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**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY**

**AN ASSESSEMENT OF THE IMPLEMENTATON OF MEDIA  
REGULATORY POLICY IN ETHIOPIA: THE CASE OF  
ETHIOPIAN PRESS AGENCY, ETHIOPIAN  
BROADCASTING CORPORATION, FANA  
BRODCUSTING CORPORATE, REPORTER AND  
CAPITAL NEWSPAPER**

**BY: MAHLET ABDUL**

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**AN ASSESSEMENT OF THE IMPLEMENT OF MEDIA REGULATORY  
POLICY IN ETHIOPIA: THE CASE OF SELECTED FIVE MEDIA**

**(Ethiopian Press Agency, Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, Fana  
Broadcasting Corporate, Reporter and Capital Newspaper)**

**BY: MAHLET ABDUL**

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## **Declaration**

I hereby declare that this thesis is my original work, has not been presented for a degree in any other university and that all sources of materials used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Mahlet Abdul \_\_\_\_\_

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS**

**EBC** - Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation

**FDRE** - Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

**EMA** - Ethiopian Media Authority

**EPA**- Ethiopian Press Agency

**EU**- European Union

**FBC**- Fana Broadcasting corporate

**FGD** - Focus Group Discussion

**ITC** - Independent Television Commission

**OECD** - The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

**OFCOM** - Office for Communications

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## ABSTRACT

*The main purpose of the current study was to assess how media policy and regulation implemented in Ethiopia. The overall objectives were to assess the implementation of the media regulatory policy with an emphasis on the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC), Fana Broadcasting Corporate, Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC), Reporter Newspaper and Capital newspaper. The study focuses on media proclamation 1238/2021. Research designs are types of inquiry with qualitative method approaches that provide specific direction for procedures in a research study, whereas research methods involve the forms of data collection, analysis, and interpretation that researchers propose for the studies. A qualitative approach is better suited to allow the researcher to investigate initial participant responses by using open-ended questions asking "why" or "how" so that the respondents can give detailed answers with full freedom and flexibility. To achieve this objective, data collected from the reporters, and assistant editors, editor in chiefs, on selected five media organizations were analyzed by using percentage form to interpret on descriptive way. In order to get the research participants, the researcher apply a non-probability sampling technique, snowball and purposeful sampling. The study used a sample of 120 participants from the total size of the five media outlets in the institutions. The major findings of the study are therefore; editorial policy of those selected five medias is not in line with the national media regulatory policy and other media policies, regulation, and proclamations. This is because journalists to access the policy, less publicity of the media regulatory policy and training in the media institution.*

***Key words: - Media, Media policy, media regulatory policy, editorial policy, training, creating awareness.***

# CHAPTER ONE

## 1. Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher tries to deal with the background information on the challenges and opportunities of implementing the media regulation policy in Ethiopia. This chapter has provided the background for the thesis by describing the research gaps that need to be addressed by examining the challenges of implementing the regulation policy in Ethiopia with a specific focus on the study focus, which is five specific media through bench marking on the state-run largest publisher, distribute, and accessible broadcasters across the country. Specifically, Ethiopian Press Agency, Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, Fana Broadcasting Corporate, Reporter Newspaper, and Capital Newspaper In this chapter, the rationales for the study are explained, and general and specific objectives as well as an overview of the thesis are provided.

### 1.1 Background of the study

In protecting the freedom of speech and expressing information and ideas, media policies have traditionally been founded on ensuring that these freedoms are ensured. Media has long been developed in the United States of America and Europe, particularly in the mid- 19<sup>th</sup> century (Freedman, 2008). During this period, it appeared in the form of the persistence of taxation or press regulation. After the 20th century, mass media began as a professionalization project in the West that was related to crafting codes of ethics (Haberas, 1989).

A new background to the theories and practices of media has started to emerge since the 1980s, following the paradigmatic shift in media policy formulation and regulations. More specifically, the issue of regulating the media in terms of a social service paradigm and its anticipating democratizing role has shifted the prevalent way of thinking to a set of ideas and practices that treat it as a market-driven enterprise predominantly shaped by economic and technological imperatives since the 1990s (Anagnostou et al.,2010).

Domestic constitutional law and parliamentary acts have played a key role in shaping media policy in western countries to safeguard free speech and the right to information. Due attention is

given to the conduct of media systems where particular market structures and media practices are identified as desirable and are promoted, as well as the organization of media markets and media performance (Garnham and Freedman, 2008).

Many African countries introduced constitutional reforms in the 1990s, recognizing some level of freedom of expression. Enshrining these fundamental rights in the constitution is a crucial step towards building a democratic system that respects individual rights. Since the Constitution is the supreme law of the land, the freedom of the media and constitutional rights are sacred (Meron, 2006). This development is hindered by the media laws adopted by these governments, which are against the promises of the constitution. Such laws have created a favorable environment that empowers the government to suppress any media reports that may question their governance (Nyamnjoh, 2005).

After some years of the reforms that took place on the continent, the belief in the values of liberal democracy is emerging as the path for the future of media practices on the continent. As a result, whether they practice it or not, it has become mandatory for the countries to strongly uphold democracy. Among the measures they must take as part of their efforts to reinforce democracy are introducing political pluralism, regular elections, freedom of the press, and the right of association. The continent started to gain a reputation as an emerging democratic continent from the long-ingrained system of authoritarianism, large-scale economic chaos, and social crises of the preceding decades into an era of regular elections and greater involvement in the world economy.

This led to the wildly stated claim that a renaissance is emerging on the continent (Ibid.). As per the constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE), pluralism is a mode of political practice. Accordingly, proclamations as well as rules and regulations were derived from the provisions of the constitution to regulate the free press in the country. Article 29 of the constitution focuses on the media, stating that the right to hold opinions without interference; freedom of expression without interference, including the freedom to seek, receive and impart information; freedom of the press and mass media as well as freedom of artistic creation; access to information in the public interest; institutional independence and legal protection for the press, enabling it to accommodate different opinions and ensure the free flow of information, ideas and

opinions; and, accommodation of differences in opinion by media financed or controlled by the government (FDRE Constitution, 1995, p:8. policy by the regulatory institution called the Ethiopian Media Authority (EMA). Regulatory governmental organization with a specific focus on the activities of the Ethiopian Press Agency, Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, Fana Broadcasting Corporate, Reporter News Paper, and Capital News Paper.

In this study, an attempt will be made to do work that is free from bias, especially by talking to independent parties. The researcher will also incorporate input from policymakers, journalists, and experts in the print and broadcast media. The study focuses on the assessment of the implementation of media regulatory policy, referring to Proclamation 1238/2021.

### **1.1.1 Background information about five Ethiopian media houses**

■ **Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation** is a leading public media company with extensive access to programming and news content covering a wide range of social, political, and economic issues. EBC has been the longest-running and long-standing public media outlet on radio since 1957. During these long years, it is the only media that has managed to organize historical events on a variety of political, economic, social, cultural, art, and cultural occasions, both nationally and internationally.

As a national media institution, EBC has taken social responsibility as a priority and broadcast messages to the public through various channels. Through its program content and presentation, the corporation has identified and redefined existing channels, including new channels, to provide a better option for its audience. As a result, the ETV News Channel will host a 24-hour newscast, news program and documentary using its more than 74 terrestrial transmitters including satellite. At the same time, the ETV Entertainment Channel is a channel where only entertainment, children and sports are offered. The ETV languages channel is a channel that highlights news and programs in a variety of domestic and foreign languages. ETV languages offers a variety of programs including Oromifa, Tigrigna, Afarigna, Somaligna, English, French, Arabic, and sign language news. ETV Sports TV is another sports channel that hosts a variety of international sports events in terrestrial coverage.

Radio Ethiopia is the most popular "Ethiopian Radio", which is tuned to mid-end and mid-air using more than 11 Medium wave transmitters and more than 15 FM transmitters throughout the country. Ethiopian Radio is a radio channel in which a variety of local languages are available to its listeners, including Amharic. One of the first and foremost in the country's history, "FM 97.1", is the only live 24-hour service for listeners in Addis Ababa and its surroundings.

Likewise, Addis Ababa as the seat of the African Union, international organizations, and the diplomatic corps, FM 104.7 radio station is established to host these communities. It is available in French, English and Arabic. New Media is another of the EBC's alternative media outlets. In addition to its Website, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube pages reach its audience and viewers. EBC is a media outlet that has wide reach both inside and outside the country. Beyond the satellite dish community, the reach is estimated to be 42%, and EBC is the only organization that can reach the non-dish community. Similarly, radio broadcasts can reach radio listeners across Ethiopia. The EBC is a major media option, especially for the rural population of all parts of Ethiopia.

In addition, FM 97.1 and FM104.7 is a distribution network in Addis Ababa and its surrounding areas and in various cities of the country. In addition to its in-country coverage, EBC is also accessible by various satellite options in different parts of the world. The satellite TV options like Hot bird, Galaxy, Eutelsat, DSTV are available in the United States (including cable TV), Europe, the Middle East, and Central and Sub-Saharan Africa.

EBC has more than 2,200 permanent staff at the Head Office and its regional branches across the country, with more than 439 undergraduates and 63 graduates studying journalism and other related fields, primarily serving the content sector. It is also a leading institution with a wide range of influential journalists, producing a variety of influential news, programs, and documentaries.

■ **Fana Broadcasting corporete (FBC)**, is a state-owned mass media company operating in Ethiopia. Launched in 1994 it focuses mostly on political, social, and economic reports about Ethiopia. It operates radio, television stations and online media with the country. The media

house commenced service with outdated equipment and limited manpower, but with the first of its kind and new style in the country's broadcasting media industry.

FBC has continued to bring about changes in the country's media culture by enhancing its role of teaching, informing, and entertaining the people by equipping itself with skilled and experienced manpower and up-to-date technologies. The media house which has well developed experience in radio and online services and built its own media complex. It has become a pioneer in the country's media history by building a full HD studio within its media complex and commencing full HD television transmission. After months of test transmission, it started transmission with its full capacity in January 2017.

PFBC is presenting various contents to its one audience in Amharic, Afan Oromo, Tigrigna and English languages Via its websites, Facebook and Twitter pages including in Photos, videos, and audios. It reaches more six million viewers on average per week.

In radio service, besides its national and Fana FM 98.1 transmission, it has opened FM stations out of Addis Ababa in 11 regional cities with a stunning speed where all stations are networked, equipped with the necessary manpower, and fitted with the latest radio technologies. Currently, it has 12 Fm stations across the nation that provide broadcasting services in Amharic, Afan Oromo, Afarigna, Somaligna, Tigrigan and sidamigna languages. The media house is currently providing training and counseling service by establishing its own technology, journalism, and communication training center. At present, it has a total of 1,000 hardworking and committed workers.

■ **Ethiopian Press Agency**, established in 1940, is a public media enterprise operating in Ethiopia. It is the sole publisher of the only daily Amharic language newspaper known as “Addis Zemen.” The enterprise also publishes “The Ethiopian Herald”, a daily newspaper except on Mondays in English language. Among its tabloids are the weeklies: “Berissa”- in the local Affan Oromo; and “Al-Alem”- in the international Arabic languages. The agency has yet another newspaper in Tigrigna Language “Wegahita” and “Bakkalcho” in Sidamigna . By-monthly magazine, known as “Zemen” in Amharic also among the publications.

Although the Ethiopian Press Organization is managed by the government, it is accountable to the House of People's Representatives. Although it is said that its publications are accessible in all regions of the country, the daily print volume has not been higher than 15,000 so far. Apart from its print results, the agency has also joined the new media and is trying to be competitive by spreading new and current information, especially through Facebook. The company is currently working to increase the quality of its content and publications and has less than 450 employees.

■ **The Ethiopian Reporter**, is a private newspaper published in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. It appears in both English and Amharic, and is owned by the Media and Communications Center. The general manager and founder of the newspaper is Amare Aregawi. It was founded in 1995 by the Media and Communications Center.

Media and Communication Center (MCC), is the publisher of “Reporter” a bi-weekly Amharic, “The Reporter” a weekly English newspaper, a monthly Amharic, and English magazines in both print and electronic versions. MCC employs 137 permanent and part-time staff and has a sister company called the Horn of Africa Press Institute, which does research on Media related issues. It distributes the newspapers and magazines to all business companies, governmental offices and non-governmental offices in Addis Ababa and all regional cities through subscription as well as street vendors.

■ **Capital** (also known as **Capital Ethiopia**), is an Ethiopian weekly business newspaper published and distributed by Crown Publishing Plc. It is published once a week, on Sundays. It was established in December 1998 with a pro-business perspective, and styles itself "the paper that promotes free enterprise". newspaper has opinions and special segments like the historian Richard Pankhurst's Corner, sports commentary, cartoons, editorials, etc.

Capital subscribers are often from local business community, non-governmental organizations, international organizations, academics, and individuals. It aims to boost the free press and information flow, while encouraging and nurturing the private sector with necessary information. It promotes ideological changes and development among the civil society for the betterment of the country, and creates employment opportunities, whilst developing professional journalism.

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

When governments devise sound policies, sometimes they tend to ignore the need to come up with tools that can guarantee their proper implementation and risk their failure. Among such important tools are monitoring and evaluation frameworks, budgetary, technical, and institutional capacity with modern technology, as well as legal frameworks. Media agencies should also devise a clear policy that incorporates the detailed position and degree of coverage of content areas. The case of many media institutions in Ethiopia lies among those that lack a clear media policy that figures out their detailed guidelines, plans, and related factors. Such drawbacks hamper their proper activities and ultimate success.

The purpose of media regulatory policy or law is to safeguard the right to freedom of information and expression, guarantee complete freedom of media outlets, protect journalists, and ensure civil and penal responsibility of the media and legal submission of the media. The Federal Act does not give any power to the media regulatory authority (Kimm Austria) to regulate online media. Audiovisual media regulation is governed by another act, i.e., the Federal Act on Audio-visual Media Services (Audio-visual Media Services Act) (François, 2014).

