



**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY**

**SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATION GRADUATE  
STUDIES**

**CONTENT ANALYSIS OF INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM PROGRAMS  
IN ADDIS MEDIA NETWORK (AMN); THE CASE OF “MIRMERA”  
INVESTIGATIVE PROGRAMS.**

**BY: ANWAR AHMED**

**ADDIS ABABA**

**ETHIOPIA**

**JULY, 2022**

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND**  
**COMUNICATION PRESENTED IN PARTIAL FILFILMENT OF THE**  
**REQUARMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTERS OF ART IN**  
**JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATION.**

**BY: ANWAR AHMED**

**ADVISO R: YOHANNES SHIFERAW(PhD)**

**ADDIS ABABA**

**ETHIOPIA**

**JULY,2022**

**Approval**

This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Anwar Ahmed entitled: Content Analysis of Investigative journalism programs in Addis Media Network (AMN); The case of “Mirmera” Investigative programs. And submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of masters of arts journalism and communication complies with the regulations of the university and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality signed by the examining committee:

Examiner-----sig.-----date-----

Examiner-----sig.-----date-----

Advisor -----sig.-----date-----

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Chair of department or graduate coordinator

### **Declaration**

I declare that this report is my unaided word, it is submitted for the degree of masters of art by course work and research report in the department of journalism and communication (multimedia) at Addis Ababa University.

It has not been submitted before, for any other Degree or examination at any university.

Researcher name: Anwar Ahmed

Signature-----

## **Dedication**

I dedicate this thesis to my family, my mother Mulu Mohammed and my father Ahmed Hamza with due respect, love, and thanks and with all the best wishes; particularly during the course of my postgraduate study. I didn't forget tribute for what they had done for me throughout my life, I know the price you paid is unforgettable for my existence and let the almighty Allah gives both of you a prosperous life a longer while. Long live.

## **Abstract**

This study was conducted to Content Analysis Of Investigative journalism programs in Addis Media Network (AMN); The case of “Mirmera” Investigative programs. to conduct that the researcher employed a qualitative approach, in depth interview and content analysis of five sample investigative programs broadcasted from January 2019 to January 2020 in AMN were used to the data and eight sample respondents were also used to collect data for the research. To inform the study Agenda setting, social responsibility and Framing theories are used as a theoretical frame work. The AMN “Mirmera” investigative program uses major sources from producer’s observation, the community and the organization plan itself. Investigative programs of Addis Media Network (AMN) mainly focuses on issues of corruption, construction, land grabbing, home title deeds, and human right issues. But the programs lack depth in entertaining various societal issues; like religious and politics. The finding of the study indicated that government high ranking officials including AMN managers act in unorthodox way in prohibiting some sensitive and depth investigative programs to be aired because of sources. Poor service delivery, shortage of time to conduct an in-depth investigation, lack of skilled and well-trained human power, lack of budget, unnecessary interference from higher officials, lack of logistics, organizational pressure and absence of law protection for investigative journalists are the main challenges of investigative journalism Addis Media Network (AMN).

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# CHAPTER ONE

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of the study

The media in its adversarial role have their roots in investigative journalism, which began in earnest during the late 18th century. During that time U.S. and British newspapers began to question official actions and seek information from other sources. According to (Burgh ,2000) Investigative journalism can be called as a gift of enlightenment because journalism had been divided in different genres, where rationalism increased intellectual discourse opened and scientific approaches were applied to identify truth from facts, therefore the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century was a period of professional development in the history of journalism and birth of investigative journalism.

Investigative journalism is when reporters focus on a single specific issue that demands public accountability to create an in-depth news story or series of articles from interviews, satellite imagery, data, and historical media. Some media outlets are specifically focused around on a history of watchdog journalism as part of their more holistic news output.

Unlike breaking news reporters, investigative journalists will usually spend weeks (or months) following up on leads and interviewing sources to piece together their article. Some information will already be in the public record, but needs attention to make sense in context. Other times, investigative journalists will invest significant time gaining the trust of their sources, so they feel safe and comfortable going on the record.

So, to make sure that investigative journalist well practiced and achieve the goal of the phenomena we have to analyze the content of investigative journalism programs news produced by journalists. Researchers regard content analysis as a flexible method for analyzing text data (Cavanagh, 1997). The specific type of content analysis approach chosen by a researcher varies with the theoretical and substantive interests of the researcher and the problem being studied (Weber, 1990). Although this flexibility has made content analysis useful for a variety of researchers, the lack of a firm definition and procedures has potentially limited the application of content analysis (Tesch, 1990).

A pertinent question that has been asked many times is what is the importance of journalism in the society? According to Rosenstiel and Kovach the primary purpose of journalism is to provide

citizens with the information they need to be free and self-governing. According to the two authors by reporting on government, business and powerful institutions, journalists one way or the other give citizens the information they need to make informed decisions. The purpose of journalism as such is not defined by technology, not by journalists or the techniques they employ but the principles and purpose of journalism are defined by something more basic, the function news plays in the lives of people, Rosenstiel and Kovach noted.

With this in mind it is also important to review the importance or the purpose of investigative journalism in a democracy. Because investigative journalism is a genre of journalism, its meaning and purpose are deeply rooted in what Kovach and Rosenstiel's calls journalism's primary purpose. Simply put, investigative journalism exists to provide the citizens with information by engaging in watchdog activities.

Locating investigative journalism's role in a democratic setup Coronel noted that high impact investigative journalism has made the media an effective and credible watchdog and boosted its credibility and support among the public. For Coronel and many others, the press as an institution is strengthened when journalists have demonstrated that they serve the public interest by uncovering malfeasance and abuse.

In this regard "In a democratic system, the primary function of the media is to act as a watchdog on government", (O'Neil 1992). Compared with the rest of the world, media's watch-dog role in Ethiopia coupled with the gigantic maladministration problem in the country, the practice of investigative journalism is not quenching across the nation's media outlets.

However, recently investigative journalism has been attempted in both state and private media for instance "Aynachin" before a decade in EBC, "Teguaz nekash" in Fana broadcasting corporate, the former "Abiy geday" and the now "Mirimera" in Addis Media Network; Addis TV are among the attempted practices in Ethiopia broadcast media. All of them strived to play the watch dog role.

Addis media network was established in 2009 independently as one of the city media. Before 2019 the station was known by another name, Addis Ababa City Mass Media Agency. Now it is called Addis Media Network. In the former time there is magazine the name called 'Addis

Metropolitan' but now the media have four outlets; ADDIS TV, ADDIS LISAN newspaper, FM 96.3 radio station and in social media and website Addis tube, Addis TV on face book and telegram.

The station's coverage throughout the country and abroad is 100 percent satellite transmission. Since its establishment the media has produced programs that inform, entertain and educate the society. Now a day; AMN have three medium of communication, Amharic, Afan Oromo and English. In light of these, the researcher intended to examine the challenges of reporters in reporting investigative stories and how investigative journalism exercised to achieve its target by analyzing their investigative program contents.

There is an effort investigative report in Addis Media Network. The research discusses content analysis of investigative reporting programs related with the current reporting of program in the case of AMN. The other issue that researcher can discuss in the study was factors affecting investigative reporting in AMN, in terms of journalism skill, policy issue, media institution editorial policy, interference from in and outside of the institution also discussed. Finally, Research finding can suggest the way forward for the media.

## **1.2. Statement of the problem**

The practice of investigative journalism, varies from country to country. In developing countries investigative journalism both at private and government owned media is not yet satisfactory. According to Kantumoya (2004), investigative journalism is still relatively new and undeveloped in the third world countries.

It means, the practice of investigative journalism is to be developed to promote democracy and development in the third world countries. Various factors such as weak legal and security environment, liable laws, media regulations, media ownership, corruption and the bureaucratic bottlenecks on media are hindering the practice in third world countries in general and in East Africa in particular (Hester and To, 1987 and Forbes, 2005).

People in leadership positions, especially senior public officials, often try to conceal vital information about wrongdoing or under-performance in their organizations from the public. Some of them are either under oath to not divulge such information, or they do so deliberately to protect themselves and their work. Investigative journalists digging to get to the bottom of a public interest matter do so in their watchdog role and as a duty they owe society.

In the event of probable difficulties in getting access to information that is being concealed, they employ various techniques to access it. The situation cannot be different in case of Ethiopia since majority of broadcast owned and controlled by the government. One of the mediums that is controlled by Ethiopian government is Addis Media Network (AMN), where this study intends to investigate. In Ethiopia media do not seem playing the “watch dog role”, which means exercising investigative journalism in their programs as it is expected.

According to Birhanu's (2009) finding concerning the practice of investigative journalism in the Ethiopian media also confirms the above idea. In Ethiopia most, investigative reporting's does not broadcast follow up stories on the covered issues. For this reason, the audience doesn't able to know the last stage of the stories. However, according to Reang and Nariddh (2007), an investigative story should aim to bring a change or correct wrong doing by using right sources in

the investigative programs. Therefore, the researcher attempts to analyze the content of investigative journalism programs produced and aired by Addis Media Network; “Mirmera investigative programs in particular.

There is a sophisticated social problem as investigative report is not studied by social science. there is no research focused on investigative journalism programs in AMN before. But the available studies did not provide the status and challenges of journalist. While reporting investigation. All research didn't show the overall challenges of doing investigative report in AMN and also other medias.

In other media there are researches conducted locally and internationally, when we see local media researches like OBN done by Chala (2019), which focuses on the challenges of journalists to contact investigative reporting, that is the research focused only journalists' challenge. It needs to conduct a research which aims at finding the challenge of reporters to report investigative issues and also the content to know the investigative reporting well prepared and broad casted. The other researcher named (Wegayehu, 2017), conducted a research titled “The practice of Investigative journalism in Fana Broadcasting Corporate, The case of ‘Teguazh Neqash’. In this research, the researcher attempts to show as the practices in FBC focused on only radio investigative programs not a content. But this paper is analyzing the content of investigative programs in Addis media network and attempted to show the reality aired by television. this means there is a gap in the platform.

when we come to international research done by Samuel Appiah Darko (2020) titled “Investigative journalism in Ghana: balancing public interest and individual privacy” this paper focused only audiences' interest and officials, but my paper intended to show how investigative programs are done professionally by using sources and how the programs entertained to show challenges the producers faces.

The main focuses of this research are identifying the extent to which Addis Ababa city resident's mal administration is addressed through the investigative program in AMN, challenges that reporter's face to report investigative stories, how the investigative programs show the reality to the audience in AMN. And also suggest possible solution for the problem identified. There are no full-pledged

researches conducted on the existing investigative practices on showing the role played and the challenges they are facing. Therefore, this research would fill these gaps.

### **1.3 Objectives of The Study**

#### **1.3.1. General Objectives**

The general objectives of the study is analyzing the content of investigative journalism programs in AMN the case of “Mirmera” TV program.

#### **1.3.2 Specific Objectives**

The specific objectives of the research would be to,

- Analyze the usage of sources in Addis Media Network “Mirmera” investigative program.
- Identify the program contents entertained in “Mirmera” program in Addis Media Network.
- Find out the challenge’s journalist face during investigative journalism.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

This study attempted to answer the following research questions:

- How Does journalists use sources to achieve investigative reporting in AMN? “Mirmera” investigative program?
- How the program contents entertained in AMN “Mirmera” investigative program?
- What are the challenges journalists face to practice investigative journalism in AMN?

