JOURNALISM, MEDIA AND CULTURAL STUDIES

JOURNALISM, ELECTION CAMPAIGNS AND DEMOCRACY IN GHANA

A Thesis in partial fulfilment for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

EBO AFFUL

September 2016

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Understanding democracy, media and the public sphere

Chapter 3: Introducing the conceptual framework: Framing and gatekeeping theories

Chapter 4: Framing election campaigns: A survey of evidence

Chapter 5: Methodology

Chapter 6: Horse race verses issue/policy framing: Ghana's story

Chapter 7: Personalization of election campaigns in Ghana

Chapter 8: Cash: Is it really defining Ghana's election campaign journalism?

Chapter 9: Conclusion

Appendix A: Code book

Appendix B: In-depth interview letters to editors

Appendix C: Question guide for editors

Appendix D: Samples of published election campaigns stories

Dedication

To the memory of my mother, Yeboaba Ansah,

The source of my life and

To my father, Kojo Afful,

The source of my academic progress

Acknowledgement

This PhD thesis would not have been a reality without the support and encouragement of many gallant people. Many thanks to my incredible supervisors, Professor Karin Wahl-Jorgensen and Dr Stephen Cushion, who read a number of my earlier revisions and assisted me to finally make some sense out of the confusion. My thanks also goes to my wife, Christy, for her love and for enduring this long process of absence with me. My children, Yeboaba, Fotwe and Edem, for their inspiration and deep interest in the work and my brothers, sisters and Paakow, for their encouragement. Finally, sincere thanks to my friends, for their support.

Abstract

Political communication literature has documented various forms of framing election campaigns although that on Ghana are few. These included issues, horse race, coverage tone and presidential candidates' media visibility leading to an incumbency advantage. These are normally attributed to news values that reflect political power such as relevance and politicians' elite status. Hence, this study is intended to explore explanation for the trend of campaign coverage in Ghana, a developing democracy, using four Ghanaian newspapers in 2008 and 2012. Through content analysis and in-depth interviews, the thesis grounded in gatekeeping and framing theories, has demonstrated that: (1) the state-owned newspapers did not give an incumbency advantage (2), the coverage was issues-based (3), election stories were more positive in tone (4), there was media bias and (5) politicians paid money ('soli') to journalists for coverage. These empirical findings show that during the campaigns, gatekeeping and framing practices were driven more likely by the 'soli' norm rather than the norm of objective and impartial journalism. Thus the study offers a new explanation why there was no incumbency advantage, why the press bias, why coverage was largely positive in tone and why issues-based framing. However, horse race appears to have the potential to dominate Ghana's elections coverage. The conclusions of this study, one argues, were as a result of interplay between candidates' desire not only to dominate the newspapers but also to be projected positively and journalists' desire to make money from politicians. Simply put: stories of elections published by the newspapers were defined by 'soli' journalism which promoted 'protocol' journalism. This means most election stories that reached electorates were from speeches of candidates. Therefore, the stories lacked critical interpretation of campaign events raising issues of capacity of the press in Ghana to function effectively as public sphere contributing to participatory democracy.

Abbreviations

AFAG	:	*Alliance for Accountability Governance*
BBC	:	*British Broadcasting Corporation*
CD	:	*Code*
CDD	:	*Centre for Democratic Development*
CNN	:	*Cable News Network*
CPP	:	*Convention Peoples' Party*
DFP	:	*Democratic Freedom Party*
DPP	:	*Democratic People's Party*
EC	:	*Electoral Commission*
EGLE	:	*Every Ghanaian Living Everywhere*
FEF	:	*Frederick Egbert Foundation*
GBC	:	*Ghana Broadcasting Corporation*
GDP	:	*Gross Domestic Product*
ICT	:	*Information Communication Technology*
IDEG	:	*Institute for Democratic Governance*
IEA	:	*Institute of Economic Affairs*
IMF	:	*International Monetary Fund*
IPR		*Institute of Public Relations*
IRA	:	Irish Republican Army
NDC	:	*National Democratic Congress*
NGOs	:	*Non-governmental Organization*
NMC	:	*National Media Commission*
NPP	:	*New Patriotic Party*
PNC	:	*People's National Convention*

PNDC	:	*Provisional National Defence Council*
PPP	:	*Progressive People's Party*
RPD	:	*Reformed Patriotic Democrats*
RQs	:	*Research Questions*
PP	:	*Progress Party*
SHS	:	*Senior High School*
SPSS	:	*Statistical Package for Social Sciences*
USA	:	*United State of America*
UFP	:	*United Front Party*
UGCC	:	*United Gold Coast Convention*
UK	:	*United Kingdom*
UN	:	*United Nations*

List of Graphs

Graph 1: A comparison of frequency of appearance of the presidential candidates in the 2008 and 2012 general election campaigns in Ghana

Graph 2: Coverage of the top two presidential candidates in 2008 and 2012 elections by the state-owned newspapers

Graph 3: A comparison of frequency of positive framing of presidential candidates during the 2008 and 2012 general elections in Ghana

Graph 4: A comparison of frequency of negative framing of presidential candidates during the 2008 and 2012 general elections in Ghana

List of Tables

Table 1: Top five (5) prominent themes in the 2008 and 2012 election campaigns coverage in Ghana

Table 2: A comparison of frequency of appearance of the presidential candidates in the 2008 and 2012 election campaigns in Ghana

Table 3: A comparison of the appearance of political parties in newspapers coverage of the 2008 and 2012 election campaigns in Ghana

Chapter 1

Introduction

The media are expected to play a crucial role in democracies, however, the question is: How effective are the mass media in executing this all important role in emerging democracies such as Ghana? Newspapers, radio, television and the internet have become major channels of information for people across the world, however, what does this say about the functioning of democratic governance and its processes? Currently, there is a debate as to whether free media are enhancing or rather undermining democratic governance especially in emerging democracies such as Ghana, which reintroduced democracy in 1992. This is because in the advanced democracies such as the United States whose media are driven by market forces, the media are agued are finding it difficult to perform their democratic roles. This, it is said, is leading to cynicism, apathy and ignorance with regard to politics among citizens of democracies across the globe. Examining the role of media in democracies, Muller (2014) points out that democratic media should supply societies with relevant political information, which should reach a considerable number of citizens with the media upholding the public watchdog role as they also provide a public platform reflecting the diversity of societies.

In this case, Muller (2014) appears to sugguest that democratic media can play their roles better if they take on the public service character to promote programmes, events and services of the state and non-profit institutions that will meet the information needs of citizens. This will include election campaign events, which go to help voters to decide who to vote for. It will also mean that during elections the press will exhibit the capacity to provide electorates the needed platform for rational public debate of issues of common good. This will require the press to help enrich voters with relevant sufficient information that will well educate voters about not just policy issues candidates are championing, but also issues about competence, intelligence, credibility and morals of candidates for voters to be well informed in order for them to take the critical decision as to which candidate deserves their votes. In effect, one fundamental question to ask is: In a society such as Ghana, where due to resource challenges and high illiteracy rate newspapers are restricted to only the urban communities, how can the ideal public sphere be achieved to help sustain its

democracy? Equally legitimate question is: How is it possible for newspapers, which are being driven by profit motive including the state-owned take on the character of public service at a time when there is an attempt for scramble for meida audience of Africans including Ghanaians by powerful global media institutions (Willems and Mano, 2016)?

Of interest to this study, therefore, is the framing practices in the media; specifically, newspapers, of multiparty election campaigns in post-dictatorship Ghana and the relationship existing among the press, economic interest and political actors in the country. In the study, framing of election campaigns, political actors' methods for influencing and shaping election journalism practice coupled with the influence of economic interest of journalists and the media are explored. The aim is to elucidate how these critical relationships weaken or deepen democratic culture in Ghana. At the core of this study, is the attempt at theorizing the function of the press establishment and how it relates to the public sphere in the context of an African democratization process. Communication research theories such as gatekeeping and framing of journalism practice will inform the study.

This investigation attempts to address issues of framing election campaigns and to establish whether in the context of democratization process, "changes in the array of forces that exercise control over cultural production and distribution limit or liberate the public sphere" (Golding and Murdock, 2000: 78). Using the research questions for the study, the thesis examines ideal forms of journalism practice, gatekeeping and framing practices, which give guidance to an ideal press serving as a critical platform for crucial quality discussions in an emerging democracy such as Ghana. The ideal public sphere provides the platform "where popular political will should take form and citizens should be able to constitute themselves as active agents in the political process" (Dahlgren and Sparks, 1991: 2). Thus, one of the cardinal roles of the press is helping to bring about actively informed citizens, who can be engaged in rational debates and contribute to the democratization process of the country. This is crucial for enhancement of democracy in Ghana.

The present chapter introduces the media and the political systems in Ghana in setting the background for the election of 2008 and 2012. It proceeds to touch briefly on how party system in Ghana has evolved since independence and how the media landscape has changed with time. The statement of the problem, research objectives and significance of the study follow. The chapter concludes by giving a brief overview of the organisation of the remaining chapters of the thesis.

1.1 The media

From the onset of the third wave of democratization (Huntington, 1991), a number of dictatorship regimes including Ghana have been transformed. For instance, Ghana today can be said to have relatively stable political institutions, access to the mass media, expansion of the mass political audience, the elevation of the news media to a more powerful institution and a proliferation of the main means of communication. The news media have been an important catalyst in the democratization process. The fact is that the media and modern democracy are strongly connected - the media serving as a link between the political leaders and citizens. Strömbäck (2005:332) believes that the media are in need of democracy. This is because democracy stands out as the only system of governance today that ensures values such as freedom of speech, expression and information as well as the independence of the media from the control of governments. Political messages and actions of politicians get to the public through the media. Perception and voting decisions are made possible by political stories supplied by the media. Although free elections are critical it is not enough for democratic governance. Blumler and Gurevitch (2005:104) observe that to ensure some level of political awareness, public discussions and media participation, a democratic society needs extensive and intelligent news media to report on public affairs. In effect, democratic governance demands the kind of media that is truly free and also give access to citizens to engage in quality debate.

The media, Strömbäck (2005:332) acknowledges normatively, play three significant roles in democracies namely: (i) ensuring the supply of information in societies (ii) serving as a platform for public discourse of variety of political ideas and (iii) media establishment positioning itself as an effective watchdog overseeing activities of political leaders. The role of the mass media is

critical in every democratic governance. The media can be used as tools for the resolution of societal conflicts in order to ensure peaceful atmosphere for development (Curran (2005:137).

According to Miller (1965:7) "the core of politics is the resolution of societal conflicts." Once a society needs intelligent and informative journalism to help sustain the workings of democracy (Curran, 2005:136) then it becomes the responsibility of the media to support body politics to achieve a stable democracy. There is sufficient evidence that demonstrates that media framing and selection of perspectives of different political actors in news reports have real consequences for the public (D'Angelo & Kuypers, 2010). Indeed, how the news media frame politics has significant cognitive, attitudinal and behavioural effects that are especially important during election campaigns when voters are called upon to elect their political leaders. A number of studies have shown that differential framing is capable of increasing or decreasing voter knowledge of political issues, change public perceptions of candidates, impact the level of support of certain policies and affects public opinion and voting decisions (de Vreese, 2004).

Considering the importance of media framing for public knowledge, candidates' perceptions and policy evaluation as well as the significance of news for voters, it is critical to investigate the news framing of the 2008 and 2012 election campaigns in Ghana. This study, therefore, examines the news media framing of the two elections by the four leading newspapers in Ghana. Contrary to election news framing research in the U.S., the analysis shows that election framing in Ghana used issues framing at the expense of horse race. The analysis also demonstrates that unlike previous studies, horse race framing is emerging in the political communication of the country. Besides these, the press in Ghana appears to give intense publicity to the two candidates of the two main political parties. This study conflicts with earlier research that negative coverage dominates elections. Again, study also shows that although the news media are accused of corruption and lack of professionalism, what seems to motivate their selection and representation of politics, specifically, election events and issues is economic interests.

1.2 News media and politics

Undoubtedly the news media institution is key in the development of societies. It is an institution which gathers and processes political, social as well as economic ideas and activities taking place in societies across the globe and then disseminates the information. By this act, the news media are engaged in the process of globalization. In effect, the news media are making it possible for citizens across the globe to share ideas and experiences. With the availability of new enhanced information and communication technology, the same information can reach mass audience simultaneously (McQuail, 2000). Due to the enhanced new information and communication technology, societies around the world get to know the political, social and economic growth of other societies. In the world today, various fields have turned to the news media as an important and reliable platform for public discourse. Politics is one area which cannot do without the news media. The institution of politics is one discipline which relies so much on the news media to engage citizens. Perhaps it is against this background that scholars maintain that the news media are potential tools for the kind of civic participation as well empowerment leading to human development.

For the past decades, studies have revealed that the news media play "the role of civic teacher" in democracies (McCombs, 2004:51). This is done by the media setting citizens' agenda of issues. In effect, the media pass on to the audience issues and events they cover including positive and negative tones. Amatya Sen points out that "Political and civil rights give people the opportunity to draw attention forcefully to general needs and to demand appropriate public action. The response of government to the acute suffering of its people often depends on the pressure that is put on it. The exercise of political rights such as voting, criticizing and protesting can make a real difference to the political incentives that operate on a government" (Sen, 1999:6).

At the present time, democratic societies around the world are engaging the news media as a critical tool for mobilization of citizens as well as drawing attention to electoral activities. One significant principle of democracy is for democratic societies to be holding frequent, free and fair elections to elect their leaders to govern them. The electorates as well, become aware of political

5

parties, political actors and issues they articulate; the news media, therefore, become an important tool used by political actors to reach out to the voters, who at the end of the day decide those they believe are best suited to be their leaders.

In their book, *Mediated Politics: Communication in the Future of Democracy,* Bennett and Entman (2001) point out that traditional characteristics of doing politics are still with us; from the old fashioned door-to-door canvassing of votes to political party and social movement organizations. One acknowledges that such old fashioned mobilization of citizens demands much effort, determination, time and energy on the side of candidates and political parties to achieve a good result. Therefore, political actors find it more convenient to engage the news media and journalists to reach out to citizens with their messages. This is evident not only in the developed democracies but also in the emerging democracies including Ghana. Strömbäck and Kaid (2008) argue that election news coverage is critical for democratic societies since it is a prerequisite for a well-informed voter. Election news coverage, therefore, adds to the enhancement of democratic practices.

During election campaigning, political actors experiment with various techniques and strategies in an attempt to win voters to their side in order to get sufficient votes to win the election. In pressing home their intentions, political actors apply various methods to make known their positions on individual issues and policies. They resort to making promises to the voters as to the policies they would pursue if voted to power. While some candidates focus their efforts on the strategies that they would apply to transform their plans into reality, others would want to engage in debating or resorting to criticizing the opinions of their competitors. With politicians applying various methods in approaching issues, problems and events, the news media in their coverage frame the issues that emerge in various forms. Depending on the policies of the media, journalists may decide to present election stories using the horse race frame or issue frames or personalization frame. The various forms of frames used by journalists may go a long way in influencing electorates' perceptions about the various candidates, political parties as well as the electoral process.

It is evident that news media frame an issue or event differently, depending on the type of media policy, the editorial policy of the media, ownership affiliations of the media towards a particular candidate or party as well as the economic, social and political situation of a particular country (Strömbäck and Kaid, 2008). To explore these differences, researchers are motivated to carry out studies in order to examine how journalists in their coverage, frame election campaign issues and events.

According to scholars such as Esser and Angelo (2006); Vreese, Peter and Semetko (2001), findings from a number of researches talk of cross-national variations in the framing of election campaign events worldwide. This thesis is interested in examining how the press frames election campaigns in emerging democracies like Ghana. The study, therefore, engages the 2008 and 2012 Ghanaian general elections by both the state-owned and privately-owned newspapers in Ghana.

1.3 Structural development: The experience of Ghana

It is suggested that the media positioning themselves as an independent power base have contributed to changes in election campaign strategies and candidates have no alternative than to adapt to new media interests. According to Swanson and Mancini (1996: 13), this adaptation is being done in many democracies across the globe. They claim that "this is a process of media contents and forms, but also to structures of relationship and ownership that increasingly are assimilating the systems of mass communication found in different countries." The above statement suggests that structural development appears to have led to changes in politics including election campaigning across the globe. The account of the structural changes in Ghana is expected to provide the context for the study. In particular, the role of the media and consequently the growth of democratic practices are outlined below.

1.3.1 The old order gives way to new

Hallin and Mancini (2004: 29) note that changes in political communication today is probably a result of collapse of old political arrangements. For the past two decades the political system as

well as the economic system of Ghana have seen some significant developments. Ghana's Coat of Arms has the inscription: Freedom and Justice, which happens to a significant objective of Ghana's independence movement in the 1950s. However, this objective appears to be too difficult for the country to achieve as difficulties in Ghana's democratic governance began to appear after independence in March 1957. The liberal democratic rule soon degenerated into a quasi-dictatorship, which led to the first military coup of 1966 (Gyimah-Boadi, 2002: 2). Ghana again made some attempts at liberal democracy from 1969 to 1972, and again from 1979 to 1981. However, each of those democracies was overthrown. Ghana's current resurrected democratic path started in the early 1990s with the formulation of the 1992 constitution. The constitution provides a two term limit of four (4) years each for the president elect through universal adult suffrage and a parliament. To citizens of Ghana, democratic governance means the country having free and fair elections every four years to elect their political leaders. Due to this political democratic culture, election campaigns by candidates and political parties are critical and important to citizens.

Again, Ghana has gone from the model of protectionism to operating an open free market economy. The country has in effect, evolved from an economy almost controlled by the government to one that is almost private in nature. The country has a new industrial policy which has the objective of promoting increased competitiveness and enhanced industrial production, with increased employment and prosperity for all. The country also has a new trade policy with the objective of ensuring "a consistent and stable policy environment with which the private sector and consumers can operate effectively and with certainty" (Ghana's Trade Policy Framework and Industrial Policy).

This economic system transformation has had an effect on the media system. Ghana's media landscape has developed with the times and become pluralistic. There is freedom on the airwaves as well as the print media. The criminal libel law has been repealed and the National Media Commission (NMC), an independent body insulated from government interference, as the referee. Advertising is helping to fund a pluralistic media in Ghana. With the privatization and deregulation of the economy and the media system, there are more television stations, radio stations as well as

newspapers, which are allowing for more competition in the media industry. The internet is also increasingly being used.

These developments in the political as well as economic systems have presented Ghanaians with a new reality. This new reality meant a more open and market-oriented Ghanaians, the expansion of independent mass media with television taking the centre stage, commercialization of the media, deepened election campaign competition, especially between the two main political parties of the NDC and the NPP.

1.3.2 The political system in Ghana

The historical narrative of Ghana indicates that the country has emerged from many political transitions which can be recounted as follows: from slavery to colonial administration, then to multiparty democratic governance then to military autocratic rule and finally to multiparty democratic governance since January 1993 when Jerry John Rawlings was sworn in as the first president of the fourth Republic.

April 1992 will go down as a very significant period in the socio-political life of Ghana. Citizens of the country had the opportunity to vote in a referendum for Ghana to go back to constitutional multiparty democratic governance after military interventions in 1966, 1972 and 1981 which suspended the constitutions of 1958, 1969 and 1979 respectively. The constitution after the April 1992 referendum put in place independent Electoral Commission (EC) with the responsibility of organising presidential and parliamentary elections on December 7 every four years by secret ballot under universal adult suffrage. On December 7, 1992, the first multiparty democratic elections under the fourth republic took place followed by the 1996, 2000, 2004, 2008 and 2012 elections. According to Boafo-Arthur (2006: 37), the efficient manner the Electoral Commission has been organising elections in the country is acclaimed across the country. In a post-election

2004 survey, 96.1 percent of respondents expressed confidence in the EC. Ghana, therefore, awaits the 2016 election as this study was being conducted.

Beyond these successful elections one can argue that there has been some level of progress in the consolidation of multiparty democratic rule within the framework of the 1992 constitution. There is tolerance of opposing views, free exchange of and circulation of ideas and mutual respect among contending leaders and their followers (Ninsin, 2006: 63). There is political liberalization which guarantees the rights and liberties of citizens as well as free and independent media which are holding government accountable on behalf of Ghanaians. Whitfield and Jones (2008: 1) argue that Ghana's practice of democracy is one of the political success stories in Africa although the democratic development of Ghana still has a long way to go.

1.3.3 The political party system

Dahl (1967: 203) argues that "no full-fledged modern democracy lacks parties that compete for voters and offices in national elections." Indeed political parties have occupied the centre stage in the democratic governance in Ghana and have provided the needed forum for citizens' participation in politics notably elected leaders. For instance, candidates who put themselves up for election are voted once every four years to become the president of the country as well as members of parliament running on the tickets of political parties or as independent presidential or parliamentary candidates. The multiparty democratic election experience so far recorded indicates that winning election as an independent candidate is a difficult task to accomplish in Ghana's electoral process. The 1992 constitution of the country is a combination of some elements of American presidential political system and British Westminster parliamentary political system. With Ghana's system, the President, who is elected through political party primaries then gets voted for and elected by popular vote directly in the same manner as a Member of Parliament will also be voted for and elected into office.

In the 1950s, political parties in the country identified with either the right or left ideological blocks with capitalists and socialists as their political orientation. As the founder of the Convention Peoples' Party (CPP), Dr. Kwame Nkrumah – the first President of Ghana- took on the character of the left, the UGCC party (the first active political party in Ghana) which then transformed to become United Party then Progress Party and now New Patriotic Party prided itself of belonging to the right ideological orientation (Auebo, 1997).

The resurrection of multiparty democratic governance in Ghana in 1992 saw the emergence of a third force in the Ghanaian political landscape. The NDC was born and according to Carbom (2003: 10) it virtually took the ideological character of the CPP as a radical social democratic party. Winning the 1992 and 1996 democratic elections, the NDC positioned itself as one of the two most powerful political parties in Ghana relegating the CPP (the first party to govern Ghana) to the third position. However, it seems the earlier ideological positions of left and right have with time been influenced by factionalism tendencies such as religion and tribe. Ninsin (2006) points out that political parties in Ghana have lost their ideological characters noted for during the early period of independence and are now concerned with organising voters during election campaigns. Jonah (2007: 6) puts it more succinctly when he points out that political parties appear to be "more like vote-gathering machine."

Policy issues are therefore not informed by ideological discourse. This, it is suggested, could be due to factors such as frequent military interventions, illiteracy and poverty. Ninsin (2006) notes that illiteracy rate is about 40 percent of the electorates who are also trapped in abject poverty. The illiterate electorates can hardly come to terms with abstract capitalist and socialist ideological discourse because they do not feel the impact of such ideologies on their lives. It is rather those in the privileged elite class who engage in ideological discourse and make some sense out of it.

With the political parties engaging in ethnic as well as religious emotional rhetoric as a strategy to win votes during elections, it appears the number of electorates who would engage in ideological discourse would be insignificant. A situation is created in which citizens allow their family attachment to political interest to influence the decision they take with regards to the candidates or political party they vote for. Other electorates are also influenced by the electoral hype of candidates and political parties especially by the use of mass media during election campaigning. These two factors, which define and identify electorates, also bring about some aspect of political party organization which includes party membership, candidate selection and funding political party activities. Ninsin (2006: 12) points out two forms of political party membership in Ghana. According to him, these are formal and informal membership. The formal group of membership are card-bearers who are interested in various activities of the political party. This group takes active part in party meetings, pay dues and attend party rallies during election campaigns. They even go to the extent of mobilizing votes for their party to contest elections.

The informal member, on the other hand, only votes for the party during elections. One can even decide to vote for the presidential candidate of one's political party and vote for opposition parliamentary candidate or vice versa. This kind of voting is referred to in Ghana's political communication as 'skirt and blouse' voting. For instance, "The Attorney General and Minister of Justice, Dr Benjamin Kumbour appealed to the constituents to desist from the practice of voting 'skirt and blouse' as they did in 2004 and 2008 elections" (The *Ghanaian Chronicle,* October 19, 2012). Unlike the formal member whose vote is dependent on family, economic and ideological considerations, the informal member votes in a particular direction. For instance, ethnic background of the candidate could influence the direction of one's voting pattern.

Political party membership also leads to the question of election campaigning and party funding. In Ghana it has been observed that political party funding, which is mobilized through dues, money from party leaders and sympathizers is woefully insufficient for effective and efficient political party organisation and management (CDD-Ghana, 2005). Ninsin (2006: 15) observes that in a

situation where workers' income is so low and formal political party membership is also low, political parties are unable to mobilize sufficient money and resources. This has created the opportunity for Ghanaians who are wealthy and appear like political entrepreneurs (political financiers) to take over the political parties. These political entrepreneurs, therefore, use their wealth to influence electorates as well as editors and election campaign reporters before, during and after elections. According to Nugent (2001: 4), lack of sufficient political party funding has also led to the creation of a two-political party system in Ghana from independence to date since smaller political parties are in no position to compete effectively for lack of funding. Therefore, the multiparty democratic system in Ghana is dominated by two political parties: the New Patriotic Party (NPP), which is seen as pro-market, pro-business, and property owning democracy party (i.e. the right of every citizen to persevere to own property) and the National Democratic Congress (NDC) which is also regarded as social democrat (i.e. the protection of the rights of socially disadvantage groups).

Gyimah-Boadi and Asante (2006: 248) point out that although the NPP and the NDC claim to be defined by ideologies, their source of strength is rather ethnic affiliations rather than ideological persuasions. The dominance of the two political parties in the Ghanaian multiparty democratic governance leads to one crucial question: To what extent is the media in Ghana upholding the core value of democracy (such as equal and fair coverage of election campaigns for all candidates and political parties) in order for electorates to make informed decisions?

1.3.4 The media system

If there is any particular institution in Ghana that has benefited from the steady growth of democratic governance, it is undoubtedly the mass media. Since its liberalization about twenty (20) years ago it has indeed been transformed to a point where the system has affected the relationship between political institutions and citizens as is the case in most liberalized democratic societies (Negrine and Stanyer, 2007: 1). Both the print and electronic media appear very vibrant.

In the past the media landscape in Ghana had only the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC) and the two regulated daily newspapers namely *The Ghanaian Times* and the *Daily Graphic*.

Since 1996 when the Ghanaian market was liberalised and the media industry deregulated, the media landscape has now over 149 radio stations, about 450 newspapers and 10 television stations as well as cable networks including the BBC, CNN and Al Jazeera (A Journalist Guide for covering post-elections in Ghana, 2010: 21). This has led to keen competition in the media industry in order to win loyal audience to secure greater share of the advertising account.

With the state losing its control of the media, Ghana's media have moved from virtually state-owned to a vibrant free independent media. This situation has opened the door for free and diversity of debates making it possible for the public with various backgrounds to contribute especially to radio debates through 'phone-in', 'mail-in', text-in'. As indicated in *A Journalist Guide for Covering Post-Elections in Ghana* (2010), "the role of strong and growing media deserve special mention in its contribution to the deepening of Ghana's democracy especially the private radio stations and increasingly available ICT tools such as mobile telephony. These two forms of media have given Ghanaians tremendous voice and space to contribute to matters of political, economic and social interest."

One noticeable feature is discussion programmes on television and radio which focus on newspaper stories. Newspaper captions on the front pages give people some insight into who and what are making the news and they then decide on which newspapers to buy or not. In Ghana, radio appears to be the favourite medium as both the English language as well as the local Ghanaian languages are in use for broadcast. Ghana's culture makes it easy for one to get informed as information is shared at all places including markets, work places, in vehicles, restaurants and pubs across the country through discussions, debates or commentaries. On the other hand, newspapers are mostly found in regional and district capitals and are of less importance in the rural

communities which have high percentages of illiterates. According to Gadzekpo (2005), 90 percent of Ghanaians had tuned in to the radio in the past seven days while 69 percent tuned in at least once in a day.

In the case of newspapers, the state-owned, *The Ghanaian Times* and the *Daily Graphic* give national coverage with privately-owned newspapers such as the *Daily Guide, Ghanaian Chronicle, The Crusading Guide, and the Public Agenda* as the most influential privately-owned newspapers providing national political coverage. In Ghana, according to *Press, Power and Politics report* (2000: 13) information on newspaper circulation figures are not reliable. There is no law for publishers to make public their circulation figures which they themselves are not ready to make them available because of assumption that giving figures out would undermine their sales and income. The state-owned, the *Daily Graphic* newspaper happens to be the most noticeable and prosperous newspaper in Ghana followed by *The Ghanaian Times* with a big share of advertising revenue without state subventions. The media have been accused of "reneging on its watchdog role turning itself into an appendage for the two leading political parties in Ghana, the NDC and the NPP" (A Journalist Guide for covering Post-elections in Ghana 2010: 22). In election campaign terms, the NDC and the NPP appear to recognise the growing force of the mass media in Ghana and are therefore using them to run their election campaigns. Hence the media appear to becoming susceptible to their manipulation.

The section appears to suggest that the 1992 constitution, which led to the collapse of the old political system, marked a watershed in Ghana's media history. This is because it came along with freedom of speech and expression including the right to freedom of the media and the establishment of the independent National Media Commission (NMC). The positive contribution of the constitution on media freedom has made possible for the country to hold successful multiparty elections since 1992. This structural development has helped bring about an explosion in the media landscape with a significant number of newspapers, radio stations and television channels coming into existence. Understanding the structural changes is, therefore, essential for

this study. The section outlined the development that has taken place to show the level of support that the changes have given to the new democratic process in Ghana leading to successful elections including the 2008 and 2012 elections that this study has chosen to explore. This, is expected, to build a strong foundation for the study to make some sense.

1.4 The 2008 election

The 2008 general election was the fifth of such elections since the resurrected multiparty democratic governance in 1992. It was the second time that power had been transferred from one democratically elected president to another. The election took place on December 7. According to the Commonwealth Observer Group report, the 2008 election was hard-fought for two reasons: the National Democratic Congress (NDC) desire to come back to power after eight years staying in opposition to the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the discovery of oil deposits, which was expected to increase resources at the disposal of the winning candidate and political party.

The report on the election drew attention to the deepening of the democratic governance of Ghana, which was conducted in an open, transparent and inclusive manner. As a result of this, the Group described the 2008 election as creditable on the African continent and the world at large.

The presidential election result, which was declared by the Electoral Commission (the body constitutionally set up to conduct the elections), indicated that in the first round of voting no clear candidate emerged. Neither Prof John Atta Mills of the NDC nor Nana Akufo-Addo of the NPP received more than 50 percent of the votes. The former had 47.92 percent while the latter also polled 49.13 percent. The remainder of the votes were split among the other parties in the race. Therefore, in the absence of a clear winner, and in accordance with Article 63(3) (4) (5) of the 1992 constitution, a presidential run-off was necessary to determine the winner. The run-off was slated for December 28, 2008.

1.4.1 The 2008 presidential run-off

Whereas the December 7, 2008 was issues based, the Commonwealth Observer Group report pointed out that the tone of the run-off campaign moved focus to personality politics and party loyalty. Ethnicity also became a crucial feature and heightened political tensions in some parts of the country. Among the concerns expressed by the report included:

- Politically – biased coverage of the elections by some sections of the media;
- Pernicious influence of money and patronage in inducing support.

The run-off witnessed a relatively high voter-turnout, which suggests the determination and interest of Ghanaian citizens in enhancing the democratic credentials of the country through a credible transfer of power. On January 3, 2009, the presidential election was won by the NDC candidate, Professor John Atta Mills with 50.23 percent of the votes cast, defeating the NPP candidate, Nana Akufo-Addo who had 49.77 percent.

1.5 The 2012 election

The December 7, 2012 general election was the sixth presidential and parliamentary elections since the resurrection of multiparty democratic governance in 1992. On July 24, 2012, President Atta Mills unexpectedly died and the then vice president, John Dramani Mahama, was immediately sworn in as the president of the country. It was the perception that the death of President Atta Mills was expected to have an influence on the election.

In June 2012, the Electoral Commission announced that 45 new electoral constituencies and districts were going to be established based on the 2010 census figures. This announcement was met with protest from some stakeholders and the Electoral Commission was challenged in the Supreme Court. The decision of the Electoral Commission was finally upheld in October 2012. Immediately after this, attention shifted to the nomination of candidates and election campaign

activities. The two main political parties promised to utilize the resources of the country including the new-found oil for industrial revolution, enhancement of education, creation of jobs, providing better health services and also improving as well as expanding infrastructure.

One major area of divergence, according to the Commonwealth Observation Group report, was education. While the NPP promised free Senior High School education immediately if it should come to power, the NDC on its part cautioned the electorates that NPP's promises were unrealistic. The NDC campaigned that when voted back to power its educational policy would include the phasing-in of free Senior High School education over a twenty- year period. The election was virtually a two-horse race between the NDC and the NPP. There were eight presidential candidates, with running mates, seven of whom were on the tickets of political parties and an independent presidential candidate. When on December 7, 2012 the election was held, the incumbent, John Mahama of NDC won with 50.70 percent and was sworn in as the president of the country. Some of the concerns that the report recorded included:

- Monetization of the political and electoral processes including alleged widespread bribery and other forms of corruption;

- Abuses of incumbency, including the use of state vehicles, state security, state officials and state venues and paraphernalia;

- The winner-takes-all politics of exclusion, perpetrated by governments in power against losing political parties;

- Politicization of ethnic issues, which is one of the biggest threats to the holding of peaceful elections in Ghana.

Although the democratization process of Ghana has been described as a political success story in Africa (Gyimah-Boadi, 2008; Ninsin, 1998), Dr. Kwasi Aning of Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC) in Accra cautions that "politicians in Ghana are still in the business of deliberately preaching hatred, busily exploiting ethnicity, regionalism and religious groups just to win power and we sit here and think that Ghana's democratic credentials

are interact" (October 25, 2012, <u>www.ghanaweb.com</u> / GhanaHomePage). Aning may not be far from right. The NPP brought three retired South African police officers into the country illegally and they were consequently arrested for "training some young men in various security drills, including unarmed combat, weapon handling, VIP protection techniques and rapid response manoeuvres" (*Daily Graphic*, Tuesday, March 22, 2016). Confirming this story, the Deputy Communications Director, Perry Okudzeto, said the officers "were in the country to train some operatives of the party to engage in crowed controlling, protecting the flagbearer as well as the running mate" (*The Ghanaian Times,* Wednesday, March 23, 2016). This is contrary to the laws of Ghana as no individual can raise a private army without proper authorization and necessary clearance. It needs to be acknowledged here that the democratic gains so for achieved by Ghana over the years, could not have been possible without the needed structures for structural development in the country as a foundation on which to grow and sustain real democratic culture.

1.6 Problem statement

If election campaign issues and events are selected and represented to favour one particular political party or a candidate, voters decisions as to who to vote for could be influenced. Again, issues and events that election campaigns coverage focus on matter for the practice of democracy. In all these, the factors that go to influence selection and representation of election campaign stories are critical indeed. These acts, it could be argued, may go to undermine democracy, undermine citizens' capacity to take political decisions and act upon them since election campaigns coverage are important in building and sustaining democracy, especially, in an emerging democracies including Ghana, where democratic norms and institutions are less developed.

Election campaigns are not limited to only media coverage. The role the media play in election campaigns appears to be critical in building a democratic culture. For many people, the media happen to be the election campaign itself. This misconception goes to emphasise the point that the behaviour exhibited by journalists, including editors, in framing election campaigns is crucial. This might have influenced the framers of the 1992 constitution of Ghana to guarantee that the state-owned media in particular have the responsibility to ensure free, fair and equal coverage to all

political parties and candidates especially during election campaigns. Media coverage helps citizens to decide as to who should constitute the political leadership of the country. Studies so far indicate that the state-owned media are not abiding by this constitutional provision and opposition parties have been disadvantaged in favour of incumbent political parties (CDD, 2004; Gyimah-Boadi, 1997, 2001). Besides this, the media in Ghana, which are noted for their issues coverage appear to be engaging in horse race framing as well as personalization of election campaigns. As a result, leading to the infusion of American style of election campaigns coverage in the country - in effect, confirming the argument that election campaigns and their coverage across democracies are taking similar form.

With such journalism practice in the country issues are raised with regards to models, theories and frameworks proposed by earlier researchers. There are questions as to how applicable and generalizable these models are to media coverage across different countries other than the originating country of study. There is scarcity of empirical findings from developing democracies such as Ghana to enable one to find out whether coverage of election campaigns follow the same logic as identified in the advanced democracies.

This study would be valuable because it would allow for comparison of coverage of election campaigns by making available comparable information to go with the previous studies. At this time when there are questions as to the trend election campaign coverage is taking globally, it appears necessary to be in the position to compare the most recent election campaign coverage with earlier studies. Another point is that coverage of election campaigns in Ghana by these four targeted newspapers is very significant since they represent the best in Ghanaian newspaper journalism.

With the above assertions very strong claims can, therefore, be made about the need for further research campaign coverage by the press in Ghana. Hence the fundamental question driving this study is expressed as follows: What is the nature of election campaign coverage in Ghana and what

explains the trend of coverage and how does it compare with election campaigns coverage across democracies?

To this end, the study will explore political communication concepts such as horse race framing, issue framing and personalization of election campaigns. This will allow the study to compare Ghana's election campaign framing with other democracies across the globe since it is claimed that democratic elections across the globe are looking similar in form. Secondly, the study will also explore the extent to which the press met the 1992 constitutional requirement of ensuring free, fair and equal coverage for all candidates and political parties for the 2008 and 2012 elections, whether there was media bias towards incumbency or otherwise. Finally, the study will examine what goes to influence selection and representation of election campaigns stories. This is to place Ghana's journalism practice within the context of global journalism practice.

By providing data from an emerging democracy such as Ghana, the content analysis and the in-depth interviews should represent a contribution to a growing body of literature on comparative communication studies, which includes media bias, incumbency coverage advantage as well as 'soli' journalism model, a model which appears to be influencing and shaping election campaign coverage in Ghana. The results of the study are, therefore, intended to encourage media and journalists to be thoughtful in understanding the potential benefits responsible journalism brings to society and to develop creative, educative and persuasive approaches for coverage of election campaigns in Ghana.

1.7 Research objective

The thesis has three major objectives to accomplish in order to resolve the research problem. The first is to explore the trend of election campaign coverage in Ghana. In this regard, the research will determine the reporting approaches adopted by journalists and how these approaches compare to other newspaper coverage within the period. The second is to research what goes to influence the selection and framing of election campaign issues and events by the gatekeepers of the press

in Ghana. In this examination, the study will also demonstrate the differences as well as the similarities that exist between the state-owned and privately-owned newspapers in the selection and framing of election coverage stories for readers.

It would demonstrate how these factors parallel gatekeeping and framing theories engaged in the literature. The gatekeeping and framing theories are supposed to provide some guidance as to the ways that the media choose to represent stories and the stories to publish. The third and final objective would, therefore, find out the opinions, attitudes, feelings and experiences of officials of parties about the coverage of election campaigns in Ghana in the context of the 2008 and 2012 election campaigns. This would demonstrate the extent to which politicians and political parties were satisfied or otherwise with the coverage of election campaigns by the press and the impression they have formed about journalism practice in the country.

1.8 Significance of the study

The media continue to influence political and social issues. On one hand, the media are used as a political tool for the legitimacy of a government by shaping a society's political culture and influencing public opinion. In addition, the media serve as watchdogs of government activities. Assuming that the media are capable of influencing politics, scholars have been examining over the years the kind of relationship that exists between the media and politics. *Politics and News* (1982) by Black, Tuchman's *Making News: A Study in the Construction of Reality* (1978), Lasswell's *Propaganda Technique in the World War* (1938) and *Communication and Democracy: Exploring the Intellectual Frontiers in Agenda-Setting Theory* (1972) by McComb, Shaw and Weaver are some few examples in this regard. The findings of each of these studies suggest that the media can influence the shaping of politics. The 1992 constitution of Ghana makes it possible for citizens of Ghana to renew their democratic rights to elect their president once every four years. Therefore, voters will need the mass media to supply them with the necessary information about the candidates, their campaign activities, plans as well as their messages. This major responsibility of the news media in democracies makes framing of candidates and their activities critical since it can add to voters' decision making as to which presidential candidate deserves their important

votes. In this regard, the media disseminating accurate, fair and credible election campaign stories become so crucial in giving meaning to the concept of democracy.

It appears then that the media have been playing a significant role in deepening democratic governance in democracies across the globe. This recognition makes it imperative for studies to be conducted into how the media in a young democracy such as Ghana are also performing their role in helping to enhance and sustain democratic culture. The other justification is that many studies that are available are contributions of the media to the Western developed democracies, however, the same cannot be said about developing democracies including Ghana. For this reason, the current thesis will provide data on performance of the media with particular reference to newspaper journalism and its role in multiparty democracy by studying the 2008 and 2012 coverage of election campaigns in Ghana. In addition despite the recognition of the benefit of combine research method for a single study, a comprehensive study engaging the combine research methods into coverage of election campaigns in Ghana is scattered in the literature.

Also it is significant to examine how far theories of gatekeeping and framing influence selection and representation of campaign issues and events for publication in the state-owned as well as privately-owned newspapers in Ghana and the extent to which these practices lead to bias coverage or otherwise. This study is also significant because it discusses the issue of 'soli' journalism practice influence specifically in election campaign coverage in Ghana. The use of the four newspapers, two state-owned and two privately-owned as the sample size for this study is lacking in comparative media research in Ghana. The findings can contribute to find a way as to how to harness their similarities as well as differences in enhancing election campaigns reporting in Ghana for the common good. The choice of election year, 2012, is also significant because it is an opportunity to examine if its election campaign coverage demonstrates an improvement over the coverage of other previous elections with regard to providing free, fair and equal coverage for all candidates as well as political parties as guaranteed by the 1992 constitution of Ghana. Finally, the outcome of this study can be compared with the trend of coverage of the impending 2016 election campaign in Ghana.

1.9 Organisation of the study

The study is made up of nine chapters. **Chapter 1** sets the stage by examining the media as well as news media and politics. It briefly narrates the 2008 and 2012 elections in Ghana. Structural development appears to have contributed to the changes in election campaigning and its media coverage across the globe. The chapter outlines Ghana's structural development, which has led to the country's new political system and new economic atmosphere. This is to help put the study in context. Research objectives, the significance of the study as well as the arrangements of the subsequent chapters are provided.

Chapter 2 provides literature review on the subject matter and on democracy. It captures the public sphere and democratic media. It also examines the ideal public sphere and its contribution to the African political environment. The theoretical framework for the study is provided in **Chapter 3.** It explores gatekeeping and framing theories and how they are related to the practice of journalism. **Chapter 4** explores the evidence of coverage of election campaigns across the globe including Ghana. The chapter helps to have an insight into the nature of previous framing of election campaigns in democracies across the globe. In **Chapter 5** methodology of the study, which is in the form of quantitative content analysis and qualitative in-depth interviews is presented. It outlines the processes involved in the collection and analysing the information. The results of the study are presented in **Chapter 6. Chapter 7,** gives the findings and explores the concept of personalization and how it relates to the political communication of Ghana. It explores the bias nature of the Ghanaian press as well as examines any coverage incumbency advantage. **Chapter 8** presents the outcome of the qualitative in-depth interviews by focusing on 'soli' journalism practice and how it impacts gatekeeping and framing practices in the Ghanaian press. **Chapter 9** concludes the study with a summary of the findings and a discussion on how the study advances the debate on gatekeeping and framing practices in the context of the 2008 and 2012 election campaigns in Ghana.

Chapter 2

The Literature Review

Understanding democracy, media and the public sphere

2.1 Overview of the chapter

Since 1960, societies in Africa have demonstrated some level of similarity in terms of lacking the most fundamental structures of democracy. This was so striking to the extent that some scholars, politicians as well as policy makers felt that multiparty democratic governance could not take root in Africa. For instance, until 1982, just one-tenth of societies in Africa could boast of elected presidents. As of 1991, there was no significant development in Africa's forward match towards democracy (Ndulu et. al., 2007:135). At the present time however, the democratic story of Africa sounds different. There are hopeful signs that democracy is taking root. The need for news media's role in helping to grow democratic culture has been advanced by a number of scholars. Democracy calls for free and open discourse using a number of communication channels to enhance democratic practices in emerging democracies such as Ghana. Scholars such as McConnell and Becker (2002:1) are of the view that media's contribution to the public sphere allowing citizens access to information about the world and encouraging debates on various issues will help citizens to arrive at informed decisions. In addition, independent mass media assist in ensuring that structures are put in place to allow for free and fair elections by covering and disseminating relevant election stories in an objective and independent manner.

To advance the debate, the chapter attempts to treat the question of the role of the media in democracy. It will review some literature which is expected to address the question of mass media's role in enhancing democratic governance and arrive at some conclusions. In achieving this, the chapter explains and examines the key concepts of democracy, the public sphere and media to establish the relationship that exists among these concepts and how these concepts help shape and influence framing of election campaigns in Ghana.

2.2 Democracy: The debate

A notable feature of the post-Cold War world is the expansion of liberal democracy. While some scholars see democracy emerging as truly a "universal value" (Gershman, 2005 and Sen, 1999), others believe that democracy has come far because of the failure of alternatives (Burgess, 2001). Democracy's popularity today can also be attributed to the geo-political space which is favouring some advanced democratic societies. For instance, the United States of America appears to have taken upon itself the lead role in promoting global democratic agenda which it is argued is not for the world to be safe for democracy but rather "only in a world of democracies can the United States of America be safe" (Jervis, 2009:13).

The introduction of democracy in Athens is believed to have been a great source of inspiration for the growth of modern political thought (Held, 2006). Its political ideals such as equality among citizens, liberty, respect for the law and justice have influenced political thinking in the West (Held, 2006:14). Held points out that the notion of human beings as individuals with rights cannot be credited to the Athens. The development of modern liberal democratic thought is said to have roots from the struggles between monarchs and estates as to who had the rightful authority, peasant rebellions against high taxation, the spread of trade, commerce and market relations, technological advancement, the consolidation of national monarchies in England, France and Spain, the influence of Renaissance culture, religious strife and the challenge to Catholicism, the confrontation between church and state. All these, Held observes, contributed to the emergence of liberal democracy (Held, 2006: 56).

This development led to creation of capitalist class or the bourgeoisie which became an economic force in Europe and America. The interest of the class could not be met with the autocratic rule and its corresponding monopolization of political power in place. Capitalism, as McNair (2003) points out, demanded an atmosphere of freedom to achieve its objectives. Autocratic rule was finally replaced with a representative democratic theory with citizenship rights rooted in the ideology of economic and political power of the capitalist class (McNair, 2003: 16-17).

Currently the world is experiencing a remarkable growth in the practice of democracy. A lot more societies in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas appear to have found democratic governance a better political governance system. With such a political development, democracy has become one concept discussed by scholars as well as politicians. The worldwide discussion of the concept and its relevance in today's political debate calls for thorough debate that there is some relationship between democracy and media. Scholars including O'Kane and Beetham make the point that the notion of democracy is interpreted differently by different people since in practice there are various types of democracy in various countries. In other words, the way and manner democracy is practised cannot be said to be the same in all countries (O'Kane, 2004: 22-28; Beetham, 1991:1). With this, the study will proceed to offer some definitions of the concept and go on to identify some of its distinctive features in this section.

The concept of democracy includes the rule of the people, majority rule, dictatorship of the proletariat, rule of the people's representatives, self-government by the masses, multi-partyism and a free society (O'Kane, 2004: 22-28). As some scholars associate the concept of democracy exclusively with the Western world, others argue that the concept of democracy is a global notion that is practised taking into consideration the socio-cultural environment of each society (Owolabi, 2003: 442). While some societies including the United States and France took revolution for the notion of democracy to be successful, in other societies such as Germany and Russia, revolution has hindered its consolidation (O'Kane, 2004: 89-112). Considering all these inconsistencies that go to undermine any attempt to define democracy, some scholars are sceptical about the reality of the concept of democracy or the possibility of ever arriving at a precise definition (Barry, 2000: 285-286; Grimsley, 1973: 106-108).

Abraham Lincoln, in his attempt to demystify democracy defined it as "the government of the people, by the people and for the people" (Schmidt, 2002:147). This definition is significant as it places value on the people who are made the final source of political power in the state. In summary, democracy literally means people's government. According to Schumpeter (2003:50), democracy is: "That institutional arrangement for arriving at political decision which realizes the

common good by [themselves] decide issues through the election of individuals who are to assemble in order to carry out its will." What is critical here is the recognition of citizens being an important part in the decision making process for their common good. Schmitter and Karl (1996: 50) give another definition of democracy. They note that democracy is "a system of governance in which rulers are held accountable for their actions in the public realm by citizens, acting indirectly through the competition and cooperation of their elected representatives." For these authors citizens are the most crucial in democratic governance. Citizens have full rights to take part in the public realm, where the state and citizens meet and take decisions for the common good. The authors believe that in democracies citizens have freedom of speech, access to information, freedom to associate and to select their leaders through political competition.

Indeed liberal democrats believe that for a society to qualify to belong to the community of democracies, it has to meet some basic principles which include citizen participation, equality, political tolerance, accountability, transparency, regular free and fair elections and economic freedom. The other principles which constitute democracy are: control of the abuse of power, a bill of right, human rights, the rule of law, accepting the result of elections, a multiparty system and the separation of the powers of the executive, the legislation and judiciary. Although scholars place emphasis on different aspects of it, there is a general consensus that liberal democracy is characterized by the above principles (Carter and Stokes, 2011: 1).

Fukuyama (1992) notes that liberal democracy is today the only political governance theory that has been able to stand the test of time. With the collapse of the communist ideology, Linz and Stepan (1996: 15) also note that liberal democracy remains "the only game in town." Ottaway (1995: 235) argues that liberal democracy is the most desirable and the only viable political governance theory for any country in the long run because according to him, it is the "democratic solution." The spread of liberal democracy has been linked to: the high level of excitement generated by the 'third wave' of democratisation, the fall of communism as political and economic competitor, growing desire for liberal democracy, globalisation and the rise of a unipolar system headed by a liberal democratic enormous power, the United States of America. This interconnected

historical factors favourable to liberal internationalism gave high hopes for seemingly democratic world, (Huntington, 1984).

One common concern of scholars, politicians and policy makers is how liberal democracy can be enhanced and preserved as the best form of political governance in modern world. It is by reference to the seemingly problems of democracy that one can examine the extent to which the concept is meeting the aims its proponents set out to achieve. The study, therefore, proceeds to review two significant problems associated with democracy which have attracted debates for some time now.

2.3 Democracy: The challenges

Democracy appears to be the only political system in existence today for exercising political power, which allows for the creation of institutions to formulate and implement policies, which are directly or indirectly decided on by citizens. Since it appears to be the only system today for mankind, it is necessary to continually identify its shortcomings for public discourse so as to improve and preserve it. This section attempts to highlight two significant shortcomings of democracy to pave way for two alternative forms of democracy, which are expected to deepen the system to be more efficient and attractive.

2.3.1 The tyranny of the majority

Despite the strengths that are associated with liberal democracy which include citizens electing their leaders, protection of people's rights, freedom of expression, media freedom and freedom of association, prominent personalities such as Aristotle and Alexis de Tocqueville harboured the fear of tyranny of the majority in democratic governance (Cunningham, 2002:15). For instance, Tocqueville was of the view that the majority with its capacity could turn democratic governance into despotism by the power of political and intellectual manipulation. In effect, the tyranny of the majority is undesirable because those who form the minority do not get their way in certain matters and if all are supposed to be equal then no one particular view should have greater weight than

another view. On this point, Tocqueville, who was interested in governments reinforcing the strengths of democracy, noted that: "it is the very essence of democratic governments that the empire of the majority is absolute; for in democracies, outside the majority there is nothing that resists it" (Mansfield and Winthrop, 2000: 235).