In today's policy regulation, regulatory efficiency has been fettered by the rapid change in technology globally and the rapid expansion of the ICT sector, not only in terms of infrastructure (which has expanded at a fast clip when compared to other infrastructure sectors in Africa) but also in terms of the portfolio of services on offer (ECA, 2017).

The Ethiopian Mass Media Authority has dedicated a directorate to media monitoring and capacity building. Even though the directorate is entitled to oversee the print media sector, it only registers print media institutions that have already secured their operational license. The Provisional Military Administrative Committee (Derg) regime Ministry of Culture and Information oversaw print media product content regulation. Hence, in the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (EPRDF) era, there was no institution duty-bound to monitor print media products. The Broadcasting Authority at that time had almost complete control and monitoring of broadcast media only.



However, following the changes in the country, the Ethiopian Broadcasting Authority was established in a new form, and departments were opened to monitor and control the print media. Although the departments were established and went operational, they were not observed taking strong action to correct and adjust the print media found to have violated the rules and regulations. On the other hand, it is difficult to check the implementation and the control system due to the brevity of the time when the new media decree came into effect and the regulatory institution was established in a new form. Therefore, the print media sector is functioning with no clarity in this way.

During my (researcher's) stay as a reporter, senior reporter, and assistant editor (the researcher's personal experiences while working at different levels of the profession; using her experiences and understanding), I had the opportunity to observe the experiences of the media regulatory body, several media institutions, and journalists in the print media institutions. They are not familiar with the media regulation policy of the country because the policy is less accessible not only to the general public but also to the prime stakeholders. Media institutions perform their daily activities depending on the decisions and orders of their top leaders, irrespective of the media regulatory policy. Therefore, this research attempted to assess the implementation of media regulation policy in Ethiopia in the cases of the Ethiopian Press Agency, Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, Fana Broadcasting Corporation, Ethiopian Reporter News Paper, and Capital Newspaper. The study focuses on the assessment of the implementation of media regulatory policy, referring to the Ethiopian Mass Media Authority's Media Proclamation 1238/2021.

However, there is no research work undertaken to assess how much the media organizations are contribution its part in the proper implementation of the Revised media law. Most of the available literature on the private media laws, for instance proclamation No. 590/2009 Freedom of the Mass Media and to Information, proclamation No. 533/2007 Broadcasting service and proclamation No. 178/1999. Different people have studied these declarations in different ways. However, it is not possible to see in depth whether the proclamations are implemented or how the media institutions are implementing them.

Although it has been three years since the media proclamation was approved, it is not believed that most of the Ethiopian media have fully understood the contents of the proclamation, especially the positive and negative aspects of it. This is evidenced by the fact that few so-called professionals are not seen challenging the rights of the media when the rights of the media are violated by the body that approved the decree. Apart from that, in the researcher personal survey, there is not found a single study that shows what the implementation of the new decree looks like. Therefore, this research will try to show the understanding and implementation of the decree based on five selected media institutions.

### **1.3. Research questions**

This research intends to answer the following research questions:

1. How does the Press/Media organization give attention to the media regulatory policy?
2. To answer the question of how to ensure media plurality and diversity in Ethiopia?
3. To what extent are the law and policy practiced in Ethiopia in Ethiopian Press Agency, Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, Fana Broadcasting Corporation, Reporter News Paper, and Capital News Paper.
4. What are the major challenges of media law and policy implementation?

### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

#### **1.4.1. General Objective**

The general objective of the research is to assess the implementation of the media regulatory policy with an emphasis on the Ethiopian Press Agency, Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, Fana Broadcasting Corporate, Reporter News Paper, and Capital News Paper as implementing focal institutions.

#### **1.4.2. Specific objectives**

- To find out the attention given to the media regulatory policy in Ethiopia.
- To show how law and policy will help to ensure media plurality and diversity.

- To explain how the law and policy are implemented in Ethiopia (in the case of five specific media),
- To identify the major challenges of its implementation (institutional, legal, human, and material facilities).

## **1.5 Scope of the Study**

Geographically, the study assesses the practices and challenges of the implementation of media regulatory policy concerning the print and broadcast media sectors, taking the practices of the Ethiopian Press Agency, Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, Fana Broadcasting Corporation, Ethiopian Reporter, and Capital Newspaper. The researcher uses appropriate sampling techniques discussed in the research methodology part of Chapter three to explain and assess the practices of the implementation of media regulatory policy in all five specific media organizations.

## **1.6 Limitations of the Study**

As the main thrust of this study is to explore the implementation of media policy and regulation, especially due to the lack of understanding about the new decree, the study is considered a limitation because it is not able to involve employees in selected institutions to the desired level.

Along with this, since the proclamation is new, those that are relevant failed to include enough literature and documents to be analyzed in detail.

So, the study does not represent all journalists in the selected media organizations. The responses and results only serve as a small sample of the institutions. Also, the study cannot and does not maintain that it reflects every issue involving media policy and regulation policy.

## **1.7 Significance of the Study**

This study will identify the status of the implementation of media regulatory policy in Ethiopia. Furthermore, the study opens room for discussion on national media policy. The finding benefits media institutions, policymakers, and government bodies, as well as the public at large. In

addition to this, the study will provide important points on how to improve the implementation of the media regulatory policy in the country by identifying the problems that hinder its implementation and indicating possible solutions.

## **1.8 Organization of the study**

This research has five chapters: Chapter one provides background information on the challenges of implementing the media regulation policy in Ethiopia. This chapter has provided the background for the thesis by describing the research gaps that need to be addressed and examining the challenges of implementing the regulation policy in Ethiopia. In this chapter, the rationales for the study are explained, and general and specific objectives as well as an overview of the thesis are provided.

Chapter two presents a literature review of the implementation of media regulation policy and how the discrepancies between top-down and bottom-up approaches affect the proper implementation of the policy and the realities on the ground. Chapter three has set off an elaborate discussion of the research setting and design, as well as the methodologies that will be employed in the study.

Chapter four gives an analysis of the data collected through interviewing and observations on the challenges of implementing the media regulation policy and provides a discussion of the findings about the literature, consolidated with the idea of a top-down and bottom-up approach. Finally, Chapter 5 summarizes, interprets, and concludes the findings of the study by providing implications as well as recommendations for implementing the media regulation policy and future research.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, various topics and issues related to the study are discussed. The overall review contains the concepts of media, media policy, media regulation policy, theory of policy implementation and implementation challenges, media history in Ethiopia, media regulation, proclamation, and media editorial policy and guidelines. In this chapter, various topics and issues related to the study will be discussed. The overall review contains the concepts of media, media policy, media regulation policy, theory of policy implementation and implementation challenges, media history in Ethiopia, media regulation and proclamation, and media editorial policy and guidelines.

#### **2.2 Media and Media Regulation Policy**

##### **2.2.1 Defining Media**

Media refers to various forms of communication channels that are used to disseminate information, entertainment, opinions, and facts. These channels can include newspapers, magazines, radio, television, the internet, books, CDs, DVDs, video cassettes, computer games, and other forms of publishing. While there is debate among writers about whether to use "media" in the singular or plural form, using the singular form may be criticized in some situations. Academic programs that focus on the study of mass media are often called "mass communication" programs. The term "media" also encompasses internet media and outdoor media in addition to electronic and print media (Gupta, 2014: 15).

Media is a term used to describe various communication channels that disseminate information, entertainment, opinions, and facts. These channels can include traditional forms such as newspapers, magazines, radio, television, books, CDs, DVDs, and video cassettes, as well as newer forms such as internet media and outdoor media. The study of mass media is often

referred to as "mass communication." Social media is a newer form of media that includes digital, computerized, or networked technologies such as internet forums, blogs, wikis, podcasts, and picture-, music-, and video-sharing platforms like Google Groups, Wikipedia, Myspace, Facebook, YouTube, Second Life, Flickr, and Twitter.

### **2.2.2 Media Policies**

*The term "media policy" refers to how public authorities try to influence the structures and practices of the media. It can also be referred to as "information policy," which encompasses laws and policies that impact the creation, flow, and use of information. This can include initiatives that promote the global information society and its associated concepts. The focus is on the actors involved in shaping these policies (Garnham, 1998).*

*Media policy refers to the strategies and actions taken by public authorities to influence the structures and practices of the media. It is also known as information policy, which covers laws and policies that impact the creation, flow, and use of information (Freedman, 2008, p. 23). This includes initiatives aimed at promoting the global information society. The focus is on the individuals and groups involved in shaping these policies. According to Freedman, media policy is a means of exerting power, while Barman sees information policy as encompassing the entire information production chain (Braman, 2006, p. 77). The International Development Research Centre uses the term to refer to policy initiatives that promote societal development using concepts associated with the global information society.*

According to Freedman's article in the Policy Research and Media Industries Journal, media policy needs to involve public participation and be inclusive and democratic. This requires moving it out of the hands of those in power and into the public domain. Freedman argues that media policy research should involve public participation and be democratic. It is necessary to remove it from the control of those in power and make it accessible to the public. The research agenda for media industries should not only focus on their routines and rituals but also examine power relations that shape policy contexts (Freedman, 2014, p. 14).

## 2.3 Regulation Policy

Over the past three decades, the emergence and advancement of regulatory policy have played crucial roles in the reform efforts within OECD countries. The primary aim of regulatory policy is to guarantee that regulations actively support economic growth, broader societal goals like social well-being and environmental sustainability, and the reinforcement of the rule of law. It addresses the ongoing necessity to ensure that regulations and their underlying frameworks are well-justified, of exceptional quality, and capable of achieving policy objectives. Additionally, it aids policymakers in making well-informed decisions regarding what should be regulated, who should be subjected to regulation, and the appropriate methods of regulation. Serving as an essential component of effective public governance, regulatory policy also helps define the interactions between the government, its citizens, businesses, and civil society (OECD, 2011).

The primary goal of regulatory policy is to ensure that regulations function efficiently and serve the best interests of the public. Regulatory policy, a relatively recent field, is evolving in various ways among OECD members and beyond. Despite these diverse approaches, they are generally converging toward common objectives. Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACHR) covers 13 principles, i.a. prohibition of prior censorship, source protection, privacy laws, public funding and advertising and plurality and diversity and anti-trust law. Article 13(3) of the Inter-American Convention, protecting freedom of thought and opinion, states that

*The right of expression may not be restricted by indirect methods or means, such as the abuse of government or private controls over newsprint, radio broadcasting frequencies, or equipment used in the dissemination of information, or by any other means tending to impede the communication and circulation of ideas and opinions.*

The Council of Europe (CoE) Committee of Ministers adopted a declaration urging Member States to ‘put in place a regulatory and policy framework that facilitates the operation of quality journalism, while not constraining media outlets’ editorial and operational independence. Recommended measures include a beneficial tax regime, financial support schemes and the

possibility of media outlets to operate as not-for-profit organisations and receive donations from philanthropic programmes.

### **2.3.1 Media Regulation Policy**

As stated by McQuail (2010), the history of media regulation can be traced back to the mid-15th century in Western Europe when the printing press was first applied to book production. Initially, printing served as a more efficient alternative to labor-intensive manual manuscript copying, and it operated without formal regulations. However, it was commonly conducted under the watchful eye of church or state authorities. With the growth of the printing industry, particularly after 1500, both religious and political institutions began to show greater interest in monitoring the content of printed materials, particularly to combat heresy or dissenting views. This eventually led to widespread state licensing of printers and the requirement of advance approval from church authorities for publications.

During the 16th to 19th centuries in Western Europe and North America, the history of regulating media was marked by continuous struggles against constraints on publication. These struggles were fought in the name of both political freedom and human rights, as well as in support of the printing industry and the rights of authors. The freedom to publish was achieved through a gradual process in Britain, a revolutionary upheaval in France in the late 18th century, and a gradual transformation in the territories of the Austrian and Prussian Empires throughout the 19th century. However, similar freedoms were never truly realized in Russia, even after the 1917 Revolution, nor in the British colonies or Japan until much later in the 20th century. For most of the world during the modern era, repressive and punitive media regulations in the service of state power were the standard practice (McQuail 2010).

The emergence of new forms of media in the 19th century, like the electric telegraph, telephone, and wireless communication, introduced a novel aspect to regulatory practices. This period saw the inception of public radio broadcasting in 1920, with all these media platforms being subject to scrutiny and oversight through national laws, often in line with international agreements concerning technical specifications (e.g., radio frequency allocation). Additionally, these media outlets served various interests of the government, including military and economic concerns.



Regulatory measures frequently took the form of control by state entities or the establishment of public monopolies. In some instances, like in the United States, robust governmental oversight was carried out by a powerful body known as the Federal Communications Commission. Moreover, as the 20th century progressed, the film industry also emerged, typically regulated at the local level to address safety issues (e.g., fire safety) and/or to ensure compliance with moral standards. (McQuail, 2010)

Media regulation refers to a subjective process under the rule of the state, usually centered on an independent regulatory body. Any regulation consists of the use of formal statutory rules laid down by public authorities. As indicated in Solomon (2006), regulation has three components: legislation, that is, defining appropriate rules; enforcement, such as initiating actions against violators; and adjudication, that is, deciding whether a violation has taken place and imposing an appropriate sanction. And one field that is regulated by the state is the media.

## **2.4 Global perspectives on media policy**

The tools used to shape worldwide media and communication policies encompass a range of elements such as laws, rules, treaties, agreements, ethical guidelines, and benchmarks. The way these tools define parties with a vested interest and the decision-making procedures has a significant impact on how different stakeholders are perceived as winners or losers, who wields authority and sway, and which individuals or groups see themselves as part of policy discussions. Given the increasing intricacy of the global media and communication landscape, the outcomes of these policies are becoming less predictable. On the global stage, there are constantly changing alliances of interests that affect the allocation of resources and the relative influence of various actors. Research within the field of global media and communication policy often centers on assessing the extent to which these policies support the commercialization of media and communication and the opening of national markets in pursuit of creating a globally competitive marketplace.