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

The study describes the content analysis of “Mirmera” Investigative program in Addis media network Addis TV. The researcher hopes that, it creates opportunity for the media house by providing necessary attention towards strengthening investigative journalism practice as a professional and facing bad doings. The study may also significant for future smooth investigative journalism practices in Ethiopian broadcast media in general and in Addis media network in particular.

By revealing the watchdog role of journalism, the outcome of the study would initiate media workers to provide the public with the information that the public needs. This will play a role in increasing the credibility of media and quality of journalism. The credibility and quality of journalism can be seen when journalism plays their role of exposing the wrong doing on elected officials and entertaining different ideas free from being one sided.

The study would help AMN and other media organizations to consider their news, programs and Source selection processes. Besides, since there has not been any actual study made on the issue so far, this study could motivate academic institutions and other stakeholders for further studies on related issues. And also, the study is significant in opening door for further research on the practice of investigative journalism in Ethiopian broadcast media, audiences may benefit, policy makers. I believe, it will be useful to students of disciplines other than media studies for whom some background to investigative journalism is needed. It assumes little prior knowledge about recent investigative journalism that practitioners or those who avidly follow current affairs have.

## **1.6 Scope of the study**

As a result of time and budget constrains the scope of this research is limited on Addis Media Network Addis TV “Mirmera” investigative programs. The researcher will focus on the programs disseminated from January 2019 to January 2020 on 5(five) selected programs for analysis. Accordingly, the researcher focuses on the content analysis of “Mirmera” investigative programs and critically analyzes challenges of journalist against the use of investigative journalism in Addis Ababa City.

## **1.7 Limitation of the study**

In the meantime, the outbreak of covid 19 in the world influences not to complete with in the scheduled time, the research couldn't observe and analyses the response and feedback of city residents. because of that I use qualitative research method. Therefore, researcher in the future in similar topic may include mixed method and inculcate the response of Addis Ababa city residents. The area of the study was limited to Addis Media Network, Addis Television “mirmera” investigative programs, by conducting an in-depth interview with 8(eight) informants from the station. They are investigative program producer and editors, content director and

general director of AMN, and collecting data through an interview guide are presented the subjects of the study analyzed only five (5) purposively selected programs based on the parameters.

### **1.8 Organization of the Study**

The study contains five chapters. The first chapter deals with Introduction: Background of the study, Statement of the problem, Objectives of the study, Research questions, Significance of the study and Scope and Limitation of the study and Organization of the study. The second chapter Reviews Literature related to the study. The third chapter entertains the methodology of the study. The fourth chapter discusses the findings. And the Fifth chapter concludes and gives recommendations based on the findings.

### **9. Ethical consideration of the study**

The study considers ethical consideration and delivers special credit to scholars' literature work, which is used as citation and reference in this study. In this respect, the researcher delivers credit to those scholars who contributed to this study.

## CHAPTER TWO

### 2. Review Related Literature

#### Introduction

This part deals with reviewing of various issues that are related to the practice of investigative journalism. In addition, the underlying theoretical frameworks of this study are discussed.

#### 2.1 Defining Journalism

Various scholars define journalism in different ways. Among the scholars who describe journalism, as quoted in Hargreaves (2003), Joan Greenfield views journalism as;

*a phenomenon that can be seen in many ways, as a sixth sense, a container, a mirror, a story, a child service, a profession, an institution, a text, people, and a set of practices. (2003)*

Based on Greenfield argument, journalism is described as an additional sense of human beings where reporters smell out news. The idea of journalism as a container indicates the idea of reflecting depth information by making complex events and issues simple and understandable. The definition also treats journalism as a mirror through which journalists and media organizations present themselves to the public at large.

According to Arturo Escobar (1995), In recent time, the mass media was seen as a mobilizing agent for nation-building. notes that modernization theories have dominated development discourses, and the ‘mobilization for nation-building’ approach draws heavily from such modernization paradigms. The modernization approach was developed in the wake of World War II by scholars such as Daniel Lerner (1958), Lucien Pye (1963), Walter Rostow (1960) and Wilbur Schramm (1964).

Such scholars envisaged that economic growth could be stimulated in Third World nations by the development of entrepreneurial, industrialized, urbanized, free-market oriented and ‘modern’ culture within traditional societies. The mass media were designated an important role in promoting this modernization of culture and ways of life.

The second approach to development journalism places journalists as the government's partners in nation-building. The application of this approach was usually fundamentally similar to the mobilization approach discussed above, except that there was a strong accompanying philosophy that press freedom should be restricted according to the nation's economic priorities and development needs (Hachten 1999; Lent 1979; McQuail 1987).

Drawing from ideas promoted by Samuel P. Huntington (1968), among others, leaders of nations such as Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia upheld the view that order and stability were preconditions for the growth of successful economies and political systems.

## **2.2 The concept of Investigative Journalism**

### **Investigative Journalism**

Different scholars define Investigative Journalism differently based on the content and issues entertained in global scenario. Some scholars consider investigative reporting as watching journalism. It aims checking the abuses of those who have wealth and power. It exposes wrong doing so it can be corrected, because journalists and their patrons benefit from exposure (coronel, 2009).

According to Robert Green, an American two-time Pulitzer Prize winner for investigative journalistic work, investigative journalism is "uncovering something somebody wants to keep secret." (MacDougall, 1982). David Anderson and Peter Benjamin, in their book(1976).

The world largest nonprofit investigative journalism association defined investigative journalism as systematic in depth and original research and reporting, often involving the unearthing of secrets heavy use of public records and computer asserted reporting focus on social justice and accountability, (Editors;1983). On this regard Investigative report has direct relationship with scientific research. The difference is content wise. While the first deals with exposing big public secrets, the later entertains academic issues. The definition of investigative journalism is multifaceted (Houston, 2010).

It's also known as expose journalist, in depth journalism muckraking journalism, advocacy journalism, public service journalism, watch dog journalism and journalism of outrage. These nomenclatures come from different investigative reporting by investigative journalist in different

time based on the area and content of the investigation report. Based on future, reports conducted we may have new naming in the future. Therefore, one could identify investigative report from conventional report after looking at the content, if she/he is not familiar with the terminologies.

In this sense, investigative journalism is taken as watch dog journalism as long as it exposes wrong doings of the wealthiest and the powerful. However, the problem with this definition is, it limits abuse as if always and only committed by the wealthiest. Hence, the watch dog role must be played on any one who abuses. Investigative journalism varies according to dissimilar press traditions and conditions for journalistic practice in a country, (Waisbord,2001).

This point of view gives sound when we compare the practice of investigative journalism that dwells in the authoritarian with democrats. Consequently, what is ought to be as a principle and what is going on the ground in poor media institutions is inconsistency as on as one can easily observe in authoritarian countries. In contrary, scholars like Protess who argue it is an awkward to differentiate investigative journalism from any other kinds of journalism. He posits that, any journalist become an investigative journalist when he /she story grows in a scope and depth beyond rout line report (Protess, 1991).

Based on Porbes (2005),and according to previous other scholars together with the student researcher's belief, parameters like in-depth reporting ,long term process of planning ,information gathering and corroboration using a diverse range of sources, the application if variety of techniques to cross-examine and piece to gather meaning from fragments of information provided by various sources, independent from special interests, envisioned to serve the public trust and enrich public debate and inspiring positive change through public debate and outrage could be concluded as the basic tenets of investigative journalism.

Journalism is and has been theorized, researched, and studied worldwide by people coming from a wide variety of disciplines. Different scholars at different places have been researching journalism. In this world, it is not difficult to find colleges or universities that are engaged in teaching programs of journalism. At the same time, the field has its own international and national journals. This implies that journalism as a discipline has international principles which make the practice of journalism common across worldwide.

In decades of journalism studies, scholars have been investigating the dominant sense of what is (and should be) journalism. The following are scholars who have taken part in identifying the concepts, values and elements of journalism's ideology or the typical traits or values of journalism. They are Golding and Elliott (1979), Merritt (1995), and more recently Kovach and Rosenstiel (2001), and describe the traits of journalism as Public service.

According to Bob Greene, who was with the U.S.-based journalist organization Investigative Reporters and Editors, there are three basic elements of investigative reporting 'that the investigation be the work of the reporter, not the work of others that he is reporting; that the subject of the story involves something that is important for his or her readers to know; and that others are attempting to hide the truth of these matters from the people' (Bolch & Miller, 1978).

Investigative journalism is meant to uncover hidden facts. Aucoin (2007) describes several elements of investigative reporting: It's meant to expose information about an important issue that interests the public, it's related to an individual or organization that does not want to be part of any investigative story uncovered through journalistic investigations, and it often aims to elicit reforms. Weinberg (1996) believes that the journalist takes the initiative in reporting about issues that are important to the public, which is the essence of investigative journalism.

Journalists provide a public service (as watchdogs or 'newshounds, active collectors and disseminators of information); Objectivity: journalists are impartial, neutral, objective, fair and (thus) credible; Autonomy: journalists must be autonomous, free and independent in their work; Immediacy: journalists have a sense of immediacy, actuality and speed (inherent in the concept of 'news'); Ethics: journalists have a sense of ethics, validity and legitimacy.

To say that investigative journalism fits into cultural categories is not necessarily to diminish it. Even if investigative journalists are less autonomous in identifying wicked things and inspiring moral umbrage than popular culture might have us believe, they may nevertheless be expanding our ideas of what we should think or care about, making us think in a certain way about an event or an issue. Moreover, the claim that they are reaching for 'the truth' is not necessarily rendered absurd by the acknowledgement that there is no truth, in the sense of an absolute hard fact against which to measure their own versions, because what the investigative journalist is after, as with the historian, is a more complete version of the truth.

In 1938, Dobrée put it better ‘Most of us have ceased to believe, except provisionally, in truths, and we feel that what is important is not so much truth as the way our minds move towards truths’ (cit. in Houghton 1957:430). Our minds can move towards a more complete truth by collecting good evidence and by corroborating accounts of people who can either be shown to be disinterested or who speak from different vantage points. Thus, while moral purpose may be a defining characteristic of investigative journalism, so is attention to the evidence used to support that purpose.

In fact, Jonathon Calvert defines investigative journalism by the attention paid to the evidence: Some stories you make five calls on, some twenty. When you are making a hundred, that’s investigative journalism. The story may land in your lap it’s the substantiation that makes it an investigative story, because when you realize people are lying to you, blocking you, then you have to find different ways of getting hold of the information and it can take a lot longer. Also, you have to be very careful when you are making serious allegations against people, then the evidence really matters, (Calvert, 1999).

According to Rusbridger, all journalism is investigative to a greater or lesser extent, but investigative Journalism; though it is a bit of a tautology is that because it requires more, it’s where the investigative element is more pronounced. In the 1970s Adam Raphael did an investigation of wages paid to blacks in South Africa which required a great deal of time and effort; more recently ‘Cash for Questions’, ‘The Connection’ took up so much energy and investment as to deserve the term.

When asked what skills are of most importance to the investigative journalist, those as diverse as Phillip Knightley, Steve Haywood and David Leppard put first the desk skills. By this they mean the thorough knowledge of information sources and types and the rules that govern them, the ability to read documents for significance, and an understanding of statistics. (Eddy’s (1976) and Knightley’s (1997).

