



Addis Ababa University

Graduate School of Journalism and Communication

**The practice of forest Management COMMUNICATION in Oromia:
The Case of OEPA**

By:

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January, 2024

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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By

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**A Thesis Submitted to the Addis Ababa University School of Graduate
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Advisor: Yohanis Shiferaw (PhD)

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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

EXAMINERS AND ADVISOR PAGE

Addis Ababa University Graduate School of Journalism and Communication, This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Tsegaye Bayissa, entitled The practice of forest Management COMNICAITON in Oromia: The Case of OEPA fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Journalism and Communication complies with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality. The work is eligible to earn master's degree in journalism and communication. Signed by Examining committee

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Yohanis Shiferawu (PhD)

Signature: _____

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LIST OF ACRONOMY

AAU	Addis Ababa University
OEPA	Oromia Environmental Protection Authority
PR	Public Relation
MEF	Ministry of Environment and Forest
FMA	Forest Management Agreement
FRC	Forestry Research Centre
CBO	Community Based Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
ORG	Oromia Regional Government
AR	Afforestation Reforestation
AGP	Agricultural Growth Program
EFAP	Ethiopian Forestry Action Program
GHG	Green House Gas
Ha	Hectare
UNCED	United nation's conference on environment and development
AAC	Allowable annual cut
US	United States
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

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ABSTRACT

The last three decades have seen an increase in Ethiopian recognition of the value of forest resources to the lives of those who live in and near forests. The people living in Ethiopia's Oromia National Regional State have a close relationship with the forest. The local community and the forest are connected by a number of challenges. The purpose of this study was to evaluate how well OEPA's community engagement initiatives function in connection to forest management. And also to determine the practical aspects of communication use, as well as the role of specialists and the difficulties that face OEPA's communication activities. The two-way balanced public relations model served as the theoretical foundation for the investigation. A hybrid method was adopted in the investigation. The primary research approach employed to examine and elucidate the procedures and difficulties associated with the Bureau's communication practice was a qualitative study design. To describe the findings, a quantitative investigation was conducted in addition to the qualitative method. While a questionnaire was employed as a data collection tool in the quantitative research design, interviews and observations were used in the qualitative study design. Purposive sampling strategies were used to identify questionnaire respondents. Interviews were also done with one team leader and four other employees. The study's conclusions demonstrate that while OEPA's communication practices vary in certain areas, they are mostly inconsistent; experts are completely focused on their technician roles without addressing their strategic roles; they have not gotten stuck on communication strategy and objectives; they lack a feedback mechanism for improving communication; messages are not pretested before being distributed to the community; and there is a lack of consistency in overall communication practices. Bad internal communication practices, inadequate attention to the communication section, expert capacity and skill gaps, a high employee turnover rate, improper communication structure, irregular workloads, and a lack of an information management system are all present. Finally, the researcher suggests that the company use a grouping and communication strategy in order to successfully accomplish the suggested aim. Additionally, it is advised that a cunning corporate communication plan include requirements for future research and involvement.

Key words: Environmental Protection, community engagement, public relations, forest management

1 CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Ethiopia's public sector has been in charge of managing its forest resources. The end result has been desertification, farmer encroachment, and unchecked deforestation of the natural forest. Because the forestry sector lacks consistent structural support and sufficient money, no program for sustainable forest management has been implemented. Finding alternate sources of raw materials for the wood-based industries, biomass energy, and other construction materials is becoming more urgent due to the depletion of commercial tree species through selective cutting and the preservation of these forest areas that have been opened to agriculture, along with the resulting environmental factors (Larsen & Nielsen, 2007).

Along with the dominant goals of the scientific management of trees, the involvement of communities in forest management has supplemented and diversified the objectives to include the social and economic well-being of the local community. In this setting, official and informal communications between Forest Departments and communities have emerged as a critical element of community-based forest management success (Kuswandari, 2004).

Natural resources, such as forests and trees, are essential to the world and provide the only means of subsistence, income, and well-being for rural populations, especially for indigenous people, smallholders, those who live close to forests, and those who use trees outside of forests (FAO, 2018). Communication problems in forest management are not limited to the local level, where community members and Forest Department representatives interact; they also arise in the planning and policy-making stages at the regional, national, and international levels (Engida & Mengistu, 2013). Reducing net greenhouse gas emissions from land use sectors and enhancing sustainable forest management outside the Oromia's borders are the program's primary goals. It is currently being used in 287 rural woredas across the Oromia Region. It is anticipated that the adoption of OFM will help achieve local, regional, and national objectives for jobs, food and water security, economic growth, poverty reduction, forest expansion, and mitigation and adaptation to climate change (Forest, 2015).

In order to address the issues of deforestation, forest degradation, and forest restoration, the new communication offers a unified and cohesive structure at the federal and regional levels. It covers the Oromia environmental protection authority, finance, research & innovation, and both supply-side and demand-side policies. In order to address deforestation and forest degradation, this involves promoting a multi-stakeholder and Member State platform that emphasizes forest management. Regarding deforestation and forest degradation, increasing financial support to assist producing nations in their endeavors, and evaluating extra demand-side measures, such as rules intended to maintain fair competition, to improve supply chain transparency and reduce the risk of deforestation and forest degradation shall be addressed. Proclamation No.542/2007, National Forest Development, Conservation and Utilization, encourages local communities to participate in forest management. More significantly, the policy opens doors for PFM implementation across the nation's many regions (Case et al., 1996)

The long-term initiative known as the Oromia Environmental Protection Authority (OEPA) aims to change the way Oromia's forested landscapes are maintained to provide a variety of goods and services. The bureau functions outside the borders of the Oromia Regional State, and the advancement of state-wide policies that support the enhancement of favorable conditions for the mitigation of deforestation and forest degradation is a key component of its effective execution.

The remaining woods are vulnerable to unrestrained wood harvesting and swift clearing rates in order to create new agricultural land, largely to support the rapidly growing population but also partially as a means of making up for area lost to degradation (Ayana et al., 2017). In the case of communication practice, participation and consultation are essential. It is important to conduct consultations in good faith. In order to identify appropriate answers in an environment of respect for one another, good faith, and equal and complete involvement, the parties should have a discussion. Time and an efficient method of communication among interested parties are needed for communication and consultation.(Baljak and Soukup, 2015)

It is imperative that a gender perspective be included, that indigenous women participate, and that children and youth participate when appropriate. Forest management of natural resources and sustainable use of its products is a difficult issue since, in countries like Ethiopia, where the lives of many rural communities are directly tied to natural resources, forests mean everything (Ango & Bewket, 2009). Therefore, the community at large nongovernmental groups, the

commercial sector, professional associations, and all others should be actively participating in this effort to simplify this difficult task. According to other studies, a large number of community-based initiatives have failed, typically as a result of insufficient funding from the government. Numerous researchers have examined Ethiopia's forest resource management strategies and their challenging communication practices; however, they have identified a number of factors that impede their effectiveness, including low beneficiary awareness, a lack of genuine participation, and an ineffective technical communication package that is appropriate for the local environment (Winberg, 2010).

According to Getahun (2016), encouraging sustainable land management requires a thorough grasp of farmers' knowledge and perceptions of the variables influencing their practices. Finding out whether and when farmers put what they understand and believe into practice is also fascinating. Insufficient communication, planning, and bureaucratic implementation are contributing factors to the failure of forest management conservation efforts. Therefore, by evaluating communication, this study seeks to advance the functionality of theoretical aids for community relations initiatives.

1.2 Statement of the problem

It is not well understood to what extent local communities' dependence on forest ecosystem services in this particular area poses a fundamental challenge to forest management. Understanding the significance of forest communication practices in bolstering local communities' livelihoods and their willingness to take on the responsibility of participating in and collaborating in collective actions for the sustainable conservation and management of forests both require this information (Gobeze et al., 2009).

The difficulty of communication in forest management will determine the welfare of current and future generations. Ethiopia's forest degradation is being exacerbated by natural events and human activity, necessitating immediate solutions to maintain agricultural livestock output and livelihood. The only media that encourages research on communication barriers and how power and technology relate to the use of and implementation of life-supporting systems for a better quality of life is Forest (Forest, 2015).

Based on this, it is imperative to monitor the program's implementation status with the local hosting institution in order to ensure a smooth implementation and the achievement of the program's objectives. For the Oromia forest management (OFM) initiatives in the area to be implemented successfully, a shared understanding among those bodies is essential. Management approaches require communication as a fundamental element. The importance of communication in forest management has grown between local populations and government forest departments. Since plans and policies are based on incomplete knowledge and information, a forest department's capacity to navigate toward co-management is weakened by a lack of communication (Frith et al., 2014).

According to Khan et al. (2012), there are two types of experts in development communication: those who see communication as an organizational delivery system and those who see it more broadly, considering it to be inextricably linked to culture and all facets of social change. In efforts to lower emissions or bring forest management with awareness communication practice for forest mitigation raising programs, it has also evolved into a tool for accomplishing development goals in ways of communication practice that respond to the needs of local communities in forest management (Holvoet & Muys, 2004).

Therefore, as a cornerstone approach, the Oromia Environmental Protection Authority (OEPA) serves as a programmatic umbrella organization for multi-partner, multi-sector interventions on all of the national regional state of Oromia's forest landscapes.

Education is a key initiative in recognizing the impact of deforestation and degradation on climate change. Education is a tool for changing behavior. Aims made to lower emissions or implement forest management while evaluating communication strategies and improving awareness of initiatives for forest mitigation (Case et al., 1996). Therefore, the primary goal of this study is to evaluate the communication practices and difficulties involved in the forest management initiatives that the Oromia Environmental Protection Authority is carrying out. Among the issues that need to be researched with relation to communication practices are appropriateness, sustainability, and the ability to create a favorable impression of the company.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

1.3.1. General Objective

This study's primary goal was to evaluate the communication strategies and difficulties encountered by the Oromia Environmental Protection Authority in its forest preventive, protective, promoted operations.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives

The particular goals of this study were to:

- ❖ Determine the main communication strategies used by the Oromia Environmental Protection Authority for forest management initiatives.
- ❖ Determine which main communication channels are employed for awareness-raising campaigns.
- ❖ Determine the main obstacles to communication that arise during the region's forest management process.
- ❖ Evaluate the level of cooperation between stakeholders in raising awareness about the activities related to forest management.

1.4. Research Questions

The following questions will be attempted to be addressed in this study:

- a. What is the main method of communication used by the Oromia Environmental Protection Authority bureau for forest management activities?
- b. Which media are employed in awareness-raising campaigns?
- c. What are the main communication obstacles that the bureau faces when managing its forests?
- d. How well are stakeholders collaborating to raise knowledge about forest management?

1.5. Significance of the study

The findings of this study will assist farmers, stakeholders, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Oromia Bureau of Agriculture and Natural Resources, the Oromia Environmental Protection Authority bureau, and development agents both practically and theoretically. Finding gaps in the

channels and practices of communication between development agencies and farmers would also be beneficial. The researcher thinks that this study will help with the strategic communication responses to forest management concerns that are being used now and in the future. It appears that potential study beneficiaries include researchers, policy makers, and governmental and non-governmental groups. According to the researcher, the organization can evaluate communication practices and challenges in Oromian forest management in depth by using the study's findings. Additionally, those who are interested in this field of study might utilize it as a source of information.

1.6. Scope of the study

The study's objective is based on an evaluation of the Oromia Regional Government Environmental Authority's communication practices and issues. The practice of communication as it relates to raising community knowledge of and fostering positive attitudes about policies, tactics, and initiatives is the main focus. It is restricted to stating pertinent communication and public relations topics. Additionally, the people included in the study was chosen from the Addis Ababa head office. And in October of 2024, this data was gathered.

1.7. Limitation of the study

The absence of literature from Ethiopian scholars exploring the subject within an Ethiopian context posed a limitation. Despite these drawbacks, the study endeavours to provide valuable insights into forest management communication practices.

1.8. Organization of the study

Five chapters comprise the organization of the research. The first chapter includes an introduction, a problem statement, research questions, research objectives, significance, scope, constraints, and study organization. Review of related literature is the focus of Chapter Two. Chapter 3 discusses research methodology and data analysis techniques. The data display and analysis were covered in the fourth chapter. The outcomes and conclusions of the quantitative and qualitative data analyses were also included in this chapter, and they were examined in relation to the main theoretical framework of the research. The final chapter of the paper contains the conclusion, the study's recommendations, and ideas for additional research.

CHAPTER TWO

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on review of related literature and begins with a discussion of study that deals with assessment of communication practice and challenges in forest management at Oromia Environmental Protection Authority bureau. It also deals with the practice of communication practice and challenge, the importance of communication practice in an organization and forest management. Discussions are made on the key concepts of this study, including defining communication, forestry, environmental communication and communication development. ((Riedl et al., 2019)

Finally, it is followed by the conceptual, theoretical literature assessment of communication practice and challenges.

2.1.1. Concept of Forest Management Communication

The word communication is derived from the Latin word, *commune*, which means common. The definition underlines the fact that unless a common understanding results from the exchange of information, there is no communication. Hundreds of clear and understood definitions of communication have been published in the communication and related literatures for use by scholars and specialists trying to describe, predict, and understand communicative phenomena (Larsen & Nielsen, 2007).