In both media and telecommunication, comparative studies highlight the progress of a Western market liberalization model that is being variously adopted, adapted, or resisted in the light of national conditions and priorities. A strong critical tradition of scholarship in this field rejects the

idea that there is a universally beneficial way of resolving tensions among stakeholders and attempts to identify opportunities for policy to be effective in rebalancing outcomes to favor citizen interests in the media environment.

The Communications Regulatory Authority carries out tasks both in the field of the telecommunications market and of audiovisual deregulation. The Authority started its operational activities at the end of July 1998, absorbing the functions of the former Authority on Publishing and Press. From a human rights perspective, a problem with convergence regulators in any country is that they do not focus on broadcasting-related issues like protection of freedom of expression, access to the media, prevention of monopolies and concentration, and preservation of plurality and diversity of opinion and programs, but rather tend to adopt a business view of technological innovation, market indicators, and growth. This problem appears even more acute in Italy, where several international and domestic human rights-related complaints and criticisms have appeared regarding mass media (Minárik, 2002).

In 2003, the Office for Communications (OFCOM), a fresh regulatory body, was established to replace five existing regulators overseeing various aspects of broadcasting and telecommunications networks, along with the services provided on those networks. This transition followed an extensive consultation period and sparked considerable controversy. The recently enacted Communications Bill brings about notable changes by relaxing ownership regulations in the broadcasting sector. Specifically, it eliminates a restriction that previously prevented major newspaper conglomerates, such as Rupert Murdoch's News International, from acquiring Channel 5. However, these conglomerates are still prohibited from holding a significant ownership stake in ITV. Furthermore, the new legislation paves the way for the merger of the two largest ITV companies, Carlton, and Granada, resulting in the formation of a unified ITV entity. Additionally, it permits shared ownership of both ITV and Channel 5 (Minárik, 2002).

According to McQuail, D. (2010), because of changes in the media and the rise of new media forms, we can still identify certain broad traditions of thought about the rights and responsibilities of media in society and the degree to which 'society' may legitimately intervene to protect the public interest. The main relevant variants can be described as follows:

**Authoritarian theory** applies to early pre-democratic forms of society and also to present-day undemocratic or autocratic social systems. In this view, all media and public communication are subject to the supervision of the ruling authority, and expression or opinion that might undermine the established social and political order can be forbidden. Although this `theory' contravenes rights to freedom of expression, it can be invoked under extreme conditions.

**Free press theory** (most fully developed in the United States of America but applying elsewhere) proclaims complete freedom of public expression and of the economic operation of the media and rejects any interference by government in any aspect of the press. A well-functioning market should resolve all issues of media obligation and social need.

**Social responsibility theory** (found more in Europe and countries under European influence) is a modified version of free press theory that places greater emphasis on the accountability of the media (especially broadcasting) to society. The media are free, but they should accept obligations to serve the public good. The means of ensuring compliance with these obligations can either be through professional self-regulation or public intervention (or both).

**Development media theory (applicable** in countries at lower levels of economic development and with limited resources) takes various forms but essentially proposes that media freedom, while desirable, should be subordinated (of necessity) to the requirements of economic, social, and political development.

Around the world, recent shifts in politics, technology, and the economy have introduced fresh challenges for the media. Consequently, there is a pressing requirement to discover innovative approaches to revamp media policies and oversee the media industry. The media possesses the capacity to facilitate greater engagement in public affairs, scrutinize those in authority, act as avenues for conversation, and safeguard individual rights. However, to ensure that the media can effectively carry out its intended role, it is imperative to establish modernized regulatory structures that are tailored to the evolving media environment (SIDA, 2019).

Korea has had various forms of ownership restrictions in the media industry. Korea's terrestrial TV started in 1961 as a public broadcasting service. However, except for the new entrances of private terrestrial broadcasting television services (5), the ownership regulation has been

virtually unchanged since 2009. Prior to 2009, involving a large stake in a conglomerate or newspaper company was banned, and one person could hold the maximum stake limit of 30% or less of the terrestrial broadcasting company. Moreover, foreign investors are not allowed to own stakes in terrestrial broadcasters. The amended Broadcasting Law of 2009 eased the ownership restrictions. Newspapers and large conglomerates can own up to 10% of a terrestrial broadcasting company. However, equity participation by foreign capital is prohibited in terrestrial broadcasting, and terrestrial broadcasters are not allowed to own cable TV companies (Lee and Kim, 2011).

As the news media is considered an instrument for implementing democracy, assessments of media system performance are often grounded in democratic theory. In democratic countries, there has been a long-lasting debate over the regulation and deregulation of the media by the state (McQuail 1992, 31). Specific norms have been stipulated in a number of international agreements and conventions, but without a binding global regulatory framework to enforce them. Wide academic discourse has been developed on broadcasting policy (as broadcasting has always been a subject for more extensive regulation than the press) and the role of public broadcasting.

### **2.5.1 History of Ethiopian media**

The history of media in Ethiopia dates back many years. In 1902/03, the *Aimero* newspaper was founded, marking the inception of the very first Amharic newspaper in the nation, as documented by Pankhurst in 1992. During the post-liberation period, the publication industry witnessed a comparatively significant expansion in terms of the number of periodicals produced and the size of their circulation. Such long-lasting weekly papers as *Addis Zemen* and *The Ethiopian Herald* came onto the scene in 1941 and 1943, respectively. The first radio was introduced in the country in 1933, and television broadcasting started in the 1960s (Shimelis, 2000; Meron, 2006). In 2014 and forward, beside state-owned media, new channels, both public and private, are on the way. Regional states and city administrations have their own radio and television agencies.

Ethiopian Television initiated its broadcasting on three channels, namely ETV1, ETV2, and ETV3, as noted in Nigussie's 2014 report. In Ethiopia, the media landscape encompasses various

types, including 19 public outlets, 39 commercial ones, 60 community-based organizations, 35 with religious affiliations, 26 in print form, and 57 online platforms, totaling 236 media entities. Nevertheless, the circulation of printed newspapers remains quite limited, with major privately-owned newspapers producing just 15,000 copies of each edition, despite serving a population exceeding 110 million. These newspapers contend that they could produce more copies if not for the restriction on private printing facilities. Additionally, private newspapers relying on state-owned printers encounter challenges like delayed printing and shortages of newsprint ink, as highlighted in IMS's 2018 report (IMS, 2018: 10).

The Ethiopian government has control over all telecommunication services in the country, enabled by the support of the international community keen to combat the terrorism threat emanating from Somalia. Equally notable is the appointment of a new Minister of Information and Communication. In a meeting with IMS in July 2018, the Minister outlined his vision as inclusive of the need to enhance access to information, noting that the mainstream print media is limited to major urban centers. He also indicated a need to strengthen the government's information sharing capacity through training of the ministry and other government departments.

The Minister of Information and Communication also stated that capacity building must include that of both the public and private sectors to enable the media and public-sector officials to play their roles and meet the information needs of society. He noted that Ethiopia still faces challenges concerning media literacy, hence the prevalence of hate speech on social media platforms, and the ministry wishes to contribute to a more inclusive identity framework in Ethiopia away from the divisive ethnic-based politics and issues (IMS, 2018: 12).

IMS noted message coherence on the capacity building issues raised by the Minister and the Ministry's regulatory bodies, including the Ethiopia Broadcasting Authority as well as the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation. The Broadcasting Regulatory Authority stated that Ethiopia has diverse languages, political views, and cultures that must all find a platform for expression in the mainstream media. In this regard, the Authority is prepared to enter into partnerships to address skills and ethics, as well as develop and implement media sector codes of conduct.

Key to this process, however, is the need to firm up the principles of the reform agenda and, for example, what will inform the government's intentions in this process. Once the principles of media reform and the role of the media in the democratization process are established, it becomes far easier to work on reforms based on such principles. The agenda set by the Ethiopian government and UNDP is very broad and needs prioritization, as well as strong capacity and the involvement of a range of media sector actors. It is a process that needs coordination and balanced representation so that it is not entirely controlled by the government (IMS, 2018: 11).

In 2003, two years before the crackdown on the media in Ethiopia, the government addressed the criticisms of the 1992 Press Proclamation when it introduced two versions of a Proclamation Regarding Press Freedom. While neither version was adopted into law, the drafts laid the groundwork for the Draft Press Law, which was surrounded by controversy from its introduction. The Draft Press Law began years of debate regarding media freedom in Ethiopia. International lobbying organizations focused on the shortcomings of the Draft Press Law and expressed concern about the future of the press in Ethiopia and its reputation among international standards on freedom of expression (Ross, 2007).

Among the lobbying organizations chief criticisms of the Draft Press Law was a major concern over the bill's imposition of a registration regime. Under the provisions of the Draft Press Law, media outlets requesting registration in order to obtain a license were required to provide extremely detailed information regarding all journalists working for the media outlet and the distribution of any press content. Additionally, the Minister of Information determined the length and fees for registration, and applications could be denied based on "excessively broad grounds.

Bezabih (2009) describes in his research the basic challenges of policy implementation in the public service delivery policy of Ethiopia. His findings show that the practicality or implementation of some of the policy statements is questionable because of the complexity surrounding the policy requirements, numerous bottlenecks, and contextual factors. The major problem was looking at the policy statements and their practicability. In his analysis, he classified policy implementation into four main areas. a) Policy Communication and Awareness/Knowledge; b) Policy Requirements Inputs/Resources and Capacity; c) Policy

Executing Civil Service Institutions; and d) Policy Implementers or Civil Servants In addition to these, limited service capacity towards civil servants as well as institutions, staff dissatisfaction, a lack of financial and equipment resources for policy execution, and little awareness of policy discussions with staff members hinder the policy's implementation as intended to achieve the target in general.

In the Ethiopian context, though there are attempts to set the development agenda through wider and more frequent coverage of development contents, they are presented mainly from government angles. This is partly because the information predominantly comes from government authorities and government news agencies rather than directly from the public, who were supposed to be the major sources of information (Negeri, 2012).

Furthermore, Zewge (2010) stated that journalistic practice is influenced by the government. He stated that the relationship between government newspaper editors and journalists seems to have been defined by evaluating journalistic contents in terms of their alliance with government demands and expectations. The process does not give a wide range of freedom to the journalists to influence decisions on the stories they are assigned to write.

According to Assefa (2016), the main challenges with policy implementation are the absence of monitoring and evaluation frameworks, budgetary constraints, weak technical and institutional capacity with modern technology, and a lack of legal basis, which leads to policy implementation being unsuccessful. As stated by Seble (2006), media institutions must have a clear editorial policy that gives their detailed position and degree of coverage on the identified issue in programs and news. Most media institutions in the country were not able to present a clear editorial policy that explained their interest in and potential for airtime coverage. This creates confusion and misguides their journalists on to what extent they are expected to cover with their news and programs (Seble, 2006).

### **2.5.2 Media Regulatory Policy in Ethiopia**

According to the Association of African Communications Lawyers, inadequate regulatory independence is common across all countries. In a liberalized environment, the concept of regulatory independence is paramount for a country that desires to realize key socioeconomic

objectives. The Association of African Communications Lawyers defines an independent regulator as one that is independent from those it regulates and protected from political pressure (ECA 2017).

According to Meron (2006) and the statement based on HRW (2011), a critical look at the legal and regulatory frameworks for the media is fundamental, as there are several implications for the degree to which freedom of expression is guaranteed. The media play an extensive role in shaping the government in power; it is, therefore, important for the government to always distance itself from interfering with media regulatory systems. The constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) provides regulations and a legal framework for broadcast media in the country.

The Media remains weak in terms of its legitimacy in monitoring the behavior of the monopoly operator and its ability to deal with regulatory challenges such as licensing, frequency assignment and monitoring, setting, and enforcing tariffs, dispute resolution, maintaining quality of service, and promoting universal access. Considerably unable to attract and retain skilled employees with legal, regulatory, management, and technical skills, due partly to low public sector remuneration and the absence of such skills, Ethiopia relies significantly on the support of partners to draft its ICT laws and regulations.

No new regulations and guidelines were issued by the regulator until 2020, an indication of the stalled communication sector regulatory process. Studies suggest that pro-competition policy intervention is important to deal with the current poor service penetration, low quality of service, and high cost of broadband access (ECA, 2017).

## **2.6 Broadcasting Policy**

According to McQuaid (2003), media accountability and freedom of communication serve as the fundamental pillars of the field of communications. The regulation of media and policies governing it are deeply ingrained in the historical and cultural contexts of individual nations. As a result, there exists a strong link between the media and essential social functions within each nation. Consequently, every country and state develop its own unique approach to media regulation, tailored to address specific issues and challenges encountered within their borders. As



an illustration of this principle, Ethiopia has implemented various regulations and proclamations aimed at governing broadcast media in accordance with its constitution.

## **2.7 Constitutional Rights of the Media in Ethiopia**

The Constitution of Ethiopia sets out the fundamental rules to be operated by the underlying principles, values, and laws of the country. The EFDR Constitution contains several important provisions, such as fundamental rights and freedoms, that directly protect the media, including publishers, broadcasters, journalists, editors, and producers.

Article 29 of the Constitution is the most important provision that protects the media. It is the foundation for the rights to information, freedom of expression, and press freedom. Under the provisions of Article 29, it gives the people of Ethiopia the right to hold opinions, free expression, and thoughts. Specifically, it protects freedom of expression without interference, including the freedom to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas of all kinds regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any media of one's choice.

It also affords freedom of the press and the mass media by ensuring the opportunity for access to information of interest to the public and prohibiting censorship. Furthermore, Article 29 provides the right of the media to institutional independence and legal protection to enable the accommodation of different ideas necessary to a democratic society in accordance with financing and ensuring its capacity to entertain diversity under the control of the state (FDRE Constitution 1995).

