



**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY**

**SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATION**

**EXAMINING OWNERSHIP AND POWERFUL ACTORS  
INFLUENCE IN REPORTING CORRUPTION ISSUES: THE  
CASE OF ADDIS ZEMEN AND REPORTER NEWSPAPERS**

**BY**

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**Examining ownership and powerful actors influence in reporting corruption  
issues: The case of Addis Zemen and Reporter newspapers**

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## **Declaration**

I declared that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented for MA and other purpose in any university or college all use for this study full acknowledges

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# Examining ownership and powerful actors influence in reporting corruption issues: The case of Addis Zemen and Reporter newspapers

**Fekadu Alemu**

**Addis Ababa University, 2019**

## **Abstract**

*Corruption is a worldwide phenomenon which affects the socio-economic development and cause of instability in a given country. The consequences of corruption don't stop in civil unrest; it also affects other socio-political system including the press freedom. Thus, this study was conducted to examine ownership and powerful actors influence in the print media by focusing on reporting corruption issues. To this purpose, Addis Zemen and Reporter were purposively selected representing the state-owned and the private newspapers respectively. Methodologically, the study employed mixed method approach. The study got the advantage of taking the political economy theory of mass media and propaganda model as its theoretical frameworks. The period of study (April 2016-April 2018) was also chosen purposively since there were several incidents with the connection of corruption issues. Similarly, six informants were selected for an in-depth interview with purposive and convenience sampling technique. Accordingly, the data obtained from content analysis, in-depth interviews with 6 informants and the newspaper's editorial policy with the review of literature were then corroborated and analyzed together for the sake of triangulation. As a result, the study disclosed that the extent of corruption coverage in both newspapers is given very little attention. Almost 92% of sources were government bodies in their coverage. The newspaper's role was to follow-up and highlighting corruption news of government-issued. They were echoes or instrument of government propaganda. Both newspapers did not initialize any reporting on corruption issues. The study also found that the state-owned, as well as the private owners, were discouraging journalists when there is a trial to produce a reporting in corruption issues or investigations. Even they do not give any protections especially in regards to reporting corruption issues.*

*Government officials were not only badly influencing in the reporting of corruption issues, but also they were denying access to information (information drought), dictating the editorial writings especially in the state-owned Addis Zemen, threatening owners particularly private Reporter and to the extent of life-threatening by government officials. Among corporate institutions; advertisers were directly influencing in corruption reporting. They used criminal defamation and break-up their long-term agreement as a strategy. Real estate owners and NGO's were affecting the reporting of corruption issues or investigations one way or the other. Others like law enforcement were not also the easiest influencers. For instance, police and anti-corruption agencies mysteriously hide or disappeared corruption cases.*

**Keywords:** *media Ownership, Powerful actors, Corruption Issues*

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### **A note on the names**

Since Ethiopian naming tradition is unlike the other world, the researcher referred Ethiopian authors cited in the text of this study as well as in the reference their first name as written in the materials. However, all foreign authors in this study were referenced according to the APA citation principle. Similarly, the researcher referred years according to Gregorian calendars.

## **List of Acronyms/Abbreviations**

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| FM        | Frequency Modulation                               |
| NGO's     | Non-Government Organizations                       |
| USA media | United States of America                           |
| METEC     | Metals and Engineering Corporation                 |
| FPCAD     | Federal Police Commission Anti-Corruption Division |
| OLF       | Oromiya Liberation Front                           |
| EPRDF     | Ethiopian People Revolutionary Democratic Front    |
| UNDP      | United Nations Development Program                 |
| FEACC     | Federal Ethics and Anti-corruption Commission      |
| CPI       | Corruption Perceptions Index                       |
| AACRA     | Addis Ababa City Roads Authority                   |
| ERA       | Ethiopian Roads Authority                          |
| ESLSE     | Ethiopian Shipping & Logistics Services Enterprise |
| AASHDE    | Addis Ababa Saving Houses Development Enterprise   |
| MoFEC     | Ministry of Finance and Economic Cooperation       |
| AGU       | AUGUST   |
| SEP       | SEPTEMBER  |
| GDP       | Gross Domestic Product                             |
| EBC       | Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation                 |
| FBC       | Fana Broadcasting Corporate                        |
| GTP       | Growth Transformation Plan                         |
| MNC       | Multinational Corporations                         |
| CPJ       | Committee to Protect Journalists                   |
| MENA      | Middle East and North Africa                       |
| KTN       | Kenya Television Network                           |
| IMS       | International Media Support                        |

# Table of content

|                                      | <b>Page</b> |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|
| Abstract .....                       | i           |
| Acknowledgments.....                 | ii          |
| List of Acronyms/Abbreviations.....  | iv          |
| Table of content .....               | v           |
| List of Tables .....                 | ix          |
| CHAPTER ONE .....                    | ix          |
| 1.MOTIVATION OF THE STUDY .....      | 1           |
| 1.1.Background of the study .....    | 2           |
| 1.2.Statement of the problem .....   | 6           |
| 1.3.Objectives of the Study .....    | 8           |
| 1.3.1.Specific Objectives .....      | 8           |
| 1.4. Research questions.....         | 8           |
| 1.5.Significance of the study.....   | 8           |
| 1.6. Scope of the study .....        | 9           |
| 1.7.Limitations of the study .....   | 9           |
| 1.8.Organization of the study .....  | 10          |
| 1.9.Operational definitions.....     | 10          |
| CHAPTER TWO .....                    | 11          |
| 2.REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE ..... | 11          |
| 2.1.Introduction.....                | 11          |

|   |    |
|---|----|
| 2.1.1. An overview of corruption and reporting corruption issues .....  | 11 |
| 2.2. Media and Society.....   | 14 |
| 2.2.1. The Watchdog Role of Media.....  | 16 |
| 2.2.2. Corruption reporting as a form of investigative journalism.....  | 19 |
| 2.3. The role of Press freedom, access to information and Editorial independence in fighting corruption ..... | 21 |
| 2.4. Media ownership Effect on Fighting corruption.....   | 24 |
| 2.4.1. Private versus public media in reporting corruption issues.....  | 27 |
| 2.4.2. Does corruption reporting matters on who own it?.....  | 28 |
| 2.5. Powerful actors in the reporting of corruption process .....   | 29 |
| 2.5.1. Politicians (Officials).....   | 30 |
| 2.5.2. Business moguls.....   | 31 |
| 2.5.3. The hands of criminals, narrow political forces and business oriented groups.....                      | 32 |
| 2.6. Theoretical Framework .....  | 33 |
| 2.6.1. Political Economy of the Media.....  | 33 |
| 2.6.2. Propaganda model.....  | 36 |
| CHAPTER THREE .....   | 38 |
| 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....  | 38 |
| 3.1. Introduction.....  | 38 |
| 3.2. Media selection .....  | 39 |
| 3.3. Data sources .....   | 40 |
| 3.4. Data instruments .....   | 41 |

|   |    |
|---|----|
| 3.4.1. Content analysis .....   | 41 |
| 3.4.1.1. Content analysis Sample .....  | 41 |
| 3.4.1.2. Unit of Analysis .....   | 42 |
| 3.4.2. In-depth interview .....   | 42 |
| 3.4.3. Sampling technique.....  | 43 |
| 3.4.4. Data Presentation and Analysis.....  | 44 |
| 3.5. Validity and Reliability .....   | 45 |
| CHAPTER FOUR.....   | 46 |
| 4. DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND DISCUSSION .....  | 46 |
| 4.1. The extent of coverage of corruption issues .....  | 47 |
| 4.1.1. Overall coverage of corruption issues by newspapers .....                                | 47 |
| 4.1.2. Genres of Corruption Issues Reported by Frequency .....                                  | 49 |
| 4.1.3. Issues raised in the corruption report .....   | 51 |
| 4.1.4. Sources used to report in the corruption issues .....                                    | 53 |
| 4.2. The Influence of Powerful Actors Reporting Corruption Issues.....                          | 56 |
| 4.2.1. The influence of owners in reporting corruption issues .....                             | 56 |
| 4.2.1.1. Low interest to play a watchdog role .....   | 57 |
| 4.2.1.2. Abusing Journalists .....  | 59 |
| 4.2.1.3. Giving limited or no protection for the security of the journalist .....               | 61 |
| 4.2.2. The influence of Politicians in hiding or limiting reporting of corruption issues .....  | 63 |
| 4.2.2.1. Denial of access to information .....  | 65 |
| 4.2.2.2. Law enforcement officials: Hiding information and supporting corrupted officials ..... | 67 |

|  |    |
|--|----|
| 4.2.2.3. Editorial Interference .....                  | 68 |
| 4.2.2.4. Threatening, Harassing and intimidating ..... | 69 |
| 4.2.3. Business People; Corporations and NGO's .....   | 72 |
| CHAPTER FIVE .....                                     | 75 |
| 5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....       | 75 |
| 5.1. Summary .....                                     | 75 |
| 5.2. Conclusion .....                                  | 77 |
| 5.3. Recommendations.....                              | 79 |
| REFERENCES   |    |
| APPENDICES   |    |
| Appendix A   |    |
| Appendix B   |    |
| Appendix C   |    |
| Appendix D   |    |

## List of Tables

| <b>List of Tables</b>  | <b>Page</b> |
|--|-------------|
| Table 4.1 percentage of corruption coverage in both Addis Zemen and Reporter newspapers..... | 47          |
| Table 4.2: Genres of reporting newspapers used to disseminate corruption issues .....        | 50          |
| Table 4.3: Types of corruption issues based on the area they covered .....                   | 52          |
| Table 4.4: Major sources of the corruption reports in Addis Zemen and Reporter .....         | 53          |

# CHAPTER ONE

## 1. MOTIVATION OF THE STUDY

The idea of this study was conceived after the end of first-year masters class of June 2017. At time, there was a grand level anti-corruption campaign held by the government. Hence, the media were reporting corruption issues following the anti-corruption campaign. This was not the first time that happened, in fact, but it was heavily reported following anti-corruption campaigns on corruption issues during the former Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn.

The student researcher, therefore, has inspired why the Ethiopian media focused on those campaigns in reporting corruption issues and asked why anti-corruption campaigns were not proactive along with media and public? With such motivation, the researcher started to see some works of literature in relation to corruption and the role of media in fighting corrupt practices. In this regard, the existing literature and some studies on investigative journalism have provided the researcher's good awareness into the role of media in fighting corruption at the global and national level.

As a result, the researcher has learnt, the anti-corruption campaigns along with media initiating or leading are usually successful (Gerald, 2008). However, the anti-corruption campaign and other corruption-related issues reported with the motivation of government (political) usually recorded a one-time phenomenon. It doesn't bring any change (White, 2015). the Complex power structure, the relationship of government officials with business people and other factors have been mentioned on the influence of reporting corruption issues. The above factors have consistently challenged the media role over fighting corruption.

With regards to the Ethiopian media situation, empirical studies asserted that there is a greater political influence in the work of journalists. The private, as well as the state-controlled media journalists in Ethiopia, are self-censored. Journalists are not free to choose issues. They are dependent either owners or government interference. Moreover, the trends of writing critical reports on wrongdoings in the country are jeopardizing the media owners and journalists. In light of the above description, empirical studies also supported as journalists are currently tending to

silence critical issues due to fear of government pressure and harassments they had experienced (Ashenafi, 2017).

Therefore, the above motives and little research on investigative reporting but not specifically on the influence of ownership and powerful actors in reporting corruption issues motivated the researcher to conduct this study.

### **1.1. Background of the study**

One of the main functions of media is making officials, business individuals and other people accountable for their wrong actions. In this regard, Transparency International (2017) stated: “journalism acts as a public watchdog on the abuse of power – it enables people to demand accountability from leaders by providing citizens with the information they need to stand up to corruption” (p. 11). Therefore, information is paramount when the media focused on such critical reporting that enables the public to hold officials or corrupted business individuals. Similarly, Pinto (2009) further explained that when critical reporting is practiced across the mainstream; various outlets gradually adopt the style of the vanguard outlet. But as circumstances changed, how they continued to investigate powerful actors shifted; according to individual organizational norms and values on one side, and interests on the other, that had developed over time.

In light of the above descriptions, one of the critical reporting issues is corruption which the mainstream media usually aimed to hold accountable public officials. In view of that, Alawode (2009) states that corruption is a worldwide phenomenon as elements of corruption are found in almost all countries of the world today, but the incidences of corruption are much more prevalent in developing countries, including Ethiopia.

In spite of improvements in recent years, corruption continues as a pandemic problem in Ethiopia and cracking the progress throughout the country. According to the Global Competitiveness-report (2016-2017, p.56), Ethiopia is where businesses are particularly vulnerable to corruption. Land distribution and administration is a sector where corruption is institutionalized, and facilitation payments, as well as bribes, are often demanded by businesses when they deal with land-related issues. Corruption also occurs when businesses obtain permits

and licenses due to complicated bureaucracy. Public procurement is also seriously hampered by corruption, and different types of irregularities exist, such as non-transparent tender processes and awarding contracts to people with a close connection to the government and ruling party (Molla, 2016).

However, the Federal Ethics and Anti-corruption Commission (FEACC) in Ethiopia were established in 2001 with the intention of designing and implementing projects that could raise public awareness of the national struggle against corruption. One of such attempts is the use of media for anti-corruption efforts. This fighting through media can be carried by investigating and reporting on corruption, and by providing information with which citizens can hold both public and private institutions accountable.

The 2016/17 grand corruption campaign allegedly involving high-level politicians, executives from the state-owned and the largest construction companies were parts of the country's systemic failures that give rise to opportunities of mismanagement and corruption (We Forum, 2016-2017, p.1). Since government institutions, construction companies, and other business organizations have got ill with high-level of corruption, it appears that the ruling party (EPRDF) has opened a serious anti-corruption campaign unlike other times in July 2017.

As a result, arrests in relation to the grand corruption complicated web were made by letting more than 55 government officials, business people, and brokers under custody. The government officials were from the Sugar Corporation, the Addis Ababa City Roads Authority (AACRA), the Ethiopian Roads Authority (ERA) Ethiopian Shipping & Logistics Services Enterprise (ESLSE), Anbessa City Bus Service Enterprise, Addis Abeba Saving Houses Development Enterprise (AASHDE) and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Cooperation (MoFEC) (Fasika, 2017).

According to the Attorney General, the arrests were made following long-time investigations conducted by the police, after the audit gaps revealed by the Federal and Addis Ababa Auditor General Offices. Tips from the public, especially employees of the institutions, were also taken into consideration in the investigation processes. Overall, the government has lost around 4

billion Ethiopian birr due to corruption by government officials, businessmen and brokers (Anbesse, 2017).

After this study began, the ruling party also continued the anti-corruption campaign recently on big government and private institutions like METEC, Sugar Corporation, Real estate owners and leaders in connection with high corruption scandals. But, the anti-corruption campaigns are not proactive along with media and public. Combating corruption can't be successful independently. A successful anti-corruption strategy, therefore, should be based on a multidisciplinary approach just as the causes of corruption are multi-faceted (Geraled, 2008).

In looking at the status of newspapers and its vibrancy, according to Ethiopian broadcast authority, the numbers of newspapers registered are 15 (EBA, 2018 July). But, when this study started nine newspapers were actively working in the country (ibid). As it is witnessed, due to the state/public-media on the side of government (EPRDF) and the private press wings for the oppositions; the Ethiopian media are characterized as polarized media (Skjerdal, 2012 and Rahmato & Ayenew, 2004). The outcome overshadows both the private and the state-controlled media journalists to be self-censor. That means journalists are not free to choose issues and write for the interest of the public.

According to Reporters without Borders (2013), the media climate in Ethiopia has significantly deteriorated since 2005. Reporters without Borders (2017) also say terrorism charges have been systematically leveled against journalists, and "physical and verbal threats, arbitrary trials, and convictions are all used to silence the media". This finding is also supported by recent research. Mulatu (2017) found out that the Ethiopian media are currently tending to silence critical issues due to the fear of government pressure.

On the other hand, the anti-terrorism law in 2009 had also eclipsed on the Ethiopian media situation which prompted massive arrest of journalists; politicians as well as banning and shutting down of media, especially those working in the private press, have discouraged many publications and forced them out of the market (Alemayehu, 2017; Doha Centre for Media Freedom, 2013).

In addition to government media laws that hinder or silence the media, it is also a blatant challenge to government higher officials and also become a challenge for journalists on corruption reporting in the country. Then, the media chose to treat the regime carefully and ignored human rights violations and political dissidence (Reporters without Borders, 2013). Therefore, the decline effect has been on the type and expansion of media outlets as well as the independence of journalists and the critical reporting in the country.

On the other hand, the trend of writing critical issues on wrongdoings in the country is jeopardizing the media owners and journalists. For example, Abera (2017) asserts that the court cases taken from the federal Supreme Court record from 1996 to 2005(E.C) had a list of more than 80 court cases on journalists. Among the court cases scenarios, twenty of them were chief editors, owners of press and journalist who had been charged several times for lots of causes related to coverage of mismanagements of resources in some government institutions as well as corruption (p, 28).

Moreover, Mulatu (2017) argued that since journalists live in the circle of fear and self-censorship, they prefer refraining from reporting wrongdoings and ethnic conflicts in the country. In relation to this, Croteau and Hoynes (2006) cited in Walulya (2008) observed that censorship and broader constraints on the media need not come from government; instead, they can come from other powerful sources. They argue that today constraints on the media in democratic societies are more likely to come from corporations for economic purposes rather than from government for purely political purposes.

Hence, the extents of those influences on the Ethiopian print media have yet to be recognized and comparatively studied. Once more such study is valuable to draw a comprehensive understanding of how those influences affect the Ethiopian print media on corruption reporting. In light of the situation described and in looking at all these challenges above, this study is concerned to what extent ownership and other powerful actors affect the print media on corruption reporting.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

The role of media in fighting corruption is emphasized to be great as Anderson & Weymouth (2007) cited in Gerald (2008) who observed that an important function of the media and of journalists, in particular, has been and remains to be exposing corruption and corrupt practices and it is one that is crucial to the fair and effective working of democracy (p.19). As a result, the role of media in monitoring centers of power enables them to report incidents of corruption and abuse of public authority. Such media reports have sometimes sparked strong actions against perpetrators of corruption. The reactions have ranged from civil suits, loss of office, impeachment and imprisonment.

However, depending on a number of factors defined by the political, economic and legal environment in which media operate: media and freedom of expression, access to information, ownership, competition, credibility, and outreach are some of the key factors that have been identified as affecting the quality and effectiveness of media performance on reporting corruption issues (Nogara,2009, p.1).

In line with the above, the role of media in fighting corrupt practices through investigative reporting is very minimal since most media in Africa is state-owned (Nogara (2009, p.1). She further explained complex power structure, the relationship of government officials with business people and other factors consistently challenged the media role over fighting corruption reporting (ibid).

As it is explicated in the background of the study, the above argument holds water when one realizes the Ethiopian media situation with regards to reporting corruption issues. In this regard, journalists are self-censored; they prefer refraining from reporting wrongdoings and ethnic conflicts in the country (Mulatu, 2017).

On the other hand, despite the robust economic growth that has reduced the percentage of the population living in poverty, corruption remains a pandemic problem in Ethiopia and cracking the progress throughout the country. At least the country has lost 4 billion Ethiopian birr in 2017 (Anbesse, 2017). A research done by Maco-Economist and Consultant stated also Ethiopia has

lost an estimated \$US 36 billion (about 1 trillion and 80 billion Ethiopian Birr) in illicit financial inflows in the last 27 years. That means, Ethiopia has been losing \$US 1.3 billion every year because of illicit financial flows (Tehibo, 2018).

Considering the above reality, the role of media in Ethiopia on investigative reporting is unsubstantial and does not commensurate with the economic development the country is registering. Mulatu (2017) found out that the Ethiopian media are currently tending to silence critical issues due to the fear of government pressure (p.203). This may imply that both the state-owned as well as the private media is less powerful in terms of their watchdog role; making accountable those public officials.

Conversely, studies in Ethiopia mainly concentrated on broadcast media, and on in the eyes of government media (EBC) and the other private broadcast (FBC, government-affiliated), revealed that government officials' intervention, lack of professional media managers, low government commitment level and lack of professionalism do affect the role of investigative journalism(Ashenafi, 2017,p.67).

On the other hand, as Bilal and Skjerdal (2017) observed the political influence on the professional work is quite common as the political influence in [EBC's] newsroom is the highest one as perceived in the state media. However, even in the private media, as many as 43.5% of respondents claim that government officials have a greater influence on professional work (p.18).

Accordingly, the problem of the above studies overlooked factors such as poor journalistic practice, weak investigative skill, and other factors as they limit in reporting corruption issues. They didn't observe to what extent ownership and other powerful actors affect their investigative reporting precisely on corruption issues. These studies were also weak to see such factors and other constraints of the media role in fighting corruption issues.

Moreover, according to the preliminary assessment and literature reviews, there is little research and article has been conducted on investigative reporting not specifically on the influence of ownership and other powerful actors in reporting corruption issues in the print media. Hence, the extents of those influences on the state-owned and private print media in Ethiopia have yet to be

recognized and comparatively studied. It is this gap that caught the researcher's attention to conducting this study so that it may highlight some of the gaps to be filled.

In light of the situation described and in looking at all these challenges above, this study is concerned to examine ownership and powerful actors influence the selected newspapers in reporting corruption issues.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The general objective of the study is examining ownership and powerful actors influences in reporting corruption issues both in the government and private print media.

#### **1.3.1 Specific Objectives**

The specific objectives of this study particularly targeted to:

- Study the coverage of corruption issues in the selected newspapers during 2016-2018.
- Examine the influence of ownership of the selected newspapers in reporting corruption issues.
- Examine the influence of powerful actors in the selected newspapers in reporting corruption issues.

### **1.4 Research questions**

To address these purposes the study guided by the following research questions:

1. To what extent did the selected newspapers report corruption issues during 2016-2018?
2. How much is ownership influencing the newspapers in reporting corruption issues?
3. How powerful actors do pressurize journalists to decline in reporting corruption issues?

### **1.5 Significance of the study**

The study is aimed to examine the extent of ownership and other powerful actors in affecting the reporting of corruption issues. Therefore, it is significant for both stakeholders to learn from the

challenges and make themselves ready to address the problem in their side and put some pressure on the government to make things better. Since no previous research has been done so far in the area, the study would contribute to an academic understanding as well as to inform media policies in Ethiopia.

Notably, it will also invite for additional research in the area and be a document from which future researchers can refer to understand the influence of ownership and other powerful actors in reporting corruption issues in the Ethiopian print media landscape.

### **1.6. Scope of the study**

The study focuses on two print media both government and private newspapers. Due to time constraints and resources, the study is limited with two selected print media outlets, and, hence, the broadcasting media, as well as others print media would not be part of the study. The study aimed at examining corruption issues published from April 2016 to April 2018 in these two newspapers. The two years' time of period has purposively chosen because there have been several incidents connected to corruption cases and continual demonstrations in the country since 2015 due to lack of good governance and misuse of power during these times.

### **1.7. Limitations of the study**

Since every study has some limitations essentially owing to time and resource constraints, this study have some limitations. The study was limited to the selected newspapers, and, hence, the broadcasting media, as well as those print media which could be significant but vanished due to many problems, are not part of the study. But it would have been important in order to get another viewpoint and to see those challenges in related to reporting corruption issues.

The other limitation is the content analysis did not include how the selected newspapers framed those corruption issues. However, it would have been nice for further understanding in relation to the influence of both ownership and powerful actors one way or the other.

## **1.8. Organization of the study**

The paper has five chapters; the first introductory chapter provides extensive background on corruption reporting and the media role in fighting against wrongdoings. The second chapter deals with the review of related literature and the theoretical framework that informs the study. Chapter three also deals with the research methodology and tools used in the study. The fourth chapter focuses on data presentations, analysis, and discussions of the findings; and the fifth chapter provides summary, conclusion, and recommendations of the study.

## **1.9. Operational definitions**

**Corruption issues/reporting:** corruption issues are embezzlement (money and property), intentional financial crime, bribery (an offer of gift to influence others for personal gain), and nepotism where officials favor relatives or close friends and others reported in the genre of news and other type of genres.

**Powerful actors:** are those who have power and money to obstruct, abort and attack the reporting of corruption issues or corruption investigators.

**Media ownership:** state-owned (*Addis Zemen*) and private (*Reporter*) newspapers.

**Investigative reporting:** digging detail informations on wrongdoings and corrupt practices.

## CHAPTER TWO

### 2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### 2.1. Introduction

This chapter reviews relevant literature of basic concepts that underpin the study. It incorporates examining the conceptual framework of corruption and reporting corruption issues and media ownership studies. The chapter reviewed the political economy theory of the mass media on the nature of media ownership and its impact on media performance of reporting critical issues like corruption. The review also covered the consequence on media ownership in media independence. Empirical studies on media ownership and control are also reviewed. It also looked at the propaganda model of Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman as a theoretical framework.

##### 2.1.1. An overview of corruption and reporting corruption issues

Defining the concepts, and meanings and cause and effect relationship is the primary objective of any research. Hence, this research followed the same approaches. William (1999:513), cited in Jiang, 2017, stated that the persistence and negative impacts of corruption in human history attract scholar's attention from the very beginning of human history and more recently, especially in the 1990s when there was a "corruption eruption" in the world ( p.11). Thus, corruption is not a new phenomenon. Two thousand years ago, Kautilya, the prime minister of an Indian king, had already written a book, Arthashastra, discussing it. Seven centuries ago, Dante placed bribers in the deepest parts of Hell, reflecting the medieval distaste for corrupt behavior. Shakespeare gave corruption a prominent role in some of his plays as well (Tanzi, 1998, p. 4).

However, the academic focus did not bring a unitary view into its being. "Numerous efforts have been made, but little consensus exists on what is corruption" (Gong 1994:1). "Since the time of Aristotle, scholars exploring the question of corruption have adopted a variety of different definitions, associated with different sorts of research questions and normative concern" (Manion

1997:58). Some scholars try to isolate particular behaviors that are subject to his concern; some seek out cultural aspect of corruption; some imagine the scenario of corrupt behaviors.

In light of the above discussion, it is, therefore, hard to give a precise and comprehensive definition of corruption. However, Stapenhurst, 2000 (cited in Alawode, 2009), defined corruption as it is the abuse of public power for personal gain or for the benefit of a group to which one owes allegiance (Alawode, 2009, p. 28).

The World Bank (2011) also defines corruption as: “The misuse of public office for private gain.” This includes a public servant accepting, soliciting, or extorting a bribe as well as instances where no bribery occurs. But the public office is still misused such as nepotism, patronage, theft of state assets and diversion of state revenues.

From the above definitions, it should not be concluded that corruption cannot exist within private sector activities. It also exists in private activities regulated by the governments and large private enterprises. The abuse of public power can extend its benefits to one’s party, class, tribe, friends, family and soon. Hence, whatever the reason, we can understand that corruption is a disgusting act by individuals from one government institution to an ordinary family firm for private gain. So then, it is a good idea to see the status of the country’s corruption report around the world.

Transparency International’s corruption index of 2017 which ranks every year 176 countries on a scale of 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean) shows that more than two-thirds (69%) of the states included in the index scored less than 50 out of 100, and were, therefore, judged to have a serious corruption problem. According to the Transparency International report (2017), the best performing region is Western Europe with an average score of 66. The worst performing regions are Sub-Saharan Africa (average score 32) and Eastern Europe and Central Asia (average score 34).

Over the last six years, several countries significantly improved their CPI (corruption perception index) (2018) score, including Côte d’Ivoire, Senegal, and the United Kingdom, while several countries declined, including Syria, Yemen, and Australia. However, developing countries

including war zone states like Syria, South Sudan, and Somalia rank lowest with scores of 14, 12 and 9 respectively.

Following the report, the annual Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) released by Transparency International (2017: Ranked 107 out of 180 countries) and in 2018 has ranked 114 out of 175 countries. The index presented Ethiopia a score of 35 – a slight improvement from 2016 and 2015 when the country was given 34 and 33 points, respectively. The corruption index in Ethiopia averaged 109.89 from 2000 until 2018, reaching an all-time high of 138 in 2007 and a record low of 59 in 2002. According to Transparency International, the increasing perception of corruption in public services and the impunity enjoyed by those who profit from it – is increasingly pushing countries towards populist politicians who promise to change the system and break the cycle of corruption and privilege.

The trend of corruption according to Transparency International's corruption perception index seem to suggest that less developed nations are more corrupt than the developed countries. This has prompted thinking in the direction of regionalizing corruption. One of such theories has been provided by Lambsdorff, (2007: 36). He argues that high levels of corruption among one's neighboring states and abundant natural resources are observed to significantly increase corruption. He argues that neighboring countries may share similar cultural affinities and norms, and that attitudes towards corruption may spill over is that news as well as editorial opinion will be strongly influenced by those interests and should display a predictable bias (Ibid, (2007: 47, 63).

