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Media Censorship in Ethiopian in the perspective of Political Economy, Regulation and Regulatory Bodies

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Abstract

This study attempts to identify major type, nature, and forum of media censorship in Ethiopia. The research used the qualitative method of document analysis. The purposive data collection techniques were employed. The main finding of this research, the media law environment is far from democratic and there are a number of laws which are used to enforce censorship and act against media practitioners. Ethiopian media focus regulations and the political economy environment had a devastating effect on media independence as many media organizations started operating in a state of fear and self-censorship. Ethiopian mass media outlets are state-controlled and the private media often censored by government and journalists themselves. Moreover, media institutions were severely censored due to political, financial and regulatory limitations under different law. In this context, the existing political, legal and regulatory framework did not play an enabling role for the emergence of a free media environment mechanism. The Ethiopian media is under the slavery of content, technology, financial, ownership, leadership, institutional, legal, ideological, personal, and authority form of censorship. More than 101 ways of censorship revealed in this research. Because of these reasons, the media have been monetized, polarized, and propagandized. The main recommendation of the research should be the government lift up heavy hands from the press for the media to play a democratic role.

Keywords: 1. Censorship 2. Mass media 3. Politics 4. Regulation 5. Regulatory bodies 6. Political economy 7. Ethiopia

Introduction

The political system, regulation and regulatory bodies are dependence of the media to censor it under partisan government interference (Sylvie, 2020). That is why in countries where governments are keen on censoring the media for political reasons, media self-regulatory bodies such as press councils do not exist (Ognian, 2008). This was also the case in Ethiopia. In the presence of effective media regulatory mechanism in the country, the government exclusively regulated the media sector through government enacted laws and established organs. In fact, Mersa (2021) declared that there was an interest from the government to censor the media.

Censor(ship) means “Pre- regulation of each kind of publish, art works of cinema and theatre by the hands of governments; a strict regulation...”, also it is mentioned as “...An official who examines books, films, news, etc. that are about to be published and suppresses any parts that are considered in regulation restriction, under regulatory, or a threat to security” (Oxford Dictionaries, n.d.). Another classification of censorship can be mentioned as a technical separation. Franklin Houn described the separation- regarding the prior restraints and post publication censorship (Houn, 1958)... According to Houn’s definition, censorship can be implied by the laws and regulations with binding restrictions before publication, and it becomes apparent with the fines and physical violence after the publication.

Keeping those definitions in mind, the main ground of the work lies on two major typology of censorship. The first implements both technique and the form of censorship that is driven from John Keane’s work the Media and Democracy (1998); and the second point of view takes its roots from Phillips & Harslof (1997) which clearly specifies the process of censorship.

The arguments of Keane and Chomsky both refers to the uneven distribution of information by officials and market intervention which directly legitimize the governmental sources of power, arguments of the share-holders or the intellectuals staying loyal to them. Framing a simple formula; if the information in a newspaper is blocked, cut, framed, or put by an official or an organic intellectual, then the knowledge grasped by the subject has already been censored from very beginning; used as “the monopoly of knowledge” by Innis as the main creator of the concept; within the discipline of sociology (Innis, 2007, p.44). Such as any form of information, the news are also cannot be taken as objective, regarding those arguments.

Censorship is a control of political economy, regulation and regulatory over its subjects. An authority is always political and it prescribes various regulation, polices and norms for its subjects to rule them in a desired designed way. Although an authority is made of the

people under it, the regulatory bodies are a regulation construct in a political system of the country. This is why the regulation, regulatory and political economy can be challenged. What is censored classified may be categorized in different forums. The way the media are censored in Ethiopia witnesses the continuity of the traditionally followed rules in Ethiopia and reinforces the same. It is structured and determined by political economy of the state, regulation and regulatory bodies that is governed by socio political and religious forces of a nation.

Ethiopia is a land of regulations. The people claim themselves a man of rule. The paper studies the prevailing practices on media censorship in Ethiopia. It highlights the regulation, regulatory and political economy behind or front the media censorship in Ethiopia which has been a topic of current affairs in this date. Political economy, regulation and regulatory bodies forces the source of censors; we do not know how to censor the media analysis formulated the following questions will be explored in this study.

- What are the main forms of media censorship in Ethiopia? What are the origins of this censorship?
- Which legal provisions censor the media?
- What key institutions censor to the media are worked under the political economy of Ethiopia?