### **2.7.1 Proclamations of the Media in Ethiopia**

The media proclamations are meant to enable the media to play their role by providing favorable conditions under which they can operate freely and responsibly. The press proclamation, broadcasting proclamation, freedom of the mass media, and access to information proclamation are described as follows:

### **2.7.1.1 Proclamation 533/2007**

The government, to license and regulate radio and television stations and to provide for the licensing of television sets, endorsed Broadcasting Service Proclamation 533/2007. Under this provision, the categories of broadcasting services are grouped under public, "commercial, and community' broadcasting services. Any public broadcasting service shall: a) enhance the participation of the public through the presentation of government policies and strategies as well as activities related to development, democracy, and good governance; b) present programs that inform, educate, and entertain the public; c) present programs that reflect the unity of peoples based on equality; d) promote and enhance the cultures and artistic values of the public; e) serve political parties operating in accordance with the Constitution and the electoral laws of the country on the basis of fair and just treatment (Proclamation *No. 533/2007*).

### **2.7.1.2 Proclamation 590/2008**

The Ethiopian Parliament adopted the Freedom of the Mass Media and Access to Information Proclamation in July 2008 (Proclamation No. 590/2008). Based on the constitution of the federal government, the proclamation is supported Article 55(1), which shows that a free, independent, and diverse mass media with high ethical standards and professional competence plays a critical role in the national attempt to build democratic order in the country. It identifies the role of mass media in ensuring respect for fundamental rights and freedoms secured by the constitution and promoting peace, democracy, equality, and justice.

The general provision recognizes the freedom of mass media, the right and responsibility of mass media, the right to publish and organize, the right to prosecute in mass media activities, mass media ownership, distributorship, certificate of registration, imprint and gratuitous copies, the right to access information, the duty to publish, the protection of proceedings, law enforcement and legal investigation, appeal, and penalties, which are listed and described widely in the proclamation (Proclamation No. 590/2008).

Generally, broadcasting in Ethiopia is regulated in terms of the Broadcasting Service Proclamation, No. 533/2007, as well as the Freedom of the Mass Media and Access to Information Proclamation, No. 590/2008.

### **2.7.1.3 Proclamation 238/2021**

The rights to freedom of expression and the media are firmly established in international instruments, regional instruments, and the FDRE Constitution. It is subject to regulation provided by law for legitimate purposes and as proved necessary. Accordingly, national legislation should be framed in line with higher laws. The former media laws of Ethiopia have provisions with the effect of curtailing freedom of expression and media. To minimize such flaws, the parliament adopted media proclamation No. 1238/2021.

Art. 29 of the FDRE also recognizes freedom of expression. Proclamation No. 1238/2021 has 92 articles divided into seven parts. The proclamation made improvements in the establishment of independent authority, the decriminalization of defamation, private ownership, scope of application, and types of administrative measures. On the other hand, some provisions regarding the prohibition of broadcast licenses for individuals, political parties, and religious institutions need further modification. It also discusses the legal framework for freedom of expression and the media. As well, inadequate coverage is provided to vulnerable groups.

## **2.8 The concept of public policy and its implementation**

Policy is typically directed towards achieving a specific objective or addressing a particular issue. Additionally, it encompasses the decisions made by the government regarding what actions to take and what actions to abstain from taking, as noted by Birkland (2011). This connection between policy and government is underscored by the constitutional guidelines that lawmakers adhere to. In essence, policy serves as the conduit through which the government interacts directly with its citizens, as articulated by Anderson (2006, 80). Cochran et al. (1993) define policy as "the actions carried out by the government and the underlying intentions that steer those actions," while Dye (2005) succinctly defines it as "the choices made by governments, whether they involve taking action or refraining from it."

Edwards and Sharkansky (1978) defined public policy as the actions or inactions of governments, or how those in power use their authority. They believe that public policy represents the aims or intentions behind government programs, such as reducing poverty or eradicating ignorance. The process of creating public policy encompasses several stages, from identifying a problem to evaluating its solutions. This cycle begins with recognizing an issue and setting an agenda, followed by formulating and adopting a policy, then implementing it, and finally, evaluating its effects. This evaluation can then inform and enhance future policy decisions.

### **2.8.1 Policy Implementation**

The term "policy implementation" has been defined by many scholars from various perspectives. Implementation is an important stage of the policy-making process. It means the execution of the law in which various stakeholders, organizations, procedures, and techniques work together to put policies into effect with a view to attaining policy goals (Stewart et al., 2008). "Implementation can be viewed as a process, an output, and an outcome, and it involves a number of actors, organizations, and techniques of control."

The field of first-generation policy implementation research has expanded significantly since the influential work "Implementation: How Great Expectations in Washington are Dashed in Oakland" by Pressman and Wilda sky was released in 1973. Prior to the publication of this book, there existed a period of scholarly discourse regarding the interpretation of implementation (Hill & Hume, 2014). The initial wave of implementation studies during the 1960s primarily focused on detailing the various obstacles hindering the successful execution of policies (Stewart et al., 2008).

Nevertheless, these early studies faced criticism for their lack of theoretical foundation, their tendency to be centered around specific cases, and their failure to contribute to a cumulative body of knowledge (Goggin et al., 1990). Building and advancing theory were not central objectives in the first-generation research (Pull & Treib, 2007). In contrast, second-generation implementation scholars aimed to develop analytical frameworks that could provide guidance for investigating the intricate process of policy implementation.

The second-generation of studies focused more on elucidating the reasons behind the success or failure of implementation (Stewart et al., 2008) and played a significant role in advancing analytical frameworks and models to steer implementation research (Goggin et al., 1990). These studies can be broadly categorized into two approaches for policy implementation, known as top-down and bottom-up approaches (Stewart et al., 2008). This era was characterized by a notable debate later termed the top-down and bottom-up approaches and models of implementation research (Pulzl & Treib, 2007). Distinguished scholars like Meter and Horn, Maznamin, and Sabatier exemplified the top-down model in explaining implementation, while advocates of the bottom-up perspective, such as Elmore and Lipsky, stressed that implementation involves the day-to-day problem-solving strategies of "street-level bureaucrats" (Pulzl & Treib, 2007). Meter and Horn's (1975) top-down model delineate six variables that influence the connection between policy and performance, encompassing policy standards and objectives, available resources, intergovernmental communication and enforcement activities, characteristics of implementing agencies, economic, social, and political conditions, as well as the inclinations of the implementers.

On the flip side, the bottom-up approach underscores the significance of local-level administrators who are directly engaged in executing policies in line with their duty to achieve the policy's goals and objectives (Birkland, 2005). This approach proposes that studying policy implementation is most effectively accomplished by commencing at the lower echelons of the implementation system or hierarchy and progressing upward to evaluate the varying degrees of success in implementation (Bachrach & Baratz, as cited in Raads chelders, 2003).

Advocates of the bottom-up perspective place a spotlight on policy implementers at the local level, specifically the activities of bureaucrats. In this context, Lipsky (1980) introduced the term "street-level bureaucrats" and asserted that they constitute the front-line public officials responsible for carrying out government policies. Lipsky's concept regards these street-level bureaucrats as the true policymakers and enhances our comprehension of how their discretionary powers and decisions impact the achievement of successful outcomes.

Once more, scholars often seek to blend the two approaches or create a fusion of them. They argue that policymakers should utilize policy tools based on the characteristics of the target

groups (as discussed by Sabatier in 1988 and Goggin et al. in 1990). The hybrid approach posits that the outcome of implementation is influenced by factors at both the central and local levels (as described by Goggin et al. in 1990). Both the top-down and bottom-up approaches face criticism for their limited explanatory power regarding the intricacies of implementation within their respective analytical frameworks (as pointed out by Stewart et al. in 2008). Furthermore, none have succeeded in substantiating the propositions derived from earlier perspectives, including the hybrid, or synthesized one (as indicated by Goggin et al. in 1990).

Significantly, third-generation research sought to bridge the divide between top-down and bottom-up approaches by integrating insights from both schools of thought into their theoretical models, as indicated by Pull and Treib in 2007. The primary objective of this third-generation research was to enhance the scientific rigor in the study of implementation compared to its predecessors. This form of research aimed to directly address the conceptual and measurement challenges that have hindered progress in the field, as noted by Goggin et al. in 1990. It placed a strong emphasis on formulating precise hypotheses, developing appropriate operational definitions, and generating empirical observations for hypothesis testing, as highlighted by Pulzl and Treib in 2007.

It is evident that policy implementation in its current state is primarily reliant on a limited set of theoretical models, frameworks, or approaches, rather than generating comprehensive grand theories. Consequently, numerous scholars in the field of policy implementation now concur that future research efforts should be directed towards the development of new theories (Stewart et al., 2008). In essence, policy implementation as a discipline appears to have a deficiency in the creation of comprehensive theories or grand theories, despite the presence of some theoretical models and approaches in the existing literature. This lack of theoretical sophistication is a significant issue within policy implementation and has a profound impact on policy performance, as the success of a policy hinges on its effective implementation.

Policy implementation, a significant challenge faced by developing nations like Ethiopia, as noted by Makinde (2005), is a multifaceted endeavor. Anagnostou et al. (2010) describe it as an inherently political and fiercely contested process, encompassing interactions at the local, national, and international levels, particularly in the context of media policy formulation and

execution. In line with this, Adamolekun (1983) and Egonmwan (1991) define media policy implementation as not only the execution of established policies but also the conversion of various resources, such as finances, materials, technology, and human capital, into tangible outcomes like goods and services.

However, recent research conducted by Nweke (2006), Ajaegbu (2010), and Eze (2010) has revealed that the effectiveness of policy implementation is primarily contingent upon its initial formulation. As Makinde (2005) asserts, creating a policy, whether through legislative action, executive orders, or regulatory mandates, that imposes adverse consequences on the people it impacts is inappropriate within their social context. Consequently, issues in implementation arise when the intended outcomes for the target beneficiaries are not realized. As Makinde suggests, for a policy to achieve success, it should involve the participation of the target beneficiaries during the formulation stage, allowing them to have a say in matters affecting their lives. Another challenge tied to policy implementation pertains to insufficient attention given to the human resources and financial assets crucial for its effective execution.

As highlighted by Bezabih in 2009, the fundamental obstacles encountered in the execution of public service delivery policy in Ethiopia stem from the intricate nature of policy prerequisites, the presence of various obstacles, and contextual elements. These challenges encompass constrained service capabilities within civil service and institutions, discontent among staff, insufficient resources like financial support and facilities for policy implementation, and a lack of awareness among staff members about policy discussions. These factors collectively impede the policy's successful realization of its intended objectives, as articulated by Bezabih.

## **2.9 Challenges to policy implementation**

Egonmwan (2009) contends that the execution of public policies poses a significant challenge for developing nations. The task of implementing public policies is already complex in developed countries, but it becomes even more formidable in developing countries, particularly in reform-oriented governments within regions like Africa and Latin America. Frequently, the main issue lies in the growing disconnect between the intended objectives and the actual outcomes." This argument is reinforced by Weimer and Vinning (1992), who liken the process of policy

implementation to a marital relationship: If policy adoption can be seen as courtship, then implementation is akin to marriage. Courtship involves the formation of alliances, much like a couple working to secure the approval of their respective families and even the acceptance of their own children from prior marriages.

Not all courtships are successful; however, with the wedding comes the implementation of the wedding agreements. The couple must constantly work to keep their marriage healthy in an ever-changing environment. At some point, they may become so accommodating to each other that the marriage stays healthy with little conscious effort. Perhaps achieving this latter condition, though not always permanent, represents the closest we can come to declaring a successful implementation". Implementation scholars exhibit wide differences on a number of crucial issues. Where implementation starts or ends, the riot is settled. While implementation is commonly referred to as a stage, the boundaries are not clear. The authors vary in their selection of critical factors affecting implementation.

Implementation is an important component of the policymaking process, and it is widely explained and discussed by scholars. Policy implementation is what develops between the establishment of an apparent intention on the part of the government to do something or to stop doing something and the ultimate impact in the world of action (O'Toole, 2000).

According to Dye (2011), implementation encompasses a wide range of actions aimed at putting into effect the policies established by the legislative branch. These actions encompass the establishment of fresh entities, divisions, authorities, offices, or the allocation of fresh duties to existing organizations, the transformation of laws into practical operational guidelines, and all activities entailing choices to specify policy. The execution of policies entails various duties carried out by professionals and government officials.

Determining the elements or circumstances that support effective execution is a challenging task, as it heavily relies on the prevailing political, economic, and societal circumstances. For instance, factors specific to a particular region, such as its size and institutional intricacies, significantly influence policy responses (McLaughlin, 1987). Payne (2008) contends that seeking universal solutions without recognizing the unique context can result in disjointed



implementation efforts. Consequently, there is no universally applicable policy that suits every situation.

Alternatively, Fullan (2009) offers recommendations for achieving effective policy outcomes. Success in policy implementation means that government agencies adhere to statutory directives, are responsible for achieving specific success indicators, attain the objectives outlined in the legislation, fulfill local objectives, or bring about an improvement in the program's political environment. The success of policy hinges on the capacity of local entities, the availability of sufficient resources, and the clarity of objectives, as noted by McLaughlin (1987). Consequently, there are several prerequisites that must be met to improve the likelihood of successful and enduring implementation, although these requirements may differ from one system to another, as observed by Lucie (2013).

# **CHAPTER THREE**

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

Under this chapter, the main task is to deal with the methodological approaches that the researcher used in the research. These are research design, sampling technique, sampling size, methods of data collection and instruments, data analysis, and interpretation.

### **3.2 Research Design**

Research designs are types of inquiry with qualitative method approaches that provide specific direction for procedures in a research study, whereas research methods involve the forms of data collection, analysis, and interpretation that researchers propose for their studies (Creswell, 2014). Descriptive research are used to obtain information concerning the current status of phenomena and to describe "what exists" with respect to variables or conditions in a situation (Anastas, 1999).

Therefore, this descriptive research will mainly focus on examination and understanding of the perspectives, perceptions, and opinions of those individuals who are involved and affected by the media regulatory policy, as well also on the identification of the practices and challenges of the print media sector, referring to the Ethiopian Press Agency, Reporter newspaper, and Capital newspaper. In the broadcast sector, he used the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation and Fana as examples.

The research reflects, explore, and disseminate the views, feelings, and experiences of research participants. Thus, bearing this in mind, such a qualitative research method will be employed, and it is possible to collect more qualitative and context-based data about the perceptions and opinions of leaders and experts and those who are engaged in the media, the media regulatory policy practices, and challenges in the sector.

