**Addis Ababa University**

**School of Journalism and Communication**

**Graduate Program**

# The Analysis of the Practice and Challenges of Media Monitoring in FDRE Ministry of Finance

**BY**

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**November, 2021**

**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

**Addis Ababa University**

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# The Analysis of the Practice and Challenges of Media Monitoring in FDRE Ministry of Finance

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**A Thesis Submitted to the School of Journalism and Communication in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Public Relations and Strategic Communication.**

**November, 2021**

**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

## DECLARATION

I, the undersigned declare that this thesis is my original work and all the materials that I used to prepare this thesis are acknowledged according to the regulation of university.

**Name:** Zemenu Dagninet **Signature:**_____

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**Submission Date**:_____

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**Addis Ababa University**

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This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Zemenu Dagninet, on Analysis of practice and challenges of media monitoring activity in FDRE Ministry of Finance Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Public Relations and Strategic Communication obeys the regulations of the University. The work is original in its nature and is eligible to earn master's degree in Public Relations and Strategic Communication.

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First of all I would like to thank my God for everything that he has done to me. It is also relevant to praise those who think and do well to others. Therefore, I would like to give my best gratitude to my adviser Dr. Teshager Shiferaw for his unreserved and enthusiastic assistance and encouragement. I must also value his well-mannered approach. My appreciation also goes to employees of Ministry of Finance and Public Relations and Information Directorate staff members for their warm approach and assistance in filling my questionnaires and answering in-depth interview questions, though COVID-19 is feared. Last but not the least I would like to thank Ato Dagninet Ayalew, Ato Wodaje Dagninet & w/ro Amelework Fentahun, Ato Beyene Simachew & W/ro Rahel Dagninet , Ato zelaleme Assefa & W/ro Wosene Dagninet and all their sons and daughters .Your presence and support has great meaning to my life. May God be with you in your life journey!

# Contents

i

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS** ..... v

**ABSTRACT** ..... viii

**LIST OF FIGURES** ..... ix

**List of Abbreviations** ..... x

**CHAPTER ONE** ..... 1

1. Introduction ..... 1

1.1 Background of the study ..... 1

1.2 Statement of the Problem ..... 3

1.3 Objective of the study ..... 5

1.4 Research questions ..... 5

1.5. Significance of the study ..... 5

1.6. Scope of the study ..... 6

1.7 Limitations of the study ..... 6

1.8. Structure of the study ..... 6

1.8 Theoretical framework of the study ..... 7

1.8.1 Systems Theory ..... 7

1.8. 2 Agenda Setting Theory ..... 9

1.8.3 Conceptual frame work ..... 10

**Chapter Two** ..... 12

2. Review Literature ..... 12

2.1 Public relations definition ..... 12

2.2 Government Public Relations ..... 12

2.3 Media relation ..... 13

2.4 Public opinion ..... 15

2.5 Media monitoring ..... 16

**CHAPTER THREE** ..... 21

3. Research Design and Methodology ..... 21

3.1 Introduction ..... 21
3.2 The study area ..... 21
3.3 Research Design ..... 21
3.7 Data sampling and sampling method ..... 22
3.4. Source of data and data collection methods ..... 22
3.8 Data analysis ..... 23
3.9 Ethical considerations ..... 23
3.10 Reliability and validity ..... 23
**CHAPTER FOUR** ..... 25
4. Data presentation and Interpretation ..... 25
4.1 Overview ..... 25
4.2 Data presentation ..... 25
4.3 Interview questions and data presentation ..... 35
4.4. Interpretation of secondary Data ..... 43
**CHAPTER FIVE** ..... 52
5. Conclusion and Recommendation ..... 52
5.1 Conclusion ..... 52
5.2 Recommendations ..... 54
**Reference** ..... 56
**Appendices** ..... 60
Appendix1: Monitored reports from Reporter Amharic newspaper in the months of February and March 2021used by translating the news in the analysis part. ..... 60
Appendix 2: Monitored reports from Fortune and Ethiopian Herald newspapers in the months of February and March 2021 used in the analysis part ..... 64
Appendix 3: Monitored reports from Reporter Amharic newspaper in the months of February and March 2021 which is selected as focus area for CEO. ..... 66
Appendix4: Questionnaire ..... 69
Appendix5: letter written to The FDRE Ministry of finance to conduct research ..... 73
Appendix6: Media monitoring report prepared by Public Relations and Information Directorate of the Ministry of Finance ..... 74

# ABSTRACT

This research paper analyzes the practice and challenges of media monitoring activity in FDRE Ministry of Finance. To study this, mixed-method research approach was applied. Based on this, a total of 30 employees were selected from the Ministry of Finance. Among these selected employees, 22 of them were from different Directorates that are core processes for the Ministry, and 8 of them were from the public Relations and Information Directorate of the Ministry and a total of 26 respondents gave their feedback. The selection was made purposefully considering the relationship and relevance that respondents have concerning the issue. To conduct the study questionnaires were distributed and analyzed qualitatively, and in-depth interviews were conducted with staff members of the Public Relations and Information Directorate. Besides these the Media monitoring report of the Public Relations and Information Directorate was analyzed.

The result revealed that media monitoring activity is practiced in the Ministry. The finding also showed that media monitoring activity and its report focused mainly on print media. Furthermore, the activity is practiced mainly to give correction for wrong media mentions. Lack of setting clear objective to media monitoring activity, longer time it takes to monitor media and poor quality of media monitoring report were seen as challenges.

# LIST OF FIGURES

**Figure 1. Katz and Kahn Open System Model……..……11**
**Figure 2.Age of respondents ..... 254**
**Figure 3.Educational level of Respondents ..... 264**

## List of Abbreviations

CEOs Chief Executive Officers

FDRE Federal Democratic Republic

PR public Relations

PPP public private partnership

R1, R2, R3, R4, R5 Respondent one, Respondent two, Respondent five

# CHAPTER ONE

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background of the study

In the process of creating mutual understanding between stakeholders and organizations, public relations specialists use media. Media are both used to disseminate as well as scrutinize information. Regarding this, it is indicated that:

> Public relations personnel will need to continually monitor, analyze, and curate large amounts of data and respond to what is being reported or discussed in everything from traditional media to blogs, chat groups, and other social media (Ferrell & Hartline, 2011).

The media help to recognize the public's stance. Organizations that understand the attitudes of their publics have an advantage over those which do not comprehend their public's attitude (Anne, 2010). As a result, public relations specialists monitor media to comprehend the attitude of stakeholders.

Media monitoring is observing print, broadcast, and online media stories. Its target may be money-making, political, and scientific. As its name indicates, Media monitoring focuses on media outputs. hese media outputs help public relations specialists to evaluate the success of their activities. Organizations monitor media to recognize the placement of their press releases, social media debates, and discussions about the brand and reputation of an organization, issues of the industry, and competitiveness. It's also useful to document published reports (Doe & Conger, 2016).The most important thing in monitoring media is to know whether reports are constructive or undesirable (Michael,Alison,&David,2005).

On the other side, media monitoring is helpful to get market information, prevent crises, know influencers that have an impact on the organization and evaluate the success of campaigns. Media are expanding nowadays. As a result, public relations practitioners have inadequate time or knowledge to carry out exhaustive media analysis. They also have no sufficient resources to follow up all media which reports about their organization or customers. However, Media have both favorable and unfavorable impacts on public relations activities. Understanding public opinion and stakeholders' views help to manage the relationship as the effort of public relations specialist is to generate empathy (Baines, Eagan, & Jefkins, 2004). This can be achieved by media monitoring. Therefore, Media monitoring helps public relation specialists understand their stakeholders' perceptions about their organization.

Citizens are one of the stakeholders of government organizations. They want to get complete and candid information from their government as it is basic to their daily lives. They also need to evaluate their government's record (Tench & Yeomans, 2009). Especially government Public relations activities are related to public matters that an organization should accomplish. Public relations' goal regarding public affairs is to monitor public view, pinpoint matters that may cause public uneasiness, and prepare a plan of action that can solve these public concerns and create a positive relationship with them (Ferrell & Hartline, 2011).

The Ministry of finance is one of the Government organizations in Ethiopia. It was established during the period of Emperor Minilik II regime in 1900EC. Its name was Ministry of Finance and Interior (Finance &Development, special issue magazine, 2008). After 100 years of establishment, it acquires the name Ministry of Finance in 1935 EC. It is expected to formulate economic cooperation and fiscal policies and follow up their implementations, lead and manage joint economic collaboration with countries, regional and international organizations, and follow up their impact on the economy of the country. Besides these, it has the mandate to marshal, negotiate and sign foreign development assistance and loans, and oversees their implementation, formulate the government fiscal budget, distributes the permitted budget, and assess its

deployment, establishes procurement and property management system of the government and oversees its application, establishes budgeting, accounting, disbursement, and internal audit systems, prepare documents needed to privatize public enterprises and facilitate privatization processes in cooperation with appropriate government bodies (https://www.mofed.gov.et/en/ministry-en/about-ministry/

The impact that the powers and duties of the Ministry of Finance have on the lives of citizens can attract media to report about its activities. Media is a dominant power in many societies (Baines, Eagan, & Jefkins, 2004). The effect of media can be understood using Media monitoring. Media monitoring results expose the quality of media coverage, the type of information that the media are disseminating, and the effect of misinformation on organizations (Baines, et al.2004). It is also significant to advise CEOs and to plan future activities.

Media monitoring is also essential in understanding an organization's strengths and weaknesses, media coverage, strengths and weaknesses of its communication strategy, and other issues (Cyber Alert (n.d.). However, media monitoring practice is under studied. I also observed from my experience that attention given to media monitoring is weak and communication departments do not actively practice it for their benefit. The reasons can be lack of awareness about its importance, the relatively long time it takes to monitor Media (both electronics and print media), and lack of alternative means to practice it.

Due to its characteristics, the Ministry of Finance needs to practice media monitoring to keep its good image, understand the effectiveness of its communication activities, create transparency and gather information for planning.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

Media monitoring is vital to get information about the perceptions of stakeholders and the success of media relations campaigns. It helps to understand negative gossips and take necessary actions. It is also essential in getting market information and feedback from the audience. Moreover, media monitoring is key for decision-making and planning (Health, R,(Ed.),2013).

In democratic societies, governments are expected to be transparent to their citizens. Communication of what and how the government is doing its activities is considered as reflecting the government's accountability and responsibility (Lee, Neeley, & Stewart, 2012). Providing timely information to citizens is a crucial feature of public organizations. Gathering information from stakeholders is also vital to organizations. Based on gathered information, public relations practitioners should strategically plan to be effective. Public relations activities should be strategically planed and their effectiveness should be evaluated (Waddington, (Ed.), 2012).

Organizations have immediate access to the viewpoint of their customers and other influencers. It was unthinkable in earlier times. There are many ways of getting the attitude of stakeholders. Media monitoring is one of the ways which public relations use in this regard. On the other hand, conducting an opinion poll needs adequate resources. Due to this, most government organizations obtain information informally from meetings, email feedback, letters to the editors, media coverage, and understand the current status of their organization (Lee et al., P. 148).

Public Relations and Information Directorate of the Ministry posted its main objectives on the web page of the Ministry. Enabling teamwork and discussion between the Ministry and its publics; collecting viewpoint of the people, analyze and present the finding to concerned bodies of the Ministry to improve service delivery and monitor media so as to correct wrong mentions and improve image of the Ministry are objectives stated on the web page of the Ministry (https://www.mofed.gov.et/en/ministry-en/about-ministry/). From these opinion poll and media monitoring are separately mentioned. However, opinion poll and media monitoring activities serve as information gathering tools. This shows how media monitoring is perceived and given attention by the Directorate.

Though media monitoring is significant for public relations activity, it is understudied. I have tried to search for researches in this area and observed many on social media monitoring. However, I have not come across a study conducted on the practice and challenges of media monitoring in government public relations.

Furthermore, in my experience as a public relations practitioner, media monitoring activity is seen as less important and its value is not well recognized. Its practice is targeted only to give corrections to negative mentions. As a result, the researcher tried to study the practice and challenges of media monitoring activity in the FDRE Ministry of Finance Public Relations and Information Directorate.

Thus the study intends to know the practice and challenges of media monitoring activity in the Ministry, the focus given to media monitoring by the CEO of the Ministry, and the method used to monitor media.

## 1.3 Objective of the study

The general objective of the study is to analyze the practice and challenges of media monitoring activity in the FDRE Ministry of Finance.

Specifically the study takes the following objectives:

- To identify the focus given to media monitoring by the CEO of the Ministry
- To identify methods used to monitor media in the Ministry,
- To detect the challenges they are facing in monitoring medias, and
- To identify the practice of media monitoring in the Ministry

## 1.4 Research questions

1. How is media monitoring practiced?
2. What are the challenges encountered in monitoring media?
3. Is media monitoring activity supported by the CEO of the Ministry?
4. What are the methods used to monitor media?