Conversely, Anderson (1999) noted, cited in Alawode (2009), the conditions of these countries are such that corruption is likely to have different causes and more consequences than in more developed countries (Ibid). The socio-economic conditions in low-income countries are more conducive to the growth of corruption. Corruption is a symptom of deep-rooted economic and political weaknesses and shortcomings in the legislative and judicial system of the country.

A document of Regional Anti-Corruption Programme for Africa (2011) stated that undoubtedly, corruption remains the most daunting challenge to good governance, sustainable economic growth, peace, stability, and development in Africa. Hence in many corruption perception

surveys and indices, Africa is perceived as the most corrupt and underdeveloped region (Regional Anti-Corruption Programme for Africa (2011 – 2016) P.9).

Conversely, the 2014 Global Corruption Barometer indicates that Africa as a region is considered to have suffered most from public corruption. These findings clearly indicate that corruption is a serious and pervasive problem in Africa and remains a major obstacle to development and good governance. For instance, it was estimated in 2014 that corruption costs the continent over US \$ 148 billion per annum (Global corruption barometer, 2014, p. 76).

Moreover, 50 % of tax revenue, 25% of the continent's GDP and US \$ 30 billion dollars in aid for Africa was eaten up by corruption. In addition, illicit financial flows, especially by Multinational Corporations (MNCs) mostly through corrupt practices, continue to deny African countries the needed financial resources for development. This makes corruption a serious development challenge in Africa (Ibid).

As it is seen above, corruption has generally been a serious problem in Africa. The source of the problem is the illusion of good governance and the politics of the state. Therefore, it is very desirable to study the influence of those owners of the media and other powerful actors in the corruption reporting process rather than on how much the media is paying attention to it.

## **2.2. Media and Society**

Most social scientists define the current society as a mass society and believe it was formed at the end of the 19th century mainly by industrialization, urbanization, and modernization (Wells, 1997, p.145). The media's role in society is fundamentally a function of how society chooses to use the media. Hence, a wide range of normative theories is dealt with the relationship of the media to society. So that media's relationship with the current society is both reflexive; the mass media simultaneously affects and is affected by mass society and varied (Bennett & Serrin, 2005, p.128).

In a similar manner, McQuail stated that the mass media are presumed not only to have certain objective effects on society but also to serve a social purpose. This means that some of the

effects that have been observed are both intended and positively valued. These include the effects of disseminating information, expressing different voices and views, helping public opinion to form on issues and facilitating debate (McQuail, 2010, p.138). McQuail further argues that the media can serve to repress as well as to liberate, to unite as well as to fragment society, to promote as well as to hold back change (McQuail, 2010, p.142).

However, the liberal perspective and the social responsibility model have been particularly influential. Although the influence wielded by the Fourth Estate on government and political decision-making today is very different from the early stages of nation-states and modern media (Jiang, 2017, p.56).

According to Wilson (1996), in countries where aggressive newspapers and advanced broadcasting systems exist, like America and Britain, democratic accountability works through the media than it works through the parliament (p.176). Curran, 2005 (cited in Afework, 2013, p.36) also strengthens broadly the role of media as follows: “The media should keep people informed about public affairs so that individuals are adequately briefed when they take part in the process of self-government. The media should be fearless watchdogs, vigilantly examining the exercise of power and protecting the public from wrongdoing. The media should also provide a platform of open debate that facilitates the formation of public opinion. In addition, the media should be the voice of the people, representing to authority the citizenry’s views and expressing the agreed aims of society. (p. 120).”

Therefore, civil society and media, in general, are essential in applying pressure and keeping governments honest and accountable. Specifically, freedom of association, including the ability of people to form groups and influence public policy, is vital to anti-corruption. The voices of both civil society and journalists put a spotlight on bad actors and can help trigger action by law enforcement and the court system (Branston & Stafford, 2003:445).

Given the above facts, Corruption is one of the major factors affecting the social, moral, political and mainly economic aspects of developing countries including Ethiopia. In order to avoid the harm being caused by this practice, creating an aware society can be taken as the first step through the watchdog role.

### **2.2.1. The Watchdog Role of Media**

The notion of the press as watchdog is more than 200 years old. Coronel, 2009 states that globalization brought the fall of authoritarian and socialist regimes, and the deregulation of the media worldwide have fuelled a renewed interest in as well as a surge in efforts by various groups to support “watchdogging” by the media( p.45). The reason is that media is one of the institutions that are viewed with hope in regard to combating corruption. In this perspective, much of the debate has focused on whether a free and independent media is more likely to report on corruption than the state-controlled media (Gerald, 2008, p.43) because it is arguable that in a country where there is low press freedom corruption still remains a problem. For instance, one can take South Africa and Ethiopia. According to Transparency International (TI), although the range and the rank of both countries are different, corruption is still a pandemic problem in the two countries. Hence, Tanner (1995) put it arguably an open, pluralistic, democratic and technologically developed society, the media are a particularly effective weapon for exposing and preventing corruption (Tanner, 1995, p.37).

The monitorial function of the media is what most commonly referred to as ‘watchdog role’. Bennett and Serrin (2005) put the definition of ‘watchdog journalism’ as, (1) independent scrutiny by the press of the activities of government, business, and other public institutions, with an aim toward (2) Documenting, questioning, and investigating those activities, in order to (3) Provide publics and officials with timely information on issues of public concern (p. 169).

In a similar manner, Ansah (1988, p. 14) contends that ‘the press in its watchdog role should, as a matter not only of right but also of duty, expose and criticize bureaucratic incompetence, corruption, abuse of power and the violation of human rights. It is for this reason that the media have always been described as the fourth estate of the political realm that monitors power.

Watchdogging can involve oversight on both individuals and institutions. The targets of watchdog reporting cover from sex and personal scandals to financial wrongdoing, political corruption, enrichment in public office, and other types of wrongdoing. It can also uncover malfeasance in the private sector, such as corporations that cause damage to the public interest, as well as non-profits who take money from unsuspecting citizens. Almost no public person or

group is immune from investigation indeed journalists have investigated scamming Buddhist monks (Thailand), sexual abuse in the Catholic Church, as well as wrongdoing in venerable institutions like the Boy Scouts (US) (Coronel, 2009).

As a result, in “The Media’s Role in Curbing Corruption” Staphenurst (2000) provides as the impact of media reporting on corruption can be “tangible” and “intangible”. It is tangible when some sort of visible outcome can be attributed to a particular news story or series of stories. For instance, the launching of an investigation by authorities, the scrapping of a law or policy promoting opportunities for corruption, the impeachment or forced resignation of a crooked politician, the firing of an official, the launching of judicial proceedings, the issuing of public recommendations by a watchdog body, and so on. It is intangible when checks on corruption arise from the broader social climate of enhanced political pluralism, enlivened public debate and a heightened sense of accountability among politicians, public bodies and institutions that are inevitably the by-product of a hard-hitting, independent news media.

On the other hand, Coronel (2009) in his watchdog journalism explanation argues that the ethical standards of the journalist or the quality of the reporting may be high or low. According to Coronel, whatever motivates the journalist or the news organization that publishes a muckraking report is not the issue; what matters is that the reporting warns citizens about those that are doing them harm and empowers them with the information they need to know. That is why Norris (2007) argued that governments cannot be held accountable if citizens are ill-informed about the actions of officials and institutions.

The media should be the watchdog not of political elites who hover around the corridors of power, or of the economic elites who are in collaboration with governments. Rather, the media should take into consideration the plight of a majority of the population whose voices need to be heard through the media (Asakitipi and Akujobi 2009).

Coronel (2007) again avers there is no argument that state controls are an impediment to watchdog journalism. There is far less consensus about the role of the market. On one hand, market liberalization and competition have encouraged the emergence of, and in many places,

also sustained, investigative reporting. But at the same time, market pressures are a major obstacle to its continued viability.

Critics say that privately owned media, independent of the state but a slave to the market, are at best, episodic and unreliable watchdogs in connection to the emergence of big media conglomerates and the takeover of family-owned media enterprises by giant corporations. The dumbing down of the news and the dominance of entertainment values in the media is still blamed (Coronel, 2007, p.23).

Some media scholars and critics argue that the adversarial nature of reporting erodes trust and support for the government. Studies on U.S. television reporting, for example, say that TV news presents the image of government as inefficient and wasteful and that this constant barrage of reporting on government wrongdoing may lead to the public being desensitized to actual instances of misbehavior by public officials.

In a related view, Monica (2009) avers the developing countries including Asian and other authoritarian governments viewed as media should veer away from the Western fixation on conflict and disaster and should instead promote developmental goals. From this perspective, the press blunts its critical edge and instead functions mainly as information provider and cheerleader in support of the development agenda (p.71).

Another strain of criticism portrays media as scandalmonger; it means that the end goal is to titillate and amuse citizens, rather than inform and mobilize them for reform. The constant barrage of media exposés and reinforces the “politics of permanent scandal,” where there is unending controversy and frenzy on the political stage, but not much substantial reform (Ahrend, 2002; Brunetti and Weder, 2003; Suphachalasai, 2005). The reason is that the community will think that the very high level of government corruption becomes a normal fact of life.

When it's summarized, the watchdog roles of the media are seldom immune from the pressures of either or, in many countries, both the state and the market. In addition, the structure and ownership of the media industry as well as professional practices, cultures, and norms have a bearing on how well the press performs as watchdog. The relationship between the media and

those in power is also a factor. Moreover, certain historical moments seem to be more conducive to watchdog reporting than others (Coronel, 2007, p.75).

### **2.2.2. Corruption reporting as a form of investigative journalism**

One of the pre-requisites for fighting corruption in the media is that the problem is publicly acknowledged and denounced by the media community through regular reports and stories. Investigative journalism can help in this regard, as a powerful tool to fight corruption and uncover corruption in the media. When the media are working well to prevent corruption, they employ investigative journalism to reveal inequities, and violations and, in an educational sense, reinforce social values that reduce the incidence of corruption in government and business. Thus, media can play an important public accountability role by monitoring and investigating the actions of those who are granted public trust and who may be tempted to abuse their office for private gain (Eigen, 1999, p.78).

Gerald (2008) cited the US Center for Investigative Reporting defines Investigative reports as; “Hard stories are hard to assemble and hard to tell. It involves numerous interviews to sort through leads, establish connections and collaborate sources, followed by writing and re-writing to bring clarity to complex issues.” (p.40)

The above implies that the act of doing investigative journalism is distinct from apparently similar work done by police, lawyers, auditors and regulatory bodies in that it is not limited as to target, not legally founded and closely connected to publicity. Coronel argues on this part as investigative reporting is watchdog journalism’s most celebrated form where journalists invest time and effort to ferret out and expose wrongdoing. He further added that they compare how organizations work against how they are supposed to work. They expose how and why individuals and institutions fail. They report when things go wrong, who is responsible, how the wrongdoing was done, and its consequences.

The best investigative work exposes not just individual, but also systemic failures. They demonstrate how individual wrongs are part of a larger pattern of negligence or abuse and the systems that make these possible. They examine what went wrong and revealed who suffered

from the mistakes. For instance, the classic exposés, however, like the Watergate investigation that resulted in the resignation of US President Richard Nixon, are the product both of the initiative and enterprise of journalists as well as the cooperation of government investigators (Coronel, 2009). The other extensive investigative works by the media of the allegation of corruption scandal that brought down Dilma Rousseff's Chief in Brazil, South Korea's, and Park in 2016 are the recent phenomenon.

However, the political and prestige rewards can offset the financial costs, as is the case in Latin America and Southern Europe where news organizations conducted exposés in order to promote the pragmatic political or economic interests of various groups or because of petty personal rivalries. In Russia, and to some extent in Latin America and Asia, journalists are sometimes used to promote a political or financial agenda through the publication of well-timed leaks. In many instances, these journalists, many of them underpaid, receive money from interested parties. The term *kompromat* in Russian refers to black PR or the publication of dossiers prepared by the political or business rivals of the subject of the exposé. In Latin America, this is called *denuncismo*. Whatever the name, this type of compromised investigative reporting is driven neither by the market nor by journalistic initiative, but by vested interests that cripple the autonomy of journalists and news organizations (Coronel, 2007).

In Europe, a study by the Dutch-Flemish Association for Investigative Journalists (VVOJ), disclosed that the leading outlets for investigative reporting are national newspapers, public-service broadcasters, and in some countries, weeklies and Sunday papers. Local media and commercial broadcasters rarely invested in investigations said the study, which included Eastern and Western Europe, Turkey, Russia, and Ukraine. Concerns about profitability do not seem to be the driving force. The history of the newspaper, newsroom culture, and editorial leadership are more important determinants of whether a news organization would invest in watchdog reporting (Coronel, 2007, p.12).

Given the above detail views, the journalist may fear the risk of the situation; and it can affect the investigation or leads into self-censorship to avoid offending an authority or not to offend either party affiliated who is thought to cause a problem. On the other hand, journalists can easily

involve themselves in brown envelop journalism as a reason for being poorly paid (Berhanu & Skjerdal, 2009). Moreover, Rudin & Ibbotson, 2002 (cited in Ararsa, 2017) stated that Private owned media are not encouraged to produce an investigative story that if it is not needed by the owner. The same thing can happen in the government media if the agenda is related to the government interest (p.17).

Similarly, studies in Ethiopia mainly concentrated on broadcast media, even though they focused on the practice and status of investigative journalism revealed that the practices of investigative journalism in Ethiopia are hindered by high government officials, owners and other interested groups (Ashenafi, 2017, p.26; Bereket, 2012, p.34; Berhanu, 2009, p.28). The problem with those studies above conducted is that they ignored to what extent those challenges affect the practice of investigative journalism, particularly ownership and those powerful actors on corruption reporting.

Over all, studies overlooked along with why poor journalistic practice, weak investigative skill and other factors had been seen reporting on corruption. They didn't observe to what extent these ownership and those powerful actors affect their investigative reporting precisely on corruption scandals.

### **2.3. The role of Press freedom, access to information and Editorial independence in fighting corruption**

Much emphasis has given above on the role of media in fighting corruption and corrupt practices. In this regard, Monica (2009) described in away how well media can perform the role of watchdog on corruption which she believes depends on a number of factors defined by the political, economic and legal environment in which media operate: media freedom of expression, access to information, ownership, competition, credibility and outreach are some of the key factors that have been identified as affecting the quality and effectiveness of media performance on corruption (p.2). Stapenhurst (2000) strengthen the above that the effectiveness of the media, in turn, depends on access to information and freedom of expression, as well as a professional and ethical cadre of investigative journalists (p.1).

Thus, a free media should provide citizens with sufficient information and freely and independently, scrutinize holders of political power as well as those groups that harm the interest of the society. As Brunetti and Weder, 2003 (cited in Färdigh, 2007) suggest, a free and active press constitutes an additional channel of external control which can substantially reduce the costs of fighting both, extortive and collusive corruption. In a related view, Norris (2006) argues news media, in their ‘watchdog’ role, can function to promote government transparency, accountability, and public scrutiny of decision-makers in power, by highlighting policy failures, maladministration by public officials, corruption in the judiciary, and scandals in the corporate sector (p.56).

On the other hand, access to information is the major underlying and fundamental principles of free press. Public access to information is largely and practically related to all rights. The right of citizens to access information, according to the United Nations General Assembly, is “the touchstone for all freedoms” (UN General Assembly, Resolution 59(1), 65th Plenary Meeting, December 14, 1946). Hence, freedom of the press, including free access to information, is fundamental to an open, democratic society. Because information flows may facilitate public oversight of government and increase the accountability of politicians for bad conduct.

The other interconnected with the role of press freedom and access to information in fighting corruption is editorial independence. As Gerald (2008) pointed out that editorial independence can be defined in three different ways; one through having the freedom to choose which stories the editors and journalists want to pursue and ultimately publish; second through freedom to choose which personnel to hire and fire in the editorial department, for example, journalists and editors; and the third reflection of editorial independence is through receiving and appropriating economic and other resources to the editorial leadership to support their functions. If this can be achieved, such media institution may be said to have editorial independence (p.46).

Peters, 2003 (cited in Gerald, 2008) argues to promote openness in society and expose corruption, media owners, publishers, editors and journalists must resist pressures to report what is beneficial to political and private interests. They must also overcome obstacles to free reporting, especially in the absence of effective freedom of information legislation. Editorial

independence – the media’s right to take editorial decisions according to conscience and codes of conduct – lies at the heart of promoting independent journalism (P.48). Rose-Ackerman (1999,) argues that the media can facilitate public discussion if it is privately owned and free to criticize the government without fear of reprisal (p.187).

The matter is although media freedom does not have to be completely exhausted in developed countries; on the contrary, it is extremely grave in developing countries. Journalists are persecuted, imprisoned, and die. That is why the government persistent pressures after the result of 2005 election dozens of newspapers and magazines diminished and the anti-terrorism law in 2009 had eclipsed on the Ethiopian media situation which prompted massive arrest of journalists, politicians as well as banning and shutting down, especially those working in the private press, have discouraged many publications and forced them out of the market (Mulatu, 2017 and Doha Centre for Media Freedom, 2013). It has been that many countries with the right to freedom of media and the right to information exposed many hidden schemes of corruption like Watergate in America and recently South Korean of park. In contrast, in many developing countries where there is a limitation of media freedom and access to information, it is still endangered. Moreover, according to CPJ (Committee to protect journalists (2016)), journalists raised about committing of corruption have been arrested, abducted, and executed in their own country.

Apart from direct physical threats against journalists, Asante (2007) argues that the media in many countries face legislation that prevents them from gaining access to and imparting information (p.12). In a related view, repressive defamation laws that put the burden of proof on journalists and grant special protection to public officials exist across many developing countries including Ethiopia. Such laws – and the concomitant threat of prison sentences – create a climate of fear that discourages investigative reporting and the exposure of corruption (Peters, 2003:49).

Therefore, there is no doubt that medias freedom of expression is essential to investigate and report incidences of corruption in a professional, effective and ethical manner. In addition, if the media are to combat corruption in the public and private sectors, they must be able to rely on access to information and editorial independence.

## **2.4. Media ownership Effect on Fighting corruption**

The post-modern society of our contemporary world is a complex entanglement of social, political, cultural and economic agencies. As an industry that shifts interchangeably throughout the varying sectors of society, the media has become a crucial instrument in the way societies develop customs, policies and responses around the globe. Throughout the last twenty years, the media industry has experienced a shift; not only through the ways in which they can share their message, but also through the concentration of control and ownership around the globe (Cahill, 2011). Thus, a number of scholars have documented the ramifications of media corporatization and ownership concentration hindered the role media on professional works (McChesney, 2008 and Hesmondhalgh, 2007).

As Doyle, 2004 stated that media firm's expansion has been seen 'horizontally' or within a single area of the activity, for example when one television broadcaster acquires another. Growth within a single sector of the media or a single business activity is sometimes referred to as 'monomedia' expansion. Monomedia expansion is a common strategy, allowing firms to expand their market share and, usually, to rationalize their resources and gain economies of scale. The other expansion is 'cross-media' expansion involves expansion across two or more different sub-sectors of the media, for example when a newspaper publisher acquires radio broadcasting interests (p.47).

As a result, critical political economy of media studies reveal the emergence of concentration of ownership and recently the globalized mass media environment is dominated by big media corporations like Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation, Disney (ABC), Time Warner (CNN & WB), Bertelsmann, News Corp (Fox) GE (NBC & Telemundo), Viacom (ABC) among others (Arsenault and Castells,2008,p.708, McPhail, 2010, 3p. 175). Bagdikian (2004) before McPhail (2010) gives a clearer picture of this in America. According to his study, 50 corporations in 1983 controlled the vast majority of news media outlets in America, but by 2004, media ownership was concentrated in only seven corporations (p.45).

The development of media companies merging collectively is a direct result of the opportunities that neoliberalism presented. Within previous decades; laws and processes of regulation disabled

the ability for media companies to buy into or merge with each other, eliminating the capability to monopolise on the distribution of media content. “Neoliberal policy enabled a new type of freedom for media corporations that were facilitated by an increasingly lax regulatory environment” (Croteau and Hoynes, 2006, p.22).

As Noam Chomsky frequently points out that no conspiracy theory is needed for the analysis of media deviations in western countries. A handful of individuals and corporations that today own the majority of media outlets, acquired their holdings by openly supporting political elites in the countries in which their media operate. When Chomsky was asked years ago how corporate elites controlled the media, he answered: “That’s like asking how corporate elites control General Motors. They don’t have to control it. They own it” (quoted in Halimi, 2002: 42).

However, State ownership of newspapers and television is significantly greater in countries in Africa and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). On average, governments in Africa control 61 percent of the top five (in circulation) daily newspapers and reach 84 percent of the audience for the top five television stations. Seventy-one percent of African countries have state monopolies on television broadcasting. With the exception of Israel, all countries in MENA have a state monopoly over television broadcasting. State ownership of newspapers averages 50 percent share of circulation—are also high in countries in MENA (Djankov, 2003, p.354, Okech, 2008, p.17).

By contrast, newspapers in Western Europe and the Americas are held predominately privately. In Western Europe, none of the top five daily newspapers are owned by the state. In the Americas, the majority of the newspapers have been owned and managed by single families for many decades (McPhail, 2010, p. 172). Moreover, in most countries outside Europe and the United States, governments traditionally maintained a monopoly on radio and television networks. In general, throughout the world, media are controlled by parties likely to value these private benefits: families and the state.

In spite of the above facts and press freedom, journalists and media organizations throughout the world continue to face obstacles in reporting corruptions. The media is often considered as the fourth estate of the realm and has a major task of not only disseminating information and

educating the general populace on key public issues, but also takes on the challenge of agenda setting in many countries. Undoubtedly, the media is a very powerful institution in any political system. However, according to Jiang, (2010) media is not immune to corruption. Media practitioners have often been accused of taking bribes, peddling influence, and molding information and reporting to achieve some specific private ends. In other words, the media could be both a perpetrator of corruption and an agency for its control depending on the nature, ethical culture, regulatory regime and character of the media (Shamsudeen M. 2014, p. 41 and Jiang, 2010, p.87).

McQuail (2010) while writing on the influence of ownership on mass media content said, “ there is no doubt that owners in market based media have ultimate power over content and can ask for what they want to be included or left.” The influence of media ownership is felt more by government owned media organizations especially in Africa. In countries like the United States of America and Britain, there are laws meant to check the excesses of owners. In Britain, there is limited (if any) influence on the content produced by the British Broadcasting Corporation by government (p.). According to McQuail, Meyer’s survey evidence confirmed that US journalistic ethics frowned on owner intervention, although editors reported a fair autonomy in practice.” Contrary to this survey, Schultz’s study of Australian journalists showed strong support for the fourth estate role but also a recognition that it was often compromised by commercial consideration and owner pressure (p.).

Buckley et al. 2008, (cited in Lynete, 2010) argues that in order to have a media landscape that promotes participation and development in Africa, there is need for diversity of content but also diversity of ownership including commercial, non-commercial, public and community ownership. When the African media is controlled by the relevant governments or an oligarchy (few sellers) of private players, then public interests are likely to be relegated and preference will be given to the interests of minority elite in those countries. Although some owners do not interfere editorially, ownership always implies a degree of actual or potential control and can be an important obstacle to pluralism and diversity (P.347).

Similarly, scholars argue that media independence can be influenced by media owners who resource or finance the media directly (Herman and Chomsky 2006; McQuail, 2005 and Netanel, 2001). In a study on the relationship between media ownership and editorial content in Kenya, Okech (2008) found a strong correlation between editorial lines of the two major daily newspapers in the country and to ownership influences in most cases.

#### **2.4.1. Private versus public media in reporting corruption issues**

As noted earlier, ownership matters a lot since it shapes the information provided to voters and consumers. Gerald (2008) explained that in terms of combating corruption, government ownership of the media is considered to be detrimental because the media may not be willing to ‘watchdog’ the very people who own them. Government ownership impedes the media’s role because of the inherent conflict of interest that government ownership of the media creates. By the same token, Djankov et al (2002:159) argue that government ownership of the media increases corruption because it has a negative effect on citizens’ rights. Government ownership of the press, they believe, restricts information flows to the public, thereby diminishing the value of citizens’ rights and the effectiveness of government. Above all, in a study on media ownership and economic growth Djankov et. al (2003) explain that “government ownership of media is higher in countries that are poorer...”.

Undoubtedly, privatization can sometimes have beneficial consequences in this regard. However, privatization may not always produce the desired results—particularly when it takes place in a poor nation with small, entrenched business elite that has close ties to power-holders in the state apparatus. In a related view, private owned media are not encouraged to produce an investigative story that if it is not needed by the owner. The same thing can happen in the government media if the agenda is related to the government interest (Rudin & Ibbotson, 2002, Ashenafi, 2017, p. 17).

In light of the above description, in Africa most state owned media are often used by the government as tools for propaganda. A report from the Common Cause Education Fund in 2008 said “media cannot play its role effectively unless it is independent from government influence. A variety of sources of information independent of each other is essential as well. On many issues, media outlets will to varying degrees reflect the interests of their individual owners.” It

should be noted however that the role of the media is not solely to make profits for the owning corporations. The media is to serve the public interest, and may make money while doing so (Ali, 2015, p.239).

#### **2.4.2. Does corruption reporting matters on who own it?**

As noted earlier, ownership is not of course the only determinant of media content. In many countries, even with private ownership, government regulates the media industry, provides direct subsidies and advertising revenues to media outlets, restricts access to news print and information collection, and harasses journalists (Ali, 2015, p.54).

There is a broad consensus that a free press helps curbing corruption by improving “citizens’ accessibility to information which in turn makes it more difficult for politicians and public servants to get away with corrupt behaviors. So that some reports underline that countries that have reduced government ownership of the media have experienced rapid improvement in the volume and quality of coverage (Transparency International, 2003). For instance, following Mexico’s privatization of broadcasting in 1989, coverage of government corruption scandals subsequently increased.

However, critics of this approach argue that privatization may not be the best solution, especially in view of some public media outlets like the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) that have exercised the necessary autonomy in their reports (Gerald,2008,p.44). Critics further argue that some forms of private ownership have not guaranteed independence to their media as it is anticipated. For instance, Croteau and Hoynes (2006) have observed that censorship and broader constraints on the media need not come from government; instead they can come from other powerful sources. They argue that today constraints on the media in democratic societies are more likely to come from corporations for economic purposes rather than from government for purely political purposes.

In general, although studies have shown a strong positive correlation between freedom of the press and control of corruption, the researcher’s hypothetical assumption is that whoever owns

the media there is an impact that emanated from both ownership and other powerful actors on the performance of corruption reporting.

## **2.5. Powerful actors in the reporting of corruption process**

For the aim of pressing government to act in public interest, the role of the media and organized groups are paramount. For instance, if the media disseminate reports by an anti-corruption organization, the publicity generated gives findings and actions of the organization legitimacy and increases public trust in this organization. The media and anti-corruption agencies therefore have a symbiotic relationship. The media's interests are served by anti-corruption agencies when they provide reporters with strong dramatic stories to pursue. The interests of anti-corruption agencies are served because reporting on their activities builds public trust and support hence enhancing their legitimacy (Gerlad, 2008, p.48 and Tanner, 1995, p.37).

The above discussion then leads to a win-win situation between the media and anti-corruption agencies. Even in this kind of situation, the media must keep a watchful eye on anti-corruption agencies, as cases of corruption have been reported in the very institutions supposed to combat sleaze. A case in point is the act by the former World Bank President, Paul Wolfowitz who corruptly authorized a pay rise for his girlfriend Shaha Riza who worked in the same institution. The public pressure generated by the media reports prompted Wolfowitz to resign in an attempt to cleanse the Bank's image (*CNN*, May 18 2007, "Wolfowitz to resign as World Bank chief").

Conversely, when journalism exposes flaws and corruption within other bodies (for example, the courts, police, and parliament and anti-corruption task forces) corruption is put on check. If the resulting public pressure leads to a reform of those bodies, the long term effectiveness and potential of the media to act as counterweight against corruption is strengthened (Sapenhurst, 2000:3).

On the contrary, if government officials or their unofficial allies intimidate and harass those who speak out, formal structures of accountability will be meaningless (Ackerman, 1999:183). A successful anti-corruption strategy therefore should be based on a multidisciplinary approach just as the causes of corruption are multi-faceted (Gerlad, 2008, p.38).

Thus, as part of a series of wide civil service reforms, the Government of Ethiopia established an anti-corruption commission in 2001 (and defined powers in the revised Proclamation 433 of 2005). Ethiopia's Anti-Corruption Commission's mandate is only at the federal level, which includes the chartered cities of Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa. Since 2007, seven of the nine regional states have established their own anti-corruption commissions to fight and prevent corruption in their respective regions. The Commission has adapted Hong Kong's three-pronged approach to fighting corruption, which incorporates investigation, prosecution and prevention /ethics education (Kibrewosen, 2009, p.29). Even though this is not part of my study, the work of this anti-corruption body left us with bold question whether it has been cooperative with other bodies or had it been effective with its approach.