Literature Review

Looking at the situation in Ethiopia historically, in the first ever constitution issued in the country, namely the 1930 Constitution, we find the following provision regarding the individual's privacy: **Article 26:** Except where the law permits, no person has the right to censor the personal correspondences of any Ethiopian citizen. The next revised Constitution of 1955 described the following two provisions in this Constitution. **Article 41:** Freedom of speech and the press is guaranteed the Empire law. **Article 42:** Correspondences shall be subject to no censorship, except in time of declared emergency (Negarit Gazeta, 1955). However, in the period of the monarchy and the military severe censorship has discouraged the broadcast content developments.

Following the 1955 Revised Constitution, the major lawful code with respect to opportunity of the press and the orderly limitations is the 1957 Penal Code, additionally given during the rule of Emperor Haile Selassie. The 1957 Penal Code and the Criminal Code which have superseded the press in restrictive and punitive provisions regarding freedom of the press (Negarit Gazette 1960). One of the media regulatory bodies is the Minister of Information. The minister was Dr. Tesfaye Gabre-Egzy, who introduced 29 different issues censored in the Ethiopian media history. Under Prime Minister Tsahafi Teezaz Aklikou Abte Wold cabinet of the emperor media was also owned by the Minister of Posts and Communications in the period of Lij Endalkachen Makonnen (Hassen, 2002).

External regulation, or attempts to regulate media content by governments concerns restrictions on the importation, distribution, and sale of pornographic materials — films, tapes/cassettes, comic strip etc. Governments everywhere appear to acknowledge their responsibility for the protection of public morals by restricting the importation, distribution and sale of pornography generally. Obscene publications are the primary targets of such restrictions, but in some countries, they also relate to gambling and lottery information. The Customs Departments of several governments are empowered to impound obscene materials as well as lottery gambling information that are being imported into their countries. The Postal Services have also been known to block the mailing of such information in the past but their activities in that regard have tended in recent times to be limited to getting senders of such information to label them as such.

What the researcher intriguing now is that national laws pertaining to pornography tend to focus attention on the importation of obscene materials across borders, while apparently de-emphasising the dangers of contents originated within each society. Judging by the amount of mass-mediated home-grown obscenity within some of these societies, it would appear that the fear of cultural contamination more than concern for public morals must have been at the centre of the attempts by various governments to restrict importation, distribution and sale of pornographic materials within their borders.

After the military regime was overthrown in 1991 democratic rights, including the right to freedom of expression, were introduced and state censorship before publication [...] was lifted (Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2010, p. 5). And as early as October 1991 the government set new standards for the operation of state-owned media outlets (Busch, 2017 cited Daniel et al. 2003, p. 15). Moreover, the 1992 Press Proclamation regulated all types of media – including television. Whereas newspapers and magazines were mushrooming in these early days of the freedom of the press in Ethiopia, EBC remained the only domestic broadcaster until 2015 (Gebru, 2015, p. 40).

Historical Censorship Practices in Ethiopia

Censorship was not originally carried out in a single organization, as it is today. According to the Ministry of Information (1966), censorship was involved in other activities with other organizations. Initially, censorship was carried out within the Ministry of Information. Office of censorship founded in 1934. The press and advertising department was responsible for providing advertising and information work and overseeing government printing presses and newspapers. Censorship was carried out in the control of newspapers. This censorship, under the auspices of the Ministry of Information, was promulgated in 1935. The proclamation is known as Proclamation No. 37/1935, which was issued for the investigation of theater and cinema making. After 23 years, the Ministry of Information and Tourism decides its powers and functions. Order No 46/1957 states that

censorship was carried out in this Ministry. Based on its authority, the Ministry of Information and Tourism established its own independent censorship board.

The Board of Inquiry had 4 parts, and they were to be found.

1. Domestic Publications Censorship Unit
2. Censorship Department of Foreign Editions
3. Film Censorship Department
4. Theater examination room.

Representatives of the Ministries of Education, State, Public Life Development, Addis Ababa Municipality and the Police Force have been appointed as members of the Board of Censorship. From June 20/1964, it was decided that the Board of Inquiry should be renamed the "Directorate of Investigation". Since then, the investigation, which has been conducted by board members from 5 organizations, has been carried out only by regular staff of the Research Department. This trend continued until the 1966 Ethiopian Revolution.

Censorship Policy and Idea from 1934 to 1966, the organizational structure of censorship gradually grew. Along with this strength and expansion of the structure, there has been a relative improvement in policy and practice. In 1934 it was reported that the press and advertising department under the Ministry of Secretariat controlled newspapers, but it was not clear what the censorship department's policy was. But one year later, in 1935, Proclamation No. 37/1935 was the first direct censorship. The extent to which it was developed reflects the desire and effort of the existing system to control the emotions of the people. Of course, the purpose of the control was a reflection of the system, not the people, but the people.

