

REVIEW
of the official reviewer for dissertation work of Haftamu Kiroso Tekare on the topic «The comparative analysis of framing of human trafficking in contemporary print media» submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in the educational program «8D03201-Journalism»

№	Criteria	Eligibility (one of the options must be checked)	Justification of the position of the official reviewer
1.	The topic of the thesis (as of the date of its approval) corresponds to the directions of development of science and/or state programs	1.1 Compliance with priority areas of science development or government programs: 1) The thesis was completed within the framework of a project or target program financed from the state budget (indicate the name and number of the project or program) 2) The thesis was completed within the framework of another state program (indicate the name of the program) 3) <u>The dissertation corresponds to the priority direction of the development of science, approved by the Higher Scientific and Technical Commission under the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan (indicate the direction)</u>	The topic of the dissertation research, “The Comparative Analysis of Framing of Human Trafficking in Contemporary Print Media,” corresponds to the key directions of scientific growth and state policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the sphere of countering human trafficking and the protection of vulnerable groups of the population. This study examines the communication and media aspects of human trafficking, which is an important societal problem that should be solved by coordinated legal, institutional and informational solutions. This research contributes to media and communication studies by analyzing the framing and portrayal of human trafficking in newspaper coverage and advances academic knowledge of the media’s role in responding societal problems. The importance of the dissertation is also confirmed by its correspondence to the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan “On Countering Human Trafficking” (Law No. 110-VIII dated July 5, 2024), which defines the legal framework for the prevention of human trafficking, protection of victims and raising public awareness. The study’s findings can help to

			improve public communication, awareness raising and media practices connected to human trafficking. Accordingly, the dissertation fits into the national priorities and objectives for the protection of human rights, social development and public awareness and prevention of human trafficking.
2.	Importance for science	The work <u>makes</u> /does not make a significant contribution to science, and its importance is <u>well disclosed</u> /not disclosed	The dissertation makes a significant contribution to science, and its importance is well disclosed. The research addresses the complex and socially relevant issue of human trafficking by investigating the ways in which contemporary newspapers in Ethiopia and Kazakhstan frame and present this issue. Through a comparative examination of media coverage in two distinct national contexts, the study expands scholarly understanding of the relationship between media representation, public discourse and social problems. The scientific significance of this dissertation lies in its systematic application of framing theory and comparative media analysis to explore patterns of news coverage related to trafficking. The study provides new empirical knowledge regarding the dominant frames, narratives and perspectives employed by The Ethiopian Herald and The Astana Times newspapers in two countries. The significance of the work is clearly disclosed through the relevance of its findings and conclusions. The dissertation provides evidence-based insights that can be used by researchers, journalists, media institutions, policy makers and organizations working to combat trafficking. By indicating the strengths and limitations of media portrayal in various socio-cultural contexts, the

			current study offers practical recommendations that may support more effective reporting practices and contribute to informed public discussion and policy formulation on trafficking and related issues.
3.	The principle of independence	Self-reliance level: 1) High; 2) Medium; 3) Low; 4) No independence	The author's level of independence is assessed as high. The dissertation demonstrates the author's ability to independently organize and implement all stages of the research process. Particular attention should be given to the author's independent application of framing theory and comparative media analysis in examining newspaper coverage of human trafficking in Ethiopia and Kazakhstan. The study demonstrates a strong command of relevant academic sources and an ability to critically evaluate and synthesize existing literatures.
4.	The principle of inner unity	4.1 Justification of the relevance of the thesis: 1) Justified; 2) Partially justified; 3) Not justified.	The high level of self-reliance is further evidenced by the author's independent processing and interpretation of empirical data as well as by the consistency of the research design. The conclusions and recommendations are well substantiated and directly drawn from the research findings, confirming the author's ability to conduct original and independent scientific research. The relevance of the dissertation is justified. The study examines media framing of human trafficking, a topic that continues to attract considerable academic and public attention. The comparative analysis of newspapers from Ethiopia and Kazakhstan addresses an important research area and contributes to a broader understanding of media coverage of social issues. The author convincingly demonstrates the need for the research and clearly establishes its scientific and practical significance. The dissertation provides