### **2.5.1. Politicians (Officials)**

The most obvious way in which the media contribute to fighting corruption is by exposing the corrupt officials. As noted earlier, such media reportages may result in resignation or prosecution of the corrupt officials. In this instance, the media provides information that can be used as leads by other agencies to launch deep investigations. Lambsdorff, 2007 (cited in Gerlad, 2008) has observed that a successful media is a strong impediment to corrupt politics by making it difficult for elites to get away with corrupt behavior. One basic pre-condition for a press to contain corruption is its freedom and independence (p.46).

Accordingly, both the print and broadcast media has a unique and particular role to play in enhancing good governance and accountability of governments (Mukhongo 2009a, p.4). The identification by the media of those responsible and the processes involved inherently increases accountability among the political actors. The anticipation of such identification can then contribute to more responsible decision-making by the governments and a positive outcome for the public interest (Buckley et al. 2008, p.12). Further, the media can play a significant role in the delivery of public service goals by providing a platform for the views of all people facilitating participation in governance, holding leaders and officials to account, and contributing to sustainable, equitable and participatory development (IBD).

However, a tendency to manipulate news and shape the agenda of public debate exists in all societies. In countries like Ethiopia where democratic culture is not well established, restrictions on media tend to be more explicit and profoundly damaging to debate or public engagement. Where the affairs of government or powerful groups are protected by secrecy, journalists face considerable obstacles – and physical risk – if they embark upon investigations that could lead to exposing corruption (Ashenafi, 2017, Mulatu, 2017 and Gerlad, 2008). As a result, Gosselin T and Nistotskaya M (2015) asserted that greater influence of politics and lower information quality is associated with higher levels of corruption (p.10).

Following the above discussion, as Yetenayet (2008) explained in Ethiopia the influence of political authorities has been seen in the news reporting in both state and private owned media in various forms and affects the media in varying degrees (p.98). In addition, he argues the forms of political authorities' influence on the media as editorial policies adopted by media organizations, subsidiary press laws, direct orders from officials as well as the use of cohesive force such as harassment, intimidation and assault (Ibid, 99).

### **2.5.2. Business moguls**

As already noted, the manipulation of news and shaping the agenda of public debate exists in all societies. In countries like Ethiopia where democratic culture is not well established, business moguls and media proprietor, who owns and controls a large number of companies able to influence public opinion (Artz, 2007; Chester, 2007). What is more, as freedman argued, there is an overriding common purpose and shared vision amongst those business moguls on the abuse of media power (freedman, 2014, p.33). This implies those of big business companies can influence one way or the other way on the performance of journalistic works specifically in corruption reporting.

In addition, Aeron Davis in his paper for the Political Economy Research Centre (Davis, 2015) argues that public knowledge is under increasing threat – notably from the corporate land grab of the internet together with the hegemony of neoliberal ideas that seek to naturalize the dynamism and creativity of market forces and their expression in 'audit culture' and austerity policies. The pursuit of individual wealth above is cemented in the representations and agendas of whole

swathes of a media system that it itself heavily implicated in the reproduction of existing social relations (p.122). Hence, it is believed that large business enterprises, including large media network institutions, are a hiding place for corruption. They either directly or indirectly promote the corruption-pricing of corporations.

For instance, Lynete (2010) stated that The Kenyan government once threatened to deny *The Standard* newspaper and Kenya Television Network (KTN) advertisement tenders because of their perceived anti-government stance (p.346). He indicated also the state-controlled *Herald* in Zimbabwe has been criticized for being pro-Mugabe and has mainly been used to propagate the government's policies. In Kenya, the Standard Group and the Nation Media Group have been accused of serving the different interests of the Kenyan government. As a consequence, their biases often play out in their analysis of key issues. These biases may be precipitated by the dynamics of media ownership. This then determines the editorial policies of the various media houses, which then affects how editorials and columns are written by various media houses (Ibid.348).

In light of the above facts, the experience of the world shows that these large organizations are hindering the mass media by extending their hands in the censorship record and supporting the dissidents. To that extent, some organizations are not interested in engaging in the reporting of corruption issues because those organizations are in the debtor's chain. Occasionally, there are reports of abusive acts being abolished. Otherwise, journalists will be killed.

### **2.5.3. The hands of criminals, narrow political forces and business oriented groups**

John Milton's (1644) conceptualization of a free "market place of ideas", a plurality of media outlets is necessary to give voice to different interests from which citizens can make 'informed' choices. However, critics of this liberal perspective argue that it is prone to being improperly biased in favor of dominant groups and has allowed the capture of much of the media by criminals, narrow political forces and business interests. The private broadcasting sector, which is widely characterized by a high degree of media concentration in terms of ownership, audience share or advertising revenue, is a prime example illustrating this dominant group bias.

According to Freedman, 2014 (cited in Demsetz and Lehn, 1985) shareholding in media companies is much more concentrated than shareholding in other companies (p.77). It would, therefore, seem that owners of media companies can exercise much more control than other owners.

In many instances, these criminals have a potential to rub shoulders with government ministers and enjoy the exercise of power or the perception of such power (which is often exaggerated by politicians themselves: Stromback and Nord 2006, 157). That means even if we believe that a media owner and a corrupt organization have no relationship, both of them will still have the potential to hinder corruption reporting.

## **2.6. Theoretical Framework**

This section discusses the political economy of media as an overarching theoretical frame to guide the study as media are often taken to be the product of the socio-political environment it inhabits.

Governments and political parties, private commercial entities, and groups in civil society each relate to media in different ways, seeing opportunities and threats to their own objectives (Buckley et al. 2008). Therefore, this section assesses the political economy of the media (ownership and other powerful actors) impacts on the media's role in enhancing accountability. Propaganda model is also relevant to my thesis to explain the operation of the mass media in order to see the journalistic works like misuse or abuse of power that disables people to demand accountability from leaders with the information they need to stand up to corruption.

### **2.6.1. Political Economy of the Media**

Political economy is originally influenced by Marxist thought on economics, which studied the manner in which the economic base of society determines the super-structure, and consequently influences the cultural and political spaces within society; labor and the international division of labor, ownership, modes of production; and the importance of class structures and struggles (Marx, 1973, p. 259).

Murdock (1989a) stated that political economy theorists study elite control of economic institutions, such as banks and stock markets, and then try to demonstrate how this control affects many other social institutions, including the mass media (Cited in Baran and Davis, 2010, p.225). For example, Herb Schiller, “one of the most widely recognized and influential political economists of communication” (Gerbner, 2001, p. 187), wrote for decades that “corporate influence pervades nearly every aspect of society, from simple things, like our daily diet and the clothes we wear, to matters of larger scale, like the way we communicate with each other” (Schiller, 2000, p. 101).

Conversely, according to Holt and Perren (2009), political economy does not merely pertain solely to economics, but to the relations between the economic, political, technological, and cultural dimensions of the social context in which media industries function (p. 102). For a long period, the main schools of political economy did not develop a strong interest in the fields of culture or communications (Graham, 2002, 501).

Innis presented the idea of “knowledge monopolies,” to describe how through history, certain social groups had enjoyed control of various types of information. In the process of separating technology from content, Innis explained how media could affect social dynamics based on the type of media used to maintain knowledge monopolies. Innis defined the concept of media very broadly, a definition that McLuhan would later adopt. (1951b, p. 141)

Frankfurt School – As Graham (2002) stated that Horkheimer and Adorno’s (1947/1998) work on the ‘culture industry’ also plays a prominent role in the early development of PEC. According to them, the culture industry produces mass deception and a false sense of happiness – it promotes an affirmative and conformist consciousness. According to Wittel, the Frankfurt School theorists were probably among the first to recognize the growing process by which cultural practices became objects for the valorisation of capital (p.504).

Therefore, political economy of mass media concerns itself with who owns the media. It suggests that the mass media is part of a capitalist system which incorporates advertisers, corporations and government and the power relationships between these. Focus on political and economic systems, e.g. organizations, ownership, advertisers, government and regulation (Golding &

Murdock, 2005: 61, Herman and Chomsky, 1988). In a related view, Baran and Davis (2010) summarizes as follows; focuses on how media are structured and controlled, Offers empirical investigation of media finances, Seeks link between media content production and media finances (p.223).

Conversely, McQuail (2010, 6<sup>th</sup> edition) explain olitical-economic theory as it is a socially critical approach that focuses primarily on the relation between the economic structure and dynamics of media industries and the ideological content of media. From this point of view, the media institution has to be considered as part of the economic system, with close links to the political system. The consequences are to be observed in the reduction of independent media sources, concentration on the largest markets, avoidance of risks, and reduced investment in less profitable media tasks such as investigative reporting and documentary film-making (p. 85).

Graham (2002) on his part reviewed the contemporary literature in political economy of communication and reveals five main research themes: *ownership, monopoly, audiences, access, and democracy*. Dividing the literature into these five thematic areas is a convenience to some extent, but it also identifies emergent and potential fragmentations in the field along specific lines of inquiry. Issues of ownership tend to focus on corporate agenda, both in terms of the economic power corporations wield through media ownership, and in terms of the political power that concentrated media ownership confers on corporations and the people who control them. Issues of monopoly tend to focus on the role of media corporations in shaping the general character of societies operating in a “monopoly capitalism” framework (Smythe, 1981). Issues surrounding audiences tend to focus on the impact of media practices upon people & perceptions; how audiences shape media practices; how media practices function in the commodification of knowledge, epistemology, and communication more generally; and how the work of audiences is appropriated and sold by media corporations (cited in Albarran and Chan-Olmsted, 200, p.495).

However, the political economy of the media in Africa is closely tied to ownership of the media. Thus, there is bias in granting the licenses where some allegations have been made that only certain politically connected people and those apologetic to the system are granted licenses. The

governments use media as a mobilization tool of the masses and, therefore, grant licenses to those who are sympathetic to the system (Mukuhong, 2010, p.348).

### **2.6.2. Propaganda model**

Within the political economy approach, the propaganda model of mass media is presented by Chomsky and Herman in *manufacturing consent: the political economy of mass media* (1988). They begin by proclaiming that

The mass media serve as a system for communicating messages and symbols to the general populace. It is their function to amuse, entertain, and inform, and to inculcate individuals with the values, beliefs, and codes of behaviour that will integrate them into the institutional structures of the larger society. In a world of concentrated wealth and major conflicts of class interest, to fulfill this role requires systematic propaganda (1988:1).

As such Chomsky and Herman operate within the tradition of Marxist critique of mass media as ideological propaganda whose purpose is not to inform rational critical societal debate, but to naturalise the ideology of the ruling classes. Chomsky and Herman go beyond Habermas, Adorno and Horkheimer, however, in delineating what they see as a series of structural filters through which ‘the powerful are able to fix the premise of discourse, to decide what the general populace is allowed to see hear and think about’ (1988:1). The mass media is owned and controlled by powerful organizations which serve their own commercial interests. According to Herman and Chomsky, media performance is largely shaped by market forces by the bottom line goals of media corporations operating within capitalist state-society. As they stated propaganda model is “an analytical framework that attempts to explain the performance of U.S media in terms of the basic institutional structures and relationships within which they operate”.

They argue that the bias derives from five ‘filters’, which all published news must pass through and this in turn distorts news coverage. They are:

1. The size and ownership of mass media corporations;

2. The economic model predicated on generating revenue via corporate advertising;
3. The reliance on ‘trusted sources’ which frequently means using government or corporate spokespeople who spend vast sums on public relations and lobbying;
4. The ability of financially or politically privileged actors to provide flak, negative responses to critical media coverage; and
5. An ideological filter described as anticommunism (due to Manufacturing Consent being published during the final years of the Cold war).

According to Jeffery Klaehn, there are numerous studies which support the logic of the Propaganda Model. His own research found that Canadian government and corporate interests in Papua New Guinea influenced the reporting of the near-genocide in the country after Indonesia’s invasion, resulting in fewer articles about the atrocities and so on (p.89). In a related view, Edward Herman (2003:1) himself describes the model as “The model that describes a system in which the media serve the elite ... and policies whereby the powerful protect their interests...” cited in Shemelis, 2016, p.3).

Thus, in this study, Propaganda model is aimed to see the extent of influences or biases of government officials and other elites in the reporting of corruption issues in the selected newspapers.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

In every research methodological appropriateness is very essential in order to answer a research question. Hence, a research that builds on the appropriate research approach with applicable method always enables to collect relevant information. Accordingly, this study is aimed at examining the coverage of corruption issues in the selected newspapers and the influences with regards to ownership of the newspapers and other powerful actors. The student researcher, therefore, believes examining the coverage of corruption issues (content analysis) and its influences in terms of ownership of the media and other powerful actors (in-depth interviews with journalists) are properly addressed through employing a mixed method of quantitative content analysis and qualitative in-depth interviews.

As Creswell (2011) defined a mixed method “it focuses on collecting, analyzing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or series of studies. The central premise idea is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches, in combination, provides a better understanding of research problems than using either approach alone” (p.43). In a related view, Bryman (2006) stated that one can use mixed methods to examine different aspects of a single research question, or one can use separate, but related qualitative and quantitative research questions (p.98). Thus, the purpose of using both quantitative and qualitative methods in this study is to obtain a fuller picture and deeper understanding of a phenomenon.

According to Smith (1988), the quantitative approach involves counting and measuring events and performing the statistical analysis of a body of numerical data. This goes along with the assumption behind the positivist paradigm which is about an objective truth existing in the world that can be measured and explained scientifically (cited in Alexei and Matveev, 2014, p.2).

On the other hand, qualitative approach shares the theoretical assumptions of the interpretative paradigm, which is based on the notion that social reality is created and sustained through the subjective experience of people involved in communication (Morgan, 1980, p.610). The researchers operating within the framework of the interpretative paradigm are focused on investigating the complexity, authenticity, contextualization, shared subjectivity of the researcher and the researched, and minimization of illusion (Fryer, 1991, p.4).

Therefore, content analysis (quantitative) was used to collect and analyze the extent of coverage of corruption issues given in the selected newspapers. All corruption issues based on the operational definition reported in the form of news and other type of genres are included in the study. This was applied after identifying and coding the corruption issues based on categorizations. The genre of reported i.e. corruption issues (in the genre of news, editorial, interview and others); issues raised in the reporting and sources which the newspapers used in reporting corruption issues are covered. Whereas, in-depth interview (qualitative) used to find out the influences of ownership and other powerful actors in the reporting of corruption issues with senior journalists and managing editors (who are mostly involved in reporting and editing corruption issues) perceptions and experiences, challenges and the way they make sense of their reporting in the corruption issues practically.

### **3.2. Media selection**

Selecting a media outlet is much-correlated with a subject of the study in media and communication research. Hence, the study newspapers, both government and privately owned, which are believed to have covered corruption issues were selected. The general concept as McCombs (2004), cited in Alemayehu (2017) is that newspapers are better than broadcast (television) services in covering some issues (p.91). His rationale mainly relates to ownership (ibid).

Therefore, the study selected two (one government and one private) print media; from the government, *Addis Zemen*; daily and from the private media *Reporter* a bi-weekly (Amharic) newspapers are parts of the study. Reasons for purposive selection of the newspapers are; first, the two newspapers are published in the Amharic language. They are believed to have similar

audiences, i.e., they target literate communities, elites, academia, and others. Second, they can represent the ownership; both Private *Reporter* (Amharic) and state-owned (*Addis Zemen*) newspapers.

With regards to audience similarity, the researcher wants to mention facts and allegations with *Reporter* newspaper. The newspaper is published by the Media and Communication Centre. The newspaper mainly focuses on current and political issues. In terms of ideology, *Reporter* is believed as supporter of ruling party. The reason is the owner of the newspaper, Amare Argawi, was one of the TPLF's fighters (Mulatu, 2017, P.29). The above allegation is shared with one of the informants.

Third, *Addis Zemen* is a daily newspaper with circulation (15,000) in the nation and has been existed since 1943. Accordingly, in terms of area coverage or accessibility, it is assumed that it would have a wider influence than any other newspaper being published in Ethiopia whereas *Reporter* Amharic privately-owned newspaper existed 1996; with the highest circulation (17,000) focuses on current affairs and critical issues such as corruptions. Therefore, considering the above newspapers in the study is very important to understand the influence of ownership and other powerful actors in reporting corruption issues.

### **3.3. Data sources**

The study aimed to examine corruption issues as primary data published from April 2016 to April 2018 based on the selected two newspapers. The two years' time of period has purposively chosen. Since 2016 there have been several incidents connected to corruption issues. In this regard, the researcher has reviewed hard copies of the selected newspapers publications from April 2016 to April 2018 in the Ethiopian national archive and museum library. The reason, above, is to increase the credibility and confidentiality of data sources.

In addition, the primary source of data for this study is an in-depth interview. Thus, six key informants were selected for both corruption reporters and editors purposively. Those who are assigned are the experienced ones. In addition, the in-depth interview focused on the concerned

journalists or editors that can generate an essential set of data that informs a research undertaking most.

### **3.4. Data instruments**

#### **3.4.1. Content analysis**

Content analysis is one of the methods employed in this study to analyze the coverage of corruption issues in the selected newspapers. Content analysis, as defined by Berelson (1952:18) is a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content such as topics or issues, volume of mentions, ‘messages’ determined by key words in context (KWIC) of communication. Conversely, White & Marsh, (2006) stated that content analysis is a flexible research method for analyzing texts and describing and interpreting the written artifacts of a society (p.29). It is flexible also to analyze the document that enables the researcher to construct the meaning the documents contain and offer.

According to Wimmer and Dominick (2011), they identified five main purposes of content analysis: 1) Describing patterns or trends in media portrayals 2) Testing hypotheses about the policies or aims of media producers 3) Comparing media content with the real world 4) Assessing the representation of particular groups in society 5) Drawing inferences about media effects (p.160). Therefore, this study is justified with the first one derived from the research questions. The reason for the above is that the method can demonstrate how reporting corruption issues coverage varies from one to the other by the owner of the media and other powerful actors. It also enabled the researcher to establish which of the two newspapers allocated more space in covering corruption issues. Conversely, quantitatively, content analysis helped the researcher examine the influence of owners and other powerful actors in the extent of coverage of corruption issues (one way or the other) in the study period.

##### **3.4.1.1. Content analysis Sample**

Analyzing all corruption issues covered by all Ethiopian broadcast or print media newspapers is difficult and inapplicable. Hence, based on the operational definition, the researcher identified and included all corruption issues reported in the selected newspapers from April, 2016 to April,

2018 (two years) purposively. All news and other types of genres (editorial, interview) reported in the study period were (66) included. The sampling editions in both newspapers were 922 (*Addis Zemen*, 730 and *Reporter* 192).

#### **3.4.1.2. Unit of Analysis**

One of the tasks of content analysis is to examine the selected body of text and to classify the content according to the number of predetermined dimensions (Hansen, Cottle, Negrine, & Newbold, 1998). Hence, the researcher defined and categorized variables in order to code issues mainly focused on the objectives and the research questions because these are the main determinants for categorizing the text in order to code it by content analysis (cited in Mulatu, 2017, p.105).

Therefore, corruption issues in the genre of news, editorial, and interview collected in the study period was unit of the analysis. As noted earlier, to analyze the extent of newspapers coverage and the influence either limiting issues related to corruption or the reliance sources newspapers used dominantly, the researcher made a categorization on corruption issues as following: name of the newspaper, genres of corruption issues reported (is it in a form of news, editorial, interview or other genres?), issues raised in the reporting of corruption issues, and sources of them gives answer to the first research question. The categorization and code book is attached in Appendix A.

#### **3.4.2. In-depth interview**

In-depth interview as a method Newcomb (1991) cited in Afework (2013), writes “The primary strength of interviewing as a method is its capacity to range over multiple perspectives on a given topic.” He further explains that conducting manifold interviews helps to increase the information and broaden a point of view (p.75).

Conversely, in-depth interviews are also said to be good data collection methods better exploited to get accurate response in the case of sensitive issues if conducted in a careful and considerable manner (Wimmer & Dominick’s, 2011:139, & Denscombe, 2007:174).

In direct relation to this study, in-depth interviews deemed appropriate with the purposive selection of corruption reporters or editors who have been mostly involved in corruption reporting and editing to get their views on the influences of ownership and other powerful actors in their reporting. Along the line of this interplay, influence of ownership and other powerful actors in the reporting of corruption issues, the interviews are paramount as mention above to explore detail qualitative data's that can show owners and other powerful actors influences, perceptions and experiences, challenges and the way they make sense of their corruption reporting practice.

Accordingly, as Spradley, 1979 and Gorden, 1975 noted there are different types of interviews: informal interviewing; unstructured interviewing; semi-structured interviewing and structured interviewing (cited in Abate, 2010, p.38). The type of interviewing and interview control exercised depend on the type of research question in addressing as each type serves different purposes. This study, therefore, focused on semi-structured interviewing, since a semi-structured interview is the one that contains structured and unstructured sections with standardized and open type questions.

Thus, Addis Zemen newspaper has 48 journalists; among them five journalists were focusing on investigative (corruption) issues. Of these, two senior journalists who had been reporting on corruption issues and one editor-in-chief were selected. In regards to Reporter newspaper, there 37 journalits; among them 26 are working for the Amharic language. Of these, two senior journalists who had been reporting on corruption issues and one managing editor were selected.

As a result, six key informants were selected for both corruption reporters and editors purposively. Those who are assigned are the experienced ones. In addition, the in-depth interview focused on the concerned journalists or editors that can generate an essential set of data that informs a research undertaking most.

### **3.4.3. Sampling technique**

According to Wimmer & Dominick (2011), the following issues are considered while deciding either probability or non-probability sampling method. These are the purpose of the study, cost

benefit analysis, time constraint and amount of acceptable errors (p.90). Therefore, due to one of the above mentioned factors, mass media researchers frequently use nonprobability sampling, particularly in the form of available samples also known as a convenience sample (ibid:92).

In light of the above explanations, the researcher has employed purposive sampling throughout the study. As noted earlier, the primary sources of data for this research are both key informants and content analysis. With a purposive sampling method, the researcher selected two newspapers from nine actively working newspapers in the country. On the other hand, based on the operational definition, the researcher identified and included all corruption issues reported in the selected newspapers from April, 2016 to April, 2018 (two years) purposively. Because there has been many incidents in relation to corruption campaigns made by the government.

When it comes to the interview, since the newspapers are selected purposively, six informants: four experienced reporters in reporting corruption issues and two (one editor-in-chief from Addis Zemen and one managing editor from Reporter) who have a power in deciding corruption issues was selected using purposive or convenience sampling techniques (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011:89-90). When it comes to their level of education, field of study and experience, all are Bachelor degree holders except two participants with a Master's degree in journalism.

#### **3.4.4. Data Presentation and Analysis**

The study applies both quantitative and qualitative methods of data presentation. The quantitative data was properly coded, organized and analyzed quantitatively. The analyses of the data had involved tables and images of story sources.

The qualitative data, on the other hand, was collected through an in-depth interview with 6 senior journalists and editors. Once the data is collected, the entire interview data was transcribed, and then the important ones were translated into the English language, since the original data was collected in Amharic. After the translation has made, the data was organized based on the themes of the research question and interpreted and analyzed relying on the theoretical assumption discussed in chapter two. For the purpose of citing the respondent's idea in the analysis part, the respondent's code was used for journalist and media managers to substitute their name.

Finally, the researcher triangulated both qualitative and quantitative data systematically. As it is suggested by Creswell, data which is first collected by quantitative method followed by with qualitative means such as in-depth interviews help explain the reality better (Creswell, 2007, p.244). In addition, the researcher used both newspapers' editorial policy for triangulation purpose with the result of both qualitative and quantitative data's in relations to the interference of owners and powerful actors in the editorial decision, use of sources and the concern of newspapers on corruption reporting or investigative journalism if stated.

### **3.5. Validity and Reliability**

Reliability and validity are two concepts that helped to measure the consistency and make sense (validating) of its findings in a study. Hence, to avoid problems with coding errors, this study has double-checked all the coded data in conjunction with one independent observer. This was to ensure that the categories that were recorded were applied consistently.

On the other hand, to validate the expected results from the findings of content analysis and in-depth interviews generally make sense are considered. One potential aspect that can affect the validity of a study is the bias that may occur from the researcher. To avoid this bias, great care was taken to minimize any possible biases.

Moreover, the ethical code for researchers is to protect the privacy of the participants and to convey this protection to all individuals involved in a study. As a result, official letters was written to all informants and the researcher has informed all participants about objectives the research and keeping their confidentiality. The in-depth interviews were made with the consent of all informants. Indeed, writing reporting corruption issues in Ethiopia is very sensitive. Therefore, anonymity was used to protect the privacy and confidentiality of the respondents.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### 4. DATA PRESENTION, ANALYSIS, AND DISCUSSION

The concern of this study is examining the influence of ownership and other powerful actors in reporting corruption issues in *Addis Zemen* and *Reporter* newspapers. Hence, this section aimed to answer the basic questions raised at the beginning of the study. Some of the key questions were how much coverage is given to corruption issues in *Addis Zemen* and *Reporter* newspapers, who are the powerful actors and how are they influencing the reporting, to what degree ownership affect the selected newspapers in reporting corruption issues. The researcher, therefore, employed mixed method approach to address the research questions. To this end, the extent of coverage of corruption issues were analyzed after categorizations were made as follows: name of the newspapers, frequency (coverage) of the corruption issues, genres of corruption issues reported (is it in a form of news, interview, editorial or other genres)?, issues raised in the corruption reporting, and sources used in reporting the corruption issues that gives answer to the first research question.

This chapter is a result of a triangulated study of both qualitative data obtained from in-depth interviews made with six informants (two editors and four seniors) from sampled newspapers and quantitative findings resulted from the content analysis of the 992 editions of both newspapers.

By doing so, the researcher found some interesting facts and the result is presented quantitatively and qualitatively. Those quantitative and qualitative findings were triangulated with the review literature and editorial policy of both newspapers for the purpose of analyzing the influence of owners and powerful actors in reporting corruption issues deeply.

#### 4.1. The extent of coverage of corruption issues

##### 4.1.1. Overall coverage of corruption issues by newspapers

The whole data was collected from a total 992 editions of *Addis Zemen* and *Reporter* newspapers which were published from April 2016 to April 2018. The researcher systematically went through each edition of both newspapers and after studying the contents of all the publications, the researcher found interesting result of the frequency of the corruption reporting in both newspapers. The crude data shows that, the government owned newspaper, *Addis Zemen*, had only reported 28 corruption issues in the two years period. The *Reporter* on the other hand had a total of 192 editions in the same period span, and out of these publications, the researcher was able to locate 38 corruption issues in it. The figure gives more meaning if the above coverage is converted in to percentage. From the 730 total editions of *Addis Zemen* newspaper, report of corruption issues were only 4%, while *Reporter* had had 20% of coverage out of 192 editions. This is a significant figure as it depicts how much attention was given towards corruption issues in both newspapers.

| Newspaper   | Total Edition | Number of corruption stories found | Percentage of corruption coverage |
|-------------|---------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Addis Zemen | 730           | 28                                 | 4%                                |
| Reporter    | 192           | 38                                 | 20%                               |

**Table 4.1** *percentage of corruption coverage in both Addis Zemen and Reporter newspapers*

The above data shows *Reporter* has fairly devoted to report issues of corruption than the state media, *Addis Zemen*. The reason is that there were two grand-level corruption campaigns launched by the government. As it is expected the favor was to *Addis Zemen* to get at least the follow-ups, but *Reporter* was exposing to those reporting of corruption issues comparing to *Addis Zemen*. In line with this, McQuail (2000:168) and Djankov et al (2002:159) supported the above fact that government media ownership restricts information flow to the public.

But when one looks at the percentage or extent of newspapers coverage on corruption issues in terms of their editions and considering the study period, the figure gives a significant meaning as mentioned above. According to Galtung & Ruge, (1965) and Dearing & Rogers, (1996) cited in Mulatu (2017), a media can be motivated to report frequently on a particular issue based on the extent of the availability of an issue (p.138). In this regard, as discussed in chapter one, transparency international (2017) and the Global Competitiveness-report (2016), Ethiopia is where businesses, land distribution and administrations are particularly vulnerable to corruption. Public procurement is also seriously hampered by corruption, and different types of irregularities exist, such as non-transparent tender processes and awarding contracts to people with a close connection to the government and ruling party.

On the other hand, the government of Ethiopia also identified some of those corrupted institutions; access to goods and services, houses and land development, revenue and income taxes, banking and insurances. Moreover, a research done by Maco-Economist and Consultant stated that Ethiopia has lost estimated \$US 36 billion (about 1 trillion and 80 billion Ethiopian Birr) in illicit financial inflows in the last 27 years. That means Ethiopia has been losing \$US 1.3 billion every year because of illicit financial (Tehibo, December 19, 2018).