## 1.5. Significance of the study

The study tried to explore the practice and challenges of media monitoring activity in the FDRE Ministry of Finance. It tried to know the perception and support that CEOs of the Ministry have regarding media monitoring activity and value, the practice of media monitoring in the Ministry, the method used to monitor media and the challenges facing in media monitoring activity. Therefore, this study is important to other similar organizations to evaluate their media monitoring practice and give attention to it. It also helps public relations practitioners to recognize the reality and adjust their media monitoring plan and practice accordingly.

The study is also expected to help other researchers who want to conduct research on this issue. Besides this, it would also benefit organizations that are working in Information communication areas - especially in Ethiopia as nowadays media monitoring technology and firms are in advance.

## 1.6. Scope of the study

Geographically the study is restricted to the FDRE Ministry of Finance. It did not include organizations that are under the Ministry's supervision. Organizations under The ministry supervision have their public relations departments. They also have a large number of employees. These organizations are located in different places that need adequate logistics and time to conduct research. Therefore, it analyzes the practice and challenges of media monitoring activity in the Ministry of Finance only, discovering the whole variables that create challenges in media monitoring activity is beyond the scope of the study and so limited on analyzing practice and challenges of media monitoring activity *in the Ministry of Finance***.**

## 1.7 Limitations of the study

Nowadays, the importance of Media monitoring is increasing and assisted by monitoring and measurement software. However, the area is understudied. It is challenging to get local resources and adequate foreign pieces of literature. Therefore, the study uses media monitoring guide information prepared by media monitoring and measurement firms and by searching for sources from Web Site.

It is also limited to the FDRE Ministry of Finance that the result might not be generalized to other organizations. Methodologically, the study uses both qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis.

## 1.8. Structure of the study

This study comprises five chapters. The first chapter states the background of the study. It also contains a statement of the problem, objective of the study, research questions, significance of the study, the scope of the study, limitations of the study, and structure of the study. Chapter two deals with a review of related literature.

The third chapter is all about research methodology. It deals with the study area, research design, source of data and data collection tools, secondary sources of data,

primary sources of data, In-depth interviews, data sampling and sampling method, and data analysis. The fourth chapter focuses on data presentation and analysis. Finally, Chapter Five presents the conclusion and recommendation.

## 1.8 Theoretical framework of the study

Public Relations is a multi-dimensional discipline and it can be interpreted using many theoretical perspectives (Tench & Yeomans, 2009). Miller (20129) stated organization as it contains five important elements namely organizational structure, group of people/employees, goals related to the organization and individuals, and environment of the organization that the organization is situated in. These elements have their implications on communication processes of organizations and their interaction with its environment. They have also relation with media monitoring practices of the organization. This study focuses on practice and challenges of media monitoring in Ministry of Finance.

Media monitoring is the process of searching for pieces of information from media sources. The information obtained from media has benefits like to plan, improve communication campaign, make decision, and manage crisis. It also is important to improve relation with stakeholders ( Cyber Alert (n.d.).

Therefore, perspectives of Agenda setting and system theories are selected to study and interpret results of the media monitoring practice and challenges in the Ministry of Finance's Public Relations and Information Directorate.

### 1.8.1 Systems Theory

Systems theory is originated from the study of Biology and Engineering. The founder of Systems theory was theoretical biologist Ludwig von Bertalanffy. He published a book which is General Systems Theory in 1968. By this Ludwig von Bertalanffy advocated as systems theory can be applied in other disciplines. Systems theory considers organizations as an open system that has interconnected and codependent parts or subsystems. It considers organizations as a complex organism that must interact with its environment to live (Katherine and Miller, 2012).

System Theory has characteristics like sub-system, holism, synergy, closed and open system and system boundary. These characteristics shows that organizations have many interrelated sub-systems, each subsystems function to form the whole system, joint production of these subsystems is greater than the sum of the yields of its sub-systems, the whole organization is made up of closed and open systems in combination. Besides these the organization is believed to have its boundary (Gordon, 2021). The media monitoring practice is observing information that help improve organization's performance. It needs creating relationship with subsystem of the organization and with its environment. Therefore, these characteristics of system theory have relationship with the idea of media monitoring practice of organizations.

There are closed and open systems in the characteristics of systems theory. There are four public relations models. These are press Agentry/ publicity model that information follows one way and depends on manipulation, public information model also uses one way information flow and focuses on maintaining image of the organization, two way asymmetric model uses two way communication. However, feedback of stakeholders is not given emphasis by two way asymmetric model, the fourth model is two way symmetric model and this model is ideal in enhancing mutual beneficiary relation with stakeholders. It uses two way communication and stakeholders' feedback is considered (Tench &Yeomans, 2009). Open system supports two way symmetrical model of public relations.

Organizations should be taken as a complex open system that needs communication within its system and with its environment for existence (Katz and Kahn, 1978, cited in Miller, 2012). Lerbinger (2006) says, "An open organization is permeable; it interacts with its environment. It is ready to listen to stakeholders, include their concerns in decision making, and sometimes involve them in coalitions and collaborative decision making."(p.92)

In this regard, public relations ought to consider itself as part of an open system. They must encourage the organization to monitor vital environmental impacts and adjust its activities accordingly with the environment. Besides this, it should support changes in

the external environment that can nurture the organization (Cutlip, Center and Broom, 2000, cited in Tench&Yeomans, 2009)

The open system encourages two-way symmetric communication and supports environmental monitoring. This theory indicates public relations practitioners to be advisors of the organization. It teaches them to get access to senior managers and influence activities, minimize crises by scanning their environment and show as public relations can make contributions to organizational success (Tench&Yeomans, 2009).

The open system is helpful for public relations planning because it allows organizations to focus on exchanging information from their environment- both internal and external environment. This theory considers organizations as a living entity that can exchange materials with them (McElreath 1997 cited in Tench &Yeomans, 2009).

Information exchange of organizations with their environments has value of having organizational goals which are accepted by organization members as well as to have organizational goals which are supported by their publics. This is also important for decision making by organizations. Public relation practitioners who are working in such environments should be member of CEOs of the organizations (Theaker, 2001,).

### 1.8. 2 Agenda Setting Theory

Agenda setting theory states that Media set an agenda for society. Sriramesh &Verčič (2009) state that while the media are doing their main activity- the watchdog function, they also set agenda for society. However, their effect goes ahead of setting the agenda. Lerbinger (2006) states that "There is mounting evidence that the modern mass media shape how people think about an event or issue." Therefore, public relations specialists should monitor media to understand their stakeholder's views besides to know the success of their activity. It also shows that establishing a positive relationship with the media is helpful to public relations practitioners to obtain consideration when an organization is under attack (Turk, & Kruckeberg, 2000 cited in Sriramesh, &Verčič, 2009 ).

Sriramesh &Verčič (2009) clarifies that much evidence shows modern mass media shape people's opinion towards an event or issue. Therefore, it is possible to understand

from Agenda-setting theory that public relations practitioners should monitoring media and early identify the attitude of their publics.

These two theories indicate that public relation should follow up what is reported about their organization and react accordingly. Based on these theories organizations' interaction with their environment is eminent. The objective of media monitoring is searching for information about organization and use the information in a useful manner. Therefore, these two theories support to study media monitoring practice.

### 1.8.3 Conceptual frame work

Organizations cannot survive in isolation. Public relations is about a relationship of organizations with their different internal and external publics. The environment of organizations are in constant change. This change affects both the organization and its publics (Tench&Yeomans, 2009).Among theorist that supports this is system Theory.

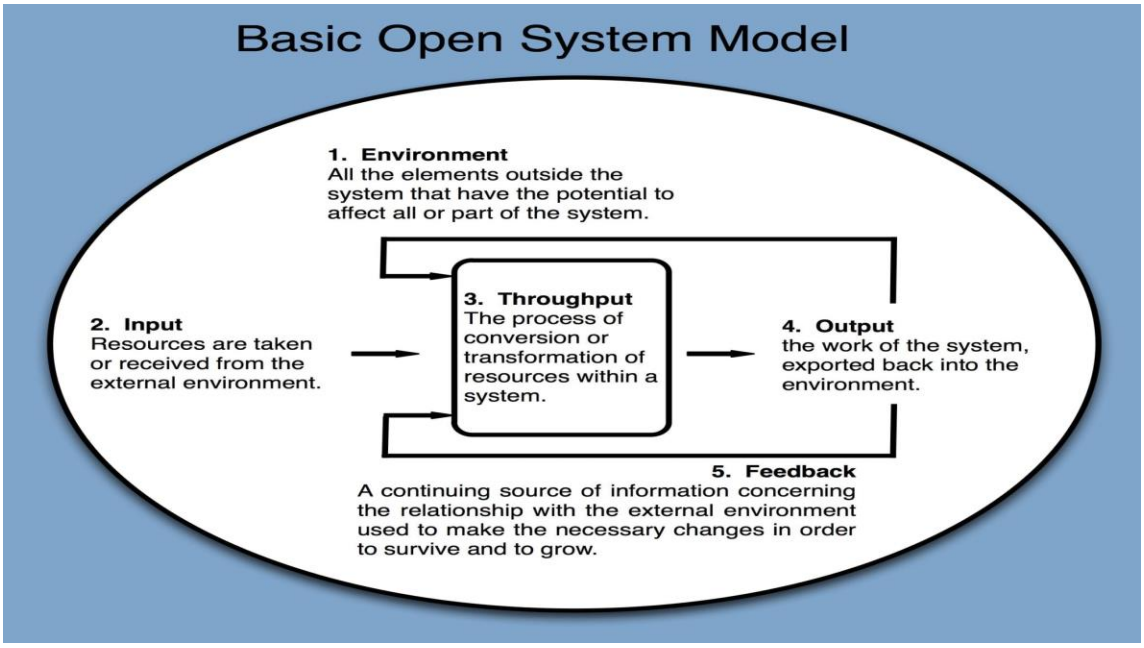
There are four properties of a system these are holism, equifnality, Negative entropy, and requisite variety. Holism is to show the cooperation and integration of its sub systems to accomplish intended goal of the system. Equifinality shows the function of a system which has highly integrated subsystems. These subsystems are part of the main system which can accomplish similar goal using different mechanisms of performing it. The third character which is negative entropy is about the ability of the system to withstand challenges due to its interaction with its environment. A system exchanges information and gets feedback from its environment to adapt and survive. The final characteristic of a system is requisite Varity. It is about the systems' complex subsystems that enable it to interact with the environment that the system is embedded in (Miller, 2009).

These features of a system shows characteristics media monitoring which is one of Public relations activities. Media monitoring activity is searching for media reports about mentions of organizations, the brand and reputation of organizations and success of communication campaigns (Cyber Alert (n.d.). This is about exchanging information with environment of organization. This also supports two way symmetric model of public relation. Open systems are systems that work according to changes in their environment. They adjust their business performances according to the changes observed in their

environment. However, closed systems do not adjust their business performance according to changes in their environment (Tench&Yeomans, 2009). Organizations get as well as give information from their environment. This characteristics of organizations goes with open system. This information exchange can be interpreted by two way symmetrical model of public relations.

The main objective of this research is about analyzing practice and challenges of media monitoring practice of Ministry of Finance. Therefore, two way symmetric model of public relations supported by Systems theory and Agenda setting theory is selected to analyze practice and challenges of media monitoring. By this model main issues like focus given to media monitoring by the CEO of the Ministry, methods used to monitor media in the Ministry, challenges facing in monitoring medias, and practice of media monitoring in the Ministry are included and evaluated.

Figure *1*.**Age of respondents**




This Katz, & Kahn (1978) Open System Model Shows how open system gets valuable imputes, process those imputes and send them back to the environment. Based on this model the environment has impact on the entire system or on part of the system.

This model also depicts how two way symmetric public relations model works as well as how can organizations get information by monitoring media practice and respond.

# Chapter Two

## 2. Review Literature

### 2.1 Public relations definition

Many scholars like Grunig try to define public relations. Their definitions differ in many ways but, they have similarities about the basic concept of public relations. The objective of this study is not to evaluate the meaning of public relations. Therefore, it is adequate to take the following definition.

> Public relations is a distinctive management function which helps establish and maintain mutual lines of communication, understanding, acceptance and cooperation between an organization and its publics; involves the management of problems or issues; helps management to keep informed on and responsive to public opinions; defines and emphasizes the responsibility of management to serve the public interest; helps management keep abreast of and effectively utilize change; serving as an early warning system to help anticipate trends; and uses research and ethical communication techniques as its principal tools. (Harlow 1976, cited in Tench &Yeomans, 2009).

This definition incorporates many activities which are vital in public relations. Therefore, it is possible to say that Public relations practitioners need to perform activities like anticipating, analyzing, interpreting, and planning to perform well.