Thus, this research is designed to assess the implementation of media regulatory policy in Ethiopia, with a focus on those five media organizations. Therefore, owing to the objectives, research questions and nature of the issue under investigation, particularly its emphasis on assessing the implementation of media regulatory policy, the research will employ a qualitative research approach.

The rationale for using the qualitative method is that the qualitative research method aims to address questions concerned with developing an understanding of the meaning and practices of humans' lives and social worlds (Davidson et al., 2002). It also provides rich data and a deeper understanding of the phenomena under study (Hancock, 2002). In addition to this, qualitative research explores attitudes, behaviors, and experiences through in-depth interviews with key informants who have knowledge about the issue under study. The aim of this thesis is to assess the implementation of media regulatory policy in Ethiopia, referring to five media organizations practices and challenges.

As a result, this thesis attempts to assess the implementation of media regulatory policy in Ethiopia. A qualitative approach is better suited to allow the researcher to investigate initial participant responses by using open-ended questions asking "why" or "how" so that the respondents can give detailed answers with full freedom and flexibility. The main reason to use this method is to enable informants and participants to express their ideas in their own words freely and get the full picture of the situation.

Qualitative research strives to collect, integrate, and present data from a variety of sources of evidence as part of any given study. The variety will likely follow from your having to study a real-world setting and its participants. The complexity of the field setting and the diversity of its participants are likely to warrant the use of interviews, observations, and even the inspection of documents and artifacts. (Yin, 2011: 9).

### **3.3 Target Population and Sampling**

#### **3.3.1 Target Population**

This research attempts to assess the implementation of media regulation policy in Ethiopia in the cases of the Ethiopian Press Agency, Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, Fana Broadcasting Corporation, Reporter News Paper, and Capital News Paper. The study focuses on the assessment of the implementation of media regulatory policy, referring to the Ethiopian Mass Media Service Media Proclamation 1238/2021. This research gives clarity and publicity to the media regularity policy in Ethiopia and explain how the law and policy are implemented in Ethiopia.

A researcher draws a sample from all items in any field of inquiry that constitute a ‘universe’ or ‘population (Kothari, 2004). Therefore, the target population for this research will be journalists from those five selected media, or heads of relevant departments from the Ethiopian Media Authority, university lecturers, professional associations, and parliamentarians.

#### **3.3.2 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques**

##### **3.3.2.1 Sampling Techniques**

Kothari (2004) sorted out that the sampling method involves the purposeful or deliberate selection of particular units from the universe. Due to financial and time limitations, assessing all the stakeholders in the print media institution will be difficult. Therefore, taking a sample and exploring the issue through an explanatory research design can provide an opportunity for the researcher to answer the research questions of the thesis.

According to Oliver (2012), purposive sampling is a form of non-probability sampling in which decisions concerning the individuals to be included in the sample are taken by the researcher based upon a variety of criteria, which may include detailed experience and knowledge of the research issue or willingness to participate in the research. Some types of research design necessitate researchers taking a decision about the individual participants who would be most likely to contribute appropriate data, both in terms of relevance and depth.

In order to get the research participants, the researcher apply a non-probability sampling technique. Based on the research problem that the study intends to address, the researcher use snowball and purposeful sampling, both of which are non-probability sampling methods. The rationale behind the selection of purposive sampling is to enhance understandings of selected individuals or groups' experiences, which can be accomplished by selecting participants that provide the greatest insight into the research question.

Although sample size is highly subjected to the time, resources available to the study, the researcher needs to consider two criteria to set the maximum or Although sample size is highly subjected to the time and resources available to the study, the researcher needs to consider two criteria to set the maximum or "enough" number of participants. The first one is sufficiency in which the researcher tries to determine if the number of participants is sufficient to reflect the assortment of participants that make up the general population. The population represented in the sample might have a chance to connect to the experience of those participating in the research. The second criterion is saturation of information, in which the researcher reaches the point of having the sense of hearing the same information repetitively and no longer expects to learn something new.

Hence, the researcher has used the principle of saturation by adding new subjects until the point is reached where the researcher feels that she no longer encounters any new information. The study will use a sample of 120 participants from the total size (Among the 3817 employees on five media outlets) of the five media outlets in the institutions. After that, by using the snowball sampling method, the researcher would select those 120 respondents. For the qualitative part, the researcher employ key informant interviews with the purposively selected participants of the study until the data saturation level is attained.

### **3.4 Tools of Data Collection**

This study utilizes a variety of data collection tools to elicit the relevant data for the study. Qualitative tools for data collection are planned to be used. Purposive sampling, which is non-probability sampling, would be employed to collect the qualitative data from participants for in-depth and key informant interviews until the data saturation level is attained. The

underlying assumption behind this technique is that since there is no guarantee that each item of the population will be included in the sample, the researcher must use his or her judgment to select a smaller sample out of the entire population that is believed to be representative of the whole population (Kothari, 2004).

### **3.4.1. Key Informant Interview**

The first data collection tool is an in-depth interview. "In-depth interview" is an ideal method to obtain detailed information on cultural beliefs and practices from the perspective of the participant (Kiswahili Study Group, 1994). Consequently, an in-depth interview conducted with the Head of the Monitoring Department of the Ethiopian Media Authority, Head of Registration and Capacity Building Department of the Ethiopian Media Authority, Editorial Sector Deputy Executive Manager of the Ethiopian Press Agency, Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, Fina Broadcasting Corporation, Reporter News Paper, and Capital News Paper, and Chairperson of the Ethiopian Journalists Association (Press Council). During the interview, the researcher could learn about the participants views on the topic of interest, their terminology and judgments, and their perceptions and experiences (Kiswahili Study Group, 1994). In this type of interview, the researcher wants to know specific information, which can be compared and contrasted with information gained in other interviews. To do this, the same questions need to be asked in each interview (Dawson, 2007).

The qualitative interview is flexible, dynamic non-directive, unstructured, non-standardized and open-ended. Taylor and Bogadan (1984:77) see the qualitative interview as "repeated face-to-face encounters between the researcher and informants' perspectives on their lives, experiences, or situations as expressed in their own words." Qualitative interviews are particularly suitable for studying individuals' understanding of their world, for describing their experiences and self-understanding, and for clarifying and elaborating their perspective of their world (Seidman, 1998:3-4). Considering this, this research attempts to explore how journalists in those five media organizations understanding the new media proclamations and how they implemented the law.

### 3.4.2 Questionnaire

It is believed that we often use questionnaires in our research as a quantitative research method. However, there are times when it is important to measure people's personal observations and behaviors that cannot be answered through interviews or gripe discussion. Therefore, when we are faced with situations like this, we can sometimes use questionnaires for qualitative research. Various scholars have expressed their opinions on this matter, and let's look at some of them.

Some attention has been paid to the context of data collection. For instance, Schwarz (1999) suggests that the researcher involvement in the questionnaire-filling process can be problematic if he or she reveals what the topic of interest is, and if the sequencing of questionnaire themes influences responses. Much of this quality improvement work, however, is silent about what is not readily observable and measurable: the meaning respondents attribute to the questions they answer. While quality assurance to assess scale and survey validity has become synonymous with using statistical tools and standards, little attention has been paid to the questions themselves and the way in which individuals interpret them (Gobo & Maugeri, 2014; Hardy & Ford, 2014). Researchers may often neglect whether targeted phenomena are clear and unambiguous enough to begin with so that they can be meaningfully accessed via surveys and scales borrowed from other studies.

Therefore, based on this, the researcher asked 120 experts in the five media that he studied to fill out a questionnaire. Managing directors, chief editors, editors, and reporters participated in this survey and were deceived. More closed-ended and some open-ended questionnaires would be used by the researcher to collect data. A closed-ended questionnaire would be used to collect background information from respondents and examine the practice, role, and challenges of implementing media regulatory policy in the selected organizations. Open-ended questions were also designed to permit a free response from the respondent rather than limit certain stated alternatives given by respondents. The researcher would prepare open-ended questions at the end of each thematic closed-ended questionnaire.

### **3.5 Units of Analysis**

The unit of analysis is an important idea in any research project. The unit of analysis is the major thing that is analyzed in a study. It is the ‘what’ or ‘who’ that is being studied. Units of analysis are essentially the things we examine in order to create summary descriptions of them and explain differences among them (Dawson, 2002). Thus, the major objective of this study was to assess the implementation of media regulatory policy in Ethiopia. The Ethiopian Press Agency, Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, Fina Broadcasting Corporation, Reporter Newspaper, and Capital Newspaper were the main print and broadcast media outlets that were examined throughout the study.

### **3.6 Procedures of data collection and method of analyses**

After collecting the necessary qualitative data, the researcher organized and schematize both secondary and primary sources according to where they belong and transcribe the recorded data word for word and present it accordingly. After repeatedly reading the transcribed data, codes created in order to make sense of the various and fragmented pieces of information gathered from the participants. Then, categories created based on the similarities and relationships of codes to merge the patterns observed in the data into meaningful units. Finally, qualitative data prepared, interpreted, and summarized by the researcher, which presented the qualitative description of analysis, such as discourse analysis, description, and narration of the informants, and theoretical analysis of events via creating themes.



## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This study was aimed at assessing the implementation of media regulatory policy in Ethiopia: the case of five selected media. The study was conducted using the qualitative research method, which employed in-depth interviews, questioning, and group discussion with quantitative data. In addition to this, document analyses were employed as instruments for data collection. In this chapter, the study presents the data gathered through examining primary sources (i.e., questioners, in-depth interviews, group discussions, and secondary sources (i.e., media regulatory policy documents)) and through analysis, as highlighted in the previous chapters.

#### **4.2 Demographic characteristics of the respondents**

The demographic background of the research participants consists of age, sex, level of education, position held, and work experience in selected five different Ethiopian media (Ethiopian Press Agency, Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, Fina Broadcasting Corporate, Ethiopian Reporter News Paper, and Capital News Paper). For the confidentiality of the participants, the researcher coded them as JP 1-120, which means journalist participant. The purpose of this background information is to show the distribution of respondents by socio-demographic characteristics such as age, education level, sex, current position, and service year.

##### **4.2.1 The demographic characteristics of 120 respondents**

Among the 3817 employed by five media outlets, 120 professionals were included as input for this study, 36 percent of the respondents are in the age bracket of 20-30, 48 percent are in the age of 30-40, age of 40-50 percent are 48 percent and the remaining 12 are in the age of 50-60. About the educational level 105 .6 percent of the respondents are BA degree holders, 36 percent Masters holders and 2.4 percent are diploma graduates. Concerning the sex of respondents, 108 percent are male and the remaining 36 are female. The position of the respondents, 54 percent are

editors, 36 percent are reporters and 48 percent are Deputy Editor in Chiefs. Last, about the experience of respondents, 24 percent 1-5 years, 30 percent are 5-10 years, 48 percent are 10-15 years, 30 percent are 20-25 years and 12percent are 25-30 years.

### **4.3 The extent of clarity, major elements, training, familiarity, and accessibility of the media regulatory policy in Ethiopia.**

Among the media professionals who filled out the questionnaire. The respondent's views on the clarity, major element, training familiarity, and accessibility of the media regulatory policy show that 36% of the respondents of the respondents strongly disagree, 60% disagree, and 30% are neutral with the familiarity of the media regulatory policy with journalists. 12 percent are agreed, and the rest six of them are strongly agreed. Therefore, this shows that the journalists are not familiar with the media regulatory policy. The mean of the respondents is 140.2.

The media regulatory policy in the country includes major contents as viewed from the nature of the media sector: 42% are strongly disagreeing, 48% of them are disagreeing, and 30% of the respondents are neutral. 12% and 6% of respondents agreed and strongly agreed, respectively. This shows that most of the respondents disagree with the item. The media regulatory policy does not include major elements. The mean for this item is 134.4.

The next item is the clarity and publicity of the policy. The result shows 48% strongly disagree, 42% disagree, 30% of respondents are neutral, 18% of them agree, and the remaining 6% strongly agree. This shows it lacks clarity. The mean for this item is 139.2.

The next item is the accessibility of the policy. So, the result shows that 36% strongly disagree and 42% disagree. 36% of them are neutral, 18% agree, and 12% strongly agree, respectively. Over 78% disagree. This obviously means it is not easily accessible. The mean for this item is 134.4.

The last box is about training. 48% and 42% of the respondents said there is no training, and 24% were neutral. It can be said that there is no training in each media organization about the media regulatory policy. The mean for this item is 134.4.

#### **4.4 Implementation of media regulatory policy functions, press proclamation, and the right to information and freedom of expression as stipulated in Article 29 of the FDRE Constitution**

In this study, a question was presented to selected experts as to how well the implementation of the media regulation policy is compatible with the Freedom of Speech stipulated in Article 29, of the Federal Constitution. In this case the first item is specific programs in media organizations, like institutional re-arrangement and editorial reform, which help implement the policy in the right way. In this case, 42% of respondents strongly disagree, 36% disagree, 24% are neutral, 24% agree, and the remaining 18% are strongly agree. This means that editorial reform in those five selected media organizations is not supporting the implementation of media regulatory policy. It is against the constitution and press proclamation. This is supported by the 129.6 mean.

The second item, which is media regulatory policy, helps to ensure freedom of expression and the free press guaranteed in the FDRE constitution. In this case, 12% strongly disagree, 18% disagree, 36% are neutral, 42% of them agree, and the last 36% of respondents strongly agree. This shows that media regulatory policy helps to ensure freedom of expression. This is supported by the 115.2 mean.

The other item is that the introduction of media regulatory policy helps the media institution function accordingly. 12% are strongly disagreed with, 12% are disagreed with, and 42% are neutral. 48% and 30% of respondents agreed and strongly agreed. This is supported by the 120-mean

The last item is that, after the introduction of media regulatory policy, there has been an opportunity to improve the media landscape in Ethiopia, particularly in their organization. In this item, 18% strongly disagree, 27.6% of them disagree, 24% are neutral, 44.4 of respondents agree, and 30% strongly agree. Therefore, two supported items show that there is improvement in the media landscape after the introduction of media regulatory policy.