The proclamation contains 10 points. All public films, theaters, and other public performances in Ethiopia do not undermine public morale or disturb the emperor's peace. - It is responsible for ensuring that all publications that enter the territory of Ethiopia and those that are published in Ethiopia do not violate the morals of the society or harm the peace of the people. Based on the proclamations and directives, detailed censorship of internal and external politics and censorship is provided. These guidelines clearly address issues that concern and promote that system. Let's look at just a few of the things that are forbidden in domestic politics:

- Criticizing the emperor's basic position
- It affects the dignity of the emperor, royal families and ministries
- About unemployment, prostitution and the number of beggars.

- Conflict between employers, student violence
- About the cost of living, about the strike, about the land version
- About the salary of a soldier, about the standard of living in Ethiopia
- Articles, films, theaters, etc., that prohibit socialist ideology are prohibited.

It is clear from the history of the investigation that the general conditions for the implementation of proclamations and directives in the adjacent system improve over time. In 1934, censorship of other departments under the Ministry of Secretariat was carried out in 1958 by an independent board of directors, and in 1964 by an organization. Censorship officials were said to have been carefully selected, both in leadership and at other levels, according to detainees, who said that censorship officials should have been known not only to the system but also to officials at the top of the system. After censorship ceased to exist on the board, it was directly accountable to the ministry and headed the ministry. Nevertheless, it is said that censorship included the king and his entourage. This shows how much the system tried to rule the people in ignorance.

Before and after the revolution, censorship served as Ethiopia's leading political system. This system was used by censorship policy, from that system, to its own policy. When a revolution broke out and replaced a new and progressive system with censorship, it was important to find a new policy and direction that reflected the new system. As a result, the censorship service has been following the radical policies of their revolution. Following the change, it was difficult to make decisions in terms of the country's system of domestic and foreign cities, movies, paintings, passports and music that flooded the country.

The problem was not only the existence of guidelines but also the fact that employees were new to the new system and science. The Revolutionary Ethiopia Department has been able to carry out its work without much difficulty, according to the policy of the National Democratic Revolution, which has been declared a socialist. Since the approval and implementation of the Information Policy Department of the Ministry of Information and Planning in 1973, the investigation service has been in a better position to carry out its work.

In this policy department, the investigative services will be compiled from time to time since the Ethiopian Revolution. During the Derg era, the military regime's investigative service department had the following main points.

1. Examination Service In addition to the information and services provided by the Ministry of Information and Media, in accordance with the directives issued by the party to the Ministry, the status of the Ethiopian National Democratic Revolution Program and the current situation.

A. It allows the ideas, opinions and commentaries expressed in newspapers, magazines, books, theaters, films, symbols, designs, photographs and drawings to ensure that the basic principles of social Ethiopia do not contradict the government's position and do not undermine the morale of the people.

B. It ensures that they are published in Ethiopia and abroad through newspapers, magazines, brochures, theaters and films, symbols, designs, sculptures, photographs and paintings, etc. that respect human rights, uphold ethnic equality, and do not discriminate on the basis of religion, gender, etc.

2. Prohibits the publication of inaccurate news, conditions, and statements about Ethiopia in films, theaters, designs, sculptures, paintings, symbols, newspapers, magazines, brochures, etc.

3. Any examination of writing, drawing, sculpture, film, theater, etc. shall be examined by a committee consisting of at least 3 members and shall make a decision after a majority vote.

4. Theater and D, Web-Based Arrangements will be reviewed and approved in full after the first reading.

5. "When making a comment on a text, drawing, sculpture or film, the investigative service shall have the following criteria, which shall be prohibited or amended and shall be subject to age restrictions.

Contribution of work and struggle censorship service is an ideological monitoring operation. It was a communication policy and law that led to a sudden transition from a system of government to a new and progressive system of radical and fast-moving revolutionary systems. Foreign workers, films, music, paintings, etc., which were condemned by the previous regime, flooded the country with the change before the workers saw the flash of science. Male science, which at that time had no staff at the time, was crucial to reading, watching, and listening to these different works. For centuries, organizations, individuals, theaters, music, and paintings, which have been denied the right to freedom of expression, have become like mushrooms.

At that time, in order to carry out the investigation, it was necessary to know not only the science but also the current situation. In the interest of the Ethiopian Revolution, it was important to know the position of each political party and to know the realities and activities of the day in the struggle. However, it was not possible to get information about the position of political parties and the current situation from the beginning without the information that the service staff knew about each other, and it was not possible to evaluate the publications and other works that reflect the position of different political groups. In the face of such a daunting challenge, the level of investigative services has

contributed to the struggle. Because of the nature of the investigation, the staff members were obliged to know about the philosophy of Marxism-Leninism and the current situation. As a result, especially among the workers, who are full supporters of the revolution have made significant contributions to the work and struggle by studying the science and carefully examining the situation.