### 2.2 Government Public Relations

Government public relations is about the relation or interface of government with, its citizens, governmental supervisory body, and lawmakers. It is to some extent different from public affairs in that public affairs is concerned with how organizations communicate with different government bodies and practice lobbying. Lee, Neeley & Stewart (Ed.),(2012) say, " Government public relations helps to facilitate communication with constituencies and with governmental publics."(pp.159-160)

Government officials are considered servants of the public and they are supposed to work transparently. They should respond to questions, needs, and investigation of the media (Lee, et al.,2012). Customers of a governmental organization are the whole

citizens. Therefore, government organizations are believed to be responsive to citizens' questions. They are not like nonprofit and for-profit organizations in answering citizen's issues.

Government public relations practitioners are expected to monitor and identify growing ethical issues in the interaction process of government with its constituencies. In most cases growing ethical public policy issues may appear and these issues must be identified early to prepare a strategic plan and properly manage them. If ethical public policy problems appear, they may change public opinion and this will make the public relations' activity of interacting with different stakeholders difficult (Lee, Neeley& Stewart(Ed.) ,2012).

In government public relations, public relations activities help government administrators realize the mission of their organization and fulfill responsibilities given to the government in democratic systems (Lee, Neeley, & Stewart,2012). There are many responsibilities government public relations practitioners should consider. It is explained as:

> The communication obligations of a government manager include responding to inquiries from the news media, reporting to the electorate on agency activities, and generally being responsive to the public. These are not luxuries in the context of democratic governance. Rather, they are obligations that can't be ignored, even if and when a politician denounces them as self-serving and wasteful propaganda. The qualitative difference between public administration and business administration is the governmental context of agency management (Lee, Neeley, & Stewart, 2012)

## 2.3 Media relation

Public relations activities use different media to transmit information and create the necessary understanding and knowledge. They also use media to monitor information relevant to their work. As a result, Media relations take up the main place in public relations activities because media serve as 'gatekeepers' or filtering unit of information flow between organizations and its publics (Hunt & Grunig, 1994 cited in Baines, Eagan, &Jefkins, 2004 ). Holtz (2002) states that "Ideally, the job of the media relations department is to help reporters and editors do their jobs."(p.157). However, its target

should not be fulfilling the objective of the media. It is expected to meet the objective of public relations.

In media relations providing timely, fair, relevant, and complete information is basic. Public relations specialists are not expected to put their organization's interests above others. They make an effort to guarantee that the interest of their organization goes with the public's interest to avoid adverse effects. If practitioners put their organization's interest above the public's interest, they will affect their media relation as well as their organization (Health,(Ed).,2013). Media relation is expressed as:

> Media relation is a busy highway traffic travelling in both directions between journalists and public relations practitioners, and the rules of the road are observed as courtesies rather than enforceable regulations. In other direction, journalists ask practitioners for help in gathering information for news stories or verifying details. (Lamb & McKee, 2005)

Both public relations specialists and journalists need one another for their own purpose. Lee, Neeley, & Stewartthe, (2012) Say, "The practice of media relations is not like the practice of law with statutes and court decisions or math with geometric and trigonometric proofs.'' (p.29). This is to show that knowledge of media relations and the technique of presenting truthful, timely, and full information are necessary for media relations. This can be observed in press relation that if the information given is not complete, it is difficult to get coverage.

Good press relations can be achieved by the knowledge we have about the nature of the press. It may include building personal relations with media, and cooperating with them, serving the media, and supplying good copy. The news media-press, radio, and TV are basic to disseminate information to stakeholders in developed nations. To get a maximum publication or broadcasting is the role of press relation and its objective is to create knowledge and understanding (Jefkine, 1992).

These media also work in Ethiopia's case. Besides these, the use of Social media is spreading. The PR Policymaker is a professional who quickly learns that a crucial part of the communications strategy and planning process includes the development of social media policies, training, and governance. Not only developing social media

policies but also maintaining those falls within this new PR practice (Deirdre & Breakenridge , 2012).

Media have good and bad sides. Concerning public relations activities, media may bring about damage to the image or reputation of organizations. Regarding this, Jefkins (1992) Says, “If this concerns a company or a government the public relations officer (PRO) has to work very fast to counteract any misinformation, or even to present the true facts about a disaster." (pp.5-6). Media relation needs careful planning.

Creating an open and trusting relationship with editors and reporters can help Public relations to get access to media channels and it should be the job of public relations (Hunt and Grunig, 1994, cited in Baines, et al.,2004).

## 2.4 Public opinion

Public opinion is the compilation of individual observations or thoughts on a specific topic (Health, R.,(Ed).,2013). Peoples have attitudes and perspectives towards events or issues. When people reach on consensus on these perceptions, they form opinions. Anne (2010) explained this as "Public opinion represents a consensus, which emerges over time, from all the expressed views that cluster around an issue in the debate, and that this consensus exercises power."(p.99). Public opinion can be created by the media. Due to agendas set by media through news reports, public opinion can be influenced or shaped. News stories may treat one as less important than the other and have marginalizing effects. This has an influence on the perception of the public. Health, R.,(Ed).,2013) Says, ‘‘The swaying of public opinion based on the coverage of events is more daunting today than ever with the abundance of news outlets, rapid-fire reporting, and biased media outlets."(p.719)

This indicates the impact of media on public relations activities and organizations. The target of public relations activities is the attitude of the general public. This can be done by increasing media relation campaign. This influences public opinion. There is a normally held view that what the media say form public opinion. Therefore, working on the media helps influence the public (Anne, 2010). Public opinions which are articulated through media have an influence on organizations. This can be seen in the following quote.

> The media often define and crystallize the public mood, although sometimes its influence can be overestimated. It is certainly true that these media can fatally damage the reputation of an organization or individual. Sometimes this is because the organization is genuinely at fault, in which case the media is doing its job of serving the public interest. (Anne, 2010 )

Opinion shows sight on a specific subject. Therefore, understanding public opinion helps to improve public relations activity. Public opinion can be recognized by media monitoring or gathered by opinion polls. According to Bethlehem (2018), the poll is an instrument of gathering information about a group of people, and opinion polls are studies that quantify the feelings and opinions of a group of people on topics like economy and politics.

## 2.5 Media monitoring

There are many public relations tools that are essential in creating understanding and relationship between an organization and its Public. Media monitoring is one of the tools used by PR departments.

Media monitoring also called clipping service is copying an article concerning an organization that appears in the media. News clipping is done on print, broadcast, and online media (Health (Ed).,2013). It is an ongoing activity of observing the editorial content of media and thereby selecting, keeping, and scrutinizing those contents which state about an organization and its activities (Kothari,2004).

Organizations use media monitoring to follow the success of their news release, find information about competitors, benchmark performance against competitors, manage brand reputation, collect organizational intelligence, measure effectiveness of communication and recognize commercial prospects ( Cyber Alert (n.d.).

The purpose of media monitoring is explained as:

> Media monitoring services monitor the media for references of a client's organization or company and supply the client with a compilation of the clips. ... Information gained from media monitoring services allows communications professionals to gather important insight about how their organization is being portrayed in the media, what topics are

> deemed newsworthy, and which reporters are covering the topics(Health (Ed).,2013).

There are many media houses that public relations departments need to follow daily. However, monitoring all media is difficult for public relations specialists. Therefore, it is preferable to select the most relevant media to meet public relations targets ( Holtz, ,2002). Though it is not familiar in Ethiopia, there are media monitoring firms and technologies that help ease the monitoring process. This is made clear as:

> The process of creating a simple media monitoring system is essentially a clerical process that as more time spent on the initial set-up stage than on the continuing regular analysis. The raw material is media clippings and transcripts, which can be generated through monitoring of the media by the practitioner or through agencies and broadcast monitoring bureau. These can be supplemented by word and topic searches by online information organizations and scanning of the internet through search engines (Watson & Noble, 2007)

Monitoring media activity assists public relation specialist to correct misunderstandings, know perceptions, and create the identity and good reputation of their organizations, and planning. It is done on press and electronic media content. The content or idea which is monitored may differ according to the purpose of organizations.

Media monitoring activities have objectives. These objectives are determined by the program that PR departments take. Objectives can be coverage of messages and awareness of the public. It can also be to identify mentions of an organization's brand and its decision-makers, the success of their campaign, coverage of news releases, find competitors, get market information, understand the perception of stakeholders about organizational reputation, know strength and weakness of their organization ( Cyber Alert,(n.d.)).

Media monitoring is one of the activities that public relations departments should use for planning purposes in the situational analysis stage. Media monitoring activities should follow steps like defining the objective, determining criteria, choose

benchmark, select a measurable tool, Compare results with objectives, and modify campaign (Watson & Noble, 2007)

Media monitoring is evaluating opinions of others concerning the brand of our organizations, competitors, business, and other topics related to the organization (https://www.agilitypr.com/media-monitoring-ultimate-guide/).

Social media monitoring activities should be done systematically. Besides setting objectives, setting keywords is advised. This is explained as:

> The media monitoring process starts with the search profile and each term or keyword(s) or keyword phrases. The search profile contains the service terms: the media to be monitored, the type of articles and/or mentions to be delivered, the time period of the monitoring, and the method of article delivery (cyber alert,(n.d)

The search terms are those keywords or phrases that must appear in the article. They are the name of the organization or its affiliates or brands. An article containing a keyword is usually referred to as a clip or clipping, news clip, or press clipping.

When monitoring media, there should be criteria to conclude using our findings. Targeting media exposure and deciding the number of times that media analysis activity should be undertaken is the next step besides setting criteria. This could be 12 months review of media and continue reviewing monthly or quarterly. Setting up the benchmark will reduce the time of periodic comparison (Watson & Noble, 2007).

Media monitoring can be done by organizations themselves or by an independent body. Watson & Noble, (2007) states that to get valid results and information or to avoid subjective interpretation by staff members, the analysis should be done by an independent group of readers. Independent readers can minimize this bias by scanning the clippings and transcripts and giving their objective opinion.

Organizations should understand their environment to survive as well as to be successful. One of the mechanisms that organizations use to understand their environment is media monitoring. Media Monitoring is gathering information. This information helps organizations improve their performance. This is indicated as:

> To (re-) formulate their strategy, organizations need to collect and process information about their environment—about, for instance,

> competitors, customers, suppliers, governments, technological trends or ecological developments. Collecting and processing environmental information for strategic purposes is by no means something new. It has always been important. Without knowing what is going on in the environment, keeping the organization viable would be impossible (Vriens,2004).

Therefore, information is crucial nowadays because of political changes, new technological developments, and increasing competition between organizations. Organizations are required to release relevant information to their environment and also get other's information. This is due to the current multidimensional and active environment that organizations are situated in. The information is relevant and actionable to them (Vriens, 2004).

An environment that organizations live in affects their business if they do not give it attention. Stakeholders' attitude is one that organizations should understand in their environment. Stakeholders influence organizations. If stakeholders do not support organizations they will face difficulties (Holtz, 2002). This information can be obtained using media monitoring.

Different names are given to Media monitoring these are press/media cutting agency/service, information logistics service, and media intelligence. Regarding information gathering or media intelligence, Some authors state four intelligence cycles as direction, collection, analysis, and dissemination ( Vriens, 2004).

Direction is the stage where organizations decide their information need or the data that should be gathered from their environment. In the stage of collection, the source of information is ascertained and data are collected. The third stage is analysis. As its name indicates, collected data are studied to use them for strategic purpose and important data are produced. The final stage is dissemination where relevant data are given to concerned bodies to use for strategic planning ( Vriens, 2004).

Media monitoring is done on electronics and print media. Nowadays, customers and stakeholders use these media to convey their views and get information. The use of social media is expanding. It provides stakeholders the opportunity of disseminating information in the form of audio, video, and text. Social media has a different quality

than television and radio in that it allows the stakeholder to participate by giving their comments and creating their own content (Scott, 2011). It is stated as:

> It is not necessary for practitioners to be active participants in online practice but they need to be aware of what is happening online. The truth is that what is happening online will influence the practice of PR. People use the internet in ways that affect all forms of practice, as do organizations. Not knowing what is happening online is not very sensible. As in all PR, there is a need to monitor the effects of PR interventions; there is a need to be able to measure and weigh such interventions, and there is a need to be able to evaluate effects (Holtz, 2002).

Monitoring all channels is difficult. Therefore, selecting channels that most people follow is needed as it is difficult to listen to all channels (Holtz, 2002).

# CHAPTER THREE

## 3. Research Design and Methodology

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the methodology used to conduct the study. Therefore, the research design and its selection for this study, source of data and data collection tools, a primary and secondary source of data, in-depth interview, data sampling, and analysis are expounded.

### 3.2 The study area

The study focuses on the Public Relations and Information Communication Directorate of the FDRE Ministry of Finance.

The Ministry has about 650 employees. Its working staff places it among the largest public service organizations.

This study focuses on the Ministry of finance because of the influence it has on many stakeholders lives and the importance that media monitoring has for public relations activity in the Ministry. Besides this, it is chosen because of the easy access that the researcher can get regarding the time and budget constraints.