With his observation of the American democracy, Tocqueville argued that the laws governing democracy favour the majority since the laws emanate from the majority, which he believed could be mistaken (Mansfield and Winthrop, 2000: 222). It is possible for the majority to act improperly and those who constitute the majority would also not act against their own interests if even their actions appeared to be immoral. Those who are in majority would always have their way at the expense of the minority. In effect, by the nature of democracy, the majority of people who govern ensure prosperity for those who rule and they fail to meet the interests of the minority who allows for such a rule. For Tocqueville, the power of the majority could go beyond politics to intellectual tyranny, which would then allow the majority to have "hegemony over thought." This, according to him, would be as a result of majority's skills to persuade. (Mancini, 1994: 48).

However, John Stuart Mill believed that the fear of the tyranny of the majority had no basis since democracies by upholding the ideals of democracy could prevent tyranny. Unlike Tocqueville, Mill had more faith in the intellectual elites to occupy the most active positions in government because as intellectuals, they would serve justly for the reason that their intelligence would allow them to be rational and impartial (Mansfield and Winthrop, 2000: xxviii-xxix). On his part, Bryce (1907: 341-347) observed that the issue of tyranny could not stem from the coercion of the majority, but rather the minority recognising and accepting the majority's power hoping that one day the minority would overcome the majority and have the power and control. One would ask to what extent voters' seemingly irrationality also contributes to undermine democratic governance?

2.3.2 Voters as irrational in democracy

In democracy voters are expected to apply the principle of rationality in their voting decisions. They are to have engaged this rational principle through good reason taking into account the implications and consequences of the available alternative positions of the competing political parties or candidates. However, some scholars argue that voters are ignorant about politics to the extent that they do not know who their representatives are, what they do and therefore, what they stand for (Keane, 2002:3; Somin, 1998). In effect, it appears voters cast their voters out of faith rather than conviction and through wishful expectation than by careful prediction and consequences. In his book, *The Myth of the Rational Voter Why Democracies Choose Bad Policies*, Bryan Caplan argues that democracy fails because voters are worse than ignorant and in one word irrational. This irrational behaviour according to him, informs the voting pattern. With such a situation, voters may not consider the need for betterment of the society they belong to. They, therefore, are not in the position to vote to that effect. Such voters may probably end up voting based on the personality charisma of a candidate or some other superficial reason. In Ghana for instance, electorates may vote based on religious or ethnic grounds.

Throughout the book, Caplan, an Economist, who focuses on the views of voters on economic issues because political decisions also centre on economic issues such as trade, welfare, job and economic growth, explains that a number of people become rational when it has to do with job, hiring workers, buying a shirt and selecting a business strategy. He argues that voters become rational because they believe it is costly to be wrong in this case. The author argues further that it is virtually costless for an individual to hold on to ones preconceived beliefs and it is cheap to believe something when it is even obviously wrong. Such people, find it virtually impossible to retrace their logic and ask themselves whether what they believe in is really true. According to him, some people recognise thinking as something that hurts and so they try as much as possible to avoid it if necessary. Caplan notes that this also happens in politics "since delusional political beliefs are free, the voter consumes until he reaches his 'saturation point,' believing whatever makes him feel best" (Caplan, 2007: 132).

With such seemingly weaknesses in the practice of democracy it is obvious that scholars will be engaged in debates to explore a better way of improving and preserving democratic governance, which appears to be accepted worldwide as a better political system. After all, examining and discussing various forms of democracy is itself a valuable democratic process encouraged in scholarship. There are different models and variations of democracy and among these are: deliberative democracy, which places value on the communicative aspects of democracy and participatory democracy, which also aims a greater level of involvement from citizens.

2.4 Deliberative democracy and participatory democracy: Towards democratic efficiency

Democracy is a form of government with the supreme power belonging to citizens of the nation and allows this power to be exercised through agents (people) elected by citizens of the nation. This underscores some differences in the practice of democracy. This section seeks to understand the nature of two forms of democracy: deliberative democracy and participatory democracy (which some scholars believe have the capacity to help improve the practice of democracy for the system to respond to the ideals of liberal democracy). The fact remains that conditions and situations of today are different from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when the liberal democratic governance was developed. It is therefore necessary, to explore how other forms of traditions can be made to help in making contemporary liberal democracy functions better, i.e. for the two different models to enhance participation and political decision making in democracies.

Deliberative is: "a decision-making procedure founded on the exchange of reasons and argument and democratic in so far as it is inclusive" (Elster, 1998: 8). A democratic deliberative procedure is all about public debate and reciprocal reason-giving, which is expected to achieve either a rational consensus, shared solution or arriving at better decisions. Meanwhile, participatory democracy is also "virtually every form of organization that brought more people into the decision-making process" (Mansbridge, 1983: 376). The term, according to the author, is associated with the combination of equality, consensus and face-to-face assembly. In other words, any issue that has social implications and consequences has to be conducted in public in participatory form and this calls for active citizenry that could and should be educated.

In participatory democracy, there is equality in the exercise of the power of decision making. The equality of power that citizens have when it comes to taking decisions is significant to democracy and participation. The key issue here is not public discussions or public reason-giving but individuals' participation in the process of making decisions and doing so in condition of equality, which creates the space for all individuals to exercise a fair share of power (Pateman, 1970: 43). In other words, participatory model of democracy, strives to create a political system that ensures the development of the social and political capacities of all citizens for quality deliberation and citizen engagement. This approach provides a channel of influence in policy making, engages citizens in a process of deliberation and public communication, and has the ability to attract a constant and increasing number of participants (Serult and Welp, 2015). It may be argued that representative democracy cannot be considered as participatory in the sense that it assumes a lack of time, knowledge and will in individual citizens, to contribute to policy making (Fischer, 1993).

In deliberative democracy, democratic decisions are considered legitimate if arrived at by authentic deliberation. In effect, it is authentic deliberation because it is a process involving decision-makers of equal political power and not decisions influenced by economic wealth or interest groups. In this case, if it happens that decision-makers are not in the position to arrive at consensus after using authentic deliberation method, then they have the option to vote on the issue applying the majority rule (Leibj, 2006). In summary, deliberative democracy is a political system with emphasis on deliberation in decision-making process with elements of both consensus and majority rule. This form of democracy, therefore, appears different from the traditional democratic theory in the sense that authentic deliberation, and not just voting, is the primary source of legitimacy for the law.

One significant strength of deliberative democratic model is its capacity to generate ideal conditions of impartiality, rationality as well as knowledge of the relevant facts concerning a specific issue for discussion. This, therefore, allows for decision-makers to deduce what is morally correct (Elster, 1998; Nino, 1996). By the nature of the model, it is observed that it is less partisan and more sympathetic to opposing views with emphasis on evidence based reasoning rather than opinion. The system is also credited for its allowing greater commitment to the decisions arrived

at by those involved and greater chance for widely shared consensus building, which goes a long way in fostering social harmony among citizens from different backgrounds (Fishkin, 2011). While participatory democracy is based on the direct actions of citizens with some power and take decisions on issues affecting their lives, deliberative democracy on the other hand, is based on argumentative exchanges, reciprocal reason-giving and on public debate.

From the above, democracy at the end of the day amounts to self-rule. However, since it is not realistic for such self-rule to be expressed by all citizens, everywhere and on all issues constantly, structures must be put in place that allow this to be realized on their behalf through vestation of power. Barber (1984: 267) believes that it is only by this practice of participation can the meaning and function of active citizenship be preserved. According to him, to delegate the governing power ends up giving away civic activity, accountability, civic responsibility, our secondary rights against government and our primary right to govern. Barber (1984) points out that if indeed democracy gives citizens the right to govern themselves and not to be governed then liberal democratic institutions are not democratic. In this case, the author suggests a progressive and gradual introduction of politics in participatory mode and of participatory ingredients within the fabric of liberal democracies. This is not to destroy the virtues of liberal democracy along with its defects but rather to move it towards civic engagement and political community (Barber, 1984: 308-309). It must be noted the Barber's participationist view has some element of deliberative democracy. For instance, 'the public talk' which calls for a platform for public discussions of public issues toward decision-making. However, liberal democracy which can be enhanced by participatory democracy and deliberative democracy is finding it difficult to take root in Africa. One might ask: "What factors are militating against the fashioning of true democracy in Africa?"

2.5 Limitations to the application of liberal democracy in Africa

Those who thought democracy was not meant for Africa would today be revising their notes. Today there is some encouragement and greater interest in the practice of democracy in Africa although the expansion of scholarship in the area has not been met by expected expansion in scope. Examples of some societies in Africa, including Zimbabwe, Kenya and South Africa, teach the

promotion of liberal democracy. The practice is however being undermined by a number of inhibitors. The experiences of Botswana however go to indicate that the inhibitors should not stand in the way of the emergence of a relatively liberal democracy fused with participatory democracy and deliberative democracy. It is suggested that to promote democracy in Africa and see the desire result, it would need rethinking, extending as well as advocating the way democracy itself is conceived.

2.5.1 Lack of economic freedom

It is argued that "the more well to-do a nation is, the greater its chances to sustain democracy" (Zakaria, 2003:69). Economic growth appears to be one critical factor for ensuring liberal democracy and its growth. The fact still remains that most societies in Africa are poor. According to IMF World Economic Outlook report (2016), in 2016, GDP per capita of United States alone stood at 52,400 US dollars. Meanwhile, Seychells, which has the highest GDP per capita in Africa accounted for 15,400 US dollars. Since the 1990's Africa has held multiparty democratic elections. This unfortunately, has not led to Africa becoming a truly liberal democratic society. With this background, Zakaria (2003: 97) believes that it is not by accident that South Africa and Botswana, the most advanced African liberal democracies on the average, enjoy higher per capita incomes on the continent. For instance, South Africa and Botswana in 2016 had average gross national income per capita of 4,768 dollars and 5,897 dollars respectively (IMF World Economic Outlook, 2016).

With this evidence, one is tempted to go with the suggestion that the higher the level of economic growth, the greater the possibility of democratic entrenchment. Larry Diamond also believes that it takes a deep reform of the instruments and institutions of democratic societies to bring about the needed conditions for real economic take-off (Diamond, 2008: 48). Collier (2007: 71) in adding to this debate, observes that democracy will need a critical number of educated citizens who will develop and improve reform strategies. This will bring about positive change. No matter the nature of relationship between economic prosperity and democratic governance, Africa's seemingly propensity for ethnic conflict and civil war inhibits democracy and economic growth.

2.5.2 The ethnic factor

No region or society on earth can build real liberal democracy with the kind of conflict and civil wars that Africa has experienced since decolonization some decades ago. The colonial rulers exploited the ethnic factor to their advantage by divide and rule. After decolonization the mind-set has not changed despite inter-marriages. There is still violence taking place in the eastern Congo, which has drawn in 10 countries leading deaths and destruction. Most of these conflicts on the continent are linked to ethnic and religious differences. This situation has affected economic growth of societies on the continent and also limited democratic growth and political tolerance of minorities. Political parties in Africa are not properly founded on well-defined ideologies. They are rather defined by their policies and electorates' perceptions based on ethnic and regional considerations. Therefore, politics is a struggle between majority winners and excludes minorities, considered as outsiders or opposition (Schmidt, 2005).

The prolong ethno-nationalist conflicts in a number of African societies has also limited the growth of broadly based civil societies as well as trans-ethnic national institutions. The xenophobic violence in South Africa in 2008 is a clear sign of the existence of dangerous ethnic-nationalist feelings. While it may be argued that by the nature of democracy, it is a political system of racially and ethnically inclusiveness, it however functions well in political units largely ethnically homogenous in character (Muller, 2008). It must be noted that it is not simply tribal identities that bring about civil unrest and ethnic strife. Leaders may deliberately incite sections of citizens to ethnic violence (Guest, 2004: 111). This attitude of some of African leaders leads to probably the most significant limitation to democratic governance in Africa.

2.5.3 The entrenchment of political elites

Lack of success in creating more democratic space in Africa over the years is also due to the desire of African political elites to hold on to power. This situation may be due to the absence of real democratic counterweights, independent institutions as well as civil society organizations. According to Mapuva (2010: 369), civil society organizations in Africa, have logistical and

viability problems and these have made them to compromise their activities as campaigners of democratic governance and human rights. The desire of political elites to hold on to political power at all cost and its subsequent effect on the creation of democratic checks and balances, to a large extent have contributed to Africa's inability to genuinely democratise.

Although one can argue that in Africa today, there appears to be more personal liberty and more space for the opposition, African leaders still control resources and patronage. In effect, "capture and control of the presidency is still the singular ambition of Africa's politicians" (Prempeh, 2010: 111). At the moment, a number of African societies continue to witness constitutional reforms that extend the time limit of the incumbents instead of reforms that will go to establish and deepen democratic checks and balances. The continued one-party supremacy of many African democracies because of ethnicity and weakness of the opposition have also undermined the effectiveness of constitutions paving the way for the majority party leaderships to misuse and abuse power. Again, democratic practice in Africa is relatively young and for that matter, institutions are still dependent on the president and his patronage. It also seems that there is no serious attempt on the part of the opposition to reform government and institutions. Opposition forces, which are expected to drive political reforms in Africa to speed up democratic governance, have rather "been motivated by the near-term goal of forming government themselves" (Prempeh, 2008: 112). For instance Prempeh asserts that the New Patriotic Party's enthusiasm for political reforms in Ghana vanished into thin air the moment the party won election and came to power.

There is no doubt that the factors attributed to Africa's democratic practice failure are complex and may be explained as country-specific. Meredith (2005: 14) observes "although Africa is a continent of great diversity, African countries have much in common, not only their origins as colonial territories but the similar hazards and difficulties they have faced. Indeed what is striking about the 50-year period since independence is the extent to which African states have suffered so many of the same misfortunes."

Currently Botswana is widely being acknowledged as a shining reality of liberal democracy on the continent. From 1966 when it had its independence, all its elections have been contested freely and fairly. For decades the country has been nurturing free market economy. Botswana's economic freedom is highly associated with growth and it is also credited with political and civil freedom. This can be a source of motivation for the rest of the societies in Africa; that liberal democracy allows more space for participation and consensus building. Media freedom and freedom of expression and education of citizens should be paramount to allow citizens to engage in rational debates on issues taking advantage of the public sphere to deepen democracy in Africa. Meanwhile, Peters (1999) draws attention to some obstacles to democratic practices.

2.6 Two seemingly obstacles to democracy

John Durham Peters (1999), makes the point that democracy has had two obstacles to deal with since its inception running into the 18th century. These obstacles are scale and human nature. He recounts that Athenian democracy was formulated for a population who were in the position at any time to assemble on a day's notice from a restricted geographic area. According to Peters, Plato on mathematical grounds estimated 5,040 as the ideal population of citizens to make democracy work. Thus democracy was formulated having in mind a relatively small city-state with the space for citizens' participation and public debate. Peters notes that until the 18th century, scholars could not envisage the practice of democracy on an extended scale (Peters, 1999: 99-101).

The second obstacle to democracy is human nature. According to Peters, democracies have been scenes of confusion and disorder, not in harmony with personal security, the rights of property and have been violent. Again factionalism has made it difficult to bring together majority or minority to rally around and support a common interest. Citing James Madison in the famed number 10 of the Federalist Paper (1787- 1788), Peters notes that factionalism has been the mortal disease of democracy and was sown in human beings (Peters, 1999: 101), making effective practice of democracy difficult and driving some scholars (Waruiru , 2007; Wasserman and de Beer , 2009) to argue for an alternative political democratic governance.

Waruiru (2007) and Baker (2002) observe that the Western-derived liberal democratic theory, which Ghana is for instance experimenting with, is partly to be blamed for the political problems facing the African continent. They argue that the theory did not take into account the historical and social realities of African countries. Rather, the theory was developed with the Western countries' social and political conditions at the time in mind. These conditions were fundamentally different from that of Africa. Waruiru (2007: 5) argues: "It is unrealistic to expect African nations to have set up successful democratic societies, given the high poverty rates and low levels of civilization of most of the population." According to him, this was the reason that led to the failed attempts to establish democracies in African countries such as Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda, and Guinea. However, from the literature, it appears that there is the need for African scholars to undertake a number of studies into how to fuse participatory democracy and deliberative democracy into liberal democracy to create a political system that gives citizens more space to participate in the political process of their societies. After all, the African traditional governance made space for broader participation and consensus building.

Wasserman and de Beer (2009: 435) caution that with the struggle for press freedom and democracy in a significant number of African countries today, African scholars and researchers should avoid Afro-centric sentiments that can lead to uncritical acceptance of authority, undemocratic exclusion of minority voices to stifle free speech. In effect, comments and actions of African scholars should inspire confidence that it is necessary and possible for Africa to build the kind of democracy that will take into account the voices of the minority as well as majority.

Democratic political system that emerges in any country should aim at targeting its citizens who through constant negotiations and dialogue make the public sphere a useful forum for political discourse. The next section of this chapter examines the concepts of the public sphere and democratic media.

2.7 The public sphere and democratic media

At the centre of this discussion is an effort to theorise the function of the press as a platform for public discourse and engagement within the context of an emerging democracy. How the media mediate the participation of citizens in discussions during election campaigns inform the function of the press in democratic governance. Informing this study is the argument that the media are supposed to contribute to democratic governance. Therefore, how the media mediate various representations on different kinds of democratic life such as election campaigns can add to or undermine the participation of citizens in democracies. The kind of relationship that exists among democracy, media and the public sphere has for some time now become an intensive scholarly discourse. Habermas (1962) is credited for his influential thought on what the concept represents and why it is critical. His thought on the concept, first discussed in his book, *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* will be the reference point for this brief discussion. Citizens' participation in and access to the media have raised the important issue as to the nature of the public sphere with its capacity in providing the neutral space which allows for the expression of common concerns and also for effective collective action against established power.

Baker (2002: 126) views democracy as respecting individuals or citizens who are in the position to discern between what is right and wrong, thus making the public sphere a critical factor in democratic governance. The public sphere is the means by which democratic decisions are reached through the media which serve as the interface between the government and citizens. It is argued that public information flow is necessary to keep democracy intact. This shows the extent citizens can act based on informed decisions and demand transparency and accountability from the governors.

Reading Habermas (1989), one learns about the birth, growth and decline of bourgeois public sphere in France, Germany and England between 16th and 18th centuries. One learns how the bourgeois class got together in public places, for instances, pubs and coffee houses in England 'table societies' or discussion groups in Germany and salons in France. The bourgeois class gave

expression to the concept of the public sphere through publications such as newsletters and pamphlets. They published and disseminated stories on issues from cloth and tobacco shipments to trade taxes. The institutions of the public sphere created the opportunity for citizens to discuss the actions of governments and then held governments to account for their performances. For Habermas the concept of the public sphere demonstrates a realm existing between the state and civil society. This makes it possible for decisions to be reached publicly by rational discourse. Habermas (1989: 49) refers to the 19th century England Press as the golden era of the public sphere which refers to "a realm of our social life in which something approaching public opinion can be formed. Access is guaranteed to all citizens. A portion of the public sphere comes into being in every conversation in which private individuals assemble to form a public body." In other words, Habermas equates the public sphere to a Greek-like format which gets citizens together for them to discuss issues of common good in a face-to-face situation.

However for Habermas, the media should share the blame for the ineffectiveness of the ideal public sphere. The media, have taken on the character of a commercialized media tool in the early 20th century (Habermas, 1989: 85). With the media relying heavily on advertising for revenue, citizens are looked upon as consumers of media products and no longer as participants engaged in discussions of common good in the political arena. In such a situation, private interests as well as government interests would compete in order to win the attention of citizens. For this reason, media products would be made more sensational than rational. Public opinion shaped out of the discussions of citizens would not mean anything to politicians who would rather project themselves to be admired by the citizens, turning them into spectators.

In other words, the public sphere has been rendered ineffective by over concentration of media on advertising and public relations selling instead of discussing relevant ideas. In effect, the relationship between the public sphere as a platform for public discourse and the participation of the individual has been undermined. Citizens have been made objects of news and information they have not been part of constructing. Habermas, (1989: 171) states that "inasmuch as the mass

media today strip away the literary husks from the kind of bourgeois self-interpretation and utilize them as marketable forms for the public services provided in a culture of consumers, the original meaning is reversed." To illustrate this point, it is observed that during election campaigns in Ghana, the stories that get published in the newspapers are about what the political actors say and do and not the debate on issues that are important to citizens. Hardly will one find space for letters-to-the-editor being used for public discourse on election issues.

Curran (1991: 42) and Dahlgren (1991: 5) disagree with the position held by Habermas on the media as a democratic public sphere in capitalist societies. According to these authors, studies show that the press, especially in the latter half of the 19th century was factional and limited, consisting of small, polemical, destructively competitive publications and so that period cannot be referred to as the golden era of the public sphere. On Habermas' idea of the bourgeois public sphere, Dahlgren sees it as ideological distortion which portrays the class bias of Habermas. Dismissing the pessimism of Habermas on the public sphere of the media in advanced capitalist societies, Dahlgren (1991: 9) though admitting its dominance, argues that "under the periods of liberal and advanced capitalism there have existed other fora which have shaped people's political consciousness, served as networks for exchange of information, rumour and gossip, and provided setting for cultural expression."

Apart from Habermas' public sphere, Hannah Arendt's work, *The Human Condition* (1958) is also significant in discussing the public sphere, which according to her, is "the common world that gathers us together" (Arendt, 1958: 52). Arendt therefore, describes the public sphere as a platform of communicative power between governments and citizens they govern. She contends that the essential thing of power is not about someone's will rather it is about a collective will in a communication with the aim of reaching mutual agreement. In other words, power is only meaningful if built out of a collective effect of speech which leads to agreement for everyone involved. Habermas (1986: 78) notes: "power is what keeps the public realm, the potential space of appearance between acting and speaking men, in existence." And what establishes the difference

between legitimate power and illegitimate power is the public realm. For Arendt, it takes participation of citizens as well as education to determine a democratic role for the media. Democracy is not just about putting in place structures. It is also about educating citizens in citizenship. That is citizens being equipped with relevant skills and values that are needed for building a lasting effective participation (d'Entreves, 1989: 17). Although education of citizens can enhance participation, one cannot also dismiss the social factors that allow for exercising a lasting authority over others.

It has been suggested that emphasis be placed on two essential basic elements of liberal democracy. These are participation as well as consent. For instance, a significant number of women and the poor in a number of countries including Ghana do not have the opportunity to actively participate in formal politics; hence they do not give their consent to be governed. Phillips (1991: 38) argues that political equality is meaningless as long as there are in place social arrangements that prevent a significant sector of society from taking part of decision making processes. The issue of structural inequalities offer some challenge for the development of media. Citizens of the resurrected multiparty democracy in Ghana, for instance, will be far from equal in their ability to be active participants in the public sphere. Therefore, the role of education as well as developmental nature of participatory democracy need significant attention.

Through the media, various individuals can be united under a political community. A collective identity under modern conditions can lead to a constantly negotiated process for actors to debate and stand up for "competing conceptions of cultural and political identity and competing conceptions of political legitimacy" (d' Entreves, 1989: 14). This can be achieved not by religious or ethnic affiliations or some common value system but rather unity through sharing a public space. According to d'Entreves (1989: 8), "what unites people in a political community is, therefore, not some set of common values, but the world they set up in common, the spaces they inhabit together, the institutions and practices that they share as citizens."

With the media playing their educative function, the opportunity is created allowing every citizen the right of opinion and action which enhance the capacity for expression and views of citizens. "The cultivation of one's moral imagination" d'Entreves (1989: 18-19) argues, "flourishes in such a culture in which the self-centred perspective of the individual is constantly challenged by the multiplicity and diversity of perspectives that constitute public life." It will appear that a powerful independent public service media is arguably a meaningful direction for providing public information for all citizens in order to give meaning to the democratic public sphere needed for active citizenship in emerging democracies including Ghana.

2.8 The media, the public sphere and the African experience

Against the background of the discussions of the public sphere above, one can conclude that the public sphere is indeed needed in emerging democracies for open discussions of all issues of general concern and also for critical examination of societal problems in order to influence political action. It therefore becomes necessary for this study to focus on contextual discussion of the functions of the media to exlpore their relationship to democratic governance and the public sphere. The idea here is to help situate the discussion. How then does the concept of the public sphere find expression in the African situation?

Much commentary on worldwide discussions on the function of the mass media in societies have centred on their democratic role in developed democracies in the Western World. There is also discussions on the function of the media after independence of African societies. However, these discussions on Africa's mass media have mostly been on the economic development of the continent and individual societies. Meanwhile the economic situation in Africa needs much to be desired.

With respect to individual independent societies, the function of the media was expected to organize the people to focus on economic development through the supply of information that the government believed was crucial to achieve such a goal. Since national unity was seen as a necessary condition for economic prosperity, the mass media were, therefore, given the responsibility of achieving that objective often by paying less attention to disagreements, dissent and even corruption within the state and government. It must be noted that some attempts made by privately-owned media by presenting alternative ideas and exposing corruption had to pay a price either arbitrary arrests or detention without trial, torture or even death (Asante, 1996). Ronning (1994: 1) observes that early 1990s will go down as the period "when the interest in the debate over press freedom and the role of the media in democratic process suddenly burst into the open in Africa." Ampaw (2006: 1) also makes the point that "the highly open space for free expression in Ghana is unarguably the country's most important gain in the people's struggle for democratic public life, space, culture and governance."

The sudden change of the mass media establishment as primarily a tool for economic development to a tool for democratic governance arguably, may be as a result of both internal and external forces. Either citizens were not seeing the expected promised economic prosperity which led to disappointment and frustration among African societies or that the desire of citizens led to open governance and participation in the political process. One other reason may also be the fall of the one-party governance and military dictatorship in a number of African societies. This situation brought about emergence of multiparty political systems and established the foundation for increasing pressure for democratic governance in Africa (Kupe, 1999). In addition, with the end of the Cold War (between 1989 and 1991) and demise of communist system, the debate for liberal democratic governance spread to Africa (Ronning, 1994). With their relationship to socio-political and economic growth, the mass media were thus seen as an establishment for supplying information needed for democratic governance.

Although the issue of economic growth was still an important issue, democratic governance took the centre stage since democracy was seen as an important condition for economic growth. The system of centralised decision-making process being practised by African societies did not create sufficient space for public discourse and participation, between 1960s and 1980s. According to Kupe (1999:2), this was not different from the situation that existed during the colonial administration. The emerging debates called for private media that would be a check on governments to allow freedom of the press and the rights of citizens, allow institution of political parties to compete for political power and be voted for in periodic elections (Ronning, 1994).

It is worth noting that the press in Africa since its emergence in the 19th century in the colonial era did not develop as a platform for African citizens. It had very small space for those who could speak the foreign languages (Mytton, 1983: 37). The point can still be made that even with the fall of colonialism and the expansion of the media landscape in African countries, there is still the issue of access to the media. This to a large extent is undermining the participation of African citizens in the political process. In the days of the colonial administration, the mainstream newspapers available in most of the African societies were platforms for the elite class made up of mostly the colonial settlers (Mytton, 1983). In most cases the newspapers were forum for ideological state tools used to support the colonial agenda (Ziegler and Asante, 1992).

Finally, when African societies became independent, the political leaders who founded newspapers and used them as platforms for mobilizing citizens for political democratic reforms after winning political power stood against democratic press. With these authoritarian posturing, the media system was expected to be a subordinate partner to development and nation-building agenda of the leaders (Asante, 1996). Even with the privatisation of some African economies as well as the institution of multiparty democratic governance in the late 1980s and early 1990s, which have contributed to the expansion of the media landscape, the media can still be seen as having some challenges to deal with in order to be in the position to provide ideal public sphere that is needed to deepen democracy to ensure consensus and participation. In this case, three critical factors have

been identified by Ansah (1991) as undermining media in Africa to meet the ideals of the public sphere. These are the crisis of power, the crisis of media ownership and the crisis of resources.

The crisis of power is as a result of weak African states, lack of legitimacy and disregard for the media as establishment for bringing about dissent. The crisis of legitimacy allows the state to intimidate the media and journalists. The crisis of media ownership is the fact that in many societies in Africa, the main media outlets are owned and controlled by the state. With such media structure, incumbent governments tend to influence and shape content to their advantage. Ansah observes that even in African societies where there is space for private press in the 1990s, some of these newspapers are being influenced by international or regional corporate interests. Where such newspapers are locally owned they face financial difficulties. They also face human resources problems, which combine to limit their circulation to urban areas. The poor financial situation of the press has resulted in poor infrastructure and distribution systems. The problem is blamed on the small market of the continent for newspapers. African continent with its illiteracy and poverty do not make it possible for the majority of citizens to have access to the press. The few attractive newspapers have to rely totally on advertising for funding, which means that such newspapers are influenced by advertisers. This situation can undermine the effectiveness of the public sphere thereby affecting the potential of the media.

It should be of great concern that after two decades of democratisation, instituting democratic culture in citizens of Africa is far from reach. Organising free and fair elections in most African societies is still a problem. Institutions of multiparty democracy in Africa including Ghana are yet to involve citizens in negotiations which are required to instil democratic values in citizens. However, despite this gloomy picture, Habermas' public sphere offers citizens of Ghana and Africa some hope.

While it is argued that mainstream media have over the years served as an arena for discussion of elite policies, it is also argued that media including newspapers have been influential in Africa's democratisation. The kind of relationship between public sphere and media has increased the promotion of democratic governance. While accepting the limitations of the media in Africa as a platform for rational public discourse, Kupe (1999: 6) observes: "the African press of today is much better than that of decades prior to the 1990s. There is some degree of probing, analyses and an attempt to be an open forum for debate and discussion, which facilitate a wider diversity of views, ideas and opinions in the quest to build democratic societies." Irrespective of its limitations in meeting ideals of the public sphere, the media located in Africa including Ghana have played a critical role in advancing democratic governance. It is therefore necessary that the role of the media including newspapers is examined in relation to the nature of their framing and gatekeeping practices in order to determine how they are contributing to influencing and shaping public opinion. In this case, the study is drawing on two theories of mass communication research to address the critical question of how the media choose to present a story and how particular news stories come to be included in newspapers and delivered to different audiences. This is important since even seemingly trivial decision can help influence the world view of voters during election campaigns in an emerging democracy like Ghana.

2.9 Summary of the chapter

The chapter discussed the public sphere as it relates to democratic life of citizens. This created the necessary entry point into theorising the function of the media in an emerging democratic society such as Ghana. The chapter in its analysis has demonstrated that there is consensus among scholars that the public sphere serves as a forum for issues of importance to a democratic community. Also the public sphere is ideal for examination of performance of media in societies. In discussing the public sphere, one recognises that its functions are key to the practice of liberal democracy and the media's role in democratic governance is to a large extent similar to their public sphere function. In other words, the media have the capacity to provide the needed space for citizens representing various social interests to deliberate on topics of common good.

In exploring the functions of media in relation to the public sphere in the context of Ghana, the study decided to choose election campaigns coverage of the press. This was to allow the study to explore the interface between the state and private press relations as well as patterns of press representations of political competition in an emerging democracy. The aim was for the study to capture the story of media framing of Ghana's multiparty democratic governance. In so doing, some attention was focused on democracy, it challenges and how other forms of democracy can help deepen its practice for it to become more attractive. The chapter also highlighted the limitations to the application of liberal democracy in Africa and how the media and the public sphere can help with the promotion of the practice in African societies. The next chapter introduces the conceptual framework to help explain how the media, which serve as the public sphere, select and represent events as well as issues meant for citizens.

Chapter 3

Introducing the conceptual framework: Framing and gatekeeping theories

3.1 Overview of the chapter

Hoover says theory is "a set of inter-related propositions that suggest why event occur in the manner that they do" (Hoover, 1984: 38). Foss, Foss and Griffin (1999: 8) also define theory as "a way of framing an experience or event, an effort to understand and account for something and the way it functions in the world." In effect, theories promote understanding and help to explain and predict phenomena. This chapter therefore, introduces framing and gatekeeping theories and how they apply to Ghanaian press reportage of 2008 and 2012 election campaign news.

Elections are said to be the centrepiece of democratic governance. They create the opportunity for citizens to express their views, hopes and aspirations, discipline their representatives and ultimately determine the destiny of their societies. Elections are citizens' power and to use this power effectively, citizens need to be aware as to where candidates and political parties stand on public policy issues. Apart from citizens, two other groups are critical in the process of electioneering. Firstly, the politicians would make their positions on issues known and secondly, the media are expected to report thoroughly, accurately and be impartial on what the political competitors are up to.

This responsibility of the media during election campaign periods presents them with a critical challenge in terms of how the news gatherers arrive at the stories they are convinced will fit the frame of their particular news outlet, how the news processors decide what to accept from journalists and how to present the final product. With the two theories, it is expected that one may come to understand what is going on in the Ghanaian media and why the four newspapers under study would frame and select the election campaigns stories they ended up publishing which, it is assumed, contributed to the decisions voters took as to who they voted for.

3.2 The theory of framing

This section of the chapter examines media framing of election campaigns in Ghana in the context of issues, horse race and personalization. Framing, also referred to as 'representation' in media, comes with two aspects which are: selection (or accessing of sources or claims-makers) and presentation (or evaluation of arguments or actors) Hansen (1999: 55). Entman (1993: 52) points out that "framing involves selection and salience. To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/ or treatment recommendation for the item described."

Framing directs attention to particular information about an issue or event. The reason is for such information to stand out as the essence of communication. This goes a long way to make the issue or event look or sound important. According to Entman (1993: 53), story placement or repetition or relating the story to well-known cultural symbol can help information become salient and salient is important in frames. It takes cultural understanding which is in the minds of the public for framing to become effective in forming public opinion. The frames that are set by the media are made possible by the information journalists gather from political elites (Scheufele, 1999: 105; Entman, 2010: 401). Kuypers (2002: 7) also observes that facts until they are framed are neutral. Thus, how events and issues are framed by the press affect how events and issues are understood by the public.

Framing, which includes game or strategy frame, positions political candidates in a frame and then presents them either as winners or losers in a game, emphasising the strategies of the candidates. The game frame also personalizes the story and makes it look like conflicts among politicians (Lawrence, 2000: 95). Lawrence (2000: 100) observes that if the media engage in game frame the act undermines politics and makes it virtually impossible for politicians to effectively discuss policy issues for the public to know where the candidates stand. This, Lawrence points out, presents politics as being self-interested calculations and manipulation in the eyes of the public.

The basic idea behind framing is to choose and rank the facts or images according to their significance over others, thus ending up projecting a particular interpretation of events unconsciously (Norris et. al, 2003: 11). The media industry including *Daily Graphic, The Ghanaian Times, Daily Guide* and *Ghanaian Chronicle* are engaged in framing which is a way of giving some interpretation to issues and events journalists cover taking into consideration some factors such as the editorial policy of the media outlet. In doing this, journalists unconsciously end up introducing some bias. According to McQuail (2005: 379), the information that gets to the news room has an in-built frame which serves the interest of the source. For instance, the Northern Ireland issue was covered by the British media as threat coming from the IRA. This kind of coverage made it to look as if the IRA were the only cause of the conflict with the British being the only victims. Also the problems in the Middle East are framed to look like a war against terror or Muslim fundamentalism (McQuail, 2005: 379). It is worth noting that the same events can be and are indeed framed in various forms in different countries depending on political factors and public opinion. An example is how the Iraq War was reported to appear differently in the media outlets in the United States, the United Kingdom and Germany (McQuail, 2005: 380). However, Scheufele and Tewksbury (2007: 1) note that it is not the intention of all journalists to try and spin a story to deceive the public. According to them, there are some journalists who see framing as a necessary tool for them to use in order that they are able to present complex issues and events effectively and in a manner that makes their news stories easy and accessible to even lay audiences (Scheufele and Tewksbury, 2007: 11-12).

Gitlin (1980) observes that frames are theories of what are in existence, what happens and what matters. The media frames make it possible for media outlets as well as journalists to manage numerous complex events and issues in a systematic way for news stories to meet the editorial policies, established routines and conventions known to the journalism profession (Gitlin, 1980: 6-7). Meanwhile an empirical approach to framing is suggested by Tankard (2001: 101). According him, to identify and measure news frames, eleven focal points will have to be taken into consideration. They include headlines, subheads, photos, photo captions and leads. The rest are source selection, quotes, pull quotes, logos, statistics and charts as well as concluding statements and paragraphs.

Therefore, the way and manner election campaigns in Ghana have been covered over the years by the Ghanaian press should then be subjected to the conventional norms of framing associated with the practice of journalism across democracies. The framing theory considers media representation as basically constructed other than neutrally expressed. Factors, such as norms, values of journalism, editorial policies of news media outlets and the interests of political and economic elites contribute to give meaning to the form that framing takes in representing either events or issues to citizens of various societies. There is concern as to whether the profit-driven media industry in a developing society such as Ghana can be in a position to create the required space for public discourse based on objective and balanced framing of relevant issues and events of common good.

A number of media scholars are of the view that the discussion about framing or representation cannot be complete without a look at an important social variable such as class. Curran (1996) and Golding and Murdock (2000) conclude that contemporary media industry has basically been turned into platform to serve competing capitalist class interests. As the major source of income for most newspapers across the world is generated through advertisements, news media are not in the position to focus on the interests of all readers at the same time and in equal treatment. It is, therefore, clear that framing of events and issues cannot be neutral for the common good. What it means is that economically poor readers do not have the purchasing power and are therefore not useful to advertisers who are looking for good market for their goods and services. Hence, the reality is for the media industry including the four newspapers selected for this study to aim at the segment of citizens within the high purchasing power bracket. Readers are seen as consumers and not participants in the public sphere which raises the question about media representation or framing. As Murdock (2000: 16) argues, "viable democratic politics depends on a shared commitment to renegotiate not simply individual entitlements but what we mean by the common good. This requires debate and dialogue across class boundaries and class interests. The cultural industries provide the major areas where these encounters now take place. The relative openness of this space and its hospitality to dissent is therefore crucial to sustaining democratic life."

In the context of resurrected democratic governance in Ghana, questions of the role of media in supplying the required information to address the concerns of citizens during elections remains a critical item on the agenda of national debate against a history of chequered political experiences. In effect, framing is a conceptual tool available for media and individuals to use to analyse, evaluate and disseminate ideas within a society (Neumon, Just and Crigler 1992:60). Thus framing defines for citizens the parameters for discussion of ideas and events of public interest (Tuchman 1978: iv). In all these, definitions of media frame are about silencing of some perceived reality. In other words, a particular issue which is to be silenced or projected is selected and given the required attention and treatment while excluding the issue considered to be of not much importance. In sum, scholars such as Matthes (2009) points out that there are a number of different definitions, approaches and types of framing.

These frames which have been conceptualized at various levels are referred to as issue – specific and generic frames. As issue – specific frames refer to certain issues such as the framing of the Intifada (Cohen and Wolfsfeld, 1993). Generic frames also referred to as a game or strategy frame refer to structural aspects and features of news that cut across variety of issues such as election campaigns (Matthes, 2009:360) and political cynicism (Cappella and Jamieson, 1997). It is virtually unimaginable to think of the practice of politics without the media institution. The evidence is that politics rely so much on both the electronic and print media. One crucial event, apart from the game of football, which easily gets the media to focus attention on in both the advanced democracies and emerging democracies such as Ghana is undoubtedly, election campaigns. Journalists, in reporting election campaigns, find themselves using variety of frames to disseminate stories on election campaigns. Strömbäck and Kaid (2008) point out that the variety of story angles developed by journalists when framing election campaign stories are informed by the type of media, the nature of society's political arrangements as well as socio-economic conditions of the society.

A number of studies on election campaigns framing have been undertaken in different democracies across the globe. These studies were meant to examine the trend of election campaigns coverage

across the globe and to find out whether election campaigns framing is looking different or similar across the globe. However, unfortunately most of these researches have been undertaken in the advanced democracies. These are societies whose political, socio-economic as well as political arrangements are quite different from emerging democracies such as Ghana. A good number of these researchers suggest four dominant types of media frames. These frames are game frames, issues frames, episodic frames and personality frames (Domke et. al, 1997).The current study is focusing on game frames, issues frames and personality frames.

In this chapter, the focus is on the generic frame often referred to as a game or strategy frame. However, the game frame discussion will be expanded to also include the issue frame to find out the space allocation devoted for horse race framing of election campaigns in Ghana. The objective is to compare it with that of issues to make judgement as to which of the two frames is actually dominating election campaigns framing in the country. It is also an opportunity to relate it to the situation in the United States' mainstream political news coverage and other democracies across the globe as it is evident in studies that the dominant election campaigns media frame in many advanced democracies is horse race (Fallows, 1997; Farnworth and Lichter, 2011).

This study proposes to identify some of the frames engaged by Ghanaian journalists in the coverage of the 2008 and 2012 elections in Ghana. In the content analysis of the campaigns, the study identifies the following main frames: Game or horse frame and personalization frame. These will, therefore, be used to analyse the coverage of the campaigns of 2008 and 2012 Ghanaian elections by four of the most important newspapers in Ghana.

3.2 .1 Game frames: Conceptual definitions

Game framing appears to be the most popular frame used by journalists especially during election campaigns in the advanced democracies (Domke et. al, 1997; Mantler and Whiteman, 1995). Game or horse race framing is used by journalists in telling stories on election campaigns usually using the language of competition or game with focus on a candidate's campaign strategy as to who is ahead or behind in the political contest. It is a frame that demonstrates also the self-interests of political actors (Patterson, 1993; Graber, 1993). Iyenger (1991) observes that game frame or horse race framing of election campaigns is interested in telling the story about the electoral changes of competing election competitors, opinion poll changes of candidates, fund raising activities, delegate counts instead of issue positions of competing candidates. In other words, horse race journalism is not interested in focusing citizens' attention on issues of competing candidates.

In summary, game framing or horse race framing can be identified with the following characteristics: It focuses on who is winning and who is losing the contest, it uses the language of war, games and competition, and talks of performers. Other characteristics are: Horse race focuses on candidate's style and perceptions and finally horse race places value on opinion polls and candidate's chances in the political competition (Jamieson, 1992). Cappella and Jamieson (1997) point out that horse race journalism dominates the United States coverage of news. To this end, Patterson (1993) presents evidence of increase in the application of horse race framing.

In acknowledging this view, Aalberg et al. (2011:165) also make the point that those electorates who are over exposed to much horse race framing and less issue framing are less likely to learn and become aware of the issues positions of the contesting candidates who they are supposed to vote for in order to help resolve some of the problems of their society. In the face of this, some scholars are of the view that horse race framing of politics goes to undermine democracy since such frames have negative implications for democratic governance. Such scholars make the argument that horse race framing of election campaigns may end up producing politically less informed electorates (Aalberg et al., 2011; Cappella and Jamieson, 1997). If knowledge is indeed power, then politically less informed citizens are made powerless since instead of being exposed

to issues framing they are rather exposed to horse race framing. If citizens view politics as a game being played by political actors for their selfish interests then citizens would not be too interested in being part of the political process (Blumler and Coleman, 2010). However, there are some scholars who disagree with the notion that framing politics as a game or horse race negatively affects the quality of information the media supply democracies leading to citizens' distrust of media and therefore, in the long run, affecting the needed participation of citizens in the political process (Newton, 2006; Norris, 2000). These scholars, for instance, believe that publishing opinion polls rather captures public attention to politics and for that matter election campaigns. This, they explain, is because horse race election news is more interesting and exciting.

The emergence of game framing or horse race framing as a journalism practice is traced to two key factors. These are: The political system of a society and news being considered as business (Fallows, 1997; Patterson, 1993). We are in an era in which election campaigning has become so demanding that it takes well refined strategies to organize and manage the political platforms as well as attractive images of candidates to compete. Since communicating politics to the public has now become more professionalized, political journalists believe that there is the need for these strategies to be exposed to the voters. This end up in horse race framing. Horse race framing of politics allows political journalists to protect their independence and uphold one most significant principle of journalism, which is objectivity. In the face of this, a 'rule of product substitution' has been suggested by Zallar (2001). The rule explains that the harder presidential campaign teams try to have control over what journalists would like to report about their candidates, the harder journalists try to report something else instead (Zaller, 2001:248). Simply put, game framing of election campaigns, it is observed, may help journalists to have control over the news stories they publish since they also see the need to bring some quality in the coverage of politics as well as election campaigns. The analysis of opinion poll for information, for instance, allows political reporters to improve the quality of their interpretation of data.

Andersen and Thorson (1989) make the point that the popularity of television today, new enhanced technology coupled with so much interest in commercialization of the media have all contributed

to the increasing framing of politics including election campaigns as a game or horse race. This, they argue, is a reflection of the nature of journalism we are experiencing in democracies today. Fallows (1997) also argues that the attraction of horse race framing to political journalists is because with just a little effort journalists are able to gather, process and get ready with their news stories on deadline. Horse race framing is also easy and more attractive since it does not demand as much resources as demanded by researching to produce a story on the substance of complex policy discussions.

Moreover, game framing also makes it possible for journalists to quickly and efficiently report opinion polls allowing the electorates to have their eyes on the election campaign activities as to who is winning and who is losing. In addition to the above reasons, opinion polls by their nature make news stories more scientific and somehow objective as compared to news stories developed from the observations of journalists and speeches by political actors (Lavraks and Traugott, 2000).

Although the increase in game framing or horse race framing of politics, in this case election campaigns, is said to be as a result of some changes in political systems and the media there is some newsworthiness in the horse race. This makes such framing attractive to election reporters to cover and editors to select for publication or broadcast. This is because the frame seems to be in tune with some of the values of news (Galtung and Ruge, 1965) which have over the years guided the practice of journalism in some societies including Ghana for some time now. To illustrate this point, framing election campaigns as a horse race, brings to the fore journalism's values such as drama, conflict and negativity. With these values, election campaigns coverage end up focusing intense attention on the political elites and political parties or groups. Therefore, game or horse race framing allows journalists to uphold the news values of time and novelty required for their daily news publication (Skewes, 2007). Careful and time consuming interpretation of issues or policies as election campaigns stories for the electorates may be stale and also appear repetitive. In such a situation, readers, listeners or watchers may not find such stories interesting to read or listen to.

While there has been a lot of discussions on and studies into the game or horse race framing, the factors that drive journalists to focus so much attention on the game framing of politics is yet to attract the needed attention from scholars. The journalistic practice of framing politics as a game is being practised in virtually all democracies (Strömbäck and Kaid, 2008). It is much more popular in the commercial US news journalism (Patterson, 2000) than in some other countries. For instance, societies with proportional multi-party political arrangements (Denmark, Finland, Israel, Netherlands Norway, Sweden and Switzerland) where the news markets are also more regulated by the state, horse race framing of politics is limited. In those democracies issues framing is more dominant (Binderkrantz and Green-Pedersen, 2009).

There is another form of framing that is attracting the attention of political communication scholars currently. This is personalization framing of election campaigns. The study, therefore, is also exploring the concept and how it relates to election campaigns coverage in a developing democracies such as Ghana. The intention is to examine whether or not the concept is leading to newspaper coverage bias and also if by focusing on candidates it is creating newspaper incumbency advantage. In other words, the press personalization of election campaigns in Ghana can appear as if presenting one presidential candidate as undeserving while another presidential candidate is presented as capable.

3.2.2 Personalization: Conceptual definitions

Rahat and Sheafer (2007) view personalization of politics to be a "change in the presentation of politics in the media, as expressed in a heightened focus on individual politicians and a diminished focus on parties, organizations and institutions" (Rahat and Sheafer, 2007:67). However, this definition can be problematic because one is unable to establish whether the definition includes all political actors or it refers to just political leaders. One is also not very sure whether to include every candidate contesting the election or only the main candidates. There are scholars who refer the attention put on a select number of political actors as 'presidentialization' (Vliegenthart et. al., 2010). This means, for instance, the media focusing on the leading candidates contesting for the position of prime minister in parliamentary systems. To illustrate this point, in the UK and

Germany which have two dominant political parties, this would mean attention of the media would be on the two top candidates contesting for the position of Prime Minister (Langer, 2010; Reinemann and Wilke, 2007). Extending this concept to Ghana, we will be referring to the presidential candidates of the two leading political parties, namely, the NDC and the NPP.

However, the picture looks different in societies such as the Netherlands and Sweden which have more political parties. In these societies the focus of the media is on the main candidates of all political parties contesting the election (Johansson, 2008). Balmas and Sheafer (2010) point out that there is a personalization that focuses on leaders of political parties and there is another that also focuses on all individual political actors leaving out party leaders. Therefore, there is the general visibility of political actors in media coverage as opposed to political parties and concentrated visibility on a few political party leaders.

Personalization, which refers to privatization, comes with some other meanings. In defining it, Rahat and Sheafer (2007:68) say it is a media focus on the personal characteristics and personal life of individual candidates. Langer (2007:379) refers to this trend as the "politicization of the private personal life." This, therefore, means the media's attention on politicians' personal life and personal qualities. Personal life here means the media investigating the private life and personal interests of political actors whereas personal characteristics also refer to shifts to non-political traits such as personality traits. For instance, studies have been conducted on the areas of competence and intelligence of politicians (Balmas and Sheafer, 2010), credibility and morality (Benoit and McHale, 2004), empathy (Benoit and McHale, 2004), appearance and looks (Tsfati et. al, 2010) and charismatic communication skills (Sheafer, 2001).

In all these, Langer (2007) proposes two methods for studying the visibility of politicians. One is counting the number of stories that mention one or more of the main candidates or leading politicians. These stories can then be presented in relation to the total campaign coverage or the

total news coverage. The second is to focus on references to both political actors as well as political parties.

This study limits itself to the number of times the newspapers under study featured the presidential candidates in their stories in framing the 2008 and 2012 election campaigns in Ghana. The results, which will include the frequency of candidates' appearances, tone of coverage and the issue of incumbency will be related to the situation across the globe to find out the influence of the global trend of election campaigns media coverage on that of Ghana. This is expected to show the extent to which framing of election campaigns in Ghana is similar or otherwise in form to the other democracies such as the United States, which, it is argued, is promoting its brand of election campaigning across democracies.

In many ways, the field of democratic political processes including election campaigns, whether influenced by the American style of campaigning or otherwise, opens up a big space for the analysis of media bias. Many people perceive that the media to a large extent are bias in their coverage of issues including election campaigns. In the next section, the study explores whether there was media bias within the specific context of 2008 and 2012 election campaigns in Ghana. The attempt is to answer questions such as: Is there partisan media bias in presidential election campaigns? If so, what is the magnitude? Is one candidate covered more than the other? Is the press more negative in tone about one candidate than the other?

3.3 The concept of media bias

Media bias is a term used to describe "perceived inaccuracies to be found within media representations" (Hartley, 2007: 17). The concept is usually referred to in relation to news and current affairs stories. Claims to bias indicate that some opinions have been privileged over other coverage of issues or events. Report of media bias may be understood that the mass media establishment is expected and can be objective in covering the news. However, Langer (1998: 17) points out that news and any form of media representations need to be seen as a 'signifying

practice'. In other words, news become real by the examination of selection and presentation rather than trying to invoke news in abstract and arguable external requirement of 'objectivity'.

Journalists in their practice of the profession can and desire to report the truth, Gunter (1997: 11) argues that this "can ever be anything more than relative." In effect, news stories must be understood as a journalist presenting not facts, but rather a selection of discourse which expresses one's thought on an issue or event. Meanwhile claims of bias, which is of different forms are discussed below.

3.3.1 Forms of media bias

In their study, *Media Bias in Presidential Elections: A Meta-Analysis,* D'Alessio and Allen (2000) identify three media biases. These are gatekeeping bias, coverage bias and statement bias. Gatekeeping bias, they explain, is an approach where journalists and editors select from a number of potential stories to be supplied to the public. This form is motivated by the study of White (1950) where the editor selected among stories provided to him. Coverage bias, according to them, is giving more space, airtime or attention to some issues or events in contrast to others. To illustrate this point, for two newspapers covering the same event, it may happen that one newspaper would give such a story more attention than the other. The third form of media bias is statement bias. This form of bias has the tendency to use more favourable (or unfavourable) statements to refer to one political party or candidate. According to Tankard (2001), news content is organized by news frames, which provide the context and also suggest what the issue is through means of selection, emphasis, exclusion and elaboration.