		4.2 The content of the thesis reflects the topic of the thesis: 1) <u>Reflects</u>; 2) Partially reflects; 3) Does not reflect	valuable insights into the representation of human trafficking in the press and improves existing knowledge in the field of media and communication studies.
			The content of the dissertation reflects the stated topic. Both the theoretical and empirical sections are based on the analysis of media framing of human trafficking in Ethiopia and Kazakhstan and remain focused on the research objectives throughout the study.
		4.3. The purpose and objectives correspond to the topic of the thesis: 1) <u>correspond</u>; 2) partially correspond; 3) do not correspond	The purpose and objectives of the dissertation correspond to the stated topic. The research purpose is clearly formulated and is fully aligned with the subject of the study concerning media framing of human trafficking in Ethiopia and Kazakhstan.
		4.4 All sections and provisions of the thesis are logically interconnected: 1) <u>completely interconnected</u>; 2) the interconnection is partial; 3) there is no interconnection	The objectives are logically structured and adequately support the achievement of the research purpose. The consistency between the topic purpose and objectives demonstrates the internal coherence of the dissertation. All sections and provisions of the dissertation are completely interconnected. The dissertation is structured in a logical and consistent manner with the theoretical, methodological and empirical components effectively integrated into a coherent research framework.

		4.5 The new solutions (principles, methods) proposed by the author are reasoned and evaluated in comparison with the known solutions: <u>1) there is a critical analysis;</u> 2) partial analysis; 3) the analysis does not represent one's own opinions, but quotes from other authors 4) the analysis is absent.	The sequence of the three chapters ensures a clear progression of the study while the findings, conclusions and recommendations are closely linked to the research objectives and results. This demonstrates a strong degree of internal consistency and unity throughout the dissertation.
5.	Scientific novelty principle	5.1 Are the scientific results and provisions new? 1) completely new; 2) <u>partially new (25-75% are new);</u> 3) not new (less than 25% are new)	The scientific results and provisions presented in the dissertation are partially new. The originality of the research lies in its comparative investigation of media framing of human trafficking in Ethiopia and Kazakhstan, which expands current knowledge in an area that has received limited scholarly attention.
		5.2 Are the dissertation findings new? 1) completely new; 2) <u>partially new (25-75% are new);</u>	The dissertation produces original empirical findings and offers a valuable comparative perspective on media representations of human trafficking. The scientific conclusions and recommendations are well substantiated and contribute new insights to the fields of media studies, journalism and communication research.
			The dissertation findings are partially new. The study contributes additional empirical evidence on the media framing of human trafficking through a

		3) not new (less than 25% are new)	comparative analysis of newspapers from Ethiopia and Kazakhstan. Although the research is based on established theoretical and methodological foundations, it produces new findings within the selected comparative context.
		5.3 Technical, technological, economic or management decisions are new and reasonable: 1) completely new ; 2) partially new (25-75% are new); 3) not new (less than 25% are new)	The results expand existing knowledge on media representation of human trafficking and provide insights that are relevant to media and communication studies. Consequently, the dissertation combines original empirical contributions with the further development and application of existing scholarly approaches.
6.	The validity of the main findings	All main conclusions <u>are</u> /are not based on scientifically significant evidence or well-grounded (for qualitative research and areas of training in the arts and humanities)	The management-related recommendations presented in the dissertation are completely new and adequately justified. Their originality stems from the comparative examination of media framing of human trafficking in Ethiopia and Kazakhstan, which provides a basis for developing new perspectives on media reporting and communication practices related to this issue. The proposed recommendations are based on original empirical findings and are closely linked to the research results. They offer practical value for media professionals and other stakeholders while contributing new approaches to the improvement of communication strategies concerning human trafficking. All main conclusions of the dissertation are based on scientifically significant evidence and well grounded. The conclusions logically follow from the research findings, and are supported by the theoretical and empirical materials presented in the study.

			The dissertation demonstrates consistency between the research objectives, analysis and resulting conclusions. The author also acknowledges the limitations of the study, which reflects a critical and balanced approach to the interpretation of the findings. The evidence provided is adequate to substantiate the conclusions and confirms the validity of the dissertation's main results.
7.	The main provisions for the defense	It is necessary to answer the following questions for each provision separately: 7.1 Is the provision proven? 1) <u>proven</u>; 2) rather proven; 3) rather not proven; 4) not proven 5) in its current wording, it is impossible to verify whether the statement has been proven.	The provision is proven. The dissertation provides sufficient theoretical and empirical support for the provisions submitted for defense. The author demonstrates through a comparative analysis of newspaper coverage in Ethiopia and Kazakhstan, the existence of distinct patterns in the representation of human trafficking including differences in thematic emphasis, source selection, framing practices and media functions.
		7.2 Is it trivial? 1) yes; 2) <u>no</u> 3) in its current wording, it is impossible to verify whether the statement is trivial.	The stated provisions are supported by the results of the content analysis and are further reinforced by qualitative evidence obtained during the research process. The findings are presented in a clear and consistent manner, and the conclusions drawn from them are well substantiated. Thus, the provision may be regarded as convincingly proven.
			The proposition is not trivial. It is based on original empirical research and reflects findings obtained through a comparative analysis of media framing of human trafficking in Ethiopia and Kazakhstan. The provision goes beyond commonly accepted assumptions, and is supported by evidence produced during the study.