Different scholars give different definition to forest management communicationAs to (Yanti et al., 2018) Communication can be defined as the process of transmitting information and common understanding from one person to another. According to the conceptualization of Hecht, (1978) forest management "forming an idea. Ideas are built on the body of knowledge that's already been created. Your idea builds on the research that's already been done on your topic or related topics" communication in this context has been conceptualized as fulfilling needs such as achievement, affiliation and dominance means the policy-based provision of forest management"(Hecht, 1978) Accordingly, community involvement is essential to the design of locally efficient and socially relevant forest management mechanisms in the communities. This

is more indicative of many of the past disaster incidents happened over the world.(Shehara et al., 2020)

Communication itself is the transmission of information from one individual or group to another. The pattern of communication refers to who is sharing information with whom, the amount of communication, the direction, whether the communication is friendly or not, and to what extent power shapes the communication in forest management. Communication depends on the coordination and shared rules of interpretation , any decision referring to forests and forestry encompasses large areas, a long time prospect and multiple stakeholders and also suggests a great deal of knowledge and information from different sources . Communication policies and patterns of governance and growing environmental awareness on a global level will probably necessitate important policy changes in redefining the partnership between society and the forestry sector on regional or national levels. Amplified interest from society towards recreational benefits acquired from forests has driven the request for the forest sector to be responsive to a broad scope of environmental and societal issues.(Hecht, 1978)

On the other hand (Shehara et al., 2020) defines communication as "talking to one another and spreading information through several channels." He further describes communication as one of those human activities that everyone recognizes but few can define satisfactorily. Moreover, communication plays significant role to bring about the desired change for development forest programs.

According to Shehara et al., (2020) communication is a key to analysing the relationship between all of these aspects environmental problems, human perceptions, attitudes, behaviours, values, preferences, and beliefs about the world. This thematic issue reports on research which delivers visions into how we can communicate environmental issues effectively and appropriately. Communication plays a central role in shaping our understanding of the natural world and the role of humans.

2.1.2. Community Perception about Communication

In multiple-use management, it is necessary to coordinate and make compromises between diverging and conflicting stakeholders. This makes communication between, and involvement

of, affected stakeholders essential. The concept of public participation has come to be an important part of the international forest management (Shehara et al., 2020).

Achieving public support and understanding in addressing the challenges of communication practice in forest management. The most important instrument for achieving public support is communication. To be effective, this communication has to be built on a communication strategy reflecting the long-term goals of forest policy and has to be based on both current examines and other relevant information (Riedl et al., 2019). Public participation is a volunteer process whereby people, separately or through organised groups, can exchange information, express opinions and articulate interests, and have the potential to influence decisions or the outcome of the matter in hand.

2.1.3. Influencing Factors

Factors Affecting the Implementation of Communication Strategies, According to Framework on Effective forest management Communication for Development assert, the communication strategies implementation is stuck due to ranked, top down one-way and undistinguishable communication to beneficiaries. Prevents communication practice in the sense of mutual learning. Organizational working environment often does not allow communication skills to be developed or implemented. The lack of accountability to clients makes the service provider much less interested in communication, since the feedback of employee on the quality of services has little capacity building in the necessary communication skills of professionals and front line staff of technical services. In sufficient support and follow up, particularly in rural areas hamper not only media communication, but even face-to-face communication. The lack of resources inhibits their ability to utilize new media and communication opportunities. These cultures of many organizations do not support the implementation of communication practice (Wegi & Eshetu, 2019).

As Shene, (2014) cited show that. In the modern world effectively applying communication practice are challenged by several factors. Horizontally, the assessment of communication

practice implementation is affected through, consistent and long-term supervision, continuous evaluation and remarks. But they are also challenged along a vertical axis which shows that the strategic effort includes a range or constituent pillars with very different characters (military, trade, diplomacy, aid and so on) at different stages of development, and with different requirements as far as communications practice are concerned. In these conditions, consensus and coherence may be impossible to achieve (Patt & Weber, 2014)

For any communication practice to be effectively implemented, it requires well trained and competent manpower. But the cost of training the staff, lack of qualified people to train and limitation in time may act as a barrier to effectiveness of communication practice implementation. Resistance to change normally leads to delays, additional costs and destabilizes organization change process. People working in an organization sometimes resist change proposals and make communication practice strategy difficult to implement.

2.1.4. The role of media in mobilizing people for afforestation

Deforestation was one of the first environmental topics discussed at a world level when the term sustainability was introduced in the UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. In that conference the management of the Amazonian forest was a key issue in discussion (Kolk, 1996). Unfortunately deforestation is still an on-going environmental problem. According to estimates of the Global Forest Resources Assessment, (UN FAO, 2001) on average the world's natural forests decreased by 16.1 million hectares (ha) per year during the 1990s, which represents a loss of 42% of the natural forest that existed in 1990. On the other hand FAO estimated that tropical regions lost 15.2 million ha of forest per year during the 1990s (FAO, 1995). Deforestation is threatening tropical forests and their capacity to provide economic and ecological services not only for sustainable local livelihoods but also for ecosystems and climate equilibrium on the Earth. During last four decades there has been increased interest in tropical deforestation since forest loss is linked with disruption of hydrological regimes (Shukla et al 1990), degradation of soil (Hecht 1981; Buschbacher et al 1988), loss of species (Myers, 1980, Wilson, 1989) and changes in green house gases in the atmosphere, which induce climate change (Houghton et al 1983; Post et al 1990; Dale et al 1991). Brazil has the potential to provide for global warming benefits if deforestation is stopped or slowed down, because the tropical forest 1

Sustainability: The concept of meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs (Our common future, 1987). In the context of forests, this term applies to the use of ecosystems and their resources in a manner that satisfies current needs without compromising the needs or options of future generations. Forests can act as a sink of CO₂ and because CO₂ emissions caused by deforestation are large, about 250- 350x10⁶ tons annually as compared to approximately 60x10⁶ tons from fossil fuels (Fearnside, 1999; Laurance, 2000). Moreover, there is a growing concern that more frequent and catastrophic El Niño events will occur as a result of the combination of massive deforestation, forest fragmentation, logging, and forest burning from thousands of small farmers (Laurance, 2000).

Deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon and the role of small farmers The Brazilian Amazon, the largest remaining rainforest, covers approximately one-third of the total rainforest area in the world. Brazil's "Legal Amazon" region covers 5 million km² of which 4 million km² was originally forested. Approximately 3.5 million km² (87%) of this originally forested area was still standing as of 1997 (Fearnside, 1999, Molofosky et al, 1985). During the last four decades the Brazilian Amazon has experienced increasing rates of deforestation. According to satellite estimates of deforestation by Brazil's National Institute for Space Research (INPE), deforestation in the Legal Amazon has increased from a total land area of 155,200 km² in 1978 to 551,782 km² in 1998 (INPE, 2001). Such figures correspond to 4.4 % and 15.6%, respectively, of all land originally forested in the Brazilian Amazon. This implies an annual average increase of 6.2% in the land area deforested (INPE, 2001). However, the Brazilian Amazon is still the largest tract of forest and now one of the "hot-spots" for bioconservation and land cover research. The Legal Amazon is made up of the entire North region (the states Acre, Amapa, Amazonas, Para, Rondônia, Roraima, and Tocantins) plus parts of the states of Maranhao, Mato Grosso, and Goias. The southern edge is the 16th parallel, and the eastern edge is the 44th meridian. The tremendous land cover change (LCC) in the Brazilian Amazon has been linked to many forces, in particular to the extension of the Brazilian highway network and large-scale development projects for mineral extraction, hydroelectric development and logging. Research has grown around the study of social and biophysical changes linked to colonization projects in the Amazon (Browder, 1988, Evans, 2001, Binswanger, 1991).

Research has focused on depicting the social evolution and landscape change of this “new” land, often called the Amazon Frontier and special interest has been given to agricultural colonization projects⁴ . Regarding the landscape change, most of the land allocated to the colonists was mature forest prior to settlement but it turned into a mosaic of pasture, croplands and different stages of forest regrowth associated with fallowed agricultural land (Evans, 2001). Small farmers are regarded by many researchers and policy makers as “major deforesters” in the Amazon mainly because of their clearing practices for agricultural and cattle ranching purposes⁵ . Small farmers are commonly defined as farmers with properties having an area less than or equal to 100 ha (Fearnside, 1999). Research estimates indicate that these farmers are responsible for about 30% of the deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon (Fearnside, 1999). They are important deforestation agents because of their large number, their incentives to clear land to prove land occupation, and their mobility. 3 Land cover: refers to the “attributes of a part of the Earth’s land surface and immediate subsurface, including biota, soil, topography, surface and groundwater, and human structures.” One type of land cover is forest. (Turner et al, 1993 in Lambin et al, 2000) 4 Frontier: a land that was not accessible before and an area sparsely populated by indigenous communities. 5 Small farmers are commonly defined as farmers with properties, which area is less or equal to 100 ha (Fearnside, 1999). 4 Population growth, colonization of the Amazon frontier and deforestation are interrelated. However, theorists still disagree on what is the effect of population changes on deforestation trends. In the 1970’s, population in the Legal Amazon grew at almost 4 percent per year showing also net migration gains of almost 20,000 people per year (Perz, 2001). This population growth was suggested as one factor that favored increased deforestation among farms, since family labor was readily available.

During the 1980’s population growth in the Legal Amazon slowed down to 3 percent per year, showing also net migration losses of about 40,000 people per year. In the 1990’s, Brazilian Amazon’s population growth was 2 percent per year (Perz, 2001). Some observers consider this slowdown in population the result of the aging process in the colonists’ families. Moreover this household aging process is linked to the change in land use strategies from annual crops to cattle ranching, under the premise that annual crops require larger number of young laborers than cattle ranching.

2.2. Communication in Community Forestry

The Community Forestry communication practice Program, has taken a number of forms; community woodlots, agro-forestry practices, catchment protection, wind and shelterbelts, and road side shade and ornament in villages and towns. This program has received most of its external support from the World Food Program (FOA) and SIDA (Kidane & Abler, 1994). The Community Forestry Development Department was created with importance on establishing for fuel and pole wood production. Started to operate based on the argument that mass placement was only possible way to attain the target of self-reliance in production and supply of non-industrial wood products (Getahun J, 2016)

According to Kidane & Abler, (1994) The objective of Community Forestry were to contribute farmer and urban dwellers associations to establish wood lots to meet their requirements for fuel wood and small construction poles; to integrate forestry in to their farming systems in the form of intercropping using multi-purpose tree classes to create a suitable and balanced farming ecosystem while, at the same time being able to obtain food, fodder etc. To create consciousness among the local people of the need and position of forestry and be able to procure their support for the implementation country's forest policy. Population depending on it. This was closely linked with conservation objectives and the maintenance or even improvement of agricultural productivity. Peasant Associations and peasant cooperatives were expected to establish wood lots to produce fuel wood and construction materials and the establishment of hillside plantations were mostly attempted in food shortage area. Thus vague occupation right on part of both the state and the community over forest land and the incapability of the forced state to enforce its own regulations led to the huge and often confused destructions of natural forest. In recollection a major weakness of past forest policy was lack of clear guidelines on the communication managements and operation of community forest lots possession and benefit sharing were not made clear from the beginning; results were made between extension staff and DA leaders without involving farmer; and community members were not allowed to participate in planning and making decisions regarding the establishment and management of the plantations

2.3. Culture and Communication

Culture and Communication aims to publish research that emphasizes the varied intersections of culture and human communication. The section is theoretically and methodologically

interdisciplinary, welcoming social scientific, humanistic, critical/cultural, symbolic, performative, and other approaches. Culture and Communication is an international platform that explores how “culture” in its countless forms intersects with those of “human communication.” This section broadly defines culture to include the ideas, customs, social behavior, and norms of societies. Communication is broadly defined as the exchange of information. All areas of research that discuss the relationship between culture and communication are encouraged, including

By including research on the intersection between culture and communication, this section seeks to promote interdisciplinary and to enhance our understanding of global and local issues. Culture and Communication places culture at the center of research. The section is interested in furthering both our theoretical and methodological understandings of culture and communication. There are six indicators of a strong submission, and myself, our reviewers, and our future readers will want to read: 1, Culture is at the center of the research 2, the work advances our understanding of communication³, the work is theoretically and/or methodologically innovative, 4) the work has societal and/or practical significance 5, the work is timely, and (6) the work follows open science practices.

They have gradually developed the knowledge of the forest management characteristics of forests, appropriate seasons of burning, and the degree of moisture in the forests. They are aware that topographical features of the land and its temperature, rainfall, soil type and soil moisture, availability of wood, grass and litter, wind direction and vegetation types determine the intensity and frequency of fires. They favour species which do not burn readily rather than easily burnable undergrowth species. They have Environmental Ethics and Oromo Culture employed empirically tested methods of forest fire management. They collectively attack forest fire. The Oromo concern for forest fire suggests that proposal of letting the fires burn is not acceptable at least in Ethiopia. Although does not reject the importance of fire management, he argues that we need to let natural forest fire take its course.

As this section is *Culture and Communication*, it is critical that culture is at the center of all submissions. What does this mean? For a submission to fit this section the research, no matter what the theoretical or methodological approach must place culture at the center of the communication process. In this sense, researchers can approach culture from a more cultural

sensitivity approach where culture is seen as the shared values, beliefs, and practices (Winberg, 2010) researchers may approach culture from a culture-centered approach, where culture is articulated in the meanings co-constructed by the cultural participants, and these meanings are located within the local context of the culture. Culture includes a continuous component that flows through the history of the culture, and a dynamic component that continually shifts as the culture responds to statewide, national, and global shifts in politics, economic, and communication flow. Culture can be defined as, “learned behaviors that are communicated from one generation to another to promote individual and social structure” In other words, information and behavior that is appropriate to where we live, where we have come from, and the traditions of those places are handed down along generations to insure that they continue. These behaviors help us identify who we are and who our ancestors were. our culture is an assorted combination of many races from all over the world coming together to create a culture unlike those found anywhere else. (Workineh, 2008) Either way, the key is to critically interrogate the role of culture in communication within all pieces submitted to *Culture and Communication*.