When we see the editorial policy of both newspapers, they stated the following in line with focusing such critical corruption issues one way or the other. For instance, *Addis Zemen* editorial policy stated that “Addis Zemen has to facilitate in a special way to speed up access to the public for jobs that expose corrupt practices in various institutions” (p.18). Similarly, Reporter editorial policy found stated as “We pledge that each week we will bring to the public the critical stories facing our people.....” (p. 3).

Given all the above realities, there have been issues of corruptions that can motivate the selected newspapers to report on those issues extensively as much as possible. The selected newspapers’ editorial policy also stated clearly as they promised to bring issues particularly on critical stories. However, the study found that only 66 (7.16%) corruption issues were reported in both newspapers in the study period. Similarly, the above realities did not influence or motivate the

selected newspapers. Therefore, the extent of reporting corruption issues coverage was insufficient since there were corruption related issues which need to be reported widely.

Surprisingly, except informant 3 almost all informants (informant1, 2, 4, 5, 6) argued that both newspapers focused on the peace agenda since the country were under state of emergency two times in the sample period (personal interview with informants, December 2018). But the researcher went against the above reason as corruption could be one of the major causes for civil unrest. In line with this, the Institute for Economics and Peace (2015), there is a direct relationship between corruption and peace. The empirical study found that corruption is a leading indicator for political instability or civil unrest in a given country particularly in developing nations. For instance, corruption was among the leading factors during 2016's political instability or civil unrest in Ethiopia (ibid). It seems that the selected newspapers were looking away behind the peace agenda.

Therefore, from the volume of coverage of corruption issues by the selected newspapers, it can be said that the newspapers did not give adequate coverage to corruption issues. On the other hand, it could be said that the coverage of corruption issues are disproportionate to the level of threat it poses to the country.

#### **4.1.2. Genres of Corruption Issues Reported by Frequency**

In addition to the quest of knowing the coverage of reporting corruption issues, the researcher also sought to find the genres that the newspapers used to report the corruption issues. This is because corruption issues could be reported with news, editorial, interview or using other genres. And based on the result gained from the content analysis of the newspapers, the researcher found that the genre of news was the dominant way of reporting. The following table, therefore, depicts what genres newspapers used to report corruption issues.

| No.   | Genres of report | Newspapers  |          |
|-------|------------------|-------------|----------|
|       |                  | Addis Zemen | Reporter |
| 1.    | News             | 24          | 37       |
| 2.    | Editorial        | 4           | 1        |
| 3.    | Interview        | 0           | 0        |
| 4.    | Others           | 0           | 0        |
| Total |                  | 28          | 38       |

**Table 4.2:** Genres of reporting newspapers used to disseminate corruption issues

As noted earlier in chapter two, one form of corruption reporting is using the model of investigative journalism. Hence, apart from investigative reporting it is good to know if the newspapers were able to report in other genres like news, editorial or other types that show to what extent the newspaper has given attention to report corruption issues using the genres above. As a result, the table proves that *Addis Zemen* and *Reporter* newspapers were predominantly reporting corruption issues using news genre. From the total of 28 coverages, *Addis Zemen* used news 24 times to report corruption related issues. *Reporter* also used news as a foremost genre to share the corruption issues to its readers. From the 38 total coverages of corruption issues, 37 of them were reported in news section.

From the above depiction we can understand that the selected newspapers coverage of corruption issues in the genre of news is much appreciated. The reason is that news by its nature is fresh, catchy and can attract the readers to go through. In a related view, Lavid (2012) stated that the function of news is to offer newspaper readers a distinctive and sometimes authoritative voice that speaks to the public directly about matters of public importance (p.5).

The other most important data that the table depicted above is none of the newspapers used the model of investigative journalism as genres of telling the issues of corruption. On the other hand, the researcher found *Addis Zemen* giving its stance on corruption issues in the editorial section four times while *Reporter* revealed its opinion only once.

The role of press freedom and access to information in fighting corruption is editorial independence. As Walulya (2008) pointed out editorial independence is having the freedom to choose which stories the editors and journalists want to pursue and ultimately publish. In this regards, both newspapers were poor to decide or choose issues related to corruption to pursue and ultimately demand accountability of those wrongdoings.

As Informant 4 from *Reporter* newspaper, reason out for zero corruption investigation and almost non editorial stance on corruption throughout 2016 and 2017. According to him, *Reporter* was giving much focus in bringing peace in the country. He said “the country was in chaos in those two years and we were trying to play our role in publishing our stances on the importance of peace on our editorial page” (informant 5, interview given on December 20, 2018).

But as noted earlier, the researcher believed that the newspaper used as a strategy refraining from reporting corruption issues behind the peace agenda.

#### **4.1.3. Issues raised in the corruption report**

According to the Global Competitiveness-report (2016-2017), Ethiopia is where businesses, land distribution and administration are particularly vulnerable to corruption. Public procurement is also seriously hampered by corruption, and different types of irregularities exist, such as non-transparent tender processes and awarding contracts to people with a close connection to the government and ruling party (p.56). On the other hand, *Addis Zemen* editorial 31 December 2016 stated as the Ethiopian government disclosed those corrupt institutions; access to goods and services, houses and land development, revenue and income taxes, banking and insurances (*Addis Zemen*, 31 December 2016, p.3). As a result, the researcher want to know what were the issues reported by selected newspapers?

| Type of Corruption Issues reported | Newspapers  |          |
|------------------------------------|-------------|----------|
|                                    | Addis Zemen | Reporter |
| Public procurement                 | 12          | 17       |
| Houses and land development        | 6           | 7        |
| Revenue and income and taxes       | 5           | 4        |
| Banking                            | 2           | 6        |
| Share companies                    | 3           | 4        |
| Other issues of corruption         | 0           | 0        |
| <b>Total</b>                       | 28          | 38       |

**Table 4.3:** Types of corruption issues based on the area they covered

As can be seen in above table 4.3, public procurement related corruption issues were frequently reported in both newspapers. Houses and land development, income and taxes and banking were reported following public procurement. The newspaper's report was dominantly relied on what has been already mentioned by both Ethiopian government and Global Competitiveness-report of 2016/17.

In view of that, we can infer both the selected newspapers were reporting corruption issues following the government. Besides, other corrupted organizations were not part of the reporting. Informant 5 from *Reporter* supported the above reality; both the governments as well as the print media in Ethiopia are not making NGO's accountable at all.

For instance, he explained that

During a press conference they said many times 'we feed seven million people'; they report also as 'we had built hundred houses in Oromiya region', but no one is seen those reports. When you questioned them about to see reports in practical, they usually refused you or they will tell you to come another time (personal interview with informant 5, December 2018).

This implies that newspapers were not monitoring and investigating other corrupted organizations like NGO's and business people that affect the life of citizens in the socio-economic development.

#### 4.1.4. Sources used to report in the corruption issues

The other important part of the content analysis is sources used in the corruption reports by newspapers. As noted in the review related literature, the source of information in a news format including corruption issues report reveals details on who is being quoted, viewed and reflected in the corruption issues reports. It can also demonstrate the influence of powerful actors who are more involved in the report or owners preference. Hence, the researcher has attempted assessing the dominant source of those corruption issues reports in the newspapers in the sampling period.

| Sources                            | Newspapers  |          |
|------------------------------------|-------------|----------|
|                                    | Addis Zemen | Reporter |
| Federal police commission          | 16          | 20       |
| Courts                             | 7           | 14       |
| Regional and wordas administration | 1           | 3        |
| Editorials                         | 4           | 1        |
| Others                             | 0           | 0        |
| <b>Total</b>                       | 28          | 38       |

**Table 4.4:** Major sources of the corruption reports in Addis Zemen and Reporter

As Table 4.4 depicts, the major source of newspapers used in the corruption reports were government bodies (Federal police commission, courts, and regional administrations). Of these sources, newspapers used federal police commission 36 times and courts 21 times and others regional and woreda administration 4 times to write the 66 corruption reports in the study period of two years.

Walulya (2008) stated corruption should be reported based on a multidisciplinary approach as the cause of corruption is multi-faceted. That means in reporting corruption issues, it needs to involve or combine further assessments, cross-check facts and other approaches. In this regard, about the use of sources, *Reporter* editorial policy stated that

“Except in a rare case like an interview, an article (news) that is developed on one source will not be printed. Journalists are expected to corroborate their sources and seek out additional information” (Reporter editorial policy, p.23). Likewise, Addis Zemen Editorial Policy stated also “information’s related to public or governmental structures must be cross-checked in diversified ways before its publications” (*Addis Zemen* Editorial Policy, p.23).

Although both newspapers clearly stated in their editorial policy on how to use sources in the reports of news or articles, none of them were used multiple sources in the reported corruption issues practically. As noted, almost all corruption issues were reported following government-issued statements, anti-corruption campaigns or press releases or court follow-ups. This implies if the government does not undertake any anti-corruption campaign or a press release on corruption issues; newspapers are not ready to monitor and investigate wrongdoings over powerful actors and business people in the country. Herman & Chomsky (1988) defined such kinds of media, which mostly relied on government sources, can be described as they are working under the political pressure and restrictions of the state.

In relation with the above, a research done by Mulatu (2017) argued that on sensitive issues like ethnic conflicts the Ethiopian media are likely using government voices as a strategy to distance themselves from different charges and harassments and they report if and only if a government official says something, either in the interviews or at the meetings (P.205). The above implies that one of the constraints of Ethiopian media in related to critical reporting is lack of professional independence. This particular study showed that the selected newspapers were not initiating any corruption issue unless the government was generated specific interest on the issue of corrupt practices.

Therefore, one can understand how it would be difficult to report such critical reporting on corruption issues without government saying or voices. This is supported by Informant 1, 4 and 6. The three informants agreed that *“since corruption and corrupted peoples chain is intricate, finding independent sources were so complicated. You cannot find information quickly in regards to corruption investigations.”* Informant 6 added further as corrupted officials and

information providers are interconnected or bound in the corruption chain that makes hard to find information on corruption issues reports (personal interview with informants, December 2018).

On the other hand, there are two arguments according to studies on the use of sources in the Ethiopian media (Mulatu, 2017, Afeworki, 2013 and Skjerdal, 2012). The first one is the Ethiopian press is characterized as a polarized medium where the state media gives more voice to government and the private media as to oppositions. The second one is specifically focused on the print media which entails government officials and politicians have been used 52 % in the six months stories of data from *The Ethiopian Herald*. Despite the above facts, the finding of this particular reporting corruption issues use of the source is different from the above studies. This specific study shows the dominant sources (92.4%) used in the state-owned as well as in the private media were government bodies. Both newspapers did not use any opposition voice or third party as a source in their corruption issue reports in the sampling period of the study. Therefore, this particular study asserted that the trend of reporting critical issues in the print media in using the source of government bodies is not decreasing rather increasing.

Moreover, although the political economy of mass media is articulated to the media corporations operating within capitalist state-society like the USA, the researcher believed that Propaganda Model was used by Ethiopian government as a strategy to cover wrongdoings knowingly or unknowingly. According to Herman and Chomsky (1988), the propaganda model is “an analytical framework that attempts to explain the performance of U.S media in terms of the basic institutional structures and relationships within which they operate”. They argue that the bias derives from five ‘filters’ which all published news must pass through and this, in turn, distorts news coverage.

Following the above model, among the five filters of all reported news, filter number 1 and 3 were applied both in the state-owned as well as in the private newspapers. Regardless of ownership type, the government has shown its control both in the largest state-owned (*Addis Zemen*) and the private one that mainly focuses on current and political issues (*Reporter*) (Alemayehu, 2017, p.33). The government has used these newspapers as propaganda instruments by restricting the flow of information directly or indirectly into his way. This shows that if press

freedom is under state control, the political climate even forced the private newspapers to align themselves with the government. Accordingly, *Reporter* was in a position of reporting corruption issues following the government trusted sources that indirectly was serving an instrument of propaganda during the study period.

Conversely, the government was successful making the reliance on ‘trusted sources’ where the newspapers used government bodies as the only source of information. Overall, both newspapers were dependents on government institutions (Federal police commission, courts, and regional administrations). Accordingly, both the state-owned and private media in Ethiopia were used as propaganda instruments in these particular issues of corruption reports and thought as newspapers were serving the ideology of the ruling party not the public interest.

Providing answers to the first research question on the extent of corruption reports by newspapers entails the following. The study found that the coverage of corruption issues by the selected newspapers were very little attempt where *Addis Zemen* has (4%) and *Reporter* (20%), considering the volume of stories carried out and the availability of corruption issues.

## **4.2. The Influence of Powerful Actors Reporting Corruption Issues**

### **4.2.1. The influence of owners in reporting corruption issues**

The second research question is about examining the influence of newspaper owners in the corruption reporting. Walulya (2008) and Peters (2003) argued to promote openness in society and expose corruption, media owners, publishers, editors, and journalists must resist pressures to report what is beneficial to political and private interests (p.44). In view of that, as noted in the review of the literature, media independence can be influenced by media owners who resource or finance the media directly (Herman and Chomsky 2006; McQuail, 2005 and Netanel, 2001). Therefore, ownership matters a lot since it shapes the information provided by the newspapers to citizens.

In the case of corruption reports, scholars discussed as government ownership of the press, they believe, restricts information flows to the public, thereby diminishing the value of citizens’ rights and the effectiveness of government. Whereas private media ownership is used to pursue

business interests that may be in conflict with the public good and the media's role in general (Djankov et al,2002,p.159).

In light of the above arguments, the researcher examined the influence of owners in the report of corruption issues based on the findings of content analysis through in-depth interviews made with editors and senior journalists. The idea is that the influence of owners can be revealed through how much owners of the state-owned and the private newspapers were committed to uncovering corruption issues, who was able to resist pressures inside and outside for the public interest, and other influences.

#### **4.2.1.1. Low interest to play a watchdog role**

Ansah (1988) contends that 'the press in its watchdog role should, as a matter not only of right but also of duty, expose and criticize bureaucratic incompetence, corruption, abuse of power and the violation of human rights' (p.14). Hence, one of the duties and responsibilities of media in general is watchdog role through investigation like the corruption one.

As the selected newspapers coverage revealed that all the reported corruption issues were based on the interest of the government. Neither of the newspapers reported any corruption investigation in their own way. Then of can be said that, regardless of ownership type, there was owners influence in some way or another in reporting of corruption issues. This resulted either from the owner's background or interest and fear. If one take the extent of newspapers coverage, both newspapers gave very little attention in the overall coverage. For example, the stated-owned *Addis Zemen* coverage was very low (4%) in terms of frequency than the private *Reporter* (20%). This showed that *Addis Zemen* (government ownership) was not only restricting the flow of information to the public but also uninterested into corruption investigations, follow-ups over those corrupt practices which were already spoken by the government (Djankov et al, 2002, p.159).

For instance, unlike other issues in the case of reporting on court follow-ups, the State-owned newspaper was covering relatively less than *Reporter*. This implies the state-owned newspaper was not interest to engage in the court follow-ups reports let alone watchdogging.

But in the *Addis Zemen* Editorial policy it was stated that:

“በተለያዩ ተቋማት የሚፈጸሙ የሙስና ወንጀሎችን ለሚያጋልጡ ሥራዎች ልዩ ትኩረት ሰጥቶ ለህዝብ የሚደርስበትን መንገድ ማፋጠን ይኖርበታል; Addis Zemen has to facilitate in a special way to speed up access to the public for jobs that expose corrupt practices in various institutions” (*Addis Zemen* Editorial policy, p.18). However, the state-owned paper was not leading or facilitating any corruption investigation with the interest of public role rather focused on government initiatives event based. If editorials are promises, they were not delivered by the newspapers.

Likewise, in the *Reporter* editorial policy, it is stated that “We pledge that each week we will bring to the public the critical stories facing our people.....” (p.3). one of the critical issues that the newspapers expected to report is the issue of corruption. But the reporting of corruption issues in the *Reporter* newspaper was tied up more on the anti-corruption campaigns and court follow-ups. As stated above, the only difference is in terms of coverage of frequency (please see table 1). Accordingly, the private newspaper was not engaging in any corruption investigations except those anti-corruption campaigns and court follow-ups reports. This means *Reporter* was not too interesting to engage into reporting any corruption issues.

When one can see apart from event-based reporting in corruption issues, according to Informant 5, *Reporter* was focusing on peace agenda whereas *Addis Zemen* (informant 2) explained was focusing on maladministration and service delivery public resources in addition to peace agenda in the sampling period of study (personal interview with informant 2 and 5, December 2018). But, according to Ali (2015) such type of (above) report normalizes corruption and public resource management crisis where government is asked to comment on these reports (p.84). In this regard, focusing on maladministration and crisis of public resource management was the agenda of the government although one of the causes of public eruption in the country was corruption in the sampling period of study.

Therefore, both newspapers were not interested to engage into its duty of watchdog role rather they were blind and guided by the actions of the government. This makes both the state-owned as well as the private newspapers remained instrument of propaganda where Power abuse and corruption is rampant in the country. Because as Ansah (1988) stated above, the selected

newspapers had not been in charge of exposing or criticizing corrupted practices, misuse of power. They were reporting following government anti-corruption campaigns or court follow-ups. In this regard, *Addis Zemen* was showing high degree of its faithfulness to the government, and *Reporter* was also found in the same line supporting the government agenda focusing on peace that emanated from fear and harassment. By the above finding, the researcher proved that regardless of ownership type, the role Ethiopian media is tied on supporting government agendas or adversary of the government (Skjerdal, 2017, p.23).

By the same token, owners of newspapers were not interested to focus on investigative reporting that emanated from fear. The reason as Doyle (2002) argued is that *Addis Zemen* was caring about its inherent conflict interest with the government whereas *Reporter* was reserved not to interfere with corruption scandals to stay on the market. For instance, informant 2 of *Addis Zemen* and informant 5 from *Reporter* explained the situation as owners of the newspapers don't encourage journalists to produce investigative stories if it is not needed by owners. Both Informants further argued that because owners of the newspapers are not interested to watchdog over wrongdoings, they usually connoted it with lack of budget for a corruption investigation. But, they were trying to avoid risks and focused on entertainment issues which they believe help owners away from critical reporting like the corruption ones (personal interview with informant 5, December 2018).

As a result, regardless of ownership type in Ethiopia where the government is the one who regulates subsidies (*AddisZemen*) and restricts access to newsprint and information collection and harassing journalists, in the case of this particular reporting of corruption issues, both the state-owned as well as the private influenced one way or another.

#### **4.2.1.2. Abusing Journalists**

The other influence of owners on reporting corruption issues was abusing journalists. According to informant 2, this happened when there is a chain between media owners and media managers outside powerful actors like corrupted politicians and business people (personal interview with informant 2, December 2018).

Informant 2 explained further:

As you know executive officers of media managers are government appointed. They are not professionals in journalism who wanted the job. Because of this, they are/were bosses who obediently called them to stop any corruption-related instances. Sometimes there is a compulsion to work on what they want to do just because of a chain relationship with any official or corrupted business organizations and if you asked why; they would immediately sweat it out to the other journalist. In light of the above, I remember two corruption cases like small and medium enterprises and the other one is water construction authority which I had been told by one of the editor to hide or leave the job (personal interview with informant 2, December 2018).

This shows the relationship between government-owned media managers with corrupted authorities that curtail the corruption reporting.

Informant 3 also added the case of one gas oil distributor. The informant explained that

The case came from employees and later on I interviewed them and then after when I tried to incorporate voice of the gas distributor, the owner refused and intimidated me. After the newspapers published including my trial to incorporate the owner's voice and unwillingness, later on one of the editorial team had a relationship with the owner and asked me to make a correction on the report or to stop looking further details (informant 4, December 2018).

The above quite clear interviews prove how the state-owned newsroom culture and editorial leadership abuses journalists and journalistic works in regards to corruption reporting. On the other hand, informants 5 and 6 argued in related to private newspapers experience as occasionally, issues like corruption are hard to come up with, may be subjected to, some issues, such as the journalist's problem or the owners personal views. Only editors may stop you because this may not be obviously defined to you or they may view it as a single-view of

investigation instances. Informant 5 described as such above impact came after intimidations and harassments happened to the owner of the private newspaper (personal interview with informant 5 and 6, December 2018).

In light of the above explanations, as coronel (2007) argued that the editor for government newspapers always make sure to keep the paper's allegiance to the government. The challenges of the editor for the private newspaper, on the other hand, arise from fear and actual experiences of official accusations and intimidations and sometimes from owner pressure (p.12). Therefore, as we have seen above, the researcher argued that media owners (leaders) who have a chain relationship with politicians or higher officials, or who have personal interest with advertisers or business people usually abused journalists in terms of critical reporting like corruption issues.

#### **4.2.1.3. Giving limited or no protection for the security of the journalist**

As aforementioned, in the case of corruption issue reports, low protection begins with abusing journalists. These are who think themselves safe guard of owner's policy like media managers or editors. Hence, the safety and security of journalists matter a lot in this particular case of corruption investigation/reporting in order to make accountable those public trusted officials and to protect the public from such wrongdoings. In view of that, it is clearer one of the reliance of newspapers source was government and focus of the reports in the sampling period was predominantly government-issued, anti-corruption campaigns report and court follow ups. These all above evidences are telling us one way or the other way about low protection from owner's perspective.

For instance, Informant 6 from *Reporter* shared his experience comparing the foreign correspondents protection by their owners.

For example, if we take The Economist when the journalist has planned for a particular case to go to Moyle (Kenya), two body guards, one interpreter and a driver will be assigned. But in the case of our country, we do not have such media culture at all. This is not only that happens in the case of corruption reporting, it is even a challenge in the case of conflict reports. Both government and owner of the media will not protect you because

they are yet to see the media as an important industry in the country (personal interview with informant 6, December 2018).

The above informant experience in terms of safety should not be taken in a narrow sense confined to the arrangement of routine stuffs. But, journalists who report on corruption issues are/may be exposed to threats so that they need legal protection. In the context of this study, such low protection developed through harassment and fear experiences. Owners of the selected newspapers were not able to give safety and protection to the journalists in related to critical reporting. On the other hand, informant 3 and 6 described that

If the newspaper moves to record large corruption cases, for such cases the problem is not only a budget but also protection from owners. At times, let alone the journalist, the media owner was beaten by strangers and found spared the death on the way. This shows how media owners even do not have a protection (personal interview with informants 3 and 6, December 2018).

In line with the above experiences, it has been blatant that the private press had faced so many challenges due to the absence of safety and legal protection. For instance, Ethio-Mihdar newspaper journalists' got a car accident because of an accusation made by a local university in connection with reporting one corruption case. Ato Amare Aregawi, the owner of Reporter, was also beaten up by at least three unknown individuals and received a serious treatment. In this regard, there was speculation with the connection of writing critical articles about Woyanne billionaire businessman Ato Mohammed Al Amoudi (Reporter without borders, 2013).

Similarly, Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) and other international organizations were criticizing Ethiopia as the media environment has been hostile to journalists (Reporter without border, 2018 and CPJ, 2017). From the above dispatch, we can understand that it would be difficult to expect the unprotected owner to protect his/her employees. This is the result of source of low protection that developed in the Ethiopian media situation (woldeamanuel, 2012, p.103).

On the contrary, in the state-owned newspaper, media managers will either give the journalist a chance to defend himself or stop the corruption issue. For example, Informant 2 shared his

experience that happened a year ago before METEC was declared a corrupted institution “there have been a number of problems reported regards to METEC. Then those of my friend journalists who went to collect information with the above problem, all their flash files and other assets taken away and returned. No one journalist has moved to work in such a large organization after that incident” (personal interview with informant 2, December 2018).

In line with the above, the point is that the informant wants to stress how the state-owned newspaper is giving a protection to the government than the journalist. The above incident happened just because those powerful actors believed that *Addis Zemen* is a government owned medium which is expected to serve officials not the general public. Of course, it can be viewed also how the state-owned media is heavily suppressed and controlled through threat and harassment by powerful government institutions.

As noted, in the case of private media situation, sometimes if owner of the private media stands to defend for a journalist, intimidation and harassment follows both the owner and the journalist according to informant 5 (personal interviews with the informant, December 2018). This is because whatever the issue, for the stat-owned ones, either the executive member of the newspaper or one of the newspaper’s gatekeepers made a decision on behalf of the journalist in line with the government ideology. But for the private ones, there is a trial of defending for a journalist on few corruption investigations unless issues are not related to government or some other big business people who has a connection with politicians.

Therefore, there is no protection on the side of owners in the case of reporting corruption issues. In the state-owned media almost there is no protection for journalists that secure them from any threat and harassment. On the other hand, comparing to the state-owned newspaper, there is a tiny or very rare protection in the private newspaper *Reporter* although informants argued that there is no protection from the unprotected owner.

#### **4.2.2. The influence of Politicians in hiding or limiting reporting of corruption issues**

One of the tasks of media is making political decision makers accountable for their actions. That is why Norris (2006) argued news media, in their ‘watchdog’ role, can function to promote

government transparency, accountability, and public scrutiny of decision-makers in power, by highlighting policy failures, maladministration by public officials, corruption in the judiciary, and scandals in the corporate sector (p.56). But in the case of Ethiopian media situation, we have seen that the government was the only source of the corruption reports in the print media. In view of that, the government has had a great influence on restricting the role of media to keep up (not to expose) those corrupted officials and corruption practices.

On the other hand, as the data revealed, the researcher believed selected newspapers were forced to serve the powerful interests and governing authorities. In this regard, informant 5 described that the Ethiopian political situation is not suited for corruption or investigative journalism. He added that the government seems demanding media service to work on corruption scandals but they are the one who discourages corruption reporting practically. They don't cooperate with the media effort; even embezzlers are government officials (personal interview with informant 5, December 2018).

Likewise, informant 2 explained as politicians are the ones who have a lot of influence on the corruption investigation.

Government officials, including opposition parties have influenced one way or the other. For instance, if you take opposition parties, they rent a room which is given for them for office purpose only. They also take a lot of spoils on the Electoral Board's financial divide. We do have that information. In the above mentioned cases, if you stand to work on it, they will accuse you in defamation and harassment will follow you with unidentified hands. Here, one of the members of the EPRDF was threatening us saying 'why the media do care about the money given by the incumbent (personal interview with informant 2, December 2018).

As informant 2 mentioned above such as defamation, intimidation and harassments are often challenging both (either the government or private) journalists and media owners to uncover those corrupted officials. Therefore, the following are influences of politicians.

#### 4.2.2.1. Denial of access to information

There is a broad consensus that access to information is important for the prevention and detection of corruption by making information available and promoting transparency and accountability. However, one of the influences of politicians or government bodies are denying information or making them inaccessible. These are illustrated through restricted sources or controlling the flow of information in their way. For instance, almost all informants argued that their reports were relying on government bodies. According to informants, the reason for the above is that the political polarization within the ruling party was a hostile environment for the media in the last years. This helped politicians denying or hiding information related to corruption issues. Officials were dealing with thousands to hide a one million corruption issue or threatening a journalist than giving information about a specific corruption issue.

Therefore, as informant 1 argued, threats remain due to the polarized state of politics in Ethiopia (IMS, 2018, p.13). In such situations, where the political system is polarized, getting information about a very simple corruption case is life threatening or you may be forced to leave the country (woldeamanuel, 2012, p. 115).

As the trend of critical reporting shows, regardless of ownership type, officials usually closed their door for such critical issues and even they don't want the government to be open and accountable to its people (Mulatu, 2017 and Skejerdal, 2017). In this regard, in the state-owned newspapers, officials think that *Addis Zemen* is their own propaganda machine. Here we can mention two perspectives;

The first one is, as all informants argued, many of the corruption cases were found in the government institutions so that politicians were highly repressive in accessing information. For instance, those corrupted institutions like METEC, Sugar Corporation, land administration, construction and tax revenues were among government corrupted institutions. Second, officials were denying access to information to help them effectively diminish media's role of holding public officials unaccountable.

As aforementioned, in the state-owned newspaper, Informant 2 shared his experience that the journalists who went to collect information in METEC, all their flash files and other assets were taken away and returned. No one journalist has moved to work in such a large organization after that event happened (personal interview with informant 2, December 2018).

On the other hand, officials frequently restricted access to information through media managerial or appointments. Therefore, Studies (Gosselin T and Nistotskaya M (2015) also asserted that Political influence is appeared often through managing and editorial structures loyal to ruling parties. For instance, informant 1 from *Addis Zemen* explained that

“*Addis Zemen* newspaper’s executive managers and board members are appointed by government through parliamentary system. Thus, when a journalist started collecting information in regards to wrongs in any government institution, it is simple for government officials to call to our boss to stop the installed corruption issue or they will send us a short message directly saying, ‘You shall be stopped’ for further threats.”