For the purpose of this study, bias will be measured by the physical amount of stories each candidate received as well as focusing on whether the stories were favourable for a particular candidate or not. Such an approach will provide determination of whether the state-owned press is still in the game of giving incumbency coverage advantage as previous studies claim. In effect,

framing is a function of gatekeeping. In other words, applying the two theories will go a long way to enrich the study for it to achieve the objective for which it was undertaken.

3.4 Gatekeeping theory

For over 50 years now, gatekeeping has been an influential theory in communication research. The term, 'gatekeeping,' was coined in 1947 by Kurt Lewin and applied White in the practice of journalism in 1950. White, referred to as 'Mr Gates' explored the habit of a newspaper editor's selection of the news. White's interest was in what news stories were given space and which stories were denied space. In other words, the editorial criteria that informed news worthiness was the focus of his research interest. As he watched the US wire editor at the *Peoria Star* working on a copy, it occurred to White to ask 'Mr Gates' to record his decision-making process. This he did by keeping track for a week.

With his observation of the editor, White was convinced that the editor's decisions were "highly subjective" considering what went into the news. According to White (1950: 386), one-third of the news stories did not get space because the editor did not find them fit for publication, while the two-thirds did not also get space due to limited space. In other words, in the study, 90 percent of the stories did not find space, which goes to show how powerful editors as gatekeepers are in terms of what stories get aired or published for the public.

The term gatekeeper used in mass communication research is traced to sociology. The gatekeepers, in mass communication, therefore, are the persons who decide what should go through the gates. Gatekeepers include the editors, television news directors, radio station managers or magazine publishers. It is the responsibility of gatekeepers to examine media content for its usefulness to the public. They, therefore, have the authority to ensure the nature and flow of information in the society.

The editor remains the main gatekeeper in the news media and decides the kind of stories that should go to the public as well as what emphasis to give stories. As practitioners see their responsibility as a professional one, scholars suggest that there are some practices which go to influence the decisions of gatekeepers. These include personal ideologies and values, economic control, individual taste or bias as well as organizational and structural procedures (Hartley, 2002: 94; Hiebert et al, 1985: 139-140). With these the unwanted information is taking out by the gatekeeper. The medium also has its own ethics and policies which help the editor to decide the news items to publish or broadcast. What is news and how news is selected, constructed and presented have for some time now attracted the attention of scholars. It is the view of Evans (2000: 2-9) that news values are the first requirement for selection of news. Palmer (2000: 45) observes that news values are what inform the decisions as to which material to include. Galtung and Ruge (1970) identify some features of events which singly or in combination could influence their being reported in the news media. These features of events and issues, which constitute news values, according to them, include timeliness, frequency, threshold, clarity, cultural proximity, unexpectedness, actions of elites and negativity. In other words, news values are a set of rules for journalists and editors to work with, to plan and execute the content of a publication or a broadcast (Brighton and Foy, 2007: 1).

While it may be unrealistic to dismiss the news values of Galtung and Ruge (1970), there are some of the news values of their study in 1965 that could be developed further for their effective application by the media of the 21st century. Brighton and Foy (2007) argue that at the time Galtung and Ruge were developing their theories, broadcast news was still young, newspapers were still serious publications, and there was nothing like the Internet. Brighton and Foy argue further that there was little trans-national broadcasting (Voice of America and Radio Luxembourg) and most broadcast news stories were based on foreign events which relied on film, shipping from the place of events to the home country of broadcast organisation, where the stories would be mediated for broadcast. Today live broadcast is common in television news. The two scholars, therefore, make the point that today "the likelihoods of confluence and a common cultural proximity are virtually nil" (Brighton and Foy, 2007: 2). With the emergence of multiplicity of media today, Brighton and Foy suggest a fresh set of news values which will vary from medium to medium and from each

individual package to the next. They, therefore, suggest the following news values: relevance, topicality, composition, expectation, unusualness, worth and external influence. The argument above and the call for de-Westernizing communication studies may have contributed to the idea of an alternative communication model for journalism practice in countries including Ghana. With such calls, the examination of development journalism model becomes necessary in this study.

Development journalism, a model practiced largely in the Asian countries such as China, Japan, Singapore as well as Malaysia, also comes with another set of news values to guide journalistic coverage of events and issues. Elliot (1998: 83) expects countries employing this model of journalism to modify the news values in order to reflect individual countries' needs and aspirations in accordance with the culture and political interests. For instance, Elliot notes that China has made the development news values its own, modifying development themes to meet China's identity. According to Elliot (1998: 80), from the earliest period of China's history, development news values have formed a significant part of the way and manner China has defined and constructed its news with different values emphasised in different periods. The following values, according to Elliot (1998: 74), have been constructed to give meaning to news and for development journalism model to work to bring about development. The values include clarification that is, making developmental projects, plans, policies and problems clear and simple for the common people to understand. The second value is constructively critical which means evaluating the relevance of development projects, plans policies and problems to national and local needs as well as providing the public with constructive criticism. The third value is instructive that is, news should provide useful information and promote self-education that can lead to greater economic and social progress that is shared by all. The final news value is future-oriented value of news. This is about news that considers the impact of development projects, plans, policies and problems of the future and implications in the long-run.

3.5 Development journalism

The de-Westernization proposal is to uphold the journalistic values considered appropriate for developing countries contexts and searching for normative theories of the media. Such efforts have contextualized the emergence and growth of the development-oriented practice of journalism, termed development journalism.

In the 1970s and 1980s, development journalism model became very attractive to the then African governments. Therefore, a number of African heads of states attempted to apply the model by making it part of their governance with the view to develop their countries. However, the model became unpopular by the turn of the century because it could not compete with the liberal media system. African leaders still believed that the media should be an establishment for nation-building. Scholars such as Berger (2010) and Banda (2007, 2010) are convinced that development journalism is an appropriate model for African journalism practice and the model should be given the needed attention. This position of some scholars has been given further weight by the UNESCO (2007), which has even gone further to suggest for its inclusion in journalism programmes of media and communication institutions in emerging democracies.

The concept of development journalism, it is argued, has not received the recognition that probably it should have. This situation can be attributed to the accusation that the model appears to promoting political agendas of African leaders and not serving as a forum that expresses the common good of citizens. Again the model's seemingly dependency on the state, which is controlled by the leaders has also been criticised as undermining the principle of press freedom in African societies (Skjerdal, 2011: 59). The concept of development journalism as journalistic practice emerged in Southeast Asia in the 1960s at a workshop in Philippines in 1968 (Gunaratne and Hasim, 1998). It was to facilitate and foster national development.

With such expectation, some countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America adopted the concept in their official policies and rearranged their media systems to be in tune with development journalism practice. In Africa, for instance, the practice was given local journalism terms. In Ghana it was referred to as 'Nkrumah's revolutionary journalism' while in Tanzania it was termed 'Nyerere's Ujamaa journalism' (Ramaprasad, 2003). In Africa, development journalism meant close collaboration between the media establishment and the authorities rather than being a critical coverage of development programmes. This also meant that the state controlled the media establishment and governments combined their forces to fight against the private media. In effect, critical and investigative function of the media suffered all in the name of the 'greater good' (Skjerdal, 2011: 60).

Against this background, development journalism was seen as ineffective in addressing the developmental issues of African societies as expected. The ineffectiveness of the concept is attributed to: the ambiguity of the concept, which has encouraged governments with different ideologies to justify a politicised policy of the media under the pretence of a journalism model (Harbor, 2001; Ogan, 1982); the risk of media becoming a tool for political agendas (Hanitzsch, 2008); the model has been linked to authoritarian leaders, who are found to supress investigative journalism practice (Steel, 2009; Harbor, 2001); the model turned out to favour the elites more rather than the ordinary citizens, who the model was meant to improve their lives (Xu, 2009); the global media establishment itself has been reluctant to accommodate development journalism as a communication model (Shafer, 1998) and finally, the model also seems to represent ideological contestations and not caring for the media and society (Steele, 2009). With these challenges, development journalism struggled to survive and could not make any serious impact on the continent. However, Shah (1996) makes the point that development journalism as a model was misunderstood and falsely informed by the Western conceptualisation of freedom of the press. Shah, therefore, advocates for a redefinition of development journalism practice.

3.5.1 Development journalism: Redefined

Conscious of the fact that the previous effort at introducing development journalism practice in Africa got stacked in political games, recent attempt at reviving the model appears to shifting the concept away from earlier preconceptions by this time focusing on professional issues. In this direction, to reconceptualise development journalism within the African set up, Banda (2007) suggests a combination of development journalism and public service broadcasting (PSB) ideology. Central to Banda's model is a dynamic notion of the public. In effect, he is advocating for both PSB ideology and public journalism. Banda, therefore, identifies five principles to guide the practice of development journalism in a new era of Africa's democratization.

According to Banda, the redefined model frames the audience as citizens and not as consumers. The media are expected to treat citizens as participants in finding solutions to issues of common good and they must be encouraged to contribute to making the media a real tool for development and freedom. This demands that journalists allow citizens to talk on issues instead of always relying on official sources to determine the mode of expression and public discourse. Journalists must encourage citizens to share their views on issues of interest. This redefined development journalism seems to have taken some lessons from the concepts of participatory democracy and deliberative democracy since the model is also supposed to encourage deliberations among citizens and between citizens and their leaders. The model is expected to create space for citizens to frame their own development interests, which means that journalists can no longer stay neutral but expected to declare their solidarity with citizens. Finally, development journalists should engage in activism, emancipation as well as social change. Banda (2007:168) agrees with Chalkley (1968), who is credited as proponent of development journalism practice, points out that "the development journalist must get readers to realise how serious the development problem is, to think about the problem, to open their eyes to possible solutions."

Banda's model, a revision of the previous approach, places much value on the media being for the people and a means to emancipate citizens. The model also plays down the role of the state. On

his part, Berger (2010) calls for the application of new media technology in the new concept of development journalism. This approach, Berger believes, could also help attract the private media in Africa to also engage in the practice of development journalism, which may probably help to put to rest some of the conflicts between the private and state-owned media for real democratic media system. Still believing that development journalism practice has the potential to help deepen democracy, Xu (2009) also suggests five features of the model. These are that the media must (i) frame achievements as well as the shortcomings in development efforts; (ii) focus on long-term development; (iii) stay independent without the influence or control of governments and criticise governments if need be; (iv) focus on issues of development and work constructively with governments in nation-building efforts and finally (v) work to empower ordinary citizens for them to be active in contributing to the socio-political development of society.

With this kind of development journalism model, the proponents would have contributed to the de-Westernization efforts to uphold the journalistic values suitable for the African context. Such a model would have succeeded in the search for African normative model of the media such that during elections framing and gatekeeping practices would help electorates to take informed decisions to help deepen democracy on the continent.

While gatekeeping theory helps editors in the process of determination as to which events and issues are fit for publication or broadcast, the theory of framing on the other hand, helps editors in "organizing idea for making sense of relevant events, suggesting what is the issue" (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989: 3). From the above discussions, one can, therefore, suggests that there is some relationship existing between gatekeeping and framing. According to Payne (2008), framing acts as ideological contextualisation of a gatekeeper's content preferences.

3.6 Summary of the chapter

The chapter has highlighted the theoretical and conceptual framework that underpin the research. In examining newspapers' election stories and the context of their publication in relation to framing and gatekeeping ideals, it is expected that a deeper understanding of Ghanaian media's responsibility in election campaigns coverage will be arrived at. In discussing gatekeeping theory, one is made to acknowledge that the theory focuses on the selection mechanism of the media institutions. It is the identification of broader trend in news selection, which has made gatekeeping very useful theory the practice of journalism. In this sense, gatekeeping is more than just a product of someone's preferences, whims or error. Therefore, regardless of the editor, some stories will be selected whiles others will be left out. In outlining the main perspective around the nature of framing theory, the chapter makes the point that the media direct attention on certain issues and events and then place them within an area of meaning. And this makes framing theory a critical topic since it suggests that how something is presented to the audience can go a long way to influence the decisions people make about how to process information. In so doing, it influences the perception of news by the audience ending up as agenda-setting not only telling the audience what to think about, but also how to think about issues.

The chapter notes the kind of relationship that exists between framing and agenda setting theories since both focus on how media direct the attention of people to specific issues and by this end up setting agenda. However, one gathers from the chapter that frames go beyond setting agenda to create frames for information with conscious decisions made by journalists. In this sense, a frame is constructed according to the way the media as gatekeepers organize the kind of issues and events they give coverage to. Therefore, framing and gatekeeping are an unavoidable part of journalism practice. In effect, the editors of the four newspapers under study, it could be argued, could not have avoided the practices of framing and gatekeeping in their coverage of the 2008 and 2012 election campaigns in Ghana. What is, therefore, in contention here is the factors that influenced the framing and gatekeeping practices during the two election campaigns, which the study is interested in investigating.

The next chapter provides an insight into evidence in the trend of election campaign selection and representation across the globe with particular focus on Ghana. This is to help compare Ghana's election campaigns trend with that of other democracies across the globe since the debate among political communication scholars is that the trend of election campaigns around the world is looking similar in democratic societies. In other words, the processes of gatekeeping and framing election campaigns stories are similar across democracies including Ghana.

Chapter 4

Framing election campaigns: A survey of evidence

4.1 Overview of the chapter

The chapter is a selection of works that are central to the area of this study. The aim is to provide a context for the study, illustrates how the subject has been previously studied and finally, to demonstrate that the current study is adding to the understanding and knowledge of the field of political communication. While comprehensive scholarly works on election campaigns coverage in the United States and Europe abounds, the same cannot be said for Ghana. Studies on media coverage of Ghanaian elections have often been carried out through media monitoring exercises covering relatively short periods, for instance, studies by the CDD and the NMC. This limitation, therefore, leaves a gap that needs to be filled. Despite this limitation, the chapter gives an account of studies of election campaigns coverage in Ghana that are available. This is help gain an insight into what has been the trend of election campaigns coverage in Ghana.

An exploration of election campaign coverage in some advanced democracies such as the United States and the United Kingdom will be undertaken since such approach will help in comparing Ghana's election campaign trend with that of the advanced democracies. For instance, how justifiable are the claims that across the globe, horse race framing is dominating election campaign coverage? Is there indeed intense visibility of party leaders to the detriment of political parties during election campaigns in Ghana? Are the state-owned media in Ghana still in the business of giving incumbent candidates coverage advantage? Are Ghana's election campaigns also negative in tone as it is across democracies? And finally, is money a serious factor in the coverage of election campaigns in Ghana? This study attempts to provide answers to these questions.

4.2 Election campaigns framing across the globe

One driving force behind this study is from the knowledge that similar election campaigns strategies and techniques are being used in democracies across the globe irrespective of differences in political cultures, historical background and societies. In effect, there is similarity in election campaign coverage. Since these innovative electioneering trends are traced to the United States, this section focuses more on election campaigns coverage in the United States.

Political election campaign reporting is currently being criticised for focusing so much attention on individual political candidates, their appearances and images as well as campaigning style rather than real substantive policy issues. Therefore, not sufficient space or air time is devoted to policy issues. According to Fletcher and Everett (1991: 181), election campaigns have come to attract so much attention for the reason that they "represent short, intense periods in democracies and stand as signal events." Fletcher (1996: 140) describes election campaigning as "democratic rituals." Studies of democracies around the world and the media indicate a common emphasis on election candidates' personalities and strategies (Strömbäck and Kaid, 2008; Fletcher and Everett, 1991). Sotirovic and McLeod (2008: 28) therefore, argue that this situation is eventually undermining the democratic value of election campaigning coverage as image and personality take centre stage in the media ending up diverting the concentration of citizens from substance or candidates' position on relevant issues.

Political communication studies on election campaigns show that the common form of framing politics including elections is horse race aspects of the event instead of issues (Lawrence, 2000). According to scholars such as Strömbäck and Dimitrova (2006), studies on the United States' election campaigns, for instance, demonstrate that the mass media in framing election campaigns, focus attention on the presidential candidate who appears to be leading in the race or the strategy political actors are using to lead in the opinion polls. This form of framing politics in general goes to add to voters distrust of the political system and also does not allow for sharing of issues of

common good (Lawrence, 2010). This may also lead to citizens not having a better understanding of issues politicians are discussing on the political platform (de Vreese, 2004).

According to newspaper coverage of the 1952 presidential election campaigning in the US, Klein and Maccoby (1954) report that 60 percent of the stories published were on policies, 16 percent of the stories were also focused on personal qualities of the candidates with stories on scandals recording 15 percent. In another study, Graber (1971) on the 1968 election campaigning in the US, 66 percent of the newspapers stories were devoted to personal qualities of the contesting candidates with policy issues recording 34 percent of coverage. Again, studying the 1979 presidential election campaigning in the US, Russonello and Wolf (1979) discovered that as high as 47 percent of stories want for horse race campaigning, the next in contention was the character of the competing candidates receiving 25 percent while policy issues recorded 21 percent of the coverage in the newspapers.

Stovall in a study into the news coverage of the US presidential election campaigning in 1982 found out that 86 percent of the newspaper stories were horse race with policy issues recording 14 percent coverage. Benoit, Stein and Hansen (2005) using the *New York Times'* coverage of presidential campaigns from 1952 – 2000 found out that horse race framing dominated election campaign coverage in the United States. Dimitrova (2006) also points out that many studies indicate that United States' newspapers emphasized horse race coverage during presidential elections. Writing on M*edia Logic and Floating Voters,* de Vreese (2008: 150) notes that there is more horse race coverage during election campaigning in the Netherlands yet policy-driven journalism practice is getting a remarkable attention in the media. According to de Vreese, for 20 years, studies conducted have recorded an increase in the horse race style of journalism practice in the Netherlands but substantive news issues still feature high in the media's coverage of election campaigns.

A study by Cardiff University reports: "As a proportion of all airtime on the major evening bulletins, 45% of news was about the 2015 general election. But although regular TV news viewers undoubtedly had plenty of updates about the election, coverage has been dominated by which parties might win the contest, or related to campaign strategies and possible coalition deals, rather than the policy choices voters face at the ballot box" (*The Guardian*, Thursday, May 7, 2015). Karin Wahl-Jorgensen also writes: "So far, 2015 is no exception. Much attention has been driven by polls, which shows a high probability that no single party will win an overall majority" (http://the conversation.com/stunts-gaffes-and-horse-race).

In the case of Ghana, a study of the *Daily Graphic's* coverage of the presidential election campaigns in 1992 and 2004, Peter Amponsah's content analysis revealed that horse race journalism was not an issue in the coverage of election campaigns in Ghana. According to the study, unlike the advanced democracies such as the United States where horse race framing of election campaigns dominates, in Ghana it is rather issues or policies that dominate election campaigns coverage. It is due to these conflicting outcomes that this current study is interested in finding out the consistencies or otherwise of this result. In other words, do issues continue to dominate election campaigns coverage in Ghana and how is horse race doing in Ghana's election coverage?

The media are again being accused of focusing much attention on candidates instead of political parties and as a result of this, voters vote for candidates and not parties. In relation to the United Kingdom, Scammell and Semetko (2008: 82) point out that all researchers have found out that election campaigns reporting is focused on the candidates, their images, competence and credibility. A study by Loughborough University on media coverage of the 2015 election campaign in the United Kingdom (2015) observes that of the nine newspapers and six television channels studied, the leaders of the two main political parties dominated the media election coverage, accounting for 30 percent of all the political appearances.

In Canada, Gidengil (2008: 46) reports that content analysis of newspaper coverage of the 2000 election campaign suggests that the reporting was heavily on the incumbent party. The newspapers ignored the election issues and also the ideological differences among the competing political parties and rather focused on the horse race with attention on the parties' leaders' personalities, performance and parties' strategies. Similarly, content analysis of press coverage of the 2006 election also found that the incumbent Liberal Party enjoyed high level of visibility. This is also true of the network newscasts.

With regard to the media's projection of candidates, Amponsah's (2012) study also indicated that candidates of the political parties were focused more since the candidates were the most common sources for election information for the newspaper's election campaign stories. In such a journalistic practice, incumbent president had an advantage over the other candidates. For instance, a study on the media and democracy in Ghana (1992 – 2000) by Dzisah (2008) showed that the *Daily Graphic*, a state-owned newspaper gave more coverage and more favourable coverage to the incumbent presidential candidate of the NDC while the *Ghanaian Chronicle*, a privately-owned newspaper also gave more coverage and more positive coverage to the opposition candidates of the NPP.

A 2001 report of the Ghana Centre for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana) on media's reportage of the 2000 election campaign observed that the print and electronic media gave more coverage and access to the incumbent candidate of the NDC. Similar to the 2000 election campaign coverage of 2004, the state-owned print and electronic media gave more coverage to the incumbent candidate of the NPP (CDD-Ghana, 2004). On the same issue of incumbency advantage, a review of a study by AfriMAP and The Open Society Initiative for West Africa and The Institute for Democratic Governance (2007) point out that during the 2004 election in Ghana, the incumbent candidate of the NPP enjoyed more coverage from all the four state-owned media. The study, according to the review, indicates that incumbency advantage was the trend of election campaigns coverage throughout the Fourth Republic. The review suggests that the trend may be as a result of

the gatekeeping practice in the Ghanaian state media establishment (2007: 39-41). From the above accounts, which point to state-owned media of practicing incumbency advantage reporting in the Four Republic, this current study will want to explore whether or not the media have continued the same trend of election campaign framing. The 1992 constitution guarantees equal and fair coverage to all political parties and candidates during elections.

Candidates and political parties during elections can be projected by the media either positively or negatively. Since most voters do not get the opportunity to physically meet with candidates, it is the media that feed the electorates with information about the candidates. Therefore, the tone of media is critical as it can influence voters' attitudes as well as voting behaviour. The 2012 US existing body of evidence indicates that both presidential candidates Barack Obama and Mitt Romney shared more negative coverage from the news media than positive coverage (Lengauer et. al., 2012: 189). The emphasis by the media on negative aspects of politics during election campaigns can indeed be troubling, because they go to help erode the trust and confidence citizens may have for politics and politicians (Capella and Jamieson, 1997: 29).

Related Ghanaian election campaigns coverage studies appear to agree that election campaigns coverage in Ghana are more positive in tone (Dzisah, 2008; Amponsah, 2012; CDD-Ghana, 2004; AfriMAP et. al., 2007 and Sulemana, 2009). These results are in conflict with most of the researches, which suggest that negative tone is the trend in the election campaigns news coverage (Benoit et. al. 2005; Hart, 2000). This Ghanaian positive election campaigns tone can be attributed to the persistent public appeals for peaceful election. With this finding, will the press in Ghana continue with its positive coverage record? The current study will attempt to find an answer to the question.

Liberal journalism practice places value on the principle of objectivity in its role of informing citizens on issues and events across the globe. However, a number of studies indicate that bias

exist in the way and manner issues and events are covered. On the issue of bias, D'Alessio and Allen (2000) in their study did not find substantial bias but a small coverage bias was discovered with regard to television in the United States. Schoenbach et. al. (2001) who examined Dutch and German television noted that chancellors or prime ministers received substantially larger number of mentions. In measuring bias in election campaigning in the well-established democratic societies since 1999, it was realized that the smaller political party of the three in the United Kingdom, the Liberal Democrats, enjoyed most coverage during election campaigns coverage in comparison with Labour and Conservative parties. The Liberal Democrats, according to the study, also attracted more favourable coverage than the two stronger political parties (Semetko, 2009: 4).

With the issue of media bias in terms of more coverage and more positive coverage, all the five studies reviewed for this study were in agreement that Ghana's press whether state-owned or privately-owned has been biased in the coverage of the previous election campaigns. The press has been giving more coverage and more positive coverage to either the incumbent candidate and political party or it has been the opposition receiving more coverage and more positive coverage. Unlike the United Kingdom, where the smaller political party could enjoy more coverage and more positive courage, in Ghana, previous studies indicate that the smaller political parties rather have been attracting extremely low visibility in the press. It has always been the case that the two main political parties of the NDC and the NPP get the lion share of the newspapers' space allocated for election campaigns stories by the gatekeepers.

Examining the related studies, one story that is striking is that even though policy or issues attracted coverage from the newspaper journalists, horse race coverage by the newspapers was the most dominant form of coverage of presidential election campaigning in the United States. To add to this, in 2005 scholars such as Benoit, Stein and Hansen undertook a study of the *New York Times'* reporting from 1952-2000 of the presidential election campaigning, these scholars revealed that horse race, which recorded 40 percent coverage was the most attractive subject to the

newspaper. This was followed by the coverage of presidential candidates' personal qualities which had 31 percent with the policy issues of candidates taking 25 percent of the coverage.

It appears from the account of election campaigning that indeed election campaigns coverage across democracies cannot be said to be similar in form in recent times. Although election campaign coverage in the advanced democracies may look similar, in emerging democracies such as Ghana it is inconsistent with that of the developed democracies such as the United States. This seemingly differences may be a reflection of the general differences in politics, the economy, media establishment, culture and values among societies. Swanson and Mancini (1996: 13) argue that this emergence is as a result of a number of democratic societies responding to a "process of media globalization, not just to the international spread of media contents and forms, but also to structures of relationship and ownership that increasingly are assimilating the systems of mass communication found in different countries." With these studies and their revelations, to what extent is Ghana's election campaigns coverage similar or distinct in trend to that of the other democratic countries across the globe especially the United States?

4.3 Summary of the chapter

About 20 years ago, sports, especially football, remained the most concentrated and contested in Ghana and occupied the centre stage in media coverage. Since 1992 political contest in the form of multiparty is competing with football in terms of public discussions as well as media attention. Hasty (2005: xii) observes that "this seven-year period of democratic renewal and consolidation in Ghana (1995-2002), without the hard work of Ghanaian journalists throughout this period, the celebrated political renaissance of Ghanaian democracy would never have been possible." According to Hasty, the editors of the major newspapers in Ghana do recognise the need for them to place the press in the centre of the democratic process in the country as well as the obligation of journalists to practically uphold the watchdog function in order to serve the interest and aspiration of the public.

Hence, democracy has come to be accepted as a respecter of individuals as citizens are able to make sense between what is right and what is wrong (Baker, 2002: 126). One critical means to consolidate multiparty democratic governance is through the news media and indeed journalism practice. Barker (2002) believes that democracy demands a free and independent media to ensure structural contributions that are "as great as or greater than many of the constitutionals and administrative devices" (Baker, 2002: 132- 133). Ghana's media, over the past decades have gone through changes, from state monopoly to liberalized structure of state and private structure with deep divide separating their practices. State media journalists and their counterparts in the privately-owned media demonstrate differences in forms of professional rhetoric, engage different methods of news gathering, negotiate different political pressures and enjoy different forms of compensation and reward for their work (Hasty, 2005: 28). As the state media speak for the government, the privately-owned media also demonstrate anti-government posturing (Hasty, 2005: 110). In the context of the 2008 and 2012 election campaigns can it be said that the state-owned newspapers speak for the government? And, therefore, the state-owned papers still ensure incumbency advantage? The study is expected to provide the answer.

The accounts of the related studies confirm that contemporary election campaign coverage in the advanced democracies have been dominated by horse race coverage. Again election campaign coverage in the United States, for instance, has been more negative than positive coverage. The chapter also indicates that in the United Kingdom, for instance, it is possible for a smaller political party to receive more coverage and more positive coverage than the main political parties. With the horse race framing and more negative coverage, it is no wonder that some scholars are of the view that the trend of election campaign coverage is undermining democracy since the media are not supplying voters with quality information for them to base their electoral decisions on. This situation can lead to voters' alienation and cynicism.

In the Ghanaian situation, the studies reviewed do not give a clear indication as to the media in the country also engaging in horse race coverage of election campaigning. The impression is that

Ghanaian media give extensive coverage to incumbent candidates and political parties. The media in Ghana are focusing more attention on the two leading political parties of the NDC and the NPP. This kind of reporting amounts to the marginalization of the other political parties. One other issue that emerged from the review seems to suggest that journalists in Ghana rely on political parties organized activities for them to generate information in order to publish electioneering news stories. Thus allowing the candidates and parties to set the agenda for the media by telling the media what election campaigns news to select, present and package for the public. Finally, election campaign coverage in Ghana is more positive in tone. With these results, to what extent will the current study be different or similar to previous studies? This will be answered in the context of the 2008 and 2012 election campaigns in Ghana. The answer, probably, will help to understand what is going on in the Ghanaian press' selection and representation of election campaign news and why such a trend in political communication of an emerging democracy such as Ghana. The techniques that the study is applying to help answer the above question will be addressed in the next chapter.

Chapter 5

Methodology

5.1 Overview of the chapter

This chapter will present an overview of research methodology engaged in order to find answers to the research questions of the study. The discussions in the chapter will be focused on issues such as research design, population, sampling, data gathering and data analysis. These processes, hopefully, will provide trustworthiness.

Henning (2004: 36) notes that methodology is "a coherent group of methods that complement one another and that have the ability to fit to deliver data and findings that will reflect the research question and suit the research purpose." Ostle and Mensing (1975: 2) also describe research methodology as "a systematically way to solve the research problem." For Babbie and Mouton (2001: 49), the choice of methods and their application are informed by the aims and objectives of the study, the nature of the phenomenon under examination and the theory of the researcher. Methodology decisions are shaped by the nature of the research question. For this study, methodology is described as how the study was executed and its logical sequence. The goal of this research is to explore the nature of election campaign framing in Ghana. To achieve this goal, the research approach was the mixed method, which assisted to meet the information demands of the study. With this, a suitable methodology was selected and the right kind of tools for data gathering and analysis were mobilized as a response to the following research questions, which emerged from the review of literature, the research problem and the research objectives. The study is operating on three research questions:

RQI. Assessing the coverage of the 2008 and 2012 elections, to what extent did the Ghanaian newspapers follow the issue-based framing rather than horse race framing style of election campaign coverage?

RQ2. In framing the 2008 and 2012 election campaigns in Ghana, how did the newspapers treat the presidential candidates' activities they covered?

RQ3. How significant is the difference between global model of journalism profession and Ghana's practice of the profession in the context of the 2008 and 2012 election campaigns in Ghana?

The intention is to examine how journalistic media are framing election campaigns in the country, which has held successful multiparty elections every 4 years from 1992 to 2012. This is to help the study ascertain the extent to which the press is providing Ghanaians with free, equal and quality election campaign stories be they straight news, feature, opinion, letter-to-the-editor or editorial. The study is interested in finding out the extent to which the Ghanaian press is giving coverage to all candidates and political parties as guaranteed by the 1992 constitution. Coupled with this focus, the study is also interested in contributing to the debate going on among political communication scholars that election campaigns coverage across democracies are taking similar form. In effect, to what extent are the election campaigns coverage in Ghana taking the shape of issues-based journalism, horse race journalism and personalization? And what accounts for such kind of coverage? The study is situated in the realm of print journalism for the reason that newspapers in Ghana are still significant and vibrant in the socio-political life of Ghanaians as they remain agenda setters. Hasty (2005:2) observes: "The most provocative and influential news stories circulating through mass media and into the public sphere are produced by the state and private press." From the above, one is convinced that it would take both content analysis and in-depth interview to achieve the goal set for this study.

5.2 Mixed method approach

The application of both quantitative and qualitative methods in communication research have been extensively discussed and both methods are said to have their advantages and disadvantages. For the study to make up for the weaknesses and make the best use of the strength of the two methods, the mixed method research was engaged (Bryman, 2006).

Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004: 17) defines mixed method research as "the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study." The major strength of mixed method is the possibility of developing an understanding of a phenomenon for which either approach in isolation would be insufficient (Venkatesh et. al., 2013). One major weakness is the large amount of data required and can be overwhelming and the study can become too complicated, costly and time consuming. The nature of this particular study is also to understand and compare the attitudes, perceptions and actions to assess the impression of political officials about the 2008 and 2012 election campaigns. The quantitative research in the form of content analysis will provide numerical evidence for statistical analysis. The in-depth interview will form the qualitative part of this research and give a sense of process and enhance the breadth and depth of the findings.

It is useful to point out that the identification and choice of the various sources of information were primarily stemmed from the researcher's knowledge of politics and journalism in Ghana. Hence, the sample for the study was purposefully selected. This meant that only those considered to be knowledgeable in the area of the study were consulted so were the newspapers used for this study. The techniques used to mobilize information are presented below.

5.3 Content analysis

Content analysis was applied in examining newspaper journalism in Ghana in relation to election campaigns framing since it has been proven to be an essential tool for the analysis of information. Berelson (1952: 18) offers a classic definition of content analysis, which reads: "It is a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication." Holsti (1968: 5) also defines content analysis as "any research technique for making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying specified characteristics within text." Neuman (1997: 272-273) describes it as a "technique for gathering and analysing the content of text. The 'content' refers to words, meanings, pictures, symbols, ideas, themes or any message that can be communicated. The 'text' is anything written, visual or spoken that serves as a medium for communication." In others words, it is one method which makes it possible for a researcher to

describe message in quantitative terms either verbal or non-verbal or non-quantitative in nature. It has to do with counting items or measuring the number of lines or amount of space allocated to different themes. It is often used for the analysis of media texts such as newspaper stories, radio and television reports as well as visual content in photographic, film and television images (Sparks, 2002:20).

An analysis of the above definitions of the method indicates an emphasis on system, objectivity, quantification, context and validity. In effect, content analysis is all about making valid, replicable and objective inferences about the messages on the basis of explicit rules. Berelson (1952) identifies five main purposes of content analysis, which are: to describe substance characteristics of message content, to describe form characteristics of message content, to make inferences to producers of content, to make inferences to audiences of content and finally, to predict the effects of content on audiences.

As a tool for research, content analysis has the following advantages as well as disadvantages. The advantages are: the data it yields can be quantified; it is not expensive to use; it is easy to find material and it can deal with current events as well as past events or even both. The disadvantages on the other hand include: it is not easy to come by a measurable unit; it is not easy to find a good working definition of the topic under study; it is not possible to prove that the inferences made on the basis of a content analysis are correct; and it is not easy to be certain that a sample studied is a representative (Berger 1982: 107). Despite these disadvantages it is still a useful study to engage the technique of content analysis.

Content analysis method was designed for this research in order to examine the messages produced by the four targeted newspapers in their responsibility of reporting, interpreting and examining politicians' statements and political activities during the 2008 and 2012 election campaigns in Ghana. The technique of content analysis applied hopefully will lead the study to measuring the significance that the Ghanaian press attached to this critical democratic feature of election

campaign through the intensity and frequency with which they reported. It will also give an indication as to how well or otherwise the newspapers in Ghana are performing their role in the framing of election campaigns by informing, educating as well as helping to influence and shaping voters' decisions from a quantitative perspective. To achieve this, selecting a sample from a population is necessary.

5.4 Getting at the sample

Sampling is a process of selecting a smaller representative that has all the attributes of a larger population for study. Brink (2006: 124) and Bless et. al. (2006:98) observe that it is necessary for the sample to be assembled for it to become representative of the population from which it is taken. The authors are of the view that collecting information on a sample is less time consuming. As a comparative study, the thesis engaged four newspapers in Ghana. These included the *Daily Graphic, The Ghanaian Times, Daily Guide* and *Ghanaian Chronicle*. These were targeted for the study as by and large they constitute the most prestigious newspapers in Ghana. The four newspapers, which were purposively selected, have consistently emerged as the top Ghanaian newspapers in terms of circulation. They have been attracting attention for selection for studies including election campaigns coverage. The *Daily Graphic* and *The Ghanaian Times* are state-owned whereas *the Daily Guide* and *Ghanaian Chronicle* are privately-owned newspapers. Copies of the newspapers used for the study were from the library of the Ghana Institute of Journalism, Accra with the *Ghanaian Chronicle* of 2012 coming from the library of the Graphic Communications Group Ltd., Accra.

The time period chosen to analyse the four newspapers to show the trend of election campaigns framing by the press was from October 1 to November 31, 2008 and October 1 to November 31, 2012 using Monday to Saturday editions. Sundays were not included because these newspapers do not appear on the newsstands. The study used a total of 192 newspapers (each of the four newspapers contributed 48 of its editions). The study looked at October and November in which election campaigns in Ghana really gather momentum for the actual election voting to take place on December 7. This sample size appears to be reasonable considering the scope of the thesis and

also considering the fact that apart from the content analysis, the study also used one other method such as in-depth interviews. In sampling the newspapers, the systematic sampling technique was applied - hence, the content unit of analysis for this study.

5.5 The content unit of analysis

The coding procedure was first the placement of the content into various story types in order to show which story types were most used by the press in covering election campaigns in Ghana. The story types were made up of: (1) Straight news (2) Feature (3) Editorial (4) Comment/opinion (5) Letters-to-the-editor.

Second, content was categorized into ten major topics. These included: (1) Setting, (2) Theme, (3) Actors (4) Reporter evaluation of actors (5) Evaluating actor (6) Actor evaluation (7) Evaluated actor (8) Tone towards actors (9) Policy (10) Headline. The idea was to use the above topics to examine how much emphasis the press in Ghana placed on the election campaigns as well as the trend that framing of election campaigns has taken.

Third, since in journalism practice headlines are used to demonstrate the importance or significance of stories, the entire headlines of all stories about election campaigns were also coded. The rationale for giving some attention to headlines was to determine the degree of attention devoted to presidential candidates, political parties and how they have been projected by the Ghanaian press taken into consideration that headline "draws the attention of the reader to the contents of the story" (Hodgson, 1987: 137). In other words, the study is interested in finding out which candidate and political party have been projected to look good or bad in the eyes of readers. This is to help assess the level of slant of coverage of presidential candidates' messages as well as political parties' activities during election campaigns by the press.

Finally, it may be necessary to point out that how the election campaign stories came about was coded since the source that set the agenda for the story is considered critical in election campaign coverage: sources of affiliation were coded under five major categories, which included: (1) Political, (2) Campaign, (3) Media, (4) Other, and (5) No identifiable setting. The objective here was to find out the sources affiliated with especially either candidates or political party initiated events or journalists initiated act. The assumption is that candidates' sources or news sources affiliated with political parties, would dominate election campaigns stories of Ghana's press. In other words, in such a situation the press creates the space for candidates and political parties to set agenda for the press. However, for the findings to make more sense, the journalistic genres have been defined and included in the coding sheet as appendix A. The genres were to help analyse the election campaigns frames.

5.6 Analysing the election campaign frames

In order to come up with the kind of frames most used in the 2008 and 2012 general elections in Ghana, three frames were identified. These included horse race, issue/policy and personalisation. The operational definition of these frames have been provided in the literature review of this study (see chapter three). And since the *Daily Graphic*, *The Ghanaian Times*, *Daily Guide* and *Ghanaian Chronicle* happen to be the most convenient form to search for information on each of the presidential candidates as well as the political parties, voters resort to these forms of media in order to learn about the candidates and the political parties. These are channels with the capacity to reach a considerable number of voters. Their inexpensive nature coupled with their large amount of text they can produce, these channels have often been a good source of study with regard to content analysis in Ghana. Besides these, they are channels voters turn to for election campaign stories. With the help of SPSS, the data collected was analysed.

5.7 Data analysis technique

The results of the coded categories gathered from the content analysis was firstly entered into an Excel spread sheet, which was then imported into the statistical analysis software, that is,

Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS). The application of the two different software packages was because the Excel was expected to automatically update graphs and tables indicating the frequencies of responses as the information was entered. This process immediately gave impressions and ideas about the information. This made it possible for reflecting on the outcome at an early stage. The second reason for entering the information first into Excel was because there was no character limit for variables, which was to a large extent convenient. With this process completed, the information was then imported into the SPSS to facilitate further analysis of the information. This was converted into frequency tables and graphs as a way of summarising the results into formats for clear and easy understanding. It needs to be noted that the use of frequency tables and graphs developed from the content analysis helped to expose and compare trends and relations that came up. As already indicated the study used the mixed method research. Therefore, the next section is to deal with the in-depth interview technique used.

5.8 The in-depth interviews

The main types of qualitative data gathering techniques include participation observation, non-participation observation, questionnaires and interviews. The decision to conduct interviews besides content analysis was as a result of the value on personal language as data. Also face-to-face interviewing was considered appropriate since depth of meaning is critical and the study is basically involved gaining insight and understanding (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003: 138; Gillham, 2000: 11). The motivation for the interview is to engage in conversation and discussion using the art of questioning for the respondents to provide insights on the investigation themes. Interviews are very useful because they provide much more detailed and specific data. In-depth interviews may also provide a relaxed atmosphere for the gathering of data as respondents may feel more comfortable sharing their perspective in words and other actions.

They also allow for follow up of thoughts, feelings and ideas behind the responses being offered (Boyce and Neal, 2006). However, one cannot discount their limitations. The most obvious limitation in conducting this type of interviewing is that they are time consuming activities since it takes time to conduct interviews, transcribe them and analyse the outcome. The sample size is

generally small and may not be representative of a particular population. With all the advantages and disadvantages, Busha and Harter (1980: 78) caution that the researcher must prepare well for the interview and must also not just know the questions to be asked, but be concern with the sequence of the questions. An interview guide was designed (see appendix B). These were grouped thematically and used for reference and prompts.

A number of interview techniques are available, which include structured, informal and semi-structured interview. And for the purpose of this study, the semi-structured interview technique, which is a technique "in which some questions are structured (closed) and some are open-ended was applied. Unstructured questions allow respondents to reply freely without having to select one of several provided responses" is the method applied (Stone, 1984: 12). The respondents for the interview were chosen purposively. These respondents were selected for the study since their positions, activities and associations with the media and politics directly and indirectly influence to some degree the performance of Ghanaian media.

5.9 Interview guide

With semi-structured interviews, Welman (2001: 161) suggests the term, 'interview guide' as against the term, 'interview schedule.' An interview guide is "a list of topics and aspects of these topics that have a bearing on the given theme and that the interviewer should raise during the course of the interview" (Welman, 2001: 161). It must be noted that all respondents were not asked the same questions. Each group of respondents had different set of questions. To illustrate, the questions for editors were different from those asked the political officials. Most of the interview questions were made up of open-ended questions. This form of questions were considered significant for the respondents. This was to allow them to speak their minds freely on the topics related to the study. The technique of probing was applied to illicit more information from the respondents in a situation where it was realised that further information was needed. The major objective for conducting semi-structured interviews was that of finding answers to the question as to how political officials discussed the 2008 and 2012 election campaigns coverage. Each of the interviews ended within 60 minutes.

The **editors** were asked questions in four broad areas:

1. **Gatekeeping**

    Under this category of the interview, the editors were asked about the factors that motivated them in their selection of political stories.

2. **Editorial policy**

    In this section, the editors were questioned about whether their media outlet has any policy that defines their coverage of election campaigns.

3. **Media corruption**

In the media corruption category, the editors were asked questions about being influenced by political actors with gifts during election campaigns and whether they were aware that their journalists on covering election campaign activities were influenced with gifts**.**

4.   **Media bias**

Under media bias, editors were asked questions about the election stories made available to them by their journalists and whether these represented equal and fair coverage of election campaigns. They were also asked about the stories they selected and whether these were selected to reflect the principle of equal and fair coverage of candidates and political parties.

The **political officials** were asked question in three broad categories:

1.   **Relationship**

    Under this category, the political officials were asked about the kind of relationship that exits between their political parties and the press and how the relationship influenced the coverage of their election campaign activities.

2. **Impressions of coverage**

   In this category, the political officials were questioned about the performance of the newspapers during the 2008 and 2012 election campaigns and whether per the performance, they found journalism practice in the country to be professional.

3. **Offer of gifts**

   With regard to the offer of gifts to the editors and journalists, the political officials were asked questions about whether they were under pressure to offer gifts to the editors and journalists for coverage of their election campaign activities.

The **journalist and the vice president of the GJA** were asked questions in two broad categories:

1. **Gifts**

   As the journalist was asked questions about his experiences covering election campaign activities and whether he was aware if editors were also receiving gifts from political actors during election campaigns, the vice president of the GJA was also asked questions about his knowledge about journalists taking gifts from sources of election campaign activities and what the association was doing about the practice if indeed it existed in the country.

2. **Effect**

   The journalist was asked questions about whether receiving gifts from politicians during election campaigns can go a long way to influence and shape election campaign stories.

The various questions asked were developed from the literature reviews and the research problem. The outcome of the interviews conducted with the various respondents are presented in chapter eight.

5.10 Analysis of the in-depth interviews findings

After gathering the information and transcribed the various interviews in their entirety and to make some sense out of the information, the study did some sorting as a way of identifying trends and established relationships in the study. This process allowed for the drawing of conclusions about the research problem based on the evidence gathered. The outcome of the empirical data was then compared to the reviewed literature including the related works as discussed in chapters three and four, which then led to conclusions. To add credibility to the report, quotes from respondents were provided throughout the report.

5.11 Summary of the chapter

The chapter is a demonstration of both the theory and empirical details that combined to form the methodological assumptions of this study. It defined the thesis as a quantitative and qualitative study. The engagement of a triangulation of media story types and interviews are necessary for better interpretation and analysis of the various issues in order to arrive at reliable answers to the research questions. Hence, giving meaning to the research problem. The media story types included straight news, feature, comment, editorial and letters. The interviews also included editors and communication directors of some political parties. The processes with which the information sources were decided upon has been examined in this chapter.

In examining the data, thematic analysis has been applied creating the space for text coding and categorization of the codes into broader themes taking into consideration the area of study as well as well as research questions and also described the attitudes, impressions, feelings and beliefs of the interviewees. The next chapter, therefore, presents the results of the content analysis that have been developed on the basis of political communication themes such as: Horse race, issues and

personalization. With these themes, hopefully, the research questions may be provided with appropriate answers for this study to add to literature and advance the debate on the capacity of newspapers to communicate quality election stories to voters across democracies including the newspapers in Ghana. This is considered necessary for an emerging democracy such as Ghana to share its political coomunication with scholars in other democracies across the globe.

Chapter 6

Horse race versus issue/policy framing: Ghana's story

6.1 Overview of the chapter

This chapter is aimed at exploring how the mass media frame election campaigns in developing democracies by examining the framing of the 2008 and 2012 Ghanaian general elections by two state-owned and two privately-owned print media houses in Ghana.

It was as far back in 1957 when Anthony Downs credited and described election campaigning as a "market place of ideas." And until *The People's Choice* study in 1944, political scientists believed that voting had always been issues-based event. It took *The People's Choice* investigation to correct this assumption. The study showed little evidence as a demonstration of issue voting in the presidential election of the United States in 1940. Politics, therefore, according to Capella and Jamieson (1997), can be framed either as horse race or issue-based. In effect, election campaigning can, therefore, take the shape of any of these two frames. One significant open question in the area of political communication is how and why the news media frame political election campaign as they do across democracies. Election campaigns frames as horse race or issues and the contribution of journalists as well as mass media are not new especially in the advanced democracies. However, exploring the nature of election campaign framing in an emerging democracy such as Ghana still remains an emerging field of study. Besides exploring the nature of election framing and why such kind of framing, the study is also interested in comparing the results to that of the Western democracies such as the United States.

As the survey of evidence in chapter four demonstrates, a number of horse race coverage of political campaigns have been amply documented. For instance, Pew Research Centre (2012) claims that in the United States during the 2008 presidential election, 38 percent of the coverage coded was framed around horse race. In effect, election campaign stories substantially were about the strategy and tactics of the campaign and who was winning. According to the study, this result

was down from four years ago, when 53 percent of the coverage studied was focused on horse race. The same study also indicated that debate coverage was more on who won than what candidates said. Furthermore, the study points out that the economy accounted for 10 percent of all campaign coverage studied. This was down from 15 percent four years earlier. Again, Loughborough University's study on the media coverage of the 2015 United Kingdom's election campaign also reports that coverage of the electoral process itself dominated both television (45.9 percent) and newspaper (44.5 percent) coverage with stories on the economic issues being the most prominent substantive topics in both television (8.1 percent) and newspapers (10.5 percent) coverage. From the above, it becomes interesting as to which of the frames, issues or horse race dominated the two election campaigns coverage in Ghana. More so when the debate is that election campaign coverage across democracies is taking similar form.

6.2 Issue-based election

In the context of political election, issues involve "any questions of public policy which have been or are a matter of controversy and are sources of disagreement between political parties" (Denver, 1990: 20). With issue-based election, the electorates get the opportunity to compare candidates' principles against their own to help them decide as to the candidate to vote for (Campbell, 1964: 98). In effect, issue framing tends to give electorates more information about each candidate. For an issue to create the needed basis for a choice, the electorates must first be concerned about the issue and have some relevant knowledge about such an issue (More, 1999: 245). It is important for the media to provide more than one opinion about a particular issue for the voter to form a solid opinion about such an issue (More, 1999: 246). In this case, how gatekeepers select and frame election campaigns events and issues go a long way in contributing to the decisions that voters make as to the candidates they should vote for.

The understanding is that how issues or events are framed by the mass media are affected by the political system, media system as well as social conditions of individual countries. (Strömbäck and Kaid, 2008). Brian McNair in his book, *the Sociology of Journalism* (1998) writes: "The journalistic text is viewed as the product of a wide variety of cultural, technological, political and

economic forces, specific to a particular society at a particular time" (1998:3). With such a situation we are likely to experience different forms of framing of issues or events among societies across the globe. This is because ideologies of individual societies as well as levels of development in societies are not the same. In other words, the assumptions, attitudes, beliefs, values as well as technological, political and economic levels of development, for instance, of an advanced democracy like the United States and an emerging democracy like Ghana vary to a large extent. It is, therefore, understandable that coverage of election campaigns across the globe is showing some signs of differences. For instance, as already indicated in this study, in a good number of societies in the Western world, election campaign coverage has taken the form of horse race while countries such as Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Norway, Israel and the Netherlands have their mass media using issue framing to tell election campaign stories (Binderkrantz and Green-Pedersen (2009). Based on the above, this study has the responsibility to demonstrate how different is the election campaigns coverage in Ghana from that of the advanced democracies such as the United States, where horse race framing is said to dominating election campaign coverage.

The way and manner gatekeepers select and present election campaigns events and issues go a long way in contributing to the decisions that voters make as to the candidates they should vote for during elections. For instance, if electorates develop favourable impression about politics and political candidates, electorates may develop more interest in politics or election campaigns. However, if their impression about the conduct of politics or election campaign remains unfavourable, this can lead to electorates' cynicism towards political actors and politics. And this can perhaps affect the outcome of elections (Cappella and Jamieson, 2003). This seems to provide the answer to the question as to why it is necessary for not only the developed democracies but also developing democracies such as Ghana to constantly find out the trend of election campaign media framing in the country.

As has been observed, election campaign framing across democracies has been focused more on horse race than the substance of a campaign. And this trend of political communication is also consistent with the trend in the United Kingdom's general election coverage (Deacon et al., 2001).

However, from the survey of evidence reviewed in chapter four, this trend of election campaign reporting appears not associated with the framing of election campaigns in Ghana. This chapter is, therefore, interrogating more closely the relative balance of issue/policy and horse race framing during the 2008 and 2012 election campaigns. Table 1 displays the results.

Table 1: Top 5 Prominent Themes in the 2008 and 2012 Election Campaigns Coverage by the Press in Ghana

ISSUES	2008	%	2012	%
Peaceful election	153	**35.1**	91	**20.7**
Horse race	82	**18.8**	121	**27.5**
Education	81	**18.6**	86	**19.5**
Economy	81	**18.6**	45	**10.2**
Employment	39	**8.9**	0	**0.0**
Free SHS	0	**0.0**	97	**22.0**
Total	**436**	**100**	**440**	**100**

It is clear from Table 1 that during the 2008 election campaign, the four newspapers devoted greater part of their coverage to stories about issues (81.2 %). In the same vein the four newspapers also in 2012 election campaign devoted more space to the publication of stories about issues (72.5 %). However, the coverage of issues decreased by 8.7 % in 2012 election. This means that the four newspapers created the opportunity for Ghanaian electorates to become aware of the policies the presidential candidates contesting the elections had in mind to implement when voted to power. And since it is obvious that electorates were interested in transforming their lives, such awareness was necessary for the decisions they took during the elections. For instance, Kwesi Amoafo-Yeboah, an independent presidential candidate in the 2008 election, according to the *Ghanaian Chronicle*, announced what appeared to be his master plan with which to tackle malaria, a disease, which the country is still struggling to manage. Part of the story reads: "Since we know that mosquitoes cause malaria and we know how they breed, we need to focus our resources on dealing

with mosquitoes, instead of providing medication for malaria patients" (*Ghanaian Chronicle,* Friday, November 14, 2008, page 12).