### 3.3 Research Design

A research design is simply the framework or plan for a study that is used as a guide in collecting and analyzing the data (Pandey& Pandey, 2015**)**. It is useful in indicating general clues about the research for those who assist researchers. It shows the methods of data collection and analysis. It has also an impact on the reliability of the research result.

To better understand the research problem, this study uses the concurrent mixed method of research. According to Creswell (1994), quantitative research is used to measure opinions, attitudes, and behaviors and find out how the whole population feels about certain issues in a manner that can be expressed in quantity. The qualitative method doesn't use numerical analytical techniques. As a result, the mixed method is preferred. This is stated as:

> Recognizing that all methods have limiting resources felt that biases inherent in any single method could neutralize or cancel the biases of other

methods. Triangulation data sources-a means for seeking convergence across qualitative and quantitative methods-was born (Jick, 1979, cited in Creswell, 2009)

### 3.7 Data sampling and sampling method

The researcher uses the purposive sampling method as the nature of the topic is not related to most of the activities that the Directorates of the ministry performs.

The purposive sampling technique is stated as:

> In this type of sampling, items for the sample are selected deliberately by the researcher; his choice concerning the items remains supreme. In other words, under non-probability sampling the organizers of the inquiry purposively choose the particular units of the universe for constituting a sample on the basis that the small mass that they so select out of a huge one will be typical or representative of the whole(Kothari,2004).

Therefore, 22 core directorate members of the ministry and 8 Public relations and Information Directorate members are purposively selected for this research.

### 3.4. Source of data and data collection methods

The researcher uses both primary and secondary data to perform this study. An in-depth interview is selected to get primary data from public relations department staff members. A questionnaire is also used to collect data from selected and relevant departments concerning media monitoring activities. Whereas, recorded materials from media monitoring activities of the public relations department are analyzed as secondary data.

#### 3.4.1 Secondary source data

Secondary data are collected from recorded media monitoring activities of the Ministry's public relations department. These data can be found from media clips, press releases, and feedbacks given to top management regarding media reports, corrective answers given for media as distorted information is reported through media.

#### 3.4.2 Primary sources of data

Primary data are collected using 8 in-depth interviews and 22 questionnaires given to public relations and Information Directorate staff and relevant directorate's staff members from the Ministry who can answer questions regarding media monitoring.

## 3.8 Data analysis

After the data are collected through questionnaires, in-depth interviews, and secondary data sources, the researcher interprets and analyzes them. Data collected from questionnaires and in-depth interviews are processed using coding, classifying, and narrating as the research uses both qualitative and quantitative type of researches. Tables and percentages are used to interpret the collected data. Interpreted data are checked using available theories in the related literature. Based on this conclusion are given and recommendations are made.

## 3.9 Ethical considerations

The researcher has received a letter written to FDRE Ministry of Finance from school of Journalism and Communication for the sake of consent .Then the letter is submitted to record office of the Ministry. After the letter is recommended to Public Relations and Information Communication Directorate, the researcher has discussed with the Directorate members' and in-depth interview is made with voluntaries members. Besides PR staff members purposefully selected respondents from other Directorates feedbacks are collected based on respondents' consent. Confidentiality matter about the identity of respondents and their answer is guaranteed to respondents by the researcher. Identities of in-depth-interview participants were presented by coding their name. The data collected from respondents was also presented in summative way that can protect moral of respondents. Hence, possible ways of protecting the identity as well as moral of the research participants were applied.

## 3.10 Reliability and validity

Validity is the capability of tools to measure what they are s envisioned to measure. Whereas reliability is about consistency of a research instrument in measuring the objective of the research. If it is consistence it will be dependable, predictable and accurate. Therefore it is said to be reliable (Kumer, 2011)

Therefore the study used In-depth, questionnaires and secondary data to analyze practice and challenges of media monitoring in the Ministry. The questions are reasonably prepared so as to measure the intended objective. They are prepared in such a way that uncovers information about practice and challenges of media monitoring practice. The questionnaire and in-depth interview questions are logically related with the objective of the research. The contents of questions are prepared to cover the issue under study. Questionnaires are evaluated by different people and based on their feedback seven questions were rejected from inclusion. During

questionnaire and in-depth interview preparations as well as while administering questionnaires and conduct interviews, factors that can affect reliability are considered. Unambiguous wording of questionnaires, physical settings which are suitable to respondents were arranged in agreement, the respondents moral is taken into consideration. Therefore the validity and reliability of the research is given attention.

# CHAPTER FOUR

## 4. Data presentation and Interpretation

### 4.1 Overview

This part presents the data analysis and result on the analysis of the practice and challenges of media monitoring activity in the Ministry of Finance.

### 4.2 Data presentation

#### 4.2.1 Demographic Data presentation

**I. personal information**

Please fill your appropriate answer on the right choice in the space provided by putting (x) sign.

**1. Age** a) 21-30 years [ ] b) 31-40 Years [ ] c) 41-50 Years [ ]

d) 51 and above years [ ]

Figure 1.**Age of respondents**

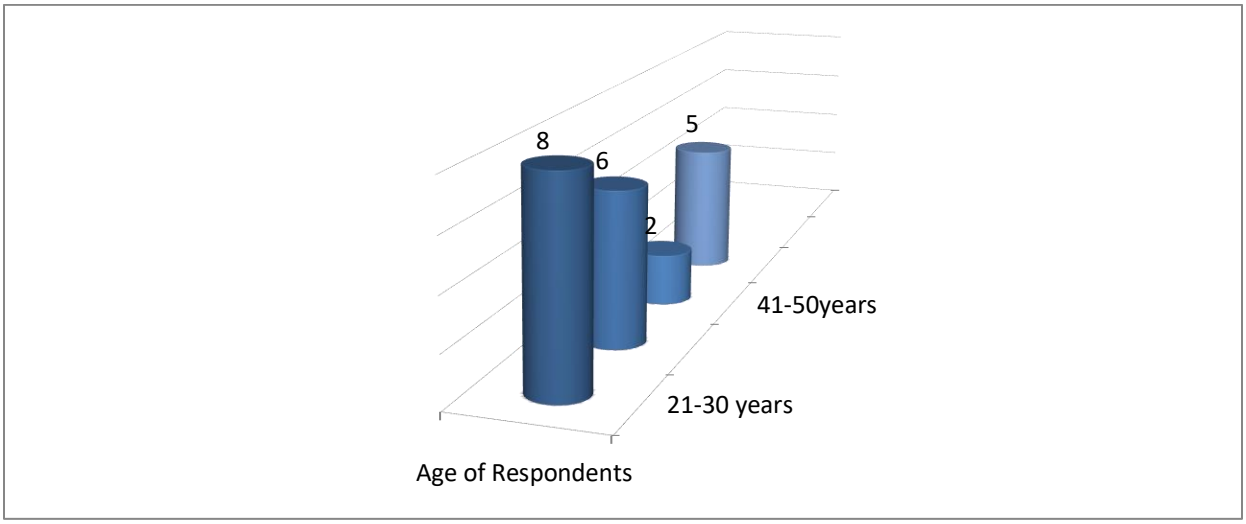



Figure 1 shows the age of respondents. This figure shows that 28.5 % of participants are between ages 21-30,21.43 % of respondents are between ages 31-40, 7.1 % of respondents are between ages 41-50, and 17.85% of respondents are above age 51. Therefore, the majority of participants in the study were aged 21 and 30.Therefore, it is possible to get diverse viewpoint of respondents from different age groups.

***Figure 2.Educational level of Respondents***

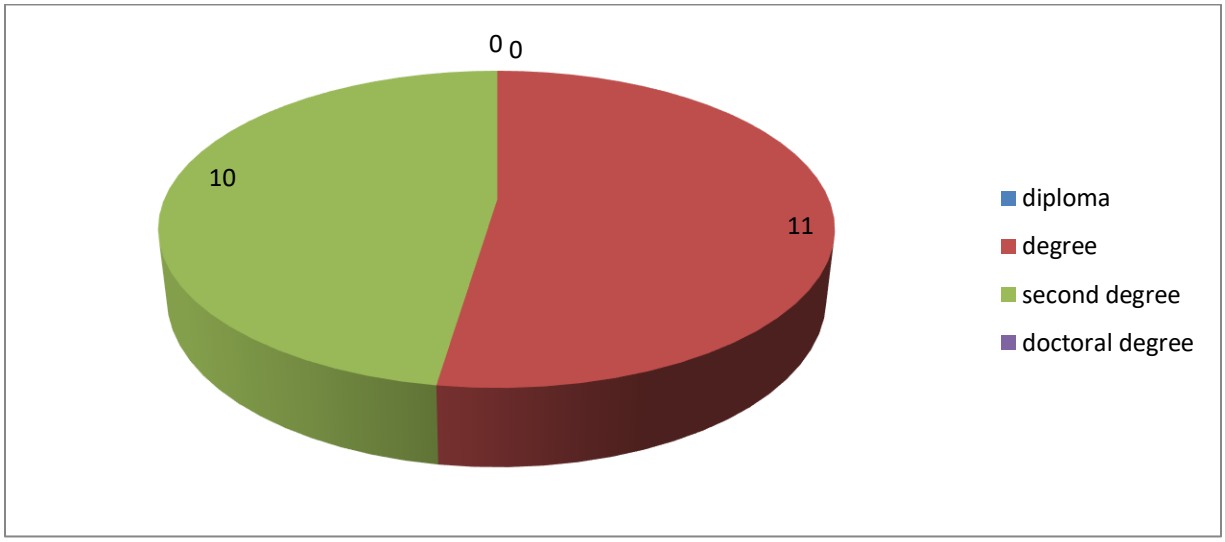



Figure 2 shows the educational level of respondents. Of these respondents, 52.38% are degree holders, and 47.62% of respondents are second-degree holders. Thus, the data demonstrate that the majority of respondents are degree holders.

***Table4.1. Experience of Respondents***

| Experience | Frequency | Percent (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Below 1year | 0 | |
| 1-5 Years | 6 | 28.57 |
| 6-10 Years | 6 | 28.57 |
| 11-15 Years | 2 | 0.095 |
| 16-19 Years | 1 | 0.048 |
| 20 and above years | 6 | 28.57 |

Table 4.1 is about the work experience of respondents. It shows that 28.57% of respondents have work experience of 1-5, 6-10, and above 20 years, and 0.095% of respondents have experience of 11-15 years. Then the remaining 0.048 percent of respondents have experience of 16-19 years.

Therefore, it indicates that respondents have adequate experience in the Ministry to answer the research questions.

**Table 4.2 Respondents answer on practice of media monitoring**

| Dimensions | Agree (5) | | Mildly agree (4) | | Neither agree nor disagree (3) | | Disagree (2) | | Mildly disagree (1) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | frequency | Percent% | frequency | percent | frequency | percent | frequency | percent | frequency | percent |
| I know about the importance of media monitoring | 12 | 57.14 | 7 | 33.33 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 9.52 | 0 | 0 |
| Media monitoring activity takes much time to do | 6 | 28.57 | 10 | 47.62 | 3 | 14.3 | 2 | 9.52 | 0 | 0 |

It is shown in Table 4.2 that the personal feeling of respondents regarding the importance of media monitoring and the time that media monitoring activity takes were asked. Based on this, 57.14% of respondents agreed, 33.33% mildly agreed on the importance of media monitoring whereas, 9.52% of respondents disagreed on the importance of media monitoring. Moreover, 47.62% of respondents mildly agreed, 28.57% agreed on much time that media monitoring activity takes. Moreover, 14.3% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed, 9.52% of them disagreed. Therefore, the result shows the majority agreed on the importance of media monitoring and mildly agreed on much time that media monitoring activity needs.

From this, it is clear that most respondents understand that media monitoring is important and accurately observed a good deal of time it takes to perform the activity. It also indicates the practice of media monitoring in the Ministry.

Media monitoring activity is important and it takes time to monitor all media reports. It has objectives. The objectives can be to discover coverage of message, to understand the awareness of publics, to identify mentions of an organization's brand and its decision makers, understand the perception of stakeholders about organizational reputation, know strength and weakness of their organization ( Cyber Alert ,(n.d.)). If these and other objectives of media monitoring are recognized by employees of the Ministry, it will be possible to strengthen the activity. These respondents are among employees of core process directorates of the Ministry. Their awareness about the importance and the time it takes to monitor media is supportive to Public Relations and Information Directorate of the Ministry. Media monitoring report of the PR Directorate can get attention, the activity can have adequate budget and human resource. Government officials are supposed to serve the public and they are expected to perform transparently. They should respond to questions of the media (Lee,et al.,2012).Media report about the performance of the Ministry. Their report may be negative or positive. Positive report build the reputation of the Ministry and negative reports have the power to damage the Ministry's reputation. As a result, the recognition that employees of the Ministry give to the practice of media monitoring can create strength to Public Relation and Information Directorate.