"When artists whose class interests were affected failed to raise their pens and brushes for the Ethiopian revolution, pens and brushes in support of the Ethiopian revolution emerged," the government report said. Many of these people, despite their position and interests, needed ideological support. The investigation service did not fail to support and encourage these to the best of its ability. Similar changes have been made in the newspapers, and since September 2, 1968, a weekly newspaper in the Oromo language entitled "Berissa .. or ..Sgat" has been able to reflect on the commitment of revolutionary Ethiopia to ethnic equality and common development. The above evidence is presented in a sample, but in all the news, commentary, special events and programs presented by all media outlets, they are clearly public and revolutionary. Under the slogan "Building a Socialist System", the Ministry of Information and Planning was a tool that echoed the decrees and directives of the revolutionary government to mobilize the general public for national unity and to strengthen its arm for action. He has been instrumental in building the new democratic Ethiopia, strengthening the public movement started in 66 to ensure that every media event, from small news to special programs, has a formal content. Accordingly, the Ministry of Information and Media made significant efforts to make the process socialist by establishing close ties with socialist countries at that time. It has signed agreements with the media of the Soviet Union, the German Democratic Republic, the People's Republic of Yemen, Vietnam, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, the People's Republic of Korea, Yugoslavia, Hungary and other socialist countries. He provided the public with a variety of cultural, economic and political programs to raise awareness of the realities of the world community. The current form of nature and type of censorship are assessed by this research.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical I propose comes from Kurt Lewin (1943) gate keeping theory as well as Pierre Bourdieu's regulation theory. I choose to use their theoretical framework as configurations of data provide analysis to identify, organize, and explore items while conducting fieldwork. Gate keeping theory was primary introduced by Kurt Lewin in 1943. The external gatekeepers to be looked at include Governments, advertisers, individual consumers, as well as consumers joined together as pressure groups. The strategies employed by governments to control the mass communication process and thus act as external gatekeeper to the media include the following (Hiebert et al: 1995, p.46).

Three censorship strategies identified by Hiebert and his associates are strategic releasing, strategic withholding and strategic staging (1995). Strategic releasing of a given information package may also be a strategic means of control on the way in which the information will be transmitted by the media and the effect(s) it will have on the audience. Strategic Withholding: The source especially a government can decide on which information or which parts of some given information the media will have access to. Laws governing security of some government information have furnished material for endless debates in some of the more advanced liberal democracies. In most conflicts touching on the propriety of the media publishing government's classified information, the government has always had its way.

Strategic withholding is also achieved by banning the press from particular meetings. Such denials of access to meetings for the press have been more common in authoritarian setups than in accredited liberal democracies. One area in which there appears to have been unqualified co-operation between the press and government (especially their Defence Division) is in the agreement to keep the identities of intelligence agents secret.

Methodology

The research used the qualitative method of document analysis and in-depth interview. The data were collected through purposive sampling technique. This research method employs on the specifications of largely qualitative approach that are propose from the media censorship indictors of political economy, regulation and regulatory body 123 documents. An excessively document analysis can enhance the quality of data collection as a result of qualitative analysis, the case study objective nature of some issues and the technicality of key informants in the in-depth interview analysis will be used. The central theme of interpretivism is that the world is socially constructed and subjective (Philips and Harslof, 1997), therefore interpretivism is based on the understanding of political behaviour from the regulation, regulatory and political economy point of view and frame of reference (Collis and Hussey, 2003).

Data Presentation

Form of Censorship in Ethiopia

Media regulation in Ethiopia are often embodied in speeches of national leaders, government official pronouncements and directives, decrees, legislation, and in some instances enshrined in national constitutions. An integration of political economy, regulation and regulatory construct the following form of censorship in Ethiopia. Some of these are:

- Content Censorship;
- Technology Censorship;

- Financial Censorship;
- Ownership censorship
- Leadership censorship
- Institutional Censorship
- Legal Censorship (Power of Regulation)
- Institutional Censorship (Power of Regulatory bodies)
- Ideological Censorship (Power Political Economy)
- Personal Censorship (Leaders)
- Authority Censorship (officials)
- Model Censorship (Development Journalism)

The Ethiopian mass media industry has experienced fundamental changes both in structure and content following the removal of the military regime, in 1991. Before 1991, the media were state owned and confined to shackles of censorship so that it could serve as instruments of oppression. With the issuance of the press proclamation in 1992, nevertheless, they have become free forums where the nations, nationalities and peoples of Ethiopia, in principle, can freely express their views. Besides, it has created an environment where the private media have the opportunity to contribute.