The *Daily Graphic* writes: "The presidential candidate of the Convention people's Party (CPP), Dr. Michael Abu Sakara, who has a solid background in agriculture also thinks that building a self-reliant economy with agriculture as the pivot, ensuring that the country's entrepreneurs compete favourably on the world market as well as enhancing free quality education and efficient exploitation of natural resources were the way forward" (*Daily Graphic*, Thursday, November 1, 2012). These news stories appear to demonstrate the positions of the presidential candidates on critical issues such as malaria and the economy and what they planned to do if voted to power. The gatekeepers of the newspapers might have framed these stories because of their conviction that the issues involved were significant and therefore, merited the attention of the electorates.

As shown by Table 1, although in both 2008 and 2012 election campaigns, issues framing dominated the coverage by a significant margin, we cannot lose sight of the fact that on the basis of single theme framing, horse race came second in 2008 election campaign with 18.8 percent surging ahead of crucial themes such as education, economy and employment. Horse race also in 2012 election campaign surged ahead of individual issues coverage and became the dominant frame of coverage with 27.5 percent. This also means that the four newspapers under study in their coverage made it possible for the electorates to become aware of which presidential candidate was ahead and who was behind in the political contest. The *Ghanaian Chronicle* of Thursday, November 1, 2012 published an election campaign story with the headline, "NDC will win the election massively" then writes: "Mr. Edward Kusi Ayarkwah, District Chief Executive (DCE) of Sekyere South and the parliamentary aspirant of the ruling National Democratic Congress (NDC) in the Sekyere South constituency, has said the ruling NDC is poised to win the December 7 general elections hands down."

Again on outcome predictions as a horse race coverage, the *Daily Graphic* of Wednesday, November 5, 2008 with the headline, "Fianoo predicts massive win for NPP at Keta" the story reads: "The parliamentary candidate of the New Patriotic Party (NPP), in the Keta constituency, Mr. Kodjoe Fianoo, has predicted a massive win for the NPP because of its numerous achievement." It is also interesting to note that as critical issues such as peaceful election, economy and employment had their coverage decreased in 2012 general election campaign, horse race framing coverage increased by 8.7 percent.

While horse race framing has always been associated with the advanced democracies such as the United States' campaign coverage and not associated with Ghana's election campaigns coverage over the years, the 2008 and 2012 election campaigns coverage by the press is showing new trend in election campaign coverage in Ghana, a country which has experienced six multiparty elections since the restoration of democratic governance in 1992. This new trend in election campaign journalism perhaps goes to help make the point that the Ghanaian election campaign is gradually incorporating American style of election campaigning since Ghana's campaign also involves professionalization, presidential debates, opinion polls, good physical looks of candidates and the image of candidates as family men. Unfortunately, the concept of Americanization did not form part of the scope of this study for it to have explored the extent to which Ghana's election campaign style is being Americanized for the study to have in addition attempted to answer the question whether Ghana's election campaign style is Americanized or rather modernized.

In his study, Amponsah (2012) observes that in the Ghanaian context, especially studying the state-owned newspaper (*Daily Graphic*), the horse race framing of election campaign was not one of the issues identified. However, this current study suggests that the Ghanaian press including the most prestigious paper in the country, the *Daily Graphic,* seems to be adding horse race framing of election campaigns to its political communication practice. The following examples of opinion polls results framing will illustrate this point better:

The *Daily Graphic* of Wednesday, November 21, 2012 reporting on opinion poll with the headline, "RI predicts victory for Akufo-Addo" reads: "With barely 15 days to the 2012 general election, an opinion poll conducted by Research International is predicting a first round victory for the 2012 presidential candidate of the New Patriotic Party, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo." The *Daily Guide* of Friday, November 14, 2008 with the headline, "Akufo-Addo leads polls" writes: "The Danquah Institute, Ghana's leading centre for research and political analysis, has conducted a nationwide survey of voters' intentions ahead of the general elections in December." The fourth paragraph of the story reads: "Judging by these figures the NPP candidate is expected to win the popular votes by a clear margin almost one quarter of electorate in the first round." In effect, one can, therefore, infer that horse race framing is now becoming an issue and part of Ghana's political communication concepts, which should attract the attention of election campaigns researchers in the country.

The following headlines should help demonstrate the extent to which horse race framing is gradually becoming an issue in communicating election campaigns events as well as issues in Ghana:

1. "Kumasi erupts for Nana" (*Daily Guide*, Saturday, November 29, 2008)
2. "Volta stands for Nana" (*Daily Guide*, Wednesday, November 7, 2012)
3. "Akufo-Addo leads polls" (*Daily Guide*, Friday, November 14, 2008)
4. "NDC will win polls by 60% - Bagbin" (The *Ghanaian Chronicle*, Tuesday, November 4, 2008)
5. "Bawku gives Mills a rousing welcome" (The *Ghanaian Chronicle*, Tuesday, November 18,2008)
6. "Campaign trail of NPP shakes Wa" (*Daily Graphic*, Thursday, November 20, 2008)

It is clear from the content analysis of this study that Ghanaian journalists are also becoming interested in reporting on crowd at rallies. For instance, with the headline, "Bawku gives Mills a rousing welcome" the story reads: "Business and social activities at Bawku came to a halt last Sunday when the flagbearer of the National Democratic Congress (NDC), Prof. John Evans Atta Mills arrived in the town amidst acrobatic displays by motorcycles, bicycles and cars" (*Ghanaian Chronicle,* Tuesday, November 18, 2008). The *Daily Graphic* of Monday, October 29, 2012 also with the headline, "Big welcome for Akufo-Addo, Bawumia" reports: "A large number of New Patriotic Party (NPP) supporters and other residents of Tamale, the capital town of the Northern Region, last Friday treated Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo and Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia to a tumultuous welcome that lasted over four hours." The second paragraph also reads: "A sea of motorbike riders seated in either twos or threes and others in cars and buses filled to capacity met the two on the outskirts of the city about 10 miles away from Tamale amid drumming and dancing."The *Daily Guide* of Wednesday, November7, 2012 has a story which draws attention to the crowd which reads: "The large crowd, boldly clad in NPP T-shirts and paraphernalia, threw the schedule of the tour of Nana Addo out of gear as they stampeded him."

As has been discussed in the literature of this study, some scholars have declared horse race journalism as low quality coverage which but for commercial interest journalists would not engage in such a practice. The practice is also described as too entertaining which displaces discourse of substantive policy issues (Iyengar et. al. 2004). However, there are some scholars who hold different views about the quality of horse race framing. These scholars are of the view that horse race frames of, for instance, opinion polls stimulate attention to politics. This, they argue, is because horse race framing makes reading the story very exciting. They also suggest that opinion polls are important political information in multiparty democracies since opinion polls lead to strategic voting. Yet there are some scholars who believe that the perceived effect of horse race framing of election campaigns is just an exaggeration (Newton, 2006). On his part, Patterson (2005) argues that public opinion polls play a significant role in election campaign framing. However, according to him, opinion polls have been discredited for fueling horse race journalism and for supplying citizens with repackaged news (Rosenstiel, 2005).

Opinion polls, as horse race framing maybe discredited because journalists who frame opinion polls as election campaign stories may not have studied research methods for them to be well grounded in the methodology to enable them identify any inaccuracies in the information coming from the pollsters. In addition journalists who frame these opinion polls are accused of failing to interpret the findings correctly when differences are statistically non-significant because, for instance, they do not understand the meaning of margin of error (Petry and Bastien, 2008). Strömbäck (2009) points out that methodological information is also in most cases not included in the opinion polls stories. Again people are of the view that opinion polls are simply complex and also too dominant (de Vresse and Semetko, 2002:379). In addition there is also the fear that because of opinion polls stories voters would be tempted to vote for those the polls suggest are in the lead of the contest. Valentino, Beckmann and Buhr (2001) also argue that by framing opinion poll stories, the media may end up distracting voters' attention away from the real important issues. This may decrease voters' ability to get the needed information about presidential candidates and policies of political parties, even when these are present and salient in the news coverage.

For instance, in Ghana, opinion poll stories, according to the study were few, but when published they always attracted debate with political parties' officials running from one media house to another either discrediting the results of the polls or insisting on the validity of the result, depending on which party such polls would favour or go against. The political party, which appeared disadvantaged would use technicalities to question the basis of such results. For instance, with the headline, "NDC Polls Bogus" the *Daily Guide* of Monday November 17, 2008 writes, "Mr. Gabby Asare Otchere-Darko, Executive Director of the Danquah Institute, has described as bogus and misleading an opinion poll advertised on media networks over the weekend." The story, which used Otchere-Darko as the only source of the story, gave him the opportunity to discuss the poll's result in which he used wrong margin of error, questioned the appropriateness of the sample size as well as the questionnaire used for the opinion poll. The story, which had no author, did not do any interpretation of the poll. Also another opinion poll in the *Daily Guide* of the same edition with the headline, "Nana leads latest polls" just presented the results with no interpretation of the results. Such presentation of opinion poll stories in the newspapers in Ghana goes to discredit those

stories. This act increases the level of cynicism towards politicians as well as the political process in general. It is also likely to add to low confidence in the newspapers election campaigns stories.

However, the overall findings of this study show that considering the five prominent themes captured in the 2008 and 2012 election campaigns by the press in Ghana, the issue framing exceeded 80 percent in 2008 and also exceeded 70 percent in 2012 election campaigns news content in the four papers. In their coverage, the various newspapers selected and framed stories on different issues that formed the campaign messages of the presidential candidates and political parties as a way of winning votes. Issues or policies such as peaceful election, education, economy, employment and free Senior High School received more coverage. As peaceful election dominated the issues in 2008, it was rather horse race journalism, which included candidates' endorsements that dominated the 2012 election campaign coverage. For instance, with the title of a feature article, "Actualisation of Nana Addo's vision on education" the concluding part of the story says:

 "Undoubtedly, the free secondary school policy is possible. It will succeed for as long as the government has the political will to do it. The NPP government under Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo does not only have the political will to do it, but has the commitment and the desire to make it happen"(*Daily Graphic*, Monday, November 5, 2012). A letter-to-the-editor with the title "President Mahama, you were tops" also reads: "I congratulate you President John Dramani Mahama on your great performance during the recent IEA debate in Tamale on October 30, 2012. Your performance, devoid of literacy technicalities was clear, comprehensive and very easy to understand even by primary school kids" (*Daily Graphic*, Friday, November 16, 2012). Since issues such as peace, the economy and free senior high school dominated the election campaigns of the various presidential candidates, the chapter will discuss them one after the other to determine why the four newspapers had to give them the kind of coverage they received during the elections.

6.3 Peace: The dominant theme

In 2008 the dominant campaign theme that could easily go through the gates of all the four newspapers sampled for the study was unsurprisingly the issue of peace. Peace as a theme as Table 1 displays, received 153 stories representing a significant 35.1 percent. Peace as a dominant theme might be because of the election violence that erupted in some of the African countries such as Libya, Egypt and Cote d'Ivoire which led to deaths and high level of structural destruction in recent times. What might have also contributed to the dominance of peace were the high levels of intolerance, including the use of vile and insulting language against political opponents, especially during phone-ins programmes on radio broadcasts; the hiring by the major political parties of so-called "macho men' or party foot soldiers' to promote the interests of a candidate and a political party and discourage opponents through intimidation and violent measures as well as reluctance to prosecute offenders for serious electoral offences, particularly if the offenders belonged to the ruling party. All these created tension within the country to the extent that the gatekeepers of *The Ghanaian Times* of Tuesday, October 7, 2008 allowed through its gate a feature by Professor Kwesi Yankah with the title, "Prof. Kwesi Yankah wonders: Will Ghana survive Dec '08?" Part of the story observes that "In Ghana… the war drums have been loud enough in recent times. From gun shots ringing at registration centres, gun shots at political rallies, to arson and inter-party killings at Gushiegu, to clashes at Berekum, and stories on stocking of arms by various ethnic groups and political parties. Day in day out, newspaper headlines have been chilling and convey the impression that all is not well with the nation Ghana."

It was probably this scary situation that might have motivated the traditional leaders, religious leaders, Ghana Journalists Association, National Media Commission, The National Peace Council and other interest groups to campaign for peaceful election in the country. For example, "Right Reverend Emmanuel Arongo, Anglican Bishop of Tamale, has called on the NDC and NPP to discourage their supporters from fighting and mudslinging each other" (*The Ghanaian Times*, Friday, October 3, 2008). Also "the chief of Apam, Obotantam Nana Edu-Effrim X, has challenged politicians to demonstrate their commitment to peace by taking disciplinary action against any of their members whose actions and utterances can disturb the peace of the country (*Daily Graphic*, Tuesday, October 2, 2012 page 19).

With the headline, "Campaign for peaceful polls intensified" the story reads: "With barely six weeks to the general election in December, non-governmental, religious and faith-based organisations and civil society groups have intensified their campaign for peaceful elections" (*Daily Graphic,* Monday, October 22, 2012 page 16). Kabral Blay-Amihere, the chairman of the National Media Commission charged the media to "provide accurate reportage to ensure peaceful, free and fair 2012 election" (*Daily Guide*, November 1, 2012). It is interesting to note that a week to the voting in 2012, the eight presidential candidates were made to commit themselves to peaceful conduct in the lead up, during and after the elections by signing an agreement pact to that effect. Commonwealth Observer Group reports: "with the level of intolerance, which manifested itself in several ways, witnessed by the Chief Justice, traditional and civil society leaders and security chiefs, in the week preceding the 2012 election, presidential candidates had to sign the Kumasi Declaration under which leaders publicly committed themselves to taking a stand against election violence, impunity and injustice" (Report of the Commonwealth Observer Group, Ghana Presidential and Parliamentary Elections, December 7, 2012).

The issue of peace, therefore, became a major campaign message for the gatekeepers of the media to find it absolute necessary to frame it and allowed it through their gates many times. In the lead up to the 2012 election, the National Media Commission maintained regular dialogue with the media, calling on them to discharge their duties responsibly to ensure a peaceful election (Report of the Commonwealth Observer Group: Ghana Presidential and Parliamentary Elections, December 2012). The numerous appeals, the political tension in the country during the elections and the memory of election conflicts' experiences of some African societies might have influenced the editors and journalists to settle on the issue of peaceful election as a major campaign story. Since the way editors and journalists select stories and how they frame them are often as a result of their political convictions, the newspapers with their political convictions and lessons from McCombs and Shaw (1972; 1993), they made peace an agenda whereby the press did not only tell people what to think about, but also told them how to think about peaceful election. Therefore, it is argued that gatekeepers of the four newspapers sampled for this study framed a lot of election stories on the issue of peaceful election as a result of their political convictions not only for Ghanaians to think about but also how to think about it for the followers of the various political

parties especially the two main parties not to engage in political violence no matter the outcome of the elections.

By framing and projecting the issue of peaceful election and highlighting information about it made the issue the subject of communication in the public sphere in the country. In the letter-to-the-editor section of *The Ghanaian Times* of Monday, October 29, 2012, the paper published a letter calling for peaceful election: "For the December 7 election to be peaceful, let's all watch our utterances, especially on radio. Let's not incite tribal politics and let's choose our words carefully bearing in mind that we have only one Ghana." In effect, the newspapers enhanced the significance of peace for it to become a dominant feature for public discourse in the public sphere. As Kuypers (2002:7) points out, "facts remain neutral until framed; thus, how the press frames an issue or event will affect public understanding of that issue or event. Callaghan (2005: XI) argues that with framing, the media and the politicians can determine for the citizens boundaries within which an issue is to be debated. Therefore, with the Ghanaian political actors talking about the need for violence free elections and the press framing it in their publications the attention of Ghanaians was focused on the subject of peace. However, it worth noting that from the experiences of some African societies, peace can be undermined if citizens are poor and not sure of the intentions of their political leaders. From the above and the fact that any time election is approaching there is threat of election violence makes the issue of peace an important matter.

6.3.1 Does peace matter: As an election campaign issue in Ghana?

With the title, "Ghana makes peace a priority in election campaign" Afua Hirsch writes: "For months, every available space on the streets of Ghana's capital city has been plastered with campaign posters as the eight presidential hopefuls in this month's elections jostle for prominence. Amid the slogans, new theme has emerged: a plethora of concerts, conferences and prayer meetings organized to promote peace at the polls." The article continues, "the let Peace Rain gospel event, the One Ghana Peace gig, the Avoiding Conflict and Mayhem concert and the Peace Song compilation album are a few of the options in what some say has become a 'peace industry" (*The Guardian,* Sunday, December 2, 2012).

Since the 1990s, crime has become an electoral issue in South Africa and public safety has become an electoral issue in Nigeria so has peace also become an election issue in Ghana. The editorial of the *Daily Graphic,* Thursday, November 6, 2008 calling for peace before, during and after election, writes: "while we all join the people of the US to celebrate their momentous election, we urge Ghanaians to learn from the US experience as we prepare for the December 7, 2008… the patience and tolerance of US voters must be emulated." In a feature in the *Daily Graphic* of Monday, November 26, 2012, Kofi Annan notes: "we are an open country, with a vibrant press an active civil society. Investors, from home and abroad, applaud this stability which creates a sound investment climate. We can be proud of this record. But there can be no room for complacency. The disastrous 2007 elections in Kenya illustrated the risks faced by all countries."

Dr. Kwesi Aning of the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training observes that politicians in Ghana were deliberately preaching hatred, exploiting ethnicity, regionalism and religious group for them to win Power. Aning notes that in all these, "we sit here and think that Ghana's democratic credentials are intact. The falsehood and wrong perception of Ghana as a front-runner state is not doing us any good" (*Daily Guide,* Thursday, October 25, 2012). Until this publication, the Ashanti Regional Police Commander, DCOP, Augustine Gyening had accused politicians of raising the "political temperature in the region with their utterances (*Daily Guide,* Thursday, October 4, 2012).

From the above, it is no wonder that peace became 2008 and 2012 election campaigns agenda which was discussed in the public sphere by civil society groups, youth groups, religious groups, women groups, traditional rulers as well as the political actors. This is so because despite Ghana's reputation for peaceful transitions, previous elections have come dangerously close to violence, therefore, peace was more of an issue, which competed with other issues such as economy, employment, health and education. Former President Kufuor, President Atta Mills and President John Mahama, it is argued, won elections because they were framed as being calm and peaceful. Calmness and peace are values, it appears, Ghanaians cherish. Therefore, in considering peace as an issue based, the study coded any election campaign story which called for peaceful election or political actors promising peace be it a feature, editorial, opinion or straight news. It appears that

in developing democracies such as Ghana, the concept of issue-based election needs to be expanded to include not only the economy, employment, education, health and housing but also peace, taking the political development of such societies into consideration. Indeed exploring the background and context of an emerging democracy such as Ghana, this would create the necessary expansion to accommodate peace as a campaign issue for the media to highlight. Article 3 of the UNESCO Media Declaration notes: "the mass media have an important contribution to make to the strengthening of peace and international understanding and countering racism, apartheid and incitement to war" (UNESCO, 1979).

In their book, *Electing to Fight: Why Emerging Democracies Go to War,* Mansfield and Snyder (2004) suggest that countries in South America, East Asia, Northeastern Europe as well as South Africa, which experienced a reasonable smooth transition in democracy, succeeded because they enjoy relatively high per-capita income and literacy. With these advantages, the citizens had the needed resources as well as skills to put in place institutions and civil society groups which could allow democracy to be consolidated. According to them, before the transition, many of these countries had well-developed state institutions such as administrative bureaucracies, which operated with some level of efficiency to advance state objectives with minimal corruption. They point out that some of these countries enjoyed the benefit of some past experience, with independent legal and journalistic outlets, which could be adapted for use by the democratizing country. In other words, with such conditions, it is possible for powerful democratic institutions to be established quickly, for democracy to be easily consolidated leading to a peaceful transition as in Brazil, Chile and Poland. However, in a situation where democratic institutions were weak and democratization was incomplete, war was more likely as in Ethiopia, Pakistan and Peru. Therefore, in Ghana with its weak democratic institutions, high illiteracy rate coupled with threat of violence from some political elites, it makes sense for peace to be placed top on the election campaign agenda as elections 2008 and 2012 have demonstrated. But for peace becoming an election campaign issue, Ghana's democratic process story might have been different.

Robert Dahl in his book, *Polyarchy* believes that Great Britain, for instance, after Second and Third Reform Bills of 1867 and 1884, because of its rules, habits and institutions of competitive politics were well in place and developed, its transition to democracy was relatively smooth. This is in contrast to the situation in Ghana, where mass electoral politics developed ahead of the needed institutions to regulate political competition. In Ghana, every election since 1992 had been challenged by the losing party to the extent that the 2012 election ended up in court because Nana Akufo-Addo accused John Mahama and the NDC of electoral malpractices. This, they could not support in court. In fact when the result was announced there were some violent acts by the supporters of the NPP. But for the calm and peaceful personality of John Mahama, who asked the supporters of NDC not to fight back and also agreed to co-operate with the court, Ghana would also have perhaps seen war.

Probably, Ghana's practice of multiparty democracy presents the world of academia with interesting and distinctive aspect of election journalism for scholars in political communication as well as political science to take interest in and study. This is because it appears from this study that some significant conventional positions of election campaign coverage are not applicable to the Ghanaian experience of political communication. An example is the dominance of peace in the coverage of the 2008 and 2012 election campaigns in contrast to the dominance of economy, health, immigration, job creation and now fighting ISIS in the advanced democracies across the globe. This goes to strengthen the argument for de-Westernizing studies since conditions in various societies are not the same. Hence, the needs and aspirations of citizens across democracies differ to a large extent. It would be strange for a candidate in an advanced democracy during election campaign to campaign on peaceful election. This is because electoral violence is not a concern in the advanced societies. These societies have been able to consolidate their democracies and established democratic culture in the citizens. However, in an emerging democracy such as Ghana, which is struggling in its democratization process, because of the huge interest of political elites to have power and control, anytime election is approaching there is high tension and signs of electoral violence.

As this chapter was being developed, there was tension already forming and there was fear of electoral violence towards the 2016 general election in the country. The main opposition political party, NPP led by Nana Akufo-Addo was calling for a new voters register at all cost, which the ruling party, the NDC thought was not a realistic position for NPP to take. "*The Ghanaian Times* of Saturday, December 5, 2015 reports: "The opposition New Patriotic Party insists the electoral album is bloated calling for a new one to be compiled ahead of the 2016 general election; however, the governing National Democratic Congress just wants the existing register to be purged." In addition to this, there was also serious conflict within NPP leadership, which had led to the killing of two of their supporters. In the face of this, electorates would first be interested in their safety and that of their families before they would think about the economy or education or health. Development in which ever form would be virtually impossible without a peaceful atmosphere. What this chapter attempts to demonstrate is that emerging democracies, which are threatened by violence or war would make peace an important agenda for the media as well as the political actors to talk about and think about it. It is a question of seeking peace first and all others can be added.

Based on the above, it appears peace as an election campaign issue matter and that it is desirable. The benefit of placing it high on election campaign agenda and for it to find space in the public sphere of developing democracies with weak democratic institutions coupled with elites who believe they should be presidents at all cost is enormous. Finally, peace as an election campaign issue is important since it may take a while for Ghana to have the rules, habits and institutions of competitive politics well established. It is worth noting that citizens or voters would choose issues which appear to represent their interests. Therefore, citizens must have some flexibility depending on existing conditions to choose any issue that they dim fit would enhance their politics and democracy. As already indicated in the literature for any issue to become public policy for candidates to make it their campaign message, voters should have first be concerned about the issue and have some relevant information about such an issue (More, 1999: 245). During the two elections, the situation in the country demanded that peace should be an issue of great importance. Therefore, it is expected that like the issue of economy or crime control policies, it is also possible to have peace enforcement policies as a major campaign agenda once that is what would satisfy citizens and ensure their well-being.

It is more than half a century ago when Key argued that "unless mass views have some place in the shaping of policy, all the talk about democracy is nonsense" (Key, 1961: 7). Harold Lasswell (1941: 15) has long observed that "open interlpay of opinion and policy is the distinguishing mark of popular rule." In effect, mass opinion is supposed to be the final determinant of political and economic actions. Based on this, if the mass views of Ghanaians point to peace, before, during and after election, then such mass views should have a place in shaping a policy, which would address peace in the country. Then such a policy, during election campaigns, would find space among election campaign issues for gatekeepers to frame it and allow it through their gates many times. However, economic growth is also necessary for peace to prevail as demonstrated by the advanced democracies.

6.4 Economy: The significant campaign issue

One significant factor that has led to political instability in Ghana, it is argued, has been the fact that democracy has not been able to deliver to the citizens the needed economic prosperity. Acemoglu and Robinson (2012:1) argue that the revolutionary uprising against the rule of the privileged elites in Tunisia and Egypt, for instance, was as a result of the poverty level of citizens. In Ghana today, there is evidence that points to the failure of the economic system to enhance the living standards of citizens. Declining economic growth is worrying since jobs cannot be created and prices of goods and services are going high by the day (Bawumia, 2014).With this worrying state of affairs, the longest serving Minister of Finance, Professor Kwesi Botchway (a member of the ruling party, NDC) in a lecture in June 2014 lamenting, pointed out that there was widespread disaffection and anger among Ghanaians. The anger has led to frequent demonstrations and strike actions. Doctors, nurses, university and other levels of teachers as well as staff of the Attorney General have resorted to strike action for salary increase. This is leading to a popular mood of frustration among technocrats and public servants. In Ghana, Botchway points out that there is feeling among citizens that everyone in public office is engaged in corruption and money grabbing. There is already evidence showing that Judges, Custom Officers, the Police Service, Members of Parliament and even the media are corrupt and grab money for their services.

Against this background, one is tempted to suggest that the issue of economy will continue to be significant during election campaigns in Ghana. Considering the high level of poverty in the country, citizens are obviously looking for a government that is committed to the public welfare and responsive to their economic needs. Since politicians are aware of this high expectation of citizens, during election campaigns, the issue of the economy is expected to feature high in their campaigns for the media to also give it the needed coverage. Already, the main opposition political party is accusing the government for poor economic performance. The party is promising Ghanaians that NPP as a government would transform the economy (*Daily Graphic; The Ghanaian Times; Daily Guide and Ghanaian Chronicle,* Thursday, December 3, 2015). After all, globally, it appears "at the core of all predictive models is the power of economic conditions to predict voting outcome" (Jamieson, 2000:6). Relying on the predictive models, Jamieson, therefore, argues that economic conditions of the individual electorate as well as the nation will be central to the decision that the voters will arrive at as to who becomes their president. Although the economy will always feature high on the list of voting consideration, occasionally other issues will emerge and be considered significant just as peaceful election emerged in 2008 and 2012 election campaigns in Ghana.

A great deal of information on the economy from the presidential candidates on the present state and future prospects of the economy will attract journalists for it to go through the gates for publication. In other words, voters would be primed by the gatekeepers to take the economy into account in deciding who to vote for during elections (Jamieson, 2000:6). There is no doubt that Ghanaians have come to appreciate education as one important variable that can help bring about economic prosperity. Politicians, especially the NPP, aware of this coupled with the fact that many Ghanaians are struggling to pay the fees of their children, made free senior high school NPP's major campaign message, which the NDC responded saying that what the country needed immediately was more and decent educational infrastructure conducive for teaching and learning and to give access to more students after which, then the policy of free education can be implemented as provided in the 1992 constitution.

6.5 Free Senior High School: The most contested issue

In 2012, the *Daily Guide* and the *Ghanaian Chronicle* gave intense level of attention to the issue of free Senior High School education, which forms one of the three levels of Ghana's educational structure. The other two levels are the basic education and the tertiary education. The basic level takes eleven years to complete for one to qualify to enter the Junior High School, which also takes three years to complete after which one then moves on to the Senior High School. It is after the completion of the SHS that one qualifies to enter the tertiary level to pursue either a diploma programme or a first degree programme. The educational system consists of state-owned schools and privately-owned schools at all levels. With regard to preference, majority of Ghanaians would prefer to attend the state-owned Senior High Schools and state-owned tertiary schools. This is because they are of high standard than those of the privately-owned and most of the prestigious schools are the state-owned schools. In Ghana a considerable number of students are attending the state-owned SHS. Because of the harsh economic condition in the country, parents and guardians would be happy and thankful to any government that would implement free SHS educational policy. Being aware of this, the opposition political party, NPP and its presidential candidate might have been so convinced that promising and making free Senior High School their main campaign message was likely to win them the needed votes to govern the country, which since independence in 1957 the party has governed for 10 years.

So for the *Daily Guide* and the *Ghanaian Chronicle* to frame and select the issue of free Senior High School and made it become a major election campaign agenda was not surprising. The provision of free Senior High School was the main campaign theme of the NPP and its presidential candidate. With the headline, "Free SHS policy possible" the story reads: "the former president John Kufuor says the New Patriotic Party's free senior high school policy is possible with the country's oil find" (*Daily Graphic*, Thursday, October 25, 2012). The *Daily Guide* gave the issue 46 (42.2 percent) stories while the *Ghanaian Chronicle* also gave the same issue 22 (28.2 percent) stories. However, what happened to be the main election campaign message of the NDC, that was, the provision of more and better educational infrastructure to enhance teaching and learning received 15 stories (19.2 percent) from the *Ghanaian Chronicle*. The *Daily Guide* had no story for the NDC's main theme. As has already been mentioned, the owners of the two papers happen to

belong to NPP and therefore, the gatekeepers of the papers (editors and political journalists) might have been more interested in NPP and Nana Akufo-Addo winning the votes to come to power. Hence, the two papers made the issue of free Senior High School an intense election campaign agenda for the electorates to talk about in the public sphere. As indicated earlier in this study, if horse race is said to dominate election campaign coverage in the advanced democracies, what then accounts for the dominance of issues in election campaign coverage in a developing democracy such as Ghana?

6.6 Why the dominance of issues framing?

The question for this section to attempt to answer is: What can explain why unlike the United States, which is noted for horse race framing, issue framing such as the economy, peace and education appear to be ahead of horse race framing of election campaigns in Ghana? As has been observed, journalism practice is influenced by the political system, media system as well as socio-economic situation of societies (Strömbäck and Kaid, 2008). Therefore, one can make the suggestion that the issue framing of election campaign dominance in Ghana may be due in part to variables such as the history and socio-economic situation in the country.

One reason that can also be used to explain the dominance of issue over horse race framing of election campaigns in the country may be the nature of practice of journalism. The profession has been subjected to all manner of governmental controls throughout the greater part of its development. The practice has been that the media depended on official sources for the information they would need to frame events or ideas. In such an atmosphere, which clearly undermines the media autonomy, it is difficult for journalists to embark on horse race journalism. This is because horse race framing of an event such as election campaign allows journalists to engage in interpretation, which in most cases demand that journalists add their personal views unconstrained by the journalistic principle of objectivity to the stories that they frame for electorates (Jamieson, 2001:39).

Another contributing factor to the dominance of issue framing over horse race framing is the socio-economic conditions of the country. Ghana, like many other developing societies, has a considerable number of it citizens living in poverty. Many communities lack basic needs such as portable water, health facilities, educational facilities, balanced diet and jobs. With such level of poverty it makes sense that electorates would demand from the various political parties and leaders' policies that could help improve their standard of living. It, therefore, stands to reason that presidential candidates and political parties in mounting the campaign platform would raise issues that would win the electorates to their side. To win votes, "Dr. Paa Kwesi Nduom, presidential candidate of the Progressive People's Party (PPP), has called on Ghanaians to vote the party into power to make the nation a better place to live in. He says the PPP has come to rescue Ghanaians from economic hardship" (*The Ghanaian Times,* Monday, October 29, 2012). To this end, Ghanaian journalists in order to meet the expectation of citizens would therefore, frame and select more stories on issues since they have also learnt that one responsibility of journalism is to help mobilize the society to put in place structures that would help create a sustainable road out of poverty for better conditions of life for citizens. Although the findings of this study show that Ghanaian election campaign coverage is issues-based, one cannot ignore the fact that horse race framing is emerging in the political communication of the country, which appears to have the potential of even dominating election campaign coverage in Ghana as it is the case with the developed democracies. Therefore, horse race as a concept is being given some attention in this study.

6.7 Horse race framing: To what extent is it an issue?

Framing politics as horse race has become a significant concept in the field of political communication research. It is a journalistic practice where the focus of media coverage is on which candidate or political party is ahead and who or which party is behind the political contest. Framing of election campaigns as a horse race is seen as virtually overshadowing real political substance and issues. In fact a number of scholars including De Vreese (2005) and Valentino and colleagues (2001) suggest that covering politics as a horse race event instead of a competition among issues undermine politics and democracy. This, they argue, is leading to cynicism making the public care less about politics as well as political actors. Lilleker (2006:63) observes that "politics is seen to

lack efficacy and politicians are largely given a low rating on issues of public trust." This, Lilleker explains, is because voters are becoming sceptic about politicians, their motives and actions.

According to the literature reviewed in chapter three, the decisions that gatekeepers arrive at as to which issues should go through the gate and which issues should stay behind the gate are crucial indeed to say the least. This is because those decisions go to impact public agenda as well as media agenda. In the same vein, the way and manner issues are framed impact public agenda and media agenda as well. For an issue to receive significant amount of coverage, the gatekeepers should consider such an issue to be so important and interesting, therefore, fit for the consumption of citizens. After all, gatekeepers "have increased their power over who gets access and over terms of access for politicians to the public." This is because "it is they who set the agenda for political debate" (McQuail, 2005:527). For instance, election campaign activities happen to occupy a central point in the public as well as media agenda in democratic societies including Ghana. It is, therefore, necessary for studies to be conducted into election campaigns to examine the attention the media are giving to such events as well as the trend of the coverage.

Based on the earlier discussion in chapter three of this study of operationalizing horse race framing, I reconstruct the description of Aalberg et. al. (2011:6) horse race and examine how the horse race coverage of election campaigns is gradually gaining grounds in political communication of Ghana. Aalberg et. al. interpretation of horse race framing involves opinion polls, actual and forecast election outcomes as well as language of winners and losers. However, my understanding of horse race journalism from the literature review can also include stories focusing on crowd attendance at rallies (Iyenger, 1991). Crowd attendance also indicates, which candidate has the largest followers, which can be used as a measure as to who is winning or otherwise. For instance, with the headline, "NPP attracts big crowd in Ho" the news story reads: "Turnout was very encouraging and underlined the in-roads being made by the NPP in a region considered to be the 'World Bank' of the main majority party, the National Democratic Congress (NDC). If the crowd here is anything to go by, then it is clear that there is a new wind of change in the Volta region" (*Daily Graphic*, Wednesday, November 26, 2008). In Ghana, Volta region is referred to as the 'World Bank' of the

NDC because during the 2008 election, the party's presidential candidate had a significant 82.46 percent votes and during the 2012 election also the party's candidate increased the percentage of votes to 85.47 percent.

The Ashanti region is also considered the 'World Bank' of NPP because during the 2008 election, Nana Akufo-Addo, the presidential candidate, had 72.53 percent votes and in the 2012 election the presidential candidate had 70.86 percent votes. Therefore, 'World Bank' as a political term in Ghana means a region that remains loyal and during elections overwhelmingly casts its votes for a particular candidate or a political party. Besides this, candidate/party endorsements will also form part of my interpretation of horse race for this study. For instance, the editorial of the *Ghanaian Chronicle* of Friday, October 12, 2012 reads: "It is cheerful to take note of the recognition given by former President Rawlings that Nana Akufo-Addo could be president of the Republic of Ghana by the time the 2012 presidential election was over." Therefore these two characteristics will form part of my operationalization of the concept of horse race framing for this study. This is because these other characteristics also give the impression as to who is winning the race in Ghana.

To illustrate this point further, images of huge crowd at political campaign rallies in Ghana become a topic for radio discussion political programmes with officials of political parties openly boasting on air as to the number of supporters their party has in a particular community. Therefore, political parties make conscious efforts to mobilize huge crowd to attend a party's rallies. If a particular newspaper publishes an election campaign rally event story without pictures depicting huge crowd at the rally, the next day or two the same newspaper would be pressured to publish pictures of the same rally with captions. In order for a political party to attract huge crowd to its rallies to demonstrate its strength in the race, buses are made available, party branded T shirts, popular comedians as well as musicians are engaged to perform at these rallies, which are well publicized. This strategy is obviously to paint a clear picture as to which candidate or party is winning the political race in the political drama in the country.

Also the images in these newspapers depicting a presidential candidate in a hand shake with a traditional ruler seems significant during election campaign periods in the country. Therefore, when a presidential candidate enters any community for a campaign rally, the first point of call is the chief's palace. Such a political drama depicting a chief in a hand shake with a presidential candidate is staged to demonstrate that the candidate is being endorsed by the chief. Such newspaper images are needed by the parties to suggest to the chief's subjects that the candidate is in the good books of their chief, hence the chief is indirectly telling them to vote for the candidate who has earned such a royal hand shake. Such images usually get space in the newspapers, which become an agenda for heated debates on radio political programmes. In Ghana because citizens appear to hold traditional rulers in high esteem, such pictures are also projected to suggest which presidential candidate is ahead of the race. One reason why political communication researchers in Ghana would need to pay some attention to horse race framing, the study argues, is that the concept appears to be contributing to a two-party political system in Ghana.

6.7.1 Horse race and a two-party political system

It is worth noting that it appears horse race framing of election campaigns in Ghana is perhaps contributing to the promotion of a two-party democratic governance. Meanwhile, Kean (2002:13) makes the point that citizens in the advanced democracies are turning their backs on formal politics. This, Kean explains, is due to loss of trust in politicians. These societies include countries with virtually two-political party governance. In this case, there is course for concern in an emerging democracy such as Ghana, which appears to be also seeing the promotion of two-political party democratic governance. Crick (2002:11) also argues that the practice of democracy in the United States and the United Kingdom is becoming populist because politicians only appeal to public opinion instead of coherent public discourse of policies of public good. Crick's observation should also be of concern to emerging democracies such as Ghana. On his part, McNair (2003:24) points out that the apathy of citizens can be attributed to citizens believing that there is no remarkable difference in terms of policy with regard to two or among various political parties presented to voters for them to make a choice. Again, McNair's argument should be of concern to Ghana. The observation of these four scholars should be a lesson to emerging democracies and alert the societies of the challenges of two-political party governance.

To illustrate the point above in connection with the promotion of two-political party system in Ghana by the press, it is noted that developing a story from the angle of who is ahead the race and who is behind the race focused the story on the presidential candidates of the two main political parties (i.e. National Democratic Congress and New Patriotic Party). Therefore, the two parties ended up amassing more coverage to the detriment of the smaller political parties. Since opinion polls can lead to which candidates are likely to get access to the press, "candidates who perform poorly in polls are less likely to garner coverage and have a tougher time increasing their visibility and with it their standing in polls, which pushes them further out of the media spotlight" (Jamieson, 2001:208). Secondly, developing a news story from the angle of crowd attendance at political rallies focused more attention on the two main political parties in the country. This is because these two parties always drew huge crowd to their rallies and because they also have the resources they held more rallies across the country. This added to their intense media visibility. Thirdly, developing an election story around outcome predictions as well as candidate or party endorsements ended up focusing on the two main political parties since they were the parties likely to win the elections, the outcome predictions as well as endorsements went in their favour. This also added to their intense visibility.

Although the 1992 constitution of Ghana calls for equal and fair coverage for all candidates and political parties during election campaigns, the media continued to focus much attention on two parties, the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP). For this reason, Mrs. Yvonne Nduom, the wife of the presidential candidate of the Progressive People's Party (PPP) Paa Kwesi Nduom, lamenting, urged the media to publish the efforts her party was making at bringing about change as a way of propagating its message to the citizens instead of concentrating on the NDC and NPP (*Daily Graphic*, November 7, 2012). Again the *Daily Graphic* of Thursday, November 22, 2012 with the headline, "Resist schemes to turn Ghana into two-party state" the story reads, "…Dr. Nduom cited some journalists and media houses as accomplices to the two-party scheme, saying they sought to promote the interest of only the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP) at the expense of other political parties.

As political experiences of the United States and the United Kingdom show, it appears a two-party system is also emerging in Ghana. The dominance of the two parties can be attributed also to lack of sufficient political party funding. This does not allow the other parties to function properly and compete with the two main parties in the country. Therefore, during the 2008 and 2012 elections, the two political parties, NDC and NPP were in the position to organise campaign activities throughout the country and in attendance would be some of the nation's music as well as comedian celebrities performing. In addition to their massive supporters, the two political parties easily attracted the media to follow them throughout the country. In effect, the election campaign reporters ended up covering political party activities of the NDC and the NPP telling the electorates what the two candidates were saying and doing. According to Cushion (2012: 93), "under PR management, today many politicians remain largely on message, sticking closely to pre-prepare party scripts and participating in strategic designed campaign event." In this case, journalists' stories about election campaigns are on de-spinning campaign tactics and candidates' speeches and statements (Cushion, 2012: 94). In effect, political party driven events have largely become sources of election campaigns stories, leading to 'protocol' journalism practice in Ghana. This model of journalism practice will be discussed latter in this study.

6.8 Political party driven campaign coverage

As the current study shows, Ghana's election campaign coverage was political party driven. What this means is that in presenting and selecting election campaigns stories, Ghanaian journalists concentrated more on political campaign events and less on them taking the initiative do analysis of the candidates' campaign messages or doing investigation to tell the electorates who really the candidates are. With this kind of journalism, which appears to be consistent with what pertains in other democracies, what it means is that journalists would use one source that is the presidential candidate of a political party or an official of the same party to tell the election story. Sources of information are critical in the process of telling a journalistic story. Sources add to news stories, which go to shape its meaning and interpretations. It is being suggested that using different sources in news stories impact news framing (Lawrence, 2000; Callahan and Schnell, 2001). The practice of objective journalism demands the use of different sources in news stories. Among a number of major functions of sources include the verification of the news story, making the news story to

look credible, sources also help to avoid suspicion of bias and give news consumers different opinions on a particular subject of interest from different stakeholders in the society (Manning, 2001). In effect, all those involved and all those affected featured in one news story will enhance the practice of journalism.

The reliance on the political actors, especially, political candidates of the various political parties in telling a story at times as much as three-quarters of a page go to show the extent to which Ghanaian political elites influence and shape media stories including election campaign stories. Hallin and Mancini (2004:233) note: "the production of news is structured around information and interpretation provided by state officials." According to Bennett and Entman (2001), United States media coverage of events and issues including election campaigns coverage is noted for intense use of official sources, which means Ghana is not alone in this kind of journalism practice. However, Lawrence (2010) is of the view that news stories with different sources are a condition for solid news stories. In other words, the four influential newspapers sampled for this study, failed to provide voice to the ordinary Ghanaian citizens and non-partisan experts. This practice of election campaign journalism is undesirable and may undermine democratic governance in the country.

Not only did the Ghanaian press framing of election campaigns lacked different sources, the coverage also appeared to have focused on conflict in the news. With commercial interests and the news value that 'conflict sells' news (Hamilton, 2004; Shoemaker and Reese, 1996), news media are tempted to focus on conflict. To this end, politicians' issues are oftentimes framed as conflicting with issues of their competitors. Conflict framing may go to divert the needed attention from the core political issues (Semetko and Valkenburg, 2000). For instance, in covering the issue of education during the 2012 election in Ghana, the press appeared to focus attention on the conflict between the NDC and NPP. It can be argued that this style of journalism practice may have left the Ghanaian voters with little appreciation of the specifics of the issue of education as a campaign promise. Strömbäck and Dimitrova (2006) observe that conflict framing is a concern for election campaign news coverage in the media in the United States.

The literature on gatekeeping theory shows that journalists and editors also have their own political philosophy which goes to influence their coverage of events and issues. Hence, during an important event such as election campaign, various journalists are more likely to be interested in the activities of a party of their choice and give the party more coverage as well as favourable coverage. One, therefore, can argue that Ghanaian journalists as well as editors have their own opinion on political issues and also the candidate who should be voted for to become the leader of the country. For instance, the results of the 2008 and 2012 general elections in Ghana show that Ghanaian journalists and the press gave Nana Akufo-Addo an advantage to become the president of the country. That their preference went to influence their coverage of the election campaigns goes to reinforce the point that Ghanaian journalists, editors and media owners might have opinions that favoured either the NDC or NPP. Hence they consciously paid particular attention to their campaign activities. Hence, the dominance of the two political parties in the coverage of election campaigns in Ghana as demonstrated in previous studies as well as the current thesis. Indeed, the contemporary history of politics and elections in Ghana have become very much a tale of two political parties, the National Democratic Congress and the New Patriotic Party.

Entman says in the *Media and Democracy without Party Competition (2005)* that there is a price to be paid for restricting multiparty democratic system to a two-party competition. Entman argues that a situation of this nature exposes the media to keen market competition, reduces investment in serious hard news by mainstream media and audiences. With this, there is no clear line drawn between news and entertainment when covering politicians, events, issues and policies. Entman would, therefore, argue further that this can lead to citizens losing interest in politics. A situation such as this can bring down the demand for serious news whereby citizens would then fall for entertainment news. This would then undermine serious public discourse on politics thus defeating the democratic principle of public participation in democratic governance.

As the major news media and citizens begin to pay less attention to politics due to their dwindling interest in politics, politicians and political parties endowed with resources will then have the capacity to manage media images. This will place them in a better position to set agenda for the

media as well as to frame the news in their favour. Since effective public discourse is possible when politicians help with framing and interpreting reality, this partisan imbalance will end up protecting the political party in power from being accountable to citizens who voted for it to lead them. Finally, Strömbäck and Kaid (2008) argue that election news is critical for democracy. This, they explain, is because election news is necessary for preparing well-informed electorates. A well-informed electorate, it can be suggested, may be good for the growth of Ghana's democracy. Hopefully, this chapter has made it clear the debate about issues-based and horse race framing of election campaigns in Ghanaian contemporary political communication and how different it is from the developed democracies.

6.9 Response to research question one

This chapter was intended to attempt to respond to research question one**,** which reads: **"Assessing the coverage of the 2008 and 2012 election campaigns in Ghana, to what extent did the Ghanaian newspapers follow the issues-based framing rather than horse race framing style of election coverage?"**

Although the principles of conflict and emotion may to some extent influence gatekeeping and framing practices of Ghanaian editors and journalists as well, however, on the basis of this result, one argues that despite the seemingly profit motive of the media, gatekeepers of the press in Ghana might have taken into consideration the need for citizens to be informed about subjects and candidates that voters might have previously unaware of. This might have helped to increase recognition of the names and faces of candidates contesting for positions. Thus, the press meeting the standard of free choice because of the information it gave to voters about their choices during elections. In so doing, the gatekeepers might also have taken into consideration the need to help protect Ghana's democracy and therefore, would frame and allow through the gates stories about peaceful election. According to the literature, this result appears inconsistent with the election campaign gatekeeping and framing practices of the advanced democracies such as the United States. This, probably, may help to understand the nature of election campaigning and coverage in Africa and in advancing the debate on gatekeeping practices across the globe.

Findings of this study seem to show that variables such as time, country and press characteristics all matter in the nature of press framing of political election campaigns across democracies, advanced or emerging although with different levels and with different focus. Meanwhile, this study appears to suggest that unlike the advanced democracies such as the United States, where coverage of election campaigns is virtually focused on which candidate is winning the political contest and who is losing, in Ghana, the situation appears to look different. It is rather issues framing that is dominating election campaign framing. However, one interesting thing about this particular revelation is that as in the advanced democracies the economy dominates the area of issue coverage during elections, it is peace that seems to take the centre stage in election campaigns coverage in Ghana.

The mass media coverage of election campaigns involves two key elements. These are reporting the news and paid advertising. Put together these two critical elements make the media important and influential factors in electoral process in democracies. As the media depend on the election campaigns for news and revenue, political actors also rely on the media to reach out to the largest number of electorates possible. Elections are influenced by a number of factors, which include the personalities of the candidates, ideological positions of voters, political party platforms and candidates debating issues. The mass media as discussed in the literature located in chapter three of this study, have their own set of values which influence and shape what is newsworthy. These values, which determine stories to be published usually include some amount of conflict and emotions, which the gatekeepers believe would be appealing to citizens. In this case, it is obvious that journalists will frame election campaign issues and activities in such a way to meet the values of their individual media outlet with the editors deciding to give some stories more news space than other stories.

The effect of the media in election campaigns, however, remains mixed in the sense that studies are not very certain that the media have an effect on the long term views of citizens, or an effect on the result of election campaigns. Furthermore, it is still a critical issue as to if news media's practices uphold or rather erode the democratic values which are expected to be inherent in the

electoral process. During election campaigns, the news media as has been indicated include in their publications different forms of framing to reach out to large electorates, which are expected to most likely affect election campaigns' outcome. From the literature reviewed in chapter three, one gets the impression that the news media are interested in reporting races, which are viewed as very competitive. The more competitive the race is, the higher the possibility for intensive coverage.

Also the news media are very interested in covering races where there is an important office involved such as that of a president of a country. A number of election campaign activities, which attract coverage are specific events which take place during the election period. These include political party rallies, debates, press conferences and public opinion polls. The media cherish new ideas for their novelty as well as conflict, which they suspect excite readers. According to the literature, in the advanced democracies, what gets covered most by the news media is the strategy of the campaigns and the outcome of the strategy (Farnworth and Lichter, 2011; Fallows, 1997). In effect, which candidate is winning and which candidate is behind the political race.

6.10 The summary of the chapter

The purpose of this chapter was to examine the kind of media frame, specifically, horse race or issue frame that appears to dominate the Ghanaian press in the coverage of election campaigns using the 2008 and 2012 as the benchmark. Secondly, how did the theories of gatekeeping and framing played out in the media coverage? These were to help identify the differences as well as similarities of Ghana's media coverage trend and that of advanced democracies such as the United States. This was considered necessary because the theoretical and empirical studies on the framing of election campaigns across the globe do not take into consideration the media framing of politics and election campaigns in developing democracies such as Ghana.

The study shows that contrary to previous Ghanaian study, which played down the issue of horse race in Ghanaian journalism practice, horse race framing of election campaigns is increasingly gaining grounds in the practice of political journalism in Ghana. This trend seems to be

contributing to a two-party democratic governance in the country as is the situation in the United States, for instance. To illustrates this point here, all the characteristics of horse race framing such as who is winning the race, public opinion polls, focusing on crowd attendance at campaign rallies all go to project the two main political parties in Ghana, the NDC and the NPP to the disadvantage of the smaller political parties.

The study is showing significant differences as compared to election campaign coverage in the advanced democracies across the globe. As studies indicate that there is dominance of horse race framing in North America and Western Europe in the coverage of election campaigns, however, in Ghana it is rather the issue framing that appears to be dominating election campaigns coverage. This goes to suggest that as citizens in those societies were being exposed more to horse race coverage, citizens in Ghana were being exposed more to issues.

Ghanaian framing of election campaigns, it can be argued, was more issues oriented. Thus the newspapers in carrying out their gatekeeping function, selected and disseminated more stories on election campaigns issues. Regardless of this form of journalism practice in the country, the results should also be of some concern since the outcome shows that horse race framing has a potential of dominating election campaigns coverage in the country. As has already been noted, one significant way for voters to get to know about their presidential candidates and their positions on issues is through how the news media select and present election issues and events. If that be the case, then a time would come when the media in Ghana, which are expected to tell citizens how to think about election campaigns' events and issues and how to evaluate political actors, would not be in the position to do so because electorates would be reading about which candidate is ahead, candidates endorsements, opinion polls without critical interpretation and speeches from rallies. In this case, horse race stories, perhaps, may have come to matter most in election campaigns coverage than issues. This can undermine Ghana's young democracy.