The system theory sees organization as a system. Organizations are composed of interrelated systems .These systems are hierarchically arranged, dependent on each other and allow flow of information within each other. The system works also by exchanging information with its environment (Katherine & Miller, 2012). Among the property of systems theory, request variety is one. It is about the interaction of the organization with its complex environment. This property shows that if organizations' system harmonized with complex system of their environment, they can sustain and thrive. Employees of the Core process Directorate of the Ministry are component of the Ministry's system that facilitate information and material exchange between the Ministry and its environment. Their recognition to Media monitoring activity is supportive to PR effectiveness.

**Table 4.3 Respondents answer on media relations**

| Dimensions | Agree (5) | | Mildly agree (4) | | Neither agree nor disagree (3) | | Disagree (2) | | Mildly disagree (1) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | frequency | percent | frequency | percent | frequency | percent | frequency | percent | frequency | percent |
| The Ministry is positively portrayed by media reports | 3 | 14.3 | 11 | 52.38 | 5 | 23.8 | 2 | 9.52 | 0 | 0 |
| I do not follow media | 0 | 0 | 5 | 23.8 | 1 | 4.76 | 10 | 47.62 | 5 | 23.8 |
| The Ministry has good relation with media | 7 | 33.33 | 6 | 28.57 | 7 | 33.33 | 1 | 4.76 | 0 | 0 |
| Media has complain about the Ministry regarding getting accurate information | 5 | 23.8 | 3 | 14.3 | 9 | 42.86 | 3 | 14.3 | 1 | 4.76 |

In Table 4.3.answers to four forwarded questions about media relations indicated. Therefore, 52.8% of respondents mildly agreed, and 14.3% agreed on the question. Moreover, 23.8% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed, the remaining 9.52% of respondents disagreed with the positive portrayal by the media. Whether they follow media or not was one question. For this question, 47.62% of respondents disagreed, 28.3% mildly disagreed. Whereas 23.8% of respondents mildly agreed, 4.76% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed. For the third question, 33.33% of respondents agreed, and 28.57% of them mildly agreed. While 33.33% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed, 4.76% of respondents disagreed on Ministry's good relations with the media.

The fourth question forwarded to respondents was whether the media have complained to the Ministry about getting accurate information. For this question, 23.8% of respondents agreed, 14.3% of respondents mildly agreed. While42.86% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed, 14.3% disagreed, and 4.76% of respondents mildly disagreed.

Therefore, the majority of respondents mildly agree with the positive portrayal of the Ministry by the media. The majority of them also described as they follow media and believe that the Ministry has good relation with media. However, they expressed their feeling that there is a complaint from the media about getting accurate information from the Ministry.

It indicates as respondents monitor media and believe that the Ministry has good media relations. However, there is a complaint from the media about getting accurate information. These media complaint responses, however, indicate a gap in the media relation activity of the Ministry.

Audiences consider the media as dependable source of information and organizations depend on media to disseminate their message (Holtz, S., 2002).The relationship between media and public relations departments relies on information exchange that serves their own interest. Regarding public relations information, to get maximum publication or broadcasting is the role of press relation and its objective is to create knowledge and understanding (Jefkine, 1992).Good media relation can be achieved when PR specialists build knowledge about the media and provide accurate information to journalist request.

Good media relation can be established by providing timely and accurate information to the media. CEOs' quick response to journalists' request can create good media relation. Good Media relation help PR to increase credibility, control crisis, build good reputation of their organizations and get easy access with their audiences. Complain from media arises if there is not good relation with the media.

Agenda setting theory states that media set agenda while they are performing their duty (Sriramesh & Verčič, 2009). The agenda may come from media bias on certain issue. The more exposure of an issue by the media the more attention it gets from audiences. This has influence on audiences' perception.

Media monitoring is listening about the brand, competitors, industry and topics which is related to organizations. The answers provided by respondents confirm that respondents follow or monitor media. Their answer shows the practice of media monitoring. As a result majority of them observed the Ministry's good media relation and its positive portrayal by the media. However, responses about complains of media on getting accurate information from the Ministry indicates few gap in the media relations activity of the Ministry.

**Table 4.4 Respondents answer on attention given for media monitoring activity**

| Dimensions | Agree (5) | | Mildly agree (4) | | Neither agree nor disagree (3) | | Disagree (2) | | Mildly disagree (1) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | frequency | percent | frequency | percent | frequency | percent | frequency | percent | frequency | percent |
| The value of Media monitoring is not considered in planning | 4 | 19 | 2 | 9.52 | 8 | 38 | 5 | 23.8 | 2 | 9.52 |
| The Ministry uses other information gathering tools than media monitoring for planning | 3 | 14.3 | 9 | 42.86 | 7 | 33.33 | 2 | 9.52 | 0 | 0 |
| The ministry uses feedback of its customers given through media for planning | 4 | 19 | 7 | 33.33 | 7 | 33.33 | 2 | 9.52 | 1 | 4.76 |
| The ministry uses media monitoring reports for planning | 3 | 14.3 | 9 | 42.86 | 7 | 33.33 | 1 | 4.76 | 1 | 4.76 |

Table4.4 is about the value of media monitoring for planning. Based on this, 23.8% of respondents disagreed, and 9.52% of respondents mildly disagreed on the question that says media monitoring is not considered in planning. Whereas 19% of respondents agreed and 9.52% of respondents mildly agree on the idea that the value of media monitoring is not perceived in planning. The remaining 38% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed. For the second question, 42.86% of respondents mildly agreed, and 14.3% agreed on the idea that the Ministry's use of other information-gathering tools than media monitoring to gather information. Moreover, 9.52% disagreed, and 33.33% neither agreed nor disagreed on preference to other information-gathering means by the Ministry.

Among respondents, 33.33% mildly agreed, 19% agreed, 9.52% disagreed, and 4.76% mildly disagreed on the Ministry's use of customers' feedback through media for planning. The remaining 33.33% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed. The other question was whether media monitoring reports included in planning or not. For this question, 42.86% mildly agreed, 14.3% agreed, 4.76% disagreed, 4.76% mildly disagreed, and the remaining 33.33% neither agreed nor disagreed.

Therefore, it shows that though other information-gathering tools are valued most for planning, media monitoring is recognized and considered in planning. Open system encourages two-way symmetric communication and supports environmental monitoring(Tench &Yeomans , 2009).This environmental monitoring helps PR specialists to advise their organization, prevent crises and know about the industry and plan. Comments of stakeholders in the media and media reports should be monitored to plan.

Open system has properties like Holism and Equifinality. Holism is about the interaction of parts of a system to solve problems. Equifinality is about integration of parts of a system in fulfilling their goal in many ways. Respondents of these questions are employees working in different departments of the Ministry. Their cooperation and integration can help the Ministry to solve its problems and thrive.

The majority of respondents know about the practice of media monitoring in the Ministry. They also indicated that media monitoring reports are used in planning. However, there are

respondents which indicated that the Ministry use other information gathering tool than media monitoring for planning. This shows that the value of media monitoring is not well recognized and given much attention.

**Table 4.5 Respondents answer on Strength and weakness of the organization**

| Dimensions | Agree (5) | | Mildly agree (4) | | Neither agree nor disagree (3) | | Disagree (2) | | Mildly disagree (1) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | frequency | percent | frequency | percent | frequency | percent | frequency | percent | frequency | percent |
| Strength and weakness of the ministry can be shown by Media monitoring results | 3 | 14.3 | 2 | 9.52 | 9 | 42.86 | 6 | 28.57 | 1 | 4.76 |
| Media monitoring activities show effectiveness of the ministry | 7 | 33.33 | 8 | 38 | 3 | 14.3 | 2 | 9.52 | 1 | 4.75 |

In Table 4.5, two questions are explained. Based on this, 14.3% agreed, 9.52% mildly agreed, 28.57% disagreed, 4.76% mildly disagreed, and the remaining 42.86% neither agreed nor disagreed on the question that asks about media monitoring results benefit in indicating strength and weakness.

The second question focuses on the benefit of media monitoring in indicating the effectiveness of the Ministry. Therefore, 33.33% agreed, 38% mildly agreed, 9.52% disagreed, 4.75% mildly disagreed, and 14.3% neither agreed nor disagreed.

The majority of respondents believed that media monitoring results don't show the strength and weaknesses of the Ministry. On the opposite, respondents support the idea that media monitoring activities show the effectiveness of the Ministry for the second question. Therefore, it is clear that respondents support the practice of media monitoring activity. However, they believe that its result does not indicate the strength and weakness of the Ministry.

Open system encourage the organization to monitor environmental impacts. This environmental scanning help organizations to adjust their activities accordingly with the environment(Tench & Yeomans, 2009).

The respondents indicated that media monitoring activities do not indicate the strength and weakness of organization. However, majority of them accepted the idea that says media monitoring activity shows effectiveness of the Ministry. Media monitoring is practiced among other things to evaluate effectiveness of our performances and recognize influencers and approach them. These questions indicates the attention and perception that respondents have about media monitoring. Media monitoring is used to know competitors and adjust organizations to be more competent in their industry. In case of government organizations media monitoring can help serve the organizations to form well-versed strategies, to prevent crisis and improve their programs.

From the respondents answer it is indicated that media monitoring has not given the attention and recognition it should get. Media monitoring is practiced to collect and scrutinize environmental information for the benefit of the organization. Without knowing what is going on in the environment, keeping the organization viable would be impossible (Vriens, 2004).The less attention given to media monitoring indicates the challenge that the Public Relations and Information Directorate has on implementing the activity.

**Table 4.6 Respondents answer on Use of media monitoring**

| Dimensions | Agree (5) | | Mildly agree (4) | | Neither agree nor disagree (3) | | Disagree (2) | | Mildly disagree (1) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | frequency | percent | frequency | percent | frequency | percent | frequency | percent | frequency | percent |
| Media monitoring is necessary to the ministry | 13 | 61.9 | 4 | 19 | 4 | 19 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Media monitoring activity is given due attention in the ministry | 4 | 19 | 9 | 42.86 | 7 | 33.33 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4.76 |

Two questions on the use of media monitoring are in Table 4.6. Concerning the importance of media monitoring, 61.9% agreed, 19% mildly agreed, and 19% neither agreed nor disagreed. Moreover, 19% agreed, 42.86% mildly agreed, 4.76% mildly disagreed, and 33.33% neither agreed nor disagreed on the question that says due attention given to media monitoring activity. The above, therefore, indicates that media monitoring is vital and it has support in the Ministry.

Monitoring online audience is vital in understanding the perception of online other audiences. It helps to respond to accusations, like and strengthen positive messages, identify possible crisis and prepare plan to address them before they surpass the internet and main issue in traditional media (Holtz, 2002).Media monitoring activity is vital in reputation management. Organizations need to collect adequate information and scrutinize it to formulate their strategy(Vriens , 2004).This can be done by media monitoring. The awareness about media monitoring value shows attention given to it by employees of the Ministry of Finance.

### 4.3 Interview questions and data presentation

An in-depth interview is aimed at getting ample information related to the subject matter under study. Tench & Yeomans (2009) stated interviews as advantageous in discovering attitudes that are comprehensive and relevant to the researcher.

In the in-depth interview, a total of five interviewees were participants. For the in-depth interview, seven questions were prepared. These questions are How do you practice media monitoring in your Directorate, What is the purpose of your media monitoring activities, For what purposes do you use monitored reports, What are challenges that you have encountered in monitoring media, What are methods you use in media monitoring, Is media monitoring activities supported by CEOs of the ministry, and how much media monitoring activity is helping you in improving public relations activities.

These questions were asked for voluntaries of two team leaders and three senior communication experts from electronics and print media teams. The respondents' names are replaced by R1, R2, R3, R4, and R5. The letter R represents the word respondent. The questions are discussed as follows.

### 4.3.1 How media monitoring is practiced

For this question, all respondents stated that they monitor web pages and five selected newsletters. They mainly emphasize the contents which state about the Ministry and its sector. Experts are assigned based on schedule and monitor media like selected Facebook and web pages as well as print media.

Herewith are among the selections from respondent's replay:

> We monitor Media targeting content related to the Ministry and the industry as a whole. We assign experts and weekly monitor Addis Zemen, Capital, Reporter, and Ethiopian Heralds newsletters. (R3)

The other respondent has also similar response which is:

> There are Electronics and print media teams in our Directorate. I am from the print media team. We mainly monitor reports of five Newsletters that have a large audience. We monitor reports which have a relation with Ministry. (R2)

One can perceive from these answers that media monitoring is practiced by selecting media that have a large audience. Besides this, it is practiced without the help of media monitoring software or company**.**

Nowadays media are expanding. Selecting print media only for monitoring is not enough. Public relations in the internet age serves as eyes and ears of an organization. Online search for information should be critical component of PR strategy. Monitoring the Internet about a company is overwhelming

task. However, by using software to find key words about the organization makes the activity easier(Holtz,2002).