He explained further, “for example, immediately after we started working on health equipment aid embezzlement, we had been told to stop.” That means the official stumbled directly to our manager (personal interview with informant1, December 2018).

Informant 2 added on his part, “It is common for officials to avoid any corruption issue either with money or using excessive power. For example, I remember one corruption case in the small and medium enterprise; when I tried to collect information on that particular case, immediately the head of that authority directly telephoned me and ordered to do the developmental issues than such critical cases.”

Similarly, in the private media, for instance, *Reporter* newspaper was reserved for the last two years from any corruption investigation except those anti-corruption reports and other instances. As informant 4 learned that the reason is if *Reporter* tries to engage into such corruption issues, either higher officials or spies will intimidate or tell them to close the media. For instance, during the former Prime Minister Hailmariyam administration, following intimidation and death

threat on one senior reporter, the journalist fled the country later on (personal interview with informant 2, December 2018).

All the above cases illustrated that greater influence of politicians and lower information quality is affecting the public life (Untold stories, p. 10). Although the political influence is higher in the state-owned newspapers than the private one, denial access to information by higher officials is affecting both newspapers in regards to reporting corruption issues.

#### **4.2.2.2. Law enforcement officials: Hiding information and supporting corrupted officials**

Apart from politicians, other law enforcement officials like Police, Federal Police Commission Anti-Corruption Division, Ombudsman, and Courts who deal with combating corruption hide corruption cases or exhibited files mysteriously. However, in regards to information hiding or denying access to information, the Institute of Ombudsman has given the following duties on the bases of, Press law of 590/2008. Article 32(sub article 2);

(A) Monitor the implementation of this section on the basis of reports submitted to it under article 36 (1), prepare an annual report to the council of peoples representatives.

(B) And (C) Co-operate in the delivery or undertake training activities for public relation officers on the right of access to information and effective implementation of part three of this proclamation.

In line with the above, for example, informant 4 and 5 shared their experiences *“If the body of information on corruption inquiries is incarcerated as our guardian institution we have applied many times at the Ombudsman, but the Ombudsman does not do anything”* (personal interview with informant 4, December 2018).

In the case of money laundering, informant 5 also argued;

“I remember after the police have received and exhibited one particular money laundry case; five hours later, they said the money has disappeared. again I personally knew about one corruption issue registered by Federal Police Commission Anti-corruption crime section, but after one and

half year the case has disappeared in the section mysteriously” (personal interviews with informants, December 2018).

As informants discussed above, denying access to information is not only incarcerated by politicians, but other legal enforcement that are expected to fight against corruption also challenge the media work. As aforementioned, they were also hiding information and have greatly weakened or marginalized the role of the media in fighting corruption scandals. In view of that, both the selected newspapers were not able to exercise their right to get information freely and independently which, in turn, affected their role of media in searching light on corruption and inequitable practices.

#### **4.2.2.3. Editorial Interference**

The finding of this study showed that the sources of the corruption issues are only government bodies. Similarly, the major genres of corruption issues by the selected newspapers were news. Therefore, if at least one media has brought news of corruption, it is expected that its position would be revealed through editorials in addition to news. But within the period of the two year study, *Addis Zemen* has reported less than *Reporter* in terms of corruption coverage, though it has written editorial 4 times. The *Reporter*, however, wrote only one editorial comment in the study period.

In view of that, informant 4 from *Reporter* explained the reason why *Reporter* was not writing editorials “*Reporter was focusing on human displacement.*” Informant 6 from *Reporter* added also “*there was an influence that comes from officials when we tried to report it in our way.*” Moreover, the owner was not interested in writing editorials to comment on the corruption reports either detention or harassments followed them many times.

However, in the state-owned *Addis Zemen* newspaper, as informant 2 explained it

Some officials have directly involved in the editorials and dictating the editors to write the way government wants it. For example, I remember in one of the two anti-corruption campaigns held by government a direction has been given to write it as anti-corruption campaigns are resulted due to maladministration and rent seeking. They are directing to

exclude essential facts which would be very important for the public to debate and demand actions in the meantime.

This is how McQuail (2010 6<sup>th</sup> edition) viewed in his political economy theory, as *Addis Zemen* is part of the economic system or with close links to the political system, politicians influence showed their effect in the reduction of sources and agenda shaping with the perspective of the ideology of the ruling party. However, *Addis Zemen* newspaper editorial stated that the freedom of *Addis Zemen* includes protecting its freedom from government intervention (p.15).

#### **4.2.2.4. Threatening, Harassing and intimidating**

Making accountable through watchdogging is meaningless since the government is the dominant source of corruption reports. In addition, the government was restricting the flow of information one way or the other. What is more is the politicians used to threatening and harassing journalist who sometimes tried to be engaged in corruption investigations and owners of the newspapers especially the private media.

For instance, the following informants shared their experience one by one. Informant 2 from *Addis Zemen* shared his experience;

When I went to collect information about a corruption case connected with a bid that aimed in a government office, the public relation expert waits me outside the gate and refused to give the concerned information with bad harassment. The matter did not end there. The news has published as the office is not willing to give the full information and in the next day, the office of that corrupted leader gave a press release explaining the news is false. Then a week later intimidation followed me by unidentified people.

Informant 3 from *Addis Zemen*:

“When I was working on illegal land seize around Addis Ababa, I remember a letter of charge and sentence came from the office of Oromiya Regional State saying ‘the journalist is working for OLF not purely illegal land seizures.’”

Informant 5 from *Reporter*:

“One of the journalists named Teshome was outraged when they threatened him with a gunshot wound. The other times, let alone the journalist, the media owner was beaten by strangers and found spared the death on the way. So, even media owners do not have protection.”

Informant 6, from *Reporter* “In a case related to the Dashen Brewery, they came with a police with their own vehicle and picked up the journalist.” (Personal interview with informants December 2018)

From the above discussions, the informants experience reflects government officials often have the experience of threatening and harassing journalists to the extent of assassinations in order to hide information in related to corruption cases. In line with the above, Informant 4,5 and 6 agreed that the death of Ahmed Hussein-Suale Ghanaian journalist ordered by the politician is a fairly easy demonstration of how much a corruption investigation leads to a life threatening attack in Africa. Similarly, in Ethiopia, a few journalists were assassinated and beaten on trial of few specific issues investigations (personal interview with informants, December 2018).

We have seen also an official can give a press release if he/she thinks the issue went in the wrong direction and intimidating and harassing of journalists to discourage further reports probing follows. No one asks them. As a result, most print media want to focus on other entertainment issues rather than focusing on corruption investigation. The private press prefers to focus on events mostly government anti-corruption campaigns.

On the other hand, the state-owned media are often engaged into developmental agenda and soft issues. In this case, the assumption of state-owned media is that development reporting has nothing to do with corruption reporting. The state-owned media always propagates only the success stories of developmental issues. But this shows the wrong perception of officials as well as journalists about development journalism. They forgot as development journalism incorporates critical reporting. It involves examining corruptions that hinder the process of development in the country.

Informant 6 argues, in view of the above, in the case of corruption investigation sometimes it doesn't matter who owns the media, what it matters is under what legal framework the media are working. It is the government who crafted and enforced the media laws which give more power to those government affiliated judiciaries and police officers who can do whatever they want with the interest of the government. Overall, getting involved in corruption investigation leads to the extent of losing your job, forced to leave the country and the worst would be losing your life.

On the other hand, apart from journalists, people who tried to give leaks related to corrupt practices face threats such as intimidation, forced to leave their job and sometimes cause family instability. For instance, informant 2 shared his experience "I myself got a Facebook message (EWWC) to work on corrupt practice at the Ethiopian Water Works Corporation. But my informant was forced to leave work, and had a one-year salary cut. It was an internal auditor." (Personal interview December 2018)

Informant 6, on his part, added the incident that happened to "18 employees working at the Ethiopian petroleum enterprise had cut a one month salary at every employee just because they leaked information related to corrupt practices in the company. Some of them were sent to work in remote and difficult places." (Personal interview with informant 6, December 2018)

In light of the above incidents, politicians did not sleep even for ordinary people who contributed tips to the media in related to corrupt practices. In view of that as informant 4 argued nowadays, people call you to give information, but they will not help you when you go back to work in detail. The reason for the above is people fear there is no guarantee of legal protection. They don't want to go through bad experiences as seen above. In this regard, Mulatu (2017) asserted that people who gave tips (sources) to the media in related to critical reporting like ethnic conflicts got bad experiences in the past Dreg Regime as well as in the EPRDF (p.204).

In view of all the above points, the government denied access to information one way or the other. This was done through intimidation, harassment and sometimes these forced journalists to flee their country as a strategy to discourage and diminish the role of newspapers on reporting corruption issues regardless of ownership type. In line with the above, Ackerman (1999) argues if government officials or their unofficial allies intimidate and harass those who speak out;

formal structures of accountability will be meaningless (p.183). As a result, journalists and media owners (private) preferred to support the government agenda. This was seen in the coverage of corruption reports by the selected print media. They were reporting those corruption issues because the government said on it. As much as possible they were trying to avoid any conflict with politicians by reporting only what has been told by government bodies.

#### **4.2.3. Business People; Corporations and NGO's**

As discussed in chapter two above, the abuse of public power can extend its benefits to one's party, class, tribe, friends, and family and so on. Hence, whatever the reason, one can understand that corruption is a disgusting act by individuals from one government institution to an ordinary family firm for private gain.

As informant 2 discussed above, although politicians are severely influencing in the case of reporting corruption issues, business individuals are not the easiest influencers. For instance, informant 5 described *"when a reporter has yet to collect a corruption report, the business individuals beaten the journalist with paid Brokers."*

Conversely, informant 4 explained that

Those business people who have money and chain with officials initially bargain with you to leave the case. If not they will come to you with money to deal with your profession and ignore ethical issues. This is because they knew that journalists are poorly paid. Due to this sometimes few journalists get into brown envelop. Otherwise, they will call your boss and order to harass on behalf of that business man particularly, this happened in the state-owned media many times (personal interview with informant 4, December 2018).

Some other corrupted business people including government corporates persecuted journalists and media owners in strict ties with government officials. This happened both in the state-owned as well as in the private newspapers. Informant 1 from Addis Zemen described that "especially in the state-owned Addis Zemen, anyone who has money and believes in an official usually can

facilitate the detainment (imprisonment) a journalist and stopped if any corruption case has initialized. This has been seen much with real estate and importers.”

In the private media, For example, informant 5 described one case related to corrupt practice as “The Dashen brewery people brought a police with their own vehicle and took a journalist and then beat him. Then the other day, they brought a copy of court order.”

The above two incidents show that the extents of business owners or criminals have the potential to influence as supported by government officials. This is because as Freedman (2014) argued, there is an overriding common purpose and shared vision amongst those business moguls on the abuse of media power (p.33). The influences of most of the investors, real estate owners, advertisers, and government corporates in Ethiopia have a heavy chain with government offices which cannot be easily broken.

On the other hand, advertisers and non-governmental organizations (NGO’s) are influenced one way or the other. For instance informant 5 explained the following influence with respect to advertisers,

The newspaper published news about the corrupt practice in the Lifan Motors organization by sourcing court follow-ups. But immediately after the news was published, they break-up their long-term advertisement agreement with Reporter. The reason is that they thought reporter tarnished the reputation of the company. There were such challenges. Similarly, when the government charged Alemgenet Galvanized Factory, they made similar thing like Lifan Motors. The reason is they said you published the news without our consents (personal interview with informant 5, December 2018).

According to the informants, those advertisers usually used criminal defamation and withdrawal of the long-term advertisement deals as a strategy. This was seen especially in the private media, breaking down their long-term advertisement deal or dealing with other media owners to correct their corrupted name.

In relation to NGO's informant 6, explained about their influence in the reporting of corruption issues.

NGOs are too much corrupted institutions in addition to the government. We did not make them accountable. For instance, there are reports that an NGO had feed seven million people, but who does check them? On the other hand, in a press conference, they give false reports to the media as they built 100 houses in Oromia Regional State, but they do not allow you to ask them to see houses. It's complicated. Some non-governmental organizations with high responsibility, such as UNDP, overrated a \$ 13,000 home. If you look at the house, it will oblige you to ask why for such a house that much amount? But the political, as well as the legal system does not allow you to ask such quires. They usually deal with money to cover wrongdoings. No one wants to talk about internal problems (Personal interview with informant 6, December 2018).

By the above discussions, government and other powerful business institutions have too much influence in the corruption investigation and report. They all are not willing to be open and accountable to the public. Information drought is highly visible. The country is still at the crossroad in related to media freedom and access to information. "If the man thinks that the horse has changed and if the stunt is still there," then corruption investigation and report is still a dream in Ethiopia.

The above African proverb is exactly what was in the above discussions with informants. That means there are still skeptics of the change process that point out the media outlets to continue to operate under very difficult policy and hostile media environment (IMS, 2018). Overall, the research finding showed that ownership and other powerful actors (government officials, business individuals, advertisers and NGO's) have major influence on the newspapers behavior and content in related to reporting corruption issues or investigations.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### 5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1. Summary

The main objective of this study was to examine the influence of owners and other powerful actors in the print media focused on reporting corruption issues. With purposive sampling strategy, two newspapers were selected. These are *Addis Zemen* from the state-owned and *Reporter* from the private newspapers. The study employed mixed method approach. The quantitative content analysis used to study the extent of corruption coverage, genres of reports the newspapers used (is it in the form of news, interview, editorial or others), and issues raised in the corruption reporting, sources used in the reporting of corruption issues, whereas the qualitative in-depth interview used to examine the influence of owners and other powerful actors in the reporting of corruption issues.

The study was conducted on corruption issues in the selected newspapers from April 01/2016 – April 29/2018 and 6 journalists in-depth interview with purposive and convenience sampling technique. Moreover, the political economy of mass media and propaganda model used as principal theoretical frameworks. To this end, data obtained from content analysis, in-depth interviews with 6 informants and the newspaper's editorial policy with the review of literature were then corroborated and analyzed together for the sake of triangulation. The reason, above, is to examine meticulously the influence of owners and other powerful actors in reporting corruption issues.

Thus, the researcher found an interesting result of the frequency of the reporting of corruption issues in both newspapers. From a total 730 editions of *Addis Zemen* newspaper, corruption report was 4% , while *Reporter* had 20% coverage out of 192 editions. This is a significant figure as it depicts how much attention is given towards corruption reporting in both newspapers. As a result, the overall extents of corruption coverage in both newspapers were very little.

The researcher found also news genre was the dominant way of reporting in both newspapers. From the total 28 coverages, *Addis Zemen* used news 24 times to report corruption issues. *Reporter* also used news as a foremost genre from the total of 38 corruption coverages, 37 of them were reported in the news format.

In terms of issues reported in the selected newspapers, public procurement related to corruption issues were frequently reported in both newspapers. Houses and land development, revenue and income taxes and banking were reported following public procurement. Therefore, the newspapers' report was dominantly relied on what was already mentioned by both Ethiopian government and Global Competitiveness-report of 2016/17. The other important part of the content analysis consist sources used in the corruption reporting by newspapers. The major source newspapers used in the corruption reports were government bodies (Federal police commission, courts, and regional administrations). Of these sources, newspapers used federal police commission 36 times, courts 21 times and others regional and woreda administration 4 times to write the 66 corruption reports in the study period.

The study also disclosed that owners were not interested to initiate any investigative corruption issues. Both the state-owned as well as the private newspapers were avoiding conflict of interests with government and some other business individuals. They were reporting when the government said on it. Similarly, owners were abusing journalists when there is an attempt to investigate corruption issues. Moreover, owners did not protect journalists at any cost in both newspapers. The safety of journalists was poor at the broader context.

On the other hand, politicians were highly influencing both in media owners and journalists with regards to reporting corruption issues. This was revealed through denying access to information, hiding information and supporting corrupted officials by Law enforcement officials, interfering in the editorials decision and threatening journalists at any trial of corruption investigation. Lastly, business individuals like advertisers, real estate and non-governmental organizations were directly influencing corruption reporting as they were supported by individuals in government office.

## 5.2. Conclusion

As noted in chapter one of this study, the objective of this paper was to examine the influence of owners and other powerful actors in the print media in the case of reporting corruption issues.

According to the Global Competitiveness-report (2016-2017, p.56), Ethiopia is where businesses, public procurement, Land distribution and administrations are particularly vulnerable to corruption. Other different types of irregularities exist, such as non-transparent tender processes and awarding contracts to people with a close connection to the government and ruling party also seriously hampered by corruption (Global Competitiveness-report (2016-2017)). On the other hand, a research done by Maco-Economist and Consultant as Ethiopia has lost estimated \$US 36 billion (about 1 trillion and 80 billion Ethiopian Birr) in illicit financial flows in the last 27 years. That means Ethiopia has been losing \$US 1.3 billion every year because of illicit financial flows (Tehibo, December 19, 2018).

However, as the findings of this study indicate, it can be concluded that the extent of corruption coverage in both newspapers were given very little attention. Despite the fact, there was a tendency in the private owned *Reporter* likely to expose corruption reporting than the State-owned *Addis Zemen*. This has proved as differences have seen based on the newspapers editions and the extent of coverage although both newspapers were dependent on government sources. In this regard, *Addis Zemen* was not only showing under low attempt in the coverage but also restricting the flow of information even in the event-based one. Therefore, the privately owned newspapers might expose wrongdoings if they could get access to information or necessary editorial independence (Rose-Ackerman, 1999, p.187).

The newspapers genres of the report was news about corruption based on the events of government-issued, press release, and court follow-up. Therefore, the newspapers roles were to follow-up and highlight the government-issued news. They were echoes or instrument of government propaganda. Both newspapers did not initialize any report on corruption issues. All what they were reporting was solely dependent on government sources.

But, the principle of ‘fourth estate’ functioning in journalism is watchdogging through investigative reporting. This can be done through exposing wrongdoings like the corruption one in the government as well as in the business organizations. In this regard, both newspapers had attempted zero investigative reporting on corruption issues. The reason is that as Walulya (2008) stated corruption investigation and reporting is basically based on the public interest not solely relied on government or any other groups. The over reliance of sources on government bodies in reporting corruption issues hindered the potential of the newspapers to take a proactive role in fighting corruption through the model of investigative journalism.

On the other hand, as studies revealed on critical issues, the Ethiopian media used government voices as a strategy to distance themselves from different charges and harassments, in this specific study newspapers also revealed heavy reliance on government sources almost 92% the 66 corruption news reported using government bodies.

The other important finding is that newspapers were not fearlessly watchdogging, guardedly examining the exercise of power and protecting the public from wrongdoings. Instead both the state-owned as well as the private owners were discouraging journalists when there is a trial to produce a reporting in corruption issues or investigations. There were cases when owners, and sometimes advertisers, among other players, influence when journalists engaged into reporting in corruption issues or investigations. If the story is related to the government agenda, *Addis Zemen* was abusing the journalists in one way or the other. The same thing happened in rare cases with *Reporter*, if the issues were related to advertisers or other interested groups.

In spite of the above facts, the discouragement of journalists or owners’ low commitment in reporting corruption issues, the private *Reporter*, came from fear and harassment and the extent of fearing to be shutdown. The state-owned *Addis Zemen* is the reason that obviously to avoid conflict of interest with government. Even *Addis Zemen* was exposing the security of journalists instead of protecting them. *Reporter* also was silent when any government officials as well as business organizations beat and intimidated journalists.

In addition to owners, media managers in the state-owned *Addis Zemen* that have a chain with any government minister can abuse and harass a journalist in the case of reporting corruption issues. However, government officials' influence is higher than any other groups. This is because as informant 3, 5, 6 argued and as the researcher discussed in chapter four most of the corrupt practice was revealed in the government organizations by political officials. That is why they were denying access to information (information drought), dictating the editorial writings especially in the state-owned *Addis Zemen*, threatening owners particularly private *Reporter* and to the extent of death assassinations by government officials. Others like the law enforcements were not also the easiest influencers. For instance, police and anti-corruption agencies were mysteriously hidden or disappeared corruption cases.

The influence of powerful actors extended to those who have connection with any government official; advertisers, real estate owners and NGOs' were affecting the reporting of corruption issues or investigations. NGOs' are particularly a silent influence in the private owned newspapers in two ways. The first one is denying the necessary information, which in turn, is affecting the public's right to know about what NGOs' are doing in the country either in a positive way or harming. The second one is creating a chain with owners that help them to intimidate the journalists if an investigative question holds during a press conference. In both cases, *Reporter* experienced higher influence than *Addis Zemen*.

As a result, the enemy of press freedom is not only the government but also other interested groups which can affect the reporting of corruption issues. Both market and state-driven influence affected the role of reporting corruption issues in *Reporter* than *Addis Zemen* newspapers.

### **5.3. Recommendations**

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are suggested.

1. Both *Addis Zemen* and *Reporter* need to work hard to improve their reporting of corruption coverage regardless of constraints seen above. This is because as Coronel (2010) stated media should be vigilantly examining the exercise of power and protecting

the public from wrongdoing although corrupted governments are not willing to be open and accountable.

2. Media owners and government bodies together have to develop a legal framework or a defense mechanism that would encourage the journalists as well as that would eliminate intimidations or threats usually came from either way particularly in the case of reporting corruption issues or investigations.
3. In addition, as suggested by IMS (2018) a dialogue between the media and the government bodies, particularly law enforcement sectors, needed to establish a more sustainable and long term professional relationship based on mutual understanding and respect for media rights.
4. The media must keep a watchful eye on anti-corruption agencies and other law enforcement bodies, as cases of corruption have been reported in the very institutions supposed to combat sleaze. For example, the act by the former World Bank President, Paul Wolfowitz who corruptly authorized a pay rise for his girlfriend Shaha Riza who worked in the same institution. In the case of Ethiopia, police, and anti-corruption agencies were hiding information and mysteriously disappearing cases of corruption issues.
5. The print media need to create or to have an investigative group in collaboration with UNESCO and World Bank occasionally gives such grants to facilitate investigative journalism. Since the world has seen in history that investigative journalism playing a very important role in the democratization and economic development of countries like America. It is worth mentioning here how much important it is for our country too. Besides investigative journalism, some of successful newspapers in history also used editorial to shape the society and bring a lot of societal changes. This is a very significant role of media. The strong stance of the media towards the unwanted behavior is a societal transformer tool in every corner.
6. The study also recommends future research on mechanisms to overcome particularly the influence of powerful actors in the reporting of corruption issues that would change the media landscape in the role of watchdogging.

7. Finally, the role of media in fighting against corruption issues in line with bringing good governance satisfaction in the eyes of the public would be future research.

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# APPENDICES

## Appendix A

### CODING SHEET

#### TERM DEFINITIONS AND CATEGORIZATION OF THE CONTENT ANALYSIS

1. Name of the organization,

1.1 Addis Zemen

1.2 Reporter

2. Frequency (coverage) of the corruption issues

| Newspaper   | Total Edition | Number of corruption stories found | Percentage of corruption coverage |
|-------------|---------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Addis Zemen |               |                                    |                                   |
| Reporter    |               |                                    |                                   |

#### Addis Zemen

Year One: April to Pagumen, 2016, Year,75<sup>th</sup>, No of issue 211 up to 364 and September, 2016 to April,2017, Year,76<sup>th</sup> , No. of issues 01 to 240.

Year Two: May to Pagumen, 2017, Year 76<sup>th</sup>, No. of issues 241 up to 366 and September, 2017 to April, 2018, Year, 77<sup>th</sup>, No. of issues 01 to 254.

#### Reporter

Year One: April to Pagumen, 2016, Volume 21, No. of issue 1664 up to 1708 and September, 2016 to April, 2017, Volume 22, No. of issues 1709 to 1772.

Year Two: May to Pagumen, 2017, Volume 22, No. of issues 1779 up to 1810 and September, 2017 to April, 2018, Volume 23, No. of issues 1810 up to 1872.

### 3. Genres of Corruption Issues Reported

| No.          | Genres of report | Newspapers  |          |
|--------------|------------------|-------------|----------|
|              |                  | Addis Zemen | Reporter |
| 1.           | News             |             |          |
| 2.           | Editorial        |             |          |
| 3.           | Interviews       |             |          |
| 4.           | Others           |             |          |
| <b>Total</b> |                  |             |          |

**News** This refers to news information written on corruption issues.

**Editorial** This refers to editorial comments or stances on corruption issues in the study period.

**Interview** This refers to interview made by the newspaper about corruption issues.

**Others** This refers to other genres written connected with corruption issues.

### 4. Issues Raised in the Corruption Reporting

| Type of Corruption Issues reported | Newspapers  |          |
|------------------------------------|-------------|----------|
|                                    | Addis Zemen | Reporter |
| Public procurement                 |             |          |
| Houses and land development        |             |          |
| Revenue and income and taxes       |             |          |
| Banking                            |             |          |
| Share companies                    |             |          |
| Other issues of corruption         |             |          |
| <b>Total</b>                       |             |          |

**Public procurement:**

This refers to the purchase of goods, services and constructions by governments and state-owned enterprises.

**House and land development**

This refers to house development, purchase, and sale of land administrations.

**Revenue and income taxes**

This refers to revenue and income taxes corrupt practices in the government as well as in the private institutions.

**Banking**

This refers to bank and bank related services and corrupt practices

**Share companies**

This refers to, business ventures and other share companies who got in corrupt practices

**Other issues of corruption**

This refers to other issues related to corrupt practices

**5. Source of the Corruption iIssues**

| Sources                            | Newspapers  |          |
|------------------------------------|-------------|----------|
|                                    | Addis Zemen | Reporter |
| Federal police commission          |             |          |
| Courts                             |             |          |
| Regional and wordas administration |             |          |
| Editorials                         |             |          |
| Others                             |             |          |
| <b>Total</b>                       |             |          |

All the above data was collected between 14 May 2018 and 24 October 2018.

## Appendix B

List of key informants by Name, code, sex, age, experience and position

| <b>No</b> | <b>Name</b> | <b>Sex</b> | <b>Age</b> | <b>Experience</b> | <b>Position</b> |
|-----------|-------------|------------|------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| 1         | Informant 1 | M          | 42         | 12 years          | Editor in chief |
| 2         | Informant 2 | M          | 34         | 10 years          | Senior Reporter |
| 3         | Informant 3 | M          | 39         | 15 years          | Senior producer |
| 4         | Informant 4 | M          | 45         | 12 years          | Managing Editor |
| 5         | Informant 5 | M          | 48         | 16 years          | Managing Editor |
| 6         | Informant 6 | M          | 36         | 6 years           | Senior Reporter |

## Appendix C

### Addis Ababa University School of Journalism and Communication

#### The qualitative in depth interview guide lines and questions

**Dear participants,**

First of all, I want to thank you for taking the time to this interview. My name is Fekadu Alemu MA student at Addis Ababa University School of journalism and communication. I am conducting MA research thesis on “The impact of ownership and other powerful actors in the Ethiopian print media; the case of corruption reporting.”

The aim of this research thesis is examining the impacts of ownership and other powerful actors in corruption reporting both in the government and private print media in Ethiopia. Therefore, I would like to talk to you about your experiences, views, opinions and facts on the impacts of ownership and other powerful actors in the corruption reporting in the print media. The interview will take less than an hour. I will be taping the session because I don't want to miss any of your comments. Although I will be taking some notes during the session, I can't possibly write fast enough to get it all down. Because we're on tape, please be sure to speak up so that we don't miss your comments.

All responses will be kept confidential. This means that name of the respondents is not identifying on the research. Anonymity would be ensured in the evaluation and write-up of the research.