This result indicates that in a developing democracy such as Ghana, issue framing dominates election campaigns coverage and peace as an election campaign message was framed more and got through the gates many times than even the economy and education. This is inconsistent with the election campaigns coverage trend in the advanced democracies such as the United States, where horse race dominates election campaigns coverage with the economy getting more framing with regard to issues coverage. What this demonstrates is that the gatekeeping and framing practices with regard to election campaign coverage across democracies cannot be said to be looking similar in form. Since the factors that will influence for instance, gatekeepers of the press in the United States to represent and select election campaign stories appear different from that of Ghana.

The study reinforces the point that framing of politics is influenced by the political system, media system as well as socio-economic conditions of individual societies. These results are, therefore, significant for the reason that they seem to add to the argument for the need for comparative studies instead of always accepting generalize results of studies beyond the society or societies in which the study has been undertaken.

Besides horse race and issue framing of election campaigns, personalization of election campaigns has emerged strongly as a central concept in political communication. This gives one the sense of how election campaigns media coverage has changed with time. The next chapter will, therefore, discuss the surfacing of leader-centred election campaign in the politics of Ghana since 1992 when the country decided to return to multiparty democratic governance. It must be noted that the chapter explores the trend of press personalization in Ghana to determine the extent of media bias and examine any evidence of an incumbency advantage.

Chapter 7

Personalization of election campaigns in Ghana

7.1 Overview of the chapter

The media play a critical role in democracies and they are expected to be fair in their coverage of candidates as well as political parties during election campaigns. However, it is argued that citizens accuse media of bias with the state-owned media giving incumbency candidates coverage advantage. The chapter, therefore, examines patterns of press bias as well as evidence of an incumbency advantage during the 2008 and 2012 elections campaigns coverage in Ghana by the four newspapers under study. The chapter is motivated by the fact that the 1992 constitution of Ghana directs the media, especially, the state-owned media to give equal and fair coverage to all political parties and candidates during election campaigns. This, it appears, the framers of the constitution had in mind that the media should avoid bias as well as an incumbency advantage in their role of enhancing democratic governance in the country. The constitution demands a level playing field for all political parties and therefore notes: "The state shall provide fair opportunity to all political parties to present their programmes to the public by ensuring equal access to the state-owned media." Again, "all presidential candidates shall be given the same amount of time and space on the states-owned media to present their programmes to the people."

In addition to this constitutional provision, the code of the Ghana Journalists Association also expects the media to ensure equal and fair coverage to all political parties and candidates. The main theories used for this study include the established theories of framing and gatekeeping. Both theories relate to issues of the role of media in societies and how stories selected may be disseminated differently to the audiences of different media outlets. On the basis of this, exploring the concept of personalization of media, the chapter is intended to lead to whether or not there is sufficient evidence to demonstrate media bias as well as an incumbency advantage that are influenced by the two theories in playing their role in Ghana's newspapers. In examining the concept of personalization of the Ghanaian press, in the context of the review of literature in chapter three, this study restricts itself to more coverage and more positive coverage to a particular presidential candidate at the expense of other candidates in the political race of 2008 and 2012

elections in Ghana. This is to help gain a better understanding of the extent of bias and an incumbency advantage in the Ghanaian press despite the constitutional provision and the GJA's code. The outcome of the study, hopefully, will go to contribute to the ongoing debate of gatekeeping and framing practices of the Ghanaian media. Therefore, how was the space available for election campaign stories distributed among the presidential candidates? An attempt will also be made to compare the result to that of space allocated to the political parties since it is suggested that because of personalization of election campaigns, political parties are being relegated to the background during election campaigns coverage.

7.2 Space allocation to candidates

Intense appearance of presidential candidates in the media during election campaign coverage has engaged the attention of political communication scholars. In fact candidate-centred election campaigning is being discussed and researchers are increasingly becoming interested in political party leaders. Graph 1 shows the extent to which the main political party presidential candidates dominated press coverage in the 2008 and 2012 general elections in Ghana. So is the result of space allocation to political parties also displayed by Table 2.The results seem to suggest that presidential candidates especially those of the two main political parties, the NDC and the NPP, commanded a considerable press appearances. Comparing the result of apperances of candidates to that of parties, it is obvious that the newspapers devoted more attention to candidates. The rationale here is to focus the analysis of space allocation devoted to party presidential candidates in order for the study to answer one of the research questions which, focuses on media bias and an incumbency advantage. Graph 1 displays the result.

Graph 1: A comparison of the frequency of appearance of the presidential candidates in the 2008 and 2012 general election campaigns in Ghana
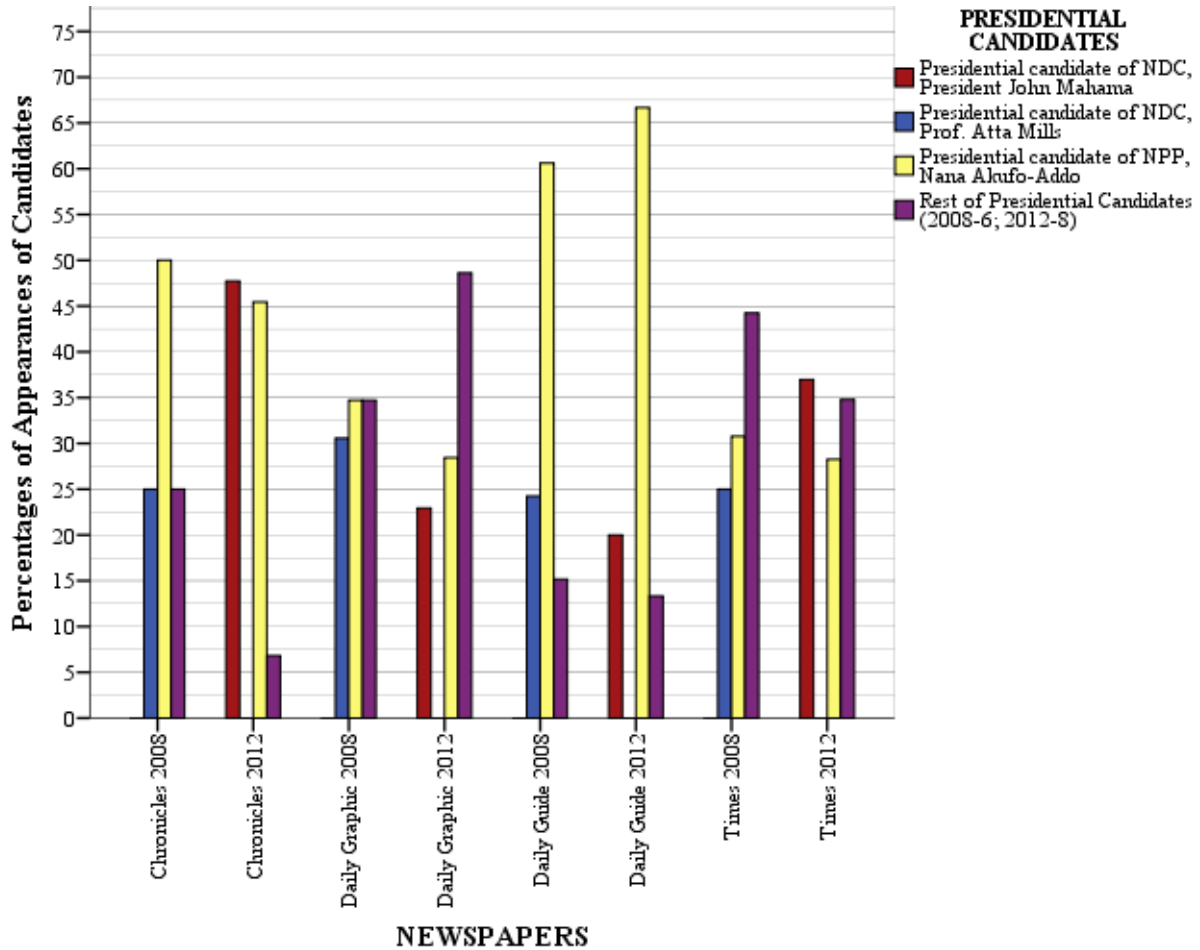
- *The total number of stories in 2008 is 234 (54 percent)*
- *The total number of stories in 2012 is 259 (60 percent)*

Table 2: A Comparison of the Appearances of Political Parties in Newspapers Coverage of the 2008 and 2012 Election Campaigns in Ghana

POLITICAL PARTIES	PAPER							
	Chronicle Oct/Nov 2008	%	Daily Graphic Oct/Nov 2008	%	Daily Guide Oct/Nov 2008	%	Times Oct/Nov 2008	%
NDC	12	38.7	24	31.6	28	46.7	14	48.3
NPP	15	48.4	23	30.3	21	35.0	9	31.0
CPP	3	9.7	11	14.5	6	10.0	3	10.3
PNC	1	3.2	11	14.5	3	5.0	1	3.5
DFP	0	0	3	4.0	1	1.7	1	3.5
DPP	0	0	2	2.6	1	1.7	0	0
EGLE	0	0	1	1.3	0	0	1	3.5
RPD	0	0	1	1.3	0	0	0	0
Total	31	100	76	100	60	100	29	100
POLITICAL PARTIES	PAPER							
	Chronicles Oct/Nov 2012	%	Daily Graphic Oct/Nov 2012	%	Daily Guide Oct/Nov 2012	%	Times Oct/Nov 2012	%
NPP	19	52.8	14	31.1	27	43.6	8	27.6
NDC	15	41.7	11	24.4	27	43.6	9	31.0
PNC	0	0	8	17.8	3	4.8	5	17.2
CPP	1	2.8	7	15.6	0	0	5	17.2
PPP	0	0	4	8.9	3	4.8	1	3.5
UFP	1	2.8	1	2.2	2	3.2	1	3.5
Total	36	100	45	100	62	100	29	100

It is clear from Graph 1 that the presidential candidates, especially those of the two main political parties (i.e. National Democratic Congress and New Patriotic Party.) during the 2008 and 2012 general elections attained high level of salience or prominence across the four newspapers. Although from Table 2 the press also gave coverage to the various political parties, especially the two main parties, the presidential candidates appear to have received more stories, which included straight news, editorial, feature, opinion/comment and letter-to-the-editor, in both elections than their political parties which gave them the platform. For instance, in the 2008 election campaign, the eight presidential candidates together received a total of 234 stories representing 54 percent as against 196 stories representing 46 percent received by the political parties. This gives a difference of 37 stories representing 8 percent.

The 2012 election campaign results are even more revealing. The newspapers in Ghana in framing the 2012 election campaign devoted as much as 259 stories representing a significant 60 percent to the ten presidential candidates while the political parties which elected them to represent their interests attracted 172 stories also representing 40 percent. This also gives a difference of 87 stories representing 20 percent. It is worth noting that in all these, the presidential candidates of the two main political parties had the better share of the personalization of the press. To illustrate this point, out of the 234 stories in 2008, the presidential candidates of the two main political parties alone recorded 164 stories accounting for 70 percent while in the 2012 election the presidential candidates of the two main political parties also had 176 stories (i.e. 68 percent) out of the 259 total stories.

In the same vein, the two main political parties also enjoyed the better share of press appearances of the two general elections. For instance, in 2008 election campaign coverage, the NDC and NPP combined attracted 146 stories out of 196 stories while in 2012 election campaign the same two political parties recorded 129 stories out of 172 appearances. With this results, *The Ghanaian Times* reports that the small political parties have accused some civil society organisations, particularly the Institute of Economic Affairs as well as the state-owned media of conniving with the 'so-called' big parties to sideline the other political parties under the pretext that they did not have representations in parliament (*The Ghanaian Times*, October 24, 2008).

These results, therefore, go to reinforce the argument that in Ghana the press appears to give more appearances to presidential candidates. Swanson and Mancini explain that the media focusing greater attention on politicians instead of the political parties the candidates came from is as a result of modernization. Modernization, according to Hallin and Mancini (2004:40), is the "deeper meaning of Americanization" which is the application of the United States' election campaign strategies due to transition communication practices as a result of structural change in politics and society (Hallin and Mancini, 2004:40). Swanson and Mancini (1996:14) believe that the concept of personalization of politics, which includes election campaigning is a product of either modernization or Americanized style of election campaign. Whichever be the case, the growing personalization of politics in contemporary democracies, Dalton and colleagues (2000) argue that

the trend is weakening the traditional attachments of the public to political parties. For instance, in Ghana followers of a particular political party could threaten to vote for a rival party if their demands were not met by their own political party. Voters in Ghana demonstrate such threats by a trend of voting that has come to be known in the political communication of Ghana as 'skirt and blouse' voting.

To illustrate this point, voters during election would decide to cast their votes for the presidential candidate of their political party and with regard to the parliamentary candidate cast their votes for a parliamentary candidate of another political party or vice versa. This seems to create the impression that voters are not bothered if their party should win the presidency but lose seats in the parliament and vice versa. This voting pattern suggests that the traditional trend of voters' desire for their party to win the presidency and at the same time dominant the seats in parliament is gradually becoming a thing of the past. In effect, voters' traditional detachment to political parties seems to be weakening. A news story published by the *Ghanaian Chronicle* with the headline, 'Skirt and blouse' haunts NPP' claimed that the NPP which claimed the Ashanti region as their strong hold had disappointed their members and coupled with prevailing conditions in the region, the electorates were yearning for a change. "As a result, many of them have threatened to vote for the NDC back to power to improve their living standards" (*Ghanaian Chronicle*, October 17, 2008).

Also *The Ghanaian Times* of Saturday, October 6, 2012 writes: "Residents of Peinyina, a settler farming community in the Nkoranza North District, have decided not to vote during the election 2012 due to lack of development projects in the community." In the face of this, it is argued that the continuing weakening of citizens' loyalties to political parties, the growing influence of the media in politics and election campaigns together with the influence of individual political actors appear to be increasing in multiparty democratic systems across the globe including an emerging democracy such as Ghana. These may have contributed to the media's intense focus on candidates instead of political parties and institutions.

This trend of voting gives the impression that electorates would cast their vote depending on the candidates who are contesting the political race. With this, political actors would present themselves more as individual politicians and less as political party members. In Ghana, for instance, presidential candidates, especially from the two leading political parties in the run-up to elections would constitute their own campaign teams which operate independently of their political parties. The candidates would run their campaigns from their own headquarters. People donate directly to the candidates for their campaign activities. It has become the practice for political parties to present their candidates at the centre of their communication strategy. In this case, the media are pressured to frame politics as a contest more of individuals than of groups. It was obvious during the 2008 and 2012 elections that the presidential candidates such as Atta Mills and Nana Akufo-Addo in 2008 and John Mahama and Nana Akufo-Addo in 2012 had the whole election campaigns revolved around them. Indeed these candidates were virtually the ones who were driving their campaigns. The paraphernalia, slogans, songs and advertisements were centred on their personalities. In such a situation, the news media in telling the election campaign stories ended up focusing on the presidential candidates.

Framing of politics or election campaign has now moved away from the activities of political parties to individual political actors. And these political actors are then projected as private individuals despite the fact that they were elected by political parties to represent the parties' interests. Empirical studies on media personalization present a mixed picture of how the situation is looking like. Some scholars claim that there is sufficient evidence to suggest that during election campaigns the media tend to give intense visibility to individual candidates to the detriment of political parties they are supposed to have emerged from (McAllister, 2007). On the other hand, Karvonen (2010) is pointing out that evidence of media personalization is mixed. Kriesi (2011) also points out that apart from the Netherlands which shows clear evidence of media personalization, the evidence for a personalization trend in Germany, for instance, is not too clear for one to make a definite conclusion. From the above, to what extend has personalization of election coverage led to an incumbency advantage in Ghana?

7.3 The Ghanaian state-owned press and incumbency advantage

From the above discussion one cannot ignore the new emerging trend in the personalization of election campaigns in Ghana's multiparty democracy. Previous Ghanaian election campaigns coverage studies have revealed an incumbency advantage in the use of the state-owned press to support ruling governments' election campaigns. For instance, during the 2004 general election campaign, the Centre for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana) in a study on the abuse of incumbency and administrative resources during the election accused the ruling political parties of not only having too much access to the media but also public resources. The report, therefore, reads:

"Monitoring of selected state-owned media revealed that these organs gave significantly more coverage to the campaign activities of incumbent party candidates. Print coverage of the incumbent party tended to be more extensive and was more likely to include front-page stories and photographs" (Centre of Democratic Development, 2005:3).

However, coverage of the 2008 and 2012 election campaigns appears inconsistent with the assertion that the state-owned newspapers continue to ensure an incumbency advantage. This revelation opens a new chapter in the life of the media in Ghana. For the *Daily Graphic* and *The Ghanaian Times* to be seen not to be given incumbents presidential candidates, coverage advantage is certainly an interesting development in Ghana's democratization process. In order to interrogate this issue more closely to have a better insight into this trend of coverage, the study, therefore, examines the relative balance of the presidential candidates of the two main political parties, which have ruled the country since 1992 when Ghana went back to democratic governance. Graph 2 presents the results.

Graph 2: Coverage of the top two presidential candidates in 2008 and 2012 elections by the state-owned newspapers
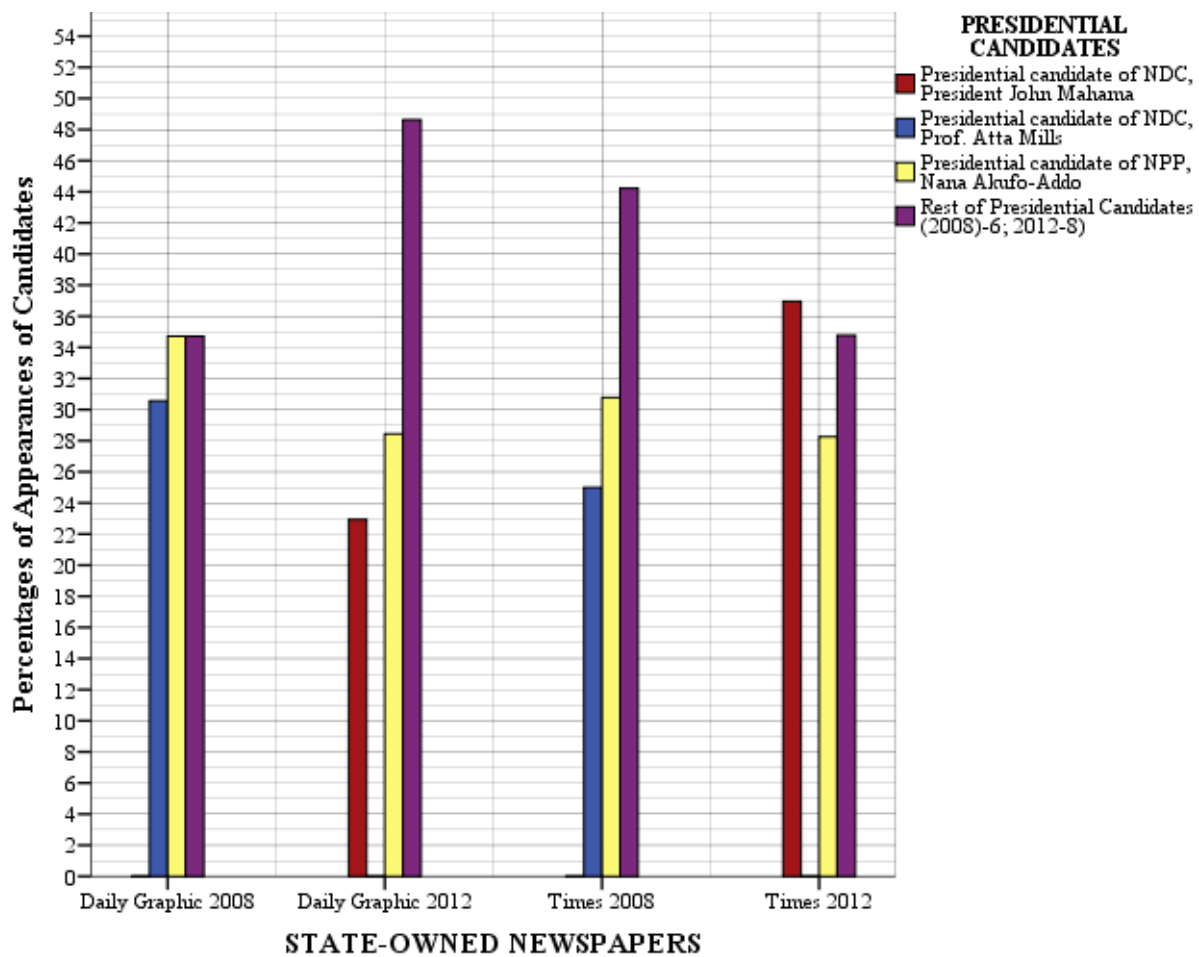
Graph 2 indicates that during the 2008 and 2012 election campaigns, coverage by the state-owned press, shows that a different trend in election campaign coverage is indeed emerging in Ghana. The incumbent coverage advantage appears to becoming a thing of the past. The conventional position has been that incumbents have always fared well against challengers. The assumption of incumbent effect is that being an incumbent candidate comes with big advantage which places challenging candidate at an obvious disadvantage. In other words, the incumbent candidates should always win the election. It would be surprising if those in power did not do better on the average than those unelected. Studies show that beginning in the 1960s, incumbents were able to win more frequently and increase their vote percentage (Stonecash, 2008). For instance, in 1789 when

George Washington took the oath of office to become the president of the United States, a total of 31 sitting presidents who have taken part in national elections, 21 have won the elections. In the case of Ghana, since 1992 incumbents presidential candidates have always won the elections. Klasnja (2015) points out that recent empirical studies indicate incumbency disadvantage in many developing democracies. However, when it comes to election campaigns coverage, recent trend of election campaign framing by the press in Ghana indicates that incumbent candidate is beginning to be a disadvantage.

This is because the difference of coverage between the two main political parties' candidates, which have been winning elections and ruled the country since 1992, is not too high for one to claim incumbent advantage. For instance, in the 2008 election campaign coverage, the candidate of the incumbent ruling government received 25 stories (34.7 percent) in the *Daily Graphic* as against the main opposition NDC's candidate's stories of 22 (30.6 percent). The rest of the presidential candidates, therefore, had 34.7 percent of the stories to share.

In the same election, the incumbent ruling government's candidate had 30.8 percent of *The Ghanaian Times* coverage with the opposition's presidential candidate getting 25.0 percent. The *Daily Graphic* in 2012 gave the incumbent president of NDC, 25 (22.9%) and the opposition NPP's presidential candidate 31 (28.4 %), a difference of six (6) stories in favour of the opposition NPP's presidential candidate. The *Ghanaian Times* also gave the incumbent presidential candidate of NDC 17 (39.5 %) with the opposition NPP's presidential candidate receiving 13 (30.2 %), a difference of four (4) stories.

It should, therefore, be clear that from the overall analysis or any of the differences between the coverage favouring either the NDC or the NPP, as a political party in power, the differences appear not to be high as is evident in Graph 2. In other words, there is no clear evidence in support of incumbent bias or bonus in the state-owned press, at least as reflected in the 2008 and 2012 election campaigns coverage. It is, therefore, quite safe to make the argument that so far as the coverage of the presidential candidates in 2008 and 2012 is concerned with regard to incumbency there existed

no consistent partisan bias in the *Daily Graphic* as well *The Ghanaian Times* after sampling five genres in four newspapers within a period of two months. This interesting outcome of the study conflicts with previous studies, which claim that the state-owned media have been ensuring that incumbent presidential candidates enjoyed more election campaigns coverage.

What then could account for this change in the trend of election campaign coverage by the state-owned press which has always stood accused of incumbency bonus or advantage? Studies on media appearances of politicians continually suggest incumbency bonus. In other words, political parties in government have been enjoying high level of media coverage compared to those in the opposition. This nature of media bias is argued to be as a result of news criteria, which is a reflection of political power, such as relevance as well as the elite position of politicians (Green-Pedersen et. al., 2012).

In addition to this explanation, Green-Pedersen et. al. (2012) also believe that variations in the media dominance of incumbents are informed by the interplay between norms of journalism practice and political context. To illustrate this point, outside election campaigns activities, political news is informed by the journalistic norm of the watchdog role. With this role, the media focus on the problems of societies. This produces a critical emphasis on incumbent politicians. However, once political party competition intensifies whether in the course of campaigning or with issues becoming salient, the norm of objective and impartial practice of journalism lead to a more balanced coverage with challengers increasing their media presence. Considering the democratic implications, Green-Pedersen et. al. (2012) point out that the watchdog norm goes to challenge the view that incumbency bonus is an electoral asset.

It is worth noting that recent comparative electoral studies have revealed that incumbency is becoming a disadvantage in some emerging democracies. For instance, in India (Uppal, 2009; Aidt, Golden and Tiwari, 2011), Brazil (Klasnja and Titiunik, 2013), Zambia (MacDonald, 2013) and Eastern Europe (Robert, 2008) scholars are claiming that there is evidence that suggests that incumbents candidates and political parties are performing badly during elections because they happen to be incumbents. These results may appear striking because a number of studies indicate

that there is incumbency advantage in the United States and some other advanced democracies (Cox and Katz, 1996; Lee, 2008; Hainmueller and Kern, 2008; Horiuchi and Leigh, 2009; Ariga, 2010; Kendall and Rekkas, 2012). Incumbency disadvantage, it is suggested, to be as a result of shortcomings of democracy. It is associated with pervasive electoral discontent, widespread corruption and violent electioneering tactics (Robert, 2008; Uppal, 2009; Klasnja, 2013; Aidt, Golden and Tiwari, 2011).

For some time now scholars have been wondering as to the factors that have been driving the media's concentration on political leaders thus diminishing the focus on political parties as the situation in Ghana, Germany, the United States, the United Kingdom, Austria and France demonstrates. One explanation is that because of the changes occurring in the media industry, the political actors have no alternative than to adapt to these changes in order to become relevant and attractive to the media. Meyer (2005), therefore, makes the point that for the political parties to receive the intense visibility they are looking for, the political parties believe that they would have to present a charismatic candidate. Against this background, which appears to be in line with other democracies across the globe how do we explain the intense visibility of presidential candidates in the media while reducing the focus of media attention on the political parties which are supposed to be the bedrock of democracy in an emerging democracy such as Ghana?

7.4 Press personalization in Ghana: Some factors

It may appear that the president and the activities the president's political party would receive intense media visibility than the members of the opposition political parties especially the main political parties. And that during election campaigns the president and president's party would enjoy incumbent advantage (Reinemann and Wilke, 2007:103). According to Hanspeter Kriesi (2011:12), there seems to be incumbent advantage in societies such as the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Austria. However, as has been already indicated, the situation appears to be different with regard to the coverage of election campaigns in Ghana. The trend of media personalization of incumbent presidential candidates during election campaigns is no longer favouring incumbents as it used to be the case before the election 2008 in Ghana. Simply put: as

far as the 2008 and 2012 election campaigns are concerned, there appears to be no incumbent bonus.

Presidential elections appear to offer intense appearances for the presidential candidates of the main political parties. This is because these are political parties which are considered to have high chances of winning elections and forming a government. In Ghana, for instance, as the results show, the newspapers sampled for the study focused more on the presidential candidates of the two main political parties in 2008 and 2012 elections. In 2008 the candidates of the two political parties received 70 percent stories while in 2012 they had 68 percent stories.

Finally, one other factor that may explain personalization of election campaign in media coverage in Ghana may be the charisma of presidential candidates. To this end, there are times political parties would consciously elect presidential candidates who they believe are credited with charisma. Charisma in this sense includes rhetorical and speech ability (Bryman, 1993), nonverbal and symbolic communication (Shamir et. al., 1993), creativity and energy (House and Howell, 1992) as well as intelligence and cognitive abilities (Bass, 1988). Political strategists may decide to take advantage of the leader's demonstrated communication skills, performance and talent to woo journalists to focus particular attention on their presidential candidates for high level of media attention.

From the above analysis and discussions contrary to previous study that identified incumbent advantage in the Ghanaian media framing of election campaigns, this current study shows that with regard to the state-owned press, a new trend of media personalization of election campaign is emerging in the political communication of Ghana. The state-owned press is no longer giving incumbents coverage advantage to the extent that the opposition presidential candidate had more press visibility than the incumbent in the 2012 election campaign. The next chapter, however, will demonstrate that the new trend of election campaign coverage, that is, the state-owned media appearing not to give incumbent coverage advantage could also be the issue of a candidate paying money for coverage of election campaign activities. Before that the next section is to explore which

of the presidential candidates had more coverage. This will help to establish whether or not the press in Ghana can also be accused of bias coverage.

7.5 Which candidate went pass the news gates more?

Studies may create the impression that the press in Ghana preferred the presidential candidate of NPP, Nana Addo over any other candidate. Hence, his intense Ghanaian press visibility. The marked dominance of framing of Nana Addo by the privately-owned newspapers in the country during the 2008 election seems to give credence to this claim. Table 3 is, therefore, to help interrogate this claim. The objective for this is to assist find out the extent of press bias in the coverage of election campaigns in Ghana since bias coverage of election appears to undermine democracy. Bias here simply means more positive coverage for a particular presidential candidate to the detriment of other presidential candidates.

Table 3: A Comparison of the Frequency of Appearance of the Presidential Candidates in the 2008 and 2012 Election Campaign in Ghana

PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES	PAPER							
	Chronicle 2008	%	Daily Graphic 2008	%	Daily Guide 2008	%	Times 2008	%
Presidential candidate of NPP, Nana Akufo-Addo	22	**50.0**	25	**34.7**	40	**61.5**	16	**30.8**
Presidential candidate of NDC, Prof. Atta Mills	11	**25.0**	22	**30.6**	15	**23.1**	13	**25.0**
Presidential candidate of CPP, Dr. Paa Kwesi Nduom	7	**15.9**	10	**13.9**	5	**7.7**	11	**21.2**
Independent presidential candidate, Kwesi Amoafo-Yeboah	2	**4.6**	4	**5.6**	2	**3.1**	2	**3.9**
Presidential candidate of PNC, Dr. Edward Mahama	1	**2.3**	5	**6.9**	2	**3.1**	8	**15.4**
Presidential candidate of RPD, Kwabena Adjei	1	**2.3**	3	**4.2**	0	**0.0**	0	**0**
Presidential candidate of DFP, Mr. Emmanuel Ansah-Antwi	0	**0**	2	**2.8**	0	**0.0**	1	**1.9**
Presidential candidate of DPP, Thomas Ward-Brew	0	**0**	1	**1.4**	1	**1.5**	1	**1.9**
Total	**44**	**100**	**72**	**100**	**65**	**100**	**52**	**100**

PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES	PAPER							
	Chronicles 2012	%	Daily Graphic 2012	%	Daily Guide 2012	%	Times 2012	%
Presidential candidate of NPP, Nana Akufo-Addo	20	**45.0**	31	**28.4**	40	**66.7**	13	**28.3**
Presidential candidate of NDC, President John Mahama	21	**47.0**	25	**22.9**	12	**20.0**	17	**37.0**
Presidential candidate of PPP, Dr. Paa Kwesi Nduom	1	**2.3**	19	**17.4**	0	**0.0**	10	**21.7**
Presidential candidate of PNC, Hassan Ayariga	0	**0.0**	16	**14.7**	3	**5.0**	0	**0.0**
Presidential candidate of CPP, Dr. Abu Sakara	2	**4.6**	11	**10.1**	2	**3.3**	3	**6.5**
Independent presidential candidate, Kwesi Amoafo-Yeboah	0	**0.0**	4	**3.7**	0	**0.0**	0	**0.0**
Independent presidential candidate, Jacob Osei Yeboah	0	**0.0**	2	**1.8**	0	**0.0**	0	**0.0**
Presidential candidate of UFP, Akwesi Addai	0	**0.0**	1	**0.9**	0	**0.0**	0	**0.0**
Independent presidential candidate, John Atta-Kesson	0	**0.0**	0	**0.0**	0	**0.0**	2	**4.4**
Independent presidential candidate, Mr. Kwesi Amoafo-Yeboah	0	**0.0**	0	**0.0**	3	**5.0**	1	**2.2**
Total	**44**	**100**	**109**	**100**	**60**	**100**	**46**	**100**

We read from Table 3 that from October through November 2008, with the stories studied about presidential candidates in the four papers, the newspapers put the incumbent party NPP's candidate, Nana Akufo-Addo on top of the coverage. The *Ghanaian Chronicle* gave Nana Akufo-Addo 50 percent stories and Atta Mills 25 percent stories. There is 25 percent difference.

Nana Akufo-Addo again had 60.6 percent stories and Atta Mills 24.2 percent stories in the *Daily Guide*, giving a difference of 36.4 percent stories. The *Daily Graphic also* put Nana Akufo-Addo

ahead with 34.7 percent stories with Atta Mills recording 30.6 percent stories. This is a difference of 4.2 percent stories. *The Ghanaian Times* also recorded for Nana Akufo-Addo 30.8 percent stories while Atta Mills had to his credit 25.0 percent stories, giving a difference of 5.8 percent stories.

Though the difference in percentage points between Nana Akufo-Addo and Atta Mills in the *Daily Graphic* and *The Ghanaian Times* newspapers may not be high, however, the difference percentage points between the two candidates' coverage in the *Ghanaian Chronicle* and the *Daily Guide* is rather high to suggest that the press gave more election campaign stories to Nana Akufo-Addo during the 2008 election. These stories included the following: "the electorates have made a choice for Dec 7" the author argues, "the electorates were categorical that in spite of the shortcomings in the NPP administration, they were happy about the opening of more jobs avenues in the country and also believe the NPP is the only party that has the potential to attract more companies into the country" (The *Ghanaian Chronicle*, Friday, October 3, 2008).

From October through November 2012, out of the election stories coded in the four papers, the incumbent president John Mahama of NDC scored 47.0 percent in the *Ghanaian Chronicle* while Nana Akufo-Addo had 45.0 percent. The difference in percentage is 2 percent. As John Mahama recorded 37.0 percent in *The Ghanaian Times*, Nana Akufo-Addo had 28.3 percent representing a difference in percentage of 8.7 percent. Though the percentage difference may not be high, the incumbent had an edge. The *Daily Graphic* on its part gave John Mahama, 22.9 percent stories, Nana Akufo-Addo received 28.4 percent stories also representing a difference of 5.3 percent stories.

With the coverage of the *Daily Guide,* John Mahama received 20 percent mention while Nana Akufo-Addo had 66.7 percent giving a difference of 46.7 percentage stories. Although with regards to the *Daily Graphic* the percentage difference between Nana Akufo-Addo and John Mahama may not be considered high, the percent difference between the two candidates appears

high with regard to the coverage of the *Daily Guide*. This gave Nana Akufo-Addo a comfortable edge.

Judging from the percentage difference point between the two candidates of the two main political parties in Ghana, one gets the sense that Nana Akufo-Addo of NPP in 2008 and 2012 elections received more press attention than the other condidates. This revelation goes to confirm previous findings of election campaign studies which show that Ghanaian media tend to give NPP's candidate more media appearances.

It appears as Table 3 displays that in 2012, NDC's presidential candidate, John Mahama generated moderately more appearances in the *Ghanaian Chronicle* and *The Ghanaian Times* than the party's candidate Atta Mills in 2008. President Atta Mills recorded 11 stories (25 percent) in the *Ghanaian Chronicle* and 13 stories (25 percent) in the *Ghanaian Times*, John Mahama on the other hand had 12 stories (47 percent) in the *Ghanaian Chronicle* while the *Ghanaian Times* published 13 stories (45 percent) about him, making John Mahama appears to be more attractive to the press. This, probably, is because some of the stories published about him were focused not on the president as a political campaigner, but as the country's chief executive. Abramowitz and colleagues (2006:77) identify two kinds of advantages which go in favour of incumbent candidates and which may account for their reelection. The first advantage comes from holding office and the second is campaign-related advantage. According to scholars such as Campbell (2002; 2003), the second advantage appears stronger in the sense that challengers are not in the position to compete financially with incumbents.

It is, however, worthy of note that the overall significant difference in percentage points between the two presidential candidates of the NDC and NPP with regard to the coverage of the two privately-owned newspapers, the *Ghanaian Chronicle* and the *Daily Guide* may be due to the fact that the founders of these two papers happen to be members of the NPP. Freddie Blay, the founder of the *Daily Guide* became the Deputy Speaker of parliament between 2004 and 2008 on the ticket of NPP. He is now the First National vice president of the NPP. And as at the time this chapter

was being developed, Freddie Blay had become the Acting chairman of the NPP. His wife is the Managing Editor of the paper. Kofi Coomson, the founder of *the Ghanaian Chronicle* contested the NPP's Member of Parliament primaries in 2008 but lost to the incumbent MP. It is, therefore, argued that being the owners of these two papers their influence were likely to affect the election stories that went through the gates of their newspapers. As members of the NPP, during election campaign contest, the candidate of their party would be a significant newsmaker. With Gina Blay as the Managing Editor of the *Daily Guide*, she has the responsibility to ensure the nature and flow of information to the public. She, therefore, might have influenced the election campaign stories that ended up going through the gates and supplied to the electorates. With her interest in seeing the political party of her husband come to power once again, the temptation for her to select or slant election campaigns stories to please the corporate owner of the paper would be very high.

There is evidence to prove that owners of media have control over stories that their outlets cover and disseminate to the public. Hence, news media owners have influence on public discourse as well as public opinion. For instance, Rupert Murdoch once revealed that he controlled the editorial content of major issues (House of Lords Select Committee, 2008). As Rupert Murdoch's editorial influence is a direct intervention, other media owners' influence is indirect. In effect, the influence is through the employment of like-minded editors who for instance, apply the business principles of owners or manage the news according to how the owners have defined the character of the news media to shape the media's content (Barnett, 2012). From the above, Kwesi Coomson and Freddie Blay during the 2008 and 2012, it is argued, decided the election campaigns stories that the voters read.

Although Nana Akufo-Addo of NPP was more widely covered in 2008 and 2012 as the findings show, he lost the two presidential contests to Atta Mills of NDC in 2008 and also John Mahama of NDC in 2012. One would have thought that a candidate's huge media appearance would go to win the candidate more support for the candidate to be the eventual winner since the candidate would have had a better race, backed by a more effective and efficient organization, better advertising and a more persuasive consistent message. Although the media are argued to influence the outcome of various events (McQuail, 2005: 529), Jamieson and Waldman (2003) note that the

outcome of events may be dependent on how those involve in such events frame the event in a way and manner favourable to themselves coupled with the failure of the press to fulfill its investigative role at the time. In effect, the "political content is shaped primarily by the perceptual environment within which campaigns operate" (Arterton, 1984:155). For instance, in Ghana, the NPP appeared to have framed Nana Akufo-Addo as an elite and citizens might also have interpreted this image as arrogant person. However, on their part, the NDC framed Atta Mills and John Mahama as calm, gentle, modest and sincere personalities earning Atta Mills the title, "king of peace."

It is one thing for a presidential candidate to receive intense media appearance and another thing for the presidential candidate to receive favourable media appearance for a positive image in the eyes of the electorates during election. In line with this, which of the three presidential candidates (John Atta Mills, John Dramani Mahama and Nana Akufo-Addo) received more favourable press election campaign appearance for him to look good in the eyes of the voters to brighten ones chances of attracting voters? Tresch (2009: 68) is of the view that politicians fighting for media attention is part of political conflicts in institutional settings. And politicians demanding favourable coverage is for a positive effect on electorates for their support.

7.6 Did more coverage yield positive coverage for Nana Addo?

Directional balance, also referred to as tone, has been identified as the most controversial and problematic aspect of press coverage to evaluate in political communication studies (Deacon et al., 2005:31). However, scholars accept that it is important to assess which candidate is being projected in either positive or negative light by the gatekeepers in framing issues or events. Two measures have been applied for the evaluation of the tone across the four newspapers sampled for this study. The first was applied with regard to policy issues. Therefore, the moment a policy issue was identified in an election campaign story, a code was attached to it. This indicated whether the policy issue was: mainly considered to be 'good news' for a particular political actor or two. For instance, with the headline "Ghana has a date with destiny on Dec. 7 – Bawumia" paragraph 8 of the news story reads: "to rapturous chants of 'Free SHS' and 'we can do it', Dr. Bawumia stated

that the pledge of making secondary education free was key to the development of Ghana into a first class society, adding that Nana Akufo-Addo was committed to ensuring that the policy became a reality, and that education, in general, received the necessary prioritization and resources"(*Ghanaian Chronicle*, Thursday, October 11, 2012).

Secondly, the study also coded stories which were mainly considered to be bad news for a particular political actor. For instance, paragraph 15 of a story, "Akufo-Addo outlines vision at debate", reads: "He (Nana Akufo-Addo) took a swipe at president John Mahama for leading an expensive scheme that cost GHc105, 000 to train each Ghanaian doctor in Cuba and reminded the gathering that the Ghana Medical Association had insisted that they could train each doctor at a cost of GHc30, 000 each" (*Daily Graphic,* Thursday, November 1, 2012).

The other measure which was applied for tone was a code to each politician identified in election campaign stories indicating whether the political actor was: mainly presenting his /her policies and views which appeared positive. For instance, with the headline, "focus is in achieving true universal basic education" the story reads: "The president said the NDC would establish 10 teacher training colleges to train more teachers to expand the basic education and reduce the cost at the SHS to allow more students into the system" (*Daily Graphic*, Wednesday, November 1, 2012).

Or stories which appeared that a politician was mainly defending him/herself from attack from political competitors and in so doing ended up sounding positive. For instance, *Daily Graphic* of Wednesday, November 26, 2008 reports that: "NPP attracts big crowd in HO" the story reads: "He (Nana Akufo-Addo) said he was not in politics for personal gain. I am a famous lawyer and if I want to make money, I will stay in my chambers" he remarked. Another instance is attacking the opinions, actions or policies of his/her competitors, for instance, "NPP promises far-fetched" paragraph 2 of the story reads: "he (referred to NDC MP) said the NPP government could not maintain a 25,000 police force, but its flag bearer, Nana Akufo-Addo, is promising to increase the police force to 50, 000" (*Daily Graphic,* Wednesday, November 5, 2008).

It is not enough for a presidential candidate to receive intense media visibility. This is because such visibility can contain more negative publicity, which may not help the course of the candidate. But in this case, Nana Akufo-Addo, who had unsuccessfully contested for president of Ghana in the 2008 and 2012 presidential elections as a candidate of the New Patriotic Party did not only receive more coverage during the two elections, he also attracted more positive coverage from the press adding to the claim that the Ghanaian press is bias during election campaigns.

The following editorials clearly demonstrate that during the campaigns, the NPP's candidate, Nana Akufo-Addo, even gained the support of some papers, which may be an act of endorsement. This may have projected him as a better candidate. For instance, editorial (a) clearly demonstrates that with the campaign issue of free education as promised by the NPP's candidate Nana Akufo-Addo, the paper supported Nana Addo's free education promise. Again editorial (b) by the *Daily Guide* shows the political bias of the paper towards Nana Akufo-Addo. With these two editorials, it is, therefore, not difficult to understand why these two papers gave more positive publications to Nana Akufo-Addo.

a.) "The Chronicle is unequivocal on the commitment of the state towards free education at the basic and second cycle level. We are firm in our belief that a child with second cycle education is more likely to move on in life…" (The *Ghanaian Chronicle*, Tuesday, October 23, 2012).

b.) "Nana Akufo-Addo was full of confidence and his performance was so outstanding that some think that he was adequately briefed before the appearance" (Editorial of the *Daily Guide*, Friday, October 31, 2008).

Graph 3 presents the extent of press bias with regard to positive coverage of the 2008 and 2012 election campaigns in Ghana.

Graph 3: A comparison of frequency of positive framing of presidential candidates during the 2008 and 2012 general election campaigns in Ghana
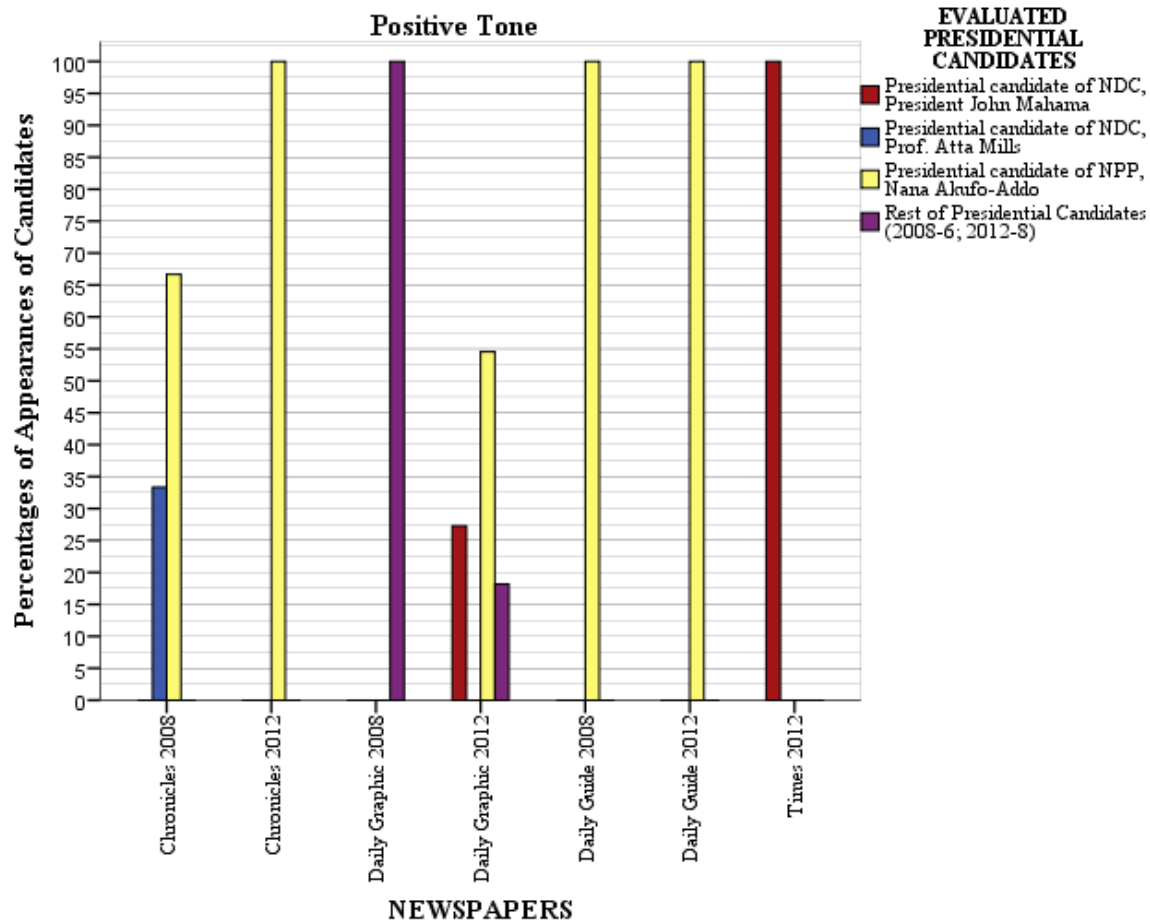
Judging from Graph 3, Nana Akufo-Addo did not only receive more election campaigns coverage, he also attracted the most favourable election campaigns coverage and the least unfavourable election campaigns coverage. To illustrate the point, in 2008 the *Ghanaian Chronicle* gave Nana Akufo-Addo 66.7 percent stories and Atta Mills received 33.3 percent stories showing difference

of 33.4 percentage points. In other words Nana Akufo-Addo received almost twice as much coverage compared to John Atta Mills.

The *Daily Guide* also recorded 100 percent stories for Nana Akufo-Addo while Atta Mills, who was the vice-president from 1997 to 2001 and after two unsuccessful presidential candidate in the 2000 and 2004 as NDC's candidate, received no favourable story at all. The two state-owned papers, the *Daily Graphic* and *The Ghanaian Times* did not report any favourable election campaign story for any of the candidates in 2008. In other words, the two privately-owned papers appeared to have favoured the incumbent's political party candidate, Nana Akufo-Addo, who was a Member of Parliament from 1997 to 2005. However, according to Graph 3, the state-owned papers were neutral in their election campaigns coverage.

During the 2012 election, the *Ghanaian Chronicle* gave Nana Akufo-Addo 100 percent favourable election campaign stories with John Mahama getting no favourable election campaign story. This also gives difference of 100 percentage point. The *Daily Guide* also recorded for Nana Akufo-Addo 100 percent favourable election campaign stories with John Mahama receiving no favourable story. This again means 100 percentage point difference.

Again the *Daily Graphic* gave Nana Akufo-Addo 54.6 percent stories with John Mahama gaining 27.3 percent stories. The difference is 27.3 percentage point. On its part, *The Ghanaian Times* gave John Mahama 100 percent favourable election campaign stories and Nana Akufo-Addo with no favourable election campaign story at all. Combining the evidence displayed in Grapg 3, it makes the whole picture clear that Nana Akufo-Addo of NPP stood out as the preferred candidate who the press projected most in a positive light during the 2008 and 2012 elections. In this case, to what extent was the press negative in its election campaign coverage?

7.7 Comparison of negative framing of candidates

The media have often been accused of being too negative in their election campaign coverage. Graph 4 deals with the extent to which negative coverage of elections dominated the press coverage of the 2008 and 2012 elections in Ghana. Interestingly, the outcome shows that the press coverage of the two elections was more positive in tone than negative in tone. However, the state-owned press was more negative than the privately-owned press. Graph 4 provides an overview of the results of the negative coverage of the two elections. It indicates that in 2008, the *Ghanaian Chronicle* gave Atta mills of NDC, 80 percent stories with Nana Akufo-Addo of NPP recording no negative election campaign story. This is 80 percentage point difference. The *Daily Guide* also published 87.5 percent negative stories for Atta Mills and then recorded 12.5 percent stories for Nana Akufo-Addo showing difference of 75 percentage point with the two state-owned papers under study reporting no negative story about any of the candidates.