Respondents answer shows that the media monitoring activity of the Ministry focuses on print media. They did not show whether they monitor broadcast media and Internet or not. This shows lack of practice of planned media monitoring activity. Monitoring the internet is vital for public relations. News is breaking quickly due to online communication. This makes crisis and reputation management difficult for Public relation. Therefore, monitoring social media should be considered by Public Relations and Information Directorate of the Ministry. Respondents also indicated that the monitoring activity is done by PR experts. This practice can create burden on experts. Media monitoring is time consuming and discouraging activity if not supported by search engines.

### 4.3.2. The purpose of media monitoring activity

Respondents have similar answers to this question. The purpose of media monitoring is to identify negative and positive reports from the media and give correction for negative ones whereas using positive reports is an impute for future activities.

The following is quoted from their response:

> We practice media monitoring to answer issues that need further clarification about the Ministry, to give correction for disinformation, and to aware the public. We also use it as feedback for policymaking. (R5)

The other respondent also answers as:

> We monitor positive or negative media reports concerning the Ministry. We correct negative reports using different communication tools and use positive reports as an encouraging benchmark for our future activities. (R1)

These responses show that the purpose of media monitoring is agreed upon by respondents as correcting misreported issues. Besides this media monitoring is used to exploit positive reports as impute for future activity. Media monitoring activity should have objective and it must be planned. Objectives can be to identify coverage of message, awareness of publics, mentions of an organization's brand, success of campaign, coverage of news releases, find competitors, get market information, understand the perception of stakeholders about organizational reputation, know strength and weakness of their organization ( Cyber Alert ,(n.d.)).The respondents show that media

monitoring is practiced to correct misinformation and use positive reports for future activities. However, their answer show as there is no planed and agreed upon purpose of media monitoring. This is a challenge to media monitoring practice. If there is no identified purpose, media monitoring practice cannot give intended result to public relation and organizations.

Monitoring to give correction to misinformation is acceptable. This goes with agenda setting theory. Agenda setting theory state that media do not show reality and its focus on few issues can lead the public to consider those issues more crucial than others(Sriramesh & Verčič , 2009 ).Besides correcting misinformation, media monitoring should consider other purposes.

Therefore, not to define the purpose of media monitoring can create challenge. Not to give attention to all media monitoring benefits and choose according to the Ministry's purpose is a challenge. This can create negative impact on PR success. The practice of media monitoring should start first by defining its objective.

### 4.3.3. Purposes of media monitoring reports

Organizations monitor media to know the effectiveness of their news release, to manage their reputation, to gather important information about their industry, to get the better business prospect and know the strength and weakness of their public relations activity (Cyber Alert (n.d.)). Media monitoring reports are also prepared by considering other interests of their organization.

Respondents gave their answer which is similar but with different elucidation. They said that their media monitoring report contains issues concerning the Ministry. They collect positive and negative reports of the media and forward them to CEOs for further consideration. Mainly to give additional clarifications on the Ministry's performance if there is a distorted report. Besides this it is used for planning.

The following is among the responses given:

> As I have said earlier, we use media monitoring reports to identify issues concerning the Ministry and forward them to CEOs so that they will give further clarifications to the public through media. (R2)

The other briefly responded as:

> We use media monitoring reports primarily for Ministry's image-building purpose.(R5)

These answers show that a media monitoring report is used to build the image of the Ministry. Media monitoring helps to identify crisis. Ministry of Finance is a government Organization. It should follow its stakeholders' view and use it accordingly. If ethical public policy problems appear ,they may change public opinion and this will make the public relations' activity of interacting with different stakeholders difficult (Lee , Neeley & Stewart (Ed.) .,2012). Therefore, defining the purpose of media monitoring is vital to improve public relations activity. It also allows Public Relations and Information Directorate of the Ministry to advise CEOs and take the necessary action if there is looming crises and negative attitudes about the Ministry.

Respondents' answer only reflect on arranging CEO to giving feedback for negative reports and image building. This shows limited outlook to media monitoring report. Media monitoring reports use for future decision making. They are also useful to show stakeholder's view about the Ministry, indicate the successes of communication, demonstrate possible crisis and to make improvement in public funded programs. However, based on respondents' answer the practice of media monitoring activity in the Ministry is not practiced by setting clear goal. This creates challenge on success of public relations activities and decision making process of CEOs.

### 4.3.4 Challenges in monitoring media

Media monitoring is a time taking activity. Besides the much time it takes to monitor media, there are challenges like monitoring and translating reports in all languages in countries that have more than one official language. Media monitoring activities need to translate gathered data into a different language. The growing number as well as type of media also makes media monitoring activity more challenging (Doe & Conge,2016).

Concerning challenges of media monitoring respondents agreed on the challenge of time it takes to monitor media. Besides this, not getting print media on time and network disconnections are presented as challenges.

Among respondent's answers, the following can be mentioned.

> Media monitoring needs time and it is a tedious activity. The Ministry is a complex organization and sees financial issues of the country, this also makes

media monitoring complex. Though media monitoring is time-taking activity, all experts monitor media based on their allocated schedule.(R5)

The second respondent also said as follows:

Newsletters may not reach us timely. Besides this, we monitor media as well as do other public relations activities and this creates a burden. (R1)

The respondents take the delay of newsletters, enormity of the Ministry's duties and responsibilities, and additional responsibilities they have as challenges of the media monitoring activity. Lack of identifying main objective and purpose of media monitoring not observed as a challenge. However, if there is no clear objective of media monitoring it will create challenge. Increasing number of media is not considered as a challenge by the respondents. Additional tasks expected from experts and vast duty and responsibility of the Ministry are shown as challenges. However, these are related with number of media, long time needed to monitor these media and the method used to monitor media. Respondents of this question are PR department members. Their response shows gap in setting objective of media monitoring and selecting media. It also shows poor planning regarding media monitoring activity. If media monitoring activity is planned and its practice is supported by search engine media monitoring challenges will be minimized.

**4.3. 5. Methods used to monitor media**

Media monitoring can be done using technology, paid up firms as well as using man power. Many organizations use search engines analytics. In social media report analysis these engines search for trends, code words, advertisement account and spending of organizations (Khan, 2017).

Technologies are used to collect text contents from blogs. They have capability to gather millions of contents and also used to measure trends of blog contents. Examples of such technologies are Google blog and Technorati (Scott,2011).

Respondents replied as they do not use technologies that can search mention of keywords about the Ministry. They read reports from print and electronic media and download reports that state about the Ministry.

Among responses:

> We monitor media by downloading softcopy of reports from web pages as well as photocopying print media reports.(R1)

The second response regarding this is:

> So far, we monitor media by reading or by painstakingly reading reports of newsletters, and new media.(R5)

From the above responses it is easy to understand that media monitoring activity is time taking and done by searching and reading from print and new media. No paid up firms and technologies are used as an alternative to experts search.

Media monitoring activity can be done using man power and search engines. There are free search engines like Google Alert. Such free search engines have limited capacity in searching, analyzing and storing complex data. Due to increase in number of media using manpower is a daunting activity. However, they can support media monitoring activity. Print media also have their own web pages therefore, monitoring social media using search engines can minimizes time and increase effectiveness.

Respondents express as they monitor digital media by downloading soft copy of reports. This cannot solve problem of timely getting relevant information by searching many websites. Respondents also did not show which websites that they are monitoring. This indicates absence of planned and defined media monitoring goal. This is big challenge of media monitoring activity. It cannot help to practice media monitoring with intended goal and outcome.

### 4.3.6 Support of CEOs of the Ministry to Media monitoring activity

Media monitoring is useful for CEOs. It helps them to understand the competition level of their company, acceptance of new products, the success of PR campaigns, and understand their environment. It helps them to decide about competitors, emerging industry trends, customer satisfaction, and anticipated crisis.

Respondents gave their answers regarding this question as:

> Media monitoring is started this year and as the CEOs understand its benefit they question when media monitoring report is delayed. Therefore, both negative and positive reports are identified together with the name of the media, date of publishing, and sent to CEOs through e-mail.(R5)

The other respondent answered as:

> It is supported very much by the CEOs.(R1)

From the above answers, it is possible to understand that CEOs support media monitoring activity. Regarding this question, all respondents gave similar answers. However, one respondent indicated that when media monitoring report delay CEOs ask about it. This shows a gap in the practice of media monitoring. Media monitoring reports should reach CEO on time. There should be planned media monitoring activity. It should give valuable insight that can support decision making. This encourages CEOs of the Ministry to support the activity. Systems theory Open systems work by synchronizing their situation with changing environment to sustain (Tench&Yeomans, 2009).Examining environmental information is vital to know what is going on in the environment and keep the organization sustainable ( Vriens , 2004). This goes with two way symmetrical model of public relations. CEOs of the Ministry are decision makers, therefore, providing media monitoring reports that can help them decide is vital. On the other hand, support of CEOs to media monitoring practice has advantage to PR department since decisions concerning budget allocation, recruitment of additional PR experts and other supports could be provided by them.

### 4.10.7 How much media monitoring activity is helping you in improving public relations activities?

Respondents all agree that media monitoring activity is helping improve their performance.
Among answers given for this question are:

> It is strongly supporting our activity.(R1)

The second response regarding this is:

> Though it is tiresome, it helps get information about our environment and prepares us for the future.(R5)

Therefore, their response show that media monitoring activity is supporting public relations activity. Respondents emphasized on getting information about their environment and prepare themselves about the future. However, elaborated benefit of media monitoring is not observed from our discussion. This specifies absence of planed media monitoring activity as the previous responses indicated. If there is planned media monitoring practice, it is possible to identify its

benefits. Identifying the success of news release, manage brand reputation, collect organizational intelligence, measure effectiveness of communication and improving programs could be indicated by respondents. Public Relations and Information Directorate of the Ministry is expected to evaluate the benefit of its media monitoring activity.

### 4.4. Interpretation of secondary Data

Secondary data is gathered to further make the research reliable and triangulate results observed from questionnaires and in-depth interview. This data is the media monitoring report of Public Relations and Information Directorate of the Ministry. From the in-depth interview it was possible to understand that five selected print media are monitored. Respondents from Public Relations and Information Directorate indicated as they monitor electronic media but not specifically mentioned them. Based on the monitored media they prepare media monitoring reports to higher-level officials-Minister and state Ministers.

The Ministry's Public relations and Information Directorate is expected to monitor media. Media monitoring is mentioned as one of the Directorate's activities. In the Ministry's web page it is stated as the Public Relations and Information directorate "Undertakes media monitoring and takes corrective measures whenever wrong/negative information is aired or published to sustain the positive image of the organization."(https://www.mofed.gov.et/en/ministry-en/about-ministry/).

It is confirmed in the in-depth interview by respondents that media monitoring activity is practiced in the Ministry. To report monitored stories, Public Relations and Information Directorate prepared an outline in Table form. The Table is divided by columns that show the date of publishing, Placement (column) of the reports on print media, Tone (Negative, positive, and neutral) of the news report, and Remark. Then the issues which need to be seen by CEOs are presented inside the columns. Besides these, there is a footnote under the Table that defines words like positive stories, Neutral stories, and Negative stories.

The media monitoring activity is practiced by focusing on the Ministry's duties and responsibilities and the industry as a whole. The mandates of the Ministry are explained as:

> Formulate economic cooperation and fiscal policies that particularly serve as a basis for taxes, and duties; follow up the proper implementation of same; initiate reform recommendations; Mobilize,

> negotiate and sign foreign development assistance and loans, and follow up the implementation of same; Establish a favorable legislative framework to promote and facilitate the implementation of PPP financed infrastructure projects by enhancing transparency, fairness and long-term sustainability and Prepare the Federal Government fiscal budget, make disbursements per the approved budget, and evaluate the utilization of the budget(https://www.mofed.gov.et/en/ministry-en/about-ministry/).

Media reports about the above mandates of the Ministry and other stories concerning the sector are monitored by Public Relations and Information Directorate. The Directorate saves reports using soft copy. Hard copy/clips and responses given to negative mentions couldn't be found for this research purpose from the Directorate. Therefore, softcopy of media monitoring report obtained from the Directorate is used. Among the stories Monitored and included in the report of the Directorate the following are presented and analyzed.

The following four news are translated from the Media monitoring report of Public Relations and Information Directorate of The Ministry. These news are prepared and given to the CEOs of the Ministry and used by the PR. These four news are attached in the appendix 1. These news are presented to show how Media monitoring reports are prepared in the Ministry. Besides this, it helps to indicate the contents that are selected from media by media monitoring activities.

**News 1.A draft proclamation for start-up businesses was presented for discussion**

> The Ministry of Innovation and Technology announced that it has prepared a draft proclamation to enable start-up businesses to provide full services within the legal framework. Dr. Abyot Bayu, Director General of the Digital Transformation Program at the Ministry of Innovation and Technology, told The Reporter that the initial plan was to ratify electronics dealing proclamation that can change the technology environment. He added that the e-commerce proclamation is prepared by considering as if it has similar contents with online services and other financial services provided in the world.