#### **4.5 The drafting and finalization of the media regulatory policy, its contribution to freedom of the press, and how it started to serve the public**

One of the core questions that the study explores is that the Media Proclamation Act provides an opportunity for those responsible to submit their own observations on how well the Media Proclamation Act protects against possible harm to Freedom of Speech and society. Similarly, it deals with the implementation of media regulatory policy, starting from its drafting up to the finalization process. Then, in the first item, about 66% of the respondents stated that it has contributed to ensuring freedom of expression and the right to information. The mean for this is 140.4.

As far as the drafting and finalization process is concerned, 30% of respondents strongly disagree, 48% disagree, 42% are neutral, 12% agree, and 12% strongly agree. Thus, it is hard to say whether it was participatory or not since most of the respondents are neutral. Regarding public interest, 24% strongly disagree, 42% disagree, 30% of them are neutral, 30% agree, and 12% strongly agree. That shows most of the respondents are not sure whether the media institution is serving the public in a proper way.

#### **4.6 Challenges of media regulatory policy in selected media institutions**

The challenges faced by both institutions and professionals in the implementation process after the approval of the mass media decrees were tried to see. It discusses the challenges related to media regulatory policy implementations. In the first item, 26.6% strongly disagree, 27.6% disagree, 42% are neutral, 30% are agreed, and 18% are strongly agreed about the lack of interest and communication between the implementation institutions. This is supported by the 129.8 mean.

The next item concerns challenges caused by a lack of partnership between the regulatory body (EMA) and the implementing body; in this case, 24% of respondents strongly disagree, 39.6% disagree, 36% are neutral, 24% of them agree, and 20% respondent strongly agree. This is supported by the 127.68 mean.

And the last item deals with the lack of recourse in the implementation of regulatory policy. In this case, 18% strongly disagree, 18% of them also disagree, 42% of them are neutral, and 54%

and 11% of the respondents agree and strongly agree, respectively. Therefore, the implementation of media regulatory policy in those selected media institutions is challenged by a lack of adequate resources.

#### **4.7 Participants views on the extent of clarity of the media regulatory policy in Ethiopia**

According to participants of the study gave their opinion in the interview, noted that Proclamation No. 1238/2021 is said to be the governing regulation law over all the media, including the print media. The Proclamation has stated a few things about the freedom of the media. As the first step to being clear with the media regulatory policy towards the media, the meaning of the proclamation must be defined. It has sometimes nothing or less. The broadcasting service proclamation 1238/2021 is mostly for the broadcasting media (radio and television), added Equally, and stated that the definition and the spirit of the proclamation are mostly or totally about the broadcast media. However, the government communication establishment proclamation on the other side has stated that the press regulatory work is given to the EMA. There is no clarity between the government organs.

In addition to this, the concept of media regulatory policy is government-driven. It was sent from the government side to the various media institutions. Regarding conceptual clarity, I think that the media in general is not that aware of the media regulatory policy. This is since it is thrown from the top down to the media. Therefore, there is clarity about that policy up in the top leadership of media organizations but not in the lower staff, as **interviewee** sorted out.

Among the journalists who were interviewed, he was asked about his understanding of the media decree that Ethiopia approved three years ago, and he replied, "On my side, I don't even know that Ethiopia has a media regulatory policy." The other expert on the other hand stated that, since recently, the country has had no positive image when it comes to the media sector. It is not a country where the media has enjoyed freedom of expression. Particularly, the executive branch of the government has been diminishing the role of the media. Therefore, I can say that the clarity of media regulation was blurred. There was heavy-handed government interference, so the clarity of media policies was unclear. EMA has been dictating that the newspaper columns and

airtime are the resources of the Ethiopian people. It is not given to someone else. This implies that there is such high interest among government officials that they want to reflect the interests of the executive body. So, I can say that it is vague.

Media regulatory policy is the result of a given political community. Media regulatory policy is also a reflection of that. Ethiopia has been governed by an ideology called revolutionary democracy. So, the political ideology and its outlook towards the media are not clear. The same is true when it comes to the regulatory body and the implementation of the media regulatory policy. Regulation was misused by controlling the media. And this is a result of the ideology of the government. The policy and ideology were vague by themselves.

Regarding this issue, one of the participants said, "We shall look at it from two different perspectives. The first one is: who is the regulatory organ? In my observation, it is not only EMA. Mass media organizations, especially in the print media sector, such as press councils and the like, have been given the responsibility to regulate themselves. So, I understand that there are also other stakeholders in addition to EMA. There is no clear-cut, defined, and organized regulatory process in the media sector." He/she explained.

According to the participants, concerning the conceptual understanding of media regulatory policy, be it due to the limitation on my side or the fact that the policy is not publicized and accessible, it has little clarity. The other most controversial laws, such as the mass media law, are very popular, unlike the issue that we are discussing now. The participant said, they have no information about the media regulatory policy in Ethiopia.

The media regulatory policy and regulation process of the print media are not clear to most of the respondents. The policy didn't mention the powers and authorities about print media content regulation. In fact, it lacks clarity. Therefore, the print media reads the proclamation and tries to adhere to it only by implication. From this point, it can be concluded that the proclamation lacks conceptual clarity when it comes to print media.

#### **4.8 Major contents of media regulatory policy in Ethiopia with reference to the print media sector**

Broadly speaking, the major elements of the policy include: a) a system of regulation conducive to freedom of expression and diversity of views; b) using the media as a platform for open discourse; c) institutionalizing independent media; and d) capacity building, underscored in one of interviewee.

The press regulation process, in accordance with Mass Media Proclamation No. 1238/2021, Article 25 (1), dictates that regulation in the print media should start with checking the following: a) the permanent address of the magazine or newspaper; b) the details of its editor-in-chief, permanent address, house number, and telephone number; c) the printing date and volume number; and e) the name and address of the publisher.

Most of participant believed that EMA should register the names and addresses of print media institutions, including those that have recently entered the market, and check the prerequisites. However, there are no activities of content regulation in the authority concerning print media, as the proclamation has not yet indicated which institution has to do content regulations the other participant says, these are the major elements of media regulatory policy in the country about the print media.

The other participant said, the Attorney General is going to check print media outlets after they produce articles or editorials that do not respect the media laws and the constitution. If they produce provocative news that invites people into conflicts, hinders mutual coexistence, and disrespects diversity of culture, belief, and religion, I know that the Attorney General has given them the authority to proceed with the legal procedures.

And added that the major elements of the media regulatory policy in Ethiopia in relation to the print media are limited to licensing and registration by EMA.

*"I see that there is not organized policy engagement in the country when it comes to the print media sector. There are many things illustrated in the press law and freedom of expression proclamation specifically for the print media sector that range from rights to accountability.*

*There are also others given to EMA. However, I am not very clear with the specific elements of the Ethiopian media regulatory policy listed in relation to the print media sector.*

According to one of the senior media editors who participated in the interview, the first one is the constitution. The other one is the policy that was stated by peviess Speaker, the press law and freedom of expression proclamation, the broadcasting service proclamation, the Ethiopian Press Agency and Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation Establishment Proclamation, and the editorial policy.

Another editor involved in the study, media institutions must draft their own policies, such as editorial policies, that can serve as regulatory policies. In this case, institutions can have their own regulatory policy elements. Due to this reason, there are different elements of regulatory policy. Specifically, I have no assessment of the print media regulation process.

In addition to these points there are different laws and proclamations in the country about the media in general. However, the executive body has not been abiding by these laws and proclamations. The same is true of the media regulatory policy. In the modern world, the media has developed a mechanism of self-regulation in order to protect itself from government interference. There is an experience of self-regulation through the establishment of media councils. Therefore, the elements are those enshrined in the constitution and media proclamation about the media.

*"To know about the elements of media regulatory policy, I must witness that these elements are practicing in the print media sector. Thus, I didn't see this in my institution, so I don't know the major elements of media regulatory policy in the print media sector. As far as my knowledge about the regulation process in the Ethiopian Press Agency is concerned, it is made by the editorial policy. For instance, the constitution states that in any public media, there must be diversity of perception and freedom of expression. In my personal observation, I didn't witness this practice in the EPA. And I didn't see the regulatory body checking the implementation process.*

The main elements are licensing, checking the permanent location and address of the editor in chief, volume number, and publisher.



Most of the discussants support these regulatory mechanisms of the EMA in order to check the proper implementation of media laws, proclamations, and even those enshrined in the FDRE constitution, Article 29 (2).

Participants indicated that the regulatory policy elements of the broadcasting service are clear to all of us. However, the regulatory policy elements about the print media are obscure. Particularly, the public print media have their own specific editorial policies to operate and regulate their implementation process. But when we look at the issues of the private print media, the regulatory body is the institution that provides them with licenses. According to my information, EMA is not undertaking proper regulatory activities accordingly. There is high confusion in the elements and implementation process. EMA is regulating only broadcasters. Giving licenses doesn't mean regulating them. If so, that could be taken as the main element given to EMA to regulate the print media.

They stressed that there is no clear element of the media regulatory policy given to the print media sector. There were only monitoring activities. It was monitoring their editorial content for the sake of its interest since it was an extension of the executive body. Therefore, with these limitations referring to the print media, the major elements as supported by most of participants on this research and as stipulated in Mass Media Proclamation No. 1238/2021, Article 25 (1), are checking the following: a) the permanent address of the magazine or newspaper; b) the details of its Editor-in-Chief, permanent address, house number, telephone number; c) printing date and volume number; and e) the name and address of the publisher. It can be deduced that content regulation was missed.

#### **4.9 Implementation of media regulatory policy as per the right to information and freedom of expression and the FDRE constitution**

Being an optimist, one of interviewee argued that regardless of a difficult political environment, Ethiopia has a thriving media freedom and social media sector that could provide platforms for dialogue on key government and development issues. In this perspective, I can say that opportunities are created to allow citizens access to information through limited media. However, the sector is still being challenged by a lack of professionalism and unethical and

irresponsible acts. To add to this, the regulatory body is not discharging its responsibility per the laws.

The second KII also supported the above opinion, adding that media cheers an enabling environment to work freely. There is no censorship. In accordance with the press freedom proclamation and the media proclamations in the constitution, the media is functioning independently without interference. After that proclamation, the country has seen the proliferation of different media institutions, including those of the private print media and broadcast media outlets. I can say that this is an improvement. Under the national law and the universal media freedoms, there are media outlets operating in the country. In terms of number, they are increasing. The regulatory body does not say, do this or don't do this. But after transmission, as is normal everywhere in the world, content regulation is done based on the media regulation policy stated in the proclamation and in accordance with the principles of media and journalism. It tries to ensure whether they are executing their social responsibility or not, whether they are respecting the principles or not, after transmission.

But two of them stand against this argument. Specially, previous participant of the study opted Ethiopia has no good picture in the media sector. There have been various accusations of media rights violations by the government of Ethiopia for so many years in the past by various freedom groups and journalists' associations. It is not a country where the media has enjoyed maximum freedom and independence. The ruling party has been trying to diminish the role of the media, unless it is predominantly using the media for political propaganda. Therefore, I can say that this is due to the worst implementation of media policies, including the media regulatory policy. There is still a long hand of politicians and structural government interference, so the implementation of media policies was not successful. EMA has not even been checking the implementation process other than controlling media. So how can the freedom of expression and the right to information of citizens be supported by the policy? he puts the implementation process of the media regulatory policy under question.

It has been observed that policy implementation is one of the major problems confronting developing nations (Makonde, 2005), of which Ethiopia is one. According to Anagnostou et al. (2010), media policy formulation and implementation are conceptualized as an intrinsically

political and intensely contested process that simultaneously involves local, national, and international dynamics.

In addition to this, went on to say that the implementation of media regulatory policy is characterized by failure since good policy implementation requires strong communication between the policy actors. In our case, the media regulatory policy has miscommunications starting from its draft preparation and finalization. The other participant also supported this perception and added that limitations in resources (human, technological, and material) are challenging the implementation of media regulatory policy. We have been governed by a series of ideologies called revolutionary democracy. So, in the public interest of media freedom, the ideology and its outlook towards the media are not clear. The same is true when it comes to the regulatory body and the implementation of the media regulatory policy. Regulation was misused by controlling the media. And this is a result of the ideology of the government.

EPA and EBC have their own editorial policies derived from the media proclamation and the constitution. The editorial policy itself has no problem. It was coined professionally. However, it has two basic problems. One is that it has not been familiarized with the staff. Secondly, it is not updated in relation to the various laws adopted in the country over time. It has to be seriously viewed from the angle of freedom of expression and the right to information. The top management has the chance of interfering in the editorial work, as stated in that policy.

The mass media proclamation and freedom of expression state that media managers have no right to be involved in operational editorial activities except for orientation. This is to protect bias. However, editorial policy is not triangulated in conformity with this proclamation. It is not revised. This has created an opportunity for the manager to even take part in editing. The editorial committee is chaired by the manager, which is totally against the stated proclamation.

The proclamation and media law noted that the editorial committee is chaired by an expired member nominated from within the committee itself. Editorial policy is on the other side in this regard. It states that the manager is the chair of the editorial committee. It should be revised according to the national media policy. This indicates that media policy, including regulatory policy, is not structurally guaranteed. The presence of policy does not matter in such conditions.

I concluded that this was due to the absence of a proper media regulation process. This is weakening the chances and development of media freedom and the right to information.

*(FGD5) The history of media in Ethiopia is that in the Imperial era and that of the Derg regime, there was a government organ called the Ministry of Information. It was responsible for implementing media policies during the respective periods. Until the most recent period, the media was the reflection of the government's political ideology and policy. It has been sending government directions to all media organizations to be entertained. There has been confrontation between public relations activities and the media. Managers are political appointees. They are coming to the media to implement their political interests, not to exercise media activities. After that, they install editors that will accept everything. Critics and professional editors are not needed here. Therefore, the priority here is the government's interest rather than professionalism or the public's interest. I knew print media outlets like Iletawi Addis, an Amharic daily, for practicing professional media and journalism. Therefore, management interference is hindering the freedom of the media and the rights that are enshrined in the constitution.*

Editorials should be chaired by the editor-in-chief; however, the practice is different. The absence of assertive professional journalists and editorial independence are additional problems.