		7.3 Is it new? 1) <u>yes</u>; 2) no 3) in its current wording, it is impossible to verify the novelty of the statement.	Its scientific value lies in providing additional knowledge about the representation of human trafficking in the media and in broadening the understanding of framing practices in different national contexts like Ethiopia and Kazakhstan. As a result, the proposition constitutes a meaningful contribution to media and communication research and cannot be regarded as trivial.
		7.4 Application level: 1) narrow; 2) medium; 3) <u>wide</u> 4) in its current wording, it is impossible to determine the scope of application of the statement.	The provision is new. It is based on the results of the author's original research and presents findings that have not previously been examined in the same comparative context. The provision offers additional insights into the media framing of human trafficking in Ethiopia and Kazakhstan. Its novelty is evidenced by the comparative perspective adopted in the study and by the empirical results obtained through the research. As a result, the provision contributes new knowledge to media and communication studies and may be regarded as scientifically novel. The scope of the application of the provision is wide. The results of the study may be used in academic research, media practice and policy-related activities concerning human trafficking and media communication. The provision is not limited to the specific cases examined in the dissertation. Its conclusions and recommendations may serve as a useful reference for future studies of media framing as well as for professionals involved in journalism, public

		7.5 Is it proven in the article? 1) <u>Yes</u>; 2) no 3) in its current wording, it is impossible to verify whether the statement has been proven in the article.	communication and anti-trafficking initiatives. As a result, the provision has broad practical and scholarly applicability.
8.	The principle of reliability. Reliability of sources and information provided	8.1 Choice of methodology is justified or the methodology is described in sufficient detail 1) <u>Yes</u>; 2) no	The provision is proven in the author's published scholarly works. The publications presented by the author address the principal themes of the dissertation including media coverage of human trafficking, framing approaches, communication practices and the representation of trafficking related issues in different contexts. The results found in these publications correspond to the objectives and key findings of the dissertation. The author's articles, conference proceedings and book chapter provide theoretical, methodological and empirical support for the provisions submitted for defense. The published studies indicate crucial aspects of the research including the analysis of media content, framing patterns, source employment and communication strategies. The close correspondence between the published works and the dissertation demonstrates that the principal findings have been adequately disseminated and substantiated in the author's scholarly publications. The choice of methodology is justified and the research methodology is described in sufficient detail. The selected research methods and design are appropriate for addressing the stated objectives and for examining the media framing of human trafficking within the chosen analytical framework. The dissertation provides a clear account of the procedures employed in data collection, analysis and

		8.2 The results of the thesis were obtained using modern methods of scientific research and methods of processing and interpreting data using computer technologies: 1) <u>yes</u>; 2) no	interpretation. The methodological rigor of the study together with the use of complementary research methods enhances the reliability of the findings and supports the credibility of the conclusions. The results of the dissertation were obtained using modern methods of scientific research and contemporary approaches to data processing and interpretation. The selected methods are appropriate to the objectives of the study and facilitate a systematic examination of media framing and representation of human trafficking.
		8.3 Theoretical conclusions, models, identified relationships and patterns have been proven and confirmed by experimental research (for areas of training in pedagogical sciences, the results have been proven on the basis of a pedagogical experiment): 1) <u>yes</u>; 2) no	Computer technologies were effectively employed in the management, analysis and presentation of the research data. Their application improved the accuracy, transparency and reliability of the findings thereby supporting the scientific validity of the dissertation's results. The theoretical conclusions identified relationships and patterns presented in the dissertation have been proven and confirmed through empirical research. The study demonstrates a clear correspondence between the theoretical framework and the empirical results with the findings providing adequate support for the proposed interpretations and conclusions. The identified relationships and patterns are substantiated by the research evidence and are logically based on the connected results and analysis. The consistency between the theoretical assumptions and the obtained findings confirms the validity of the dissertation's principal conclusions.