It is stated that the amended proclamation in Ethiopia is designed to link the start-up business proclamation with the traditional financial system and various financial systems in the world, and to provide support to the right entrepreneurs.

**News 2.The number of cars entering the country has been reduced by a factor of ten**

According to The Reporter, the number of vehicles entering Ethiopia has dropped tenfold in the last six months alone. According to sources, the main reasons are the increase in excise taxes imposed on cars by the government and the shortage of foreign exchange.

The government earned 4.9 billion birr from excise tax in the first six months of the fiscal year 2013, which is less than the target of 6.2 billion birr during the same period. The reduction of number of imported cars has also affected the market. In particular, there has been a sharp rise in prices over the past two months. Car importers cite a lack of foreign exchange as reason for uneven market. It is recognized that the government laid 500 percent excise tax over imported used cars.

As it is indicated above the Ministry is expected to perform activities concerning economic cooperation and fiscal policies, establishing a favorable legislative framework to promote and facilitate the implementation of PPP financed infrastructure projects and development assistance and loans.

Therefore, the above two news indicate that Public Relations and Information Directorate monitors reports which are related to Ministry's duties and responsibilities. The contents of these news are concerning tax and loan. The placement of the news on the newspaper and their tone (Negative or Positive) related to the Ministry are labeled on the media monitoring report. The ton which is attached to news 1 is positive and its placement is on front page of the Newspaper.

These news help to follow up stakeholders view about the government’s policy and react. Agenda setting theory is about media influence on attitude of the people. Mass media shape how people think about a certain information or issue (Lerbinger, 2006). Therefore, the above two news indicate the Public Relations and Information Directorate is monitoring relevant reports

from the media. However, the meaning of placement of the news and their positive tone are not analyzed in the way that help CEOS and PR.

### News 3. Addis Ababa City Administration has announced that the inflation in the city is a political fraud

The Addis Ababa City Administration said that the inflation in Addis Ababa is caused by the political power that has been controlling the economy in the past. In a statement to reporters on inflation and stabilization, the administration said a task force led by the deputy mayor has been set up to stabilize inflation in the city. According to the task force, market fraud is the cause of instability.

According to the deputy mayor, the city administration has realized that products have been prevented from entering the market by creating special relations with the business community and retailers at all levels. The deputy mayor, who did not say who was behind the incident, said the party, which has lost power, is now working to torture the people and overthrow the government.

The Addis Ababa City Administration said it has taken steps to control the trick, shutting down 9,341 companies, banned 58 companies, prosecuting 97 companies, and issuing written warnings to 18,455 companies. The city administration added that supervision was done on 1,085 mills, and 99 mills were found to be increasing prices and working without receipts and banned.

According to the mayor of the city administration, Adanech Abebie, the city administration is working to increase the number of products entering the city through cooperatives to prevent inflation. In addition to the indirect loan decision, the deputy mayor said the city administration will continue to strengthen its efforts to control illegal activities.

### News 4. Over 157 million birr damaged by fire in Addis Ababa shopping malls

The Addis Ababa Fire and Disaster Management Commission said that because of 199 fires more than 157.8 million birr worth of property have been demolished in various

markets in Addis Ababa over the past six months. In the conference held with Addis Ababa Trade Bureau members and the Business Community, it is stated that a research showed 85% of the damages are brought about from lack of caution.

In the first six months of the 2013 Ethiopian budget year, 25 businesses entities were completely demolished. The commission said that, the food vendors use of charcoal, gas and electric stoves to sell food, tea, coffee and other items was also a major cause of the fire.

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Addis Ababa Trade Bureau Head, Abdulfatah Youssef, said the project will be reinforced by strengthening the existing project of electric wiring with the service. He urged the business community to be vigilant in the event of a fire.

From the above news, it is possible to understand that media stories that have related content with duties and responsibilities of the Ministries are gathered. However, content of news 4 has weak relationship with the Ministry's duties and responsibilities. The placement of the news is not indicated in the report. The tone of news 3 is positive and the tone of news 4 is negative. However, the relation of their tone with the Ministry is not clearly indicated.

News 3 is about the inflation observed in Addis Ababa city. It has its own implication on the economy of the country. Therefore, different responses could be expected from the Ministry. The response can be searching for the root cause of the inflation and addressing to the people. However, what is expected from the CEO and PR directorate is not clear. Therefore, these

monitored news indicate that media monitoring activity of the Ministry lacks setting main objective of media monitoring. It also demonstrates the reports are not analyzed in a way that help PR and CEOs.

The following News analysis is given based on Monitored reports of three News from Fortune and Ethiopian Herald newspapers in the months of February and March 2021.It is attached in appendix 2.The news are originally written in English.

The three news stories focus on sectors like Bank or finance, construction, and profit of public enterprise. The topics are Dashen's mounting climbs, new road project to connect Sekela, origion of Abay River to trunk road and corporation generates over 1.5 billion. The placement as it is written on the reports says that the first news is written on front page, the second on page two and the third on page 3. Concerning their tone all the three news are labeled as positive.

The issues of these three news are related to profit of private bank, construction of asphalt road by government budget and profit made by government owned corporation. The Ministry has organizations under its supervision like Public Enterprises Holding and Administration Agency that supervises Ethiopian Construction works Corporation. The profit of this corporation is related to the Ministries mandate. The road construction is also funded by the government and Ministry of finance has relation with such activities in terms of budget allocation. From these news except the first one, two news have content related to duties and responsibilities of the Ministry.The first news is about the profit of private bank-Dashen Bank. This news have weak relation with the duties and responsibilities of the ministry. Monitoring such reports shows lack of clear and agreed up on objective of media monitoring.

The secondary data collected from the Ministry's Public Relations and Information Directorate has two parts. The first part contains the whole reports monitored from print media whereas, the second part presents stories that need focus by CEOs.

The above analyzed news belonged to the first part of the media monitoring report. The following three news(News 6-News 8) are those selected reports by Public Relations and Information Directorate and presented to the CEOs for their attention. These monitored reports are attached in the Appendix 3. Among these three news, the two of them are analyzed in the

above secondary data analysis part. Whereas News 7 is not analyzed. However, the content of this news has relation with the mandate of the Ministry.

News 6. **The number of cars entering the country has been reduced by a factor of ten**

The number of vehicles entering Ethiopia has dropped tenfold in the past six months alone, according to The Reporter source. In the first six months of the current budget year, vehicles worth $ 10.7 million were imported; it was $ 105 million during the same period last year. According to sources, the main reasons for the decline are the government excise tax on cars and the lack of foreign exchange. The government earned 4.9 billion birr from excise tax in the first six months of the fiscal year 2013, which is less than the target of 6.2 billion birr in the same period. In particular, there has been a sharp rise in prices over the past two months, with car importers saying the market has been unstable due to a lack of foreign exchange.

News 7. **The private sector has taken over 72 percent of the 155 billion birr lent by banks**

The Banks of Ethiopia has issued a new loan of 155.4 billion birr in the first half of the current fiscal year, of which 72 percent has been disbursed to the private sector.

Governor of National bank of Ethiopia YinagerDssse (PhD) said 72 percent of the loans disbursed to private investors in the first six months of the year showed that the loans to the private sector were growing in size and share. According to the data, the share of the private sector in the country's new loans has increased over the past three years, with the share of the private sector increasing to 63 percent in the 2012 fiscal year. He said, “We are working to ensure a stable economy."

News 8. **It was stated that the government should pay special attention to the inflation of the price during the election**

It is indicated that the government should consider short term solutions for inflation since following the election season, the government and other bodies are expected to focus on the election. According to Wasihun Belay, an economist and analyst, the country is currently preparing for the upcoming general election. He said that as the country prepares for national elections, the government's focus will be on mobilization and related issues during the election season, therefore short term plans should be prepared to prevent the price boost. Ato wasihun added that the business community may also focus on the election and abstain from investing. According to the analyst, this situation occurs in developed nations also. As a result, the Government should also abstain from actions that foster inflation. Ato wasihun said that besides focusing on supply, availing foreign currency and loans for imported goods should be considered for entrepreneurs. He also said that monitoring markets should be done as it is accustomed to hid products nowadays.

As we understand from the above extracted news from the Reporter newspaper, they have contents which have a relation with duties and responsibilities of the Ministry. Media monitoring is helpful in improving messaging, preventing crises, and reducing the time to respond to the crisis. It supports decision-making. Therefore, the above two news seems alerting CEOs about the reduction of income that could be obtained from imported cars and its impact on the market, and inflation. They are also labeled as Negative. The remaining one news concerning Bank loans states about measures taken to encouraging private owners. It also indicates that financial stabilization has been given focus by the government. However, it is tagged as negative but its negative implication and what must be done as a result are not indicated clearly.

The above media monitoring reports of Public Relations and Information Director shows how media reports are selected, analyzed and reported. The media monitoring reports are done on print media. Broadcast media reports and reports from the internet are not included. The objective of media monitoring is not clearly set. This is shown by monitored reports which have no relation with the Ministry. The analysis part presents selected news, their placement on the newspaper and their positive or negative tone. However, these report are not analyzed clearly.

The analysis does not show how the reports are positive or negative to the Ministry. What is expected from CEOs or what insight is ignited from the analysis is not indicated. This analysis lacks brevity. Reading the Newspapers and reading media monitoring reports are different. Media monitoring reports should consider this and target main objective of media monitoring. Media monitoring activities should follow steps like defining objective, determining criteria, choose benchmark, select a measurable tool, Compare results with objectives, and modify campaign (Watson & Noble, 2007)

# CHAPTER FIVE

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendation

This chapter focuses on the conclusion and conceivable recommendations based on the finding of the research. As a result, the first part states the conclusion, and the second part gives a possible recommendation. The recommendation develops our perception about the practice and challenges of media monitoring activity in the Ministry of Finance.

### 5.1 Conclusion

To conclude, the study tried to understand media monitoring practice and challenge in the Ministry of Finance. It used mixed-method research and purposefully selected 30 employees in the Ministry. Questionnaires and in-depth interviews were used. Finally, twenty-two Employees from core process Directorates and five staff members from the Public Relations and Information Directorate have participated. Questions focused on practice and challenges of media monitoring activity. To identify these, support given by the CEO to media monitoring activity is asked. Besides this, questions that focus on the purpose, challenges, attention and use of media monitoring activity are asked. Questionnaires and in-depth interviews are answered by Public Relations and Information Directorate and selected Core process directorate employees of the Ministry. Secondary data which is media monitoring report of Public Relations and Information Directorate is analyzed. The Feedbacks then are analyzed. This process helps for triangulation.

Public relations departments try to establish and maintain mutual lines of communication between their organization and its publics. They alert management to changes in their environment and give appropriate decision. They also anticipate problems and enable their organization to prevent possible crises. Public relations disseminate information and they use media both to transmit and gather information.

Good media relations give public relations practitioners a chance to impart their message to their publics. Besides information dissemination, media enable public relations practitioners to understand the success of their communication activities. It helps know the opinion of their stakeholders about their organization and act accordingly.

Media reports help to aware the management about changes in the sector, influencers, possible crises, and stakeholder's perceptions about the organization and its reputation. Media monitoring helps to know this. Therefore, monitoring media activity is crucial in correcting misunderstandings, understanding success of PR, observing possible crises and understanding perceptions of stakeholders. Besides these, it is helpful to plan and create an identity and good reputation for an organization.

The study showed that the Public Relations and Information Directorate of the ministry is practicing media monitoring. CEOs also support the activity. Public Relations and Information Directorate have set objectives related to media monitoring. It is made clear as:

> Facilitates Cooperation and dialogue between the ministry and stockholders; Gathers, organizes and analyzes public opinions and submits the findings to the concerned bodies to improve the service delivery of the Ministry and meet the demands of its customers; Undertakes media monitoring and takes corrective measures whenever wrong/negative information is aired or published to sustain the positive image of the organization (https://www.mofed.gov.et/en/ministry-en/about-ministry/).

Organizations need to select priority areas to monitor media. Priorities may be identifying coverage of message and awareness created on their publics because of these massages. Identifying mentions of their organization's brand or exposure given to their press releases can be other priority areas for media monitoring activity. Organizations may practice media monitoring to understand the perception of their stakeholders, organization's reputation and recognize the strength and weaknesses of their organization.

Regarding this, we can see that the media monitoring practice of the Ministry prioritizes searching for negative mentions and improve the image of the Ministry. It is clearly shown on their web page.

However, the practice of media monitoring and the objective mentioned differ in some extent. The perception and feedback of PR specialist also show this difference.

To put it all together, the Ministry practices media monitoring activity only on print media by assigning employees. The objective mentioned about media monitoring activity on the web page of the ministry and what is actually practiced differ. According to the secondary data,

media monitoring activity focuses on finance sector. Unrelated contents are monitored and corrections for negative mentions are not observed. However, the practice of media monitoring is only associated with giving correction to negative reports and build image of the Ministry.