2.4. Development Communication and Environment

Domestic waste in urban areas is one of the critical problems in the era of the climate crisis. This problem is reflected in river pollution and flooding during the rainy season, especially in coastal areas that experience rising water levels or tidal flooding (Rob). In 2020, Indonesia produced 67.8 million tons and is predicted to increase by 4.4% in 2025 to 70.8 million tons. In 2021, there was 34.64% of unmanaged waste or around 9.65 million tons, and the contribution of domestic waste was 40.8%. Household waste is estimated to be a severe challenge in achieving the SDGs target until 2030. In Indonesia, waste management still relies on the end of the pipe system; 69% of waste is concentrated in Final Disposal Sites (TPA), 12% recycled, 8% composted, 4% waste banks, 3% fuel (biogas), and others 4 % (KLHK 2019). This pattern is considered ineffective and requires the role of the household to manage waste while improving the living environment and microclimate around the home.

Households are the primary producers of domestic waste, which is reflected in the increase in the quantity of garbage that is positively correlated with an increase in population (Mulasari and Sulistyawati, 2014). Things that contribute to the identified waste problems include people's

behaviour in disposing of waste and waste management technology that still needs to be appropriate and effective. Babelan Bekasi sub-district is a sub-district bordering the North Coast, and Kebalen Village is one of the villages in the sub-district area. Several villages in this sub-district face the threat of climate crisis risk through rising sea levels. The research location is not affected directly by increasing sea level but indirectly because the sea-level rise on the Coastal Coast hinders water flow. On the other hand, the threat of flooding due to piles of garbage in the river flow from the city also restricts water flow to the beach. The research location faces two risks: flooding from upstream due to piles of garbage due to ineffective waste management and obstacles to water flow to the North Coast of West Java sea estuary. Sea level rise reaches inundation 300 meters inland or 6-10 mm/year. The rate of sea-level rise has been as high as 8 cm over the last ten years. The impacts of climate change have even inundated the community's residential areas, but the community's responses have varied. Some are indifferent, most react after being affected, others are proactive, and some are anticipatory. This shows that public awareness still needs to improve, apparently due to the ineffective communication of risks to the impacts of the climate. From initial observations, related parties need a practical communication problem to build public awareness of the climate crisis. In theory, the development of appropriate risk communication has the potential to overcome the impact of the climate crisis, especially related to the causes of flooding by domestic waste. A proper risk communication strategy is needed to anticipate the further effects of the climate crisis. The government's concern can be seen in regulations related to waste management and the climate crisis.

The government has issued law number 18 of 2008 concerning Waste Management. In addition, there have also been derivative regulations regarding Household Waste Management contained in Government Regulation No. 81 of 2012. Presidential Decree No. 81 has been published—97 of 2017 concerning National Policies and Strategies for the Management of Household and Other Domestic Waste. Even more operational, there has been a Regulation of the Minister of Environment and Forestry No. 14 of 2021. Still, it has not had a tangible impact on the problem of handling waste, especially domestic waste. It is interesting to study how to develop an appropriate development E3S Web of Conferences 454, 02009 (2023) <https://doi.org/10.1051/e3sconf/202345402009> ICAS 2023 2 communication model in environmental management to overcome the risks of the climate crisis, especially household waste and flood risk, pollution, and housing microclimate problems. Risk communication is

considered appropriate in environmental management through community empowerment by utilizing waste for ecological improvement. Various journals mention that risk communication can be one of the potential alternative solutions to anticipate the impact of the current and future climate crisis. Development communication is a two-way process of information dissemination and dialogue among stakeholders. Development communication is an environmental management tool to help assess risks and opportunities for environmental, social, and economic crises. Servaes (2020) emphasizes the importance of adapting to the dynamics of ecological change so that people are ready to face changes in the social, economic, and technological fields. Hemer and Tufte (2006) showed that with suitable risk communication methods, all of the above can be achieved. In the context of empowerment, the participatory communication paradigm that promotes dialogue impacts mutual understanding, mutual agreement, and collective action among participants according to their respective portions. Development communication aims to build consensus by sharing knowledge for positive change initiatives in development. Development communication is a two-way process of sharing ideas and expertise using various communication tools and approaches that empower individuals and communities to take action to improve their lives.

Participatory development communication refers to using mass media and traditional interpersonal communication that empower communities to take responsibility for their development. Risk communication is often mixed with crisis communication; in this study, risk communication is interpreted as crisis communication. Crisis communication is a dialogue process between various parties related to crises that occur in public, which is carried out to overcome the current crisis. In this case, a communication strategy is needed to overcome threatening emergencies. A situation is different from everyday problems. A concern is a big problem that hurts people's lives, but if the trouble can be handled properly, it will be positive for people's lives. Crises often become public attention and media coverage that sometimes affects people's lives in politics, law, and government. Some of the cases that are the basis of thinking in this study can be described as follows. In the case of COVID-19 in Wuhan, China, applying appropriate risk communication in community empowerment can reduce the risk of COVID-19. Using risk communication in reducing greenhouse gas emissions to overcome the impacts of climate change.

Accessibility and information disclosure about the risk of the impact of COVID-19 can be improved by forming convergence in the risk communication process, especially related to existing uncertainties. The risk communication model in the form of collaborative networks between parties effectively empowers the community to overcome the risk of the COVID-19 outbreak. The parties involved in handling the outbreak are the government, experts, and the public. Their respective roles and responsibilities in community empowerment to overcome the impact of COVID-19, especially in China, the Government is the leading actor. Three principles can be learned in improving the effectiveness of risk communication through community empowerment in Wuhan, namely: (1) Communication to overcome public health emergencies, (2) Three main factors that play an essential role: the government, experts and the community, (3) The synergistic network of the three actors in the risk communication process of managing the impact of the Covid 19 outbreak.

2.5. Environmental Communication

Environmental communication is defined as the social and symbolic constructions of environment, public participation in environmental decisions, conflict resolution, environmental journalism, social media, environmental advocacy campaigns, science communication, environmental justice and climate justice movements, risk communication, Environmental communication is any kind of environmentally relevant information flow that uses different communication channels. It is any communication that includes communication of environmental messages to audiences by all means and through all channels. It involves interactive listening and public discussion and debate. Communication that establishes the relationship between the people and environment as a means of enhancing environmental literacy and sustainable environment practices(Yanti et al., 2018). It is communication about environmental affairs that include all of the diverse interpersonal, group, public, organizations, and mediated communication that makes up the social debate.

In addition, it is also an interdisciplinary field of study that requires professional practice. Environmental communication can advance and enhance environmental performance and address climate change that pays to green growth. Scholars (Monroe et al., 2019) describe “environmental communicators create strategies for reaching certain audiences, they develop messages and select the appropriate media to reach these audiences”, the goal is to in still in

learners the knowledge about the environment, positive attitudes toward the environment, competency in citizen action skills, and a sense of empowerment” The aim of environmental communication, like any other development issue, is to bring a positive change in the living conditions of people. According to FAO (1994), communication for development should change people's lifestyle through awareness, peer therapy technique of relational.

2.5.1. Social, Economic and Environmental Communication

The role of forest and forestry in any country or region will be settled by two poles, the forest resource (supply) on one hand and the need by the society (demand) on the other hand. Neither supply nor demanded are static. The forest resource can be managed for the purpose of optimal supply, but with time, society changes its use of products and services in quality as well as in quantity(Yanti et al., 2018) Forest and trees are an important resources base for a sustainable economic and social development, providing a large variety of wood products, non-wood products and services. The role of forest and trees with regarded to the protection of soil, water and the environment is of vital importance in many regions of the world and for most mountainous area(Case et al., 1996) noted the role of forest as follow conservation of biological diversity, carbon storage and consecutive for mitigation of global climate change, soil and water conservation, provision of employment and recreation as opportunities, improvement of agricultural production system, improvements forest management conditions and protection of natural and cultural inheritance.

Moreover, the cultural influences of the forest have been recognized throughout the age and writers, painters and philosopher and have resulting inspiration from it. The forest has left a deep impression on the minds of men from the earliest times, and is related with religious belief among the people of many land; this finds look in the protection of blessed grows and in the worship of certain kinds of trees, while, the folklore of many embryonic communities is certain up with the forests and the sprits which inhabits them (Workineh, 2008) put the contribution of forest and trees to agricultural production as “maintain the soil and water for agricultural production, particularly in upland water sheds, by reducing erosion and moderating streams flow, restore soil fertility in shifting agriculture; increase farm crop yields by 20-30% in arid and semi-arid areas by slowing wind and increasing soil moisture; increase soil nitrogen content through

use of leguminous nitrogen fixing tree species; and provide a significant proportion of livestock feed requirements especially, in upland and semiarid regions. (Chen et al., 2013)

The production of wood for industry and, in some cases, for the export of forest product has been and is likely to continue to be the main policy objectives for a large proportion of the managed forests of most countries and it constitutes the main sources of income from forestry. But in many developing countries and especially those with limited forest resources, the provision of fuel wood and of other wood for domestic use in rural areas is even more important. In these countries most people depend almost entirely on wood to cook their food and this situation is not expected to change much in the predictable future, (Yanti et al., 2018). Trees are essential sources of fodder for livestock. They also provide fruits and nuts, honey, gums, oils, resins, medicines, tannins, fibers, and other materials. There is growing recognition of the importance of small-scale forest-based enterprise as a source of on farm employment and income (Lewis & Sheppard, 2006) Almost all forests everywhere have environmental function, but the nature of that function varies. In major water catchment areas forest act as a sponge that absorbs rain and then releases it slowly thus helping to prevent the periodic flooding and drying out of rivers; on slope forests help to retain the soil and prevent erosions, in arid regions forests impede the march of the desert; and almost everywhere they are playing an increasingly important role as habitats for wild life. Forests and trees are an essential factors for protecting environmental and human and habitat, they are most remarkable achievements in the development of nature, an in restrict element of biodiversity and a significant part of many landscape.

According to Winberg, (2010), the use of forests for recreational purposes has only in recent times created problems requiring policy decisions. The most serious problems arise in developed countries, which are densely populated and have only a limited area of forests under this the number of people wishing to visit forests is very large and the risk of damage is great unless appropriate measures are taken

In developing countries, forests are unavailable upon by urban development when require land for housing industries, roads, motorways, airports, power plants etc. These losses of forest area are often compensated by afforestation of marginal agricultural land, but usually, in remote areas or in the mountains, the forest areas may be in balance or even show an increase but the development as a whole may never the less be unfavourable, because the disadvantages of losing

forests near the population middles is by no means counter balanced by the advantage of creating new forest in place where the forest cover may be already sufficient and benefits fewer people (Getahun 2016) pointed out that there are different causes of deforestation in Ethiopia, increase in population and consequent increase in the demand for agricultural land, fuel wood as well as construction and industrial, settlement around forest area and forest fire, the expansion of large commercial farms in forest area, absence of forest protection and conservation system policy , absence of strong forest administration system, incapable of arresting the rapidly increasing rate of deforestation as well as controlling and preventing the disruption of the various ecosystem, lack of effort to ensure the participation of communities in forest protection and conservation and the sharing of benefits. According to Kidane & Abler, (1994) factors causing deforestation includes economic stagnation and poverty, poor governances and political tolerance, expanded civil wars, fixed bureaucracy , extensive corruption, weak policies and in appropriate institutional arrangements including tree or land tenure insecurity and population pressure.

2.5.2. Forest management in Ethiopia

The field of community-based natural resource management has been receiving growing scientific attention over the past two decades. Most studies, however, focus on investigating institutional designs and outcomes and pay scant attention to how community-based natural resource management arrangements are carried out in practice. Through an in-depth ethnographic case study in one of the pioneer participatory forest management (PFM) arrangements in Ethiopia, this article proves a significant disparity between the PFM institutional principles and actual local forest management practices. (Ayana et al., 2017)

Our study confirms the usefulness of a practice-based approach to understand and explain how a newly introduced institutional arrangement is acted upon by local actors situated in their social, political and historical context. Our findings also contribute to empirical knowledge useful to initiate dialog and to critically reflect on whether and what kind of intervention is actually needed to positively influence forest management practices on the ground. Overall, the components of PFM are concentrated around: forest development management that can include plantation and reforestation or rehabilitation of degraded lands; forest protection and utilization; monitoring of the forest and evaluation of the management following this. Emphases on these

different topics vary between the implementers and are often complemented by activities aimed to improve livelihood.(Ayana et al., 2017)

2.5.3. Background of Oromia Environmental protection Authority

Ethiopia has designated many protected areas throughout the country that includes national parks, wildlife reserves, National Forest Priority Areas, biosphere reserves and community conservation areas. There are 58 protected forest priority areas, 21 national parks, 2 wildlife sanctuaries, 3 wildlife reserve areas, 6 community conservation areas, 2 wildlife rescue centres, 20 controlled hunting areas, 2 botanical gardens and herbariums and 4 biosphere reserves (Forest, 2015) According to (Forest, 2015) protected forests did not yield the expected results as they are increasingly degraded and is being converted for subsistence and commercial agriculture, timber used for fuel wood and construction, protected grasslands used for livestock grazing. Young (2012) reported that the loss of forests and other protected areas is underpinned by a growing population, unsustainable natural resource management, poor enforcement of existing legislation, uncertain land tenure and very low public awareness of the impact of climate change and the importance of biodiversity and ecosystems. A close look at policy and legal framework as well as the institutional set up reveal that the efforts made so far to establish and protect protected areas induced access restriction. At international level as well as the establishment of institutions for implementing the policies and strategies indicate the efforts Ethiopia made so far to protect its natural resources be it with in protected areas or outside.