To list the things that I think they should be improved, noted one of participant, i) political affiliation and media must be separated; ii) the other thing is that EPA and EBC are accountable for the parliament. There is no need for managers to come through the party line. The parliament has to be provided with a legal framework to check the qualifications of managers nominated by the Prime Minister other than political affiliation and the issue of censorship.

He sorted out the affairs of the Editor-in-Chief and must be given due attention. S/he must be free from politics starting with the appointment. Editorial independence must be ensured. The media regulatory organ has to be active to check on these issues for the sake of improving freedom of expression and the right to information. Unless and until others are wise, other media policies could not be properly implemented.

On the same talk, the other noted there should be improvement in three things: I) the policy itself should be updated; ii) its implementation process must be improved; and iii) professional development. He shared the same point with all the other discussants in terms of editorial independence and political affiliations. The provisions stipulated in the media regulatory policy concerning editors and editorial committees are not being implemented. The editor and deputy editor are appointed by the general managers. This is against the media's regulatory policy and editorial policy as well.

Supported the arguments by mentioning that the relationship between media ownership and editorial operation should also be stated clearly in the media regulatory policy. This also works not only for the public media but also for the private media. For example, in political parties that have their own media, how the editorial team must be functioning should be stated. Media governance for media owned by any political party has to be well defined in the policy.

To add some points, there are several print media outlets in each media organization. Their function has to be defined in the policy. For instance, the Ethiopian Herald (an English daily) is targeted only for image building. This by itself is suffocating. It has no way to entertain criticism. In relation to this, when we sit for an editorial meeting, the editorial committee must be independent, and the chair of that committee is necessarily the editor-in-chief of that newspaper. The same is true for other newspapers published and distributed by the EPA. This needs clear and defined provisions in the media regulatory policy, particularly in the public print media sector. The other thing is criticism. Criticizing senior government officials is a criminal offense currently. It should not be dealt with as a criminal case; it should be a civil case from a legal perspective.

In a heated debate in this issue, I was asked a critical question by one of interviewee about what happens if an organization publishes several newspapers and magazines. How could the editorial committee function? What seems to be the experience of other countries in this regard? Who has more information on this point?

In his responses, one of editor in-chief said, I have visited media outlets in Egypt and Uganda, for example. It is incomparable with our experience. The experience of *Al Haram* newspaper in

Egypt is that it has editorial independence. The editor of *Al Ahram* is more powerful in terms of position than Egypt's Information Minister. The editor is not a member of the management. Other members of the editorial committee are members of the board of media management. This is in order to empower the editorial committee members and raise their concerns with the board. The role of the editor-in-chief is to create connections, not control journalists. They have editorial independence. The final say in any media in Egypt is that of the editor-in-chief. The same is true for some of the various media institutions in Uganda. This is how they work. Our case is different from this.

The Ugandan Vision functions similarly. In both countries, editors have the highest chance of being promoted. In Ethiopia, editors have no place to grow up. Due to this, they are not ambitious. Two things are missed in Ethiopia when it comes to media management. One is that media principles are thrown apart structurally. And secondly, the status of editors is undermined by the top managers of media organizations.

In addition to this, **media** managers and board chairpersons are members of the ruling party. There are different political ambitions among them. This has its own negative impact on the freedom of the media and the right to information. These days, the manager of a given media institution assumes the role of board chair of another media institution. There is a conflict of interest in such a way. The result of this conflict is that it hinders freedom of expression.

Article 29 of the Constitution is the most important provision that protects the media. It is the foundation for the rights to information, freedom of expression, and press freedom. Under the provisions of Article 29, it gives the people of Ethiopia the right to hold opinions, free expression, and thoughts. Specifically, it protects freedom of expression without interference, including the freedom to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas of all kinds regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any media of one's choice.

It also affords freedom of the press and the mass media by ensuring the opportunity for access to information of interest to the public and prohibiting censorship. Furthermore, Article 29 provides the right of the media to institutional independence and legal protection to enable the

accommodation of different ideas necessary to a democratic society in accordance with financing and ensuring its capacity to entertain diversity under the control of the state (FDRE Constitution 1995).

Therefore, the implementation of media regulatory policy in Ethiopia is characterized as not successful since there is an autocratic nature to the government and social systems. The rights of access to information and freedom of mass media and expression are not protected because the media regulatory policy developed to protect them is not being implemented properly due to a lack of communication, clarity, and limited resources.

#### **4.10 Participants views on the crafting and finalization process of the media regulatory policy in Ethiopia**

According to most of the media experts who participated in the interview have no information about the draft preparation and finalization process of the media regulatory policy. The drafting and finalization process for most of the media policies in the country is already known. After public participation, the final policy is always in the interest of the ruling party. Even so, they didn't include any input from the participants. That is the trend of policy in Ethiopia. It is always a top-down process. The result is usually in the interest of the government.

On the other hand, the person who was the leader of the media authority and was interviewed in the study, I participated in the drafting and finalization process for most of the media policies in the country, including the media regulatory policy. In our context, participation has many paradoxes. Things are usually brought to the table for discussion. After passing through several discussions, the result is usually in the interest of the government. In our country, public dialogue is fashionable. All policies developed a top-down approach. Discussions are used for the sake of public relations and for the sake of public consumption.

The public perception in our context these days is that every draft policy is acceptable to the parliament. The policy process in Ethiopia is entirely done by the government (executive). The finalization process of the media regulatory policy couldn't be different from this policy development trend.

In this regard, the most controversial press law was among the policies that sparked heated public debate. But finally, as we all know, what happened was the final draft of the policy was in the interest of the government.

*The participants in the most recent public debate on the policy draft to control hate speech were similar. The participants were handpicked* said a media expert who works in private media.

Most of them believed that there is no doubt that, starting from the incumbent constitution, there have been large numbers of public discussions. It was participatory. But the other participants were, noted, handpicked by the policy implementers. Therefore, the case of media regulatory policy would be the same. Media authority management staff who participate in this study, for his part, stated that draft policies are prepared by the executive organ. And since the parliamentarians are all members of the ruling political party, there is a high chance for policy approval. This is what I've been doing for a long time.

#### **4.11 Challenges of media regulatory policy implementation in Ethiopia**

One of editor who participate in this research was sorted out in the initial stages, but regulation was taken in the wrong direction. Regulation was viewed as controlling. It was difficult to educate the media owners and the general public about the importance and meaning of media regulation. However, through time, EMA managed to realize that, as everywhere in the world, media has to be regulated. And this regulation is totally different from controlling the media. Regulation is for the sake of better functioning of the media itself. Now, there is a better understanding among media operators and the general public that the media should be regulated. As a result of technological advancement, EMA has modern technologies to undertake regulation at this time.

He also pointed out the main challenges of media regulatory policy in Ethiopia as the following: a) lack of professionalism from the side of journalists; b) lack of adequate information and overall capability; c) polarized political environment; and d) lack of capacity of the regulatory body.



Most of key informant persons indicated the absence of proper professional associations; democratic institutions are the major challenges in the implementation process of the media regulatory policy in Ethiopia. Professional associations regulate print media in many countries around the world. However, there are no press councils to perform self-regulation.

The other main challenge is the interference of the ruling party during the policy process and policy implementation. In addition, the inaccessibility of the law is its challenge. It is top-down in its approach and lacks consistency in training for journalists and media managers. This created an awareness gap. As a result, its implementation process wouldn't be effective. Having the same stance with three, the interest of the media personnel in accessing the policy is low. Lack of a rewarding environment is another challenge.

Egon van (2009) argues that public policy implementation has been one of the major problems confronting developing countries. Implementation of public policy is difficult in first-world countries; it is more difficult in the third world, and it may be most difficult in reform-oriented governments in the third world, such as Africa and Latin America. Most often, it is the problem of a widening gap between intentions and results.

One of key informant person added that the global trend is similar. The regulation process for print media is done by various media councils. Even in the broadcasting regulation, in order to lessen the grievances that may come from the audience, the work of the media council is found important. They work jointly with respective regulatory bodies; thus, I can say that there are not that many strong regulatory institutions in the print media sector globally.

The challenges include, among others, the absence of strong professional associations (the media council), the fact that press regulation in most of the countries in the world is done by professional associations, and the interference of the ruling party during the policy process and policy implementation. noted a similar concern. In addition, the inaccessibility and publicity of the law are its challenges. It is top-down in its approach and lacks consistency in training for journalists and media managers. This created an awareness gap. As a result, its implementation process wouldn't be effective.

Having the same stance as three of interviewee added that the interest of the media personnel in accessing the policy is low. Lack of a rewarding environment is another challenge, according to them. They beg a bit of a different idea. Interest in knowing about new policies is that even though there is good policy, there is no possibility of translating it into action. They added that policy development and policy implementation should be institutionalized for effective implementation of any policy. Thus, the challenge for media regulatory policy emanates from weak policy implementation mechanisms. The participant of the study who works as an editor of one of the newspapers that are published privately and selected for the study, for his part, stated that when we think of media, there must be parallel political ideology. The media is directly related to liberal political ideology. Be it for its success or for its failure. In the Ethiopian context, the political ideology was revolutionary democracy and not supportive of the media. Freedom of expression, diversity of views and thought, and the media in general demand liberal views. The political ideology by itself was challenging for the media policies in the country.

There are plenty of laws in this country, said one interviewee, adding, however, that the media people are governing themselves by unwritten laws subconsciously. Political correctness is another challenge for the implementation of media regulatory policy. Policies will function not by the good will of the managers; it is you; it is me, and it is when we all start to assert the laws and constitutional rights. Confronting two of them raised the idea of protectionism and censorship through heavy-handed intervention. The previous individual pointed out that a lack of an equipped and well-structured government regulatory organ and poor media councils are the challenges of media regulatory policy in Ethiopia.

One of editor who participate on this study is the person who participated in the activities of media reform in the country during the last four years. This person believed that the reason for media proclamation reform is the need to enact a law that accommodates the social, economic, political, and technological developments in Ethiopia and fully enforce the right to freedom of expression and citizens freedom of the media, which is guaranteed under the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, as well as international human rights instruments that are binding on Ethiopia.

It is important to enact law to acknowledge the significance of freedom of expression and of the media in ensuring respect for fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution and to be aware that the media plays an irreplaceable role in the success of efforts towards building a democratic system in Ethiopia. According to the individual's belief, the fact that the Ethiopian media authority is accountable to the House of People's Representatives in the revised media law is considered to protect the freedom of speech of the people and gives the media institutions an opportunity to expand their freedom of work.

*"In this revised proclamation, one of the fundamental issues with media is media ownership. Previously, for example, a broadcast media owner did not have to own a newspaper; it was designated as overlapping ownership. It was since the sector could be dominated by certain forces. However, due to the constantly growing economy of our country and the fact that many investors are being created, investors should be allowed to participate in the development of the sector. A fugitive media policy or decree is one that allows an organization with overlapping responsibilities to become a media outlet. When it participates in two or three media institutions, he does not hold more than a certain share, but he sets the ownership of different media institutions".*

Secondly, I added that an article stating that a media owner should not have more than 15 percent of shares was clearly stated in the Media and Freedom Proclamation 290. As this limits participation, the new policy and proclamation stipulate that it can hold up to a 25 percent share.

Thirdly, it is relevant to Ethiopians and Ethiopians by birth, and it allows them to participate in the media just like any other Ethiopian. Not to mention, foreign nationals can also participate, but they are not allowed to possess more than 25 percent of the shares. In the previous policy and proclamation, however, foreigners were absolutely prohibited. Therefore, he believes that the new law is much better than the previous one in terms of increasing the participation of individuals in media institutions. The other issue in relation to publishing stipulates that the companies cannot obtain a license if they are not established as a limited liability private association. The new policy and decree, however, stipulate that an individual can be the sole owner of media. This is a big change. Another important aspect of the new policy is regarding religious media. Earlier, religious media were not given permission. But as research has shown,

banning religious media does not stop them completely. They have established the type of media they want and are working with the current digital media and satellite channels.

*"Therefore, if such types of media are going to go operational in any way, we thought it was better to bring them out from those who spread wrong and illegal messages, and just like any other media that is banned, they are prohibited from broadcasting illegal and conflict-provoking programs that are contrary to Ethiopian culture and values, but they are allowed to operate while respecting their fundamental rights regarding their religion".*

The other role of the government is that it should not be a supervisory one but rather one of monitoring and assistance based on cooperation. On the contrary, it is one of the positive aspects that the media will be able to manage themselves. Accordingly, the Ethiopian Media Council was established. Also, the Ethiopian Printers Association was established. In addition, new journalistic associations have been established. This is considered a good step.

Apart from this, what we consider basic is that before the Media Authority controls the media, now that it has changed its name to the mass media and thus controls the media on the internet and in religious institutions, the name has been changed. For the first time in the history of our country, a voluntary registration certificate has been created.

Another change is that the media used to be accountable to the executive, but now it is accountable to the House of Representatives. Despite this, in addition to the Ministry of Justice and the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission, in order to implement the decree issued to control false information and hate speech, the authority is providing capacity-building training to the media and working to prevent the media from spreading false information and hate speech.

In addition, it is allowed to monitor and regularly report the status of our media. So, from this point of view, these are very basic. According to one of participant, in the previous law, defamation was a civil case, but it was punished as a crime. Now the case is to be fully prosecuted at civil courts. This is a very big step. Because no one rushes to make an accusation that its image is being smeared, it prevents the reporter from being held in the police station. Along with this, there is information that cannot be refuted as false information, which is clearly stated in the anti-false information decree, namely 1185/2012.

First, regarding educational discussions, any kind of idea can be accommodated, if it is educational. Second, even if the different ideas in the council are going on, they are not considered a problem. It is not seen as a problem if it is time to teach when third-party institutions teach in the same way. This is clearly stated in Articles 6 to 8 of 1185/2012.