The media monitoring activity is given attention from the CEO of the Ministry. Experts monitor media by themselves without technology and a hired firm's support. We can also see from the research that the challenges facing them in monitoring media are not getting newsletters on time and the longer time it takes to monitor media. Besides this PR specialists of the Ministry are assigned to monitor the media and as the same time expected to perform other duties. The scope of duties and responsibilities of the Ministry is also shown as a challenge. Moreover, to some extent there is a challenge of unplanned and unorganized media monitoring activity. The Media monitoring report analysis shows this.

Based on the results found, the recommendations are:

## 5.2 Recommendations

Based on the general objective of this study and obtained result, the following recommendations are given.

- Methods used to monitor media in the Ministry: The Ministry uses experts to read and identify media reports concerning the Ministry's duties and responsibilities and the industry as a whole. In relation to the existing numbers of Media and responsibilities of the Ministry, media monitoring becomes tiresome and time-consuming. Therefore use of media monitoring technologies or conducting media monitoring activity by hiring firms in a contract base would bring about an effective result.
- Purpose of media monitoring practice in the Ministry: Mainly media monitoring is practiced to identify negative mentions and give correction that builds an image of the Ministry. However, media monitoring uses like anticipating a crisis, forewarning management about changes, forwarding issues for policy decisions, showing weakness and strength of communication activities, creating good media relations, collecting organizational intelligence, and planning are not given emphasis. Taking into consideration these purposes can improve overall performance of the organization.
- Challenges they are facing in monitoring media: Challenges taken by PR department members were mainly not getting newspapers on time, performing media monitoring and other duties as the same time and large scope of duties and responsibilities of the

Ministry. However, the increased number of media, time it takes to monitor media using experts search, setting clear objectives to media monitoring and create awareness on that objective among PR specialists and problem of analyzing reports should also be considered. Besides these, multilingual media are increasing and they create a challenge. Therefore considering these challenges can help the Ministry to build its image and plan accordingly.

- Use of Media monitoring activity in improving public relations activities of the Ministry: Media monitoring is used to correct negative mentions and build a good image of the Ministry. However, it is not seen to use media monitoring for planning and evaluation. Therefore, using media monitoring activity to evaluate the effectiveness of communication activity and use the finding for planning and decision making need attention.
- Besides the above recommendations, Broadcast and internet media analyzing and documenting the results are not given attention. Only print media reports are monitored and presented for CEOs without analyzing the results. Media monitoring results should be brief that can ignite insight of what is expected. The results should be prepared for an appropriate purpose. Reading briefly analyzed results minimizes the time of decision-makers and PR staff to act accordingly. Documenting these results should also be given attention. Mentions are indicated as Negative and positive. However, CEOs should get precise indications of what dose negative and positive tone mean regarding reports. what should be done and what needs their support should also be clearly indicatedin the media monitoring report.

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# Appendices

**Appendix1: Monitored reports from Reporter Amharic newspaper in the months of February and March 2021used by translating the news in the analysis part.**

| No | Media | Date of publishing | Content of published story in short | Placement (Column) | Tone (Positive, Neutral, Negative) | Remark |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Reporter | February 28/2021 | □□□□

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| | | | 24,900pc of what it was a quarter of a century ago. | | | |
| 3 | Herald | March 03/2021 | **New road project to connect Sekela, origin of Abbay River to trunk road**<br><br>SEKELA – Construction of a 62 km long Arb Gebeya-Sekela-Tilili asphalt road project has been launched on Monday. Deputy Prime Minister DemekeMekonnen and Chief Administrator of Amhara Regional State, AgegnehuTeshager launched the project which connects Sekela, the origin of Abbay (Blue Nile) River with the main road. Construction of the new asphalt road would be carried out by a local construction company called DMC, with an outlay of more than 1.67 billion birr allocated by the government. The project is expected to be completed in three years; it was indicated.<br><br>Speaking on the occasion administrator of Amhara regional State, AgegnehuTeshager said that infrastructural development is part of economic reform as the country is in the path of reforms in all arenas.<br><br>The road will have 21.5 meters width in urban areas and 10 meter in rural areas, it was learnt. | Page 2 | Positive | |
| | | | **Corporation generates over 1.5 bln Birr revenue**<br><br>Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation announced that it generated over 1.5 billion birr from profit oriented projects over the last six months. Engineer YonasAyalew CEO of the corporation told | Page 3 | Positive | |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | The Ethiopian Herald that the corporation has abled to generate the stated amount of revenue through reforming itself focusing on four pillars such as profitability, time, quality, and human resource skill and working culture.<br><br>As to him, the corporation obtained 181-million-birr profit from the projects in this fiscal year.<br><br>To this end, the corporation has been developing data center and network infrastructures to closely follow up the progress of activities in project management, human resource management, construction resource management system, cash flowing system and procurement tracking system. | | | |

**Appendix 3: Monitored reports from Reporter Amharic newspaper in the months of February and March 2021 which is selected as focus area for CEO.**

**Issues to focus on**

| No | Media | Date of publishing | Content of published story in short | Placement (Column) | Tone (Positive, Neutral, Negative) | Remark |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Reporter | February28/ 2021 | □□□□

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## Appendix4: Questionnaire

Questionnaire to be filled by employees of FDRE Ministry of Finance

Dear Respondents,

I'm following academic research on the topic media monitoring practice and use as a public relation tool with special reference to FDRE Ministry of Finance. The research requires

collection of data from employees of the Ministry regarding their opinion of media monitoring activities in the Ministry. Therefore, I kindly request you to give some time and fill the questionnaire. The information and view that you have given will be kept confidential and used only for the research propose. Your contribution for this research is highly regarded and appreciated.

With very great regards!

## I. personal Information

Please fill your appropriate answer on the right choice in the space provided by putting (x) sign.

**1. Age**

a) 21-30 years [ ]

b) 31-40 Years [ ]

c) 41-50 Years [ ]

d) 51 and above years [ ]

e) 16-19 Years [ ]

**2. Academiclevel**

a) Diploma [ ]

b) Degree [ ]

c) Second Degree [ ]

d) Doctoral Degree

**3. Work Experience in the Ministry?**

a) Below 1year [ ]

b) 1-5 Years [ ]

c) 6-10 Years [ ]

d) 11-15 Years [ ]

f) 20 and above years [ ]

**4. sex**

a) Female[ ]

b) Male[ ]

## II. Questions related to research Topic(media monitoring practice and use)

Please fill your answers 5 for the Agree,4 for Mildly agree,3 for Neither agree nor disagree,2 for disagree and 1 for Mildly disagree on the right choice in the space provided by putting (x) sign.

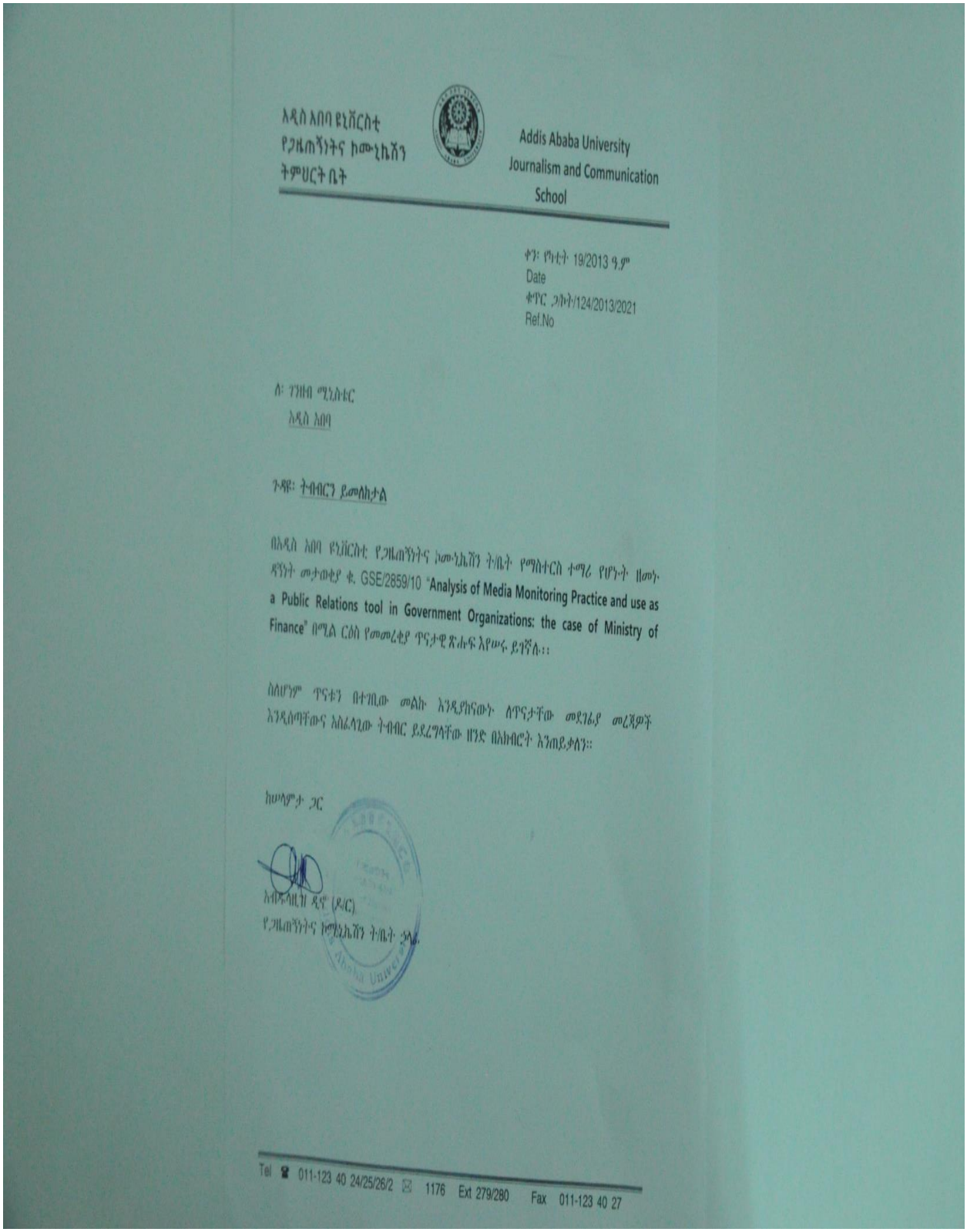
| **Dimensions** | **Agree (5)** | **Mildly agree (4)** | **Neither agree nor disagree (3)** | **Disagree (2)** | **Mildly disagree (1 )** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Personal feeling** | | | | | |
| I know about the importance of media monitoring | | | | | |
| Media monitoring activity takes much time to do | | | | | |
| **Media relations** | | | | | |
| The Ministry is positively portrayed by media reports | | | | | |
| I do not follow media | | | | | |
| The Ministry has good relation with media | | | | | |
| Media has complain about the Ministry regarding getting accurate information | | | | | |
| **Future plan** | | | | | |
| The value of Media monitoring is not considered in planning | | | | | |
| The Ministry uses other information gathering tools than media monitoring for planning | | | | | |
| The ministry uses feedback of its customers given through media for planning | | | | | |
| The ministry uses media monitoring reports for planning | | | | | |
| **Strength and weakness of the organization** | | | | | |
| Strength and weakness of the ministry cannot be shown by Media monitoring results | | | | | |
| Media monitoring activities show effectiveness of the ministry | | | | | |
| **Use of media monitoring** | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Media monitoring is necessary to the ministry | | | | | |
| Media monitoring activity is given due attention in the ministry | | | | | |

## Interview questions

1. How do you practice media monitoring in your Directorate?
2. What is the purpose of your media monitoring activities?
3. For what purposes do you use monitored reports?
4. What are challenges that you have encountered in monitoring media?
5. What are methods you use in media monitoring?
6. Is media monitoring activities supported by CEOs of the ministry?
7. How much media monitoring activity is helping you in improving public relations activities?

## Appendix5: letter written to The FDRE Ministry of finance to conduct research



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Addis Ababa University
Journalism and Communication
School

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ከሠላምታ ጋር

አብዱላዚዝ ዲኖ (ዶ/ር)
የጋዜጠኝነትና ኮሚኒኬሽን ትቤት ኃላፊ

Tel 011-123 40 24/25/26/2 1176 Ext 279/280 Fax 011-123 40 27

## Appendix6: Media monitoring report prepared by Public Relations and Information Directorate of the Ministry of Finance

| No | Media | Date of publishing | Content of published story in short | Placement (Column) | Tone(Positive, Neutral, Negative) | Remark |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Reporter | February 28/2021 | □□□□

| No | Media | Date of publishing | Content of published story in short | Placement (Column) | Tone (Positive, Neutral, Negative) | Remark |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Reporter | February28/ 2021 | □□□□