Ethiopia, aware of its vulnerability to the climate change has promptly engaged in REDD+ process by submitting its initial national communications to the UNFCCC in 2001 and its related instrument, the Kyoto Protocol in 2005. Since then, it has been trying to increase the forest cover of the country through reforestation/afforestation programs to address the issues of climate change. The 2007 Forest Management, Development and Utilization Policy, the NAMA (2010) and CRGE strategy (2011) documents produced can be dully mentioned as the effort of the country to that end. The preparation of this natural resource process framework (NRPF) report is required because Ethiopia is going to implement REDD+ (be it in protected areas, where access restriction is already there, or outside without access restriction where the REDD+ itself induces access restriction.) This process framework is prepared by using inputs from national forest priority areas of Ethiopia, the Bale National Park and Yayu Biosphere Forest Reserve. A detailed

project and site specific NRPF preparation needs to be supported by social analysis or surveys of a local context due to the fact that how communities manage land and natural resource is critical for the local context preparation of NRPF. Ethiopia's development agenda has been shaped by two key strategies, the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) and the Climate Resilient Green Economy (CRGE) strategy. Both strategies aim at transforming the economy from a Least Developed Country (LDC) to a middle income country status by 2025.

2.5.4. Participatory Forest management

Participatory Forest management: is the inclusion of communities in the management of state owned or formerly state owned forest resources. It is also the process and mechanisms that enable those people who have a direct stake in forest resources to be part of decision-making in some or all aspects of forest management, from managing resources to formulating and implementing institutional frameworks. Globally, Participatory Forest Management is exercised in different countries at least two decades ago. For example, PFM was practiced in India in 2005 there was a research made entitled 'Incorporating Stakeholder Perceptions in Participatory Forest Management in India', Perceptions of Panchayati Raj Institutions on Joint Forest Management in Harda Prepared.

Similarly, participatory approach to forest management organized at a grassroots level by community-based institutions has been implemented in India since the 1970s and is considered, by and large, to be successful and an ideal forest management model in the present world forestry scenario. In Pakistan, there was also a research entitled Impact of participatory forest management on financial assets of rural communities in Northwest Pakistan in 2006 (Indian Institute of Management Kozhikode 2002) In Ethiopia, there are also researches conducted by Alemtsehay Jima, Determining Factors for a successful establishment of participatory Forest Management in Bale 2011, Dr. Melaku Bekele and Dr. Tsegaye Bekele, 2005, Participatory Forest management in Bonga and Chillimo.

There are also participatory Forest management practices in Oromia. For example, the practice of PFM members called WaJiB locally called 'WaldaaJiraattotaBosonaa' meaning association living around and in forest in Adaabbaa- Dodolaa where they keep forest in collaboration with the Oromia Forest and Wildlife Enterprise in which they benefit from horse rent, providing cultural materials for tourists to get income. Similarly, there are PFM members in Harargee

locally called 'WaKUB, locally called 'WaldaaKunuunsaBosonaa, There are also 16 PFM members in Jimmaa called WajjiB' waldaaBulchiinsa Bosonaa and Chillimo there are also PFM members using plantation forest as means of income in collaboration with the enterprise. Forest is one of the most essential kinds of resources that human beings and other animals depend on. It regulates environmental and ecological changes in which soil, water; climate, rainfall etc are in the good existence in sustainable condition. Whether it is private or public property, forest is the nationally and globally mutual treasure. This means whatever the resource the people have; the existence of forest is decisive(Terefe, 2003). These resources are threatened by massive deforestation worldwide. In the time period from 2000 to 2005 the area of estimated 7.3 million hectares forest was lost per year. It is also attended by a loss of biodiversity which has negative consequences, such as local population eviction and famine.

Particularly due to the significance of forests for CO₂ conversion and storage, deforestation of forests entails an intensification of the greenhouse effect which contributes to global warming. But biodiversity loss also disrupts natural functions of an ecosystem which makes it more vulnerable to shocks and disturbance and less able to supply humans with its diverse ecosystem goods and services (Tropetag, 2008) Moreover, trees and forests have always been important, providing essential products and services, for human and other animals. For this purpose many people and interest groups have a stake in how forests are managed; one of the biggest challenges facing managers of forest lands is how to incorporate the views and desires of diverse groups of forest users into forest management decisions.

It has also become widely accepted that participation of local people is a prerequisite for sustainable forest management and is recognized that involvement in forest management must provide real benefits, based on the needs. There must be involvement of the local community in preserving forest and other natural resources (Headley, 2004). "Ethiopia is rich in its flora and it is estimated to contain 6500- 7000 species of higher plants of which about 125 are endemic" (Azene, 1997:13). In the country the major source of energy is from forest. The rural households account for about 93 percent of the total energy consumption in the country and 99.5 percent of their energy comes from bio-mass fuels such as fuel wood, twinges, leaves, charcoal, dung, and agricultural wastes" (Azene,1997:4).

Though Ethiopia is rich in natural resources like forest including endemic ones, it is devastated due to excessive utilization because of fuel and extension of farmland. Deforestation may be because of lack of intervention for such natural resources from concerned body and legal framework. Deforestation can be minimized by using the participation of local community in conservation of natural resources particularly forest. To minimize this deforestation, the participatory Forest Management strategy is introduced two decades ago. Participatory forest management (PFM) can be defined in various ways, but is, generally, the active inclusion of rural communities in the management and utilization of state-owned or formerly state-owned forest natural forests and woodlands. It also refers to processes and mechanisms that enable those people who have a direct stake in forest resources to be part of decision-making in all aspects of forest management, from managing resources to formulating and implementing institutional frameworks. More specifically, community forestry refers to a component of participatory forestry that focuses on local communities as key stakeholders for sustainability (Kdevries, 2006). From a sustainable livelihood perspective, forests are natural assets that contribute to household income, food security, reduced vulnerability for less productivity, and improved wellbeing through non-material benefits. Achieving a positive livelihood outcome requires the availability of a range of assets; those households with more assets have a greater range of 18 options and an ability to shift emphasis in their livelihood strategies.

To overcome their life by improving their life situation, the society is expected to develop sense of ownership through Participatory Forest Management strategy. The society has to get chance of using non timber forest products like honey production, strengthening eco-tourism activities and seed collection for selling (Berhanu, 2010). On the other hand, deforestation and the resulting environmental degradation is a major problem in the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and a key factor challenging food security, community livelihood and sustainable development. Between 1955 and 1979, over 77 percent of the country's forested area disappeared and it continues to lose 8 percent of its remaining forests annually (Warner, 2000). Participatory Forest Management is used to describe systems in which communities (forest users and managers) and government services (forest department) work together to define rights of forest resource use, identify and develop forest management responsibilities, and agree on how forest benefits will be shared. This means the community living around forest has a right given to utilize by law or agreement with the government without devastating the forest (Farm Africa, 2007).

Participatory Forest Management is also a forest management system that may be based on traditional systems of community-based Natural Resource Management (NRM). Using traditional systems recognizes the importance of well established roles and rights of different members of the community. In the absence of traditional knowledge of the society, it may be developed as a new system of resource management and lead to resistance to accept it. If building on traditional NRM systems, it is important to recognize that present day contexts often require the system to be modernized so that the traditional system can function in present day realities. For example, the Oromo culture doesn't allow the cutting down of big trees and growing tress and it will be good opportunity to use the 'Qaalluus' and 'Abba Gadaa' or 'Gadaa' leaders (Farm Africa, 2007). In the process of PFM, issues of accountability are becoming critical, both to those with whom management agreements are signed and, internally, to make local forest managers accountable to the wider communities on whose behalf they act. Benefits that are useful to people, state and forest conservation may be seen in these paradigm shifts and go beyond the cost and efficiency benefits of sharing responsibility for forest security and management with citizens. First, livelihood concerns may be more profoundly and less paternalistically addressed.

Generally, poor forest-local populations move from positions of subordinate beneficiaries (receiving a share of access, products or other benefits) into positions where they may themselves regulate this source of livelihood, with longer-term perspectives (Wily, 2002). Forest resource reduction through unlawful acts remained a common feature of developing countries like Ethiopia, Oromia with high population growth rate, low agricultural productivity, shortage of croplands, and little off-farm activities to support the household survival needs. In such situation it is not at all surprising if communities grew hostility towards forestry projects, as was widely observed in Ethiopia. The scarcity of food because of overpopulation and lack of farmland can lead to deforestation. Besides, the absence legal framework which incorporates the society also aggravates the limitless utilization of forest.

For this, the system called PFM is very important. It is also very important to understand that the community considers the forest as enemy property if alienated as they are from the resources; villagers reverted into what is termed by governments an illegal and unsustainable resource utilization and faced penalties (Melaku & Tsegaye, 2005). 20 Participatory Forest Management

refers to processes and mechanisms that enable those people who have a direct stake in forest resources to be part of decision-making in some or all aspects of forest management, from managing resources to formulating and implementing institutional frameworks. The variability in the institutional arrangements for PFM makes comparative analysis difficult (Kdevries, 2006). This means the legal framework for PFM members differs from place to place that results in difference of getting advantage from the forest they protect. The forest resources in Ethiopia have suffered decades of mismanagement due mainly to loosely defined property relations over these resources. As one of the solutions, Participatory Forest Management (PFM) scheme was introduced during the early 1990s by some NGOs. Nearly two decades of experience now exists in the country. PFM is a mechanism to protect forests and enhance the livelihoods of communities who use and benefit from the resource in the process (International Forestry Review, 2009).

Participatory Forest Management was first introduced to Ethiopia twenty years ago but the approach is expanding to cover more and more hectares of forest across the country. Participatory Forest management refers to the inclusion of communities in the management of state owned or formerly state owned forest resource. It also refers to processes and mechanisms that enable those people who have a direct stake in forest resources to be part of decision-making in some or all aspects of forest management, from managing resources to formulating and implementing institutional frameworks (Kdevries, 2006). Participatory Forest Management has also been initiated since the 1990s despite such moves to devolve management responsibilities to forest adjacent communities though research done on the subject is still quite inadequate. On top of this, the application of community forestry (such as PFM) varies across different social and environmental context.

Thus, this has made the learning so peculiar that a wealth of lesson needs to be drawn to mainstream community participation into national forest policy and practices. In addition, it is also highly important to study factors affecting people's participation in PFM and associated challenges entailed in its implementation and gather lessons to apply them for further participatory natural resource management schemes (Henok, 2010). Before the establishment of PFM in Oromia, there was Integrated Forest management project AdaaabbaaDodolaa in 1999 which is a technical cooperation of Ethiopian and Germany governments to conserve natural

forest in this regional forest priority area. This area got attention because of the devastation of forest for farm land and seasonal overgrazing. Besides, it is the home of endemic wild animals the place where high forest is found (Synopsis, 1999).

In the absence of intervention from concerned bodies, traditional extension and development projects are often based on aggregates of populations and assumptions about their conditions, concerns and strategies that can result in unintended problems and misuse of resources. Policies aimed at rural productivity or poverty reduction must recognize the diversity of income range of products at household levels. Particularly, sectoral policies must take in to account the widely differing impacts of various income sources on income inequality. The structural relationships linking households to resource use entail going beneath aggregated income values and examining differentiations by unraveling the relationship between key socioeconomic factors and environmental resource use. (Yemiru, 2011)

2.5.5. Experience of other Countries on Forest Management

2.5.6. Canada's Experience

Canada is a forest nation, forests are part of Canada's heritage and history, and their current significance for its economic, social and environmental well-being is undeniable. The pulp and paper and wood industries as well as forest based tourism and recreation, are major components of Canada's economy. Forests provide a back drop for tourism reaction, hunting and fishing, employing thousands of Canadians (FAO, 1991: 189). Of Canada total area of 1997 million hectares, 453 million hectares are forest however, not all this available or suitable for commercial timber production. Only about 233 million hectares or 5% is inventoried productive forest available for commercial purpose. Internationally, Canada is a leading producer of forest products ranking first in meal sprint production; second in pulp production (after US) and 3rd in soft wood lumber production (after USSR and US).

The forest management techniques used on crown lands and to be recommended for use on privately owned land include to facilitate suitable natural regeneration wherever practical and involve selection cutting or the harvesting of individual trees or groups of trees with in a stand and the shelter wood harvest system involving one or more partial cuts carried out a decade or two before the final harvest, permit consideration of the size and configuration of areas to be

clear cut where circumstances warrant; make provision for early specking or cleaning where naturally regenerated stands contain too many seedlings for good diameter growth; provide for commercial thinning to enhance the future saw log harvest where stand and site conditions permit provide for weeding or the removal of unwanted competing vegetation in stands to be managed and provide for any silvi- culture technique designed to promote improved growth and vigor of forest stands. (Walstad.D.J. and Peter.J, 1987:63)

Harvesting of Canada's forests is strictly controlled by provincial and territorial regulation, and all harvested areas must be reforested. Each province and territory sets an allowable annual cut based on the sustainable growth rate of the particular forest area. The goal is to maintain biological diversity while considering economic and social factors. About 900,000 hectares forest is harvested annually in Canada (accounting for approximately 0.22% of all forest and other wooded land). In 1994, about 425,000 hectares were replanted and 34,000 were seeded planting and seeding are reliable means of regenerating forests disturbed by harvesting or other influences when advanced or natural regeneration is not an option for a site. The proportions of area planted and seeded may change from year to year depending on the nature of the disturbance, species composition, ages and structure of the forest, success of natural and artificial reoperation, government policies and other factors. The means of regeneration is less important than the end result-the long term functions, conditions and productivity of the forest ecosystems (Wolvekamp, 1999: 210-212). Regulating the amount of wood that can be harvested is central to forest management strategies. Tracking the amount of wood harvested allows forest managers to determine whether harvest levels comply with regulated amounts. Harvest levels on provincial crown lands are regulated by provincial governments. Governments usually specify an allowable annual cut (AAC), which is the annual level of harvest allowed on a particular area of crown and over specified number of years.