## **2.3 Myths About Investigative Reporting**

Nazakat (2016) provides six myth about the practice of investigative reporting. These are

### **Myth 1; It is glamorous and can be career-defining to the point of celebrity.**

Perhaps this is why the people on the cover of ‘All the President’s Men’ are **not** the Watergate journalists but the actors who played them: Robert Redford and Dustin Hoffman. Reality shows that investigative journalism is hard, humdrum and sometimes dangerous work.

### **Myth 2; Journalists are bigger than the stories they report.**

Investigative journalism is a public service, not an ego trip, and being an investigative journalist gives you no right to flout professional ethical standards.

### **Myth 3; The Investigative Journalist is a kind of Lone Ranger.**

From a film-making point of view, it is practical to have one hero because action can revolve around a single individual. In reality however, investigative journalism is not sustainable unless it is a team effort.

### **Myth 4; Investigative Journalism is Mainly Driven by The Private Media.**

Partly, this is true. But there are also well-known examples where government-owned media have undertaken ground-breaking investigations against government.

### **Myth 5; Investigative Journalism Focuses Only on Bad News.**

The priority for communities and the media that serve them is to discover and correct wrongs. But investigative journalism also has a role in uncovering positive news. For example, counteracting unbalanced, negative images of people or communities could form the basis of real and good investigative stories. Besides that, it is this type of investigative journalism also known as ‘muck-raking’ that makes the public unhappy. Simple scandal-mongering may have no purpose beyond appealing to people’s nosiness about the private lives of others. To be worth investigating, a scandal must go beyond personal misbehavior into issues that truly affect the public interest.

### **Myth 6; Investigative Reporting Is Simply Good Reporting.**

This definition comes out of the traditional view of journalists as ‘watchdogs’, whose mission is to sniff out wrongs, point fingers at those to blame, and report in a way that brings about change. And that is certainly part of their role. It is important that corrupt individuals are stopped. But if an investigative report does not look beyond the criminals to the faulty system that permits such behavior, it has simply cleared the ground for a new crop of crooks to do exactly the same thing (and has possibly taught them how to do it better).

An investigative story needs to identify underlying problems and alert those who can close exposed loopholes. If those in power fail to do so, a further investigative story is needed to find out why. So, while investigative journalists must draw on all the skills of good reporting observation, research and the determined pursuit of answers these criteria alone do not completely define their work, nor make it distinct from other professions.

### **2.4 Media’s Role in Promoting Development and Democracy**

The duty of the press to a society is not a novel concept in communication studies. As early as 1948, Harold Laswell had assigned the functions of surveillance of the environment, correlation of parts of the environment and transmission of socio-cultural heritage to the press. What indeed has been a subject of polemics are: the journalist, his working environment and how well he meets public expectations on his duties (Harold Laswell, 1948).

Merrill (1992), also contributed to the discourse on the duty of the journalist. In his view, Merrill suggested the three roads to press responsibility namely: that which is legally defined or determined by government, that which is professionally defined or determined by the press itself and that which is pluralistically defined or determined by individual journalists themselves. The United Nations Declaration notable media theorists lend their voices on the press and its duty to the public.

Therefore, the press could be said to be acting within the confines of reasonable social norms in ensuring that the public is not just informed, but well informed. The new inventions and major or technological breakthroughs highly sophisticated and very rapid means of communication make transmit of information easy almost instantaneously, between the different regions of the globe.

And this would help nations to enhance democracy, good governance and development by learning from the advanced nations (Campbell, 2004).

The media's role in a democracy is varied. After all, it acts as additional mechanism to check and balance on government activities; creates an enabling environment for accountability when public figures stray from the track and provides issues for public discussion by inviting citizens to actively participate in the issue of their country. In such scenario media can strengthen and benefit democracy. However, if the media fails to accomplish these responsibilities, and instead acts as mouthpiece for the interest of particular group such as the government or large corporations, it does not only fail to do its role to secure democratic governance, but it can also undermine it (Rapporteur's Report, 2009).

Development is not as such commodity to be negotiated in any society especially for the third world country. To resist influences which may come from local and international conditions being developed is unquestionable. The more a country has a strong economic, social and political base, the more it becomes powerful state and would be able to influence others in various aspects. According to (Maina, 2010) to register all rounded and sustainable development, applying important mechanisms which can enhance the participation of stakeholders has a pivotal role in realizing the business.

In this regard media take the key role in realizing sustainable development by informing the public to support the development process and informing the public about the barriers such as corruption, abuse of power and lack of good governance. Though media can play a decisive role in enhancing development and democracy, its role in different governments is characterized by the ideology of these governments. In authoritarian government, the media function is helping the ruler to stay in the power.

The day to day activities of the media is highly related with propaganda, propagating the people about positive aspects of the government and invite people to be part of the government system. The media can be taken as benevolent authoritarian. On the other side in a democratic government the main business of the media is serving the interest of the citizens. In short it serves as watch dog guarding the interest of the people against abuse of power in order to sustain democracy (Siebert et al, 1963).

Media can play a significant role by setting agendas for public debate to create general consensus on the development issue. For instance, the Ethiopian media are observed in covering the issue regarding “the grand renaissance dam” and people are observed while taking actions for its implementation as a result of the agenda set by the media. However, it is not always expected that government officials and individuals always save the public interest.

They can breach the public interest by using their power for personal benefit. The media is needed to extract the wrongdoings and inform the public. However, the media cannot bring the hidden to the light through the practice of conventional journalism unless it applies and follows the notion of investigative journalism (Hunter,2011).

Generally, to promote democracy and development in a given country, exposing hidden activities which are against the people is; after all, guarantee the sustainable development of the country. For this reason, the media is highly expected to adopt and encourage the practice of investigative reporting in order to block the barriers of the development process such as corruption, abuse of power, etc., in the society.

Journalists are also responsible to inform the public concerning issues related to their life. Especially, in exposing individuals or organizations who/which are standing against the public interest; but it does not mean that journalists should not only strive to extract the wrong doings but they should also take into consideration the ethical principles in carrying such tasks for the well-being of the society, (Nigussie, 2008).

## **2.5 Investigative Journalism Areas**

The impact of journalism is standing on behalf of the people for those who need voice and striving to report their say in the way that can influence the legislative, executive, judiciary bodies and private institutions. Investigative Journalism should also have run such activities for the wellbeing of the society; by its nature is dealing with process reporting rather than event reporting. It means reporting issues and conditions are the business of investigative journalism than incidents and events. In additions to this, there are not issues considered as off limits to investigative reporters (Gaines, 1994). And Kantumoya (2004), also strengthens as follows:

*There is no limit to subject areas requiring investigative treatment. Politics and politicians; government and governance; corruption; health and health care; agriculture; land alienation; the economy; privatization; business and consumer affairs; nongovernmental organizations; the environment; gender issues; religion; human rights; child abuse; public procurement and tender procedures; the list is endless. All these could produce issues amenable to investigative reporting.*

Among these various issues, one of the illustrated as follows:

### **Politics**

To bring about sustainable development in a given country, its political atmosphere has an indispensable role. Politicians who have been elected to office are expected to discharge their responsibilities. So, investigations should be done to know whether they have over ridden the line that is given by the people. The media, therefore, have to check the truth through deep investigation. Gaines (1994) clearly states that how much the investigation made by *The Washington post* influence the American politics of the time as follows:

*The Watergate investigation of The Washington post in 1972 began as a follow up to a routine story and ended in the resignation of President Richard Nixon. It touched off a revival of investigation efforts. It showed the public and, more profoundly, reporters and editors how perseverance can reveal truth in the face of a formidable opponent who seeks to hide it.*

This implies that the media could change the situation and warn the actors of the business in their way of walking on the track of politics. And the people become alert at the time for political change if they believe the situation around them is not conducive.

## **2.6 Constraints of Investigative journalism**

### **2.6.1 Legal Constraints**

The ability of the investigative journalist to access and disseminate information with minimal and reasonable restraint is healthy for social growth and development. In a social context, the investigative journalist is a liberator of society. Where he is unduly restrained by the legal system however, the society is restrained with him. This assertion is supported by an English proverb that “you cannot hold a man down and not remain down with him.” Some of these constraints are:

#### **2.6.1.1 The Freedom of Information Bill**

As indicated in the United Nations General Assembly Declaration of December 14, 1946,

*Freedom of information is a fundamental human right, and is the touchstone to which the UN is consecrated. Any restriction on the freedom of the press amounts to direct denial of the fundamental rights of the citizens to knowledge and information, the result of which can be counterproductive to government’s intention and action.*

#### **2.6.1.2 Privacy**

The privacy law concerns the right of an individual to be left alone. It is however difficult for the investigative journalist to leave individuals alone when things are not going right, therefore, privacy law is a major snag for investigative journalists. In the words of Moore, in Burgh (2000), “the work of the investigative journalist raises inevitable conflict between freedom of speech and protection of privacy.

The very nature of investigative journalism involves potentially intrusive activities.” The situation requires some form of balance between protection of privacy for individuals and creation of legally permissible leeway for the investigative journalist to uncover what citizens might wish to cover. As Moore concludes however, “with the help and advice of the legal profession, investigative journalists have developed methods of avoiding many of the legal pitfalls placed in their way.”

### **2.6.1.3 Protection of Sources**

Sources are the lifeblood of a good story. An investigative journalist cannot achieve worthwhile success without consistent and reliable sources of information. The ability to keep the identity of his sources makes those sources available to him for future stories. It equally increases his stream of sources as well as his credibility. By contrast, failure by an investigative journalist to protect his sources even in the face of contempt charge or worse consequences may mark the beginning of the end of his career. According to Sandman et al, in Okunna (1995),

*Any journalist who engages in investigative reporting, political reporting, or police reporting ... is often asked by a news source not to reveal his or her name. Few reporters will refuse such a request. If they do, they run the risk of not getting the information at all....Once a reporter gets a reputation as someone who won't keep a confidence, that reporter is finished as an investigator- and the public is the loser.*

Insistence by a court that a journalist reveals his sources is inimical to the growth of not just the journalism profession, but the nation. Supporting this view, Burgh, H, (2000). reports, “What is clear is that any legal requirement to disclose the identity of a source acts as a severe blow to investigative journalism, undermining its ability to expose corruption and wrongdoings.”

## **2.7 The Regulatory and Ethical Frame Work for Investigative Journalism**

Journalism can usefully be characterized, in part, as an unofficial Fourth Estate which has the function of pursuing and covering stories that concern the political, legal or social interests of the public as citizens. It relies on the Lockean notion of an implicit contract (Kieran 1997). The basic Lockean thought is that citizens must be made aware of the nature, workings and characters of those in government so they are in a position to exercise their will as citizens and judge those to whom power is entrusted on their behalf.

Now the essential aims of investigative journalism give rise to various professional constraints which, as journalists, they are ethically required to adhere to. Given that investigative journalism aims at uncovering and revealing the truth about a matter of public concern, investigative

journalists are required to stick to truth-adhering methods. Indeed, this may even require familiarity with the basic methods of the social sciences and the basic skills of critical reasoning in order to ascertain whether claims made have a reasonable scientific basis are the methodology unsound (Matthew Kieran,1997).

Thus, the quest for truth is tightly linked to procedural matters such as checking the authenticity and trustworthiness of one's sources, following up claims made to see if they bear out in fact, constitute plausible if unproved speculation or downright lies, attempting to discover if there are any motivations at work other than those presented and so on. Obviously, such procedures are not sufficient to ensure that the truth of a matter will be discovered. But they are the only way of ensuring that an investigation is likely to get at the truth of the matter (Kieran, 1998). Carelessness about such procedures is thus professionally culpable and, in this respect, constitutes a moral failure to live up to the responsibilities of one's job.