		8.4 Important statements are confirmed / partially confirmed / not confirmed by references to current and reliable scientific literature 8.5 Used literature sources are sufficient/not sufficient for a literature review	Important statements presented in the dissertation are confirmed by references to current and reliable scientific literature. The study is grounded in a broad range of relevant academic sources, which provide an appropriate theoretical and conceptual basis for the research. The author demonstrates a sound understanding of the existing literatures and effectively integrate contemporary studies into the analysis. The used and cited literatures is relevant to the dissertation topic and adequately supports the key arguments, interpretations and conclusions presented in the dissertation. The literature sources employed in the research are sufficient for a comprehensive review of the research problem. The author relies on a broad and relevant body of scientific literature that adequately indicates the current state of research related to the topic. The reviewed sources provide a sound foundation for the theoretical and methodological aspects of the study and support the formulation of the research framework. Eventually, the literature base is important, appropriate, balanced and adequate to support the analysis and conclusions presented in the dissertation.
9	Practical value principle	9.1 The thesis has theoretical value: 1) yes; 2) no	The dissertation has theoretical value. It contributes to the further development of research on media framing and the communication of social issues by providing a comparative analysis of human trafficking coverage in different national contexts. And, the current research broadens the existing body of knowledge in journalism and communication studies and offers a foundation for

		9.2 The thesis is of practical importance and there is a high probability of applying the results obtained in practice: 1) <u>yes</u>; 2) no	future research on media representation, framing processes and public discourse of issues like human trafficking.
		9.3 Are the practice suggestions new? 1) completely new; 2) <u>partially new (25-75% are new)</u>; 3) not new (less than 25% are new)	The practical relevance of the study is indicated in its potential support informed decision-making and to improve the effectiveness of media communication on socially important issues like human trafficking. Therefore, the findings owns clear applicability beyond the academic context.
10.	The quality of writing and design	Academic writing quality: 1) <u>high</u>; 2) average; 3) below average;	Many of the recommendations build upon established approaches in media and communication research while others indicate original insights based on the comparative analysis undertaken in the dissertation. Hence, the proposed recommendations combine existing knowledge with new practical contributions and owns clear applicability in professional practice. The academic writing quality of the dissertation is high. The study is presented in a clear, coherent and scholarly manner and the author's arguments are articulated with precision and consistency. The use

		4) low.	of academic language is appropriate and contributes to the clarity of the discussion.
11.	Notes on a thesis	In addition, the dissertation adheres to accepted academic writing standards and effectively communicates the research objectives, methodology, findings and conclusions. Collectively, the quality of writing facilitates a broad understanding of the research.	
		The dissertation represents a significant contribution to the fields of journalism, media and communication studies. The current study is characterized by possessing a coherent and appropriate methodological frameworks and design and also a well reasoned interpretation of the findings. The stated purpose and objectives have been successfully achieved and the conclusions are sufficiently supported by the empirical evidence. Like any scientific research, certain limitations are present and are appropriately acknowledged by the author. These limitations primarily relate to the scope of the analyzed material and the specific research context which may restrict the broader generalization of some findings. However, these considerations do not diminish the scientific quality of the dissertation. They instead reveal potential directions for future research while preserving the validity, reliability and practical significance of the study's results.	
12.	Scientific level of the doctoral student's articles on the topic of research (in case of defense of the dissertation in the form of a series of articles, the official reviewers comment on the scientific level of each article of the doctoral student on the topic of research)	The scientific level of the doctoral student's publications on the research topic can be assessed as satisfactory. The published works demonstrate the author's ability to conduct independent scientific research, apply appropriate theoretical and methodological approaches and present research findings in a clear and academically sound manner. The publications are closely related to the subject of the dissertation and reflects its principal theoretical, methodological and empirical dimensions. They make a meaningful contribution to the study of media framing, communication processes and human trafficking, thereby supporting the scientific significance of the current dissertation research.	
13.	Decision of the official reviewer (pursuant to paragraph 28 of the present Model Regulations)	Dissertation research of Haftamu Kiros Tekare on the topic "The Comparative Analysis of Framing of Human Trafficking in Contemporary Print Media" is a completed scientific research. The work is accomplished at a high level and the applicant Haftamu Kiros Tekare deserves to be awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in the educational program «8D03201-Journalism».	

Official Reviewer:

Abazov Rafis Faniyovich
PhD, Vice- Rector for International Relations
and Strategic Development,
Kazakh National Agrarian University
(Almaty, Kazakhstan)