In practice annual harvest levels may be above or below the AAC, but they must balance out over the regulation period. Although AAC is determined for Canada as a whole, it is possible to compare the aggregation of the provincial AACs across the country with the aggregated harvest from the same provincial crown lands base. Harvest levels on private, federal; and territorial lands are generally unregulated. It is therefore difficult to determine the level of harvest deemed to be sustainable of these lands. For example, for managed forest in a British Columbia assessment

property classifications established in 1988 to encourage private land owners to manage their lands for long term forest production. Managed forest land class requirements included a minimum of 25 hectares. The property may consist of more than one parcel provided the parcels are contiguous. If the land is 25 hectares at least, 70 % of the land must be productive. If the land is more than 50 hectare at least 50% of the land must be productive.

A signed management commitment filed with the council that signifies the owner's commitment to use the property for production and harvesting of timber and associated forest management activities. Annual administration fee paid to the council. The fee is determined each year by council and is based on area at per \$ 1000 of bare land. Annual declaration form that highlights forest management activities completed during the year including harvesting destroyed timber, road construction, and reforestations. Comply with the privately managed forest land Act and regulations, including protection of key environmental values. Pay an exit fee if the property is withdrawn from the managed forest land class after 15 years (Ibid).

2.5.7. Swedish Forest Policy

In Sweden, legislation on forest ownerships and managements date back a long way, because of their major economic role; forests have been a topic of regulation ever since the provincial laws of the 13th century. The national forest policy currently enacted by parliament in 1993 incorporates the commitments made by Sweden at the united nation's conference on environment and development (UNCED) at Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Underlying this policy is the convention that there will continue to be a demand for renewable products in the future and that Swedish forest can remain an important raw material based for processes that are based on principles of ecological cycles. Goals for both forest production and forest environment have been established, these two types of goals carry equal weight. The preservation of biological diversity is a key element of the new forest policy (Wolvekamp, 1999:216). The Swedish forest policy assigns "sectorial" responsibility for the environment. One consequence is that forest owners and forestry workers are responsible for obtaining the requisite knowledge to fulfilling environmental measures.

A few years ago, major ecological and environmental training campaign was carried out known as richer forest. The campaign involved 100,000 participants and has already led to environmentally sound forest management in Sweden. Since 1903 there has been legislation

which requires planting and cultivation of new forest after logging. Today's forest legislation contains provisions aimed at protecting key wood land habitats for flora and fauna, selected viewable broad-leaved deciduous trees, forests located near high mountains and wetland forests. There are also special regulations governing some 4 million hectares of low productive forest land. These regulations allowed only careful low-intensity utilization ensuring that the character of these woodlands alive remain unchanged, key wood land habitats functions as the houses of an ecological network, while forest wetlands and low-productive wood lands often comprise ecotopically corridors in the landscape.

The Swedish forest Agency work to implement the forest policy, supervision of the forestry Act is an important part of this work, as there are various forest survey advisory services and the administration of state subsidies to the forest owners. The forest Act sets out the demand placed on forest owners by society. These include the wood production level that was being shown to nature conservation and cultural heritage. The Swedish forest agency is pleased to offer advice on how to meet and exceed the minimum requirements of the Act, both for production and conservation. This include how to regenerate new forest in a way that better utilizes the production capacity of the land, or how to play greater consideration to conservation and the cultural heritage when felling. As the Swedish forest Act indicate for sustained yield forest management new forest must be planted or naturally generated after felling when land's capacity to produce is not fully exploited. Planting or measures for natural regeneration must have been completed by the end of third year of the land falling in to disuse. This does not however; apply to land to be protected for its, natural characteristics or its cultural heritage. Reliable methods and suitable species of trees must be used in the forestation work.

Natural regeneration can be a good method if the site is suitable otherwise, the land must be sown or planted. If there are insufficient numbers of seedlings supplementary planting must take place before it is too late, subsequent weeding and thinning may be necessary (Milton, 1991: 191). Thinning must encourage forest development. Timber stock after thinning must be large enough to utilize the production capacity of the land. After thinning the trees must be evenly distributed on the area. Regeneration felling must not be carried out until the forest has reached acerbating age, for predominantly coniferous forests the age varies between 45 and 100 years.

Regeneration felling is restricted on forest holdings larger than 50 hectares up to half of the land may be made up of finally felled areas and of stands less than 20 years old (Ibid).

Biological diversity in the forest must be preserved at the same time the cultural heritage must be safeguarded and social aspects must also be taken in to consideration. As Milton, 1991) indicates, the most important considerations are don't create excessively large felling areas; leave non productive forest land untouched; avoid damage to sensitive habitats and valuable historical sites; be particularly careful when felling in areas rich in rare flora and fauna, retain some deciduous trees in coniferous forests for the entire rotation period; leave protective buffer zones adjacent to water, non-productive land for agriculture, and urban areas, plan felling and transport operation, go as to avoid or limit damage to the land and water courses and land forest roads so as to minimize damage to the forest and safeguards the cultural heritage.

2.5.8. Main Causes of Deforestation in Ethiopia

The forest resource of Ethiopia is probably changing more rapidly at present than any time in human history due to the interference of human being. Deforestation in Ethiopia occurs when locals clear forests for their personal needs, like fuel, hunting, agriculture, housing development, etc (Demele, 2001; Badege, 2001:13). The main causes of deforestation include population pressure (expansion of Agricultural land), overgrazing, timber cutting for construction, fuel and wildfire ("seded isat").

Population pressure: - In Ethiopia, the rapid rate at which the population increased (2.6% annually - 2007 population census report), is among the main factors that contributes to high rate of deforestation. The need for cultivated land, wood for fuel and wood for construction materials increased with rapidly growing population (Berry, 2003).

Over grazing: - The biomass of wood resources of the woodland and bush lands have been rapidly depleted by an increase in the livestock population. Over grazing mainly by ruminants cause irreparable damage to young seedlings (Gashaw, 2001).

High need of Construction Material and Fuel: - Ethiopia's deforestation problem is more aggravated by the great dependence of the population on biomass as a source of energy. Wood has been the single most important source of energy both in urban and rural Ethiopia (Badege, 2001:12). The way of using forests for timber is not well developed. Chonjnachi (1963:35)

explained that “...in Ethiopia even though there is very good timber, they spoil a complete tree by using a wood-splitting wedge in order to get a few boards. The rest of the trunk is chipped into small pieces due to absence of modern splitting instruments.”

Wildfires (“seded isat”):- Clearing and burning of forests and woodland savannas during the dry season for the expansion of cultivable and grazing land, for charcoal production and for honey production has been one of the major causes of deforestation (Gashaw, 2001). Cury-Lindhali (1972:131) underlined the effect of wildfire as- ... grass lands and forests in many parts of the world are exposed to human mad fires. Farmers start bush fires regularly in order to burn off dry, old grass to produce ashes valued for the nutrients they added to the soil, or to kill weed seeds. Livestock owners burn dry grasses, so that fresh new grass will shoot up to provide pasture for cattle. Hunters also burn the dry grass because the new green shoots attracts grazing antelopes, which make easy targets for snaring or the hunters to drive out animals for hunting.

2.5.9. Consequences of Deforestation

Studies by Curry-Lindahi (1972), Demele (2001) and Gashaw (2002) clearly indicated the effects of deforestation as follows:-

- ✓ Change of micro/macro climate and in hydrological cycles, Causes the disappearance of wild animals, birds and reptiles,
- ✓ Affects the natural beauty of an area,
- ✓ Accelerates run off and soil erosion- soil loss by water erosion range from 3.4 to 84.5 tons/year/ha with a mean of 32 tons/year/ha due to land degradation-twenty or more times replacement rates (Berry, 2003).
- ✓ Shortage of rainfall, increase in siltation of dams and reservoir,
- ✓ Results and increase in carbon dioxide that in turn causes an increase in temperature, causes for extinction and loss of economically important indigenous plant and animal species,
- ✓ Land degradation greatly affects agricultural productivity and production.

2.6. Conceptual framework

This study aims to promote the operation of theoretical aids for community relations activities by assessing communication. The study aims to classify the range to which activities of communication working to theoretical ideas, discover experts' role, and challenge facing communication activities in OEPA. The study involved the two-way balanced public relations model as a theoretical framework to inform the study.

Globally, Participatory Forest Management is exercised in different countries at least two decades ago. It is also the process and mechanisms that enable those people who have a direct stake in forest resources to be part of decision-making in some or all aspects of forest management, from managing resources to formulating and implementing institutional frameworks.

CHAPTER THREE

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Description of the study area

Oromia has a total area of about 367,000 km². This represents 31.1% of Ethiopia's total area. With its 21 Administrative Zones, the Regional state is the biggest of all the Regional States in the nation. Oromia has a population of 18.7 million, of which 89.5 percent reside in rural regions, according to the results of the 1994 Population and Housing Census (CSA, 1995). According to reports from EFAP (1994), Farm Africa/MNRDEP (1994), EWNHS (1996), and RCSO (1996), Oromia's high forest area is 2.8 million hectares, or 7.7% of the region's total area.

Additionally, it is estimated that 32.7 percent of the Region is made up of roughly 12 million hectares of woodland and wild area. According to recent estimates, shifting cultivation land clearing for commercial and subsistence agriculture, fuel wood urbanization, forest fires, and poor logging and utilization techniques cause the loss of 50,000–100,000 ha of the world's natural forests per year (EWNHS, 1996).

The devastation of the natural environment is directly related to issues such as soil erosion, land degradation, draught-induced dangers, intensive overgrazing, and the loss of natural flora. It should be mentioned that biodiversity loss is one effect of increasing deforestation. An acceleration of land degradation and soil erosion are further repercussions. East and West Hararge and East and North Shewa are the regions most affected in this way, with other places experiencing comparatively smaller effects. The general state of affairs may be explained, among other things, by the notable growth in population and high population density, which place extreme strain on the land and its surroundings. Oromia is home to 37 (64%) of Ethiopia's 58 Forest Priority Areas (FPAS). Thus, the general state of Ethiopia's forests is described in this report. Forest (2015)

There is extremely little and conflicting information on Oromia's forest resources currently available. The location, scope, and current amount, as well as the annual increase and rates of depletion of these resources, are not well documented. The lack of a consistent and trustworthy database on the country's renewable natural resources is the root cause of this issue. Different

figures are provided by reports on land use, forests, and woody vegetation since they are based on different classification systems.

Forest resource management for as long as people have thought about the future, they have managed forests. Forest resource management is, therefore, thinking about the well-being of present and future generations. In principle, forest management involves the use of forests to meet the objectives of forest owners and society. It attempts to guide forests towards a society's goals. In Oromia, forest resources are primarily owned and managed by the Regional Government, and have environmental and economic objectives. The forestry conservation, development and utilisation Proclamation No. 94/1994 recognises private forest ownership. In Article 6, the proclamation defines the obligations of private forest owners, but does not articulate their rights. To this day, guidelines are not issued either at Federal or Regional level on how and where a private investor can own and manage forest resources. Given Oromia's huge potential for private investment in the forestry subsector, the Regional Government should take immediate action to issue the required guidelines, and should put in place a mechanism to follow-up the implementation of the same. In theory, community and catchment protection plantations belong to local communities. In practice, these are controlled by the Regional Government for the plantations were inherited from the previous government which was the driving force behind the establishment of the forests. The plantations have largely failed to show the desired results. This is because local people have not been involved in the planning and implementation phase, and they have not directly benefited from these forest resources. The Regional Government, therefore, owns almost all forest resources including natural high forests, woodlands and bush lands, industrial and per-urban plantations as well as community woodlots and catchment/protection plantations. (Yanti et al., 2018)

The management of the natural high forests is done for both productivity and protection. In actuality, the high forests of Oromia provide a sizeable amount of the commercial timber that is supplied to the country's market. Local communities view the Regional Government's forest management initiatives within the Forest Protection Areas (FPAs) as an encroachment on their territory and forest resources. The demands of the local population appear to be at odds with the conservation, protection, and production objectives of the Regional Government.

3.2. Research Design

The research design serves as the guide for data collecting, measurement, and analysis. It is the general approach the researcher choose to combine various study components in a logical and cogent manner, guaranteeing it successfully solves the research problem.2020; Rust et al. Descriptive design is used in this study.

3.3. Research Approach

The researcher used a qualitative and quantitative research strategy in this study, or a mixed method. One approach can never fully explain a phenomenon, which is why both quantitative (validation) and qualitative (inquiry) investigations were chosen.

3.3.1. Mixed method

This research uses a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. The quantitative data obtained through questionnaires is covered under the numerical data. Conversely, the qualitative approach of the study will be employed in the interview, with a focus on the respondents' personal perspectives, views, and insights. The researcher chooses to employ both strategies in order to complete and triangulate the data collected from respondents.

3.4. Qualitative approach

As per Rust et al. (2020), qualitative research relies on verbal data such as descriptions, accounts, views, sentiments, etc., as opposed to numerical data. When people are the subject of a study, especially in social groups or as individuals, this kind of data is frequently collected.

The levels of measurement used in the collection of data are important factor in choosing the type of analysis that is applicable. As the determination of the study is to assess the practices and challenges of communication employed by the Oromia Environmental Protection Authority (OEPA), a qualitative method was used as the main research method. Talking about qualitative research, it is a scientific research method that searches for an answer to a research question based on evidence. Moreover, it searches for an answer to a specific research problem or topic from the view point of the contributors it includes. “Qualitative research is especially effective in obtaining culturally specific information about the values, opinions, behaviors, and social contexts of particular inhabitants.”