### **The point of regulation**

It does not, however, follow that the ends of investigative journalism thereby justify any means used to fulfill them or that anything or everything is licensed by such considerations. Rather, what does follow is that certain actions we normally think of as immoral can be, under certain strict conditions, morally justified. Consider an analogy. Generally, we hold killing to be a deep moral evil. Yet under certain conditions, those of self-defense for example, it may be morally justified. But this is only so where one's life is threatened and the threat cannot reasonably be neutralized by actions short of killing. So, the means used must be proportionate to the threat involved and no more.

Such matters as deceit or intrusion into privacy may be Justified but only where they are absolutely required to establish proof of serious corruption, deceit or immorality that significantly harms to others. Moreover, journalistic actions that abrogate the relevant moral considerations are very often not illegal in any way. Nonetheless, there are ethical considerations that arise independently of legal prohibitions and are more properly considered and treated as regulatory matters.

This explains a major part of the rationale for regulation to ensure that journalists adhere to the moral obligations incumbent upon them and to clarify when and where they are morally justified

in acting in ways we would under normal circumstances regard as immoral. Enforcement is required given the commercial, political and psychological pressures involved in investigative journalism.

## **2.8 Deceit in investigation**

Obviously without trust investigative journalists cannot fulfill their function as the Fourth Estate. Yet, on the other hand, they cannot nor should they be too trusting and must often use deceitful means to achieve their goals. Hence journalists may have to break the very bonds of trust on which they depend. Honesty, openness and truth-telling are not in need of justification. But deception or lying clearly is. So we need to understand when and where deception may be justified in investigative journalism.

Despite its ongoing political challenges Ethiopia's socio-political environment is changing for the better following a change in government leadership that saw a new Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed inaugurated in April 2018. Dr. Abiy has indicated a willingness to institute broad-based socio political and economic reforms that if completed, will change the trajectory of Ethiopian development in the foreseeable future. A notable change is that the government is working hard to communicate its vision through the presence of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and his senior staff on social media.

This is important to note that media professionalism can only flourish in an environment of media freedom. In this regard the ongoing media policy underway in Ethiopia must be supported and seen through. The prime minister has pledged to reform repressive laws and has on various occasions acknowledged the role of media in the anti-corruption drive. Media reforms are part of the reform agenda proposed by the prime minister. Consultations on the media reform process have been initiated by the government and UNDP (IMS Report, 2018).

## **2.9 Investigative Journalism in Addis Media Network**

In the today's world where competition is the rule of the game every organization, governmental or non-governmental, must struggle to survive the race. The survival is not only dependent on the product or services it provides but also the communication strategies it has so as to build and

maintain its reputation among the mass public. When it comes to the arena where institutions working on the dissemination of information are to be considered the competition between organizations becomes fierce.

Now a day's the Media competes not only with broadcasting of first-hand information but also in a different communication strategy to address the needs of their audiences so as to become a number one choice. These can be mentioned in other words that today the Media are running for their life in a competition where building and maintaining of once reputation among the audiences is the ultimate goal.

The former Addis Ababa Mass Media Agency now Addis Media Network is established by the proclamation no 20/2009 with the objective of working towards creating common understanding between the city government officials and the residents by transmitting accurate and current information; providing its own contribution towards creating national consensus on major national issues; encouraging the public to express and exercise freely its freedom of thought in accordance with the laws of the federal government and Addis Ababa city Government; playing supportive role in the economic, social as well as good governance building efforts of the city government and encouraging further strengthening of the democratic culture.

The organization has the broadcast social media and print media outlets; Addis Television, FM 96.3 and Addis Lisan Newspaper. Having more than five hundred employees. The organization is working towards the achievement of its vision, which is becoming one of the five best media in the world by 2025.

## **2.10 Theoretical frame work**

Three theories have been chosen to provide the theoretical frame work for the study; they are: Social Responsibility Theory, Agenda setting theory and Framing theory.

### **2.10.1 Social responsibility theory**

Social responsibility is an ethical theory in which individuals are accountable for fulfilling their civic duty, and the actions of an individual must benefit the whole of society. In this way, there must be a balance between economic growth and the welfare of society and the environment. If this equilibrium is maintained, then social responsibility is accomplished.

The theory is built on a system of ethics, in which decisions and actions must be ethically validated before proceeding. If the action or decision causes harm to society or the environment, then it would be considered to be socially irresponsible. This theory places due emphasis on the moral and social responsibilities of persons who, and institutions which, operate the mass media (Moemeka, 1991).

This theory, regarded as a western theory incorporates part of the libertarian principle and introduces some new elements as well. The underlying principle of the social responsibility theory of the press is that the press should be free to perform the functions which the libertarian theory granted it freedom to perform, but that this freedom should be exercised with responsibility (Okunna & Omenugha, 2012). If the media fail to meet their responsibilities to society, the social responsibility theory holds that the government should encourage the media to comply by way of controlling them.

Bittner (1989) has it that the theory held that “a press has the right to criticize government and institutions but also has certain basic responsibilities to maintain the stability of society”. In the same vein, but in a slightly different angle, Dominick (2009) writes that,

*This approach holds that the press has a right to criticize government and other institutions, but it also has a responsibility to preserve democracy by properly informing the public and by responding to society's needs and interests. The press does not have the freedom to do as it pleases; it is obligated to respond to society's requirements...*

Freedom of the Press which formulated the Social Responsibility theory while noting that the press does not fulfill her basic societal roles of providing information, enlightenment, serving as watchdog, advertising, entertainment, and self-sufficiency, called on the media to:

- Provide a truthful, comprehensive and intelligent account of the day's event in a context which gives them meaning.
- Serve as a forum for exchange of comment and criticism
- Project a representative picture of the constituent groups in society

- Be responsible for the presentation and clarification of the goals and values of the society.
- Provide full access to the day's intelligence.

These goals according to Peterson and Wilkins (2005) were troublesome to journalists who think that these goals are ambiguous and unattainable at the time.

Now a days the Social Responsibility theory of media ethics has become the norm now. This theory inspires self-control by the media, for the good of the society. But the question is: how have the media practitioners and journalists held up this theory? How ethical have they proven to be, professionally? A recent research I carried out on sensationalism, social responsibility and media ethics, revealed that today, a century later, the media is seen to be reverting back to the 'bad old days' of practicing freedom devoid of responsibility.

The in-thing is now what scholars have come to term "market-driven media" (Yadav, 2011, Kleemans & Hendricks, 2009, Omenugha & Oji, 2008, Sparks and Tulloch, 2000). It is tangible that the fundamental principles of the social responsibility theory could be summarized thus: "be self-regulated, practice responsibly, or the government will control you". In other words, freedom should be exercised with utmost responsibility to societal interest.

### **2.10.2 Agenda Setting theory**

The agenda setting theory is a theory that discusses on how the mass media influences in making a certain issue as a public agenda. The public agenda is the main focus or prime issue which the members of the society or public concern about. The term agenda setting theory is first used by McCombs and Shaw (1972). This theory elaborates the connection in term of relationships between the emphasis that the mass media put as an issue and the media audiences or the public's reaction or attributes to such issue (Littlejohn and Foss,2009).

The agenda setting theory begins as an explanation on how the mass media affects to change the pattern in political behavior during elections (Cohen: 1963). Later, the theory has inspired and developed hundreds of latter explorations on how the mass media primes and frames issues for

their audiences. Not only limited to such, the discussion also covers on how the mass media colors a particular event for their media audiences (Matsaganis and Payne, 2005).

Therefore, the mass media can be considered as responsible in influencing and shaping the public opinion and agenda. Such influence of mass media on the public agenda or opinion can happen intentionally or unintentionally (Iyengar & Kinder,1987). Continuously, the agenda setting theory stands as important theory not only on mass communication, but extends to other related social science studies such as political communication (Reese,1991).

Under the agenda setting theory, the mass media is believed not to possess the ability to set the public agenda especially in matters of opinions or attitudes (Cohen,1963). However, the mass media has a particular access in contributing to or influencing the audience's perceptions, values, focus and priorities. With such influence from the mass media, the media audiences tend to form their own opinion or focus on those issues that are considered as worthy of inclusion on their mental agendas (Littlejohn and Foss,2009).

The media set agenda for the public to follow is basic assumption for the theory. The theory holds that most of the pictures we store in our heads, most of the things we think or worry about, most of the issues we discuss, are based on what we have read, listened to or watched in different mass media. The media make us to think about certain issues, they make us to think or feel that certain issues are more important than others in our society (asogwa,2012).

Agenda setting theory is an important theory in mass communication. The agenda setting of mass media can be derived from the public agenda. The said agenda setting can also be set up through government's policy or by politicians. As identified by Rogers and Dearing (1988), there are three main agenda setting which are: (i) public agenda, (ii) media agenda and (iii) policy agenda. Based on Cohen's opinion, the agenda setting of mass media only provides the media audiences on what they should think about and not to set what to think.

The mass media can influence on the opinions of the media audiences or public at large. Such can be done through agenda setting of the mass media on a certain particular issue or agenda. The faster the device used in delivery of information, more influential the mass media is. In catering the influences of mass media to the society or media audiences, the society or public

should be given proper knowledge, so they can evaluate the overall facts and they can form their opinion correctly to the issue at hand. This is important to avoid the society or media audiences to be dependent in totality on the information delivered by the mass media.

According to University of Wisconsin political scientist Bernard Cohen's "The press may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about" (Cohen, 1963). Most agendas covered by investigative reports has the tendency to make the public what to think about than the conventional journalism agenda indeed.

### **2.10. 3 Framing Theory**

Framing is a concept which is commonly used to understand the media effects. It is regarded as the extension of agenda setting theory which prioritize an issue and makes the audience think about its effects. Framing is an important topic since it can have a big influence and therefore the concept of framing expanded to organizations as well. In essence, framing theory suggests that how something is presented to the audience influences the choices people make about how to process that information.

Frames are abstractions that work to organize or structure message meaning. The most common use of frames is in terms of the frame the news or media place on the information they convey. In many ways Framing tied very closely to Agenda Setting theory. Both focus on how media draws the public's eye to specific topics, in this way they set the agenda. (Goffman, Erving, 1974)

But Framing takes this a step further in the way in which the news is presented creates a frame for that information. This is usually a conscious choice by journalists, in this case a frame refers to the way media as gatekeepers organize and present the ideas, events, and topics they cover. In general, the journalists select the news stories influenced by many factors such as news values, editorial policies, and interaction with the creamy layer of the society. These factors build the frame.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN**

This chapter deals with the methodology and procedures of the study under which the methods data source, sampling technique and data analysis are discussed to address the research objectives.

#### **METHODOLOGY**

This study deals with analyzing the content of Addis Media Network “Mirmera” investigative program. Qualitative research method of inquiry is primarily selected as the principal method for the study, because first; it enables the researcher to critically evaluate and grasp the social phenomenon from the perspective of the subject of the study.

In addition to this it encourages the researcher’s interaction with the subjects which enable him to gather a rich data out of observations in line with discovering meanings attribute to events and activities (Porta and Keating, 2008 cited in Kibrom, 2011). Second, the nature of the research problems descriptive than experimental. therefore, the method is chosen for qualitatively describing the extent, role and areas of issues in AMN investigative programs.