Graph 4: A comparison of frequency of negative framing of presidential candidates during the 2008 and 2012 general election campaigns in Ghana
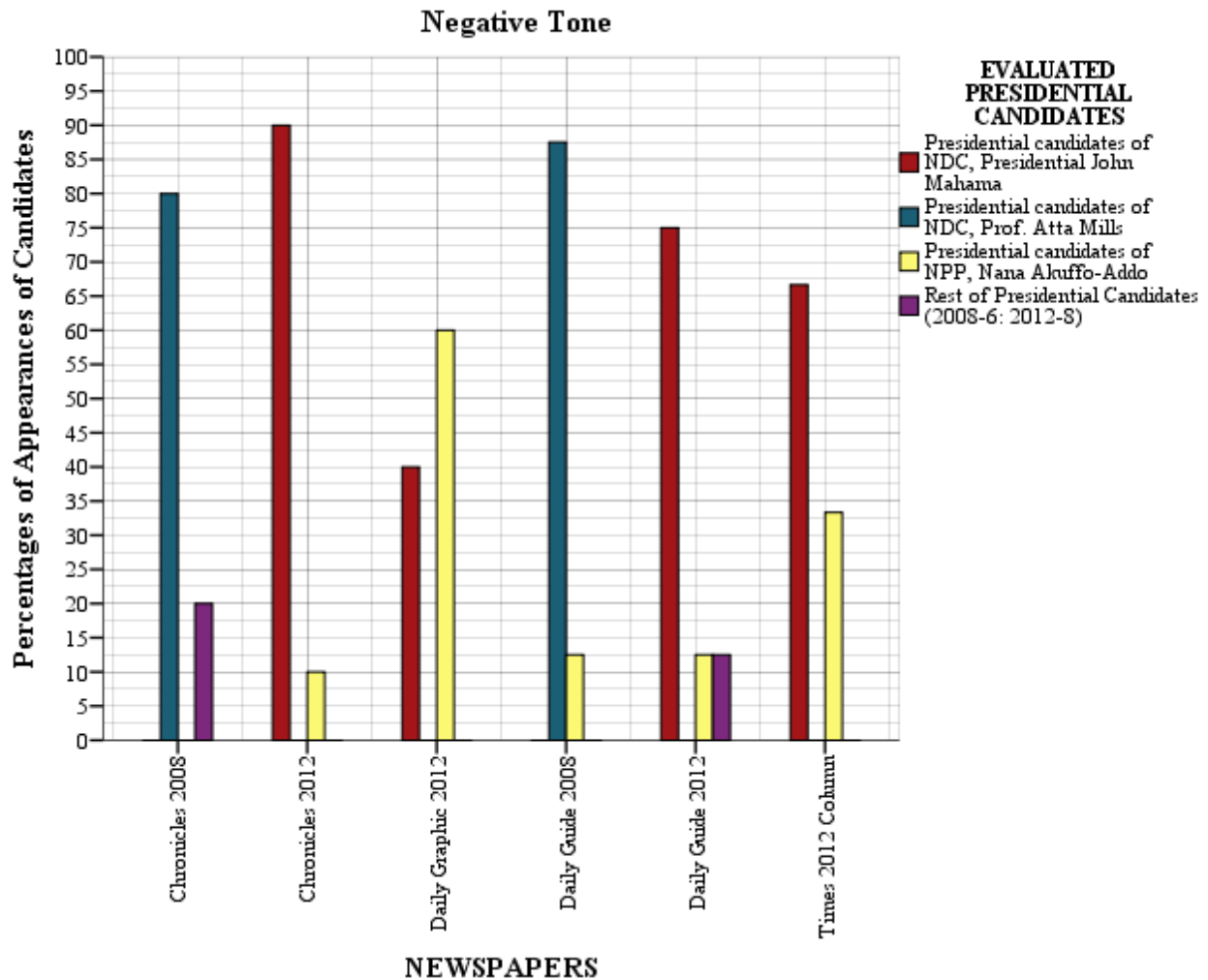
In the 2012 election, the *Ghanaian Chronicle* gave John Mahama of NDC, 90 percent negative stories with Nana Akufo-Addo getting 10 percent stories yielding difference of 80 percentage point. The *Daily Guide* on its part, had for John Mahama, who served as the vice-president from 2009 to 2012 and then was sworn in as the president on July 24, 2012 when his predecessor, John Atta Mills died, 75 percent negative stories including a news story such as, "I am told that a number of chiefs have been given these vehicles as a means of motivating them to canvass for votes for the NDC in the 2012 elections" (The *Ghanaian Chronicle,* Tuesday, November 6, 2012 while Nana Akufo-Addo also received 12.5 percent stories.

This shows difference of 62.5 percentage point. The *Daily Graphic* gave Nana Akufo-Addo 60 percent stories and John Mahama, who was elected on the ticket of the National Democratic Congress to serve his first term as president on December 7, 2012, 40 percent stories. Thus recording difference of 20 percentage point. *The Ghanaian Times* on its part reported no negative story about any of the presidential candidates.

Therefore, combining all the negative election campaign stories, Nana Akufo-Addo had the least negative stories published about him. It is also clear that the privately-owned papers under study significantly framed more negative stories against the NDC's presidential candidates in 2008 and 2012 elections. Indeed this finding is a reflection of previous findings discussed in chapter four. In 2008 the two state-owned papers were neutral. However, in 2012 the *Daily Graphic* framed more negative stories against NPP's candidate, Nana Akufo-Addo. *The Ghanaian Times* was neutral in its coverage.

The above demonstrates that the four Ghanaian papers sampled for the study devoted greater attention to positive election campaigns than negative election campaigning. However, it must be pointed out that the newspapers devoted extensive coverage of the limited number of negative election campaigns stories to the candidates of the NDC, thereby projecting a bias negative image of the NDC to the electorates. If this form of bias should continue, elections in Ghana may begin to experience more negative election campaigns in the future. In effect, if a political party or candidate continues to attract more negative coverage than positive election coverage, such a political party or candidate may be tempted to also go negative in order to reach more electorates. With this kind of bias framing, election campaigns may lead to increase in mistrust of politics including elections which may project a bad picture of how politics and elections are really practised. This result which shows that the Ghanaian tone of election campaign coverage was more positive than negative conflicts with a number of studies which indicate that across democracies, negative tone dominates election campaigns coverage (Lengauer et. al., 2007; Benoit, Stein and Hansen, 2005). Ghana's election campaigns positive tone may be as a result of conscious effort of candidates to engage in more issues-based campaigning since the politicians may have come to

the realization that the electorates were more interested in the issues of peace, education and the economy.

It is interesting to note that although NDC's presidential candidates attracted more negative stories in the four newspapers, the candidates appeared to have benefited from the many stories on the issue of peace the newspapers published. This is because the issue of peace was more associated with the campaign messages of the NDC. In other words, NDC appeared to own the issue of peace, which is referred to as 'issue ownership' (Petrocik, 1996; Ansolabehere and Lyengar, 1994). What this means is that it is possible, whether consciously or otherwise, for one or other political party or candidate to benefit disproportionately from media emphasis on a particular issue during election campaigns coverage. In this case, the form of bias seems to be a significant one. The gains from an issue ownership is as a result of the main political parties with time creating a niche for greater effectiveness in particular issues. In effect, issue association with a particular political party gives an impression of the ability of such a party to implement superior policies and programmes in an issue area (Petrocik, Beniot and Hansen, 2003: 601).

To illustrate this point, in the United States, for instances, studies point out that as the Democratic Party gains from election campaigns focusing its campaign message on social welfare issues, Republican Party, on the other hand, also benefits from election campaign message focusing on budgetary issues and the size of the government (Petrocik et.al, 2003). In the experience of Ghana, it appears that the NDC is gradually growing to own the issues of peace and education. This is because for some time now their candidates have been associated with peace and also the party is investing so much in the education sector. And it appears these two issues are going to be part of their campaign message in the 2016 election. When the party gets the media coverage focus on these two issues, it should reflect more favourably on the NDC. Agenda-setting claims that electorates place more value on those issues which attract the most coverage in news media (McCombs and Shaw, 1972; Hill, 1985).

On the basis of this logic, the suggestion can, therefore, be made that for an issue ownership to be meaningful, a candidate should have the ability to win the news media to give particular attention to the issue that the candidate believes has an electoral advantage. However, the theory of framing points out that the quantity of stories on a particular issue published or broadcast are less significant than the kind of frame the media engage to tell stories (Druckman, 2001). This means, the kind of frame the media use can influence electorates assessments of which political party or candidate can better implement a particular issue (Holian, 2004). For instance, on the issue of coverage of education, if the mass media focus on the welfare of teachers, the NPP's candidate is arguably most likely to gain from such coverage. On the other hand, if the news media engage a frame that focuses on educational infrastructure, the NDC candidate might be more likely to benefit from such coverage.

From the above analysis, one also gets the impression that the coverage of especially the private papers was so unrelentingly negative towards the candidates of the NDC. This unrelenting negative portrayal of the NDC is difficult to understand. However, one may suggest that it may be as a result of the fact that the NDC was born out of PNDC, which had poor human rights record and was also considered unfriendly to the media. The Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC), which overthrew a civilian administration in 1981, stayed in power for eleven years until in the early 1990s when it reluctantly agreed to constitutional rule under pressure from both external and internal forces (Ninsin, 1998:14). The anger of the media against NDC was also the fact that the military regime metamorphosed into a political Party (NDC) to contest the 1992 election which was perceived to have been rigged. Also the *Daily Guide* and the *Ghanaian Chronicle*, which are owned by members of the main opposition political party, NPP, perhaps thought of being biased and therefore gave NPP an advantage by adopting a strategy of projecting NDC in a negative light in their coverage with the hope that it would work for the NPP.

This difficulty to explain why the private press would be so negative towards NDC's presidential candidates could be the argument that perhaps Ghanaian journalists to some extent ceded control of what citizens learnt from election campaign to the voices of politicians. This is because the study shows that journalists in reporting the 2008 and 2012 elections were covering mostly

political parties' organised events, a journalism practice which is referred to as 'protocol journalism' (Taylor, 2009; Taylor and Kent, 2007). In effect, Ghanaian election campaign journalists just attended press conferences, meetings and political rallies and framed their election stories from these events. What this means is that the election campaign journalists during the 2008 and 2012 elections fed the electorates with stories based on what was said by the candidates at election campaign events. The practice of 'protocol journalism' during the two election campaigns in Ghana might be as a result of the value the media placed on breaking news. In their desire to abide by the principle of speed, speeches by politicians during the campaigns became election stories with minimal quoting of a secondary source.

However, it is significant to note that the candidates who recorded the most negative election campaigns coverage were the winners. It, therefore, appears that the NDC's two presidential candidates for the 2008 and 2012 might have benefited from the news media adopting the kind of frame which focused on the issue of peace which electorates felt the party was in a better position to handle.

It needs to be noted that the NPP's seemingly attraction to the press may also stem from the fact that during the 2000 election campaign, Kufuor then NPP's presidential candidate was able to develop a close relationship with the media. This relationship with the media seems to have been sustained by his successor, Nana Akufo-Addo, who during the 2008 election campaign also developed close relationship with the media. This appears to have made the journalists become so attached to the candidates, their personality and their political party.

In a feature article, the author writes: "the NPP has a machinery that draws in the media practitioners. Why the NDC is not doing the same beats the mind. The present political campaign sees the NPP getting the highest media coverage, not because the party has the best message, for the electorate, but it believes that the media have a big role to play in drumming their messages to the people" (*Daily Graphic*, Thursday, October 9, 2008). This, therefore, might have contributed largely to the favourable coverage of the candidate and the party.

One interesting question that develops from the above analysis is: Can it be assumed that with the evidence of this study, the news media in Ghana are pro-Akufo-Addo? Is the evidence displayed sufficient enough to point to a rooting by journalists for Nana Akufo-Addo and against the NDC's candidates, consciously or otherwise?

It may be argued that the data appears to suggest that journalists and the press were pro-Nana Akufo-Addo. What this outcome also teaches is that winning media appearance alone does not begat winning elections in Ghana. The NDC would be thankful in part to the relentless effort of the media to probably frame Nana Akufo-Addo as an elite and at the same time a militant who encouraged his followers to intimidate his opponents. Meanwhile, the same press projected Atta Mills and John Mahama as calm, peaceful and ordinary citizens with humility. However, the Deputy Communication Director of the NPP believes that it was NDC's strategy to portray Nana Akufo-Addo as a violent politician and an elite, full of arrogance (Interview, February 2012). From the above, it can be assumed that the chapter has been able to demonstrate how the four newspapers treated the various activities of the presidential candidates during the two election campaigns for the study to respond to research question two.

7.8 Response to research question two

In this case the chapter appears to have responded to research question two, which poses**: In framing the 2008 and 2012 election campaigns in Ghana, how did the newspapers treat the presidential candidates' activities they covered?**

The findings suggest that there is press personalization of election campaigns in Ghana as well as presidentialization; that is, concentration of press attention on the presidential candidates of the two main political parties, the National Democratic Congress and the New Patriotic Party. Between the two presidential candidates of the two main parties, NPP's presidential candidate received more coverage as well as more favourable coverage from the newspapers sampled for this study. With this, the study seems to suggest that the state-owned media can no longer be accused of

creating incumbency advantage; however, the press can be accused of bias. Again, unlike the advanced democracies, where studies indicate negative tone of election campaign coverage, in Ghana, the election campaign tone in the context of 2008 and 2012 elections is rather looking positive.

7.9 Summary of the chapter

The empirical evidence gathered by this study makes the issue of press personalization of election campaigns in Ghana clear. The discussions of the data from the four sampled newspapers on coverage of 2008 and 2012 election campaigns show that there is a trend of increasing press personalization as well as increasing concentration of the press coverage on the two presidential candidates of the two main political parties in the country. In line with this study, the story shows that there is indeed no clear-cut incumbent advantage for the two political parties that have been in government with regard to their personalization of their presidential candidates. However, there is an indication of a big gap between the personalization of the two incumbent ruling political parties and the other opposition political parties. In effect, the situation is not an increasing visibility of the two presidential candidates of the NDC and NPP, but rather an increasing neglect of the presidential candidates of the smaller political parties. In this case, the press in Ghana is creating the impression that it has an agenda to promote a two-party democratic political system in Ghana. However, as it appears, it is not possible for any small political party in Ghana to attract more coverage and more positive coverage. In measuring bias in the well-established democracies since 1999, it was found out that the smaller political party of the three in the United Kingdom, the Liberal Democrats, enjoyed more coverage and more positive coverage than the Labour and Conservative parties (Semetko, 2009). The next chapter of this study will demonstrate why it was difficult for smaller political parties to attract the kind of coverage that the main political parties found it easy to attract during the election campaigns in Ghana.

This study, appears to suggest that personalization of election campaigns is not similar across the globe since empirical evidence of the trend among the advanced democracies is at best mixed. It appears to suggest that there are country-specific differences in the level of media personalization

of politics and election campaigns and also of the degree of concentration of visibility of the leaders of the political parties. These differences could be due to institutional arrangements existing in individual societies' political systems, the kind of regime as well as the electoral system in place. The study of Balmas and Sheafer (2013) on political personalization suggests the increasing importance of individuals in contemporary political institutions as well as news coverage. They suggest the need for an international perspective on news coverage of political leaders, where different news values as well as individual countries' differences would have combined influence on the construction of political news stories. It is observed from this chapter that in terms of state-owned press and privately-owned press in Ghana, there was not much difference with regard to levels of personalization of election campaigns and intense visibility. In effect, not much difference in terms of treatment was accorded the two presidential candidates of the two main political parties which have ruled the country since 1992 when Ghana returned to multiparty democratic governance.

The findings also go to show that gatekeeping and framing practices of democracies across the globe appear to show some differences. The factors that influenced the selection as well as those that shaped the representation of the activities of presidential candidates during the 2008 and 2012 elections in Ghana cannot be suggested to be the same as that of the advanced democracies such as the United States in its presidential election in 2012.

Media outlets select the kind of events and issues to cover and how those events and issues are treated. Journalists may have the motivation which stories they should cover and the angle they should develop the stories from. This can take the form of bias or unbalanced reporting. Bias, therefore, impacts coverage and treatment. It impacts coverage because the probability is higher that a story on election campaign activity will be published. Journalists may have the motivation to bias stories, however, such motivation may be affected by elements such as professionalism as well as media house own controls. This chapter appears to support the findings of studies that suggest that citizens view the media as bias. However, evidence from the chapter does not support the argument that the state-owned press in Ghana is still in the business of giving incumbent candidates coverage advantage.

The chapter establishes that news media outlets select the stories to cover and how those stories are treated. According to global journalism practice model, the pillars of journalism are: objectivity, truthfulness, accuracy and balance. With the findings of the chapter indicating that the press in Ghana is bias using the 2008 and 2012 election campaigns coverage as benchmarks, the next chapter is to identify the framework that appears to define journalism practice in Ghana and then subject it to the global journalism practice framework. The idea is to explore how well or not the press in Ghana is playing its role as an effective public sphere in helping to grow and sustain the democratic governance in the country. This, hopefully, would be achieved through the technique of in-depth interviews as discussed in the methodology chapter.

Chapter 8

Cash: Is it really defining Ghana's election campaign journalism?

8.1 Overview of the chapter

It is a practice that happens all the time in the country. A political party organizes an event to comment on an issue. The room for the event gets filled up with anxious journalists who seem lucky to have been asked by the editor to cover such an event. After the event, journalists appear happy and treat themselves to free refreshments. After some time, someone appears to distribute envelopes obviously containing cash, a journalistic practice termed 'soli' (from the word, solidarity) or 'T&T' (i.e. time and transport). The cash is to pay for the cost of travel to the event location. In all these, journalists remain absolute that this practice does not influence them in any way to slant stories. However, some scholars argue that cash for news coverage is not good for editorial independence of media. Meanwhile, journalists claim they take 'soli' because of their poor salaries. According to the vice chairman of the Ghana Journalists Association, while having a conversation with a journalist, he learnt that the journalist was happy that the 2016 election was fast approaching. The vice president explained that the journalist's happy mood was because election campaign period in Ghana has come to be media's and journalists' 'cocoa season' since the media outlets make money from political adverts and journalists also make money from covering candidates and political party activities. The journalist, according to the vice chairman, is expecting to make enough money from coverage for him to pay two years, two-bed room rent advance by December 2016 or face ejection.

According to the literature, the concept of liberal journalism indicates that journalism is the gatekeeper of events and issues and also watchdogs of societies. Journalists, therefore, have the responsibility to watch over the activities of governments. In performing these crucial responsibilities, journalists are supposed to be accountable to citizens of their countries. However, from the narration above, the 'soli' practice appears to be undermining professional journalism practice in Ghana. In effect, professional principles such as fairness, truthfulness and accuracy have lost their meaning in journalism practice in the country as a result of the practice of 'soli' journalism thereby putting Ghana's democratic governance in danger.

With the above perspective, this chapter is to examine the perception of political officials toward the practice of journalism in Ghana in the context of the 2008 and 2012 election campaigns. The study predicts that so far as journalists took 'soli' for the coverage of election campaign activities, the image of the profession held by politicians would be bad and that their coverage of the elections would lack quality. This is because the focus of the elections would be slanted to favour the main candidates who the study suggests paid 'soli' for the kind of coverage they received. Therefore, these findings are a reflection of the outcome of the content analysis of this study where coverage of the two election campaigns was bias and there was no incumbent coverage advantage. If the result of the content analysis, which claims the state-owned press is no longer giving incumbent coverage advantage, one can then argue that this outcome is not as a result of any conscious effort by the gatekeepers to end the practice of incumbency advantage but rather the main opposition political party was in the position to pay for coverage in the state-owned newspapers for its candidate not only to receive more coverage, but to also attract more positive stories in order to dominate the press.

The Deputy Communication Director of the NPP, Perry Okudzeto pointed out that the party during the elections understudy constituted a media monitoring team with the responsibility to monitor the news media to make sure every activity of the party and the candidate have been given the expected coverage and there should be quick response to any bad coverage (Interview, February, 2015). This shows the value the party placed on the media for the party to spend on its election campaigns coverage. This may explain Nana Akufo-Addo's press dominance for him to have had better coverage than Atta Mills in 2008 and John Mahama as incumbent in 2012 election. The overall findings seem to suggest that as long as a candidate has the financial muscle to pay for coverage, such a candidate stands the chance of attracting more coverage and more positive coverage to become the most visible candidate even in the state-owned media.

8.2 What constitutes 'soli' journalism?

According to Skjerdal (2010: 369), 'brown envelope journalism' which in Ghana it is referred to as 'soli' is an activity in journalism practice involving gifts received by journalists from sources

of information for coverage of events. In Ghana the term 'soli' was developed out of the word 'solidarity,' indicating that the source of an event out of sympathy for the poor condition of the journalist would want to show some concern therefore, reward the journalist with an envelope containing money (Hasty, 2005: 346) after coverage of an event. Hasty suggests that such a practice can help deepen relationship between the two parties. Ekerikevwe (2009) describes such an act as journalists demanding bribe or other forms of gratification for coverage of events. In this case, Ekeanyanwu and Obianigwe (2012: 517) believe that journalists receiving gifts would exert pressure on them to give sources the kind of coverage that they expect, which may affect the quality of reporting. With such a practice, being defined by monetary gains, the story that will be published become a commercial product paid for. On his part, Skjerdal (2010: 370) stretches the issue further arguing that the practice, which is difficult to trace its origin, corrupts the journalist who is credited as the custodian of the truth. This, behaviour, Skjerdal points out demonstrates the disregard of journalistic ethical demands and the crucifixion of the fundamental function of journalism profession.

8.3 'Brown envelope' journalism: Where did it come from?

Researchers are not very sure where the term 'brown envelope' developed from. As some trace the term to West Africa, other scholars also trace the term to the United Kingdom in the 1990s (Forbes, 2005). Brown envelopes were associated with the "cash-for-questions affair" in the United Kingdom. The story goes that in that affair, according to Harrods chief, some lobbyists working for Mohamed Al-Fayed were said to have given money to two members of the British parliament. The rational was for them to ask specific questions on the agenda for the House of Commons (Bartlett, 1999). In telling the story of the affair on October 20, 1994, *The Guardian* reported that the money was in brown envelopes when it was given to the two members of parliament. With that experience, 'brown envelope' became a term adopted and use to indicate money from sources of information to journalists covering events (Forbes, 2005: 82). Another account of the origin of the term appears to conflict with that of Forbes' narration. According to Bamiro (1997), the term 'brown envelope' was known to Ghanaian as well as Nigerian journalism practitioners and sources of information earlier and it developed from the practice of taking money concealed in envelopes, although not always brown envelopes for coverage of events. Even

though it is difficult for scholars to be exact as to the origin of the term, Uko (2004: 55) makes the point that by 1983, journalists in Nigeria were collecting 'brown envelopes from events organisers for coverage. The GJA Vice President also recollected that as far back as 1983 when he was studying journalism, he was aware of the term 'soli' and 'brown envelope'.

8.4 Election journalists and 'soli'

It appears that because 'soli' journalism is considered as illicit payment of money, which takes place on a very personal level with confidentiality, it is difficult to really establish its level in Ghana since journalists shy away from discussing the practice. For instance, all the four editors interviewed claimed that although they were pressured by politicians to place their stories on certain preferred pages, use particular pictures especially those that depicted huge crowd at political rallies and write the stories from a certain angle, they did not take 'soli.' In addition, the editors also gave the impression that they were not aware if their reporters took 'soli' for covering the two elections. In responding to a question: "Were you sometimes pressured by politicians for them to have their way?" All the four editors responded that they were indeed sometimes pressured by the politicians. "What was the nature of the pressure?" According to them, the politicians would make all the arguments in an attempt to convince them as to why their candidates and political parties deserved to have their way. "Were you promised money by any of the politicians if allowed to have their way?" In an answer to this question all the four editors answered that they stood on their grounds not to give in to the politicians. They also indicated in the interview that they were not aware if any of their reporters took 'soli' for covering election campaigns. According to Kobby Asmah, the political editor of the *Daily Graphic*, if politicians gave 'soli' to any of his reporters it had no effect on the editorial decision of the paper since those reporters did not decide on the election stories to use (Interview, February, 2015).

However, on the other hand, when a former political reporter was asked: "Did you ever take 'soli' from political parties when covering their election campaign activities?" Zakaria Tanko Musah (now a lawyer and journalism lecturer) remarked:

"Well, yes. After each campaign event, someone would appear and call all the journalists and distributed envelopes to individual journalists. And any time I opened my envelopes, there was money in them for me. They would not tell you what the money was meant for. It has become an open secret that if journalists are reporting on a candidate, it is expected that the event organisers would give the journalists money. Indirectly the candidate is saying I want to be in your good books, I want you to be nice to me and my party in your coverage." According to the respondent, all the journalists who were attached to the political parties to cover their election campaigns activities had their accommodation, transportation as well as subsistence taking care of by the political parties. He noted that in order for the candidates and political parties to be sure of receiving positive coverage with pictures occupying big space, the communication team would normally send ahead money to the editors of the various newspapers, since editors do not go out to report, their gifts are sent to them in their various offices. This was supposed to be a guarantee for positive stories and big space for candidates' activities (Interview, February 2015).

"So how much were you making covering the election campaigns?"

"Unfortunately, I cannot remember the exact amount, but I can tell you that I made good money to my surprise. My surprise may be because it was my first time of covering such events and earning so much. I found covering election campaign activities so lucrative. With this, I was all the time looking forward to being assigned to cover election campaign events. So you can imagine, if even as a junior reporter I was making good amount of money how much more the senior reporters and editors. If I should tell you, the politicians were ready to pay especially if as a journalist you wrote the kind of stories they were expecting about their activities and more so with pictures showing big crowd at their rallies. This practice could earn a journalist extra 'soli' for being such an 'intelligent' reporter."

One interesting debate on 'soli' journalism is the extent to which a practice of this nature is affecting the quality of election campaign coverage which leads to such a critical decision as to voting for a leader. Journalists are so quick   to insist the practice does not in any way influence

the stories they write and publish. In reference to the question: "How did 'soli' affect your election campaign coverage?" Look, journalists boast that 'soli' does not influence the stories that they end up publishing or broadcast. This entrenched position that journalists have taken is never true. The reality is that when you take 'soli' after covering an election campaign event, you become very conscious of what to write and publish. You would obviously not want to publish a story that would go to discredit the political party or candidate you have taken 'soli' from. You would do everything possible to write a positive story about the party or candidate from which or who you have taken the 'soli.' The fact is that after such an event, copies of the speeches of the presidential candidates were distributed to journalists indicating that they expected the journalists to reproduce the speeches for readers. There was no opportunity for journalists to ask candidates questions. And by the time you got to the newsroom, the news editor and all those who matter had already been compromised by the political party. So you ended up producing the kind of story that would please the officials of the political party as well as the candidate and the following day you got phone calls from political party officials hailing you for a good job done" Zakaria pointed out. "If a reporter had accepted 'soli' and yet published a negative story about a candidate, the candidate or the party in question would have asked that such a reporter was not assigned again to cover the party's events. The editor would have had no alternative than to withdraw such a reporter." "So tell me, as a poor reporter why write a negative story?" he asked.

Lodamo and Skjerdal (2010) who appear to agree with Zakaria point out that when journalist is bribed in the form of 'soli' such a journalist is eventually forced to give a positive account of events irrespective of how the events would end up. This, the two scholars explain, is because 'soli' is an expression of "an unwritten contract between the public officer and the reporters, whereby positive promotion is expected in return." In effect, when a journalist takes 'soli' for covering an event, which has an obvious negative side, such a journalist would have to do everything possible to overlook the negative side of the story. This practice may explain why the 2008 and 2012 election campaign coverage in Ghana recorded more positive and less negative campaign stories. According to the Deputy Communication Director of the NPP, "soli does wonders. You get what you want." Besides getting positive coverage, Zakaria claimed that the amount of 'soli' a political party or candidate would pay especially to the editors determined the

size of space for the story. And indeed from the content analysis, it was clear that the two main political parties as well as their presidential candidates attracted much bigger space for their coverage than their counterparts, the smaller parties. This is because as the in-depth interview revealed, the NDC and the NPP had big budget for 'soli' payment. This may explain why the two parties and their candidates could attract half-page and even full-page stories with pictures to enhance the stories as a way of persuading electorates and also to impress the parties' officials. In view of the above, Adesoji (2009) and Ndangam (2006) argue that 'soli' journalism practice undermines objectivity in journalism profession. And without objectivity election campaigns stories would lack quality. What then promotes the practice of 'soli' journalism?

8.5 What accounts for 'soli' journalism?

In making a case for motivation for journalists to engage in 'soli' journalism, poor conditions of service and poor salaries have always been cited (Mpagaze and White, 2010; Ndangam, 2006; Diedong, 2008). It has been argued that one most significant problem making it so difficult for Ghanaian journalists to uphold the ethics of the profession is obviously the level of poverty of journalists. The remuneration of Ghanaian journalists is so low. In Ghana over 40 percent of journalists receive less than average monthly wage of GH¢200.00 (estimated at €57.14) (myjoyonline, 2011). Added to this is the fact that media houses could owe their journalists in months of arrears. "The owners of these media outlets are not bothered because they are aware that the journalists are using the outlet to make money to take care of themselves, appearing as if journalists are just mere tools for media owners and politicians to be used for their own selfish interests" The GJA Vice President said. It is then obvious that in such a situation, journalists are made to find ways of making money on their own. For instance, one political party official, Atik Mohammed of PNC in an interview for this study, noted that during the 2012 election campaign some journalists approached his party with a written proposal asking the party to allow them to put together strategic communication packages to enhance the party's and its candidate's media coverage for a fee. "We refused to accept their proposal and we could feel their hatred for the party and its presidential candidate" Atik noted.

It is no secret in Ghana that some journalists especially during election campaigns unofficially work for political parties and candidates for a fee. Some senior journalists are paid to link up with some editors to influence media coverage. Some too write favourable stories about a candidate for fee while others also influence radio and television political programmes hosts for candidates to gain access to such high rated programmes with preconceived questions that would enhance a candidate's chances. Commenting on the poor conditions of service for journalists in an interview, Mathias Tibu, Vice President of GJA observes: "The ridiculously low salaries giving to journalists is worrying. Journalists disregard for the ethics of the profession can be attributed to the fact that they are financially not secured. If a journalist from the most well paid media outfit in the country is receiving such indecent salary as low as GHC 1,513.00 ($378.25) it is so easy for one to be corrupted. However, the same journalists are accusing politicians of being too corrupt. I just think we need to shake up the media. We need to do something to change things for the good of our democracy as well as the image of the profession (Interview, February, 2015). In effect, 'soli' lessens the pressure on media owners who want to maximize profit to pay better salaries to their journalists since there is less agitation from journalists who after all, get paid by sources of information. It is also worth noting that with the harsh economic conditions in some African countries such as Nigeria and Ghana and desperation to earn income, journalists are forced to negotiate wages individually with media owners making some of them to accept any wage offered with some agreeing to very low wages just to make a living (Uzochukwu, 2014).

According to the Vice President, because of low salaries paid to journalists in the country, the journalism profession continues to lose its fine experienced journalists to other seemingly lucrative professions such as Law, Public Relations, Marketing and recently, Politics. "Today we have a number of journalists who have studied law and have joined the law profession" the Vice President pointed out. "Journalism is now a spring board on which people stand on only to spring one fine day and land in a more rewarding profession" Tibu noted. The Vice President hinted that Ghana Institute of Journalism's record of their four Master of Art programmes indicates that journalists who apply to do any of the programmes, go in for either Public Relations or Development Communication. "Only a few would apply to do the Journalism or the Media Management programmes. This trend is disturbing" The Vice President added.

On his part, when asked for his view on the claim that Ghanaian journalists take 'soli' because of poor salaries they receive, Zakaria Tanko Musah answered: "In Ghana today, there are many people who are well paid yet they are taking bribes. It is true that salaries of journalists are unbelievably low but that should not give them the license to engage in illegal or unethical practices. I can tell you that the very few journalists in the country who are well paid are receiving 'soli' from all manner of people" (Interview, February 2015). On his part, Atik of the PNC remarked: "Only few Ghanaians will deny that most of the media houses and journalists are in financial difficulties. But I ask the question, should their eagerness to live make them apply all sorts of tricks? Are we then upholding the principle of the ends justify the means?

As the editors were vehemently denying the practice of 'soli' journalism and insisted they did not take 'soli' from political parties and candidates all the three political parties' officials said they paid money to journalists for coverage of their election campaign activities. This goes to confirm the claims by Tanko Musah that journalists took 'soli' for coverage of election campaigns. The Deputy Communication Director of the NPP, Perry Okudzeto in responding to the question: "Did you give money to journalists after covering your party's election campaign activities?" He observed:

"There is something we call in Ghana 'soli' and I do not think any organization in Ghana can say that it does not give 'soli.' I do not think it is something we should shy away from. It has been a practice over the years." Okudzeto argued that 'soli' has become a tradition in the country and that his party was not ready to wage war against it. This is because according to the Deputy Communication Director, politically it was not a smart thing to do, therefore, the party will keep the tradition of giving 'soli.' "It would be suicidal for political parties in Ghana to be the ones to fight against this tradition" Okudzeto stated.

Responding to the same question, the Communication Director of the NDC, pointed out: "Once a practicing journalist, I feel so uncomfortable discussing 'soli.' This is because it is a shameful practice which undermines the independence of the profession. I took 'soli' as a journalist covering

events and today as a politician I gave 'soli' during election campaigns. It is a horrible thing to do but the fact is that if as a Communication Director my party's candidate should be featured in the media to the expectation of the party, there is no alternative than to pay 'soli.' After all, the budget for the two campaigns that you are referring to included 'soli' for media coverage" James Asante, the Communication Director of the NDC noted. "As a student of Journalism, Media and Communication, I have come to the conclusion that as objectivity is said to define journalism profession in the Western world, development also defines journalism in Asia unfortunately what seems to define our journalism is 'soli,' period" Asante noted further. The Communication Director was convinced that if any of the smaller political parties could also pay the kind of 'soli' the NDC and the NPP paid during the 2008 and 2012 elections the nature of the coverage of the two elections would have been different.

In order to determine the effect payment of money for coverage had on the overall coverage of their election campaign activities, answering the question: "What did you gain from the payment of 'soli' for coverage of the party's election activities?" The political officials of the two main parties appeared satisfied with the quantity of stories each received from the press especially, the state-owned since they have better reach across the country. According to Okudzeto, 'soli' "does wonders. Although it is expensive, you get journalists to give you what you want. I am sure your study will reveal that my party and candidate were always in the newspapers with good stories backed by appealing pictures."

Interviewing the political party officials, one had the sense that political parties in the country set aside budget specifically for media coverage of their election campaigns. And this happens to be a huge budget, which the political parties' officials were not ready to disclose. "Sorry, I am not in the position to tell you the kind of budget we put aside for media coverage of our election campaigns. But to give you some insight, can you imagine a campaign trail moving along with about ten or more journalists for about a week in this country? Their accommodation bill, feeding bill, transportation and something for the pocket. And after all these you lose the election. That is multiparty democracy for you" Okudzeto pointed out. "If you really want your candidate to get the kind of media exposure that is satisfactory, then the candidate or the party should be ready to

spend on the journalists as well as the editors of the various media houses in the country and this is besides the huge budget for adverts," the NPP Deputy Communication Director further pointed out. "Trust me, without good budget, forget it. Coverage of your candidate and party campaign activities will be poor and the party will blame the communication team for not working hard. Some party members will even accuse the team of pocketing the money meant for coverage. It is a very difficult job" Perry Okudzeto noted (Interview, February, 2015).

The People's National Convention (PNC) Policy Director, Atik Mohammed also claimed that his party did not get the expected coverage in the newspapers as well as the electronic media because the party and the other smaller political parties did not have the kind of media coverage budget that the NDC and the NPP had and displayed. "If we had that kind of budget and spent lavishly on journalists and the editors as shamefully did by the so called big parties we would have attracted better coverage." Atik Mohammed (now the General Secretary) noted: "If today you should ask any journalists and editors if they took money from the political parties for coverage of campaigns they will have the audacity to deny ever taking money. We should begin to have a crop of journalists who understand the importance of creating opportunities for every political party and presidential candidates who speak on realistic policies for the country. That is what those of us in the PNC believe professional journalism that is responsible to its society is all about (Interview, February, 2015).

One other interesting factor which leads to 'soli' journalism in Ghana appears to be the fact that Ghanaian journalists have prior knowledge that event organizers or Public Relations officers always include in their budget for events money to be paid to invited journalists and therefore, the organizers take money from organizations in order to pay 'soli' to journalists who would cover the event and even go to the extent of paying 'soli' to the editors in their offices to be sure that their events would be given the kind of coverage that would be positive. With the knowledge that they have been budgeted for, these journalists would push for the organizers to pay them for coverage. Therefore, after the event, journalists would stay around the event location indirectly signaling to the organizers that they are waiting for their well-deserved 'soli.' According to Atik Mohammed of PNC, "you dare not refuse to pay Ghanaian journalists 'soli,' if you do not pay

'soli' or the 'soli' you pay is considered inadequate, you either get a small space for your story or negative story or your story is not published at all or they boycott your programmes. In fact campaign coverage has become more or less for the highest bidder, the NPP and the NDC will continue to dominate the pages of our newspapers" Atik claimed.

As to why Public Relations Officers as well as event's organisers are ready to pay 'soli' for coverage, former Vice President of the Institute of Public Relations, Ghana, Perry Ofosu in an interview for this study pointed out that companies and political parties pay 'soli' in order for them to maximize their budget. According to him, it is cheaper to pay 'soli' to create awareness for products and services in the country than to pay high media commercial fees. "So you see the motivation to pay 'soli' is high," Perry indicated.

'Soli', according to Birhanu (2010), is bribery in journalism which is collapsing the independent, accurate, objective and informative journalism. Lodamo and Skjerdal (2010) also add that 'soil' journalism spoils journalistic independence and damages public confidence in the media. This practice, where journalists can sometimes go to the extent of even heckling event's organisers for not giving 'soli' after coverage, Mpagaze and White (2010) describe as unethical and unprofessional.

8.6 'Soli' journalism and ethical consideration

Hasty (2005:135) points out that some Ghanaian journalists especially from the private press believe that 'soli' does not constitute a form of bribery because they see it as an appreciative gift or compensation for risk. Indeed Herman Wasserman (2008: 2) argues that "instead of labeling this practice as bribery and simply condemning it" one should use a "hybrid ethical framework" in examining 'soli.' The framework as noted by Wasserman, gives regard to the ethical principles of fairness, credibility and truthfulness and at the same time gives recognition to the socio-economic conditions under which journalists in Africa would have to practise the journalism profession. Retief (2002:135) believes that gifts in the practice of journalism amount to bribery.

He points out: "Never use your poor salary as an excuse for accepting free meals." It must be noted that scholars of journalism ethics see 'soli' as problematic and therefore, unethical which is likely to affect the quality of journalistic products. On his part, Frere (2010) believes that the act of journalists accepting gifts leads to deceiving citizens. This, he explains, is because issues and events are falsely published as neutral news stories.

Yusha'u (2009:167) is of the view that the practice of journalism "cannot be practised outside the culture and political system in which it is located. In other words, in Ghana for instance, with its strong clientelism tradition, it goes without saying that journalism practice has the habit of developing strong bonds between journalists and sources of information. With such relationship there is no motivation for investigative journalism to dig out scandal. This may have contributed to the desire of Ghanaian journalists to prefer to do most of the election campaign stories in 2008 and 2012 in straight news style.

It is no secret that the patronage system, in which the 'soli' giver indirectly demand certain services from the journalists has virtually become institutionalized with the development in the Ghanaian society. It is, therefore, argued that the prevalence of 'soli' today is informed by the wider corrupt social as well as political system in the country. For instance, a presidential candidate who wants media visibility and positive image, would entice the journalists with gifts. The politician can even pay for journalist to drop scandal stories against him or his party. In offering analysis of 'soli' in journalism practice in Ghana, Hasty (2005:366) draws attention to the kind of practice of journalism in the country where it is difficult to understand why for instance, journalists working in the private press would expose corruption in government while they too are receiving 'soli' from sources of information. The difficulties journalism practice in Ghana is facing, it is argued, is partly due to the owners of the media outlets not making it difficult for their journalists to resist the practice of 'soli' journalism. It appears that because they are not ready to pay the journalists better salaries these owners do not have the moral strength to institute measures to kill such a practice.

Unethical journalism practice unquestionably, shows an element of unprofessionalism, which Nyamnjoh (2001) argues, is connected to the social and political context. Arguing further, Nyamnjoh (2005: 65) makes the point that in such a situation, it is virtually impossible for "even the most committed professionals to excel ethically in the African context." Ndangam (2006: 838) also points out that it is not acceptable for a pluralistic media society practising liberal democracy to be unfortunately thriving and sustaining itself through the institutionalised "culture of bribes, self-censorship and compromised integrity." On the basis of what appears as the 'soli-infected' Ghanaian media market, the global principles of journalism practice are meaningless to the Ghanaian journalism practice. To this end, Agbanu (2009: 13) calls for a new kind of journalism informed by local ethical standard and news judgement. According to him, such kind of journalism model should take into consideration the values of Western journalism, which make the practice of global model of journalism in Africa too difficult.

It is suggested that the level of bribery everywhere in a society would go to affect the practice of journalism. In other words, corruption begets corruption (Omenugha and Oji, 2008). In Ghana, some judges in the country have been filmed taking bribes before they came out with their judgements. With the title, "Bribery scandal rocks Judiciary" the *Daily Graphic* of September 9, 2015 reports: "It may go down in history as the single most massive bribery scandal to hit Ghana's Judiciary, as 180 officials of the Judiciary Service have been caught on camera taking bribes and extorting money from litigants." The story continues: "Thirty-four of the suspected culprits are said to be judges at the High, the Circuit and the District courts." The Ghanaian police have also been accused of taking bribes in executing their duties.

"Eighty-nine per cent of respondents in the latest findings of the Afrobarometre Survey have accused the Police Service of being the most corrupt public institution in the country" (Ghana News Agency, December 5, 2014). There is also film evidence to suggest that Custom officers are in the habit of taking bribes. Even Members of Parliaments are accused of being influenced with money in performing their duties to the society. "A fellow of the Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences, Prof. Agyemang Badu Akosa has described Ghana's Parliamentarians as a bunch of corrupt people who are out there to enrich themselves." The story continues: "According to him,

his judgment of the country's Legislature is based on a personal experience he has had with them while serving in Public Service as a Director-General of the Ghana Medical Health Service" (www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage).

From the discussions above, the impression one gets is that despite the advantages that incumbents candidates are said to have, once an opposition political party is able to come up with the kind of budget that can pay sufficient 'soli' to election campaign journalists as well as editors, it is possible for an opposition candidate and a political party to influence and shape media coverage of election campaigns in Ghana to a particular candidate's favour. The above discussions also appear to suggest that as long as it is 'soli' that is serving as the framework for journalism practice in Ghana, then one argues that it is the 'soli' model that is going to define Ghana's election campaign journalism. In this case, the two main political parties, the NDC and the NPP will continue to enjoy high media visibility because they have the resources to play the political game in the media, probably, following the footsteps of the advanced democracies such as the United States, where election campaigns are being staged in the media at a very high cost.

It should be noted that besides 'soli' influencing journalism practice in Ghana, the in-depth interview also shows that the press in Ghana is being driven by advertising revenue, which appears to be the only alternative in keeping a highly expensive media system running. Indeed all the four editors interviewed for this study indicated that one critical factor that they take into consideration when performing their gatekeeping function is making profit for their newspapers. It worth noting at this point that the *Daily Graphic* as well as *The Ghanaian Time*s although are state-owned do not receive any funding from the state. They are, therefore, operating as business entities. The Political Editor of the *Daily Graphic*, Kobby Asmah noted: "When covering election campaigns, we are conscious that we are also in business, therefore, we should take advantage of the occasion to make money for the outlet. People criticize us for devoting the kind of space that we give to the NPP and the NDC. The fact still remains that apart from the two political parties having large followers to read their stories, during election campaigns, we make good money from the adverts they place in the paper." "Does it not make business sense for us to pay particular attention to them?" Kobby asked.

The next section explores briefly the effect that commercialization media model is having on the journalistic profession in Ghana. This is necessary since during the in-depth interview all the three officials of the NDC, the NPP and the PNC revealed that during the 2008 and 2012 election campaigns in the country, journalists received 'soli' for covering the elections and also the editors were conscious of making money for their papers. Hence, this might have affected the performance of the election campaigns journalists as well as editors. On the basis of the above discussions, it is suggested that Ghanaian journalists, editors and the press have not been as effective as they ought to be in communicating to Ghanaians the 2008 as well as 2012 election campaigns' events and issues.

The section will also look at the lack of professionalism and media corruption as the bane of the Ghanaian media. Journalism practice in Ghana has indeed declined in public esteem. For instance, the Ghana Integrity, a local chapter of the Transparency International ranked the media as one of the most corrupt institutions in the country (Ghana Integrity Initiative, 2011). Also the 2011/2012 worldwide index by Reporters without Borders Report indicates that Ghana has dropped some points in media performance (Reporters without Borders, 2012). The section also makes the point that Ghanaian journalistic professional model is finding it difficult to catch up with the liberal professional model because of historical and development conditions which are different from that of the liberal advanced democracies. The section first explores the extent the liberal model of journalism profession can be used to determine professionalism in an emerging democracy such as Ghana. And finally, it will discuss the effect of commercialization of the Ghanaian media on journalism practice in the country.

8.7 Global model of journalistic profession: Does it really matter?

It appears the world is beginning to see similar media systems and the practice of journalism although there are differences among societies of the world. To this end, McQuail (1994:28-29) observes that the development of a global media organization is leading to an "international media culture." This appears to argue that the world is seeing similar standards and similar in text, genres as well as communication substance. Such a situation, it is suggested, is as a result of the world

becoming globalized thus reflecting the social structures, relations as well as cultures. This is also reflecting on the expansion of the free market philosophy in operation in the Western democracies (McQuail, 1994:11-12).

With evidence of similarities in media systems across the world, this chapter suggests that individual country's media system differs from other systems in other societies. In this situation, journalism practice including its professional culture cannot be the same. This is because media industries are influenced and shaped by individual country's political system, culture, history and economic situations. With a globalized liberal media system, societies across the globe are sharing similar notions. For instance, concentration of media ownership, deregulation, privatization and commercialization are becoming the order of the day. Even with this, it is difficult for one to suggest that journalism across the globe is using the Anglo-American model, which stresses objectivity in the practice of the journalistic profession. The Ghanaian contemporary journalism practice can, therefore, be presented as an example, which appears to conflict with the global liberal model of journalistic profession. The Ghanaian situation suggests that despite the era of globalization, journalists in Ghana have their own way of practising the profession. The in-depth interviews conducted as part of the methods engaged to resolve the research problem, revealed a major issue, that is, journalists in Ghana take money for coverage of such an important national event like election campaigns. As such journalism practice in Ghana lacks professionalism. This is because the practice would erode their independence.

The point has been made that the growth of media systems in individual societies is influenced by a number of factors and the form that journalistic profession is taking which is termed "professional model" is shaped by the liberal tradition. This professional model, according to Mancini (2000:285), appears to be a model which is widely theorized, discussed and shared all the world over. McQuail (1994:145) explains that what defines the professional model or Anglo-American model is objectivity or neutrality. In effect, objectivity happens to underline the way journalism is practised, which involves gathering of relevant information, processing such information and supplying the information which then becomes news to news media audiences. McQuail identifies some key elements with regard to journalistic practice. These include taking a

178

position of detachment and neutrality towards the issue or event of reporting. In effect, this calls for the absence of subjectivity or personal involvement, lack of partisanship, upholding the principles of accuracy and truthfulness and finally, lack of ulterior motive or service to one's party.

Nichols and McChesney (2005) are doubtful whether objectivity really informs the practice of journalism even in the United States. According to these authors, even the strongest proponents of neutral journalism have come to accept that values play an important role in story selection, deciding what gets covered and what does not and how the coverage is framed. Nichols and McChesney (2005) therefore make the point that journalists reporting an issue or event cannot be expected to be objective. Instead of the notion of objectivity, they propose terms such as fairness, accuracy and balance. On their part, Schudson and Anderson (2008:99) observe that: "The question of the manner by which objectivity functions within a larger occupational, political and economic social structure is more complicated and difficult to discern." In this case, the principle of objectivity in the practice of journalism is not real and thus cannot be applied in practice.

The professional model of journalism, which claims autonomous statutes, brings up the issue of journalism serving the interest of the public and not the interests of any particular party or owners of any social organization. One would ask: To what extent, therefore, can the professional model of journalism be applicable to the Ghanaian situation with its different political culture and development?

Taking the example of Italy, Mancini (2000:266) argues: "In reality journalists act in different ways: they follow a different model of journalism." Based on this assertion then Ghanaian journalism practice is expected to follow a different model. This is because the Ghanaian society has its own political and development peculiarities and these make it difficult for the society to grow journalism professional culture strictly in line with the liberal journalism profession model. McNair (1998:64) reminds one that the historical processes with which journalism was developed as well as modern social conditions within which the profession was grown are likely to influence and shape journalism. Nichols and McChesney (2005) note that professional journalism gives

editors and journalists independence from the owners' political orientation as well as from commercial pressures not to shape the news to satisfy advertisers. In performing this task, journalists place value on being fair and being accurate. According to these two scholars, it is sinful, a career killer for journalists to take bribes or to fabricate stories.

It is worth noting that the liberal multiparty democratic governance and its functions in Ghana since 1992 seem to have contributed in shaping the character of its news media irrespective of the peculiarities of the Ghanaian society suggesting that the liberal professional media model cannot be applicable to all emerging democracies including Ghana. One can use Mancini (2000:267) to explain this situation as follows: "Journalism does not grow in a vacuum: it is the fruit of the interaction between different actors and systems and such differences in social structure and context have to be taken into account even when theorizing models of journalism."

Theoretically, Ghanaian journalists pride themselves for being fair, equal and balanced in their reportage. However, this study has demonstrated beyond doubt that the newspapers were not only biased towards the two main political parties and also biased in favour of Nana Akufo-Addo during the 2008 and 2012 elections in Ghana. The problem with this form of bias is the impression that it might have been influenced by 'soli' to the extent that small political parties hardly attracted the attention of the press for the PNC Policy Director, Atik Mohammed to observe that "Journalists were ever ready to jump into buses and follow the so called big parties wherever their rallies were being staged. With us the small parties we did not matter in their scheme of things. As professional journalists, who are supposed to give equal and fair coverage to all political parties and candidates for voters to decide who to vote for, it was as if it was too much work for them to give us coverage. They even thought it was waste of space to give the small parties coverage. If finally, we got them to attend our events, check from the newspapers the space we got as against the space for the NDC and the NPP. It was as if they were doing us a big favour."

Added to this is the fact that among all the presidential candidates, Nana Akufo-Addo of the NPP had the most intense coverage, also the most positive stories and less negative stories in the two

election campaigns under study. This also demonstrates the bias nature of the press in Ghana. Letters-to-the-editor, which are supposed to be an arena for public discourse during the elections were virtually absent suggesting that the press in Ghana, perhaps, were not interested in facilitating public debate on election campaign activities and issues. Therefore, there was lack of feedback from citizens who were expected to elect their leaders. Also there is the issue of reporters taking 'soli' from political parties for covering their activities.

If journalists, according to the liberal model of journalism, are to function as watchdog and expose the wrong doings of other people in the society then what moral right do they have if they indulge in corruption to perform such a critical professional function? This appears to be the basic framework of Ghana's journalism practice today. Arguably it appears so because besides its commercialization motive, journalism practice is connected to the peculiarities of the Ghanaian society as already discussed. However, Wilmot (2006) insists journalists have a choice to work in a supermarket or a bank. As long as they have taken the decision to work in the journalism establishment, where truth happens to be the yard stick of the profession, they need to with stand every temptation whatsoever the sacrifice. Journalists, according to Wilmot, should not tell lies for them to put food on the table and house their family. Meanwhile news commercialization in developing democracies such as Nigeria and Ghana is said to be contributing to media corruption in those societies. In effect, media commercialization in Ghana is encouraging 'soli' journalism practice. The next section of the study explores the emerging issues associated with media commercialization in Ghana and how they impact public interests.

8.8 News commercialization, 'soli' and the public interest in Ghana

One key issue facing the news media in Ghana today after the spectacular socio-political changes in the 1990s is how to manage the fundamental conflict of journalistic professional practice in the country. Across democracies, the news media appear to be a social establishment and at the same time an industry. And this is the challenge facing Ghanaian journalism practice. The news media as a social establishment is entrusted with the sacred obligation to "fulfill, with varying degrees of voluntariness and explicit commitment, certain important public tasks that go beyond their

immediate goals of making profit and giving employment" (McQuail 2005: 213). In other words, the media are supposed to be held in trust by the owners on behalf of citizens of Ghana. McQuail explains that the media if found not to be living up to expectation are demanded to give account through public opinion or some guardians of the public interest such as political actors.

As an industry, it is considered as business entity. The news media producing news from events and issues of public interests as well as entertainment are also expected to make profit on the investment that their owners have made. As the political editor of the *Daily Graphic* in an interview for this study stated: "With our responsibility towards voters and the public, we are also conscious of the fact that we are in business." As has been observed, the news media have responsibility towards the society in contributing to peace and co-existence of different sectors of the society. However, with commercialization of the news media with the emphasis from the public good to commercial value of news the notion of the public interest is undermined.