However, the Ethiopian media institutional arrangement is a state owned public media following the government financial and administrative operations. Hence, the wording of the Decree is vague about how the media should be funded saying that sources of finance may include government funding “in order that the media achieves its objectives” (Negarit Gazeta, 2014). For example, the government has been a decide nature, type, character and function of the media.

EBC always works under the command of the political party office, communication office of the government and leaders (In-depth interview1, 2019). The media also propagandize the content in news, program, documentary, and reportage (In-depth interview2, 2019). The light entertainment, sport, music and advertisements are politicized as well as acting as censors of the opposite views (In-depth interview3, 2019).

The democratic developmental state media systems thus became instruments of this ‘revolutionary’ ideology, functioning as an organ of the party program and the ruling regime in power (Woldu, 2014, Negeri, 2015, Abdissa, 2013). Similarly, officials are not only involved in the management and, appointed to the respective positions, additionally, also the board members of the state/public media are dominated by representatives of the party office. In part to media ownership and the control structure, political leaders were able to hide under the pretext of development journalism, thereby using the media as their propaganda machine (Abdissa, 2013).

The main difficulty facing the Ethiopian media are the obstacles set up by political powers confronting journalists in their work. The first of these is withholding information. In Ethiopia where there is no tradition of public information and where the least administrative fact is considered to be a state secret, the practice remains widespread, especially in regimes under pressure. The withholding of information is generally selective and public owned press journalists complain they are neglected by state structures favoring the public media.

But state intervention is often more direct. In the Ethiopian media, the state continues to impose censorship on the media: in Ethiopia, up until the recent change of regime, a series of suspensions caused the transition of the politics, the first leader to open the space of the media in a while, and regularly hit Ethiopian Broadcast Authority. Elsewhere, the manager puts significant pressure on the system throughout press cases, so as to get significant sentences or to push legal procedures into violation.

Finally, alternative pressures square measure felt besides legal judicial procedures. Thus, in the Ethiopian media, journalists are sometimes arrested and tortured by the police, intelligence and prosecutors. In the CPJ report, in December 2016, more than 500 journalists were imprisoned, exiled during the 28 years in power of Ethiopian People Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF).

Even in Ethiopian media, varied sanctions, that don't respect legal procedures, have an effect on journalists. Government leaders still think about the state media as their mouthpiece and rebukes square measure frequent once state-employed journalists take their duty to convey balanced info too seriously. The attitude of the journalists during the recent transition in Ethiopia was a glaring example of this.

The state owned public broadcaster led a committed campaign in favor of leaders and hardly gave challengers the chance to come to the party. In a few exceptional cases confronted with competition and a multiplicity of voices and approaches, to make some changes: on one hand by opening up to all the various voices (ethnologist, unionist and social) and, on the other, by moving towards structural transformation. Thus Ethiopian media, that in general fell directly under the control of a prime ministry and Ethiopian media or former minister of information/government communication/Spoken person of the prime minister, moved without consultation towards the statutes of the Ethiopian media (public establishment with an administrative function) giving them financial and administrative autonomy.

While these new positions free the media from strong state domination (even if only in theory), they also give them an obligation of financial profitability. Major transformation is

needed, in a context where the authorities themselves find it difficult to break from their habit of considering the national media (especially television and radio) as their “thing”.

This transformation is all the more problematic as the public media often see their most competent staffers (in particular audio-visual technicians) fleeing to the state sector where remuneration is more substantial. Their infrastructure, inherited in the 2000s, is generally technology used, compared to new state enterprises opting from the outset for lighter, more efficient digital technology. In spite of their change in status, many ministers continue to consider the state media as a tool to ban the handling of sensitive information. The era of state monopolies took long ago.

The other important factor concerning the Ethiopian mass media in the past and current period was the nature and method of censorship in Ethiopia. Though freedom of speech and freedom of the press were provided for in the constitution, subsequent legislation placed strong limits on the press. All branches of mass media had been under strict government control. The daily newspapers as well as the electronic media had always tended to exclude pieces that had anything to do with highly controversial matters (Amanuel, 2007).

Regulation and regulatory bodies censorship role in the Ethiopian Media

In short, the last 29 years of Developmental journalism and state-controlled media gave rise to a media system that completely lacked one of its most important components; a free press infrastructure. Democratic Ethiopia found itself without an information capital and a poor, economically unprotected press. Various laws, restricted regulation, tight regulators, lack of investment and heavy censorship [of media operation, and broadcasting hindered the development of a sustainable broadcast media. Meanwhile, EBA (2012) described that “as broadcast media not raced for higher coverage and quality content production, lower standards became acceptable”.