✓ **Name of the organization**\_\_\_\_\_

✓ **Name**\_\_\_\_\_ **Sex** \_\_\_ **Age** \_\_\_ **position** \_\_\_\_\_ **work experience** \_\_\_\_\_

## In-depth Interview Questions

1. አንተ/አንቺ የምትሠራበት ጋዜጣ ዐበይት ትኩረት ምን ምን ላይ ነው?
2. ባለፈው ሁለት ዓመታት የጋዜጣችሁ የሙስና ዘገባ ሽፋን እንዴት ይገለጻል?
3. የጋዜጣውን የሙስና ዘገባ ሽፋን በፐርሰንት ይህን ያህል ነው ብሎ ማስቀመጥ ትችላለህ/ሽ?
4. አንተ/ቺ በምትሠራበት ጋዜጣ የሙስና ዘገባዎች የሚዘጋጁት በኤዲቶሪያል ውሳኔ ነው፣ በጋዜጠኛው ምርመራዊ ሥራ ነው፣ በፍርድ ቤት የተወሰነ ነው ወይስ ደግሞ ከመንግሥት በኩል በሚሰጥ መግለጫ ነው?
5. በአንተ ጋዜጣ ከላይ ከተዘረዘሩት አመዛኙ የሙስና ዘገባ ምንጫሁ የትኛው ነው? ምክንያቱስ ምንድን ነው?
6. ብዙ ጊዜ በማኅበራዊ ሚዲያው የሚጻፉና በህብረተሰብ የሚደርሷቸውን የሙስና ጥቆማዎች እንደ ቲፕ(tips) ወስዶ ጋዜጣው ወይም ኤዲቶሪያል ቡድኑ የጉዳዩን እውነተኝነት አረጋግጦ ለአንባቢያን የሚያደርስበት ኹኔታ እንዴት ይገለጻል?
7. አንተ/ቺ የምትሠራበት ጋዜጣ የሙስና ዘገባዎችን በነጻነት የሚያሠራ የላት/መት(ጋዜጣ) ተቋም ነው ማለት ይቻላል?
8. በተለያዩ አጋጣሚ የሚሰሙ የሙስና ጉዳዮችን አጥንታችሁ ከሠራችሁ በኋላ እንዳይወጣ ወይም እንዲቆም የተደረጉባቸው ጊዜያት ዋና ዋና ምክንያቶች ምን ምንድን ናቸው?
9. ከሚዲያ ባለቤትነት ጋር በተያያዘ የሙስና ዘገባን በተለየ ኹኔታ አስቸጋሪ የሚያደርግበትን ኹኔታ እንዴት ትገልጭዋለሽ/ህ?
10. የሚዲያ ባለቤቱ ወይም የኤዲቲን ቡድኑ በሙስና ዘገባ ላይ ያለው ተጽእኖ እስከምን ድረስ ነው?
11. በሙስና ዘገባ ሂደት ከሚዲያ ባለቤቱና ኤዲተሩ በተጨማሪ ሌሎች ጣልጋ ገቢዎች ወይም ተጽእኖ አድራሾች ብለህ/ሽ የምታስባቸው እነማን ናቸው?
12. ፖለቲከኞች፣ የቢዝነስ ቡድኖች/ተቋማት እና በተለያዩ ጥቅሞች ሰንሰለት ውስጥ አሉ የምትላቸው አካላት በሙስና ዘገባ ሂደት ያላቸውን የተጽእኖ ዓይነት እንዴት ትገልጻላለህ/ሽ?
13. ከላይ ካነገሩቸው አካላት መካከል በዋናነት የትኞቹ ናቸው ችግር ፈጣሪዎች ብለህ/ሽ የምይታስበው?
14. ከሙስና ዘገባ ጋር በተያያዘ የመረጃ ነጻነቱን እንዴት መግለጽ ይቻላል?
15. በአጠቃላይ ከሙስና ዘገባ ጋር በተያያዘ ከልምድና ከምታውቀው በመነሣት አሉ ቀሩ የምትላቸው ችግሮች ወይም ተጽእኖዎችን ብታብራራልን?

አመሰግናለሁ!

## **The English version of the qualitative in-depth interview**

1. What is the main focus of the newspaper you are working for?
2. What is your view about how much your newspaper has been concerned in covering corruption issues for the last two years?
3. How much percentage would you give the coverage of corruption issues in your newspaper?
4. How did you prepare and publish a corruption issues; a story with editorial decision, a story with investigative team based, a story that comes from the source of court cases or a statement issued by the government?
5. As mentioned above, which of the foremost sources your newspaper used to publish corrupt? What is the reason?
6. How do you explain the way you investigate and publish corruption issues by your newspaper with other source of tips that comes from the social media or public comments?
7. What level of freedom you enjoy the newspaper you are working for in terms of reporting corruption issues?
8. What are the major reasons in a case where you as a journalist or the newspaper ordered to stop while reporting corruption issues either from the owner of the newspaper or other powerful actors?
9. How does ownership of your newspaper constraints your corruption issues?
10. To what extent does the media owner or the editorial team have influence in the reporting corruption process?
11. Who do you think of other influencers in addition to the media owner and manager in the reporting corruption issues?

12. How do you explain the intervention of politicians, business groups, and other networks influence on the reporting corruption process?
13. Who are the major problematic ones above mentioned that you faced many times?
14. What is your take on access to information in focus of reporting corruption issues?
15. In general, with regards to the issue of corruption, would you describe the problems or effects that you have left behind?

The in-depth interview data was conducted between November to December 2018.

# Appendix D

## የቃለ መጠይቅ ጽሑፎች

### 1. Informant one

### አዲስ ዘመን ጋዜጣ

ለሙስና ብቻ ሳይሆን ሁሉም ሥራዎች በኤዲቶሪያል ነው የሚወሰነው። አዲስ ዘመን እቅዶችን በሁለት መንገድ ነው የሚሠራው። አንደኛው እንደ ዝግጅት ክፍል የሚታቀድ ሲሆን ሁለተኛው ጋዜጠኛው በራሱ የሚያቅደው ናቸው። እነዚህ ሁሉ በኤዲቶሪያል ታይተው ነው የሚወሰኑት።

የጋዜጣው ዐብይ ትኩረት፡ የአዲስ ዘመን ጋዜጣ ትኩረት አድርጋ የምትሠራው በኤዲቶሪያል ፖሊሲው አንደተቀመጠው በሀገሪቱ ማህበራዊ፣ኢኮኖሚያዊ፣እና ፖለቲካዊ ጉዳዮች ይሠራል። ባለፈው ሁለት ዓመታት ግን በሰላም ጉዳይ ትኩረት እድርገን ሥንሠራ የነበረው። መልካም አስተዳደርና ሙስና ላይ የተወሰነ ስርተናል። ከተወሰኑ ተቋማት ጋር በተገናኘ ለሙስና አሰራር ክፍተት ናቸው ያልናቸውን ስርተናል። በቁጥር ከታየ ግን ብዙም አይደለም። ሙስና ማጋለጥ ላይ ጸረ ሙስናና የፌደራል ፖሊስ ኮሚሽን የሙስና ወንጀሎች ምርመራ ከሚሰጠው መግለጫ ውጭ በራሳችን የሠራነው የለም። ለዚህ ደግሞ መረጃ የሚሰጡን የጸረ ሙስና ኮሚሽንና ጠቅላይ አቃቤ ሕግ አካላት ናቸው። እነዚህ አካላት የሚሠሩትን ግን ስንዝግብ ነበር። ከዚህ ውጭ ግን ዝምብለን አልሠራንም። ምክንያቱም ይላሉ ሙስናን የመከላከል ተግባርና ሃላፊነት የተሰጣቸው አካላት ከላይ የጠቀስናቸው ናቸውና። ሚዲያ መረጃ ማስተላለፍ ነው ተግባሩ።

ከማኅበረሰቡ ከሙስና ጋር ሳይሆን ከመልካም አስተዳደር ጋር በተያያዘ ብቻ ነው ቲፕ የሚመጣልን...ወደ እኛ የሚመጡት ብዙም አይደለም..ምክንያቱም ግለሰቦችም ሆኑ ሌሎች አካላት እንዲህ አይነት መረጃ አይሰጡም ከለላና ዋስትና ስለማንሰጣቸው። ለሙስና ብቻ ሳይሆን ሁሉም ሥራዎች በኤዲቶሪያል ነው የሚወሰኑት።

ከዚህ ውጭ ከሙስና ጋር በተያያዘ መረጃ ከመጣ የአዲስ ዘመን አሠራር ይፈቅዳል ግን..መረጃ እንኳን ቢኖር ሁለት ነገሮችን ችግር ናቸው።..ብዙ 1.ጋዜጠኞች ኮሚት መንት....ድፍረት የለም 2.ሴፍ ሪፖርት ነው የሚያተኩሩት ጠንክር ያለ አይፈልጉም....ከላላና ዋስትና ስለሌላቸው....ጋዜጠኞች ለአደጋ የተጋለጡ ናቸው። በዚህ ምክንያት ብዙም ገፍተን አልሄድንብትም። የተወሰኑ የሠራናቸውም ጫጫታ አስነስተዋል። አንድ ኤች አይ ቪ ኪት ጋር በተያያዘ ችግር ያለበትን ቦታ ለመሥራት ስንነሣ ወዲያው አቁም ተባልን። በቀጥታ ለአለቆቻችን ተደወለ ቆመ።

በመረጃ ፍንጭ መሠረት ጉዳዩ የሚመለከተው አካል ገና መረጃ ለመሰብሰብ ስትንቀሳቀስ ከሰሙ አንተ አታረፈም የሚል ቀጭን ማሰጥንቀቂ ይደርስህል....ከዛ አላርፍም ካልክ ወደ አለቃ ይደወላል...ከዛ አለቃ ካለ ታቆማለህ። የኢትዮጵያ ፖለቲካዊ ምህዳር ለሙስና ወይም

ለምርመራ ጋዜጠኝነት ምቹ አይደለችም። መንግሥት ሁሌ ሥሩ ይላል..ነገር ግን አደናቃፊው ራሱ የመንግስት ባለስልጣናት ናቸው።

ከሚዲያ ባለቤትነት ጋር በተያያዘ..የተቋቋመበት አዋጅ የህዝብ ሚዲያ ነው የሚለው...የመንግሥት ነው አይልም። ነገር ግን የአዲስ ዘመን ኤዲቶሪያል ፖሊሲ በግልጽ ምእራፍ 2..ገጽ.14..የኢትዮጵያፕሬስ ድርጅት የመንግሥት የመዲያ ተቋም እንደመሆኑ..ኤርትራ ብትሄድ የመንግሥት መገናኛ ብዙጉን ነው ሚለው..ኢትዮጵያ ውስጥ ግን በቀጥታ ተጠሪነቱ ለፓርላማ ነው...ስለዚህ የህዝብ ነው ነገር ግን የህዝብ ሚናውን public ሚዲያ role or government ሚዲያ role ነው የተጫወተው የሚለው ነው ቁምነገሩ ይላሉ። እንደ ባለቤትነት የህዝብ ነው..በራሱ ገቢ የሚተዳደር (በማስታወቂያና ከጋዜጣ ሽያጭ) የሆነ ያህል ገቢ እቅድ ይዘን ነው የሚሠራው....ከታቀደው ውጭ ከሰበሰብን ግን ወደ መንግሥት ነው የሚገባው።

የሀገራዊ ሥርዓት ችግር (ሲስተም) ሚዲያው ላይ ተጽእኖ አምጥቷል። ፖለቲካ ሲስተሙ ነው ችግር ያመጣው....ከስራ አስኪያጅ እስከ ቦርድ አባል ድረስ መንግሥት ነው የሚሾማቸው..ላዛ ነው። ሚዲያ እንደ ዋች ዶግ..ነው ችግር አለበት የተባለ ቦታ ሄዶ መረጃውን አጠናክሮ ለአንባቢያን ያደርሳል...በመረጃው መሠረት የሚመለከተው አካል ለምሳሌ....እኛ ሀገር ባለሀብቶች ሃሽሽ ለመግዛት ጎዳና ተዳዳሪዎች ላይ ነው የሚመክሩት ይሄን ዘግቦናል...ፖሊስ ደግሞ የተባለው አካባቢ ሄዶ በማጣራት መያዝ....የመክሰስ ደግሞ የአቃቤ ሕግ ነው። ከእኔ በላይ ያለው አለቃየ አቁም ሲል ነው እንጅ ማን እንደደወለለት አላቅም ስራው ሲቆም። የቢዝነስና ባለስልጣናትም ቢሆኑ ማንም እንዲነካ አይፈልጉም።

የመረጃ ነጻነቱ ችግር የለበትም...ነገር ግን መረጃ ሰጪዎች ግን ዋና ችግር ፈጠሪዎች እነሱ ናቸው። ከሙስና ጋር በተያዘ ግን ሁሉም አካላት በራቸውን ዝግ ነው የሚያደርጉት። ሙስና በግልጽ የሚሰራ ስላልሆነ..መረጃ ለመፈለግም እንደዛው ውስብስብ ያደርገዋል።...ለምሳሌ..በቢ.ሊ.የን የዘረፈ ሰው በመቶ ሚሊዮን ሊያስገድልህ ይችላል...በዚህ ባለስልጣንና ባለሀብቶች የተሳሰሩበት ሀገር የሙስና መረጃን ለማጠናከር ፈታኝ ያደርገዋል። አብዛኛው ጋዜጠኛ 10 ሺሕ በማይሞላ ደሞዝ እየሰራ ..በመቶ ሚሊዮን ዝርፊያዎችን..ለመዘገብ ሞራሉም....ቁርጠኛ አይደለም። ከላላና ጥበቃ የለውም።

በዳታው መሠረት ደግሞ.....የተሰበሰበው ዳታ ትክክል ነው ብለዋል። ሜቴክ ላይ የተሠራው በርእስ አንቀጽ ቀድሞን ይዘን ወጠናል...ነገር ግን በተጠቀሱት ዓታመታት ሀገራቱ ወደ ብጥብጥና ሁከት ስታመራ..በመንግሥት ትእዛዝ ወደ ሰላም ብቻ እንድናተኩር ሆኗል። በእነዚህ ወቅት...በሙስና ላይ ትኩረት ማድረግ ከባድ ነበር...አንዳንዴ ቲፕ ሲመጡ ...ቲፕ ብሎ ያመጣውም ችግር ይኖርበታል..እና እነዚህን ለማጣራት ከባድ ነው በኢትዮጵያ የሚዲያ ሁኔታ።

2. Informant two

አዲስ ዘመን ጋዜጣ

አዲስ ዘመን የሀገር ግምባታ ላይ የሚያተኩረው። ባለፉት ሁለት ዓመታት የመንግሥት አፍ ሆኖ ነበር። በአገልግሎት ዘርፉ ላይ ይታይ የነበረውን የመልካም አስተዳደር ችግር ነበር የምንታኩረው። አገልግሎት የማግኘት መብት፣ ሕዝብ መንገላታት እንደሌለባቸው እናመሰል ጉዳዮች ላይ። ይህን እኔነኝ ያልኩት እናም የሙስና ችግሮች ላይ ከማተኮር ይልቅ የግዛቤ ሥራዎች ላይ ማተኮር ነበር።

እንደ አዲስ ዘመን የሙስና ጉዳዮችን በሁለት መልኩ እሠራለን...ጥቆማዎች ከሕዝቡ ሲመጡ እና መንግሥት የሙስና ችግር አለባቸው ብሎ የለያቸው ካሉ ነው። እንደ አዲስ ዘመን ግን በራሳችን የሠራነው የለም። ምክንያቱም ጋዜጠኛው በእለት ተእለት ጉዳዮች...በሩቲን ሥራዎች ላይ ተጠምደን የምንውለው...ሌላው ኮሚትመንት (እንደዚህ አይነት ጠንካራ ጉዳዮች ላይ የመስራት ፍላጎት ብዙም የለም) .....የሙስና ጉዳይ ከጋዜጠኛው ወይም ከሌላ ቢመጣ ግን...በምክትል ዋና አዘጋጅ ይወሰናል...አንዳንዴ በዋና አዘጋጁ ሊወሰን ይችላል። ከዛ እንደ ሥራ አስፈጻሚ በኤዲቶሪያል። በማኅበራዊ ሚዲያ ወይም ከሕዝቡ ግን የሚመጡትን ብዙም አልሄድንባቸውም። የሞከርንባቸው ነበሩ። ለምሳሌ...እኔ ራሴ..በፌስቡክ ኢንቦክስ ተደርጎልኝ..(ኢውስኮድ) የኢት.ው.ሃ ሥራዎች ኮርፖሬሽን እና ጥቃቅን እና አነስታኛ ላይ የሙስና ሥራዎችን ለመሥራት ወደ ሥራ ገባሁ...ነገር ግን መረጃ የሰጠችኝ ልጅ ከስራ ገበታዎ ገቅ ተደርጋ፣ ከጥቅማጥቅሚ...የአንድ ዓመት ደሞዝ አገዷት። የውስጥ ኦዲተር ነበረች...ለእኔ ደግሞ ድለላዎች ቀርበውልኝ ነበር..በዚህ ምክንያት እምቢ በማለቴ ማስፈራሪያ ይደርስብኝ ነበር...በወቅቱ ሓላፊው ከሥራው ተነስቷል..ግን ፈተናው ቀላል አልነበረም.. ከዚህ በላይ መሥራት እና መሄድ ይቻላል...ግን አልፈህ ስትሄድ የበለጠ (scarification) ከባድ ነው...እናም ገፍተን አንሄድበትም። ምክንያቱም ደጋፊ የለህም። የምትሠራበት ተቋም ጨምሮ ሌሎች አካላት አይደግፍህም። በወረቀት መሥራት እንደምትችል ችግር ነጻነት አለህ...የለም ነገር ግን በተግባር ልትሠራ ስትነሣ አቅም የሚሆን ነገር የለም....ከትንሹ የትራንስፖርት ጀምሮ ድጋፍ የሚያደርግልህ. የለህም...ከሌላ ፈጽሞ አይታሰብም።

ማንም የፈለገውን አደጋ ሊያደርስብህ (የትኛውም አደጋ ሊደርስብህ) ይችላል...አንዳንዴ በልቶ ከጠገበ ሰው ጋር ነው የምትጋፈጠው...በዚህ ምክንያት ከአንዴም ሶስቱ ቤት ቀይሪያለሁ...በሥራዎቼ...ምክንያት... እና በኢትዮጵያ ውስጥ ሙስናን ለመዘገብ ምቹ ሁኔታ የለም። ኤዲቶሪያል ፖሊሲው ነጻነት መስጠት ብቻ ሳይሆን ከላይ ያነሳናቸውን አሳቦች ማሟላትና ከላላ ማድረግ ያስፈልጋል። ለምሳሌ አንዴ..ለፍቼ የሠራሁበትን ሥራ እንዳይወጣ ተደርጓል...ባለሥልጣናትም ከመጀመሪያው ምንም አታመጣም እያሉ ነበር የሠራሁት...እንዳሉትም እንዳይታተም ጥናል...የምሠራበት አዲስ ዘመንም መጋፈጥ ሲችል...አቁም ነው ያለኝ።

ከሚዲያው ባለቤትነት በተጨማሪ አዲስ ዘመንን ባለስልጣናት የእነሱ ልሳን አድርገው ነው የሚያስቡት። የትኛውንም ነገር በገንዘብና በስልጣን የማፈን ብዙ ጊዜ ሆኗል። ለምሳሌ በጥቃቅን ዘርፍ ላይ በአንድ ሙስና ጉዳይ ልሠራ ስነሳ...በቀጥታ የዛ ባለስልጣን መስሪያ ቤት ኃላፊ በቀጥታ ስልክ ደውሎ አርፈህ የልማት ሥራህን ሥራ ብሎ ቀርቷል። እንዲህ አይነት ሰው ለማን ነው አቤት የምትለው...ከሚዲያው አልፎ...ከማስቆም አልፎ እኔን እስከማስፈራራት የደረሰ። እጃቸው ረዥም ነው።

ቀደም ሲል በአዲስ ዘመን የነበሩት አለቆቻችን ..ማንም ደውሎ እንዲቆም ሲነግራቸው እሽ የሚሉ ነበሩ...አንዳንድ እነሱ እንዲሠራ የሚፈልጉትን ደግሞ እንድትሠራ የማስገደድ ሁኔታ አለ። አንዳንድ ለምን ስትል...ከእንተ ሥራውን ቀምተው ለሌላ ጋዜጠኛ ይሰጡታል። ይህ የሚያሳየው...ይቁም የሚሉት ከላይ ከባለሥልጣናት ጋር ወዳጅነት ስላላቸው ሲሆን...ከእነሱ ጋር በጥቅም የተጋጨ እና ከሌሎች ባለሀብቶች ጋር ችግር እንዳይፈጠር ከፈለጉም ያደርጉታል። እናም ከባለስልጣናት ጋር ባላቸው ትስስር እና ከባለሀብቶች ጋር ባላቸው ዝምድና ነው አንዳንድ የሙስና ሥራዎች ትንሽም ቢሆን ሲወሰን የነበረው። አሁን ሚዲያው የመንግሥት ወይም የህዝብ ስለሆነ አይደለም...የግልም ሚዲያም ቢሆን ስፖንሰር የሚያደርገው ተቋም ከሆነ...እንዳይዘገብ ሊያደርግ ይችላል ወይም በጥቅም የተገናኘ ከሆነ። በአዲስ ዘመን የሚመደቡት ሥራ አስፈጻሚዎች የመንግሥት ሹሞች ናቸው። ሙያው የሚፈልገው ዐይነት ሰዎች አልነበሩም። አንዱ ትልቅ ችግር ይህ ነበር። ከላይ ያሉት ሃላፊዎች ጥቅማቸውን እንጅ ሙያው በሚፈልገው ልክ የህዝቡን ፍላጎት አልነበረም ቅድሚያ የሚሰጡት። ችግሮች እንዲታወቁ...አሠራሮች እንዲተቹ አይፈለግም።

የግል ሚዲያዎችም ጥቃቅን ነገሮች ላይ ትኩረት ያደርጉ የነበረው። ትልልቅ ነገሮች እንደ ሙስናና ዘረፋዎች ላይ ትኩረት አድርገው ቢሆን ኖሮ...ይህ ሁሉ ችግር አይፈጠርም ነበር ብሎ ይከራከራል። ለምሳሌ...ስለሜቴክ እና መሰል ትልልቅ የመንግሥት ተቋማት ዝርፊያ አዲስ ዘመንን ጨምሮ ማንም አልተነፈሰም። እንዲያውም አዲስ ዘመን...ሞክሮ ነበር..ነገር ግን በወቅቱ አስታውሳለሁ...ስለሜቴክ ብዙ ችግሮች እንዳሉ ስለሚታወቅ ለመሥራት የሄዱ ልጆች..የያዙት ፍላሽ እና ሌሎች ንብረተቶቻቸው ሁሉ ተቀምተው ተመልሰዋል። እንዲህ ያሉ ትልልቅ ተቋማት ላይ አንድም ጋዜጠኛ ከዛ በኋላ ደፍሮ ለመስራት የተንቀሳቀሰ የለም።

እንደ አዲስ ዘመን ከባለሀብቶች ይልቅ ብዙ ችግር ሲፈጥሩ የነበሩት ባለስልጣናት ናቸው። ባለሀብቶች መጀመሪያ በገንዘብ ይመጡብሃል..ከዛ እምቢ ስትል...በባለስልጣን ይመጡብሃል...ይህ ማለት ባለሀብቶችና ባለስልጣናት ምን ያክል ትሥስር እንዳላቸው ያሳያል። ስለሆነም ባለስልጣናት እዚህ ሀገር ላይ ትልቅ ችግር ፈጣሪ ናቸው..በሙስና ብቻ ሳይሆን በመረጃ ነጻነትና ገለልተኝነት።

የመረጃ ነጻነቱ ሌላው ትልቁ ፈተና ነው። በቃ አንድ ባለስልጣን ለምን ይህ ተፈጠረህ ብለህ መጠየቅ አትችልም..አይሰጥህምም። ይህ ከላይ ከሃላፊው ጀምሮ እስከ ተራ ሰራተኛው ድረስ።

የሙስና ዘገባ በአጠቃላይ በጋዜጠኛው ፍላጎት ብቻ ሳይሆን የሚሠራው...በተቋም ደረጃ ከለላና ድጋፍ ማድረግን ይጠቅቃል። መረጃና ማስረጃ ለማግኘት በጣም ከባድ ነው። ሁሉም ነገር ውስብስብ ነው። ጥፋተኛውም..መረጃ ደባቂውም...በጥቅም የተሳሰሩ ናቸው። ለዛ ነው ኢትዮጵያ ውስጥ የሙስና ዘገባን ከባድ የሚያደርገው። እንደ አዲስ ዘመን በሙስና ጉዳይ ለመዘገብ ብዙ ጋዜጠኞች ተስፋ ቆርጠዋል። ለዛ ነው ያ ሁሉ ዘረፋና ሙስና ተፈጽሞ አንድም ሚዲያ ተከታትሎ እዚህ ቦታ ችግር አለ ብሎ የሚመለከተው አካል በሕግ እንዲጠይቅ ማድረግ ያለልተቻለው። watchdog functioning zero..በዛ ላይ ብዙ ዘረፋ የተፈጸመው በመንግሥት ተቋማት ነው። እናም መረጃ ለማግኘትና ለመሥራት ከባድ ፈተና ነው። ባለሀብቶች...እንደ ሪል እስቴትና ንግድ ዘርፍ..መሬት እና መሰል ተቋማት ጋር የትቅም ትሥሥር ስላቸው...በገንዘብና በባለስልጣናት ይጠብሃል። ለዛ ነው ለጋዜጠኛውም...የሚዲያ ነጻነቱም (በተለይ ከመረጃ ነጻነቱ ጋር በተያያዘ) ፈተና የሆኑት። እና እኔ አሁን ሥራውን በሙስና ጉዳይ መሥራት ካቆምኩ ቆየሁ....ከላይ ባነሳኳቸው ምክንያቶች።

3. Informant three

አዲስ ዘመን

ኢትዮጵያ ውስጥ የሙስና ዘገባ በጣም አስቸጋሪ ከሚባሉት አንዱ ነው። ችግሩ የሚጀምረው ከሚዲያዎቹ የመሥራት ፍላጎትና ቁርጠኝነት ያንሳቸዋል ነው። ዝግጁ አይደሉም። በዚች ሀገር ላይ የተንሠራፋው የሙስናና ብልሹ አሠራሮችን በማጋለጥ...ዳግም እንዳይከስት ወይም በሕግ እንዲጠይቃቸው አላደረጉም። ሁሉም ዝም ብሎ ነበር ሲመለከት የነበረው። አልፎ አልፎ ሲታዩ ወይም ሲነበቡ የነበሩት አንዳንድ የሙስና ዘገባዎችም...የአየር ሰዓት ሽፋን ወይም ገጽ መሙያ እንጅ.... (እንዲያው እንደ አንድ የሕዝብ ግንኙነት ተቋም አለን ለማለት ነው እንጅ).... ሀገራዊ ተጽእኖ አሳድሮ እንዲቀንስ የሚመለከተው በሕግ እንዲጠይቃቸውና የሕዝብና የመንግሥት ሀብት እዳይባክን ከማድረግ አኳያ ደካማ ነበሩ። ..በሰው ሃይል አደራጅተው...በጀት መድበው በቁርጠኝነት ሲሠሩ አልነበሩም ወይም በራሳቸው አግባብ ሚናቸውን ሲወጡ አልነበረም። ትልቁ ችግር የሚዲያ ሚናችን ነው ብለው አለመንቀሳቀስነው።

መንስኤው ግን ሚዲያውን የሚመሩት ሰዎች ለዚህ ዐይነት ተግባር በቂ አመራር አለመስጠትና ሚዲያው ተልእኮውን እንዳይወጣ በማድረግ ደካማ ነበሩ። ለዚህ ደግሞ ሙስና ወይም ብልሹ አሠራር ካላቸው የመንግስትና የግል ተቋማት ጋር እንዲጋጩ ወይም እንዲነካኩ ይፈልጉም። አንዳንዶቹም የችግሩ ስለባ በመሆናቸው....ሥራው እንዲሠራ አይፈልጉም። በአጠቃላይ የሚዲያ ኦነርስ ወይም ባለቤቶች..ከቢዝነስ ተቋማት ጋር በብዙ ነገር ስለሚገናኙ ስፖንሰር...የአየር ሰዓት...እነሱን ማስከፋት አይፈልጉም። እዚች ሀገር ሙስና ስር እንዲሰድ የሆነው የባለስልጣናትና የባለሀብቶች ቅንጅት ነው። ሁሉም በታናጠልና በቡድን በልዩ ልዩ ድለላዎች....ፈተና ይሆኑብሃል። አንዱን ስትነካ.....ይቀናጁብሃል...የግሉም ቢሆን መንግስት በጀት ስለማይበጅትላቸው...ከባለሀብት ጋር...ነው ጨዋታው። ሦስተኛ..በዘርፉ የተሳማራው

ጋዜጠኛ...ገንዘብ ካላቸው..ጉክበት ካላቸው ሰዎች ጋር ስለሆነ የሚፋለመው..ወደ መዝናኛው ያተኩራል። ጠላት ማፍራት አይፈልግም። በቀላሉ ራሱንም ቤተሰቡንም ይመራል ማለት ነው። መሥራት ብትፈልግ እንኳን..የሕግ ዋስትና ከላላ እንደተቋምም እንደ ግለሰብም በሙስና ጉዳይ ላይ እጁን ማስገባት አይፈልግም። ሌላው ጋዜጠኞች ገቢያቸው አነስተኛ በመሆኑ.....አንዳንድ በሙስና ወይም ምርመራ ዘገባ ላይ የሚሠማሩትን በገንዘብ መግዛት አለ...የመንግሥት ባለስልጣንና ባለሀብት ጥምረት ነው ችግሩ። አንድ ዓይነት ይሠራበት የነበረውን ሚዲያ ለቆ ከወጣ በኋላ ወዲያው መኪና ገዛ....አየህ።