The third reason is, according to Hughes, “...if there are new situations to deal with, or if an institution has intractable problems that do not seem to be explained by existing theories, qualitative research is stereotypically seen as the chosen method” (Hughes, 2003). Therefore, qualitative approach is best practiced whenever the aim of the researcher is reaching in generalization from a small number of samples that can represent the whole. Under qualitative research methodology there are multiple methods employed to answer the research questions and describe the investigative report scenario in AMN.

#### **3.2 Research design**

This research was designed to use descriptive and case study research method. Descriptive research is directed at making careful observations and detailed documentation of a phenomenon of interest by selecting different cases. These observations must be based on the scientific method (i.e., must be replicable, precise, etc.), and therefore, are more reliable than casual

observations by untrained people (Anol Bhattacharjee, 2012). Content analysis of Investigative programs is based on the extent of investigation and subjects of the investigation and importance of the issue's coverage from the point of media watchdog role for the benefit of the public at large.

Using checklists designed from investigative journalism practice worldwide as it is discussed in literature review the content of the practice in Addis Media Network is qualitatively analyzed. The interview is open-ended and the interview guide is divided based on the role and responsibility of the samples. The ultimate goal of in-depth interview is to collect data up on the practice of investigative journalism practice the case of "Mirmera" in Addis Media Network; Addis TV's investigative programs. The full break down of in-depth interview questions are reproduced in appendices. The programs also selected case by case.

### **3.2. Data Collection Tools**

To get appropriate information to answer the research questions, the researcher uses both primary and secondary sources. And also there are several data collection instruments in scientific research for collecting the appropriate data which differ considerably in context of money costs, time and other resources (C.R.Kothari, 2004). On this study, the researcher uses in-depth interview, and content analysis.

#### **3.2.1. what is Content Analysis?**

The researcher wanted to analyze a representative of 5(five) investigative stories disseminated during the last one year from Jan 2019- Jan 2020) in detail regarding the extent to which "Mirmera" investigative program does investigation in entertaining public grievance issues and addressing media watch dog role in AMN. To do so, the researcher has used systematic random sampling technique during the selection of 5 stories disseminated in the given year.

#### **3.2.2. In-depth interview**

In-depth interview is an indispensable way to probe phenomena such as journalistic attitudes and perceptions. If someone stands to know about a media participants or journalists attitude he/she cannot understand human actions without understanding the meaning that participants attribute to those actions their thoughts, feelings, beliefs, values, and assumptive words. Because, it offered in-depth details from practitioners, who, are experienced during their course of duty.

Investigative reporters need to be good interviewers: well prepared, concise in questioning, and devoted listeners with all the attributes of a girl scout or a boy scout.

They also have to develop some special investigative interviewing techniques, (Gaines W.2008). On the other side; the researcher needs to understand the deeper perspectives captured through face-to-face interaction (Berger, 2010; Marshall & Rossman, 2010). Therefore, 8(Eight) AMN media journalists interviewees consisting of 5 (Five) investigative reporters, one program director and the chief editor from different backgrounds, roles and experience, were asked open ended questions providing to collect qualitative data to get the accurate data. so from because there is only 8(eight) employees investigative program team in AMN.

### **Sampling design**

There are two sampling designs; Probability and Non-probability sampling designs so in this study I use both probability and non-probability design.

**probability sampling method** is mainly used in quantitative research in which sample members from a large population or in this study programs are selected according to a random starting point but with a fixed periodic interval.so I use probability systematic sampling design to select investigative programs produced from January 2019 up to January 2020.

**Non-probability sampling designs:** This type of sample is easier and cheaper to access, that means the inferences you can make about the population are weaker than with probability samples, and your conclusions may be more limited. If you use a non-probability sample, you should still aim to make it as representative of the population as possible.

### **Sampling technique**

In this research I used purposive sampling technique and systematic sampling technique purposive sampling technique is a non-probability sampling method, this type of sampling also known as judgement sampling, involves the researcher using their expertise to select a sample that is most useful to the purposes of the research. It is often used in qualitative research, where the researcher wants to gain detailed knowledge about a specific phenomenon rather than make statistical inferences, or where the population is very small and specific. An effective purposive sample must have clear criteria and rationale for inclusion.

### **3.2.3. Selection of AMN contents**

Up on the practice of investigative journalism in Ethiopian Broad cast Media, Addis Media Network (AMN) is purposely selected as case study to analyze the practice of investigative journalism. Because, AMN is currently operating investigative journalism reaching mass audience throughout the country and basically in the capital. Purposive sampling technique was used when selecting AMNs “Mirmera” investigative program investigative reporters, editor in chief for interview. This is to gather information about the overall investigative environment in AMN.

### **3.4 Method of content Analysis**

Investigative journalism is a set of methodology that are a craft and it can take years to master (Kaplan, 2013). The aim of the study was to analyze the content of investigative programs in AMN This study approach dealt with qualitative data. and the findings are the interview with eight target samples and content analysis.

The analysis of systematically selected 5(five) “Mirmera” AMNs investigative reports were the starting points of the thesis, which examines the extent of investigation in addressing public priority issues coverage of the program as investigative report based on the checklists designed for analysis that are considered as values that underpin a worth of good investigative stories it is discussed in the literature. (The checklists used by the student researcher to analyze the content of the investigative programs for this research are attached in the appendix)

The analysis of the data was accompanied by thematic coding based on the objectives and questions. The interview was recorded and then translated by the researcher from the media house working language *Amharic* to English. The analysis is presented qualitatively and for further understanding the researcher has raised and described some crucial points from the discussion of investigative journalism in review of related literature. Narrative and descriptive form are how the data were structured and ways of presentation.

# CHAPTER FOUR

## PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRITATION

### Introduction

This chapter focuses on analyzing and explaining the data collected from primary and secondary sources, and presenting the final findings of the study. The data analysis involves participation of 5 journalist, 1 editor, 1 director and the general manager, a total of 8 employees of Addis Media Network through detailed interview. Based on qualitative data collection method, detailed content analysis will be conducted on the findings and conclusions of investigative works selected by the participants.

### 4.1 Data archives and content analysis

On this part the systematically selected 5(five) Mirmera investigative programs within a year from January 2019 to January 2020 qualitatively analyzed based on the checklists attached in the appendix. The descriptive analysis will follow three steps. First, the brief overview of the report is high lightened in order to assess areas of issues coverage in the program. Next, the extent to which the program does investigation is described. Finally, the role of the issue for the public at large is critically analyzed through the strength and weakness discussion of the report from the perspective of both agenda setting theory and social responsibility theory framed in the study.

#### 4.1.1 The brief overview of “fichi yeqwaterew” investigative program

The investigative reporting which had been produced under the title “Fichi Yeqwaterew” or “**a bond with separation**” in its English version was aired on October 25, 2019. The investigative reporting was focused on complaints of a members of community of a certain locality in Addis Ababa who was demanding the city government to have an open public space and a road connecting the district with highway. The complaint emanated from disagreement occurred between two groups in the target community based on the disparity in the design on the master plan of Addis Ababa and what had been done on physically on the area.

## **Scope and Content analysis of the investigative reporting**

The aforementioned investigative reporting was based on an information the target community submitted to Addis Media Network. As the researcher mentioned in Chapter Two, an information arises from the public is one of the sources of investigative reporting in Addis Media Network. Based on the information forwarded by the community, the producer prepared a plan and conducted an interview with residents of the target area. The problem stated originated from misuse of the land apportioned to the road for green recreational open space by decision of some executive bodies.

Based on this, the residents of the area who previously knew that the space was allocated for the construction of road formed on of the contradicting groups and raised their complaints of the issue. Then they mobilized people who favored their idea and raised money for road construction, and started the building activities by their own. As mentioned above, the other group supported the idea of maintaining the green space as public reactional area rather than the construction of the road. And they referred the case to the plan commission other concerned governmental bodies holding what is designed on the master plan as an evidence.

During this time, members of the executive bodies of the Woreda had decided to stop the construction of the road temporarily till the issue got a solution. It was at this time the resident who were supporters of the road construction brought the case to an investigative reporting team of Addis Media Network. The complainers angrily told AMN that lack of road access in their residential area caused complicated socio-economic problems in their day to day activities and their lives as a whole.

The other producer who was in charge of conducting interview with the other group in favor of the green area could not be successful because the people refused to express their opinions for the media. Taking the ideas raised before, the investigative program producer contacted concerned bodies from Addis Ababa City Administration Green Development Commission, the Federal Plan Commission and the Head of the Sub City's Plan Commission Branch Office regarding the causes behind the complaints focused at demand of the road development rather than the green area.

Most of the responses from the interviewees indicated that the road had been chosen in place of the green area based on interests of the then officials of the Sub City and some members of the community. But the Federal Plan Commission disclosed that it had not any information concerning the green area issues. And the investigative indicated that the City's Plan Commission refused to give any information concerning the issue.

In addition, the report showed that the controversy occurred in between the two groups couldn't be addressed for three years. The Sub City's Plan Commission Branch Office said the previous leadership could create an agreement between the two opposing sides on the necessity of the green area and decided to undertake its construction accordingly. But, nothing was found to draw a conclusion on the matter.

Finally, highlighting the causes of the problems to the audience based on his findings, invited the second group to reflect their options on the matter whenever they were interested. Then he concluded his investigating reporting with an information indicating that lack of mutual understanding among concerned executive bodies had created the problem which became the source of maladministration and public grievances in the area.

### **Strengths and Weaknesses of the Investigative Reporting**

The Investigative reporting conducted under the title "A bond in Separation" or "Fich Yequaterew" in its Amharic version has fulfilled some of the journalism principles needed by the activity. But It is clear that the investigative reporting is not supported by sufficient information. For instance, the opinions of the second group has not been included the reporting. The suggestion of the City's Pan Commission is not also included in the work.

The reporting should have also created an opportunity to bring the violators to justice and indicated the way how to charge all the concerned bodies with maladministration cases. Furthermore, the producer did not try repeatedly to contact those who refused to be included in the interview. The other weakness of the investigative reporting is that the investigative reporting didn't indicate how many times the master plan of the city is revised. And, it didn't show at which period of revision the public complaint occurred. And the findings of the preliminary research didn't clearly indicate who and which institution is accountable for the problem.

To indicate the strengths of the investigative reporting, we can say that it tried to show the audience how maladministration issues become sources of “mirmera “ investigative programs. And, it sorted out some sources of the complaint such as the contradiction over the master plan and lack of mutual understanding among executive bodies. The reporting also slightly informed the audience and journalist about how investigative journalism practiced and the major accountable bodies to the problems, and also forwarded some recommendations to address such issues. The investigative also has also a strong side for it has highlighted the necessary steps that must be taken to address maladministration problems before they cause complicated challenges to the community as a conclusion.

#### **4.1.2. Investigative program titled ‘In pretext of Law’ or “Behig Shifan” in its Amharic Version**

##### **Short explanation on the above Investigative Reporting**

The investigative reporting made under the title “In the Pretext of Law” aired on July 16/2019 in Addis Media network Addis tv. the investigative program deals with illegal activities carried out by a relief organization named ‘Elshaday’ in guise of development works. The reporting revealed that the organization was distributing expired foods and medicines for humanitarian aid receivers and other vulnerable segments of the societies.