More than 1353 articles, 61 regulators and 130 regulations of Ethiopian media created a tense situation in the free media environment. These rules are executed in regulators, the political system policy, guide line and political economy linkage of regulation in a clear impact establishment, function, and operation of pre production, production and post production of the media job.

The Regulation, Regulatory and political economy impacts on the media in the following ways:

1. Censoring, oppressing and restricting; for works of artistic, literary or scientific character which are not calculated to inflame erotic feelings or lust – article 642. (the constitution artistic freedom is censored by the criminal code);
2. Prohibitions on displaying writings or images such that they are visible from without and which stimulate unduly, pervert or misdirect the sexual instinct, arouse or stimulate unduly brutal or bloodthirsty instincts, antisocial feelings;
3. Economic treason;
4. Collaboration with the enemy;
5. Espionage;
6. Indirect aid and encouragement of crimes against the state;
7. Hostile acts against a foreign state;
8. Insults to foreign states; Insults to official emblems of foreign states;
9. Insults to inter-state institutions;
10. Hostile acts against international humanitarian organizations;
11. Publishing information regarding specified military zones and objects; Article 333(2) of the Criminal Code;

These types of censorship are the major ways of closing the media doors. It is a way of protecting the government status. This tightened type of Ethiopian media content, technology, geography, data collection, production, reporting, dissemination, ownership type of censorship negatively affects the media life. The effects of the media regulation, regulatory and political economy of the state;

1. Source of intimidation
2. impose censorship
3. Flee journalists
4. Source of dissatisfaction of the professionals
5. Lose of public trust
6. Limiting the view of diversity.
7. Impose Harassment and intimidation and undermine the right of journalists to protect the anonymity of their sources and have been used to
8. Use the laws Prosecute individuals for making false assertions of fact against government authorities, or for other acts of legitimate criticism of or protest against government policy.

These effects influence the character, function and organization nature of the media. Because of these reasons, the media will be mono voice, single source, polarize, isolated and propagandize.

Major Laws and Articles censor the media

The constitution includes a prohibition on censorship and affirms the need for access to information of public interest (article 29(3a)). It also states that “the press shall, as an institution, enjoy legal protection to ensure its operational independence and its capacity to entertain diverse opinions. However, the prohibition of censorship also promotes media censorship. There are a number of documents are censored Ethiopian media. These are; Guideline, Manual, Standard, Policy, Directive, Proclamation, Plan, Report, Policy, Strategy. These documents are the main references of the governance of the media.

- Security laws;
- The Criminal Code, Proclamation No. 414 of 2004;
- Telecommunication License Fee Directive, Directive 1/2004;
- Broadcasting Service Proclamation, No. 533/2007;
- The Freedom of the Mass Media and Access to Information Proclamation, No. 590/2008;
- The Telecommunication Proclamation No. 49/1996 ;
- The Council of Ministers Regulations No. 47/1999 by the Ministry of Infrastructure;
- The Flag Proclamation, Proclamation 654 of 2009;
- Anti-Terrorism Proclamation No. 652 of 2009;
- Code of Conduct for the Mass Media and Journalists on the Manner of Reporting About Elections Regulations, No. 6/2010;
- Broadcasting Service Grievance Handling Directive, No. 3/2008;
- Community Radio Broadcasting Service Directive, No. 3/2008;
- The Commercial Radio Broadcasting Services Directive No. 1/2008;
- The Subscription Broadcasting Service Directive No. 4/2009;
- State of Emergency, 2005, 2016, and 2020.

The above listed laws are censoring the Ethiopian media, ban to watch media channels; strong content restriction and closing the doors of access to information and freedom of mass media. Clearly, the Ethiopian government makes censored the media in three ways of political, legal and institutional censorship on the exercise and protection of rights contained in the constitution, regulation, directives, policy, and leaders’ orientation.

The Censorship of Ethiopian media will have a general and specific limitations clause that applies to all or any laws of the country. Within the constitution provisions of Article 93 deals with a declaration of a state of emergency. Article 93(1)(a) entitles the Council of Ministers of the central to decree a state of emergency ought to any of the subsequent occur: external invasion; a breakdown of law.