ሌላው የከፍተኛ ትምህርት ተቋማት በዘርፉ የተሰማሩ ባለሙያዎችን ክህሎታቸውን አንዲያሻሽሉ እገዛ አያደርግም። አዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲን ብትወስድ...በህዝብ ግኝነትና በመልቲ ሚዲያ ነው እንጅ በምርመራ ጋዜጠኝነት ያለውን ከፍተኛ ለመሙላት የተሸለ ሠልጠናና ዝግጁነት እዲኖራቸው በጥናት የታገዘ ሙያው ድጋፍ አያደርጉም። እዚህ አገር ላይ የግጭት ሪፖርትና የምርመራ ዘገባ ላይ ሥራ መሥራት (ሙያውን ለማሻሻል እድል የለውም) ያስስፈልጋል።

የሚዲያ ባለቤትነት ጋር በተያያዘ...በመንግሥት...በንግድና በማኅበረሰቡ የተያዘ ነው። እኔ በንግዱ ሚዲያና በህዝብ ሚዲያ ሠርቻለሁ። የግል የንግድ ሚዲያዎች የሚተዳደሩት በማስታወቂያ ነው...ይሄውም...ከከፍተኛ የመንግሥት ባለስልጣናት ጋር ባላቸው ግንኙነት ነው...እንደዚህ ካላደረጉ ያ ባለስልጣን ለዛ የሚዲያ ድርጅት የማስታወቂያ አይፈቅድም። በጥቅምና በኔትወርክ ነው የሚሠራው። ለዛ የሙስና ስራን ኢትዮጵያ ውስጥ ከባድ የሚያደርገው። እናም ያንን ገቢ ላለማጣት በሙስና ጉዳይ ላይ መነካካትን አይፈልጉም። የመንግሥትም ሚዲያ ብትለው...አይል ሊቢያ ላይ ሠራተኞች የነዳጅ ቅሽባ ሠርተዋል በሚል ሰማሁና...ጉዳዩን ሳጣራ...እነዚህ ሹፌሮች ግን ከጅቡቲ አምጥተው በስርዓት አምጥተው እንዳስረከቡ...ቦቸር ነበራቸው። እናም ከሥራ ተባረሩ። ግን ጉዳዩ..ዩኔይትድ ሲ.ኤ.ሲ.ሲ. እኔ ከምሠራበት ሚዲያ ሃላፊ ጋር ዓይኛ በመሆኑ...የተሠራው ዘገባ ስህተት ነው በሚል አስተባብል ተባልኩ። እኔም አባርሩኝ እንጅ አላስተካክልም በሚል ብዙ መከራ ደርሶብኛል። ምክንያቱም የጋዜጠኝነት ምርመራዊ ባህሪ አሟልቶ ነበር የሠራሁት። ሌላው አንድ የጨረታ ግዢ ሙስና ተኮር የግዥ አጻጸም ስህተት በምሠራበት ወቅት...የተባለው ተቋም መረጃ ለመስብሰብ ስሄድ የህዝብ ግንኙነቱ እሽ ብሎ ቢሮ ስደርስ ግን በጥበቃ ነው ያስወጣኝ። ጉዳዩ በዚህ አላበቃም..ያ ብልሹ አሠራርና ሙስና ለምን አየር ላይ ዋለ ወይም ተነካ በሚል...ይሄን ካውንተር አታክ ለማድረግ የዚያ ሃላፊ ተቋም ጋዜጣዊ መግለጫ ሰጠ። በኋላም ላሥርህ እችላለሁ....አንተ የምትሠራበት ሚዲያ የእኛ ነው አለ። እናም በኋላ እኔ ከምሰራት ሚዲያ ተቋም አልፎ...የብሮድስት ባለስልጣን ደርሶ...ብሮድካስት ባለስልጣንም የሆነ ቡድን አቋቁሞ የተሠራው ዘገባ ሲታይ ቡድኑ ለሁለት ተከፈለ...ይሄ የሆነው በነበረው የጥቅም ትስስር ነበር። እና የመንግስት ሚዲያ የሆኑ ተቋማትም እንዲህ ከባለስልጣናትና ገንዘብ ካቸው ጋር ባላቸው ትስስር ነው ችግር የሚፈጥሩት። የሚዲያ አመራሮች እና የሚዲያ ባለቤቶች ከባለስልጣናት እና ከባለሀብቶች ጋር በሚፈጥሩት የጥቅም ትስስር ጋዜጠኞች Abuse ያደርጉታል። እንዲያው

በራስህ ተነሳሽነት ሾልክህ ልስራ ስትል ያዋክቡሃል። የአነርስ ownership ችግር ምንድን ነው መሰለህ...እንደ ሚዲያ ተቋም ለሙስና ዘገባ ትኩረት አለመስጠት፣ በጀት አለመመደብ፣ በቂ የሰው ሃይል አለማደራጀት...የሙስና ዘገባን የሚሠራ ቡድን (ቲም) የላቸውም። ሌላው ከሱልጳታ በሚኒባስ አንድ ሺሕ ኪሎ ግራም ሥጋ ወደ አዲስ አበባ ሲመጣ ተይዞ...የጉለሌ ክፍለ ከተማ ፖሊስ መምሪያ.....ሌሊት 6 ሰዓት ይዞታል ተብሎ..... ጥቆማው ደርሶን ጧት ስንሄድ የለም ተባለን። ከቁራ ድርጅት ጉዳዩን ሰምተው ስጋውን ሊረከቡ ሲመጡ የለም...እና ስጋው የት ደረሰ ብዩ ሠራሁት። ከዛ በኋላ ፖሊስ በኤገዚቢትነት የያዘውን ጉዳይ በአምስት ሰዓት ልዩነት ውስጥ የለም ሲል.....በዚህ ወቅት የአዲስ አበባ ፖሊስ ኮሚሽን የሕግ ክፍል በቀጥታ እኔ ጋር ደውሎ ፖሊስና ሕዝብን የሚያጋጭ ዘገባ ስለሠራህ መጠህ ቃልህን እንድትሰጥ ነው ያለኝ። እኔም ሚዛናዊና ስነ ምግባራዊ ነበር ዘገባዬ እና የማምንበትን ነው የሰራሁት ምጥቼ ቃሌን የምሰጥበት ምክንያት የለም አልኳቸው። አለቆቼም በተቋሙ በኩል የሚገባውን መልስ ተጠየቁ። ግን የህግ አካላትም ከጋዜጠኛው ጎን ከመቆም ይልቅ ለጥፍት ወገን ከለላ በመሆን ችግር ፈጣሪ ናቸው።

የመረጃ ነጻነቱስ...የመረጃ ምንጭ ከተለያዩ አካላት ጥቆማ ሊደርስና ልትሠራ ትችላለህ...ነገር ግን...በጉዳዩ (በሙስና) መረጃ ለመሰብሰብ ስትነሣ...ከራሱ ከመንግሥት ተቋማት ጀምሮ ስቃይነው.. ቀላል አይደለም። በየተቋማቱ ያሉ የህዝብ ግንኙነቶች ....ዋና ችግር ፈጣሪዎች ናቸው። መረጃ ይደብቃሉ...የመረጃ ነጻነት አዋጁ እስከነችግሩ...በስንት ቀን መስጠት እያለባቸው...ይደብቃሉ...አንተን ያሸማቀቅቃሉ...ከአለቆች ጋር ይደዋወሉብሃል...ከዚህ አልፏህ ስትሄድ ደግሞ..ወደ ክስና ስም ማጥፋት ዘመቻ ይሄዳሉ። ይህ ሁሉም ተቋማት ይመለከታል።

ሌላው ሀብረተሰቡ ጥቆማ ቢሰጥህም....ዝርዝር መረጃ ለመስጠት ፈቃደኛ አይደለም። የህግ ከለላ ዋስትና የለውም...ይፈራል.....ከሥራ ይባረራል...በተለይብልሹ አሠራር ላይ። አንድ ተቋም የሚሠሩ ሠራተኞች..በአንድ ሙስናና ብልሹ አሠራር ሰነድ እና ማስረጃ ቢኖራቸውም....መረጃውን ለመስጠት ፈቃደኛ አይደሉም። ለምሳሌ በአይል የነዳጅ አስመጪ ድርጅት ይሠሩ የነበሩ 18 ሰራተኞች ለምን መረጃ ሰጣችሁ ተብሎ የአንድ ወር ደመወዝ ተቀጠዋል። ከደረጃ ዝቅ ማለት...አስቸጋሪና ምቹ ባልሆኑ ቦታዎች ተመድበው ወይም ተቀይረው እንዲሠሩ ተደርገዋል። አንዳንዴ...የሕግ አካላት እንደ ፖሊስ ያሉ አካላት መረጃ ይደብቃሉ። የሕዝብ እንባ ጠባቂ ተቋም..መረጃ አልሰጥም በሚል ተቋምና ግለሰቦች ላይ ማስተካከያ እንዲያደርግ ብሎም ክስ እስከመመስረት መድረስ ነበረባቸው..ግን አላደረጉትም። የማሸመገል በሚመስል...አጉል የቃል ንግግር ያለፈ ተግባር ሲወስዱ አልታዩም። የህግ ክፍተት አለባቸው። መረጃ የመንግስት ሀብት አይደለም...በአደራ እንዲይዝ ነው እንጅ የህዝብ ነው። ሕዝብ ደግሞ በሀብቱ እንዳይጠቀም ነው እያደረጉት ያሉት። ሚዲያ ደግሞ በአደራ መልክ ከተሰጠው ተቋምና ልዩልዩ አካላት ተቀብሎ የሚገባውን ሥራ እንዳይሠራ እያደረጉ ነው። የግዛቤ ችግር አለ። ይህ ሁሉ ሚዲያ ሃላፊነቱን እንዳይወጣ ነው የሚያደርጉት። ሌላው ራሱ የፌደራል ጸረ ሙስና ፖሊስ ኮሚሽን ተቋም ጥቆማ ደርሶት....ምንም ክስ ሳይመሰርት አንድ አመት ደብቆ ከቆየ በኋላ እኔ ጋር ደረሰና...ለምን ብዩ ጥቆማው መቼ...ቀኑን

አጣርቸ...ጠይቁ ከሠራሁት በኋላ...አንድ አመት ደብቆትነበር። በኋላ የሚዲያውን ሲዲ ወስደው ወደ ህግ ክፍል ወስደውታል።

ገንዘብና ሥልጣን ያላቸው አካላት...ደግሞ...አንደኛ ገንዘብና ሀብት ያላቸው...ሥራውን ተወው ብለው ይደራደሩሃል...ለምሳሌ...አንድ ተቋም እኔ ልሠራ የነበረውን የሙስና ዘገባ በተለያዩ ምክንያቶች እንዳቆም ከተደረገ በኋላ ሌላ ሚዲያ ያለ ሰው ጥቆማው ደርሶ...ነገር ግን በድርድር የሚገባውን ወስዶ ጉዳዩ በአጭሩ እንዲቀር ተደርጓል። ባለስልጣናት አስፈላጊውን ጥቅማጥቅም በማመቻቸት...ባለሀብቶችም ሙያህን በገንዘብ እንድትሸጥላቸው ነው የሚፈልጉት። ሃላፊትህን..ስነምግባርን ረስተህ...በገንዘብ...የደራደሩሃል...ምክንያቱም ጋዜጠኞች ክፍያ ትንሽ እንድሆን ያቃሉ። አንዳንዴ እምቢ ካልክ...በቀጥታ ለሚዲያ አመራሮች ደውለው የለፋህበት ጉዳይ ጫፍ ከደረሰ በኋላ እንዳይተላለፍ ያደርጋሉ። ካልሆነ አንድ የበላይ ባለስልጣን ለሙዲያ ሃላፊው ደውሎ...የፈለገውን ያስደርጋል። ይህ አልሆን ካላቸው በብርድካስት ባለስልጣን በኩል ይከስሱሃል። ከዛ ተገቢ አይደለም እያሉ ደብዳቤ ለሚዲያው እንዲጸፍ ያደርጋሉ። ቦታህን...ኑሮህን አጥንተው...ሰው በገንዘብ ገዝተው...መውጫ መግቢያ ያሳጡሃል....

ስለዚህ በየዘርፉ ከላይ የተጠቀሱት ናቸው...ችግሮቹ...አንድ የመጨረሻ በአዲስ አበባ ዙሪያ እየተፈጸመ ስለነበረው የመሬት ወረራና ሙስና...ዘገባ በቲም ስንሠራ የኦሮሚያ ክልል ዞን አስተዳደር ለጋዜጠኞች የአነግን ተግባር ነው እያስፈጸመ በሚል የክስና የአስር ደብዳቤ ይዘው መጡ...በወቅቱ የነበረው የሚዲያ አመራር ግን ተከራክረው የተሠራው ዘገባ በማስረጃ አስደግፈው ትክክል መሆኑን ካስረዱ በኋላ ከፈለጋችሁ እኔን እስሩ ብለው አድነውናል። እንዲህ አይነት የሚዲያ አመራር መምጣት አለባቸው ወደ ሚዲያው..በሙያው የሰለጠኑ...ልምድ ያላቸው...በየጊዜው ራሳቸውን የሚያበቁና ለሙያው ስነምግባር የሚያደሉ መሆን አለባቸው። ከተቋም ተቋም ይለያያል ተጽእኖው።

ግን ከኢትዮጵያ ተጨባጭ ሁኔታ ባለሀብቶችና ከፍተኛ ባለስልጣናት ተደራጅተውና ተቀናጅተው በሚሰርፉበት ሀገር... የሙስናን ዘገባ አጋልጣለሁ ማለት...ከፍተኛ የሆነ መስዋትነት...ወከባ...ከሥራ መፈናቀል...ብሎም አገርን ጥሎ መውጣት ያመጣብሃል።

**የሪፖርተር ጋዜጣ ቃለ መጠይቅ**

1. Informant one ..... **ሪፖርተር**

ሪፖርተር ጋዜጣ ባለፉት ሁለት ዓመታት በሁሉም ጉዳዮች ላይ ነው ትኩርት አድርጎ ይሠራ የነበረው። በሰዎች መብት፣ በቢዝነስ፣ ስለሴት እኩልነት...ነገር ግን ሪፖርተር እንደ ፎርቹን ጋዜጣ ዋና ትኩረቱ ይህ ነው የምትለው የለም። እንኳን የሙስና ጉዳይ ይቅርና ስለሰዎች መብት ለምን በስፋት ጻፍክ ተብሎ በዱርዩዎች የተደበደበበት፣ ነብሱን እስኪስት ድረስ መንገድ ላይ ጥለውት ሄደው ከሞት ተርፏል። ብዙ ሰው ሪፖርተርን የመንግስት ደጋፊ አድርገው

ይወስዱታል። ነገር ግን ሪፖርተር በእኔ እምነት መሀል ላይ ያለ ጋዜጣ ነው። ምክንያቱም የሰዎች መብት ሲጣስ በደንብ ይዘግባል፤ መንግሥትም ሲያጠፋ እንደዛው...አንዳንዴ መሀል ላይ ሲቆም ታያለህ...ይሄ ደግሞ ሰዎች የእኛ ነው ካሉህ ሁልጊዜ ስለእነሱ ማውራት አለበት ብለው ስለሚያምኑ ነው። የጋዜጣውን ባለቤት አስረው...በአንድ ጉዳይ ላይ የሠራን ጋዜጠኛ ከሀገር እንዲወጣ አድርገዋለል።

ባለፉት ሁለት ዓመታት USAI ካንትሪ ዳይሬክተር ቤት እየተከራየች፤ ሰው እያሠራች ገንዘብ ሳትከፍል እየኮበለለች በማስቸገሯ...ጄኔሩ ድረስ ሄደን ሠርተናል...አሁን ስትኖር ልትባርር አንድሆን ሰምተናል። ጋዜጣ ለሀብታም የሚቆም ከሆነ እሱ if it is ...it is publicity. ገንዘብ ስላቸው ማስታወቂያ በመግዛት..በገንዘብ በመግዛት ስማቸውን ሊያድሱ ይችላሉ..ሰለዚህ ጋዜጣው ሀብት ለሌላቸው ነገር ግን በደል ስለሚደርስባቸው ግለሰቦች፣ቡድኖች ብዙ ጊዜ ከፍተኛ ሽፋን ሲሰጥ ነው የኖረው ሪፖርተር።

ኤዲቶሪያል ፖሊሲው በጣም ነጻ ነው። አልፎ አልፎ ግን አንድም ከጋዜጠኛው ችግር አልያም ከአመራሮች በሚመነጭ ግላዊ እይታ ጠንክር ያሉ ጉዳዮች እንዳይዘገቡ ሊደረግ ይችላል። ስሜታዊ በሆነ መልኩ ወይም አንድን ወገን ብቻ በሚጎዳ መልኩ ብቻ ዘገባው እየተሠራ ከሆነ ኤዲተሮች ሊያስቆሙህ ይችላሉ

ሪሶርስ የለም...እንኳን ክፍለሀገር እና ሌላ ሩቅ ቦታዎች ሄደን ለመሥራት ቀርቶ እዚሁ አዲስ አበባ ስንት ትልልቅ የሙስና ጉዳዮችን ለመዘገብ ጋዜጣው ለእነዚህ ዐይነት ሥራዎች በጀት እና ተያያዥ አስፈላጊ ድጋፍና ከላላ አያደርግም። መንግሥትም አብዛኛው ሙስና የሚሠራው ከመንግሥት ባለስልጣናት ጋር ባላቸው ትስስርና ራሳቸው የችግሩ ምንጩ በመሆናቸው እንዲሠራ አይፈልጉም..ከላላ አያደርጉም በሕ በኩል(ማንም የፈለገውን በአንተ ላይ ሊያደርግ ይችላል) ጋዜጣውም ዋስትና ስሌለው በእንደዚህ አይነት ጉዳዮች ይልወቅ ሌሎች መዘናኛና ቀላላልጉዳዮች ላይ ትኩረት አድርገው ነው የሚሠሩት።

ለምሳሌ ኢኮሚስትን ውሰድ..በአንድ ጉዳይ ላይ ወደ ሞያሌ ቦታ ሄዶ ለመሥራት ሲያስብ ሁለት ቦዲጋርድ፣ አንድ አስተርጓሚ እና ሾፌር አብሮ ይመደብለታል። እኛ ግን ምንም አስተማማኛ ነገር የልም። ችግር ያለበት ቦታ ልሂድ ብትል ህልም ነው። መንግስትም የጋዜጣን ጥቅም አላወቀም። አሁን ባፈው የጋዜጣውን መጠን ቀነሱብን፤ በ30% ጨመሩብን። ይሄ ግን አዲስ ዘመን ላይ ተግባራዊ አልሆነም።

ምርመራ ጋዜጠኝት እዚህ የለም..ኢትዮጵያ ውስጥም የለም። አሁን አብይ ከመምጣቱ በፊት...ከሙስና ጋር በተያያዘ ቀደም ሲል አንዳንድ በሰራናቸው ጉዳዮች ምክንያት ግን ጓደኞቻችን ተደብድበዋል...ከሀገር እንዲሰደዱ ተደርጓል። ከላላ የለም protection doesn't exist. አሁንም ሰው ባፈጠጠብን ቁጥር ምን ሊያደርጉን ይሆን እያልን ነው የምንሠራው። አቶ አማራ ጋር መወደዎል...በሜሴጅ ማንቋሽሽ...ብዙ ስቃይ ደርሶብናል። ምርመራዊ ሥራ ለመሥራት እንፈራልን...ከላላ ስለሌለ አንሞክረውም...ባለሥልጣት እጃቸው እረጅም ነው።

ሰዎች ይደውሉልሁል..... ነገር ግን በኋላ ወደ ሥራ ስንገባ ብዙም አይረዱህም..እነሱም ስለሚፈሩ..እኛ ከላላስለማንሰጣቸው ነው። ማስረጃ ደግሞ ሌላው ከባድ ፈተና ነው። ጋዜጣው ግን በራስህ ተነሳሽነት ልትሠራ ካልክ ችግር የለበትም።

ለምሳሌ ብዙዎች ፕሬስ ኮንፍረንስ ጠርተው እነሱ በሚፈልጉት መልክ ይሄን ሠርተናል ይላሉ አንድ ስለችግሮች ከጠየክ ችግር ውስጥ ነው የምትገባው። ማንም የውስጥ ችግሩ እንዲወራ አይፈልግም።

ከሚዲያ ባለቤትነት ጋር በተያያዘ...ማስታወቂያ አስነጋሪዎች ግን ባላቸው ቅርበት ችግር ፈጠረዋል...የቆረቆሮ አስመጪ የሆነ ድርጅት ከጋዜጣው ጋር የነበረውን ውል አቋርጧል። ከዛ ለመደራደር ተሞሯል። ስራው ግን ብዙም ሳንፋብት ቀረ። አንድ ሌላ እንዲሁ ኤምባሲ ሠራተኛ ከመጠን በላይ የሚከፍልበት ኪራይ 5 ሺሕ ብር ኪራይ 150 ሺሕ ነው ብሎ ይከፍላል..መንግስታዊ ያለወሆኑ ተቋማት እና ኢምባሲዎች ኢትዮጵያ ውስጥ የሚሠሩት ሙስና ወደር የለውም። ነገር ግን መረጃ ለማግኘት..ስትል ለአንድ ቢሊዮን የሙስና ቢዝነስ ..እነሱ በመቶ ወይም በሁለት መቶ ሺሕ ብር መረጃ ይደብቁብሃል።

የመረጃ ጉዳይ ሰዎች በተለያዩ መንገድ ይሰጡሃል ነገር ግን እስከመጨረሻው ልሂድ ስትል...ወገቤን ትላለህ። መረጃ በጣም አስቸጋሪ ነው። መረጃ በገንዘብ ይለወጣል...መንግስትን ጨምሮ የመረጃ...ከፍርድ ቤትና ከጋዜጣዊ መግለጫ ውጭ በጋዜጣው ሪፖርተር የሚሠሩ ግን አንድም የለም። commitment የለም። ሪሶርስ..የጋዜጣው ፍላጎት ሲደመር የሚዲያ ነፃነቱ እጅግ ከባድ ፈተና ውስጥ ነው። መሻሻል ይገባዋል።

ብዙ ሽፋኑ በዜና መልክ ነው...ለምን ለሚለው...ዜና ለመስራት ብዙ ሪሶርስ አይጠይቅም...ብዙ ወጪ የለውም። የሙስና ጉዳይ ለመሥራት ግን ብዙ ሪሶርስ...ማስረጃ...ጊዜ...እና ከላላ አስፈላጊ ናቸው። ለዚህ ነው ጉዳዩን በጥልቀት ከመሥራት ይልቅ በአጭሩ በዜና የምንሠረው..እሱም መንግሥት ወይም ፍርድ ቤት ወይም ጸረ ሙስና መግለጫ ሲሰጡ ነው።

ጃዋርን ለምንድን ነው ምርምር የማናደርግበት...ሚሊኒየም አዳራሽ ብዙ ሺሕ ብር ሰብስቧል...ያ ብር የት ደረሰ..ምክንያቱም ያ ብር በግልጽ ሕዝብ አውቆት ነው የሰበሰበው...እና የት ደረሰ ብሎ መጠየቅ አልተቻለም። ሌላው 5 ሺሕ ዶላር ኢትዮጵያ ውስጥ ቤት ተከራይቷል ይሄ እንዴት ነው ብሎ ለመሥራት...ግን መጠየቅ አልተለመደም...ሲስተሙ ደካማ ነው። መንግሥትና እነዚህ ትልልቅ ገንዘብና እውቅና ያላቸው ሰዎች የሚሠሩት ለመፈተሽ አቅሙም የለህም...ሪሶርሱም የለህም..አንዳይ ጋዜጣውም ብዙ መዘጋት ስለማይፈልግ...ወደዚህ ሥራ መግባት አይፈለግም። ለዚህ ነው ከዜና ውጭ በርእሰ አንቀጽ መልኩ ሆነ በዝርዝር ይዞ መውጣት ያልተቻለው። ቀላሉ መንገድ..መንግሥትና የሚመለከታቸው አካላት በሚሰጡህ መረጃ መሠረት ዜና አድርገህ ትዘጋግላለህ በቃ። ብዙ መረጃዎች ኢትዮጵያ ውስጥ ግላዊ አሳቦች ወይም opinion ናቸው። ከፍርድ ቤትና ከጋዜጣዊ መግለጫ ውጭ በጋዜጣው ሪፖርተር የሚሠሩ ግን አንድም የለም። commitment የለም። ሪሶርስ..የጋዜጣው ፍላጎት ሲደመር የሚዲያ ነፃነቱ እጅግ ከባድ ፈተና ውስጥ ነው። መሻሻል ይገባዋል።

እናም ሚዲያዎች በሙስና ጉዳይ watchdog ሳይሆኑ... ቀድመው ችግሩ ያለበት ቦታ ችግሩን በማጋለጥ ... የሚመለከተው አካል ክትትልና ውሳኔ እንዲሰጥ የመረጃ ምንጭ ከመሆን ይልቅ ሚዲያዎች ከመንገሥት መግለጫ ተከታይ ሆነዋል ይላል።

በኢትዮጵያ ውስጥ የመንግሥት ተቋማት ብቻ ሳይሆኑ መንግሥታዊ ያልሆነ ተቋማት ብዙ ሙስና ውስጥ ችግር አለባቸው.... ምንም accountable አላደረግናቸውም። ሰባት ሚሊዮን ሕዝብ መገባዘን ይላሉ... ግን ማን ነው ቼክ የሚያደርገው... ኦሮሚያ ክልል መቶ ቤት ሠራን ይላሉ... ማን ነው ቼክ ማድረግ የሚችለው ስትጠይቃቸው.... እንድትጠይቃቸው ደግሞ አይፈቅዱልህም። ውስብስብ ነው። ሁሉንም በገንዘብ ነው የሚያሳስሩት። የማይገባ ቤት ከመጠን በላይ ብር ተከራይተው... ጠያቂ የላቸውም። የUNDP ከፍተኛ ሃላፊ ሰው በ13 ሺሕ ዶላር ነው ቤት የተከራየው... ቤቱን ብታየው.. ለምን ብለህ ትጠይቃለህ.. በማን ስም እየለመኑ እያመጡ ነው እንደዚህ ተገቢ ያልሆነ ሥራ የሚሠሩት ብለህ መጠየቅ ከባድ ነው። ብቻ ብዙ ሥራ አለ። ኢትዮጵያ ውስጥ NGO's ጋዜጠኛ ለምን ብሎ እንዳይጠይቅ ተገቢ ባልሆነ እና ከፍተኛ አበል እየከፈሉ... ለምሳሌ አንድ ታዋቂ የተባበሩት መንግሥታት ድርጅት አምቡላንስ ለሶማሌ ክልል ሰጠናል ብሎ ጋዜጠኞችን ጠርቶ ሲያበቃ እኔ የታሉ ብየ ስጠይቅ... ሌላ ጊዜ አሉኝ ይህ ነው ችግሩ accountable አላደረግናቸውም። (corruption index ደግሞ ኢትዮጵያ ውስጥ የሙስና ምንጭ ብሎ ያስቀመጣቸው የመንግሥት ተቋማትን ብቻ ነው ይህ ተቃራኒ ነው).... የሙስና ጉዳዮችን እንዳይጠየቅ አደርገውታል... መንግሥት በማሠረርና በማሳደድ ብሎም መረጃ በመደበቅ... ባለሥልጣናት ስልጣናቸውን በመመካት ጋዜጣነውን በማስፈራራት በገንዘብ በመደለል ብሎም በአለቀቃቀው በኩል ከሥራ ገለል እንዲደረግ... የቢዝነስ ሰዎች በገንዘባቸውና አንዳድ የመንግሥት ባለስልጣናትን በመወዳጀት።

2. Informant two ሪፖርተር ጋዜጣ

ብዙ ትኩረት የሚያደርገው.. ሀረጋዊ ፖለቲካው፣ ማኅበራዊና ኢኮኖሚያዊ ጉዳይ ነው። ባለፉት ሁለት ብቻ ሳይሆን ከአራት ዓመት ጀምሮ ሪፖርተር ያተኩር የነበረው.... ፖለቲካዊ ጉዳይ ነበር ኩረቱ። እነሱም በኦሮሚያ ክልል ማስተር ፕላን.. ኢህአዴግ ውስጥ የተፈጠው አለመግባባት.. በአማራ ክልል ውስጥ የነበረው ግድያ... የሰዎች መገደል.. መፈናቀል... ጉዳዮች ላይ ትኩረት አድርገን ነበር። ከመጀመሪያው አስቸኳይ ጊዜ አዋጅ በኋላ ቱሪዝም መቀዛቀዝ.. የሰርቪስ ሴክተር (ሠራተኛው መቀዛቀዝ) ትልቅ ትኩረት ነበረን።