News commercialization simply indicates that news is a product and it is purchased by people who have the money for their views to be heard. In contemporary media, news is being sponsored or paid for by interested individuals or groups. What this means is that it is difficult for those with no money to gain access to the news media. To illustrate this point, because the two main political parties of the NDC and the NPP had money they could pay for high media visibility as against the smaller political parties such as the PNC which had very low press coverage according to chapter 6 of this study. Omenugha, et al (2008) claim that news commercialization functions at two levels. These are: Institutional level where fees are charged for news programmes such as corporate coverage, social events, political activities, commercial programmes and religious programmes. According to Ogbuoshi (2005), institutional level of commercialization is as a result of the owners of the media outlets considering the media and their investment as profit making entity and therefore, they expect the investment to bring to them financial return. There is also the individual journalist level where a journalist or group of journalists demand money from events' organisers for covering an event such as election campaigns.

With such a practice, it is obvious that public interest which is accepted as something generally good to the majority of citizens cannot be met. Satisfying public interest demands that the news media report on a number of events as well as issues which probably may go to satisfy or meet the news needs of the generality of citizens. In other words, with the practice of 'soli' journalism during the 2008 and 2012 election campaigns in Ghana, it is suggested, that the social and public service functions of the press were greatly undermined. The vice president of the Ghana Journalists Association laments: "Because it is the desire of the media owners to make huge profit, they have closed their eyes on the role of the media as public service so are these owners pretending as if they are not aware that their reporters as well as editors are taking 'soli' for coverage. And journalists aware of this attitude of their owners are also not interested in stories that serve the public good. In such a situation, it has become extremely impossible to preach ethics to journalists. What therefore is happening in this country is that journalists during election campaigns publish stories about candidates and political parties that are ready to pay for coverage. With 'soli' in the pocket, they give candidates the desire positive image." Meanwhile both the social responsibility theory (Siebert et al, 1956) as well as the democratic-participant media theory (McQuail, 1987) demand intense focus on the needs, interests and aspirations of citizens. To this end, McQuail's theory calls for complete dismantling of media conglomeration and monopoly and to be replaced by pluralism, decentralization and small scale media enterprises. What this section appears to suggest is that as commercialization of the Ghanaian media is encouraging 'soli' it also affects the quality of journalism practice.

8.8.1 Commercialization: Its effects on journalism practice in Ghana

There is no denying the fact that the deregulation and commercialization of the Ghanaian media landscape have had an impact on journalism practice in the country. The newspapers are clearly partisan, political and also sensational. Before the state media monopoly was finally shattered and allowed for competition, the newspapers, the *Daily Graphic* and *The Ghanaian Times* were some sort of governments' ideological apparatus. The newspapers as well as the state broadcasting were tools for the state and government officials. But today, the deregulation and commercialization of the media have allowed for changes in the form and content of news. The newspapers are still

political as they give intense publication to the NDC and the NPP just as the result of election campaign coverage of the 2008 and 2012 indicated.

The press has become so partisan and excessive and sometimes uses adjectives and phrases only to exaggerate. For instance, an opinion piece in the *Ghanaian Chronicle* states: "the enthusiasm that people currently have in political issues was as a result of Nana Akufo-Addo's charming voice…" (*Ghanaian Chronicle* Friday, November 21, 2008). Also the *Ghanaian Chronicle* of Wednesday November 7, 2012, with the headline, "Volta stands for Nana" reads: "…yesterday's display of love for the opposition NPP and its flagbearer, Nana Akufo-Addo would go down in history as unprecedented." The *Ghanaian Chronicle* of Friday November 21, 2008 also in an opinion piece states: "The plain truth is God has prepared and reformed the NPP flagbearer to man the affairs of this country to meet the demands of globalization and aspirations of her citizens." The newspapers also end up mixing freely facts and comments in straight news stories. For example, "with less than a month to go for the general elections, Mr. Kofi Osei Ameyaw, the sitting New Patriotic Party (NPP) Member of Parliament (MP) for the Asuogyaman Constituency in the Eastern Region, has already buried the main opposition party, the National Democratic Congress (NDC)" (*Ghanaian Chronicle* Tuesday November 18, 2008).

There is also evidence of the newspapers publishing unbalanced news stories. For instance, a news story with the headline: "Bagbin distributes cutlasses to NDC" the story reads: "The New Patriotic Party (NPP) campaign team in the Nadowli West Constituency has expressed concern about an alleged distribution of cutlasses to National Democratic Congress (NDC) sympathizers in the constituency by Alban Bagbin, the Minister of Health… the distribution of the cutlasses to the NDC loyalists was tantamount to arming NDC activists to possibly harass and intimidate NPP supporters during and after the poll" (*Daily Guide* Thursday November 1, 2012). A serious allegation of this nature did not include the version of the accused nor any other credible sources. Considering the already high political tension at the time, a story of this nature should have benefited from some form of investigation to establish the credibility of the allegation before allowing it to go through the gates.

184

It is no secret that in Ghana the newspapers with political links to the political parties both in power and opposition have become praise singers. In this situation, it has become so easy for the politicians to take advantage to use the press to set the agenda for the public. This appears to have encouraged Ghanaian journalists knowing that politicians are in keen competition for space to set their agenda, they have also taken advantage to make money for covering political activities including election campaigns. The vice chairman of the GJA observes: "Take it from me, the very politicians who pay money to journalists for them to do their bidding are in most cases suspicious of the stories that are published in the papers. As executives of the association when we get the opportunity to meet the politicians they are always blunt in expressing their disappointment in Ghanaian journalists. You can imagine how we feel before these politicians rubbishing our profession. Look, they have no respect for journalists in this country. It is all because of the 'soli' that journalists take from them." From this perspective, in an attempt to find an answer to research question three, one then can argue that it is difficult for one to fit Ghana's journalism practice into the global model of journalism profession.

8.9 Response to research question three

This chapter attempted to provide an answer to research question three which asks**: How significant is the difference between global model of journalism profession and Ghana's practice of the profession in the context of the 2008 and 2012 election campaigns in Ghana?**

From the above, it is obvious how 'soli' journalism has affected election campaign framing in Ghana. What is expected to be a critical press, according to the study, has largely become the lapdog of the NDC and the NPP , the two main political parties, instead of being the watchdog overseeing the activities of the politicians and reporting the realities to the electorates for the electorates to base their voting decisions on. This stems from the corruption and compromising nature of the press as evidenced in the 'soli' journalism model. The irony is that the journalism profession is expected to be the gatekeeper of society exposing corruption and corrupt practices. It is one profession that should take itself serious. From the analysis, if Ghanaian journalists will continue to enjoy the 'soli', a time may come when the practice of journalism will completely be

undermined, highly commercialized, a tool for the highest bidder and may not have anything valuable to give coverage to and disseminate to the electorates. According to the ideal public sphere, the media are supposed to serve leading to more participatory and more deliberative democracy. Finally, global model of journalism profession is characterized by objectivity, accuracy, balance and truth. These are strong pillars that global journalism rests on. The Ghanaian press like any press in any democracy is expected to meet these principles with the highest sacredness. This can only be achieved by being principled, independent and highly objective and doing away with 'soli' otherwise, 'soli' becomes the primary objective with morality and truth crucified.

According to the social responsibility theory of the press, freedom of the press also means concomitant obligation. In other words, journalism practice should be responsible to the society and its citizens. By this, critical functions of the press should be allowed to work for the supreme interests of citizens. In effect, the social responsibility theory also calls the journalists to order if journalists are abusing what seems to be unrestrained freedom. McQuail (1987: 117-118) points out: "That media should regulate itself within the framework of law and established institutions to be able to carry out its responsibilities." From the above, the code of ethics of GJA, for example, was formulated to regulate and guide journalism practice in the country. This is to help give real meaning to the social responsibility theory of the press for journalism practice in Ghana to also identify with the global journalism model with the interest of Ghanaian citizens well protected whereby the press provides the platform for rational public discourse of issues of common good.

8.10 Summary of the chapter

Under no circumstances journalists covering events and issues be paid by sources of information. However, in an emerging democracy such as Ghana, journalists expect to be paid or rewarded for covering events including election campaigns. Meanwhile the media in democracies are expected to play a significant role, functioning as effective public sphere in order to enhance democracy. So far in this chapter, it has been revealed how 'soli' journalism model is undermining the credibility of journalism practice in Ghana leading to unethical and unprofessional practice.

The chapter has demonstrated that 'soli' journalism forms the core of journalism practice in Ghana and as such defines the profession. In this case, there is a significant difference between global model of journalism profession and Ghana's practice of the profession in the context of 2008 and 2012 election campaigns in Ghana. The chapter found out that as the editors denied indulging in 'soli' practice, political officials insisted that they paid 'soli' to journalists for coverage of their events. Again, the chapter explored what accounts for 'soli' journalism and suggested that poor conditions of service, poor salaries as well as journalists' prior knowledge of budget of organizers for payment of 'soli' are to be blamed for 'soli' journalism model in Ghana. The chapter has also revealed what drives Public Relations Officers and events organizers to offer 'soli' to journalists as well as editors for coverage of their events.

According to the study, unlike the advanced democracies where negative tone dominates election campaigns, it is rather positive tone that dominates election campaigns coverage in Ghana. On the basis of the result of the in-depth interview which shows that journalists were just reporting from speeches of candidates, this practice may go to explain why Ghana's election campaigns' tone was largely positive. The chapter shows that under the influence of 'soli' there was every reason for Ghanaian journalists to frame more positive stories about candidates. Contrary to the advanced democracies where journalists would go beyond speeches to investigate into the dealings, competence of candidates, analyse candidates' promises and even private lives of candidates, in Ghana, it appears with 'soli' defining election campaign journalism, there was no incentive for investigative kind of election campaign journalism. If for some reason a journalist would be motivated to go to the extent of framing a negative story about a candidate, an editor who might have been compromised by the candidate in question would obviously not allow such a story to go through the gate. Therefore, framing and gatekeeping practices of an emerging democratic society such as Ghana and that of advanced democratic societies such as the United States cannot be the same. In sum, the global model of journalism practice as discussed does not inform Ghana's practice of the profession. The next chapter, which concludes the study, among other issues will discuss the implications of framing and gatekeeping practices on Ghana's election campaigns coverage.

Chapter 9

CONCLUSION

9.1 Overview of findings

The study investigated Ghana's 2008 and 2012 election campaigns coverage by the press specifically two state-owned as well as two privately-owned newspapers. These newspapers are considered as the most prestigious newspapers in the country in terms of circulation and readership. These newspapers were faced with some major challenges in the coverage of the two election campaigns.

The first was the long time held perception that Ghanaian press did not play to the rules of journalism practice and therefore, it lacked professionalism (Karikari, 1996). Secondly, the press was only interested in the two big political parties of the NDC and the NPP to the detriment of the smaller political parties. Thirdly, the state-owned press would be manipulated to give more coverage and more positive coverage to the incumbent candidate (CDD-Ghana, 2004; AfriMAP, OSIWA and IDG, 2007). Also these two elections were held at a time when the debate was: Election campaigns coverage across democracies were looking similar in form. For instance, election campaigns coverage was horse race and negative in tone (Farnworth and Lichter, 2011; Lengauer et. al., 2012). With these challenges, it was obvious that researchers and scholars would be watchful to see how the elections in an emerging democracy would play out. Besides these, with the mounting tension, threats, intimidation and sporadic political violence in the country, there was the need for the press to approach the coverage of the elections with high level of commitment and professionalism in contributing to peaceful and successful elections. This was a challenge for the press to meet in its coverage of the elections in order to achieve the objective of improving upon its credibility as a reliable institution, creating platform to give meaning to the public sphere thereby helping deepen democracy as deliberative and participatory.

In order to understand how the press managed these challenges, the thesis undertook content analysis of the four newspapers sampled, using five journalistic styles of telling stories and also conducted an in-depth interviews with editors of the four newspapers sampled, a journalist with

experience in election campaign coverage as well as three political parties officials. Besides these, the Vice Chairman of the Ghana Journalists Association (GJA) as well as former Vice President of the Institute of Public Relations, Ghana, were interviewed for their insight into Ghanaian journalism practice and the concept of 'soli.'

The results were then examined within the framework of gatekeeping and framing theories. These communication research theories were essentially engaged to understand from journalistic perspectives, how the editors of the Ghanaian press went about their functions as gatekeepers and also how the reporters played their crucial role as election campaigns events framers through the use of journalistic genres such as straight news, editorials, features and opinions to tell the 2008 and 2012 election campaign stories. The results of the study have unearthed some interesting thought provoking conclusions and implications for election campaign coverage studies as well as practical ways of election campaign coverage generally including gatekeeping and framing practices as compared with the practices of other democracies such as the United States.

Overall, the results of this research provide evidence that framing of 2008 and 2012 election campaigns in Ghana as horse race and issues appear not consistent with previous studies in the advanced democracies such as the United States. As previous studies indicate that horse race was dominating election campaigns coverage in the advanced democracies such as the United States, in Ghana, according to the 2008 and 2012 elections, it was issues that dominated election campaigns coverage. However, it needs to be pointed out that unlike previous study that observed that horse race was not an issue in Ghana's election campaign coverage, this study has found out that horse race is taking root in election campaign journalism and it has the potential of dominating election campaign coverage in the country as in the case of the advanced democracies. Again the study shows that the press did give intense publication to the two presidential candidates of the NDC and the NPP with the NPP candidate not just receiving more coverage but also received more positive coverage, which were largely present in straight news stories, creating the impression that the press in Ghana was biased in favour of Nana Akufo-Addo. One other interesting finding of this study was that the state-owned press did not give incumbent candidates coverage bonus or advantage as previous studies have claimed. Again, unlike in the case of the

advanced democracies such as the United States, where studies have shown that the tone of election campaigns was negative, in the situation of Ghana, the election campaigns' tone happened to be positive.

This study also indicates that advertising revenue appears to play a significant role in news that is allowed to go through the gate by the gatekeepers of the press. This may explain the dominance of the candidates of the NDC and the NPP in framing of the two elections by the newspapers. This is because they were considered to be news makers and therefore, the newspapers which are in business could attract adverts from them and the business community. Besides these, the study also revealed that journalists who covered the election campaigns received 'soli' from the political parties and candidates. This unprofessional practice of journalism might have elicited favourable framing, which might have undermined objectivity as well as promoting uncritical reporting.

It must be noted that the study was aimed at sharing some thought with editors, journalists, ownership of the media, politicians as well as scholars in Africa to pay particular attention to election campaigns trend of coverage since it appears studies in the field is lacking. It is also to draw attention of the media to place much value when covering elections campaigns on fairness, equality and balance. These principles should be made to define Africa's election campaign journalism and not 'soli' or 'brown envelop' as it appears to be the case as of now. As a result of the 'soli' journalism regime in the country, the press has become visible sites of competition between the NDC and the NPP during election campaigns. The result was that the model of journalism used in the 2008 and 2012 political contestations was generally mediated through the narrow confines of the NDC and the NPP by the newspapers. The study, therefore, suggests that to put in place a media establishment that will serve the public sphere and in turn helps the democratic governance to be more deliberative and participatory, Ghana, as an emerging democracy, will need a radical reform at the levels of both policy and journalism study and practice. Finally, the study, hopefully, will contribute to the knowledge of Africa's political communication trend as it advances the ongoing debates about the trend of election campaigns coverage across democracies and the need to de-Westernize communication studies.

This study has shown that election news framing, which was influenced by 'soli,' only ended up molding the facts into narratives that succeeded to undermine independence of the profession and thereby affecting the quality of election campaigns stories consumed by Ghanaian voters during the 2008 and 2012 elections.

9.2 Media framing of Ghana's election campaigns: Concluding discussion

The mass media in Ghana have become such an important cultural form with various dimensions to the extent that scholars need to focus intense attention on them for the Ghanaian media to be better understood and serve citizens better. One critical dimension is the relationship between political actors and the political journalists, who politicians tell their stories to, with the desire that journalists will give them favourable publicity. With the increasing differences between political actors and the news media, there are more instances of negative journalism and media bias (Schudson, 2002). The media with their freedom have the power to supply citizens with personal preferences of stories of events and issues unconstrained. The selection of stories, nonetheless has an effect on the decision voters make. The selection of stories and the way and manner events and issues are framed are subjected to scrutiny because of the ability of the media to shape public perception through the stories the media supply the society. This function of the news media goes to influence agendas and policies because of how citizens react.

One significant issue which influences media content of politics is the preference the media give to one side of politics over another. News media tend to project one side of political news and give coverage to event or issue with the perspective of favouring one political party or candidate over the other. This ends up in supplying one sided discussion, supported by sympathetic interests (Hayes and Guardino, 2010). The selection of news that favours one side over another adds to the claims of media bias. With news media, facts constitute news, but outside interests can influence and shape the tone and slant the news (Wright and Rogers, 2010).

9.3 Framing and gatekeeping practices: Implications for Ghana's elections coverage

The purpose of this section is to demonstrate how framing and gatekeeping theories apply to this study. The section is in two parts. First, the section will examine how election campaign coverage can influence and shape citizens perception of election events and issues. The second section explores the influences on the news media in sending information to citizens. This discussion demonstrates how and why the two communication theories are significant for this study. Ghanaian electorates expect the media, including newspapers, to supply them election campaign stories. What is striking about today's journalism practice in the country is that politicians are paying for coverage of election events. This, therefore, impacts the quality of election campaign events and issues framed and selected by the news media.

9.3.1 Framing theory

Framing theory as discussed in chapter three does not focus on what is being communicated, but how it is communicated and the patterns which go to influence selection of events and issues. With this study, framing theory was to assist with analyzing not what events or issues were covered, but how the newspapers decided how to tell the various election campaigns' events and issues. The theory outlines how events and issues are selected, evaluated and reported. A frame that presents a story in one way can influence how an event or issue is understood and also how it is going to be recalled in the future. According to Chong and Druckman (2007), stories of events or issues are formatted in a way that the facts are important to the journalists. Entman (2007) observes that elements such as communicator, text, receiver and culture combine for a frame formation.

According to Entman (2007), the first step to evaluate framing is by looking at the attitudes of the journalist who framed the story. In this study we mean the various journalists who covered the election events. These journalists, may have framed the events or issues influenced by their personal evaluation of the facts. Contemporary journalism practice, has moved away from simply reporting facts to a practice which encourages interpretation of facts whereby the story will have background, significance and perceived influence on politics. This practice is expected to help voters to understand why the event happened the way it did. However, in Ghana, it appears, with

regard to the two elections, journalists attended rallies, focused attention on the crowd, and took a number of pictures which depicted candidates talking to a big crowd. After the event, these journalists went for copies of the candidates' speeches, enjoyed some refreshments, picked up 'soli' and rushed to the newsroom. In the newsroom, they produced their stories from the speeches, thereby leaving voters uninformed. Therefore, if framing is not what event is communicated, but how it is communicated, then election campaigns' events communicated to voters were through 'protocol journalism,' that is, simply reporting the facts as told by candidates. Framing stories including election campaigns is more meaningful if such a frame takes into consideration prior knowledge and views of audience. However, in a situation where an event or issue is framed in a fastidious manner that pleases the journalist, such a frame is more likely to influence the understanding of the story (de Vreese, 2005).

Chong and Druckman (2007) note that in presidential elections, frame is the act of presenting one candidate as being better than the other. In this case, from the current study, Nana Akufo-Addo of the NPP was presented to voters as a better candidate than Atta Mills in 2008 election and John Mahama in 2012 election. However, Entman (2008) explains that until there is constant bias over some years such bias should not be seen as institutional rather, it is considered as passing. Therefore, if for two different elections the press projected Nana Akufo-Addo as being a better candidate, one can argue that the bias in favour of Nana Akufo-Addo is institutional. Frames function by projecting a specific definition or interpretation (Rodriguez and Dimitrova, 2011). In this regard, the press publishing more positive stories about Nana Akufo-Addo and publishing more negative stories about Atta Mills and John Mahama show how the press communicated to voters. This journalism practice by the newspapers in its framing of the elections appears to have combined some elements that Street (2001) describes as partisan and propaganda bias.

According to Street, partisan bias is a cause which is explicitly and deliberately promoted. It can be of explicit recommendations to vote for one party or another or it can be identified in an endorsement of a cause (Street, 2001: 20). The findings of the study show that the newspapers published a lot of stories on NPP's main campaign message of free Senior High School education. Street (2001: 20) also explains propaganda as when a particular story is published with conscious

193

objective to make a case for a particular party or policy or point of view without explicitly stating it. The framing of peace as the dominant issue tells how the press told the election campaigns events and issues. A selective visual aid such as a picture depicting a political rally to back a framed story, enhances the chances of readers believing the story (Rodriguez and Dimitrova, 2011). This in a way goes to explain why the political actors were excited when the press during the election campaigns backed stories about their candidates with pictures of their rallies depicting huge crowd. As the political actors utilized the power of 'soli' to influence the kind of election stories that went through the gates, it might have been difficult for the average reader to have done quality analysis of candidates and their campaign messages.

9.3.2 Gatekeeping theory

As already indicated in chapter three of this study, it is obvious that newspapers have specific amount of space for publication of stories. With such limited space, an editor with his or her team will select few events and issues that will fill the space. Therefore, the process of selecting stories is the practice of gatekeeping. In effect, editors and journalists who are in charge of the newsroom control the kind of stories that finally get to the consuming audience (Castells, 2011). The control is an indicative of the power of gatekeepers as they publish or broadcast stories which might have been filtered through a bias frame. With the kind of power that the editors and journalists of the four newspapers under study have and more so under the influence of 'soli', the gatekeepers allowed more and positive stories about the presidential candidate of the NPP to get to Ghanaian electorates. Based on the findings of this study, one can suggests that gatekeepers of the four papers with their power were able to control the stories of the smaller political parties and candidates that went pass the gates to get to the electorates. Thus the press showed its bias against the smaller parties as well as candidates who could not influence the editors and journalists with the kind of 'soli' that the two main political parties paid to the gatekeepers. Findings of the in-depth interviews agree with the position of scholars including Shoemaker and Vos (2009), Folarin (2002) and Herman and Chomsky (2000) that gatekeeping practice is influenced by some factors such as finance, professional ethics, ownership, management policy as well as perceived needs and preferences of audience.

Empirical evidence from this study, however, suggests that during the elections in Ghana, 'soli' was a critical factor which influenced the gatekeeping processes. In effect, the argument of Shoemaker and Vos (2009) as well as Folarin (2002) that professional consideration influences gatekeeping practice appears non-applicable to the practice of election journalism in Ghana. In this case, selection of stories or placing emphasis on some information to favour one side of the story over the other obviously goes to affect true assessment of political parties as well as the media outlet (D'Alessio and Allen, 2000). This, therefore, informs the argument that political stories that get to the public are subjectively controlled by the media (Shoemaker and Vos, 2009). This act appears to confirm the belief that news media determine for the public what they should think and worry about. Although agenda-setting was not considered for this study, however, it is necessary to visit it since the theory focuses on how framing combined with gatekeeping produce the final product to influence the perception of citizens. In this case, the events and issues of election campaigns that were framed and went through the gates of the four newspapers determined what the Ghanaian electorates were called upon to think and worry about. This action might have played some role in influencing and shaping perception of electorates about the candidates who contested the elections.

9.3.3 Agenda-setting theory

News media are key in democracies since they inform citizens about events and issues. Agenda-setting is about how audiences are influenced by the media as to what to think and worry about. Agenda-setters select information and mold it into a simple structure (Sanchez, 2002). Agenda-setting has two approaches. The first is internal discussion, which is not seen by citizens. This involves the determination of the significance of events and issues with contrary or unfavourable information omitted (Littlejohn, 2002). The second on the other hand, is the effect and influence on the public perception of stories. The public perception contributes to influencing and shaping agendas. This process influences policy and politics. The mass media on the other hand have the power to help bring about political awareness, how citizens see politics and what is considered critical. The agenda-setters of the mass media have what it takes to influence and shape the course of politics including election campaigns (Littlejohn, 2002). Fuchs (2009) supports the idea that framing and agenda-setting are two major elements engaged in political communication to

influence citizens. And these are used not only by politicians but also by journalists to project one political side over the other. Hence, journalists of the four newspapers, according to the findings of this study, projected Nana Akufo-Addo and his message over the other presidential candidates and their campaign messages. In effect, the media details events and pass them on to the public in a selective way. Thus determining what citizens know, how citizens think about and how citizens discuss (Shaw and McCombs, 1977).

Agenda-setting becomes real when for instance, a newspaper increases the prominence of a particular event or issue. The four newspapers selected for this study seem to have reported similar election campaign events and issues. The differences in language and emphasis on certain information go to demonstrate the agenda. In this case, priming effect would have taken place the moment readers of the *Daily Graphic, The Ghanaian Times*, the *Daily Guide* and the *Ghanaian Chronicle,* read, thought and discussed the election related stories. These four newspapers, therefore, acted as agenda-setters during the 2008 and 2012 elections as they framed the different election campaigns' events and issues. The focus of the news they published demonstrated their agenda. To illustrate this point, an intense attention on peace, free Senior High School or the economy demonstrated the agenda of the papers. These four papers took over the Ghanaian news market to occupy a critical position of influence.

The theories discussed above represent the basis for the study of four most influential papers and how they presented their stories, which were driven by the power of 'soli' to influence and shape the 2008 and 2012 election campaigns engaging 'protocol journalism model.

9.4 'Protocol journalism' and election journalism in Ghana

This study suggests that 'protocol journalism' was the guiding framework for explaining how the election campaigns news was framed or presented by the four newspapers and communicated to the Ghanaian voters. 'Protocol journalism' which is developing news stories from events such as

press conferences, political meetings, conferences and seminars mostly involving politics and political actors is described as reckless form of journalism (Andresen, 2009).

According to Taylor and Kent (2007) and Taylor (2009) stories from the practice are based on the main points of events sometimes with few additional comments and analysis. Such stories, the authors observe, lack critical question. In effect, journalists end up telling citizens what is said at an event, making journalists the mouthpiece for politicians or companies and such a practice does not allow for investigative journalism. Jibo and Okoossi-Simbine (2003:193), referring to Nigeria, note that journalism in the country is "open for all sorts of professional misconduct, ranging from 'protocol journalism' to bribe taking."

Meanwhile democracy, as discussed in chapter two of this study, is a political system that should ensure participatory process, where electorates have sufficient information about political parties, candidates, policies as well as the electoral process for citizens to engage in useful public debate in order for them to make informed choices. Lasch (1990) argues: "What democracy requires is public debate, not information. Unless information is generated by sustained public debate, most of it will be irrelevant at best, misleading and manipulative at worst. Much of the press, in its eagerness to inform the public, has become a conduit for the equivalent of junk mail." In a situation where the public sphere has become a platform for journalists to tell citizens what their pay masters (politicians) are saying, such a practice cannot help deepen democracy, which the study argues, is supposed to be deliberative and participatory for democracy to become meaningful and accepted by citizens of emerging democracies.

As the findings of this study reveal, there was not much difference in journalism among the four newspapers used for this study. They were all engaged in political parties' organised events coverage. 'Protocol journalism' accounted for framing the election campaigns coverage in the 2008 and 2012. First of all, the nature of the framing presented the elections as a political contest between the NDC and the NPP. The candidate of the NPP was framed in a more positive light than the candidates of the NDC. In effect, voters were presented with what appeared to be an obvious

selection. There was a dearth of analysis and investigation to allow voters to understand the issues being presented and also have an idea of the quality of candidates being framed for voters to base their votes on. Another point of 'protocol journalism' practice used to frame the elections was the one-sided sources of the election campaigns stories. All the newspapers generally sourced the candidates of the various parties and other party leaders to the exclusion of some contending opinions. Other interested groups within the civil society hardly featured as sources until they appeared to praise or endorse a candidate. The third point of 'protocol journalism' was the lack of critical debate on issues of common good. According to Boylan (1991), journalists may take citizens as news consumers but generally, ignore their role as citizens. This practice of journalism does not encourage communication, strengthen the public dialogue nor facilitate the formation of common decisions. In effect, the public sphere, which is key in democratic governance, is weakened by the practice of 'protocol journalism' in Ghana.

To enhance and enrich the public sphere, Esser and Umbricht (2014) suggest a more interpretative news style of reporting policy issues. There are claims that news journalism has over the years changed from being predominantly descriptive in form to more interpretive journalism (Salgado and Strömbäck, 2012).This news style of journalists telling stories of issues and events involves the mixture of information and interpretation of the facts. Such stories present views of experts, use direct quotations as well as consideration of pros-and cons. They take the form of analysis (answering why- questions) and contextualization of political events addressing the issues of causes, consequences and connections in one story. In effect, interpretative reporting helps societies to create informed citizenry and by extension impact democratic governance. Schudson (2008) believes that interpretative news reporting aids citizens to understand the world of politics better. According to Schudson, journalism practice of this nature is not just defendable but laudable. Simply put: An emerging democratic society such as Ghana will need a media system whose owners understand journalism to be an "ideological force, communicating not just the facts but also a way of understanding and making sense of the facts (McNair, 1998: 7). In this way the media in Ghana may be transformed to become the public sphere's one most significant establishment for citizens to engage in the much needed rational critical discourse for better democracy.

From this study, it is suggested that what informs this kind of 'protocol journalism' is the relationship between the press, political actors and economic interests of the press. On the institutional level, one significant factor for the framing of election campaigns' events and issues was the economic benefit of the newspapers. On the other hand, on the personal level, framing of election campaigns was determined by 'soli' that journalists received from the political parties and candidates. 'Protocol journalism' is, therefore, undermining the credibility of the press in Ghana. Without a credible press, stories from all sources become suspect before citizens. The study argues that 'the soli' journalism practice of the Ghanaian newspapers provided the framework, which further provided some insight into press and politics relationship and their influence on the framing of Ghana's election campaigns.

With this turn of events, one argues that the contradictions of media commercialization in Ghana thus make it extremely difficult for the Ghanaian media including the four newspapers used for this study to demonstrate their ability to meet the demands of the ideal public sphere in order to protect the common good. Be that as it may, commercialization of the Ghanaian media may be considered as a necessary evil. However, looking at the responsibility and contribution of media to the society, through realistic policies they should be re-directed to serve as a social establishment with public service character to focus on development needs of the citizens. This, probably, may help enhance the professional commitment of Ghanaian journalists for them to uphold the principle of social responsibility of the media (Oso, 2006). Hallin (2000) believes that a truly professional will perform ones duty not because of the influence of money.

It is clear from the above that Ghana and indeed Africa will need to search for and develop new theoretical frameworks and paradigms which should become more relevant to the cultural context of the individual countries. This should be done with the objective of formulating an alternative media model instead of always trying to apply the liberal media model to explain Africa's situation. It must be noted that the idea and the need to formulate an indigenous media models is not an exclusive position of a few Ghanaians or African scholars. To illustrate this point, James Curran and Myung Jin Park in their groundbreaking study, *De-westernizing Media Studies (2009)* also make the case that the study of media should strive to extricate itself from ethnocentric

199

perspectives, essentially western orientation to broaden media theory and understanding in a way to take into account experiences of countries outside Anglo-American orbit.

As Berger (2002) observes, today the challenge facing the continent of Africa is for scholars to research and develop original media model informed by African experiences which can explain experiences of Africa more accurately and to make use of it to enhance democratic governance in African societies. Berger, therefore, suggests a redefinition of 'civil society' as well as 'public sphere' not as defined in the Western scholarship but a definition reflects the cultural structures of public life as expressed in African journalism. Such a definition should be made to take into account the differences existing across African societies.

9.5 Rethinking the model of political communication

It sounds a cliché, to say that the mass media's role in politics including election campaigns is of ultimate significant. Editorial independence, integrity and professionalism remain the key to democratic election coverage. The lack of journalistic responsibility undermines the outcome of elections. On this point, diversity of mass media institutions, available to variety of interests are of necessity in an emerging democratic society such as Ghana. However, in Ghana, it seems the expansion of media is struggling to uphold the ideals of the public sphere which should help provide a more rigorous accounting of political actors, supply society with credible and quality information as as well as variety of informed views about important political and social issues. On this note, it is argued that no one medium is capable of achieving this. Ghana's media system should, therefore, be such that the system gives easy access to all Ghanaians. It is obvious that the difficulty facing the media in playing their role as expected is causing some concern since it is having some negative effect on election campaigns coverage. In the face of this, reading Curran for some ideas will be useful.

Curran (2000: 143) suggests that an ideal media system should include specialist as well as general media sectors. According to him, such a structure should have a public service broadcasting, with

private enterprise, social market and civic media. For him, with such a proposed media system functioning in different ways, the media will have the capacity to "create spaces for the communication of opposed viewpoints and a common space for their mediation." Curran explains that the specialist media will have to serve various audiences, allowing different social groups to discuss issues of social identity, group interest, political strategy and normative understanding on the terms of the groups (Curran, 2000: 140). The public service broadcasting is to serve both the specialized and non-specialized audiences. This kind of media should be accessible to all audiences who have the opportunity to discuss issues of common interest. To address the diversity in the society, the specialized civic media, made up of civil society groups including non-governmental organizations; professional media, that is, media which address issues of professional; private media, that is, commercial and finally, social media, with focus on the minority and functioning within the market and also with support from the state. All these forms of media are to help meet the information and entertainment demands of all citizens.

Based on Curran's media system model and the attitude of media owners, editors, journalists and politicians in Ghana, the study argues that for the country to put in place the type of media system that makes the public sphere meaningful, 'soli' journalism should be eliminated and replaced by a system guided by a policy accepted by various social groupings, which insist on professional journalism practice. A policy of this nature should allow for media autonomy, public-owned media accountable to citizens through the parliament of Ghana and also create the space for commercial, community as well as non-profit media. This study, therefore, on the basis of Curran's model and development Journalism model discussed in this study, calls for a policy which will ensure a robust, plural and responsible media which will bring quality to the public sphere and help deepen democratic governance of Ghana. Curran's model, which attempts to create a media system controlled by neither the state nor the market forces combined with some ideas from Banda's redefined development Journalism may have it challenges but it offers something that appears can help add and improve the system that already exists in Ghana. This may become an important tool for consolidating democratic culture in the country.

9.6 Towards democratic culture in Ghana: Contribution of journalism

The coverage of election campaigns by the press in Ghana should contribute to cultivating in the citizenry virtues that will go to sustain national peace, stability and economic progress geared towards advancing their standard of living.

For four decades now the important contribution of the press as Fourth Estate and as a platform for public discourse and debate has been acknowledged. There is criticism against the media for their sensationalism and superficiality. The role of media is to serve as watchdog of society, as guardian of common good and a conduit between rulers and the ruled is still deeply ingrained in people's minds. But as has already been discussed in the literature and also evidence from content analysis and in-depth interview, the press in new and restored democracies including Ghana is struggling to meet the demands of the ideal public sphere. Ghana's press for instance is being undermined by ownership whose primary interest is commercial oriented (making profit). As has been argued the market as well as the race among the mass media for loyal audiences and market share can affect the quality of news.

It is worth noting that economic interests may have driven people to establish newspapers. The power of media to help influence and shape citizens' attitutes and behaviours demand that society takes deep interest in the workings of mass media. Thus ownership of media must be accepted as a public trust and must not be seen the same as ownership of a house or any other business. Added to this is the fact that unethical journalistic practices as well as the applications of mass media by various vested interests go to contribute to the media's difficulty in meeting their core democratic function. People continue to hail the mass media as a valuable gift to mankind. If indeed the media are truly valuable gift to humanity then they must be used for the benefit of all citizens and not a few individual politicians and elites.

One thing is clear from this study: It was difficult for journalists in Ghana to make ethical decisions when they were covering the election campaigns. They could not do stories that could be said were

fair and balance from the perspective of principles of the journalism profession. They could also not publish election campaigns stories developed out of their own investigations. To this end, Ansu-Kyeremeh (2000) who expresses concern and wonders why since 1994 when the Ghana Journalists Association (GJA) formulated its code of ethics journalists cannot cope with the professional journalistic standard leading to widespread perception that the practice lacks professionalism. Scholars such as Kunczik (1999), Karikari, (1996) and Nyamnjoh (1996) confirm low standard of journalism practice in Africa including Ghana. It must be noted that it is the responsibility of journalism establishment functioning in a democratic environment to help develop an active and efficient public sphere which will in turn helps to enhance democracy. To achieve this, a number of concerns will have to be addressed.

Poor conditions of service and poor remuneration for journalists in Africa including Ghana have always been cited as a major factor for 'soli' journalism practice (Dunn, 2010; Kasoma, 2007; Holt, 2008; Myers, 2009). Indeed Kasoma's study (2007) established some relationship between poor salaries and 'soli' practice in Ghana. Based on this, this study suggests that the Ghana Journalists Association should be more active and see to journalists' unionization to have the strength to negotiate for better conditions of service for its members although there is no guarantee that better conditions of service will end the 'soli' practice in the country. In Kenya, according to a study by Mak`Ochieng (1994), well paid journalists were identified to be taken money for coverage of events.

In light of this, there is the need to strengthen the National Media Commission (NMC), which is a body with responsibility to ensure high level of journalistic standard in the country. However, the NMC appears to be a lame duck Commission with no teeth to bite to bring journalists in the country under control insisting on journalists to uphold the code to ethics of the GJA. The NMC should be empowered to have the power to prosecute, impose fines and even stop journalists from practising for consistently violating the ethics of the profession. This will mean that the Commission is well resourced to be in the position to monitor media institutions to enable it effect timely corrective measures to bring about media accountability. In addition the Disciplinary and Ethics Council of the GJA should be more active to bring about practical measures to resolve concerns of disregard

of the ethics by members to create in them ethical consciousness for journalists in the country to exhibit commitment to the principles of journalism profession.

One other factor that has also been cited as undermining journalistic professional practice in Africa including Ghana is lack of proper training (Nyamnjoh, 2005: 95; Onadipe, 1998: 263). This means that there is the need for measures to be put in place for enhancement of the quality of training of journalists. For instance, emphasis will need to be placed on media law, ethics, investigative and interpretive journalism. Training should help empower journalists to see the need to fight for their independence from media owners, sources of news, political actors, business community and even the newsroom. This perhaps will go a long way to enhance the public sphere and deepen the democratic governance in the country. In this way, election campaigns coverage may see more investigative and interpreted election stories for voters to be in the position to evaluate more accurately issues candidates talk about as well as competence of candidates.

Finally, the study will want to acknowledge that beneath the assumption in the above discussion of the proposals for enhancing the practice of election journalism in Ghana, is the need for conscious political and moral will for such reforms to occur in the Ghanaian media to perform to expectation. With 'soli journalism' model, the study raises critical question as to the capacity of the Ghanaian press to provide the society with the needed platform for citizens to engage in rational debates to deepen democratic governance of participatory and deliberative character.

9.7 Conclusion

The study of the coverage of 2008 and 2012 election campaigns in Ghana has to a large extent demonstrated that the relationship that exist between the press, political actors and economic interest suggest the nature of how political contestation was mediated by the press in the country. Money appeared to have influenced and shaped the way and manner in which the election campaigns were framed. The two major political parties because of their resources attracted the press to give them intense press visibility to the detriment of the smaller political parties which did

not have the kind of budget that they needed to buy the press for better news coverage of their activities. The practice is what this study refers to as: 'soli journalism model.'

The study suggests that to ensure a democratic press, which will lead to serving the interests of the public sphere and democracy, practical changes need to be effected within the journalistic professional practice in the country. The practice of cash for coverage, which does not allow for equal, fair and balance coverage for all political parties and candidates, needs to be abolished for a more independent and pragmatic media system along the lines suggested by Curran and Banda. This will make it possible for journalists to practise the profession in the interests of not only the main political parties and candidates but also more significantly, the smaller political parties, candidates and voters whose marginalized voices in the political discussions attracted little press attention. In addition, journalists will have to be more responsible to citizens by upholding the GJA's code of ethics to ensure equal, fair and unbiased coverage of events and issues of political parties and candidates during future election campaigns. In sum, hopefully, this study will contribute to election campaigns coverage debate across democracies.

9.8 Contribution to knowledge

For the study's contribution to the field of election campaign communication, the study advances further the discourse on political communication. It examines a number of critical issues in one study that was previously lacking in Ghanaian political communication literature. Prior to this study, a comprehensive comparative academic study grounded in the theories of gatekeeping and framing has been American and European focus. The closest one could find on election campaign coverage in Ghana grounded in the two theories used for this study are the studies reviewed in chapter four. In contributing to knowledge, this study has revealed that in the context of 2008 and 2012 election campaigns in Ghana, journalism practice in the country does not conform to the global model of journalism profession rather what defines journalism practice in the country is 'soli,' which also determines the gatekeeping and framing practices of Ghana's journalism. Also, according to literature, the tone of election campaigns across democracies is negative and coverage is horse race framing. However, this study shows that in Ghana, the tone of election campaigns is

positive and issues-based. Unlike previous studies, that indicate that state-owned media gave incumbent presidential candidates advantage, this study reveals that the state-owned press is no longer giving incumbents election campaign coverage advantage. One significant contribution to knowledge is that the bias nature of the press as well as lack of incumbent advantage may be traced to the practice of cash for coverage journalism model in the country. Hence, the study has provided a new explanation as to the trend of election campaigns coverage in a developing democracy such as Ghana. In sum, the study's ability to report significant findings and extend the theoretical models to include my findings is the study's humble contribution to knowledge in the field of political communication.

9.9 Limitations of study

Despite the claims of the study, it also acknowledges that it has some limitations. The most obvious limitation of the study is for it to rely solely on what the editors told the researcher since there was no objective standard to find out the accuracy of their answers to the questions asked. Therefore, firm conclusions cannot be drawn. Thus the relationship between gatekeeping factors discussed in the literature and gatekeeping practices in the Ghanaian press must be interpreted with some caution. Hence, this is an unavoidable criticism of the study, which was also interested in examining the likely factors that Ghanaian editors took into consideration as to which events or issues would pass through the gates to be disseminated to the voters. As a result of this limitation, continuous and consistent studies using different methodologies are recommended. Such an approach could help gain greater insight into the factors that influence the selection of election campaign stories by Ghanaian editors.

The data collection was confined to only the editors in the capital of Accra. Since all the four newspapers sampled have their correspondents in the other regions where these correspondents also engage in gatekeeping practices and framing before the stories are sent to the officers in Accra, the replication of the study at different regions of Ghana would enable better generalization of the findings of the study. Also data collection during real newsroom working experience could have elicited better results.

Next on method limitation was the in-depth interview with political parties' officials to examine their impression about the 2008 and 2012 coverage of election campaigns. The sample for the study comprised of three political parties' officials. This sample is only a small proportion of the entire population of political parties' officials in the country. Therefore, research studies with much larger sample size would be helpful to ensure appropriate generalization of the findings of the study. This means the opinions of the political parties' officials could not be entirely taken as a representation of the political parties' officials' population. The present research has relied largely on quantitative methodology of data collection even though qualitative methodology was also engaged but to a limited extent and it may be restrictive. Therefore, more of qualitative methodology of data collection could be undertaken in future to provide greater perspective to the current research.

9.10 Future research directions

With the above limitations, five main recommendations are suggested for future studies. First, Ghanaian researchers should go beyond critiquing 'Westerncentrism' and 'Asiancentrism' in media and communication studies to finding out where 'Eurocentrism' and 'Asiancentrism' came from, how are they reflected in the study of media and communication, what obstacles and solutions to decentralizing the production of theories are and what is called for in order to formulate and develop Ghanaian communication theories. Secondly, attention should be focused on examining gatekeeping and framing practices of Ghanaian editors as well as journalists applying different research methodologies to really come to terms with the relationship between the Westernized gatekeeping and framing theories and the selection and framing practices of |Ghanaian editors and journalists. Thirdly, this study brought out the issue of media corruption through the collection of 'soli' from the political parties during election campaigns. A deeper study into its form and shape and its effect on the quality of election campaign news is highly recommended. Also a study of this nature will be more effective during election period. Fourthly, a more rigorous research design should consider the effect of election campaign coverage on the Ghanaian electorates. Then finally, the study found out that the letter-to-the-editor as public sphere is becoming ineffective at least during the period of election campaigns. Therefore, future research should aim at this platform and its impacts on the public sphere towards democratic governance.

References

A Journalist Guide for covering post-elections in Ghana, (2010) 21.

A Report by Congressional Research Service (2013).

Aalberg, T., Strömbäck, J., and de Vreese, C. (2011). 'The framing of politics as strategy and game: A review of concepts, operationalizations and key findings.' in *Journalism*: *Theory and Criticism* 13(2):162–178.

Abramowitz, A. I., Alexander, B. and Gunning, M. (2006) "Incumbency, Redistricting, and the Decline of Competition in U. S. House Elections" in *The Journal of Politics,* Vol. 68 (1) 75-88.

Acemoglu, D. and Robinson, J. A (2012) *Why Nations Fail: The origins of power prosperity and poverty*. London: Profile books.

Adesoji, A. (2009). "Old Wine in New Bottle: The Nigerian Press in the Era of Constitutional Democracy", 1999-2009, *Sosyalarastirmalar.com*.

African Leadership Forum (1991) *Farm House Dialogue: The media in Democracy*. Dialogue 15: Ota, Nigeria.

AfriMAP and OSIWA and IDG (2007).

Agbanu, V. N. (2009). Re-examining brown envelope and news commercialisation syndromes: A case for redefined news judgement and media ethics in Nigeria. Paper presented at the African Council for communication Education conference, Accra, Ghana, 11-14.

Aidt, T., Golden, M. A. and Tiwari, D. (2011). "Incumbents and Criminals in the Indian National Legislature".

Amponsah, P.N (2012) "The *Daily Graphic* Coverage of Presidential Campaigns in Ghana, 1992-2004" in *Journal of political Science, Government and politics,* vol. 1, (1).

Anderson, K. and Thorson, S. J. (1989). "Public discourse or strategic game? Changes in our conception of elections". *Studies in American Political Development* 3: 262-278.

Ansah, P.A.V. (1991) Blueprint for freedom, *Index on Censorship*, 20 (9): 3-9.

Ansolabehere, S. and Iyengar, S. (1994). "Riding the wave and claiming ownership over issues: The joint effect of advertising and news coverage in campaigns. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 58 (3).

Ansu-Kyeremeh, K. "Meeting the Challenges of Professional Journalism Training in Ghana for the 21st Century". (Paper presented at the 11th Sam Arthur Memorial Lecture at the Ghana Institute of Journalism on April 4, 2000).

Ampaw, A. (2008). *A Critical Review of the Defamation Bill, 2006*, Accra: MFWA.

Arendt, H. (1958). *The Human Condition.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Ariga, K. (2010). *Entrenched Incumbents, Irresponsible Parties? Comparative Analysis of Incumbency Advantage Acrosst Electoral Systems*. PhD thesis: University of Michigan.

Arterton, F., (1984). 'Campaign Organisations Confront the Media-Political Environment,' in Graber, (Ed.) *Media Power in Politics,* Washington, CQ press, 155-163.

Asante, C. E. (1996). *The Press in Ghana: Problems and Prospects*, New York and London: University Press of America. Inc.

Asante, R. (2006) 'Local Factors that Shaped the 2004 General Elections in the Ejura-Sekyedumase, Mampong and Effiduase-Asokore Constituencies, in Kwame Boafo-Arthur (ed.) *Voting for Democracy in Ghana, the 2004 elections in perspective.* Constituency Studies Vol. 2, 231-255. Accra: Freedom Publications.

Asante, R. (2006) 'The Youth and Politics in Ghana: Reflections on the 2004 General Elections' in Kwame Boafo-Arthur (ed.) *Voting for Democracy in Ghana, the 2004 elections in perspective.* Thematic studies Vol.1, 211-236. Accra: Freedom Publications.

Auebo F.K. (1997) 'Voting pattern and electoral alliances in Ghana's 1996 elections.' African Association of Political Science, Vol. 2, No. 2, 38-52.

Babbie, E. and Mouton, J. (2001). *The practice of social research.* Cape Town: Oxford University press.

Baker, C. E. (2002). *Media, Markets and democracy.* Cambridge: Cambridge University press.

Balmas M and Sheafer T (2010). Candidate image in election campaigns: Attribute agenda setting, affective priming, and voting behaviour. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* 22(2): 204–229.

Balmas M and Sheafer T (2013). "Leaders first, countries after: Mediated political personalization in the international arena". *Journal of Communication,* 63 (3), 454-475.

Bamiro, E. O. (1997). 'Lexical innovation in Ghanaian English: Some examples from recent fiction.' *American Speech*, 72 (1), 105 – 112.

Banda, F. (2007). "An appraisal of the applicability of development journalism in the context of public service broadcasting (PBB)". *Communication.* 33 (2): 154-170.

Banda, F. (2010). "Epilogue: Media reforms in Africa – a theoretical commentary" *Media policy in a changing Southern Africa: Critical reflections on media reforms in the global age*, (Ed.) D. Moyo and W. Chuma, 279-285. Pretoria: Unisa Press.

Barber, B. (1984). *Strong Democracy. Participatory Politics for a New Age*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Barnett, S. (2012). 'Public Interest: The Public Decides', *British Journalism Review*, 23 (2).

Barry, N. (2000) *Modern Political Theory*, New York. St. Martin's Press.

Bartlett, D. M. C. (1999). 'Corruption and lying in a parliamentary democracy: British politics at the end of the twentieth century.' *Crime, Law and Social Change*, 30 (3), 205 -235.

Bass, B. M (1988). Evolving perspectives on charismatic leadership. In J. A. Conger, and R. N. Kanungo. (Eds.). *Charismatic leadership: The elusive factor in organizational effectiveness*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publication.

Bawumia, M. (2014) 'State of the Ghana economy'. A lecture delivered at the Central University College, Ghana on March 25, 2014.

Beetham, D. (1999) *Democracy and Human Rights,* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bennett, W. L., & Entman, R. M. (Eds.) (2001). *Mediated politics: Communication in the future of democracy.* New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Benoit, W. L., Stein, K. A. and Hansen, G. J. (2005). "*New York Times* coverage of presidential campaigns". *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly,* 82 (2), 356-376.

Berelson, B. (1952) *Content analysis in communication research* New York. The Free Press.

Berger, A.A. (1982) *media analysis techniques.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Berger, G. (2002) 'Theorizing the media – democracy relationship in South African', Gazetter: *The International Journal for Communication Studies.* Vol. 64 (1): 21-45 Sage publications.

Berger, G. (2010). Return of a Development Role for Africa's Media. A presentation at Africa Media Leaders' Forum, Yaoundé, Cameroon.

Berman, F.B. (1998) 'Ethnicity, patronage and the African State: the politics of uncivil nationalism', *African Affairs.* 97 (388): 305-310.

Binderkrantz, A. S. and Green-Pedersen, C. (2009). "Policy or processes in focus?" *The International Journal of Press/Politics* 14 (2): 166-185.

Birhanu, D. O. (2010). "The growing influence of bribery in Ethiopian Journalism*", African Commun. Res*., vol. 3, no. 3, 475-496.

Black, E. (1982). *Politics and News.* Toronto: Butterworths

Bless, C., Higson-Smith, C. and Kagee, A. (2006). *Fundamentals of research methods*: *An African perspective*. Cape Town: Juta.

Boafo-Arthur, K. (2006). "The 2004 General Elections: An Overview" Boafo-Arthur, (ED.) *Voting for Democracy in Ghana: The 2004 Elections in perspective*, Vol. 1. Accra: Freedom Publications, 33-58.

Boyce, C. and Neale, P. (2006). "Conducting in-depth interviews: A guide for designing and conducting in-depth interviews". *Monitoring and Evaluation*: Pathfinder International Tool Series.

Boylan, J. (1991). "Where have all the people gone?" *Columbia Journalism Review.*

Brighton, P. and Foy, D. (2007) *News values*. London: Sage.

Bryce, J. (1907). *The American Commonwealth*. New York: The Macmillan.

Bryman, A. (1993). *Charisma and leadership in organization.* London: Sage Publication.

Bryman, A. (2006). "Integrating quantitative and qualitative research: How is it done?" *Qualitative Research,* 6 (1): 97-113.

Burgess, A. (2001). "Universal Democracy, Diminished Expectation" *Democratization* 8 (3) 51-74.

Busha, C. and Harter, S. (1980). *Research methods in librarianship: Techniques and interpretation*. New York: Academic Press.

