

## ABSTRACT

This dissertation reviews the legal regulations relating to media freedom in Sri Lanka, the manner in which it has involved in improving ethical journalism standards. Freedom of expression recognizes as a fundamental right in Sri Lankan Constitution. Most of the countries recognize this right as a fundamental right. But most of those countries have taken additional precautions by regularizing with other laws and standards in formalizing media freedom. It is important to examine comparative experience and learn the best practices that can be incorporated in developing such a regulatory framework. But, though we have laws in Sri Lanka there is still a lacuna in exercising the media freedom as we do not have a stronghold which can be limited in the eyes of public interest at the same time giving the required freedom to the media by these laws. It will give a clear understanding of same if we consider the following state of affairs; we do not have an independent media commission to introduce new policies and regulations or to be the governing body. Though the rules and regulations are there setting out ethics, there are no rigid or clear regulations setting out what basis it should be on qualifications or credibility criteria recognition of an individual or an entity to form a new media institution. In some countries an individual can only hold up to a maximum of 40% of the shares in ownership if they are to form a media institution hence dilutes the dictatorship and therefore limits the influence on the media freedom. No minimum qualifications or standards for a person to be called a "Journalist". Thus, this researcher aims to understand the nature and scope of the regulatory framework governing the media in Sri Lanka at present and its strengths and weaknesses and suggest how a regulatory framework which promotes both ethical practices while promoting media freedom can be developed in Sri Lanka. The study examines the legal, non-legal, social-cultural, editorial and viewpoints of press freedom in Sri Lanka. A qualitative research approach was employed in collecting and interpreting data. Information was gathered by way of interviews, document analysis, Internet search and an analysis of press freedom in other developed countries. The findings revealed that there was no specific regulatory framework to regulate media freedom and ethical journalism in Sri Lanka.

Key Words-Media freedom, Ethical journalism, Legal regulatory Frame work.