Article 93(4)(b) specifically entitles the Council of Ministers to ‘suspend such political and democratic rights contained during the 1995 Ethiopian Constitution to the extent

necessary to avert the conditions that needed the declaration of a state of emergency'. In freedom of expression of Ethiopia, the foremost necessary provision that protects the media is article 29 headed 'Right of thought, opinion and expression'. Freedom of the media and freedom of inventive creativeness is secure (EPRDF, 1995)

Further, this freedom prohibits 'any kind of censorship'. The opposite provision shows the limitation of media possession within the Article 29(5) is specifically centered on public or state media, which is decided by state funding or management. It needs, in line with ignored the private or independent media, that such state or public media be operated therefore on entertain diversity within the expression of opinion. On the contrary, the translation of public broadcasting is unsuccessful.

The on top of limitation provisions area unit obscure and contradictory. Within the case of right to privacy, a second protection is contained in article 26 of the Constitution of Ethiopia, 'Right to privacy'. it's created from 2 specific varieties of privacy rights. Article 26(1) specifies that '[e]veryone has the proper to privacy. But, this violates by Network Security Agency (INSA). Article 26(2) could be a notably necessary right for journalists et al. operating within the media as a result of, primarily, it protects a person's notes, correspondence and communications as well as by electronic means that. The impact of this is often that the proper prohibits the interception and observation of communications that conjointly aids in sanctioning a journalist to shield his or her sources. The most restrictions could also be placed with specific laws whose purpose shall be safeguarding of national security or public peace, the interference of crimes or the protection of public morality, health or the rights and freedoms of others'.

The impact of the restrictions clause is to line out grounds for regulatory institutions with privacy rights. Most of those area units in line with international needs, namely: national security, public peace, crime interference, public health protection and public morality. In the scope of rights to freedom of association and occupation, Article thirty one of the Ethiopian Constitution is headed 'Freedom of association' and provides that '[e]very person has the proper to freedom of association for any cause or purpose...'. Article 32 contains its own internal limitation, that provides that organizations shaped, in violation of applicable laws, or the constitutional order, or that promote such activities area unit prohibited'.

The primary impact of this limitation is that organisations are often regulated by 'appropriate laws'. This is often clearly extraordinarily obscure, that is problematic as no steering is given on what's meant by 'appropriate'. A second impact is that the outright prohibition of organisations shaped to de jure subvert the constitutional order or to market such activities.

Article forty one is headed 'Economic, social and cultural rights'. Article 41(2) provides that '[e]very Ethiopian has the proper to decide on his or her means that of sustenance, occupation and profession'. This right isn't on the market to everyone; it's on the market solely to Ethiopians, thence there seems to be a citizenship demand to exercise this right. In freedom of movement, Article thirty two is headed 'Freedom of movement' and article 32(1) state: the proper to freedom of movement isn't on the market to everybody. It's on the market to Ethiopians and to foreign nationals provided they're 'lawfully in Ethiopia'. Consequently, foreign nationals don't seem to be lawfully in Ethiopia don't get pleasure from the proper to freedom of movement. This impacted in the data gathering, collecting and analyzing first hand information in the country.

Legal limitations is arranged down so as to safeguard the well-being of the youth, and also the honor and name of people. Any info for war furthermore because the public expression of opinion supposed to injure human dignity shall be prohibited by law'. Further, article 29(7) provides that any national who violates any legal limitations within the physical exertion of those rights could also be control liable beneath law.

The Constitution of Ethiopia, as has been started higher than, makes provision certainly rights to be subject to 'internal' limitations that's, the supply coping with rights contains its own limitations clause, beginning ways that during which a government will licitly limit the compass of the correct. These internal limitations occur among variety of articles on rights in Chapter three of the Constitution of Ethiopia. They deal specifically and solely with the limitation or qualification of the actual right that's addressed therein article. As has been mentioned a lot of totally higher than, the rights to freedom of expression and privacy contain such an inside limitation. In different words, the article that contains the correct additionally sets out the parameters or limitations allowable in respect of that right.

Statutory law contains further limitations. The Prime Minister may make orders under the Preservation of Public Security Act to arrest and detain any person indefinitely if it is deemed in the interest of defense, public safety, public order, public health or public morality. These terms are subjective and the prime minister alone determines their definition and applications. The Act allows for the restriction of movement and compulsory movement, including the imposition of curfews. It also allows the government to censor, control or prohibit the communication of any information. The penalty may be an amount of imprisonment or a fine or death or terrorist. The label of punishment is very high to labeling criminal, terrorist, and fine, life to sentence prison or death.