የሙስና ዘገባን በተመለከተ በቀድሞው ጠቅላይ ሚኒስትር ሃይለማርያም ጊዜ መንግሥት የእስር ዘመጃ ሲጀምር... በፍርድ ቤት የሚመላለሱት ላይ ትኩረት ስናደርግ ነበር። በአብይ ጊዜ... አሁን እንደ ሜቴክ እና የሪል ስቴት ድርጅት መሪዎች እየታሰሩ ነው። ከዚህ በፊትም .ስኳር ኮርፖሬሽን ... ያዩ ማዳበሪያ ላይ... በዜና መልክ መንግሥት የሚለውን ተከትለን ዘግበናል። ከዚህ ውጭ ግን እኛ በራሳችን አቅደን እዚህ ቦታ እንዲህ እየተደረገ ነው በሚል አንድም የሠራነው የለም። ምክንያቱ የሀገሪቱ የፕሬስ ነጻነት... ነው... አንቀጽ 29 ተደፍጥሏል። በ2010ዓ.ም የፕሬስ ነጻነትና የመረጃ ነጻነት አንድ ላይ ወጡ... ነገር ግን... እንደፈለክ

ተንቀሳቅሰህ እንዳትሠራ ያደርግሃል። ጥቆማ ይመጣል...ግን መረጃ ማን ይስጠን...ምንም...እንባ ጠባቂ ተቋም የሚባለው እንደ ሞግዚትነቱ እረ ባካችሁ ስንል...ሁል ጊዜ እንዲህ እናደርጋለን እየተባለ...ምንም መሥራት አልተቻለም። በአንድ ሕዝብ ግኑኝነት መልካም ፈቃድ ነው መረጃ የምታገኘው። ዳር ድንበር የማይታወቅ የብሄራዊ ደህንነት አመክንዮ መረጃ ማግኘት ከባድ ነው።

የህግ ማእቀፍ...የብሄራዊ ድደህንነት...የመረጃ ነጻነቱ እና የሚዲያ ነጻነቱ የሙስና ዘገባን ከባድ አድርጎታል። ጋዜጠኛው እና ኤዲተሩ...የሙስና ዘገባን እንደ ቀላል አያዩትም። ዝም ብሎ ሰዎች ስለጠቆሙህ...የሆነ መረጃ ስላለህ ብቻ አትሠራውም...ማስረጃ...መረጃ...ማረጋገጥ ይጠይቃል።

ከፍተኛ ጥፋት የሚከናወኑባቸው መሬት ወረራ...ጋምቤላ ውስጥ ብዙ ተደርጓል። የእንግሊዝ ኩባንያ ኢትዮጵያ ውስጥ እንዲገባ ከተደረገበኋላ በጣም ብዙ ሄክታር ይወሰድና ጫካውን መንጥሮ...የሞተር ዘይት እንዲያመርትና ወደ ውጭ እንዲልክ በሚል...በኋላ ግን ያ ኩባንያ ተመልሶ እንዲወጣ ከተደደረገ በኋላ የተወሰኑ ቡድኖች እንዲወሩት ነው የተደረገው...የህንድ ካምፓኒ...ሩዝ አመርታለሁ ብሎ ጣውላ ሲያመርት ጽፈናል..ነገር ግን ከፍተኛ የሆኑ መንግሥት ባለስልጣናት ጨምሮ ባለኩባንያዎች ከፍተኛ ወከባና እንግልት..ብሎም እስር ነው የደረሰብን። ጋዜጠኛው እንዲሰደድ ሆኗል።

ከዛ በኋላ ግን በፓርላማ ወይም በመንግሥት የፖሊስ፣ ፍርድ ቤት...እና መሰል ተቋም ሪፖርት እስኪወጣ ጠብቀን ካልሆነ ስለሙስና ስንዘግብ አልነበረም። የአስር ሚሊዮን ብር ምርት ፈላጊ አጦ ...ግን ማንን ጠቅሰን እንዘግብ።

የሪፖርተር ባለቤትን በተመለከተ...የሙስናን ዘገባ ያሠራል ወይስ አያሠራም የሚለው...ባለቤቱ እንዲህ አድርጎ ላይል ይችላል። ግን አንዳንድ የማያግቡን ሊኖሩ ይችላሉ። ግን ዋና በምንላቸው እንደ ሙስና ዘገባ ግን...ብዙም አይደለም። ከማስታወቂያ አስነጋሪዎች ጋር በተያያዘ ግን ሊፋን ሞተርስ...ጋር በተያያዘ ፍርድ ቤት ያገኘውን ጉዳይ ስንዘግብ ሊፋን ሞተርስ በቀጥታ ከሪፖርተር ጋር ያለውን ውል ነው ያቋረጠው። እንዲህ አይነት ፈተናዎች ነበሩ። ስማችን አጥፍሃል ይሉሃል። ከአለም ገነት ቆርቆሮ ጋር በተያያዘም..መንግሥት ነው ክስ የመሠረተው ነገር ግን እኛ ላይ መጠው እናንተም ..ያለፈቃድ የተዘገበው ብለው ..ፍርድ ቤት በአደባባይ ከሶ ግን..እኛን..ለምን ይላሉ።

በሙስና ዘገባ ላይ ብዙ ተጽእኖ ያላቸው..ፖለቲከኞች ናቸው...የተቃዋሚ ፓርቲዎችን ጨምሮ...ለቢሮ የተሰጣቸውን ቤት ሽንሽና ያከራያሉ..የምርጫ ቦርድ ገንዘብ ክፍፍል ብዙ ዘረፋዎችን ያካሂዳሉ...ከዛ ስማችን ያጠፋሉ ብለው ከሰሱን...ከዛ አንድ የአህአዴግ ተወካይ የሆነ ሰው እኛ በምንሰጣቸው ገንዘብ ምን አገባችሁ እያሉ ሲያስፈራሩን ነበር። ቢዝነስ ኮሚኒቲው በጣም ማፍያ ናቸው። ከፍተኛ ሙስና ከመንግሥት ባለስልጣናት ጋር እየተወዳጁ መረጃና ማስረጃ በገንዘብ እየደለሉ...ለህትመት ሚዲያዎች ከፍተኛ ችግር እየፈጠረ ያሉት እነሱ ናቸው። የሙስና ዘገባን ገና ለመጀመር ስትል የቢዝነስ ኮሚኒቲው በብር ጋዜጠኛ

ያስደበድባሉ። ዳሽን ቢራ በራሱ መኪና ፖሊስ ይዞ መጦ አንዱ ጋዜጠኛችን አንጠልጥሎ ወስዶ ያቃል። አንዱ ተሾመ የሚባል ልጅ በሽጉጥ እያስፈራሩ ሊገልጉ ሲያስችግሩት ወደ ውጭ ተሰዷል። ሪል ስቴት በተመለከተ..ታግደው እየተመረመሩ ሳሉ..እንዴት ስማችን ትጠቅሳላችሁ ብለው..ጮሁ...እና ነገ እኛ ጋር ማስታወቂያ እንደማያስነገሩ እናቃለን። ለምሳሌ ጋና ውስጥ በአንድ ፖለቲከኛ ትእዛዝ የተገደለው ጋዜጠኛ ...አፍሪቃ ውስጥ የሙስና ዘገባ ምን ያክል ዋጋ እንደሚያስከፍል ቀላል ማሳያ ነው። ሕይወትህ ነው ሚመጡት...ስልጣንና ገንዘብ ያላቸው።

የኢትዮጵያ ሚዲያ እኮ የትኛውንም ኢንቨስትመንት መሰብ አልቻለም። እነ ኬኒያና ታንዛኒ ግን ብዙ የጭ ሚዲያዎች አሉ..ሌላው ቢቀር ብዙ ኮርስፖንዳንት ቢሮ አላቸው። ያው ታስረው የወጡ የተለመዱ ሰዎች ናቸው መልሰው ሚዲያው ላይ ይሰማራሉ።

በዜና መልክ ለምን ሠራን ከመንግሥት በዘመቻ አልፎ አልፎ መግለጫ ከሚሰጠው ይልቅ..ፍርድቤት የቀረቡ...ፓርላማ ላይ የቀረቡ...ናቸው ምንጮቻን የነበሩት። ብዙዎቹ። እኛ ቀድሞን መሥራት አልቻልንም። ከላይ ባነሳናቸው ምክንያቶች። የፕሬስ ነጻነቱ እና የመረጃ ነጻነቱ በሙሰኛ ባለስልጣናትና በሙሰኛ በለሀብቶች የተቀፈደደ ነው። ከሕግ ማእቀፍ በተጨማሪ። መንግሥት ሆን ብሎ ሚዲያዎችን እንዲጠሉ አድርጓል። እሞክራለሁ ብለህ ስትንቀሳቀስ ብትገኝ..ችግር ነው።

ከዜና ባሻገር በርእሰ አንቀጽ በኩል...ያልጸፍንበት ምክንያት..የሰው ሕይወት ይቀድማል ነበር ምልሱ። የህግ የበላይነት...ስለሰው ሞት..ምናምን ነበር ጉዳዩ። 2.8 ሚሊዮን ሕዝብ በተፈናቀለበት ጊዜያት...ስለሙስና መዘገብ ሌግገሪ (ቅንጦት) ነበር ለእኛ ብለዋል።

በአጠቃላይ ፈተናው ከሙስና ዘገባ ጋር በተያያዘ...እዚህ ሀገር ብዙ ችግር ፈጣሪዎች ባለስልጣናት አሁንም ሥራ ላይ ናቸው። ነገር ግን እንዴት በየትኛው የሚዲያ ነጻነትና የመረጃ ሁኔታ እንዴት መሥራት ይቻላል። የፕሬስ አዋጆች...ለመንግሥት እጁ ረዝሞ... በልዩ ልዩ ቅጣቶች የሚያሸማቅቅ ነው። አፋኝ ነው። ሰዎች ሚዲያው ላይ ኢንቨስት እንዳያደርጉ ፍላጎት እንዳይኖር የሚያደርግ ነው። ምን አልባት አሁን አዲሱ የፕሬስ ታስክ ኮሚሽን እንደተባለው ሕጎችን ከልሶ፣...በደንብ የሚያሳራ ነገር ለመፍጠር ከቻለ የተሻለ ሥራ ይሠራል ባይ ነኝ። ግን አሁንም መስቀለኛ መንድ ነን። ሰውየውና ፈረሱ ተቀይሯል ብለህ ብታስብና መግረፊያው አሁንም ካለ ግን (ካልተቀየረች) አሁንም የሙስና ዘገባ ኢትዮጵያ ውስጥ ህልም ነው ብለዋል። የአፍሪካ ተሞክሮ ከላይ ያነሣውን አባባል እውን ያደረገ ነውና። መፍትሄው ..መንግሥት ሕግ ማስከበር መቻል አለበት...ግለሰቦች ወይም ቡድኖች ከሕግ በላይ መሆናቸውን ማቆም አለባቸው። ሙያው እንዲወደድና እንዲከበር አሳሪ የሚዲያ ሕጎች መሻሻል አለባቸው። ሃላፊነትህን እንድትወጣ አጋዥ የሆነ ስነምግባር ያለው እንዲሆን መታገዝ ዘለበት። ሚዲያ ገለልተኛና ነጻ ሆኖ እንዲሠራና በስነ ምግባር ታንጾ እንዲቀጥል ማድረግ ነው።

3. Informant three

ሪፖርተር ጋዜጣ

ኢትዮጵያ ውስጥ የሙስና ዘገባ በጣም አስቸጋሪ ከሚባሉት አንዱ ነው። ችግሩ የሚጀምረው ከሚዲያዎቹ የመሥራት ፍላጎትና ቁርጠኝነት ያንሳቸዋል ነው። ዝግጁ አይደለም። በዚች ሀገር ላይ የተንሠራፋው የሙስናና ብልሹ አሠራሮችን በማጋለጥ...ዳግም እንዳይከስት ወይም በሕግ እንዲጠይቃቸው አላደረጉም። ሁሉም ዝም ብሎ ነበር ሲመለከት የነበረው። አልፎ አልፎ ሲታዩ ወይም ሲነበቡ የነበሩት አንዳንድ የሙስና ዘገባዎችም...የአየር ሰዓት ሽፋን ወይም ገጽ መሙያ እንጅ.... (እንዲያው እንደ አንድ የሕዝብ ግንኙነት ተቋም አለን ለማለት ነው እንጅ).... ሀገራዊ ተጽእኖ አሳድሮ እንዲቀንስ የሚመለከተው በሕግ እንዲጠይቃቸውና የሕዝብና የመንግሥት ሀብት እዳይባክን ከማድረግ አኳያ ደካማ ነበሩ። ..በሰው ሃይል አደራጅተው...በጀት መድበው በቁርጠኝነት ሲሠሩ አልነበሩም ወይም በራሳቸው አግባብ ሚናቸውን ሲወጡ አልነበረም። ትልቁ ችግር የሚዲያ ሚናችን ነው ብለው አለመንቀሳቀስነው።

መንስኤው ግን ሚዲያውን የሚመሩት ሰዎች ለዚህ ዐይነት ተግባር በቂ አመራር አለመስጠትና ሚዲያው ተልእኮውን እንዳይወጣ በማድረግ ደካማ ነበሩ። ለዚህ ደግሞ ሙስና ወይም ብልሹ አሠራር ካላቸው የመንግስትና የግል ተቋማት ጋር እንዲጋጩ ወይም እንዲነካኩ ይፈልጉም። አንዳንዶቹም የችግሩ ሰለባ በመሆናቸው...ሥራው እንዲሠራ አይፈልጉም። በአጠቃላይ የሚዲያ አነሳስ ወይም ባለቤቶች..ከቢዝነስ ተቋማት ጋር በብዙ ነገር ስለሚገናኙ ስፖንሰር...የአየር ሰዓት...እነሱን ማስከፋት አይፈልጉም። እዚች ሀገር ሙስና ስር እንዲሰድ የሆነው የባለስልጣኖችና የባለሀብቶች ቅንጅት ነው። ሁሉም በታናጠልና በቡድን በልዩ ልዩ ድለላዎች...ፈተና ይሆኑብሃል። አንዱን ስትነካ.....ይቀናጁብሃል...የግሉም ቢሆን መንግስት በጀት ስለማይበጅትላቸው...ከባለሀብት ጋር...ነው ጨዋታው። ሦስተኛ..በዘርፉ የተሳማራው ጋዜጠኛ...ገንዘብ ካላቸው..ጉክበት ካላቸው ሰዎች ጋር ስለሆነ የሚፋለመው..ወደ መዝናኛው ያተኩራል። ጠላት ማፍራት አይፈልግም። በቀላሉ ራሱንም ቤተሰቡንም ይመራል ማለት ነው። መሥራት ብትፈልግ እንኳን..የሕግ ዋስትና ከላላ እንደተቋምም እንደ ግለሰብም በሙስና ጉዳይ ላይ እጁን ማስገባት አይፈልግም። ሌላው ጋዜጠኞች ገቢያቸው አነስተኛ በመሆኑ.....አንዳንድ በሙስና ወይም ምርመራ ዘገባ ላይ የሚሠማሩትን በገንዘብ መግዛት አለ...የመንግሥት ባለስልጣንና ባለሀብት ጥምረት ነው ችግሩ። አንድ ጓደኛዬ ይሠራበት የነበረውን ሚዲያ ለቆ ከወጣ በኋላ ወዲያው መኪና ገዛ....አየህ።

ሌላው የከፍተኛ ትምህርት ተቋማት በዘርፉ የተሰማሩ ባለሙያዎችን ክህሎታቸውን አንዲያሻሽሉ እገዛ አያደርግም። አዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲን ብትወስድ...በህዝብ ግንኙነትና በመልቲ ሚዲያ ነው እንጅ በምርመራ ጋዜጠኝነት ያለውን ከፍተኛ ለመሙላት የተሸለ ሠልጠናና ዝግጁት እዲኖራቸው በጥናት የታገዘ ሙያው ድጋፍ አያደርጉም። እዚህ አገር ላይ የግጭት ሪፖርትና የምርመራ ዘገባ ላይ ሥራ መሥራት (ሙያውን ለማሻሻል እድል የለውም) ያስስፈልጋል።

የሚዲያ ባለቤትነት ጋር በተያያዘ...በመንግሥት...በንግድና በማህበረሰቡ የተያዘ ነው። እኔ በንግድ ሚዲያና በህዝብ ሚዲያ ሠርቻለሁ። የግል የንግድ ሚዲያዎች የሚተዳደሩት በማስታወቂያ ነው...ይሄውም...ከከፍተኛ የመንግሥት ባለስልጣናት ጋር ባላቸው ግንኙነት ነው...እንደዚህ ካላደረጉ ያ ባለስልጣን ለዛ የሚዲያ ድርጅት የማስታወቂያ አይፈቅድም። በጥቅምና በኔትወርክ ነው የሚሠራው። ለዛ የሙስና ስራን ኢትዮጵያ ውስጥ ከባድ የሚያደርገው። እናም ያንን ገቢ ላለማጣት በሙስና ጉዳይ ላይ መካካትን አይፈልጉም። የመንግሥትም ሚዲያ ብትለው...አይል ሊቢያ ላይ ሠራተኞች የነዳጅ ቅሽባ ሠርተዋል በሚል ሰማሁና...ጉዳዩን ሳጣራ...እነዚህ ሹፌሮች ግን ከጅቡቲ አምጥተው በስርዓት አምጥተው እንዳስረከቡ...ቦቸር ነበራቸው። እናም ከሥራ ተባረሩ። ግን ጉዳዩ..የአይል ሊቢያ ሃላፊ..እኔ ከምሠራበት ሚዲያ ሃላፊ ጋር ጓደኛ በመሆኑ...የተሠራው ዘገባ ስህተት ነው በሚል አስተባብል ተባልኩ። እኔም አባርሩኝ እንጂ አላስተካክልም በሚል ብዙ መከራ ደርሶብኛል። ምክንያቱም የጋዜጠኛነት ምርመራዊ ባህሪ አሟልቶ ነበር የሠራሁት። ሌላው አንድ የጨረታ ግዢ ሙስና ተኮር የግዥ አጻጻም ስህተት በምሠራበት ወቅት...የተባለው ተቋም መረጃ ለመሰብሰብ ስሄድ የህዝብ ግንኙነቱ እሽ ብሎ ቢሮ ስደርስ ግን በጥበቃ ነው ያስወጣኝ። ጉዳዩ በዚህ አላበቃም...ያ ብልሹ አሠራርና ሙስና ለምን አየር ላይ ዋለ ወይም ተነካ በሚል...ይሄን ካውንተር አታክ ለማድረግ የዚያ ሃላፊ ተቋም ጋዜጣዊ መግለጫ ሰጠ። በኋላም ላሥርህ እችላለሁ...አንተ የምትሠራበት ሚዲያ የእኛ ነው አለ። እናም በኋላ እኔ ከምሰራት ሚዲያ ተቋም አልፎ...የብሮድስት ባለስልጣን ደርሶ...ብሮድካስት ባለስልጣንም የሆነ ቡድን አቋቁሞ የተሠራው ዘገባ ሲታይ ቡድኑ ለሁለት ተከፈለ...ይሄ የሆነው በነበረው የጥቅም ትስስር ነበር። እና የመንግስት ሚዲያ የሆኑ ተቋማትም እንዲህ ከባለስልጣናትና ገንዘብ ካቸው ጋር ባላቸው ትስስር ነው ችግር የሚፈጥሩት። የሚዲያ አመራሮች እና የሚዲያ ባለቤቶች ከባለስልጣናት እና ከባለሀብቶች ጋር በሚፈጥሩት የጥቅም ትስስር ጋዜጠኞች Abuse ያደርጉታል። እንዲያው በራስህ ተነሳሽነት ሾልክህ ልስራ ስትል ያዋክቡሃል። የኦኔርስ ownership ችግር ምንድን ነው መሰለህ...እንደ ሚዲያ ተቋም ለሙስና ዘገባ ትኩረት አለመስጠት፣ በጀት አለመመደብ፣ በቂ የሰው ሃይል አለማደራጀት...የሙስና ዘገባን የሚሠራ ቡድን (ቲም) የላቸውም። ሌላው ከሱልጋታ በሚኒባስ አንድ ሺሕ ኪሎ ግራም ሥጋ ወደ አዲስ አበባ ሲመጣ ተይዞ...የጉሰሌ ክፍለ ከተማ ፖሊስ መምሪያ...ሌሊት 6 ሰዓት ይዞታል ተብሎ... ጥቆማው ደርሶን ጧት ስንሄድ የለም ተባልን። ከቁራ ድርጅት ጉዳዩን ሰምተው ስጋውን ሊረከቡ ሲመጡ የለም...እና ስጋው የት ደረሰ ብዬ ሠራሁት። ከዛ በኋላ ፖሊስ በኤገዚቢትነት የያዘውን ጉዳይ በአምስት ሰዓት ልዩነት ውስጥ የለም ሲል...በዚህ ወቅት የአዲስ አበባ ፖሊስ ኮሚሽን የሕግ ክፍል በቀጥታ እኔ ጋር ደውሎ ፖሊስና ሕዝብን የሚያጋጭ ዘገባ ስለሠራህ መጠህ ቃልህን እንድትሰጥ ነው ያለኝ። እኔም ሚዛናዊና ስነ ምግባራዊ ነበር ዘገባዬ እና የማምንበትን ነው የሰራሁት ምጥቼ ቃሌን የምሰጥበት ምክንያት የለም አልኳቸው። አለቆቼም በተቋሙ በኩል የሚገባውን መልስ ተጠየቁ። ግን የህግ አካላትም ከጋዜጠኛው ጎን ከመቆም ይልቅ ለጥፍት ወገን ከለላ በመሆን ችግር ፈጣሪ ናቸው።

የመረጃ ነጻነቱስ...የመረጃ ምንጭ ከተለያዩ አካላት ጥቆማ ሊደርስና ልትሠራ ትችላለህ...ነገር ግን...በጉዳዩ (በሙስና) መረጃ ለመስጠት ስትነሣ...ከራሱ ከመንግሥት ተቋማት ጀምሮ ስቃይነው.. ቀላል አይደለም። በየተቋማቱ ያሉ የህዝብ ግንኙነቶች ....ዋና ችግር ፈጣሪዎች ናቸው። መረጃ ይደብቃሉ...የመረጃ ነጻነት አዋጁ እስከነችግሩ...በስንት ቀን መስጠት እያለባቸው...ይደብቃሉ...አንተን ያሸማቀቅቃሉ...ከአለቆች ጋር ይደዋወሉብሃል...ከዚህ አልፏል ስትሄድ ደግሞ..ወደ ክስና ስም ማጥፋት ዘመቻ ይሄዳሉ። ይህ ሁሉም ተቋማት ይመለከታል።

ሌላው ሀብረተሰቡ ጥቆማ ቢሰጥህም....ዝርዝር መረጃ ለመስጠት ፈቃደኛ አይደለም። የህግ ከለላ ዋስትና የለውም...ይፈራል.....ከሥራ ይባረራል...በተለይብልሹ አሠራር ላይ። አንድ ተቋም የሚሠሩ ሠራተኞች..በአንድ ሙስናና ብልሹ አሠራር ሰነድ እና ማስረጃ ቢኖራቸውም....መረጃውን ለመስጠት ፈቃደኛ አይደሉም። ለምሳሌ በአይል የነዳጅ አስመጪ ድርጅት ይሠሩ የነበሩ 18 ሰራተኞች ለምን መረጃ ሰጣችሁ ተብሎ የአንድ ወር ደመወዝ ተቀጠዋል። ከደረጃ ዝቅ ማለት...አስቸጋሪና ምቹ ባልሆኑ ቦታዎች ተመድበው ወይም ተቀይረው እንዲሠሩ ተደርገዋል። አንዳንዴ...የሕግ አካላት እንደ ፖሊስ ያሉ አካላት መረጃ ይደብቃሉ። የሕዝብ እንባ ጠባቂ ተቋም..መረጃ አልሰጥም በሚል ተቋምና ግለሰቦች ላይ ማስተካከያ እንዲያደርግ ብሎም ክስ እስከመመስረት መድረስ ነበረባቸው..ግን አላደረጉትም። የማሸመገል በሚመስል...አጉል የቃል ንግግር ያለፈ ተግባር ሲወስዱ አልታዩም። የህግ ክፍተት አለባቸው። መረጃ የመንግስት ሀብት አይደለም...በአደራ እንዲይዝ ነው እንጅ የህዝብ ነው። ሕዝብ ደግሞ በሀብቱ እንዳይጠቀም ነው እያደረጉት ያሉት። ሚዲያ ደግሞ በአደራ መልክ ከተሰጠው ተቋምና ልዩልዩ አካላት ተቀብሎ የሚገባውን ሥራ እንዳየሠራ እያደረጉ ነው። የግዛቤ ችግር አለ። ይህ ሁሉ ሚዲያ ሃላፊነቱን እንዳይወጣ ነው የሚያደርጉት። ሌላው ራሱ የፌደራል ጸረ ሙስና ፖሊስ ኮሚሽን ተቋም ጥቆማ ደርሶት....ምንም ክስ ሳይመሰርት አንድ አመት ደብቆ ከቆየ በኋላ እኔ ጋር ደረስና...ለምን ብዬ ጥቆማው መቼ...ቀኑን አጣርቻ...ጠይቁ ከሠራሁት በኋላ...አንድ አመት ደብቆትነበር። በኋላ የሚዲያውን ሲዲ ወስደው ወደ ህግ ክፍል ወስደውታል።

ገንዘብና ሥልጣን ያላቸው አካላት....ደግሞ...አንደኛ ገንዘብና ሀብት ያላቸው...ሥራውን ተወው ብለው ይደራደሩሃል...ለምሳሌ..አንድ ተቋም እኔ ልሠራ የነበረውን የሙስና ዘገባ በተለያዩ ምክንያቶች እንዳቆም ከተደረገ በኋላ ሌላ ሚዲያ ያለ ሰው ጥቆማው ደርሶ...ነገር ግን በድርድር የሚገባውን ወስዶ ጉዳዩ በአጭሩ እንዲቀር ተደርጓል። ባለስልጣናት አስፈላጊውን ጥቅማጥቅም በማመቻቸት....ባለሀብቶችም ሙያህን በገንዘብ እንድትሸጥላቸው ነው የሚፈልጉት። ሃላፊትህን..ስነምግባርን ረስተህ...በገንዘብ...የደራደሩሃል...ምክንያቱም ጋዜጠኞች ክፍያ ትንሽ እንድሆን ያቃሉ። አንዳንዴ እምቢ ካልክ...በቀጥታ ለሚዲያ አመራሮች ደውለው የለፋህበት ጉዳይ ጫፍ ከደረሰ በኋላ እንዳይተላለፍ ያደርጋሉ። ካልሆነ አንድ የበላይ ባለስልጣን ለመዲያ ሃላፊው ደውሎ...የፈለገውን ያስደርጋል። ይህ አልሆን ካላቸው በብርድካስት ባለስልጣን በኩል ይከስሱሃል። ከዛ ተገቢ አይደለም እያሉ ደብዳቤ ለሚዲያው እንዲጸፍ ያደርጋሉ። ቦታህን...ኑሮህን አጥንተው...ሰው በገንዘብ ገዝተው...መውጫ መግቢያ ያሳጡሃል።

ስለዚህ በየዘርፉ ከላይ የተጠቀሱት ናቸው...ችግሮቹ...አንድ የመጨረሻ በአዲስ አበባ ዙሪያ እየተፈጸመ ስለነበረው የመሬት ወረራና ሙስና...ዘገባ በቲም ስንሠራ የኦሮሚያ ክልል ዞን አስተዳደር ለጋዜጠኞች የኦነግን ተግባር ነው እያስፈጸሙ በሚል የክስና የእስር ደብዳቤ ይዘው መጡ...በወቅቱ የነበረው የሚዲያ አመራር ግን ተከራክረው የተሠራው ዘገባ በማስረጃ አስደግፈው ትክክል መሆኑን ካስረዱ በኋላ ከፈለጋችሁ እኔን እስሩ ብለው አድነውናል። እንዲህ አይነት የሚዲያ አመራር መምጣት አለባቸው ወደ ሚዲያው..በሙያው የሰለጠኑ...ልምድ ያላቸው...በየጊዜው ራሳቸውን የሚያበቁና ለሙያው ስነምግባር የሚያደሉ መሆን አለባቸው። ከተቋም ተቋም ይለያያል ተጽእኖው።

ግን ከኢትዮጵያ ተጨባጭ ሁኔታ ባለሀብቶችና ከፍተኛ ባለስልጣናት ተደራጅተውና ተቀናጅተው በሚሰርፉባት ሀገር... የሙስናን ዘገባ አጋልጣለሁ ማለት...ከፍተኛ የሆነ መስዋትነት...ወከባ...ከሥራ መፈናቀል...ብሎም አገርን ጥሎ መውጣት ያመጣብሃል።