Hence, one of the positive sides of a qualitative research is the capacity to give involved explanation about ‘how people experience’ some research topic. Accordingly, one of the benefits of qualitative method is the opportunity to use open-ended questions and it provides participants the advantage to respond in their own words rather than forcing them to choose from fixed responses, as quantitative methods do.(Getahun 2016)

It provides information about the human side of an issue – that is, the often contradictory behaviours, beliefs, opinions, emotions, and relationships of individuals. Qualitative methods are also effective in identifying intangible factors, such as social norms, socioeconomic status, gender roles, ethnicity, and religion, whose role in the research issue may not be readily apparent. When used along with quantitative methods, qualitative research can help us to interpret and better understand the complex reality of a given situation and the implications of quantitative data (Mack et al, 2005)

3.5. Quantitative Data

In addition to the qualitative method, quantitative method was used to triangulate and strengthen the findings. Quantitative method of research uses numbers and the analysis is based on data. “Quantitative methods are those which are based on numerical information or quantities, and they are naturally associated with statistical analyses. Qualitative research in contrast is the name given to a variety of research models that are primarily concerned with meaning and interpretation” (Stokes, 2003: 2-3). Quantitative research uses methods such as content analysis, survey research and some types of archive research. Therefore, quantitative analysis is based on numbers while qualitative research relies on words or images as a unit of analysis(Núñez et al., 2016)

3.6. Sampling techniques

The study employed purposive sampling technique to select questionnaire samples. As it was briefly discussed at the start of this chapter, purposive sampling was one of the techniques used to select samples for questionnaire. The study sample consisted of respondents from different media houses and media associations which work in collaboration with the Environmental Protection Authority bureau as stakeholders in delivering Bureau’s messages to the community. Since they take part in the above-mentioned communication activity they were believed to

suitable evaluate the communication practice. Moreover, they are more available and suitable sources of data to the researcher. The first balanced to select media houses and media associations from the rest of the stakeholders was that it would be impossible to use all the stakeholders as a source of data as they were many in their numbers. Hence, the research couldn't be possible without being selective due to resource restraints. Secondly, they are believed to be closer to the profession and have better knowledge of the subject matter to respond to the questions more appropriately than the rest of the stakeholders. Accordingly, questionnaires were distributed to 100 respondents from bureaus and 83 completed questionnaires (83%) were analysed.

According to (Zimmerman et al., 2006) purposive sampling participants were selected based on some specific standards. "Sample sizes, which may or may not be fixed prior to data collection, depend on the resources and time available, as well as the study's objectives." In purposive sampling, the researcher chooses people based on their better knowledge or experience about specific issues.

In addition to availability and willingness to participate is also another standard to select the sample. Moreover, people's ability to express their knowledge and ideas appropriately is another principle for selecting the sample(Zimmerman et al., 2006)

3.7. Data Collection Methods

3.7.1. In-depth Interview

In-depth interview was used as one of the data collection tools of the study. The interview conducted with 5 communication experts selected from the Bureau.. The interviewees comprised four assistants and a team leader who is responsible for communication activities. In-depth interview is a method of getting a clear vision of the participants view on the subject of the study. In-depth Interview was used to get data on personal histories, perspectives and experiences, especially when searching subjects are investigated. In-depth interviews are categorized in qualitative method of studies that can help look through what people are thinking, feeling and experiencing and it also helps to find out how people observe the world. Interviews are also helpful to deal with issues that people are not comfortable to speak out in a group. In-

depth interviews are always carried out through in person and that includes the interviewer and the interviewee.

In in-depth interview, the person who is interviewed should be seen as the one who knows more than the interviewer. "The researcher's interviewing techniques are motivated by the desire to learn everything the participant can share about the research topic"(Emiru, 2012) Although, interview has the same purpose with questionnaires, it is different since it is done face to face. It is useful to gather information based on thoughts, beliefs, opinions, and the like concerning information of the past, present or the future. The types of interviews include experience/behaviour, opinion/belief, feeling, knowledge, sensory (what the interviewer see, etc., "used to find out the stimuli the interviewee is subject to" (L. et al, 2009: 271- 272).

3.7.2. Questionnaire

Another tool for gathering data for the study was a questionnaire. Following the use of convenience and purposive selection procedures to determine the sample, 100 questionnaires were disseminated to OEPA stakeholders and bureaus. One hundred respondents received questionnaires; 83 of them (83%) were completed and analysed. "Questionnaires are used to collect thoughts, beliefs, opinions, reasons, etc., from people about past, present, or future facts and events, by asking questions," according to Blessing & Chakrabarti (2009: 269).

When there are a large number of responders and the information required is simpler and more straightforward, questionnaires are more beneficial. "The data from questionnaires tends to reduce into two general questionnaires, and the researcher is clear about whether the important information relates to opinions or facts." Therefore, questions about facts and opinions may be included in questionnaires (Patt & Weber, 2014).

3.7.3. Focus group discussions

Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Focus groups can be seen as a type of group interview, but one that tends to concentrate in depth on a particular theme or topic with an element of interaction. The group is often made up of people who have particular experience or knowledge about the subject of the research, or that have a particular interest in it. (Getahun J, 2016) of this research intended at showing the activities, contribution, strong points and weaknesses as well as challenges of the communication in forest management. FGD provides the opportunity for group

interaction, which generally stimulates richer responses and allows new and valuable thoughts to emerge. The researcher has used four FGD with Farmers and community on the region. The discussion holds on Afaan Oromo language but then translate to English for the analysis.(Getahun J, 2016)

3.8. Data Sources

The sources of the data were sampled from staff members of Oromia environmental protection authority from the Department of forest management, staff members of Oromia environmental protection authority and selecting employees. The reason for selecting employees of Oromia environmental protection authority is that they are front facings and professionals having relevant experience and information in forest management activities. The focus of thought is on the relation of public relations experts with the different departments, and their relation with different stakeholders. The secondary sources of data consisted of related literature, journals, records, research out puts that are published and unpublished.(Gobeze et al., 2009)

3.8.1. Primary Data Collection

Tools In the primary data collection, the researcher has used questionnaire, interview. The main reasons to selects these tools were for getting better data by triangulating different methods of data collection so as to easily access the relevant or appropriate data for the study. Interview the researcher used in-depth interview as a data collection instrument to collect the data from selected three forest experts, one the directorate director of communication. This study has select the above informants because they had knowledge about the research area of forest management communication practice in the organization very well. And also, they gave the information that can answer the research questions research objectives. The primary data was also collected through the use of survey questionnaire. The advantage of questionnaire was accepted because it approves that data collection was consistent that each respondent got similar question and in the same format. Questionnaires also enabled collection of original data from the sample of the population within a short time and at low cost for purposes of telling the entire population (Chen et al., 2013) Structured questionnaire be applied according to the research questions. This study used pilot test to redesign the questions and also used to check weight of the research. The questionnaire is distributed to selective employees' Oromia Environmental Protection Authority.

The student researcher included three types of questionnaire for pilot test study. Those are open-ended, close ended, and also, for measuring the validity of questionnaire tool, the researcher distributed 100 questionnaires as a experimental study for coming up with appropriate questions to appraise about the assessment of communication practice and challenge in forest management

3.8.2. Secondary Data Collection

The researcher also used secondary data collection method both published and unpublished documents. The researcher used published documents means the documents that are issue. The sources like books from library, internet and other relevant sources such as previous research works and works published in journals. The researcher also used unpublished documents; it means documents that are accessible for this study but were not published. Thus, documents are taken from www.OEPA.et (Oromia environmental protection authority website). From the published document analysis, annual reports, newspapers, public relations tools like press releases, pamphlet and brochures, and from Megalata Oromia(መገለጫ ኦሮሚያ)

3.9. Data Analysis Techniques

With the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS version 24), the data collected from significant sources through questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, documentary analysis, and field observation has been triangulated and arranged in a manageable way using tables (based on similarity of the issue). Both qualitative and quantitative analysis have been done using the structured data. Real photos have been used to bolster the study. Ultimately, conclusions and workable suggestions have been derived from the analysis's main findings.

3.10. Ethical Considerations

It was anticipated that there might be some ethical considerations throughout the investigation. All questionnaire respondents were assured of their secrecy by the researcher, who also expressed appreciation for it. Names and other unique identifying information of the participants will not be disclosed, and it will only be used for the purpose of the study. Additionally, they were told that they would not be compelled to respond to any questions if doing so made them uncomfortable. The researcher requested their consent to tape record the material and obtain their photo in order to conduct interviews and focus group discussions (FGD). They said they would be willing. (Workineh, 2008)

CHAPTER FOUR

4. DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Data presentation

The primary portion of the research involved elaborate open-ended semi-structured in-depth interviews with elders, religious leaders, indigenous experts in various fields, and other knowledgeable persons both inside and outside the study sites. This was done because the topic of the research deals with the communication practices and challenges employed by the Oromia Environmental Protection Authority (OEPA).

The goal of the study was to learn more about the difficulties encountered in practicing communication. In order to evaluate the communication that was used and the difficulties that were faced, a qualitative research design was employed as the primary research method of the study. To support the conclusions, the study included a quantitative approach in addition to a qualitative one. To gather data, analyze documents, administer questionnaires, and conduct in-depth interviews. The convenience and purposive sampling methods were used to choose the sample for the questionnaire data collection.

Respondents for the study came from a variety of Oromia bureaus and stakeholders which cooperate with the Oromia bureau to communicate with the community (Gould, 2008). Due to their participation in various activities with the bureau, such as the creation of community messages, the stakeholders were chosen as samples for the questionnaire data. They are better qualified to assess the communication practice because of their involvement in spreading and developing messages to the community. Furthermore, as the agriculture bureau and Oromia Environmental Protection Authority are the most practical data sources, they were chosen as the sources of the questionnaire data. Second, experts in the field of forests are thought to be more connected to the field and possess greater subject-matter knowledge than other stakeholders, allowing them to answer questions more correctly. As a result, 83 of the 100 respondents who filled out the questionnaires (or 83%) were examined. Additionally, a selection of the environmental protection authority staff were interviewed. Four experts and the director of a directorate in charge of communications were among the interviews.

As a communication specialist with the Oromia Environmental Protection Authority (OEPA), like the researcher, I was able to get entry to the actual workplace and see individuals going about their daily business. The investigator attempted to investigate how the procedure

The researcher endeavoured to examine how the practice has been conducted and what challenges have been faced in the work place.

4.1 Demographic Background

The demographic background of sample informants was indicated by age, sex. Occupation and educational qualification as follows:

Table 1 Age and sex of Respondents

Age	Frequency	percent
20-29	49	60
30-39	22	26.4
40-49	7	8.1
50-59	5	5.5
Total	83	100
Sex	Frequency	percent
Male	57	69.2
Female	26	30.8
Total	83	100

The data were divided into four age groups based on critical points that divide the whole data into four equal parts: 20-29, 30-39, 40-49 and 50-59. As can be seen from table - 1 above 60% of respondents were aged between 20- 29, 26% respondents were aged between 30-39, and 8.1 % respondents were aged between 40-49 and 5.5% respondents were aged above 50-59 year. Among respondents, 69.2 % of the respondents were male respondents and 30. 8% respondents were female.

Table 2: Educational Status of Respondents

Educational status	Frequency	Percent
Diploma	17	20.7
BA/BSc	60	72.7
MA/MSc and Above	6	6.6
Total	83	100

As presented in table- 2 above , the educational status of the respondents was. 20 .7% had Diploma, 72 .7% had BA/BSc degree and 6.6% had MA/MSc degree. This data indicates us that the majorities of the informants were qualified and had higher education in different department.

4.2. Demonstration of practice

The Oromia environmental protection authority (OEPA) used different channels to transmit messages to the community. Among the tools or ways of transmitting messages to customer, dominant are three ways used develop to transmit messages to client. Face to face discussion (client), publications, the media and Panel discussions are used. The media which the bureau used to channel the messages include radio, television, online communication and newspapers. The types of messages that are transmitted through the media include talk show,(Ardaa Marii) spot, television, radio and mini media, community radio, panel discussions, meeting, supervision. Other include exhibition, briefing kits, training, bulletin, brochures, email or updating videos, leaflet and feature articles. The other type of communication tool is publication which includes posters, brochures fliers, booklets, newspaper articles, magazines. As a result, the OEPA communication practice need to incorporate all stakeholders and levels of sectors whose supports arc required for the awareness creation and attitude development.

Table 3: Professional and Experts Knowledge (view) of OEPA Communication practice in Frequency and Percentage

How do you view (your knowledge)at OEPA Communication Practice	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage
Excellent	5	5.7	5.7
Very Good	7	8.6	8.6
Good	12	14.3	14.3
Satisfactory	17	20	20
Poor	42	51.4	51.4
Total	83	100	100

Employees’ judgment about bureau’s media utilization performance to raise community awareness

Table 4. Employees’ perception towards the bureau’s media utilization performance

	Alternatives	Frequency	Percentage
Bureau’s uses multiple media channel storun awareness raising campaigns as is expect	Strongly agree	16	17.1
	Agree	23	28.3
	Dis agree	37	44.9
	Strongly Dis agree	8	9.8
	Total	83	100

	Alternatives	Frequency	Percentage
Bureau's(OEPA) appropriately utilizes local broadcast media	Strongly agree	12	14.6
	Agree	27	34.1
	Dis agree	32	36.6
	Strongly dis agree	12	14.6
	Total	83	100

	Alternatives	Frequency	Percentage
Bureau's(OEPA) appropriately utilizes local print media	Strongly Agree	15	19.5
	Agree	33	41.5
	Dis agree	27	29.3
	Strongly dis agree	8	9.8
	Total	83	100

	Alternatives	Frequency	Percentage
Bureau has continuous communication practice awareness raising program on media	Strongly agree	12	14.6
	Agree	25	26.8
	Medium	32	39
	Dis agree	12	14.6
	Strongly dis agree	2	4.9
	Total	83	100

As shown in Table 4, the questions proposed were related to the bureau’s utilization of media to develop community awareness on forest management communication. Thus, respondents were asked if the bureau uses multiple media channels to run awareness-raising movements as it is expected. Relating to this question, 7 (17.1%) and 12 (26.8%) in sum 19 (43.9%) of the respondents have rated “strongly agree” and “agree” respectively. But, 4 (9.8%) rejected this statement. 18 (43.9%) of them rated the use of multiple media channels by the bureau medium. From this point of view, we can suppose that the bureau is not utilizing multiple media channels. Additionally, employee respondents were asked, “as part of its communication practice awareness-raising programs, the bureau appropriately utilizes local broadcast media” This question was supported by 6 (14.6%) and 14 (34.1%) in sum, 20 (48.7%) of respondents by rating “strongly agree” and “agree” respectively. Again, respondents were asked to judge the bureau’s appropriate utilization of local print media. Accordingly, this question was positively favoured by 6 (19.5%) and 15 (41.5%) in sum, 21 (61%) of the respondents by rating “strongly agree” and “agree” respectively. Besides, respondents were questioned about the continuity of the communication practice awareness-raising programs of the bureau on media. 6 (14.6%) and 12 (26.8) of the respondents in sum, 18 (41.5) have expressed their agreement by rating “strongly agree” and “agree” respectively. Therefore, from this research finding, one can imagine that the bureau is not utilizing local broadcast and print media at highest level. In connection with this,

scholars mention that one of the strategies of communication practice awareness-raising programs is using media.