Media Regulatory bodies or Gatekeepers in Ethiopia

There are internal and external gatekeepers in the Ethiopian media system. The in-depth interview seven informant said saw that the media have lawyers on their staff to guard

against potentially libellous the media production in particular (2020). In some, there are more than 61 regulatory bodies (gatekeepers) whose work control to be the media in Ethiopia). The Authority is an institution that is in the process of implementing a fundamental process change study to implement the functions and responsibilities given by the Proclamation in the required manner. A score-based system is currently being implemented and results-based evaluation has begun to be implemented.

The in-depth interview informant described that the broadcasting outfits have censors who assess programmes that are ready to go on air (Personal interview four, 2020). The in-depth interview informant five concluded that gate keeping standards are subject to regulation in accordance with political economy orientation of the media (2020). The in-depth interview informant six says brief examination of regulatory bodies (gate keeping) in the mass media establishments has shown that they fulfill their self-regulation requirements through strict internal and external gate keeping (2020). The approaches vary with media types and structures, but the end- purpose of their entire internal gate keeping is to preempt public criticism and restrictive government regulatory measure.

The Media regulatory bodies are normally more wary of falling foul of professional codes of practice. Especially at the license, import of technology products, networks, internal censors guillotine many programmes which the producers have “finalised” for airing. The Ethiopian Broadcast Authority (EBA), which would be more or less the equivalent of our own Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC), appears to be much more visible and more powerful than its print press counterparts such as the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA). But it sometimes looks as if the ombudsman can be responsible in the access of information, in view of the authority wielded by their own internal and external censors, all in an effort to forestall undue external pressure through self-discipline. The point is that the media are, everywhere at the centre of public interest, pressure and criticism, not only because of their greater visibility and the immediacy of their content but, more important, because the airwaves which constitute their primary capital, are public property and are very scarce. This is a fundamental fact that all broadcasting personnel must be trained to realise; but, just in case there are some who do not realise or simply forget this fact, there are internal and external censors to keep all gatekeepers on theories. There are no media-regulator specific institutions established under the Constitution of Ethiopia, the Constitution does establish a number of institutions that indirectly affect the media, namely,

1. The Human Rights Commission,
2. The ombudsman, Proclamation 211 of 2000 (Ombudsman Proclamation).
3. The judiciary, Article 78(1) of the constitution
4. The Council of Constitutional Inquiry and
5. The judicial administration councils (at federal and state level). article 81(2)

6. The House of Peoples' Representatives
7. The House of the Federation
8. State Council
9. prime minister
10. Minister of Information, Article 9.1 of Proclamation 590 requires the publisher of a periodical to register.
11. Regional government communication Affair, Article 9.1 of Proclamation 590
12. Agency of the National Archives and Libraries (Article 10.3–10.4 of Proclamation 590)
13. The state public library or cultural bureau.(Article 10.3–10.4 of Proclamation 590)
14. the Ethiopian Broadcasting Authority (EBA) Article 4 of Proclamation 533 establishes
15. Board of the media regulatory and institutions
16. Ministry of Information Communication and Technology
17. The Ethiopian Communication Authority
18. Information Network Security Agency
19. The Information Network Security Agency (INSA)
20. the National Archives and Libraries

The Ethiopian government has tight control over the broadcast media, Internet and mobile technologies, which has allowed it to monitor the use of the service and to limit the type and amount of information transmitted with the strong regulatory bodies. Unlike other African countries, the Ethiopian government is solely in control of the fast-growing media sector through its state-media ownership service provider, Ethiopia Broadcasting Corporation and regional media. This lack of an independent legislative and legislative body in Ethiopia to monitor the misuse of government oversight has allowed the government to control the sector on its own, restrict access to information without oversight, and effectively suppress freedom of expression and association.

This directly impacted on the journalists and the media house in working directly and indirectly their own job. It creates censorship in the right of access to information, and self censorship in journalists. The shadows of fear, losing independence are damaging freedom of thought.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Both regulation and political economy interdependently define the media' strategy and plan. In the Current reform, it is discussed to form an umbrella organisation for both journalist associations. Journalistic practice in Ethiopia has highly heterogeneous ethical

and professional standards and is characterised by considerable self-censorship. For this reason, professional capacity and ethical standards are very weak due to the influence of the political economy.

More than 100 ways of internal and external censorship occur within a number of regulation and regulatory bodies on political economy of the democratic development state of Ethiopia. They deal specifically and only with the limitation or qualification of the particular media operation, ownership and function that is dealt with in orientation of leadership, institution, ideology, profession, policy, party and etc. As has been discussed above, the rights to freedom of expression and privacy contain such an internal and external limitation. The Ethiopian media is under the slavery of content, technology, financial, ownership, leadership, institutional, legal, ideological, personal, and authority form of censorship. The Ethiopian media should emancipate from the above slavery to play democratic role.

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