Another major change is that the media manager will no longer be the editor-in-chief of this policy. But before that, they were also the chief editors of the owners. But now it is stipulated by law that it is impossible to hold both responsibilities because ownership and the profession must be separated. Thus, the editor-in-chief is generally responsible for monitoring the work of the newspaper or media institution.

The freedom given by the institution to the media is a policy that forces it to come down to the ground. The reason for the establishment of the council is to enable the mass media to control and manage themselves. Whether the council is working in that way requires its own research.

But the government has brought this situation to a halt. The official refrained from being an institution that makes a statement while jumping. The problem is to be resolved through understanding and discussion prior to receiving complaints. After that, the action will be implemented only when the board discusses and approves it. There is no more tyrannical shaming as in the past. It is yet to be seen whether the council is using its self-regulatory powers to produce results.

Online media outlets are required to register on a voluntary basis in order to prevent negative activity from going public. It is also dangerous to control those who work abroad. Currently, more than 60 institutions working on the Internet have been registered. First, it is required to do work based on knowledge and understanding. More than 60 have registered so far.

#### **4.12 Regarding the control bias (pressure),**

One of editor in-chief of the media house states that control should be viewed in two ways. One is the constitutional obligation of public media, and the other is the context. It is said that it is constitutional when an elected government takes power; as it is clearly stated in the constitution, the government must inform the public about the work it is doing in a transparent and

accountable manner. Therefore, mass media have this constitutional obligation. Since the government is the winning party, which is elected based on its policies, he can explain and inform the public about the policies by using the public media.

In addition, these mass media are accountable to the House of Representatives and the State Councils. Therefore, each of them should be responsible for caring for the public. In this sense, it cannot be said that it is strong in dealing with complaints from the public.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

#### **5.1 SUMMARY**

The objective of the thesis was to assess the implementation of media regulatory policy in the five selected Ethiopian. Research designs are types of inquiry with qualitative method approaches that provide specific direction for procedures in a research study, whereas research methods involve the forms of data collection, analysis, and interpretation that researchers propose for the studies.

Media regulatory policy as a policy is designed to follow up on the proper implementation of media policies in the country in order to ensure freedom of thought, the right to information, and the improvement of the media landscape in general. However, due to the absence of strong professional associations and democratic institutions in the country, the implementation of media regulatory policy in Ethiopia is full of misunderstandings ranging from the top leadership to lower-level implementers.

In most countries in the world, the regulation of media is done by professional associations. However, the research found that there are no strong press councils to perform self-regulation in Ethiopia.

#### **5.2 Conclusion**

The major findings of the study are therefore that the editorial policy of those five selected media is not in line with the national media regulatory policy and other media policies, regulations, and proclamations. This is because of the lack of motivation of journalists to access the policy, the lack of publicity for the media regulatory policy, and the absence of regular training in the media institution.

The other most important finding is that heavy-handed political interference and partisan media managers have been interfering with the activities of media institutions, which is against the press law, the media regulatory policy of the country, and the incumbent constitution.

Journalists from those five selected media outlets have not clearly understood the media regulation policy of Ethiopia. In any case, the media house must regulate itself and take all the responsibility for the impact that new media or essays bring about. But this does not mean that the media regulation policy is not important.

Furthermore, the implementation of media regulatory policy in those five media has been facing challenges emanating from a lack of clarity, familiarity, accessibility, proper communication, partnership between the regulatory body and the implementer, and limited human and material resources.

Finally, it is found that media regulation overlaps with media monitoring. The executive organs have been trying to undermine the role of the media in society structurally and deliberately in order to serve the interests of the ruling party instead of the public interest.



- **Recommendation**

Depending on the findings, the researcher recommends the following points to the media managers: Five Media House, Media Authority, policy actors, members of the parliament, journalists, and researchers.

- The media regulatory policy in the country lacks clarity, so the policy itself should be updated and defined in order to be clear and easy to implement. Here, the researchers recommend other researchers conduct further studies on how the media regulatory policy in Ethiopia should be reviewed for better functioning of the media in the country.
- Each media house should give fixed, regular training on the policy (on-the-job training) to create proper awareness, especially for new employees. And organized training about the editorial policy, proclamation, and media policy.
- Conduct an annual review and evaluation workshop on the implementation of policies, problems faced, etc.
- Organize a consultative workshop with other media on the policy.
- The provisions stipulated in the media regulatory policy concerning chief editors and editorial committees are not being implemented in accordance with the media policies in the country. Editors and deputy editors are appointed by media managers, sometimes handpicked. This goes against the media regulatory policy and editorial policy of media organizations as well. Therefore, it is recommended that media managers and the regulatory body adhere to the policy, press law, and media proclamations.
- The press law and freedom of expression proclamation, the broadcasting service proclamation, the media organizations establishment proclamation, and editorial policy should be clearly defined, and policy actors should work closely to design and implement a legal framework that clearly defines the role of editors and media managers.
- Political activities and the media must be separated. Instructions are accountable to the parliament. There is no need for managers to come through the party line. The parliament has to be provided with a legal framework to check the qualifications of managers nominated by the Prime Minister other than political affiliation.
- Unless media policies are properly implemented, the absence of proper professional associations and democratic institutions, coupled with other challenges, will not improve

the implementation of media regulatory policy in Ethiopia. Thus, there is a high need for the establishment of strong professional associations.

- Criticizing top government officials by any media outlet is a criminal offense currently. It should not be dealt with as a criminal case; it should be a civil case from a legal perspective. To solve the challenges of media regulatory policy, such as lack of professionalism, lack of adequate information, polarized political environment, and lack of capacity of the regulatory body, the national parliament should step up so that the press will enjoy the utmost freedom.

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# Appendix I

## ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

### AN ASSESSEMENT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MEDIA REGULATORY POLICY IN ETHIOPIA: THE CASE OF SELECTED FIVE ETHIOPIAN MEDIA

(Ethiopian Press Agency, Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, Fana Broadcasting  
Corporate, Reporter News Paper and Capital News Paper)

My Name is Mahlet Abdul, I am studying at the Addis Ababa University, school of journalism and communication. Currently, I am conducting research on the topic of "Assessing the implementation of Media Regulatory policy in Ethiopia: The case of five Ethiopian media for the partial fulfillment of Master's degree in the field of multi-media. The data collected and results computed will be strictly for academic purposes and all information given will be handled with at most confidentiality. There are no ways that your information is transmitted to third party and you would not be liable for the opinion you deliver. The researcher believes that the opinions you would fill in the questionnaire are all right and your ideas has great value to the quality of the research. Therefore, the researcher kindly requests you to give response that are true and frank.

*N.B: Do not write your Name on the questionnaire*

#### 1. Back ground of respondents

1.1 Age:

- a) 20-30 \_\_\_\_\_ b) 30-40 \_\_\_\_\_ b) 40-50 \_\_\_\_\_ c) 50-60 \_\_\_\_\_  
e) If other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

1.2 Educational status:

- a) Certificate \_\_\_ b) Diploma \_\_\_ c) Undergraduate deg \_\_\_ d) Master \_\_\_ e) P.H.D \_\_\_\_\_

1.3 Sex:

a) Male \_\_\_\_\_ b) Female \_\_\_\_\_

1.4 Your position:

a) Director \_\_\_\_\_ b) Editor in chief \_\_\_\_\_ c) Deputy editor in chief \_\_\_\_\_

d) Editor \_\_\_\_\_ f) Reporter \_\_\_\_\_

1.5 Work Experience:

a) 1-5 years \_\_\_\_\_ b) 5-10 years \_\_\_\_\_ c) 10-15 years \_\_\_\_\_ d) 15-20 years \_\_\_\_\_  
e) 20-25 years \_\_\_\_\_ f) 25-30 years \_\_\_\_\_ f) If other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

**2. List of questionnaires developed to assess the implementation of media regulatory policy in the you**

**r media organization.**

(Simple random sampling method), from the perspective of role, practice, and challenges of media regulatory policy.

Note 5= strongly Agree 4= Agree 3= Neutral 2= Disagree 1= strongly disagree

Please put the Numbers of your choice in the below table equivalent to your choice of alternative.

If you have any further idea about the implementation process, role, and challenges of media regulatory policy implementation in your media organizations, please write in the space provide.

## Appendix II

ለጋዜጠኞች(ከሪፖርተር እስከ ዋናአዘጋጅች ድረስ ላሉ ባለሙያዎች ) የሚቀርቡ መነሻ ጥያቄዎች

- 1 በ2021 የፀደቀውን የመገናኛ ብዙሃን አዋጅ 1238/2021 ከዚህ ቀደም ከነበረው አዋጅ አንጻር እንዴት ይመለከቱታል?
- 2 አዋጁ ከፀደቀ በኋላ በአዋጁ ዙሪያ ምን ያህል ግንዛቤ እንዲኖር በመንግስት ወይም በሚመለከተው አካል ምንአይነት ጥረት ተደርጓል?
- 3 እርሶ በሚሰሩበት የሚዲያ ተቋም ጋዜጠኞች አዲሱን የመናነኛ ብዙሃን አዋጅ 1238/2021 ለማሳወቅና በዚያ መሰረት እንዲሰሩ ምንአይነት ስራዎችን አከናውኗል?
- 4 ሌሎች መገናኛ ብዙሃን አዲሱን አዋጅ በምን ደረጃ ተገንዘው ተግባራዊ አድርገውታል ብለው ያምናሉ?
- 5 አዲሱ አዋጁ ለመረጃ ነፃነት ተግባራዊነት ምን የተሸለ ነገር ይዞ መጥቷል ብለው ያምናሉ?
- 6 ከአዋጁ መሻሻል በኋላ መገናኛ ብዙሃኑ በነፃነት የመንቀሳቀስ መብት በምንደረጃ ተጠብቋል?
- 7 በሀገሪቱ ከመገናኛ ብዙሃን ጋር ተያይዞ በሚወጡ ድንጋጌዎች ላይ ያሉትን ልዩነት በነፃነት ይገልጻሉ?
- 8 በህግ አወጣጥና አተገባበር ዙሪያ በመንግስት በኩል የሚታዩ ክፈቶች ምንድናቸው ብለው ያምናሉ?
- 9 አዲስ አዋጁ ለግሉ ፕሬስ ነፃነት ምን መልካም ነገሮች አምጥቷል?
- 10 ከዚህ ቀደም የነበረ አሁንም ያልተሸሻለና መሻሻል አለበት ብለው የሚሉት የህግ ክፍተት ካለ ይጥቀሱ?

## Appendix III

Basic questions for journalists (from reporters to editors)

- 1 How do you view the media proclamation 1238/2021 approved in 2021 compared to the previous one?
- 2 After the proclamation was approved, how much effort was made by the government or the relevant body to raise awareness about the law?
- 3 What kind of work has been done to inform the journalists of the new Mass Media Proclamation 1238/2021 and work accordingly?
- 4 To what extent do you believe other mass media have understood and implemented the new declaration?
- 5 What improvements do you believe the new Act has brought to the practice of freedom of information?
- 6 After the amendment of the decree, to what extent has the media's right to move freely been protected?
- 7 Do you freely express your differences in the provisions related to the media in the country?
- 8 What do you believe are the gaps seen by the government in terms of legislation and implementation?
- 9 What good things has the new decree brought to the freedom of the private press?
- 10 If there is a legal loophole that existed in the past and has not escaped and needs to be improved, please mention it?



## Appendix IV

ለምሁራንና ለመገናኛ ብዙሃን አመራሮች የሚቀርቡ መነሻ ጥያቄዎች

- 1 በ2021 የፀደቀውን የመገናኛ ብዙሃን አዋጅ 1238/2021 ከዚህ ቀደም ከነበረው አዋጅ አንጻር እንዴት ይመለከቱታል?
- 2 አዋጁ ከፀደቀ በኋላ በአዋጁ ዙሪያ ምን ያህል ግንዛቤ እንዲኖር በመንግስት ወይም በሚመለከተው አካል ምንአይነት ጥረት ተደርጓል?
- 3 ከሆነ መገናኛ ብዙሃን አዲሱን አዋጅ በምን ደረጃ ተገንዘው ተግባራዊ አድርገውታል ብለው ያምናሉ?
- 4 አዲሱ አዋጅ ለመረጃ ነፃነት ተግባራዊነት ምን የተሻለ ነገር ይዞ መጥቷል ብለው ያምናሉ?
- 5 ከአዋጁ መሻሻል በኋላ መገናኛ ብዙሃኑ በነፃነት የመንቀሳቀስ መብት በምንደረጃ ተጠብቋል?
- 6 በሀገሪቱ ከመገናኛ ብዙሃን ጋር ተያይዞ በሚወጡ ድንጋጌዎች ላይ ያሎትን ልዩነት በነፃነት ይገልጻሉ?
- 7 በህግ አወጣጥና አተገባበር ዙሪያ በመንግስት በኩል የሚታዩ ክፈቶች ምንድናቸው ብለው ያምናሉ?
- 8 አዲስ አዋጅ ለግሉ ፕሬስ ነፃነት ምን መልካም ነገሮች አምጥቷል?
- 9 ከዚህ ቀደም የነበረ አሁንም ያልተሻሻለና መሻሻል አለበት ብለው የሚሉት የህግ ክፍተት ካለ ይጥቀሱ?

## **Initial questions for academics and media leaders**

1. How do you view the media proclamation 1238/2021 approved in 2021 compared to the previous one?
2. After the proclamation was approved, how much effort was made by the government or the relevant body to raise awareness about the law?
3. If so, to what extent do you believe the mass media have understood and implemented the new decree?
4. To what extent do you believe other mass media have understood and implemented the new declaration?
5. What improvements do you believe the new Act has brought to the practice of freedom of information?
6. After the amendment of the decree, to what extent has the media's right to move freely been protected?
7. Do you freely express your differences in the provisions related to the media in the country?
8. What do you believe are the gaps seen by the government in terms of legislation and implementation?
9. What good things has the new decree brought to the freedom of the private press?
10. If there is a legal loophole that existed in the past and has not escaped and needs to be improved, please mention it?