4.3. Perceived Effectiveness of OEPA Communication practice

A message comprises several social issue and economic issues; and categorizes which communication strategies can most effectively reach particular target resident. Oromia Environmental Protection Authority communication strategy have been planned for creating and developing the regional communities awareness, approaching development on government procedures, strategies and programs so as to shape active community participation and building common consensus among communication practice in forest management in the communities. These communication strategies dictate the direction of the bureau 's vision for a year or more experienced, even if the bureau's communication strategies concentrated on these sectors, there are gaps which need more efforts so as to create awareness and develop attitude of the communities on the policies, strategies and programs of these bureau's. Furthermore. the finding of this study indicates as ineffectively implementing the bureau's communication practice results failing long-term goals on sustainable awareness creation. The result further showed, lack of knowledge based on communication, lack of administrators, experts' commitment. Continuous awareness creating and approach development were the major gaps of the bureau's communication practice implementation.

Besides, an appropriate communication practice was of extreme importance in making all stakeholders to collaborate towards the stable goals of OEPA. Based on the respondents result, the bureau's communication practice were realized through means of communication distributed message to targeted groups. The OEPA communication practice indicated which means of communication can most effectively reach particular target people and how specific means of communication can help achieve particular goals. They further explained that the two main means of the bureau's communication strategies were face to face and media communications. Which covered different mediums. Each standard has its own advantages and disadvantages, so that each may be best appropriate to a particular circumstance. Face-to-face communication in seeking communities' views and concerns is highly recommended in the bureaus' communication practice. Consequently, face to face communication plays a vital role for the OEPA

communication practice which intended at creating awareness and develops attitudes of the targeted group, so as to create common understanding.(Shehara et al., 2020)

Besides, mass media can raise the bureaus' communication practice awareness of specific facts. Because the mass media are as slimed to carry a certain authority and consistency. Mass media can also be a means to reach rapidly and model behaviours and positive attitudes in the person of respected members of the target community on the issues of the bureaus' communication practice.

As the 2021/2022 the bureaus' communication practice describes face to face communication becomes primary, while the mass media play supporting role. The document also illustrated as when mass media are being used it is important to know which radio stations and television programs are popular with the target community.

Accordingly, the OEPA communication practiced both face to face and media communication in order to create awareness and develop the attitude of the community. Which enables them to actively participate on government policies. Practice and programs.

According to informant I, (Interviewee .1. Aug.13/2022):- The OEPA evaluates and monitor its activities to ensure as the bureau is practicing its communication practice satisfactory. Feedback is one of the bureau's mechanisms to evaluate effectiveness of its communication practice.

Besides, monitoring and evaluation are part of the ongoing management of the OEPA communication practice, and it usually focuses on the process of implementation. The bureau's communication practice monitoring and evaluation lead directly to modifications of the overall program, as well as the practice messages and approaches the bureau.

Accordingly, monitoring is more of process based assessment while evaluation is progress based assessment which was concentrating on the bureaus' communication practice strategies success. In achieving predetermined objectives of awareness creation and attitude development. Moreover, as the OEPA communication practice strategy feedbacks gathering from employees, stakeholders and customers who were relevant to implementation of the bureaus communication practice strategies. Served as a significant evaluative function for the bureaus' directors. Also, it is fundamental for directors to gather and provide feedbacks on the practice of the bureaus'

communication practice strategies. The establishment of effective information gathering systems is one of the practices so as to monitor and evaluate the OEPA communication practice strategy. Monitoring and evaluation of the bureau's communication practice strategy scheduled to execute with in its segments. Evaluation and monitoring reports, supervision, and meetings are the major tools of the OEPA communication strategies monitoring and evaluation works.

4.3.1. Communication practice, Challenges and opportunities

The Corporate Communication directorate has been presented with the responsibility of delivering different communication practice activities. Different communication practice activities have been organized by the directorate that include preparing different publications, conducting messages through the different medias, administering website and social media, and the like.

Check list of activities observed;-

- Organizational structure
- Activities plan and reports
- Face to face discussion
- Website and social media administration activities
- Publications
- Notice boards

4.3.2. Organization of communication practice

It was examined that there has been an overlap of duties and responsibilities as all communication practice activities have not been organized under the same directorate that can enable to handle and deal with the issue efficiently. Although communication practice activity has been properly given to this particular directorate, there is also another directorate that interrupts communication activity like corporate customer service directorate which has been doing communication practice activities as well. In this regard, communication practice activities are disorganized and isolated to different directorates which show structural problems. The structure of bureau Communication Directorate is level. It hasn't team structure according to its work category. All print media's activities like writing articles to newspapers and for magazines, speeches, brochures and flyers and all electro-media's activities such as Media monitoring, preparing messages for website and managing the website , preparing message for social media,

event management are done at directorate level. This also shows not only a structural problem, but also it is an indicator of existence of confusions concerning the essence of communication practices.

4.3.2.1.Way of Communication

From the different communication practice activities taking place, it can be clearly seen that they are carried out in a way that can encourage the community in forest management. However, the plans and reports that were prepared by the bureau's managers stated about what had been planned and carried out with regard to the forest management communication practice activities. Therefore, the plan and report filed show that the aim is not to influence and change the conduct of the bureau but, to report about their communication practice activities. Thus, as it was observed from the interaction taking place between the bureau's and the stakeholders through plan and reports, a one-way communication mainly existed. This shows that the way of interaction doesn't allow the society as well as the stakeholders to have equal chance of influence as the bureau has. Hence, communication between the bureau and the public (including the stakeholders) is irregular and aims at influencing the public/stakeholders by the bureau. It was observed that there are few ways provided to the public that give them the opportunity to express its views and comments. Also suggestion boxes are available in every floor that have been used to collect the opinions and comments of the public. However, this cannot be said a community participation fully exercised since the greatness of influence by the public is so minimal and the purpose is different. There is no mechanism and activity found that enables the bureau to use public comments and opinions to make changes. It can be concluded that purpose of collecting views and opinions of the public by using suggestion boxes is to only use it for reporting purposes.(Cheng & Sturtevant, 2012)

Those opinions and views presented during meetings and face to face discussion serve only the purpose of influencing public view and make clarification to questions not for the purpose of being influenced back by the public and help as in put for improvements and changes in the bureau. According to the two-way balanced public relations model, the purpose of entertaining public participation by organizations is to give equal chance so as to be also influenced by the community. Thus, mutual benefit would be attained as change occurs both on the conduct of the

bureau organization and the community. As it is stated above, this has not been the case with the communication practice of the bureau.

4.3.2.2. Communicators, communication materials and resources

Although some unclear situations exist concerning the duties and responsibility of media relation and there is no written statement, there has been agreement that information to the media should be given by the Director of the bureau Communication Directorate. However, there were some events observed when heads of other directorates give information to the media by them. It was studied that the situation had been creating problems on providing consistent and accurate information based on proper preparation and professional way of communication. As an administrator of the website and Facebook of the bureau, the researcher also observed and experienced frequent interruptions of internet connection that had been also creating difficulties to provide consistent information through the website, social media and email. The internet that the bureau installed had not been interactive enough to upload and to make up dates every time. Moreover, the bureau's website and social media do not have full time administrators who are specialized on the area. Since the communicators who are assigned to administer the website and social media have other duties and responsibilities to discharge, the website and social media have not been run with sufficient time and effectively utilized as much as needed.

Additionally, internal communication is not strong enough to create a strong interaction and to enable an efficient information exchange among the different directorates of the bureau. One such gap is that reports organized by other directorates are not appropriately and timely informed to communicators so as to be used for different communication practice activities. Information is not also organized appropriately to be used by communicators for different purposes. For instance, information with regard to allocating people forest management is not well organized and easily accessible to communicators. It is observed that there are times when opposing information was presented to communicators concerning the activity reports of other directorates. The bureau's Communication directorate produces an internal newsletter that is posted on boards and distributed to the employees. However, only few employees are observed reading the message posted on notice boards. Some employees even state that they do not read the newsletter which has been distributed to their different places. It was also frequently observed that people coming to get publications were grateful to take soft copies since the hard

copies were out of stock. Generally, Communication practice activities were not appropriately supported by sufficient amount of materials.

4.4. Tools and way of communication

According to the interviewees, the bureau uses different guidelines of communication practice. And also the bureau uses different communication tools like radio, television and the website. Spot, talk show and panel discussions are among the different types of messages channelled through the media. There are also different types of publications that include magazines, newsletters, posters, brochures, fliers, billboards and the like. With regard to interview questions listed in number 1-3:-

1. What are the strategies of the communication practice of the Oromia Environmental Protection Authority (OEPA)?
2. What are the communication tools used by the bureau? And
3. What is the main focus areas of the bureau's communication practice) Interviewee no.1 and interviewee no.5 explained as follow;

With regard to the communication way that the bureau's follows,

The main objective of the communication practice of the bureau is to create mutual understanding between bureau's and community. The bureau's communication practice is mostly one-way, although there have been some attempts to increase the participation of the public. I read different books in the area of public relations and know how to do public relations. However, I do not know a modern public relations model such as the two-way balanced model that you mentioned. I understand public relations as a profession that should protect the interest of the institution. Accordingly, the communication is more of a one-way communication which aimed at changing the attitude of the community.

The communication practice cares for the bureau's agenda more than the ideas and opinions of the community.

According to interviewee no. 5, Aug 15/2022:- The bureau uses different stakeholders which are organized based on their profession among other things. The communication way that takes place between the directorates in the bureau is a one-way which aimed at simply delivering

predictable work or other messages to members through meetings. Stakeholders are communicated for the purpose of reaching the public through them. As it is clearly understood from the interviewees, stakeholders have the responsibility to deliver message to their workers and public. They provide the messages to the public which is directly provided to them by the bureau. The way of communication is a one-way by which the messages first come from the bureau and pass to the directors and workers and finally reaches to the public.

Interviewee no. 5 Aug 15/2022 added that;- The bureau communicates with the directors through meetings, letters, plan and reports, e-mails, telephone and fax. Directorates directors prepare plan and reports and submit them to the Corporation for the purpose of reporting their plans and activities regarding transmitting messages.

Interviewee no. 1 also noted that:- “There are weaknesses in using the opinions and ideas from the public for the purpose of taking actions and making changes.” Hence, it can be understood from the interviewees that communication between the bureau and the public (including the directors) is irregular and aims at changing the other party not changing the bureau itself.

4.4.1. Challenges of communication practice

There are variations of challenges stated by the informants which are faced by the bureau with regard to media relations.

According to interviewee no. 1, 02/08/2022):- There hasn't been a media standard or a policy that directs the relationship between the media and the bureau.” Media play a major role in influencing the publics' opinion and making an issue a public agenda. Although the OEPA has been using efforts to make the correction upon. There are different problems faced by the bureau to appropriately utilize the media. It was discussed in the literature review that media relation is one of the core components of communication activity for any institution especially for those which have a responsibility of safeguarding the wellbeing of the society forest management. Therefore, media policy that can guide the activity between an institution and the media is an obligatory task that can clearly show the duties and the responsibilities of the two parties. It also helps to appropriately use the media in a way that can benefit both an institution and the society.

Regarding the problem that had been created in utilizing the media, interviewee no. 2 and 3, 13/08/2022) stated that;- It has been very challenging for us to get sufficient airtime on broadcast

media especially on television. Many people tell us that our messages, particularly television spots are good. They frequently tell us that the airtime is insufficient. So far, the messages channelled through the media, especially in the broadcast media, did not match the need in terms of number and frequency. Lack of sufficient budget and the problem that arise from the media themselves are some of the reasons for not getting sufficient air time. We have also skill gaps on how to utilize the media in order to appropriately use the media as much as needed. The difficulty faced by the bureau to reach audiences by providing sufficient number of messages with the appropriate frequency by using local broadcast media might have an impact in being effective to communicate the issue.

In addition, according to the interviewees, there were also other challenges concerning the relationship between the bureau and the media.

Interviewee no. 1 indicated that:- The private media complain that the bureau doesn't equally treat them with the government media. The private media have been complaining that the bureau is partial towards the government media and is more open to the government media than the private ones. The bureau doesn't prefer to give information to the private media since it has a fear of alteration. We have experiences of alterations by the private media and this is the reason why we are more reserved to give some information to the private media. The other reason that the bureau prefers to use some media to others is some media are better to reach larger number of audiences and have more readability. Moreover, some media workers just come and ask for information that they do not have the appropriate way of inquiry. In addition, they do not get ready prior to their appointment and have no knowledge on what they seek to find out. The other problem is that some media wants to get any information they want in an excessively rushed way. Some media also uses the information by altering it and making it sensational. About the forest management the media are concerned only for selling their newspapers and make highlights of issues inappropriately without allowance them.