##### **Scope and Content analysis of The Investigative Reporting**

Elshaday Relief and Development Organization (ERDO) which is engaged in lifting homeless people from streets and benefiting them with job opportunities after they get its trainings in Afar Region. The investigative reporting shows the relief organization secures financial and technical support from various stakeholders including public institutions at Ministerial level. But using all the above as pretexts, Elshaday Relief and Development Organization engaged in illegal activities including exploitation of labor.

The organization misused resources it gained from the government for illegal activities that posed various social and economic threats to the community. Besides the report indicated that Elshaday distributed expired medicines to the community. The problems created by the relief organization are attributed to lack of supervision and monitoring from government institutions.

Avoidance of responsibility from government officials is also taken as a factor for illegal activities of the organization that left people who were lifted from streets jobless and many ill due to expired medicines they took from it.

The reporting attributed the problems made by ERO to the lack of supervision and controlling activities from concerned government bodies. Rather government bodies supported organization's wrongdoings through financial supports. Government officials who were avoiding their duties and properties have negatively contributed to the wrongdoings of Elshaday that affected living conditions of many helpless segments of the society.

After highlighting the audience about Elshaday, the producer presented detailed information about the issues supported by comments of the homeless regarding the problems they faced due to malicious acts of the organization. The investigative reporting started its narration by revealing expired medicines, foods and closings stored in the premises of the organization. The reporting also narrated that Elshaday received financial supports from ministerial organizations. It relates the grievances of the target individuals with mischievous mentalities of the founders and officials of the organization and carelessness in concerned government authorities. In addition, the producer tried to incorporate opinions and ideas of different concerned individuals in the reporting.

### **Weaknesses and Strengths of the Investigative Reporting**

Since the "Bond in Separation" investigative reporting focused to expose the wrongdoings of Elshaday Relief Organization, it should have included the opinions of the affected individuals through their own words of mouth. However, the producer failed to do so. Likewise, the concerned government officials should have said something about what was going in the organization. The producer should have conducted interviews to include their responses in his investigative reports. But, he only focused at the owners and officials of the relief organization. All the above points are connected to the weaknesses of the reporting.

The weakness of the investigative reporting is also related to its failure to clearly show that the concerned government officials are part of the sources of the problems. It should have shown how the government authorities are responsible for what had happened to the target vulnerable

segment of the society. The reporting also failed to present concrete evidences that may help to take the responsible government bodies to justice. Mostly using government officials are thus challenges of investigative journalism.

On the other hand, the investigative reporting has strong side in trying to collect written documents like letters related to the wrong activities of the organization. Besides, the producer tired to include some concerned government officials. Lastly, the reporting gives some information that helps to ensure fairness and impartiality in service delivery of organizations engaged in various activities. Its recommendations that demand government institutions to establish well organized control and supervision can be taken as strength of the investigative reporting.

#### **4.1.3. “If justice punishes or....?” (Fitih Siketa) In Amharic version**

##### **Short Explanation about the Investigative Reporting**

The investigative reporting conducted under the title “If justice punishes or...” is was aired by Addis Media Network on January 18,2019. The reporting focuses on a litigation between two people due to a house property sale took place before fourteen years. A woman who were living abroad claimed ownership over the house which had already been sold. The lawsuit happened between the woman who bought the house from another person and the woman who claimed ownership of over the house. In this investigative reporting cases related to injustice, corruption, maladministration and unconstitutional activities are discussed in advance.

##### **Scope and Content analysis of the Investigative Reporting**

The investigative reporting under the tile “If the Justice punishes or...” deals with a litigation happened between two women; the one who bought the house and the other who came from abroad and claimed ownership over the property. The buyer presented her complaints that she had been forced to leave the house she bought following legal procedures. She said the judges and other justice bodies forced her to abandon the house due to the bribes they received from the other party. The complainer raised issues related to breaching of human rights and unconstitutional decisions at her expenses.

The producer of the reporting tried to include in his interview governmental bodies involved in breaching the law because of the bribe they received. He transmitted didactic lessons that created awareness among the community how to protect such activities. The narration of reporting starts with complaints of the buyer of the house showing that she had the house property title deeds and plan.

She told the audience that the sale document has been authenticated by vital events registration. And the woman who was a wife of the seller and came from abroad to claim the ownership claimed ownership over the house. This is all about how the reporting starts. The attorneys of the two women in the lawsuit raised issues accusing the then officials of the locality where the house is located and other concerned stakeholders.

They also give their own explanation on the issue. They correlated the case to the breach of constitutional provisions and violations of human rights. Ideas and explanations were also included in the reporting from human rights violation perspectives from Human Rights Commission. The Commissioner of the Commission gave his own testimonies how the issue violated principles of human rights. The reporting also reveals the decision of the Federal Supreme Court on the issue. The idea from constitutional interpretation and identity affairs was also included in the reporting.

The producer included argumentation of both litigants. But the man who sold the house to the buyer is not included in the reporting. The producer tried to indicate the impacts of the injustice seen in the litigation process from perspectives of law, constitution, crime and human rights concepts. Finally, the reporting concludes showing that all people are equal under the law. And, it clearly recommends that government and all stakeholders have a great assignment to deal with in order to ensure rule of law and justice among the community.

### **Weaknesses and strengths of the investigative reporting**

It is not possible to say that the investigative reporting conducted under the title “if Justice punishes or...” or “fitih siketa” in Amharic version has not fulfilled all the principles of investigative reporting. The reporting shouldn’t have concluded only focused on a single individual despite its strong side related to the single-story angle where it begins. The reporting

could have shown how the provisions of the constitution are breached in connection with human rights violations if it includes similar cases in the narration.

This could have added credibility to the reporting. The exclusion of the man who sold the house in the interview also leaves a vacuum and depicts weakest sides of the reporting. It would be better if the judges involved in corrupt activities in the trial are included in the interview and reflect their own ideas regarding the issue. The producer should have conducted detailed research and reveal the findings accordingly how injustices are affecting socio economic activities and the community and individuals in specific.

On the other hand, the flow of the narration and coherences of events can be taken as strengths of the investigative reporting. The way the produces tries to show how individual cases will lead to constitutional matters with support of explanations of human rights experts is also a good side the investigative reporting.

#### **4.1.4 The story of “Yetekema Abrak” investigative program**

##### **The brief overview of “Yetekema Abrak”**

Addis Media Network aired an investigative reporting produced under a title “Yetekema Abrak” on August 20/2019. The program was focused on grievances of parents who have lost the whereabouts of their children after they had given them to a non-governmental organization named “Elshaday Relief and Development Association” with legal adoption.

##### **Scope and Content analysis of the Investigative Reporting**

The investigative reporting started with the process how the parents give their children starting their age of three and were prohibited to physically see their babies. It showed that the complaints of the parents continued for years. And, it included the opinion of an individual who was a former worker of the relief organization, and this man told the reporter how the organization picked the children from their parents and sent them to abroad with adoption. And the owner of the organization dismissed the grievances of the parents as invalid saying that he had arranged opportunities to them to see their children physically.

In the contrary, the parents insisted that the organization didn’t allow them to meet their children after they had handed them over to the organization. They expressed their grief as the organization had not responded to their repeated inquires to meet their children. But, they said

that some parents had seen only the photographs of their children. The investigative reporting explained that any relief organization working with adoption should get an authentication from the then Women, Children and Youth ministry to take children in this regard. But, the aforementioned organization rejected what Elshaday claimed though it insisted as if it had got the permission. Even, the ministerial institution said that it didn't know the name of the relief organization.

The investigative reporting further showed that Elshasay Relief and Development Association tried to stop recurring cries of the parents by giving them money ranging from three hundred to six hundred Ethiopian Birr. The organization which failed to bribe the parents was forced to tell them that it had sent the children abroad for better care. The parents got terrified with the information they had got from the organization concerning the transfer of the children to abroad.

They lost hopes to search for their children. But the organization dismissed the grievances raised by the parents as false. The manager told the investigative reporter that his organization had not committed the blunder mentioned by the parents. The responses manager gave to the reporter contradict one another and showed how he was trying to conceal the bitter truth related to the disappearance of the children.

The investigative reporting included ideas of legal experts focused on the rules and regulations or relief organization while making adoption. Their thoughts exposed the mistakes committed by the organization. The correlated the wrong action done by the organization with illegal human trafficking and entails the doer to be punished by ten to twenty years of imprisonment. Although the investigative reporting was started in 2016, the reporter tried to check circumstances and add findings to his report in 2019.

The ideas gathered from concerned governmental organizations indicated that the manager admitted the transfer of the children abroad. The officials from concerned government organizations said the manager vowed to reunion the children with their parents when they get seventeen years old. Finally, the reporting concluded forwarding recommendations to concerned government organizations, stakeholders and relief organizations to ensure transparency and lead the adoption activity in adherence to rules and regulation put in place to protect right of adopted children.

All concerned bodies to respond to the inquiries from the adopted children to know their identity. The reporting also urged concerned governmental organizations to establish a strong controlling and monitoring system to follow up whether orphanage and adoption organizations are working in conformity with legal issues set to protect rights of children in a proper manner.

### **Strengths and weaknesses of the investigative reporting**

The courage shown in the investigative reporting aired entitled “Yetekema Abrak” to show how the illegal trafficking of the children committed by Elshaday Relief and Development Association in a way that exposed the complicated crime unusual in Ethiopia can be taken as a strength of the product. The reporting which started with a single story of a mother who lost the whereabouts of her children has an attractive presentation.

It also included additional nine mothers who expressed their grievances up on the disappearance of their children and this by itself delivered concrete evidences about the crime done by the organization. The evidences compiled in the investigative reporting can serve as evidences to file crime charges against the organization. In addition, the investigative reporting played the role of journalism as a watch dog and provided an alarm for the government to give prior attention for protection of children’s illegal trafficking and put in place a system vital to do so.

All the above issues clearly indicated the strengths of the investigative reporting. On the other hand, the investigative reporting has weaknesses related to lack of sufficient information from concerned government organizations regarding the crime done by the relief organization. Its failure to include ideas of other institutions working with Elshaday and governmental organizations involved in the wrongdoings can also be taken as weaknesses. Currently, the crime stated in the investigative reporting is under police investigation following charges filed against it.

### **4.1 .5. The story of “Mekuwacha Yatu Ginbatawoch” investigative program**

#### **Short description on the investigative reporting**

The investigative reporting produced under the title “Mekuwacha Yatu Ginbatawoch” was focused on the delays of the construction projects started in 2008. Although the government allocated enough budget, the projects could not be completed on time. Even the budget had been used up though the projects did not show any progress.

With regard to this, the producer collected relevant evidences to uncover why the process of the projects sluggish become sluggish and extravagant. And, he conducted the production of the investigative reporting in a way to unfold the facts behind the delays of the projects and find out responsible government bodies for the problems occurred.

### **scope and Content of the Investigative reporting**

The investigative reporting starts from revealing the process of the building of a certain youth center which has been stalled without witnessing any progress since its commencement in 2009. The residents living around the construction site expressed their complaints on the delays of the project through the interview. The investigative reporting also uncovered the secret that there was no any construction contract document related the target project.

Even the interviewees told the producer that much of the construction materials stocked on the building site were stolen reduced in quantity. Residents also expressed complaints that the stalled building was collapsing. The then government officials also expressed their opinion that lack of close monitoring and supervision works caused such slowdown of the projects and related mal administrative problems in the area.