In addition, interviewee no. 4, (25/08/2022) indicated that:- The media do not want to work on forest management issues independently. They do not have self-motivation. Some media are not self-motivated to play their role of aware the public on the issues of advances.

Interviewee no. 1 also stated that:- “The other problem is that there is lack of sufficient communication knowledge among the employees to carry out different communication practice activities.”

With regard to other challenges of the communication practice, Interviewee no. 4, indicated that:- There are some problems in providing information on time and with clarity. For instance, the bureau’s how to communicate with the community evaluated the forest management have not been appropriately and timely communicated with public. This has made the public to misunderstand the issue. Although the bureau has already been using different documents has not clearly expressed the issue to the public. The media also have been complaining that the bureau doesn’t provide information on time.

In addition, interviewee no. 5 stated:-“Image building has been a problem which is not appropriately addressed by the bureau.” On the other hand, interviewee no. 1 stated that: The negative image is decreasing from time to time but some negative images such as the perception that the bureau is not expressing about the forest management and lack of clarification on bureau’s principal and usages.

Moreover, interviewee no. 4 indicated that:- There are other negative images attached to the bureau, the situation with regard to the unclear situation of the Oromia environmental protection authority administration directions, has been creating an additional pressure on the image of the bureau.

The other challenges of the communication practice, according to interviewee no. 5 additionally, the absence of sufficient budget and resources has been suffering additional loads on different communication activities. In addition, interviewee no. 4 stated different communication activities have been distributed to different directorates which show a structural problem.

According to interviewee no. 1:- Recently, following the reinstatement of bureau in business concerned with Initiative, its income becomes increased, the bureau is making effort to classifying its assets, revaluating assets and being partial independent political decision is one success that the bureau achieved. In addition, starting Communication practice standard forest management on its forest management has become a public agenda compared to the time before the founding of the bureau.

As the study o interview informants indicated human resources have a significant role on effectively implementing of the bureau's communication practice strategies. One of the main challenges on implementing the bureau's communication practice strategies was high rate of professional and experts turn over. This high rate of turnover resulted in lack of knowledgeable and skilled manpower. The newly appointed officials and engaged experts have different backgrounds and they have been implementing the bureau's communication practice without getting suitable training. Furthermore, short and long terms on job trainings were not given on time for the engaged professionals and experts. According to these respondents, OEPA attempted on providing training through capacity building programs for experts with the support of different stakeholders training. As these respondents informed, the desires for training was short to provide training which could not manage up with the rate of turn over. Nevertheless, as a communicator these professionals and experts should know what they communicate and in what way they have to communicate to their community in terms of forest management.

Besides, they should develop mechanisms of gathering information from the external and internal body part to have the ability to publicize message accessibly accurately and timely. However, some of the appointed professional were assigned without approving their capabilities of communicating the bureau's communication practice properly as well as few of them appointed as demotion. Practice of communication involves an initial and continuing distribution of appropriate resources. Compensation and logistics however, the allocated budget compensation and logistics for bureau were not satisfactory so as to implement the bureau's communication practice effectively. As a result of these problems. The professional and experts practiced the bureau 's communication practice with the support of other sectors. This is one of the reasons that lead the bureau's professional and experts' to release, the employees. Moreover, the 2021/22 second quarter supervision reports acknowledged as the regional government provided less attention for this sector and the bureau was not committed enough on providing appropriate feedbacks and supports. Additionally, there were no collaboration along the regional, zonal and woreda communicators on forest management planning, supervising and evaluating. As a result. The professional and experts were discouraged with these challenges. As these informants explained, the success of the bureau's communication practice implementation needs may fail to succeed the desired results even if the bureau has framed in suitable communication practice it could not be much fruitful and the right way of dealing with positive image building,

but they also fail to enable the evaluation of the status of existing communication practice image of the bureau. The communication practice strategies may fail to accomplish the desired goals and also there are different factors which are affecting forest management communication information disseminations. Community have less interest and trust on media messages due to absence of their voices in the programs and also lack of awareness.

Therefore, for the OEPA to be able to achieve its targeted communication practice points these challenges should be determined in time and properly. Furthermore, the finding of respondents through questionnaires on the challenges of the bureau's communication practice enactment implies similar results.

4.5. Stakeholders' View

For the purpose of having a wider view of the practices and challenges of the communication practice of the Oromia Environmental Protection Authority bureau, the study working questionnaire as an additional data collection instrument. Respondents from different media houses and media associations which work in collaboration with the OEPA bureau as stakeholders were selected based on purposive and suitability sampling methods. The stakeholders were used as samples for questionnaire data since they have been taking part in different activities with the OEPA bureau including transmitting messages to the society. Their participation in transmitting messages to the public makes them more appropriate to evaluate the communication practice. Media houses and media associations were selected as sources of questionnaire data from other stakeholders, since they are the most convenient data sources. Secondly, media professionals are believed to be closer to the profession and have better knowledge of the subject matter to respond to the questions more appropriately than the rest of the stakeholders.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Conclusion

The goal of this study was to investigate the communication methods and difficulties used by the Oromia Environmental Protection Authority (OEPA). Finding out how communication is practiced and what obstacles are faced when practicing communication is the primary goal of the research. In order to do this, the study's primary research approach was a qualitative research design. To triangulate and support the findings, the study also employed a quantitative research method. The study's theoretical framework also made use of a two-way symmetrical public relations model.

Interviews, questionnaires, and document analysis were used in the data collection process. An analysis was conducted on two documents that served as guidelines for communication. After 120 respondents received questionnaires, 83 (or 83%) of them were completed and analysed. Additionally, five individuals chosen from the professional expertise were interviewed. The interviewees included heads in charge of communication as well as specialists. The following conclusions were drawn after the research findings were analysed.

The OEPA was established close to long ago by having the name Oromia forest and Wild life Enterprise (OFWLE) with the purpose of administering and Protection the forest management for the climate mitigation. With regard to this, there have been efforts exerted to communicate the issue with the public using different methods and types of communication. In addition, efforts were made to reform both the guidelines and the practice of communication practiced by the bureau. Although there have been some achievements made, there have been also challenges and gaps which have been affectation a tentative knob to the communication practice. With regard to the documents which have been used by the bureau.

The major problem was that they didn't include important points so as to make them go in line with up-to-date communication standards. Therefore, it can be said that the objective of reaching quality outputs couldn't go beyond the effort since there haven't been any mechanism to solve the problem and check the quality by setting standards.

The other attraction of the communication was it had been fixed to the old fashioned one way method of communication. As it was discussed in the theoretical framework, the modern two way balanced public relations model targets to achieve common benefit for both the institution and the public. In other words, there is an equal chance of sending and receiving messages between the two parties. Accordingly, changes would take place on the side of both parties as a result of equal chance of interactivities.

Hence, the modern public relations model indicates that a two-way balanced model is distinguished by its quality of promoting the agenda of not only a bureau but also both of the bureau and the communities. Here, some capacity argue that ethics and anti-corruption issues are the communities 'agenda that the bureau is trying to promote. However, it should be understood that on the same agenda of administering the community and the forest management might have their own issues on how to progress. In other words the community also has its own technical issues that it would like the bureau to accept with as much as the bureau wants the community to perform in a certain way.

With this in mind, the findings show that the communication employed by the bureau is more of a one-way communication that facilitates the condition for the bureau to impact the community but, not the other way round. However, both the interview and questionnaire data indicate that the bureau practically does not contain the public in important issues such as in law strategy. The other most important issue which lacks explanation is the issue in connection with the right of the community to have access to information. Although ensuring the right of the public to get information is one of the major responsibilities of public relations.

The findings indicate that there are still a number of negative images fundamental. According to the data gathered, the negative images of the bureau are among the most challenging issues of the communication practice. Furthermore, there is no media strategy that can guide the work relation between the bureau and the media. Hence, this has been creating considerable problems on how to properly consume the media. One such problem includes the pressures on the amount and rate of the messages transmitted through different media channels. The amount and rate of the messages sent through the media have been restricted due to lack of a complete media policy. It is also stated that a modern public relations activity gives important consideration to "give voice to the voiceless" However, there has been no special communication package included in

the documents of the bureau to deal with this issue. Moreover, the findings also suggest that both the documents bureau and the practice do not entertain such an issue.

Thus, in Ethiopia where a significant portion of the society lives under poverty, a communication scheme that doesn't give special attention to the poor cannot be as effective as it is unreal. It is good that the bureau's communication document have included the importance of conducting researches. However, the findings show that in practical terms, there have not been satisfactory researches showed with the proper standard. Although research is an important component of a modern communication practice, the bureau is lacking reflection to conduct sufficient and professional research and successfully change them in to practice.

Moreover, as it is the aim of irregular communication, the purpose of some of the researches is not to bring about a mutual understanding and benefit to both the bureau and the public. Thus, the researches made on the practice of the communication are not intended at changing the conduct of the bureau. According, to questionnaire respondents, television and newspapers are respectively the first and the second most familiar media in relation to the bureau's message transmission. However, there are problems in capably and effectively utilizing the media such as lack of adequate airtime for messages that are being channelled through television. On the other hand, website and Face book are rated as the least familiar communication tools.

In progress communication practice website and Face book have fundamental role to play in providing timely and the most easily reached information to the community. However, the data from both the questionnaire and the interview shows that these present communication tools are not being properly utilized to better reach the community. With the plan to increase the number of people that take part in delivering bureau's message as well as having a significant number of stakeholders, there is no measure taken to increase both the number of communicators that deal with the issue and the amount of communication materials produced and distributed. This has been confirmed by the data from both the questionnaire and the interviewees. There has been also a basic problem observed with regard to the document principles of the communication activity. There is no communication strategy available to the document all the plans and activities of communication.

Not only the un accessibility of a communication practice that matters most, but also the available documents also lack professional guiding principles that are founded on abstract basis. With regard to the strength of the communication practice, the findings from questionnaire data show that sustainability is among the strong sides of the communication practice. However, there are challenges relating to providing timely information to the community. Although, the proper operation of the plan is a problem, weight and gratitude has been given in the documents to conduct researches on the communication activities of the bureau. In addition, the effort to make the messages based on facts and to make them interesting can be engaged as the other positive side of the communication practice. The functioning of the objective to hold variety of stakeholders and making them take part in the activity delivering messages to the public can be engaged as the other strength of the communication practice.

5.2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The research findings have led to the forwarding of the ensuing recommendations. First and foremost, the communication practice plan needs to be thoroughly updated and expanded to incorporate all pertinent communication-related elements. Additionally, it ought to include guidelines and explanations regarding the characteristics of communication tool contents and output.

The effectiveness of the communication should also be evaluated against current, easily accessible public relations models. Therefore, communication practices need to change in order to replace the existing, predictable one-way communication methods with more balanced, two-way approaches that are centered on society.

Another component of the communication action should be clarity. It is important to provide sufficient clarification regarding the public's right of access to material included in communication papers. The community should be informed promptly of the message and given clear instructions on how to access the resources of appointees, elected officials, and other public servants.

Additionally, the bureau must to invite public participation on significant matters like regulations. Additionally, it should be acknowledged that concentration will empower the underprivileged and provide voice to the voiceless.

To address the issues at hand and make greater use of the media, the bureau should also create a media relations principle. The research suggests that the bureau should also boost the number of messages and frequencies it channels through broadcast media, particularly radio and television, which have the largest audiences. Additionally, the agency needs to promote and make greater use of its Facebook page and website.

Additionally, the bureau needs to raise awareness in order to have a document that is appropriate and to take action that will improve the agency's unfavorable reputation.

Additionally, qualified studies based on the two-way balanced public relations model should be carried out. As a result, adequate and standard research should be conducted on a regular basis, and the results should be verified.

Additionally, the agency must to hire more communicators and periodically develop their skills. In a similar vein, greater quantities of communication products are required in order to fulfill the community's growing need.

In order to appropriately address communication difficulties in an organized manner, the bureau should also create and implement a comprehensive communication practice document.

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Appendix

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATION

Questionnaire for Staff Members of Oromia forested landscape program (OFLP)

Dear respondents,

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect data in order to investigate Assessment of communication practice and challenge in forest management in the case of Ormia regional state. Your genuine and accurate responses will no doubt have great contribution to the findings of the research. Therefore, you are kindly requested to give genuine answers to the questions below. The researcher would like to assure you that the answers that you give will be used only for the research purpose. For this, I would like to thank you in advance

Instruction

1. You do not need to write your name or identity.
2. Please provide short answers to each question and by circling the answers for choice questions.

Questionnaire

Table 1: Employees' reaction to the questions related to Assessment of communication practice and challenge in forest management activities of OFLP.

Note: SA= strongly agree A= agree M= medium D= disagree SD= strongly disagree

F= frequency

No.	Categories	Employees' responses corresponding to the scale											
		SA		A		M		D		SD		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
1.	The OFLP undertakes studies on the challenges of communication in promoting forest management activities campaigns regularly												
2.	If you witness that the Bureau undertakes studies on the assessment of communication practice in promoting forest management campaigns, the effect of activities is evaluated before and after the campaigns												
3.	The Bureau takes essential evaluation on each awareness communication raising activities and takes corrective actions to												

	reduce forest deforestation											
4	The Bureau studies the causes of Deforestation and Degradation											
5.	If you are of the opinion that the Bureau studies causes of Deforestation and Degradation the causes are communicated to the public											
6.	The Bureau implements appropriately designed the program to communicate awareness raising education programs											
7.	The Bureau uses multiple media channels to run awareness raising campaigns											

8	The Bureau fully utilizes local media (both broadcast and print)													
9.	Staffs of education and capacity building directorate have experience sharing programs with stake holders on how to conduct awareness raising programs													
10.	The awareness raising communication activities of promoting forest management Education and Capacity Building Directorate of the Bureau have positive impact on duties of other directorates of the Bureau													