They said investigative works which were being carried out by anti-corruption commission could not bring about any solution for the problems occurred related to the delays of the projects even four years after it was started. The second case covered by the investigative reporting is related to the building whose contract is signed in 2003. This building was being constructed in a specific place called Janmeda around Sidist Killo area.

Although the agreement entailed the contractor to complete the construction of the building within two years, it was not even reached half the state in the time specified. The building intended for youth sports center was being carried out with enormous budget allocated by the government. The investigative reporting uncovered that the budget which was said to be used for the building process and what was found on documented evidences varied with a big variation.

The information gathered from concerned stakeholders concerning the budget appropriated for the builds contradicted one another. When the reporting was underway in 2018/2019, the whereabouts of the lost budget couldn't be found. The producer of the investigative reporting

contacted concerned bodies such as Construction Bureau, the contractor, the owner of the building others he thought to be concerned about the case in order to get the source of the extravagancy. But, he couldn't find anything that would lead to the root causes of the problem rather the responses he got were contradicting one another.

Lack of courage to accuse the responsible body, shortage of integration among concerned institutions and carelessness among officials to discharge responsibilities caused the aforementioned wastage of public resource. Even no one was made responsible for the problem occurred. And it was learned that the project needed a larger amount of budget more than the previous one to be completed and address the related maladministration problem.

The case which was included in the investigative reporting is a building that was expected to be completed within a year starting from its commencement in 2015. Much of the budget allocated for this building was already paid before the construction process reached half of the stage. The building which was expected to generate income for the city administration of Addis Ababa was delayed for three years starting from the beginning of the first works.

Residents of the city living in the cite area, members of the business community and the owner himself was asked with an interview to express their ideas on the problem. And, they answered that the building was collapsing though its construction had been completed. According to the - \*interviewees who forwarded their opinions on the matter, lack of close monitoring and supervision works from government bodies, absence of coordination among concerned authorities, and failures of executive bodies to discharge duties and responsibilities are the factors that contributed to the slowdown of the construction process and poor quality of the building and extravagancy of the public resource.

The fourth case discussed in the investigative reporting was the work stoppage of the Health Center Building after its cornerstone was put in 2015. The shortcoming in the design, previous decisions made to reserve the site place for green area, and lack of follow up from government bodies to enforce the commencement of the building were listed as factors for the slowdown of the project. In general, the investigative reporting was focused on slowdown of various construction project which were intended for public benefit.

And, lack of transparency and accountability and shortage of effective monitoring and follow up system in concerned government bodies, corruption were considered as the major factors which caused maladministration problem related to poor infrastructure development and extravagancy of public resource. Due to this the proposed projects couldn't deliver the intended social services to the community. The producer concluded the investigative reporting telling his audiences that he would bring findings to them as soon as they were grasped.

### **Strengths and Weaknesses of the investigative reporting**

The investigative reporting which was aired entitled “Mekuwacha Yatu Ginbatawoch” has a storing side in terms of revealing one of the major sources of maladministration and public grievances in Addis Ababa. The inclusion of ideas of residents in the site area and concerned government bodies can also be taken as a good side of the reporting. The activities done to include the ideas of the bidders and winners of the tenders and related contract documents is also the strength of the investigative reporting.

The selection of the projects as an evidences of maladministration problems can be taken as a weakness for there are many other sources of public grievances at the national level in the construction sector. Because the municipal projects could not invite to conduct in depth investigation compared to those which are related to slowdown construction of bigger hospitals, schools and colleges in various parts of the country.

The investigative reporting could have included these mega projects whose construction was stalled after the contract had been signed and the cornerstone put. And, only corrupt individuals had been wrongly benefited from the projects. Failures to include all the above issues in the reporting can also be taken as a weak side of the investigative production. To mention the other weakness of the reporting, the investigation works were mainly focused on the contractors and gave less attention for the bidders, governmental organization which were in charge of monitoring and supervising the activities in the construction site.

Due to this, the producer failed to conducted in-depth investigative reporting that could effectively reflect the public grievances and seek possible solutions to prevent same challenges in the sector.

## **4.2 Interview Discussion**

Based on the detailed interview the researcher conducted with 8(eight) employees of Addis Media Network, the investigative reporting being carried out under the scheduled airtime entitled “Mirmera” contents of the investigative works in the organization, status of investigative journalism in the target media house, would be assessed thoroughly. Besides, issues like corruption, misuse of power and related maladministration problems in the city of Addis Ababa assessed by the investigative reporting works of Addis Media Network is covered by the research.

### **4.2.1 The Essence of Investigative Journalism in Addis Media Network (AMN)**

One should clearly understand the characteristics of investigative journalism through scientific way to effectively apply it to maintain interests of the general public. Based on this, journalists of Addis Media Network working in the field of investigative reporting have given their own definition to the term. The researcher also assessed the level of knowhow investigative program producers at Addis Media Network understand about investigative journalism through interview. Almost all the interviews forwarded relatively the resembling answers to the questions. Their responses imply that investigative journalism is a type of reporting that aims to expose illegal activities being carried out by individuals or a group of individuals to the general public.

Producer I

*Investigative Journalism is a journalistic genre helps to address problems occur in between the government and the public during service delivery due to individuals or groups engaged in deceitful activities.*

(Personal interview conducted on Tuesday September 1, 2020)

The definition given by the above producer of Addis Media Network relates to the meaning offered by David Anderson and Peter Benjamin:

*“Investigative reporting is simply the reporting of concealed information.”*

## Producer II

*“Investigative Journalism deals with exploration of hidden activities related to maladministration, corruption or other bad activities against interests of the public and reporting their findings to the audience to seek a solution to the problem.”*

According to the meaning suggested above an investigative journalism is not only focused at exposing the problems but also seeking possible solutions and recommending measures must be taken to fix related harmful situation.

The aforementioned meaning implies the corruption misuse of power seen in the Addis Ababa City Administration related illegal transfer of lands to individuals that give bribes to authorities. In this regard, investigative journalism is vital to address problems such as unprecedented displacements of residents from their home places in guise of development and loss of public resources through creation of accountability among the public and authorities. The definition given by the above producer bears resemblance with the meaning forwarded by the author of investigative journalism Wais Bord, (2001);

*“Investigative reporting should reveal new information, expose what is being covered up, accuse bad guys and organizations, raise concerns over new/hidden problems trigger changes, and make society better,”*

Based on this, one can infer that the meaning suggested by the producer II resembles with the concept raised by the author. It means the purpose of investigative journalism is not only to expose wrong doings in public service delivery but also create awareness among the society and ensure accountability among public servants to alleviate maladministration and corruption issues.

The definition given an Investigative Program Director in Investigative Works Division at Addis Media Network does not vary from those who are forwarded by producer I and II. The director said that Addis Media Network does not hire reporters specifically qualified in investigative to cover issues it incorporates in its annual plan or it gets from and information through a letter or face to face contact. According to the director, the media institution deploys reporters in investigative works based on their tendencies and abilities in the field.

### **4.3 Focus areas of Investigative journalism in Addis Media Network**

According to the interviewees contacted by the researcher, the investigative program aired in an average month, by Addis Media Network for one hour under the logo title “Mirmira” focuses on exploring corruption and maladministration issues in social and economic spheres in a view to ensure good governance and create transparency between the city government and the public. In doing so, the investigative report aims to create fair and impartial playground which enable residents of Addis Ababa to contribute their share for development of the city.

The information gained from the interviewees indicates that the information needed by the investigative report is gained from three major sources; i.e. personal observation of the reporter, plans of the institution prepared based on the editorial policy of the media house and public complaints submitted to the organization. The three sources of investigative reporting issues affirmed that the investigative reporting of Addis Media Network mainly focuses on maladministration issues related to land and land related management, poor service delivery, unfitness of land and home title deeds and other related matters.

### **4.4 Procedure and pre-research plan of Investigative Reporting**

According to the responses of the target investigative program producers and division heads to the interview, the Investigative reporting in Addis Media Network undergoes several steps and procedures till it is approved by the editorial meeting and aired to the audience. Responding to the interview about the preliminary research and procedural steps of the investigative reporting production, the reporter III said the following:

*“We start our investigative reporting from analyzing the information we gather through observation, institutional plan based on the editorial policy and public grievances the institution receives from city residents. In the next step, the investigative reporting team discusses on the issue selected to be investigated. And then, the investigative program director and the general manager of the media are invited to forward their views on the issue selected. After the issue is approved, we the producers gather the required information about the issue for fifteen days before the video recording is started. If the time given is*

*not enough, the gathering of the preliminary information will continue for a month. Based on the preliminary information gathered, written and oral information is gathered from people concerned to the issue. Then the video recording starts. Based on the public complaints, opinions and ideas raised during the video recording, we inquire public servants and executive bodies through interviews conducted at their office or television studios of Addis Media Network to give responses for the issues forwarded by the people interviewed before them. Then we complete the video recording.”*

(Personal interview September 1, 2020)

To the same question forwarded to producer III above, the producer IV responded that his investigative reporting starts as follows if the issue is attained by a public grievance submitted to the institute.

*“Various issues come to our media organization through direct information from city residents of Addis Ababa. Taking the information referred to the media house by the complainer, we go out for preliminary information gathering. In this regard, sometime we find the complainer legally incorrect while we closely investigate the matter he complains about. Even some time, we find the complainer guilty of the case. In such occasions, we are forced to stop the investigation reporting. This shows how preliminary information gathering is significant to discover the truth behind the case issued and stop the investigative reporting before loss of time, labor and money is occurred.”*

(Personal Interview, September 1, 2020)

In addition to producer the program editor said,

*In addition to information it gains from the community, Addis Media Network conducts investigative reporting based on its first quarter, half year and annual plan. But, sometimes members of the community*

*who bring the information to the media house are found responsible for the problem they want to get investigated. And, sometimes, the case is found an issue of individual, and will be canceled before the pre-investigation process is completed.*

(Personal Interview, September 2, 2020)

The opinion from the editor indicates that pre-research engagement is significant for investigative reporting. And, it observed that the investigative reporting which is conducted based on the plan of the organization will not be effective in achieving the intended result.

#### **4.5 challenges of investigative reporting practices in AMN**

As we have seen in chapter two of Review Literature, investigative journalism faces many challenges. serving society by detecting corruption, enhancing transparency and reinforcing public opinion are the key roles of investigative journalism. investigative journalism often shoulder the responsibility for uncovering corruption and other wrong doing (Deburgh,2008; Kaplan,2008; O’neill,2010), However there are several issues that impact investigative journalists ability to act with intellectual and professional freedom journalists face other influencing factors such as media owners mandates advertisers preferences and the high cost of investigative journalism(Griffen,2014; Raphael.el.2004).Such factors are also true in the case of Ethiopian private and government medias specifically in Addis Media Network, which are greatly impacted by political system.

Based on Baker, 2005; and De Burgh, 2008, the challenges facing investigative journalism vary by culture and are influenced by politics, financing, time constraints, the commitment of media owners and journalists, and legal restrictions imposed by governments. According to their response to the questionnaire of this research, the director and the editor share common opinion regarding whether the topic of the investigative reporting under the title “Mirmera” is accepted or not.

*The investigative reporting quality circle of the media organization discusses to decide on the topic of the investigative reporting whether it is to be carried out based on community’s information or the plan of the*

*media house. The discussion brings about necessary input regarding the directives, sources of the information and the information to be included in the investigative reporting. And, the producer conducts the video recording and the production work based on the ideas he gets from the discussion. If the producer fails to follow the steps in accordance with the directive from the quality circle and even completes the production in this way, the program will not be aired at all.*

(Director, Sep, 5, 2020)

Although the editor shares what the director said so far regarding the reasons why the program will not be aired despite completion, he added that the transmission of the program will be banned due to the intervention of higher officials of the organization. High officials will order the cancelation of the program from transmission.

According to the idea from the editor, external influences such as an intervention from high government officials of other organizations, first, Unwillingness of government officials in provision of the required documents and information for investigative journalists. The second one is the investigative program is forced not to be aired so that the community loses the importance expected to be gained from the work. In other words, it is stated on chapter two of the research that the intervention from higher officials is one of the factors that brings difficulty during investigative reporting both locally and in an international level.

The other things identified as a bottleneck to the investigation reporting in Addis Media Network are journalists' skill gap and less professional predations. The deployment of journalists to the positions to the investigative works division without considering their professional competence is also presented as a challenge that hinders the media house from conducting better works.

*‘The organization recruit journalists regardless of their prior educational background and experience. from the very beginning, the vacancy is not posted in accordance with a specific qualification in the field of investigative journalism. Therefore, we assign journalists to the investigative post without any criteria, just randomly. But, there are some improvements in the recent time to fix such a problem’*

(Director Sep. 1, 2020)

According to the points raised by the director, journalists hired by Addis Media Network had not taken any specific trainings on the field of investigative journalism before they join the organization. This implies that they have not a special interest and preparation to the post of investigation works. As a result, the investigative journalism is facing various challenges that make the media organizations not to achieve goals set in their plans and address grievances of the public in appropriate manner. The problem is not bound to the specific organization, but continues to become a challenge as a national level. And, the responses of the editor to the questionnaire reflects the same idea regarding the aforementioned problem.

*‘I learned about investigative journalism after I joined Addis Media Network, and I developed my experience gradually while working in my profession. I do not believe that I have scientific skill in the field of investigative journalism. Even, the organization has not given us any related trainings on the field so far.’*

(Editor: Sep. 1, 2020)

In addition to the aforementioned challenges, absence of legal framework that protects journalist’s security, failure of the organization to ensure rights of journalists, shortage of time to conduct enough preparations for the investigative work and less appropriation of budget for the work are among the challenges stated by both the editor and the director.

Even though the investigative works conducted by Addis Media Network are not effective in achieving their goals set to address maladministration issues, misuse of power, corruption and waste of public resources that affect livelihoods of the community, there are promising results being registered in some specific areas recently. The reports being conducted to assess the influence of the investigative program aired by the media helped to collect feedback and rectify errors and register some improvements.

The editor said that the media has conducted follow up stories based on the feedbacks collected from post transmission period and managed to improve its performances. This activity helps to get delayed projects completed and save loss of public property.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **MAJOR FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Major Findings**

This research has been conducted under the theme “Content Analysis Of Investigative journalism programs in Addis Media Network (AMN); The case of “Mirmera” Investigative programs. ”. Based on an interview guideline, the researcher included responses of eight information providers gathered through detailed interviews.

The information gathered and analyzed is focused on the content and practices of Investigative Journalism. The research also assessed the status of the Investigative Journalism Division at Addis Media Network in line with discharging its responsibilities, the types of media coverage in the division, challenges faced by reporters in the department, intervention from government officials, advantages and disadvantages in the field and possible measures that should be taken to address problems accordingly.

The findings of the research have been framed based on Agenda Setting, Social responsibility and Framing Theories. The scope of the research is limited to investigative reporting works conducted in Addis Media Network particularly in Investigative Journalism Division. The researcher has made detailed analysis on five systematically selected investigative programs aired by Addis Media Network within a year from January 2019 – January 2020.

The research underlined that the investigative reporting works in Addis Media Network are mainly focused on maladministration problems. Producers of the investigative programs interviewed by the researcher responded that most of the target productions were not effective in line with bringing working improvements and making wrongdoers responsible for the faults they did against public interests.

The public has been the major source for the investigative programs discussed by the research. But, the people who brought the cases to the Investigative Journalism Division caused challenges that impeded producers’ efforts to reach proper decisions, bridge working gaps and expose responsible bodies involved in target wrongdoings. This by itself prohibited the investigative works from achieving their goals.

Regarding the presentation of investigation programs, the findings of the study show that there is still a lot to be done by showing Lack of journalists experienced in investigative reporting, lack of interests among journalists deployed to the investigative works, so that the people can't understand it properly and find a solution, and also to make the offenders and the officials who have wronged the people accountable.

lack of trainings, intimidations, absence of conducive working environment, lack of insurances and security agreements, shallowness of investigative works due to shortage of time, lack of information, disorganization among drivers, camerapersons and producers are the major factors the caused poor investigative journalism practices in Addis Media Network.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

The researcher has reached a decision supported by multifaceted and objective sources of information. AMN investigative stories are not well developed by follow up stories. Based on the content analysis of the investigation programs and the interviews conducted, the research results obtained from the source of information show that the individuals who are the source of information, government officials and written documents have not been properly completed and many investigations have failed to achieve the desired objectives. In addition, informant individuals are cited among the findings of the study for being afraid to provide information, hiding information from government officials and not being present during interviews.

To make investigative production effectively, the producers have to be well trained but in AMN the producers and the editors also didn't get professional training to be effective in the field and the interviewees also clarified that there was the delay of the investigative program due to higher officials' influences. The study reflects that AMN investigative producers were not fully funded the investigative program needs clear and strong planning, budgeting, logistics and clear and known source of information. generally, higher officials' unnecessary interference, shortage of budget to run the program, blocking investigative program developed by journalists, pressure of targeted groups on journalists and people lack of confidence to give information, uncooperative feeling and act form government organizations and scarcity of sufficient documents to run the program are challenges of investigative journalism of AMN.

### 5.3 Recommendations

On the bases of conclusion drawn, the researcher forwards the following recommendations;

- Addis Media Network have to be incorporate diversified views Because most probably AMN covers government issues dominantly.
- AMN should work jointly with broadcast authority, media institution's local and international; to get proper and reliable sources from government officials, to build the capacity of investigative producers to strengthen the practice of investigative journalism in Ethiopia media.
- AMN producers, editors and the director should do their best of 'Mirmera' investigative program to be properly entertain the content of investigative program. To be Professional and resist the challenges they face.
- AMN investigative producers should cover not only corruption and other economic issues but also religious and political issues.
- Higher government officials should open the door to provide information needed for investigative report. Because most of the time Unwillingness of government officials in provision of the required documents and information for investigative journalists was found as the challenge of practicing investigative journalism in AMN.
- Investigative journalists should be protected from threat by the government and the media organization they are serving for.
- Finally, Educational institutions which are delivering related courses should give attention for investigative journalism and work cooperatively with media organizations, focusing on to inform the public about its significance in order to give information about the significance for the development and democratization process.
- In Addis Media Network the challenges facing investigative journalism and journalist mainly this is due to institutional reasons (the government and the employer) so they should accept it as any other form of journalism and accord it the respect it deserves.

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## **Appendix I**

### **Interview guide questions**

*This Interview questions are designed for AMN investigative journalists on the practice of investigative journalism taking “Mirmera” program as a vantage point in addition to their overall experience on the field.*

This is an in-depth interview designed for data analysis and presentation for the topic entitled as “The practice of investigative journalism in Addis Media Network; the case of “Mirmera” in Addis TV AMN” which is basically, an input for the partial fulfillment of Master of Arts in Journalism and communication(multimedia).

1. What are major areas “Mirmera” investigative program focuses on ?
2. Where do you find sources of agenda for investigation for AMN “Mirmera” program?
3. How do you verify the information you get during investigation?
4. How is the pre-research plan on “Mirmera” investigative program? For how long do you conduct the research on the area before you go to cover the issues?
5. What kind of ethical concern considered during investigation? In what ways your program plays media watchdog role?
6. How do you identify major grievances in the public that need to be addressed.
7. Do “Mirmera” investigative programs supported by follow up stories?
8. Do you think that investigating public grievances in Addis Ababa city is fruitful? To what extent your investigative report exposed hidden facts from the public so far? How?
9. What challenges you faced in investigating public grievance in Addis Ababa? Please briefly mention a kind of s challenges you have faced? (i.e. from your own media house, government authorities, individuals)?
10. What kinds of mechanism do you use to overcome such challenges? What do you suggest as a solution?

## **Appendix II**

### **Interview questions for editors and directors**

*In depth interview is designed for “Mirmera” investigative program editors.*

This is an in-depth interview designed for data analysis and presentation for the topic entitled as “The practice of investigative journalism in Addis Media Network; the case of “Mirmera” in Addis TV AMN” which is basically, an input for the partial fulfillment of Master of Arts in Journalism and communication(multimedia).

1. How do you assign journalists to investigate issues?
2. Do you think that investigative journalism practice in AMN is well planned?
3. In addition to producers Where did you get ideas for investigation as an editor?
4. Do you conduct pre-research plan on “Mirmera” investigative program? For how long the producers conduct the research on the area before they go to cover the issues?
5. After journalist’s treatment plan is approved what are the criteria’s you follow to accept or reject or investigative stories already conducted/done by journalists before they get broadcasted?
6. Do you think you have the necessary knowledge/skill for editing investigative stories?
7. To what extent investigative stories produced by journalists are quenching and raise public issues as per expected?
8. What are the major issues you tend to edit in “Mirmera” investigative program?
9. Do “Mirmera” investigative program supported by follow up stories?
10. Do you have any suggestion for a better investigative journalism practice in Ethiopian broadcast media in general and AMN in particular for maladministration in Addis Ababa city?

### **Appendix III**

#### **Interview questions for Manager**

1. How do you evaluate the practice of investigative journalism in your organization?
2. What special attention is given for the field on the behalf of the media house both for the practice and journalists?
3. In order to do professional investigative reporting, what kind of training and professional support do you provide to your journalists on topics of investigative journalism?
4. How do you evaluate the pre- plan on your “Mirmera” investigative program? Are all producers, editors, content directors and head directors/manager/ of the Organization participate on the plan?
5. Is there an encouraging environment in your station to practice investigative journalism?
6. Do you think that the AMN’s investigating of public grievances in Addis Ababa city is fruitful?
7. How do you evaluate investigative journalism producers, editors and their investigative programs?
8. What should be done to strengthen the practice of investigative journalism in Ethiopian media?

## **Appendix IV**

This checklist is basically designed for a critical content analysis of 5 systematically selected investigative stories aired during 2019-2020 from the experience of global and sub Saharan investigative journalism practice and assessment criteria taken from books as it is discussed in the review of related literature.

- Is the story of national or public concern? Who would benefit from this story?
- Is the topic or issue under investigation a priority?
- What hidden truths would the story reveal?
- What moral values does the story raise?
- Does the story challenge those in power to be responsible to the public, taxpayers, voters, consumers?
- Does the story indicate what type of behavior is unacceptable in our society?
- Does the story expose failures in systems that the public might not be aware of?
- Examples include highlighting bad policy, absence of mal administration, corruption in government, nepotism in business, insurance fraud and so on.
- Are public figures or decision makers held accountable?
- Has anybody addressed the same problem or story before?
- The story has an effect on other actors?
- The issues are emanating from the public at large?
- The story has enough credible sources?
- The story has an impact on policy, administration or public debate?