Callahan, K., & Schnell, F. (2001). Assessing the democratic debate: How the news media frame elite policy discourse. *Political Communication, 18*(2), 183-212.

Campbell, A. (1964). *The American Voter: An Abridgement*. New York: Wiley.

Campbell, J. E. (2002). "Is the House Incumbency Advantage Mostly a Campaign Finance Advantage?" paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the New England Political Science Association, Portland. Maine.

Capella, J. N. and Jamieson, K. H. (1997). *Spinal of cynicism: The press and the public good.* Oxford: Oxford University press.

Caplan, B. (2007). *The Myth of the Rational Voter: Why Democracies Choose Bad Policies.* Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press.

Carbone, M. G. (2003). 'Developing multi-party politics: Stability and change in Ghana and Mozambique.' Working Paper No. 36.

Carter, A. and Stokes, G (2011). *Democratic Theory Today.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Castells, Manuel. *"A Network Theory of Power"* International Journal of communication. 5. (2011): 773-787. http://ijoc.org/ojs/index.php/ijoc/article/viewfile/1136/553 (accessed April 3, 2013)

CDD-Ghana (2004)

CDD-Ghana (2005)

Centre for Democratic Development, Ghana (CDD-Ghana) (2005). *Abuse of incumbency and administrative resources in Ghana's election, 2004.* Accra.

Chalkley, A. (1968). *A Manual of Development Journalism.* Manila: Thomson Foundation and Press Foundation of Asia.

Commonwealth Observer Group Report (2012).

Constitution of Ghana, 1992

Collier, P. (2007). *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries Are Failing and What Can Be Done about It.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Cox, G. W. and Katz, J. N. (1996). "Why did the incumbency advantage in U. S. House Elections grow?" *American Journal of Political Science* 40: 478-497.

Crick, B. (2002). Democracy: *A very short introduction.* Oxford University Press

Cunningham, F. (2002). *Theories of Democracy: A Critical Introduction.* London: Routledge.

Curran J. (1991). 'Rethinking the media as a public sphere,' in P. Dahlgren and C. Sparks (Eds) *Communication and Citizenship.* London: Routledge.

Curran J. (1996). 'Media and Democracy: Third Route,' in M. B. Andersen (ed.) *Media and Democracy.* Oslo: Strandberg og Nilsen.

Curran, J. and Myung-Jin Park (2000). *De-Westernizing media studies.* London; New York: Routledge.

Cushion, S. (2012). *The Democratic Value of News: Why Public Service Media Matter*. New York; London: Palgrave MacMillan

D' Alessio, D. and Allen, M. (2000). "Media bias in presidential elections: A meta-analysis". *Journal of Communication,* 50 (4): 133-156, http//jonathanstray.com/papers/Media Bias in Presidential Elections.pdf (accessed April 3, 2013).

D'Angelo, P. & Kuypers, J.A. (eds.) (2010). *Doing news framing analysis: Empirical and theoretical perspective.* New York, NY: Routledge.

d'Entreves, M. (1989): 'Agency, identity and culture: Hannah Arendt's conception of citizenship,' in *Praxis International,* 9 (1/2).

Dahl, R. (1967), *Pluralist Democracy in the United States* (Chicago: Rand Mcnally, 1967).

Dahl, R. (1972). *Polyarchy: Participation and Opinion.* New Haven: Yale University Press.

Dahlgren, P. (1991). 'Introduction' in P. Dahlgren and C. Sparks (Eds.), Communication and Citizenship. London: Routledge.

Dahlgren, P. and Sparks, C. (1991) *Communication and Citizenship: Journalism and The public Sphere:* London: Routledge.

Dalton R.J., McAllister, I. and Wattenberg, M. P. (2000). The consequences of partisan dealignment. In: Dalton RJ and Wattenberg MP *Parties without Partisans. Political Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 37–63

Deacon, D., Wring, D., Billig, M., Downey, J., Golding, P. and Davidson, S. (2015). *Media coverage of the 2015 campaign (UK general election, Report 5)*. Loughborough University.

Deacon, D., Golding, P. and Billig, M. (2001). "Press and broadcasting: Real issues and real coverage". *Parliamentary Affairs* 54 (4): 666-678.

Dearing, J. W. and Rogers, E. M. (1996). *Agenda-Setting*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Denver, D. and Gordon, H. (1990). "Issues, principles or ideology? How young voters decide". *Electoral Studies* 9 (1): 19-36.

de Vreese, C. (2004). The effects of strategic news on political cynicism, issue evaluations and policy support: A two-wave experiment. *Mass Communication and Society,* 7(2), 191-214.

de Vreese, C. (2005). The spiral of cynicism reconsidered. *European Journal of Communication*, 20(3):283.

Diamond, L. (2008) "The Democratic Rollback: The Resurgence of the Predatory State" *Foreign Affairs* 87 (2).

Diedong, A. (2008) *"Establishing journalistic standards in the Ghanaian press" African Commun. Res.*, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 207-232

Downs, A. (1957). *An economic theory of democracy*. New York: Harper and Row.

Druckman, J. (2001). "Evaluating framing effects". *Journal of Economic Psychology* 22: 91-101.

Dunn, E. (2010). "Country report, Liberia". Dizard, J. and Walker, C. (Eds.), Countries at the crossroads 2000. Report, Freedom House.

Dzisah, W. S. (2008). *The news media and democracy in Ghana (1992-2000)*. Doctoral thesis, University of Westminster.

Ekeanyanwu, N. T. and Obianigwe, N. O. (2012). "The Nigerian Press, Brown Envelope Syndrome and Media Professionalism: The Missing Link. *Journalism and Mass Communication,* 2 (4), 514-529.

Ekerikevwe, S. A. (2009). Manifestation of corruption among journalists in Nigeria. *Makurdi Journal of Communication Research,* 1 (1), 14-23.

Elliot, C. (1998). 'Defining development news values: An examination of press releases from the new China News Agency.' In McIntyre, B.T. (Ed). *Mass media in the Asia Pacific.* Clevedon; Multilingual Matters Lts. 72-84. 74

Elster, J. (1998). *Deliberative Democracy.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Entman, R. (1993). 'Framing: Toward a clarification of a Fractured Paradigm'. *Journal of Communication*, 51-52.

Entman, M. R. (2010). "Media framing biases and political power: Explaining slant in news campaign 2008". *Journalism,* 389-408.

Esser, F. and Angelo, P. D. (2006). Framing the press and publicity process in U. S., British and German: A comparative study of Metacoverage. *The Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics*

Esser, F. and Umbricht, A. (2014). "The Evolution of Objective and Interpretative Journalism in the WesternPress – Comparing Six News Systems since 1960s". *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, 91(3).

Evans, H. (2000). *Essential English for Journalists, editors and writers.* London: Pamlico.

Fallows, J. (1997). *Breaking the news: How the media undermine American democracy.*
Farnsworth, S. J. and Lichter, R. S. (2012). "Media Coverage of the 2005 Governor's Race: A Comparison to Presidential Election News Coverage". The Virginia News Letter 88 (3).

Fischer, F. (1993). "Citizen Participation and the democratization of policy expertise: From theoretical inquiry to practical cases". *Political Science,* 26: 165-187.

Fishkin, J. (2011). *When the People Speak.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Fletcher, F. J (1996) Journalism in a fish bowl: Ethical dilemmas: in campaign coverage. In Valerie Alia, Brian Brennan and C. Barry Hoffmaster (Eds). *Deadlines and diversity: Journalism ethics in a changing world* (pp. 140-150). Halifax, NS: Fernwood Publishing.

Fletcher, J. and Everett, R. (1991) 'mass media and elections in Canada,' in Fredrick, F.J. (Ed) *media, elections and democracy.* Toronto: Dundurn Press. 179-222.

Folarin, B. (2002). *Theories of Mass Communication*. Abeokuta: Links Publications

Forbes, D. (2005). *A watchdog's guide to investigative reporting.* Johannesburg: Konrad Adenauer Stiftung.

Foss, K. A., Foss, S. K. and Griffin, C. L. (1999). *Feminist Rhetorical Theories.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Fransworth, S. J. and Lichter, S. R. (2011). *The nightly news nightmare, media coverage of US Presidential elections, 1988-2008.* Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.

Gadzekpo, A. (2005) 'Ghana Country Assessment paper.' Submitted to Accra.

Galtung, J. and Mari Rung (1965). 'The structure of foreign news: The presentation of the Congo, Cuba and Cyprus Crises in four Norwegian newspapers' in *Journal of international peace research* 1: 64-91.

Gershman, C. (2005). "Democracy as Policy Goal and Universal Value" *The Whitehead Journal of Diplomacy and International Relations* 6 (1) 19-38

Ghana News Agency, December 5, 2014

Ghanalinks: Directory 2013-2014.

Gidengil, E. (2008) Media matter: Election coverage in Canada. In Jesper Strömbäck and Lynda L. Kaid (Eds.), *The handbook of election news coverage around the world* (pp. 58-72). New York, NY: Routledge.

Gillman, B. (2000). *The research interview*. London: Continuum.

Gitlin, T. (1980) *The whole world is watching: Mass media in the making and unmaking of the new left.* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Golding, P. and Murdock, G. (2000) "Culture, Communications and Political Economy" in Curran, J. and Gurevitch, M. (Eds.) *Mass Media and Society*, London: Arnold.

Graber, D. (1971). 'Press coverage patterns of campaign news: The 1968 presidential race' in *Journalism Quarterly,* 48, 502-512.

Graber, D. (1993). *Mass media and American politics.* Washington DC. CQ Press.

Grimsley, R. (1973). *The Philosophy of Bouseau*, London: Oxford University Press.

Guest, R. (2004). *The Shackled Continent*, Washington: Smithsonian Books

Gunaratne, S. and Hasim, M. S. (1996). "Social responsibility theory revisited: A Comparative study of public journalism and developmental journalism". *Javnost – The Public*. 3 (3): 97-107.

Gunter, B. (1997). *Measuring Bias on Television,* Luton, John Libbey Media.

Gyimah-Boadi, E. (1997). 'Civil society in Africa: The Good, the Bad the Ugly; CIVNET, Vol.1, no.1.

Gyimah-Boadi, E. (2001). "A peaceful turnover in Ghana" in *Journal of Democracy,* vol. 12, no 2, pp. 103-117.

Gyimah-Boadi, E. (2008). 'Ghana's Fourth Republic: Championing the African Democratic Renaissance?' Ghana Centre for Democracy Development Briefing Paper vol. 8 No. 4 January 2008.

Haas, T. and Steiner, L. (2001). 'Public Journalism as a Journalism of publics: Implications of the Habermas – Fraser Debate for public Journalism.

Habermas, J. (1989). *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Hainmueller, J. and Kern, H. (2008). "Incumbency as a source of spillover effects in mixed electoral systems: Evidence from a regression-discontinuity design". *Electoral Studies* 27 (2): 213-277.

Hallin, D. (2000). "Commercialisation and Professionalism in the American Media" in Curran, J. and Gurevitch, M. (Eds.) *Mass Media and Society.* London: Arnold.

Hallin, D. and Mancini, P. (2004) *Comparing Media Systems Comparing media systems: Three models of media and politic*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Hallin, D. and Mancini, P. "Americanization, Globalization and secularization' In F. Esser and B.Pfetsch" (Eds.). (2004) *Comparing Political Communication.* Cambridge:

Hallin, D. C. and Mancini, P. (2004) 'Comparing Media Systems: Three Models of Media and Politics' in *Journalism* Sage Vol. 2 (2): 123-147.

Hart, R. P. (2000). *Campaign talk: Why elections are good for us.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Hartley, J. (2007). *Communication, Cultural and Media Studies: The Key Concepts.* London: Routledge.

Hamilton, J. T. (2004). *All the news that's fit to sell: How the market transforms information into news.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Hanitzsch, T. (2008). "Situating peace journalism in journalism studies: A critical appraisal". *The Peace Journalism Controversy*, (Ed.) W. Kempf, 69-80. Berlin: Regener.

Hansen *A. et. al. (1999) mass communication research methods. London: Palgrave.*

Harbor, K. O. (2001). "The mass media and political stability in Africa: A utilitarian theory approach". *Contending Issues in African Development: Advances, Challenges and the Future,* (Ed.) O. M. Iheduru, 45-68. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Hartley, J. (2002). *Communication, Cultural and media studies: The key concepts.* London and New York: Routledge.

Hasty, J. (2005). *The press and political culture in Ghana,* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Hasty, J. (2005). The pleasures of corruption: Desire and discipline in Ghanaian political culture, in *Cultural Anthropology,* 20(2), 271-301.

Hasty, J. (2005). Sympathetic magic/contagious corruption: Sociality, democracy and the press in Ghana. *Public Culture*, 17 (3), 339-369.

Held, D. (1995) *Democracy and the Global Order: From the modern state Cosmopolitan Governance*, UK: Polity Press.

Held, D. (2006) *Models of Democracy.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Herman, E. S and Chomsky, N. (2000). 'The Propaganda Model: A Retrospective Journalism Studies 1 (1): 101-112.

Hill, D. (1985). "Viewer characteristics and agenda setting by television news". *Public Opinion Quarterly* 49 (3): 340-350.

Hodgson, F.W. (1987). *Modern newspaper editing and production.* London: Heinemann.

Holian, D. B. (2004). "He's stealing my issues! Clinton's crime rhetoric and the dynamics of issue ownership". *Political Behaviour* 26 (2): 95-124.

Holsti, O. R. (1968). "Content Analysis". G. Lindzey and E. Aronson (Eds.), *The Handbook of Social Psychology.* Vol. 2, New Delhi: Amerind Publishing.

Holtz, A. (2008). "Dateline Nigeria". Part 1. *Oncology,* 30 (8), 45-46.

Holtz-Bacha, C. (2000). "Wahlkampf in Deutschland. Ein Fall bedingter Amerikanisierung. Kamps, K. (Ed.), *Trans-Atlantik – Trans-Portabel? Die Amerikanisierungsthese in der politischen Kommunikation.* 9-26. Wiesbaden: Westdeutscher Verlag.

Hoover, K. (1984). *The Elements of Social Scientific Thinking.* New York, NY: St. Martin's Press.

Horiuchi, Y. and Leigh, A. (2009). "Estimating Incumbency Advantage: Evidence from Multiple Natural Experiments". *Unpublished paper.*

House, R. J. and J. M. Howell. (1992). Personality and charismatic leadership. Leadership Quarterly, 3(2), 81-108
.
House of Lords Select Committee on Communications (2008). *The ownership of the news Report.*

Vol. I and Vol. ll: Norwich: The Stationary Office Limited.

http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/artikel.php?ID.

Huntington, S. (1984). "Will More Countries become Democratic?" *Political Science Quarterly* 99 (2) 193-218.

IMF World Economic Outlook Report (2016).

Iyengar, S. (1991). *Is Anyone Responsible*? Chicago: University of Chicago.

Iyengar, S, Norpoth, H. & Hahn, K. S. (2004). "Consumer Demand for Election News: The Horserace Sells". *The journal of Politics* 66 (1): 157-175.

Jamieson, K.H. (2000). *Everything you think you know about politics: And why you're wrong.* New York: Basic Books.

Jamieson, K. H. and Waldman, P. (2003). *The press effect: Politicians, journalists and the stories that shape the political world*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Jevis, R. (2009). "The Remaking of Unipolar World" *The Washington Quarterly* 29 (3) 7-19.

Jibo, M. and Okoosi-Simbine, A. T. (2003). "The Nigerian media: An assessment of its role in achieving transparent and accountable government in the Fourth Republic". *Nordic Journal of* African *Studies,* 12 (2): 180-195.

Johnson, R. B. and Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2004). "Mixed methods research: A research paradigm whose time has come". *Educational Research* 33 (7): 14-26.

Johansson B (2008) Popularized election coverage? News coverage of Swedish parliamentary election campaigns 1979–2006. In: Strömbäck J, Ørsten M and Aalberg T *Communicating Politics. Political Communication in the Nordic Countries*. Göteborg: Nordicom, 181–194.

Jonah, K. (2007) 'Political Parties, Democracy and Development in Ghana' Unpublished Concept Paper prepared for the Institute for Democratic Governance (IDEG), Accra, Ghana.

Karikari, Kwame (ed.), *Ethics in Journalism: Case Studies in West Africa. Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1996.*

Karvonen L (2010). *The Personalization of Politics: A Study of Parliamentary Democracies*. Colchester: ECPR Press.

Kasoma, T. (2007). Brown envelope journalism and professionalism in development reporting: A comparison of Zambia and Ghana. PhD dissertation, University of Oregon, USA.

Keane, J. (2002). *Whatever happened to Democracy?* London: IPPR.

Kendall, C. and Rekkas, M. (2012). "Incumbency advantages in the Canadian Parliament". *Canadian Journal of Economics* 45 (4): 1560-1585.

Key, V.O. (1961). *Public Opinion and American Democracy.* New York: Knopf.

Klasnja, M. and Titiunik, R. (2013). "Incumbency disadvantage in weak party systems: Evidence from Brazil".

Klein, M.W. and Maccoby, N. (1954). Newspaper objectivity in the 1952 campaign. '*Journalism Quarterly*, 31 (2), 285-296.

Kriesi HP (2011) Personalization of national election campaigns. *Party Politics* (forthcoming).

Kupe, T. (1999). The Role of the Media in the Democratisation Process in Africa. Unpublished Paper.

Kunczik, M. (1999). *Ethics in Journalism.* Bonn: Friedrich-Ebert-Shiftung.

Kuypers, J.A. (2002) *Press Bias and Politics: How the Media Frame Controversial issues.* Westport, CT: Praeger.

Langer AI (2007). A historical exploration of the personalization of politics in the print media: The British prime ministers 1945–1999. *Parliamentary Affairs* 60(3): 371–387.

Langer AI (2010). The politicization of private persona: Exceptional leaders or the new rule? The case of the United Kingdom and the Blair effect. *International Journal of Press Politics* 15(1): 60–76.

Langer, J. (1998). *Tabloid Television: Popular Journalism and the 'Other News.'* London: Routledge.

Lasswell, H. D. (1938). *Propaganda Technique in the World War.* New York: P. Smith.

Lasswell, H. D. (1941). *Democracy through Public Opinion.* Menasha, WI: Banta.

Lavrakas, P. J. and Traugott, M. W. (2000). "Why election polls are important to a democracy: An American Perspective. Lavrakas, P. J. and Traugott, M. W. (Eds.). *Election polls, the news media and democracy*. New York: Seven Bridges Press, 3-19.

Lawrence, R. G. (2000) Game-framing the issue: Tracking the strategy frame in public policy news. *Political Communication*, 93-114.

Lawrence, R. G. (2000). *The politics of force: Media and the construction of police brutality.* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Lawrence, R. G. (2010). Researching political news framing: Established ground and new horizons. In P. D'Angelo & J. A. Kuypers (Eds.) *doing news framing analysis: Empirical and theoretical perspectives* (pp. 265-285). New York, NY: Routledge.

Lee, D. S. (2008). "Randomized experiments from non-random selection in U. S. House elections". *Journal of Econometrics* 142 (2): 675-697.

Lengauer, G., Esser, F. and Berganza, R. (2012). "Negative in political news: A review of concepts, operationalizations and key findings". *Journalism.* 13 (2): 179-202.

Leibj, E. J. (2006). "Can Direct Democracy Be Made Deliberative?" *Buffalo Law Review*. Vol. 54.

Lilleker, D. G. (2006) *Key concepts in political communication.* London: Sage.

Linz, J.J. and Stepan, A (1996) "Towards consolidated democracies" *in Journal of Democracy,* Vol. 7, No.2.

Lodamo, B., & Skjerdal, T. S. (2010). African Journalism Studies Freebies and Brown Envelopes in Ethiopian Journalism*", Ecquid Novi African Journal. Stud*., no. December 2014, pp. 37-41.

Lynch, J. and McGoldrick, A. (2005). *Peace Journalism* Gloucestershire: Hawthorn.

MacDonald, B. (2013). "Incumbency disadvantages in African politics? Regression discontinuity evidence from Zambian elections".

Mak'Ochieng, M. (1994). "The African and Kenyan media as the political sphere". Norsk medietidsskrift. 1 (2), 64-85.

Mancini, P. and Swanson, D.L. (1996) *Politics, media, and modern democracy: An international study of innovations in electoral campaigning and their consequences*. Westport: Praeger.

Mancini, M. (1994). *Alexis de Tocqueville.* New York: Twayne Publishers.

Manning, P. (2001). *News and news sources: A critical introduction,* London, England: Sage.

Mansbridge, J. (1983). *Beyond Adversary Democracy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Mansfield, E. D. and Snyder, J. (2004). *Electing to fight: Why emerging democracies go to was.* Cambridge: MIT Press.

Mapuva, J. (2010). "Challenges to the Democratization Process in Africa". *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa:* 12 (2).

Matthes, J. (2009). "What's in a frame? A content analysis of media framing studies in a world's leading communication journals, 1990-2005". *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly* 86: 349-367.

McAllister I (2007). "The personalization of politics". In: Dalton RJ and Klingemann HD. *The Oxford Handbooks of Political Science: The Oxford Handbook of Political Behaviour*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 571–588.

McCombs, M. E. and Shaw, D. L. (1972). 'The agenda-setting function of the press', *Public Opinion Quarterly,* 36:176-187.

McComb, M..; Shaw, D. and Weaver, D. (1972). *Communication and Democracy: Exploring the Intellectual Frontiers in Agenda-Setting Theory*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

McConnell, P. J., and Becker, L. B. (2002). The role of media in democratization. Paper presented to the political Communication Section of the International Association for Media and Communication Research, Barcelona, Spain.

McInturff. B. (2009). "The role of polling" in Kathleen Hall Jamieson (Ed.) *Electing the President, 2008.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. 84-107.

McNair, B. (1998). *The Sociology of journalism. London: Arnold.*

McNair, B. (2003). *An Introduction to Political Communication,* London: Routledge.

McQuail, D. (1994). *Mass Communication Theory: An Introduction,* London: Sage

McQuail, D. (2000). *McQuail's mass communication theory.* London, Sage Publications.

McQuail, D. (2005). *McQuail's Mass Communication Theory.* London: Sage

Meredith, M. (2005). *The State of Africa: A History of Fifty Years of Independence*. Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball. 368-369.

Miller, J.D.B. (1965). *The nature of politics*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

More, J. l. (1999). "Elections A to Z". Washington, D.C.: *Congressional Quarterly.*

Mpagaze, B. D. & White, R. A. (2010). Tanzanian journalists 'ambivalent perception of their ethics: A 'Jekyll and Hyde' occupation*", African Commun. Res.,* vol. 3, no. 3, pp. 543-574, 2010.

Muller, J., Z. (2008). "The Enduring Power of Ethnic Nationalism" Foreign Affairs 87 (2).

Muller, L. (2014). *Comparing mass media in established democracies*. London: Palgrave.

Myers, M. (2009). Radio and development in Africa. Concept paper, International Development Research Centre of Canada.

Myjoyonline (2011)

Mytton, G. (1983). *Mass Communication in Africa*. London: Arnold.

Ndangam, L. N. (2006). "Gombo": Bribery and the corruption of journalism ethics in Cameroon". *Ecquid Novi,* 27 (2), 179-199.

Ndulu, B., Chakraborti, L., Lijane, L., Ramachandran, V. and Wolgin, J. (2007) *Challenges of African Growth.* Washington: World Bank.

Negrine, R. and Stanyer, J. (2007). *The Political Communication Reader.* London: Routledge.

Neuman, R., Just, M. and Crigler, A. (1992). *Common knowledge: News and the construction of political meaning.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Neuman, W. (1997). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches.* Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Newton, K. (2006). "May the weak force be with you: The power of the mass media in modern politics". *European Journal of Politics Research* 45 (2): 209-234.

Nichols, J. and McChesney, R.W. (2005) *Tragedy and Farce: How The America Media Sell Wars, Spin Elections, And Destroy Democracy.* New York: New Press.

Nino, C. S. (1996). *The Constitution of Deliberative Democracy*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Ninsin, K.A. (1998) 'Elections, Democracy and Elite Consensus,' in Ninsin, K. A. (ed.) Ghana: Transition to Democracy (Dakka: CODESRIA).

Ninsin, K.A. (2006) *Political Parties and Political Participation in Ghana.* Accra, Ghana: Konrad Adenaur Stiftung.

Nugent, P. (2001) 'Ethnicity and recent democratic experiments in Africa.' *African Issues,* Vol. 29, No.1/2, 2-7 African Studies Association.

Nyamnjoh, B. Francis. 1996. *Mass Media and Democratization in Cameroon. Yaoundé.* Friedrich Ebert Foundation.

Nyamnjoh, F.B. *(*2001). "Media ethics and professionalism in Cameroon". C. Ukpabi (Ed.), *Handbook on journalism ethics: African Case Studies,* 65-86. Windhoek: The Media Institute for Southern Africa.

Nyamnjoh, F.B. *(*2005) *Africa's media, democracy and the politics of belonging.* Pretoria: Zed Books.

O'Kane, R.T.H. (2004) *Paths to Democracy: revolution and totalitarianism*. London: Routledge.

October 25, 2012, www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage

Ogan, C. (1982). "Development journalism/communication: The status of the concept". *Gazette* 29(1-2): 3-13.

Ogbuoshi, L. (2005). *Issues in Nigeria Mass Media History*. Enugu: Linco Enterprises.

Omenugha, K. A. and Oji, M. (2008). News commercialization, ethics and objectivity in journalism practice in Nigeria: Strange bedfellows? *Estudos em Communicao*, 3, 13-28.

Onadipe, A. (1998). "The media in the eye of the storm". *West Africa Magazine.*

Ottaway, M. (1995). "Democratisation in collapsed states" in Zartman, I.W. (Eds) *Collapse States: The Disintegration and Restoration of legitimate Authority.* London: Lynne Rienner.

Owolabi, K. A. (2003) 'Can the past salvage the future: indigenous democracy and the quest for sustainable democratic governance in Africa' in J.O. Oguejiofor, *Philosophy democracy and responsible governance in Africa*, Munster: LIT, pp. 442.

Palmer, J. (2000) *Spinning into control: News values and sources strategies*. London: Leicester University Press.

Pateman, C. (1970). *Participation and Democratic Theory.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Patterson, T. E. (2005). Of polls, mountains: U. S. journalists and their use of election surveys. *Public Opinion Quarterly,* 69 (5), 716-724.

Patterson, T. E. (2000) "The United States: News in a free-market society". In Gunther, R and Mughan, A (Eds.) *Democracy and Media: A Comparative Perspective (pp. 241-265).* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Payne, G. A. (2008) *Mass media news and the freemarket of ideas: Structural impingements on the right to communication,* LSE Research online. Available on http://eprints.1se.ac.uk/21582/1/Gregg-Payne(LSEROversion).pdf

Peters, J. D. (1999) "Public Journalism and Democratic Theory". In Theodore L. Glasser (Ed.) *The Idea of Public Journalism*. (Pp. 99-117). New York: The Guilford Press.

Petrocik, J. R. (1996). "Issue ownership in presidential elections, with a 1980 Case Study". *American Journal of Political Science* 40 (3): 825-850.

Petrocik, J. R., Beniot, W. L. and Hansen, G. H. (2003). "Issue ownership and presidential campaigning, 1952-2000". *Political Science Quarterly* 118 (4): 599-626.

Petry, E & Bastien, E. (2008). Follow the pollster: Inaccuracies in media coverage of the horse race during the 2008 Canadian election. *Canadian Journal of Political Science,* 46 (1), 1-26.

Pew Research Centre's Project for Excellence (2012). Winning the Media Campaign 2012.

Phillips, A. (1991). *Engendering democracy*. Cambridge: Polity. 16.

Plasser, F. and Plasser, G. (2002). *Global Political Campaigning: A Worldwide Analysis of Campaign Professionals and their practices*. Westport: Praeger. Policy news. *Political Communication*, 17(2), 93–114.

Press, Power and Politics Report (2000) 13pp. 380-407.

Prempeh, K. (2008). "Presidents Untamed" Journal of Democracy 19 (2).

Qualitatskennzeichen einer Demokratie, in C. Derichs and T. Heberer (Eds.), Wahlsysteme und Wahltypen, Wiesbaden: Vs-Verlag fur Sozialwissenschaften, 26 – 46.

Rahat, G. and Sheafer, T. (2007). "The personalization(s) of politics: Israel, 1949-2003". *Political Communication* 41 (1): 65-80.

Ramaprasad, J. (2003). "The private and government sides of Tanzanian journalists". *Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics* 8 (1): 8-26.

Reinemann C and Wilke J (2007). It's the debates, stupid! How the introduction of televised debates changed the portrayal of chancellor candidates in the German press, 1949–2005. *The Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics* 12(4): 92–111.

Retief, J. (2002). *Media ethics. An introduction to responsible journalism,* Cape Town: University Press South Africa.

Ritchie, J. and Lewis, J. (2003). *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers*. London: Sage.

Roberts, A. (2008). "Hyperaccountability: Economic voting in Central and Eastern Europe". *Electoral Studies* 27 (3): 533-546.

Ronning, H. (1994). "Democratisation Processes in Southern Africa and the Role of the Media". Waldahl, R.., (ed.) *Perspectives on Media, Culture and Democracy in Zimbabwe.* Oslo: Department of Media and Communication.

Rosenstiel, T. (2005). Political polling and the new media culture: A case of more being less. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 69 (5), 698-715.

Russonello, J.M. and Wolf, F. (1979). 'Newspaper coverage of the 1976 and 1968 presidential campaigns', in *Journalism Quarterly, 56, 360-364, 432.*

Salgado, S. and Strömbäck, J. (2012). "Interpretive Journalism: A Review of Concepts, Operationalization and Key Findings", *Journalism* 13 (2): 144-161.

Sanchez, M. California State University Fresno, "Agenda Setting". Last Modified 2002, Accessed May 13, 2013 http://zimmer.csufresno.edu/-johnca/spch 100/7-4-agenda.htm.

Scammell, M. and Semetko, H.A. (2008). 'Election news coverage in the U.K.' in Strömbäck, J. and Kaid, L.L. (Eds). *The handbook of election news coverage around the world.* New York and London: Routledge. 73-89 ,82.

Scheufele, D.A. and Tewksbury, D. (2007). 'Framing, Agenda Setting and Priming: The evolution of three media effects models', in *Journal of Communication.* 9-20. 1.

Schmidt, M. G. (2002). "Political Performance and types of Democracy: Findings from Comparative Studies" *European Journal of Political Research* 41: 147-163.

Schmidt, S. (2005). "Democracy Without Development? Unbalanced Transformations in Eastern and Southern Africa" *Strategic Insights* 4 (12).

Schudson, M. (2008). *Why Democracies Need an Unlovable Press*. Cambridge, UK: Polity.

Schudson, M. and Anderson, C. (2009) 'Objectivity, Professionalism, and Truth Seeking in Journalism,' in *The Handbook of Journalism Studies* Karin Wahl- Jorgensen and Thomas Hanitzsch (Eds) New York and London: Routledge pp.74-88.

Schoenbach, K., De Ridder, J. and Lauf, E. (2001). "Politicians on TV news: Getting attention in Dutch and German election campaigns". *European J. of Political Research,* 39 (4): 519-531.

Semetko, H. (2009). 'Political communication, democracy and democratisation' memorandum prepared for Panel 1: Elections, Press Freedom and Rule of Law of the conference on Democracy Audits and governmental indicators, Goldman School of Public Policy, University of California, Berkeley.

Semetko, H. A., & Valkenburg, P. M. (2000). Framing European politics: A content analysis of press and television news. *Journal of Communication, 50*(2), 93-109.

Sen, A. (1999). "Democracy as a Universal Value, "Journal *of Democracy,* 10 (3) 3-17.

Serdult, U. and Welp, Y. (2015). "How Sustainable is Democratic Innovation? Tracking Neighbourhood Councils in Montevideo". *Journal of Politics in Latin America*, 2: 131-148.

Sheafer, T. (2001). "Charismatic skills and media legitimacy: An actor-centred approach to understanding the political communication competition". *Communication Research* 28 (6): 711-176.

Shafer, R. (1998). "Comparing development journalism and public journalism as interventionist press models". *Asian Journal of Communication*. 8 (1): 31-52.

Shah, H. (1996). "Modernization, marginalization and emancipation: Toward a normative model of journalism and development". *Communication Theory.* 6 (2): 143-166.

Shamir, B., R. J. House, and M. B. Arthur. (1993). The motivational effects of charismatic leadership: A self-concept based theory. Organization Science, 4(4), 577-594.

Shaw, Donald Lewis and Maxwell E. McCombs (1977) *The emergence of American political issues: the agenda-setting function of the press.* West Publishing Co. New York.

Shoemaker, P. J. and Vos, T. (2009) *Gatekeeping Theory.* New York Oxford: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2009.

Skewes, E. A. (2007). *Messages control. How news is made on the presidential campaign trail.* Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.

Skjerdal, T. S. (2010). "Research on brown envelope journalism in the African media". *African Communication Research* 3 (3), 92-118.

Skjerdal, T. S. (2011). Development Journalism Revived: The case of Ethiopia. *African Journalism Studies*, 32 (2), 58-74.

Society for Professional Journalists, "SPJ Code of Ethics" Last modified 2013. Accessed March 21, 2013. http//www.spj.org/ethicscode.asp.

Somin, I. (1998). "Voter Ignorance and the Democratic Ideal" *Critical Review* 12 (4).

Sotirovic, M. and McLeod, J. (2008) 'Media coverage of the US election: Persistence of tradition,' in Strömbäck, J. and Kaid, L.L. (Eds). *The handbook of election news coverage around the world.* New York

Sparks, G.G. (2002). *Media effects research: A basic overview.* Toronto: Wadsworth.

Steele, J. (2009). "Development Journalism". *Encyclopedia of Journalism,* (Ed.) C. H. Sterling. London: Sage.

Stone, S. (1984). *Interviews.* Sheffield: University of Sheffield.

Stonecash, J. M. (2008) *Reassessing the incumbency effect.* Cambridge University Press.

Stovall, J. G. (1982). "Foreign policy issue coverage in the 1980 presidential campaign". *Journalism Quarterly,* 59, 531-540.

Street, J. (2001). *Mass Media, Politics and Democracy*. New York: Palgrave

Strömbäck, J. (2005). "In search of a standard: Four models of democracy and their normative implications for journalism". *Journalism Studies,* 6 (3), 331-345.

Strömbäck, J. (2009). 'Vox Populi or vox media? Opinion polls and the Swedish media, 1998-2006.' *Javnos the public,* 16 (3), 55-70.

Strömbäck, J. and Dimitrova, D. V. (2006). 'Political and Media Systems Matter: A Comparison of Election News Coverage in Sweden and the United States'. In *press / politics* 11 (4): 131-147

Strömbäck, J., & Dimitrova, D. V. (2006). Political and media systems matter: A comparison of election news coverage in Sweden and the United States. *The Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics, 11*(4), 131-147.

Strömbäck, J., & Kaid, L. L. (Eds.). (2008). *The handbook of election news coverage around the world* (Vol. 1). Routledge

Sulemana, B. (2009). *Coverage of election campaigns by the state-owned press: A content analysis of the Daily Graphic's coverage of Ghana's 2008 elections.* Accra: MFWA.

Swanson D and Mancini P (1996). *Politics, Media and Modern Democracy: An International Study of Innovations in Electoral Campaiging and their Consequences*. Westport, CT: Praeger.

Swanson, D. and Mancini, P. (1996). Patterns of Modern Electoral Campaigning and Their Consequences. In Swanson, D. and Mancini, P. (Eds.) *Politics, Media and Modern Democracy* (pp. 247-276). London: Praeger.

Swanson, D. and Mancini, P. (1996*). Politics, Media, and Modern Democracy: Introduction*. In Swanson, D. and Mancini, P. (Eds.). Politics, Media, and Modern Democracy (pp. 1-26).

Tankard, J.W. (2001) "The empirical approach to the study of media framing". In S.D. Reese, O.H. Grandy and A.E. Grant (Eds.), *Framing public life,* 95-106, Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence.

Taylor, M. (2009). "Protocol journalism as a framework for understanding public relations-media relationships in Kosovo". *Public Relations Review* 35 (1), 23-30.

Taylor, M. and Kent, M. (2007). "Resisting the temptation of protocol journalism: How public relations can build media capacity". Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Communication Association, TBA, San Francisco, CA

Tresch, A. (2009). 'Politicians in the media: Determinants of legislators' presence and prominence in Swiss newspapers.' In *International Journal of press / politics* 14 (1): 67-90.

Tuchman, G. (1978). *Making News: A Study in the Construction of Reality*. New York: The Free Press.

Uko, N. (2004). *Romancing the gun. The press as a promoter of military rule.* Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press.

Uzochukwu, F. (2014). 'News Commercialization and the Future of Journalism in Nigeria' Paper presented to the Department of Mass Communication, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

UNESCO (1979). Records of the General Conference. Twentieth Session, Paris, October 24-Novermber 28, 1978.

UNESCO (2007). Model Curricula for Journalism Education. Paris: UNESCO series on Journalism Education.

Uppal, Y. (2009). "The disadvantaged incumbents: Estimating incumbency effects in Indian state legislatures". *Public Choice* 138 (1-2): 9-27.

Valentino, N. A., Beckmann, M. N. & Buhr, T. A. (2001). A spiral of cynicism for some: The contingent effects of campaign news frames on participation and confidence in government. *Political Communication,* 18, 347-367.

Venkatesh, V., Brown, S. A. and Bala, H. (2013). "Bridging the qualitative – quantitative divide: Guidelines for conducting mixed methods research I information systems. *MIS Quarterly* 36 (1): 21-54.

Vliegenthart, R., Boomgaarden, H. G. and Boumans, J. (2010). "Changes in political news coverage: Personalization, conflict and negativity in British and Dutch newspapers". Brants, K. and Voltmer, K. (Eds.). Political Communication in Postmodern *Democracy*. London: Macmillan.

Vreese, C. H. D. E., Peter, J. and Semetko, H. A. (2001). Framing politics at the launch of the Euro: A cross – national comparative study of frames in the news, 107-122.

Waruiru, M. (2007). 'The failure of democracy in Africa' in Taki's Magazine, October 31, 2007.

Wasserman, H. (2008). 'Media ethics and human dignity in the postcolony', In S.J.A. Ward and H. Wasserman (Eds.), in *Media ethics beyond borders (*pp. 74-89). Johannesburg: Heinemann.

Wassermann, H. and de Beer, A.S. (2009). 'Towards De-Westernizing Journalism Studies, in Wahl Jorgen, K. and Hanitzsch, T. (eds.) *The Handbook of Journalism Studies. New York and London: Routledge, 428-438.*

Welman, C. (2001). *Research Methodology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

White, D.M. (1950). 'The 'Gatekeeper': A case study in the selection of News: *Journalism Quarterly*, 50: 751-758.

Whitfield, L. and Jones, E. (2008). 'Ghana: Breaking out of Aid Dependence? Economic and Political Barriers to Ownership, in the Politics of Aid: African Strategies for Dealing with Donors. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Willems, W. and Mano, W. (2016). (1 – 26) 'Decolonizing and provincializing audience and internet studies: Contextual approaches from African vintage points.' In Willems, W. and Mano, W. (Eds.), *Everyday media culture in Africa: Audiences and users*. London: Routledge.

Wilmot, P. (2006). 'Broadcasting, Agenda Setting and the Integrity Question,' Paper presented at the Biennial African Conference, Abuja.

www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage.

Xu, X. (2009). "Development Journalism". *The Handbook of Journalism Studies*, (Ed.) K. Wahl-Jorgensen and T. Hanitzsch, 357-370. New York: Routledge.

Yusha'u, M. J. (2009). "Investigative journalism and scandal reporting in the Nigerian press. *Ecquid Novi: African Journalism Studies,* 30 (2), 155-174.

Zakaria, F. (2003). *The Future of Freedom.* New York: W.W. Norton and Company.

Zaller, J. R. (2001). "The rule of product substitution in presidential campaign news". Katz, E. and Warshel, Y. (Eds.) "*Election studies. What's their use*? Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 247-270.

Ziegler, D. and Asante, M. K. (1992). *Thunder and Silence: The Media in Africa*.

Newspapers engaged

The Chronicle November 18, 2008.

The Chronicle October 3, 2008.

The Chronicle, November 14, 2008.

The Chronicle, November 17, 2012.

The Chronicle, November 20, 2008.

The Chronicle, November 28, 2008.

The Daily Graphic, November 17, 2012.

The Daily Graphic, November 19, 2012.

The Daily Guide November 16, 2012.

The Daily Guide November 5, 2012.

The Ghanaian Chronicle, October 19, 2012.

The Ghanaian Times, October 5, 2012.

The Ghanaian Times, December 20, 2014.

The Insight, June 2014.

Daily Graphic, November 20, 2008.

Daily Graphic, November 20, 2008.

Daily Graphic, November 24, 2008.

Daily Graphic, November 24, 2008.

Daily Graphic, November 26, 2008.

Daily Graphic, November 5, 2008.

Daily Graphic, November 7, 2012.

Daily Graphic, September 9, 2015.

Daily Graphic, December 3, 2015.

Daily Graphic, March 22, 2016.

Daily Guide, October 16, 2012.

Daily Guide, October 17, 2012.

Daily Guide, October 22, 2012 .

Daily Guide, October 22, 2012.

Daily Guide, October 4, 2012.

Daily Guide, December 3, 2015.

Ghanaian Chronicle, December 3, 2015.

The Ghanaian Times, October 28, 2015.

The Ghanaian Times, December 3, 2015.

The Ghanaian Times, March 23, 2016.

The Guardian, December 2, 2012

The Guardian, May 7, 2015.

Appendix A: Codebook

Content Analysis of the JOURNALISM, ELECTION CAMPAIGNS AND DEMOCRACY IN GHANA

<u>**Population:**</u>

Content of press coverage of election campaigns of 2008 and 2012 in Ghana. Articles including letters relating to the election campaigns were identified from four daily newspapers (Monday-Saturday): *Daily Graphic, Ghanaian Times, Daily Guide and Ghanaian Chronicle*. This included news stories, opinion, feature stories, editorials and letters from readers on the election campaigns.

<u>**Kind of Data:**</u>

Textual data.

<u>**Data Sources:**</u>

The originals of newspapers were from the library of Ghana Institute of Journalism with the *Ghanaian Chronicle*, October and November, 2013 from the library of the Graphic Communications Group Ltd.

<u>**Method of Data Collection:**</u>

Articles including letters to editors from readers relating to the campaign were identified from hard copies of newspapers.

Variable name	*Description*
artdate	date of article
paper	newspaper
day	day of week
papetyp	newspaper type
arttyp	article type
pageno	page number
storytyp	type of story

setting	setting
thme 1st	main theme
thmeoth	other main theme
thme2	2nd theme
thme3	3rd theme
actor1st	main actor
actor2nd	2nd actor
actor3rd	3rd actor
actor4th	4th actor
journey1	journalist evaluation of main actor
journey2	journalist evaluation of 2nd actor
evlting1	1st actor evaluating
evltion1	1st evaluation
evted1	1st actor evaluated
evlting2	2nd actor evaluating
evltion2	2nd evaluation
evted2	2nd actor evaluated
tone1st	tone towards main actor
tone2nd	tone towards 2nd actor
policy	policy information
prsonlty	personality information
Headln	Headline

2008 and 2012 GHANAIAN ELECTION CAMPAIGNS PRESS NEWS CONTENT ANALYSIS CODEBOOK

VARIABLE LIST

V1 ARTDATE (dd/mm/yy)

Date of article

V2 PAPER

Newspaper in which the article appeared

01 Daily Graphic

02 Times

03 Guide

04 Chronicle

V3 DAY

Day of week on which the articles appeared

01 Monday

02 Tuesday

03 Wednesday

04 Thursday

05 Friday

06 Saturday

V4 PAGENO

Page number on which the article appeared. Where a continuation page is given, only the first page number could be coded.

V5 STORYTYP

Type of story

01 Straight News

02 Feature/Profile

03 Editorial

04 Comment/Opinion

05 Interview

06 Letters

(STRAIGHT NEWS if article relates to events over previous 24-hrs; FEATURE/PROFILE if article has current information combined with substantial background information and often interviews with several protagonists OR if article contains attributes of the main actor with no interviews or substantial background information (e.g. 'Day in the life' type articles); EDITORIAL if article is specifically titled as such; COMMENT/OPINION if article is explicitly titled as such or appears to be the journalist's opinion without being a Signed Column or Editorial article, LETTERS if specifically titled as such or appears to be written by and sent by a reader to the editor.

V6 SETTING

Setting/Occasion of the story (HOW?)

01 Political

02 Campaign

03 Media

04 Other

05 No identifiable Setting

This variable is intended to identify how the story came about. Which source set the agenda for the story? What is the setting or occasion that generated/initiated the story, i.e. the immediate stimulus for the action or events reported in the story? (POLITICAL would include legislative, government, party events or international events; CAMPAIGN would include press conferences, press releases/statements campaign events such as photo opportunities, rallies, speeches, meet-and-greet, candidate debates, launches; MEDIA would include interviews, reporting opinion poll results, journalists analysis, straight news reports of non-campaign events or news analysis; OTHER would include financial community, agricultural community, European community, readers', letters for example). As an example, an article about the launch of a manifesto would be coded 'CAMPAIGN', an article analysing the content of the manifesto would be coded 'MEDIA'.

V7, 8, 9, 10 THEME1ST, THEME2ND, THEME3RD THEME 4TH

Story theme (WHAT?). <u>What</u> is the story about? The theme list should be used to identify the most important/predominant subject in the story. The second and third-most important/predominant stories should also be coded (if applicable).

Use attached table of Story Subject (What?) variables (Table 1) for subjects/themes.

V11, 12, 13, 14 ACTOR1ST, ACTOR2ND, ACTOR3RD, ACTOR4TH

Story actors (WHOM?). <u>Who</u> is the story about? The first and second (if applicable) most important/predominant actors should be coded. If applicable, up to 2 subsequent actors may also be coded. This variable will assess the importance of the actors as indicated by a combination of the number of times they are mentioned or referred to, in order in which they appear and their appearance in the headline. The most important/predominant actor in the story should have the highest reliability between coders.

See attached table of Story Actor (Whom?) variables (Table2).

Code Main, Second Actor and up to 2 subsequent actors

V15, 16, JOURNEV1, JOURNEV2

Reporter evaluation of Main and Second Actor as identified in Variables V10 and V13 (if applicable).

00 Can't determine

01 Criticising

02 Mixed/both

03 Supporting

04 Neutral

The coder should provide up to two entries to summarize the tone of all reporters' comments directed towards the main and second (if applicable) actors in the story. The aim is to determine whether or not reporters' comments were overall neutral (non-directional, straight, descriptive), mixed (a balance of criticising and supporting) or whether they appear to be purely supporting (reinforcing, agreeing,) or criticising (deflating, disagreeing,) the statements and activities of the MAIN ACTORS mentioned in the article. Max. 2 entries.

V17, 21 EVLTING1, EVLTING2

Evaluating actor. The coder may provide up to two actors who have been identified as evaluating other actors in the story.

Use attached table of Story Actor (Whom?) variables (Table 2) to identify the actor(s) making the evaluation. Max. 2 entries.

V18, 22 EVLTION1, EVLTION2

Actor evaluation of main actors in the story.

00 Can't determine/N/a

01 Criticising

02 Mixed/both

03 Supporting

04 Neutral

The coder should provide up to two entries to summarize the tone of comments directed towards the main actors in the story by other actor/s. the aim is to determine whether or not the comments of another actor mentioned in the story were overall neutral (non-directional, straight, descriptive), mixed (a balance of criticising and supporting) or whether they appear to be purely supporting (reinforcing, agreeing) or criticising (deflating, disagreeing) the statements and activities of the MAIN ACTORS mentioned in the article.

V19, 23 EVLTED1, EVLTED2

Evaluated actor. The coder may provide up to two actors who have been identified as having been evaluated by other actors in the story.

Use attached table of Story Actor (Whom?) variables (Table 2) to identify the actors(s) being evaluated. Max 2 entries.

V20, 24 TONE1ST, TONE2ND

Tone/favourability towards Main and Second Actor (as identified in variables V25 and V28 (if applicable).

01 Negative

02 Mixed/Both

03 Positive

04 Neutral

00 Can't Determine

Based on the <u>story as a whole</u> including all information in the story, what is the tone of the story towards the main and second (if applicable) actors? The story should be coded AS A WHOLE, on the four point scale where 1 is negative, 2 is mixed (i.e. both negative and positive), 3 is positive and 4 is neutral (negative and positive both absent). To avoid bias and to differentiate from 'V15-16' JOURNEV1, JOURNEV2', coders should evaluate the tone of the story FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE MAIN or SECOND ACTOR. As an example, this may result in a situation where JOURNEV1 and JOURNEV2 are both coded as 'Neutral' but due to comments and information provided within the story about the main and second actor TONE1ST and TONE2ND may be coded as 'Negative'

V25 POLICY

Density of policy relevant facts/information.

01 Low

02 Medium

03 High

00 None/N/A

Some stories may contain a great deal of policy relevant facts/information while others will contain very little, and these should be coded on the three point scale. Some will contain none whatsoever, and these should be coded as 0. (In some instances issues may be referred to without any facts/information regarding policy towards that issue being provided-these should be coded 0). Refer to the policy/Issues in the attached table of Story Subject (What?) variables (Table1) for guidance. A judgement should be made depending on the number of policies referred to, the amount of facts/information and the size of the article.

V26 PRSONLTY

Density of personality information.

01 Low

02 Medium

03 High

00 None/N/a

Some stories may contain a great deal of information about actors' personalities while others will contain very little, and these should be coded on the three-point scale. Some will contain none whatsoever, and these should be coded as 0. Personality information is present where comments are made specifically about the actor(s) character(s). A judgement should be made depending the amount of information and size of the article.

V27 HEADLINE

TABLE 1: STORY SUBJECT (WHAT?)

Election Campaign/Election Process

101 'Campaign Trail (out & about, meetings, speeches, launches, outdooring of candidates etc.)'

102 'Campaign Strategy (security, emphasis on certain issues, actual running/management of the campaign, etc.)'

103 'Announce Election Date'

104 'Negative Campaigning/Scare Tactics/Smears'

105 'Scandals/Controversies'

106 'Campaign Gimmicks (use of celebrities, theme tunes, presentation of Gifts etc.)'

107 'Political Distrust/Voter Alienation/Voter Cynicism/Disenchantment

108 'Voter Apathy'

109 'Tactical Voting'

110 'Hecklers/Protests'

111 '(Risks of a) Low Turnout'

112 '(Risks of a) Landslide'

113 'Spin'

114 'Electoral Reform'

115 'Electoral Process (inc. capacity building voting data, picking of form, Electoral laws)'

116 'Campaign Funding'

117 'Women MPs'

118 'Skirt and blouse voting'

119 'Ethnic Vote/Politics'

120 'Young Vote'

121 'Female Vote'

122 'Christian/Muslim Vote'

123 'Media Manipulation'

124 'Departing/Retiring MPs/Party Official'

125 'Free and Fair Election'

126 'Wives/Partners (role/importance of, etc.)'

127 'Election Campaign Process-Other'

128 'Exercising of franchise'

129 'Political Violence'

130 'Peaceful Election'

131 'Electoral Fraud'

132 'Presidential Debate'

133 'Defection'

134 'Voters Register'

135 'Issues-based campaigning'

136 'Dirty Politics (inc corruption, greed, selfishness etc.)'

137 'Electoral disputes'

Media Coverage/Polls

201 'Opinion Poll Result'

202 'Opinion Poll Design etc.'

203 'Reaction to Poll'

204 'Outcome Prediction/On Winning'

205 'Turnout Prediction'

206 'Media Coverage of Campaign (inc. analysis of coverage, deliberate concentration on specific events/people etc.)'

207 'Party/Candidate Endorsements'

208 'Voter Panel'

209 'Stats/Facts & Figures'

210 'Summary of Events'

211 'Joke/gimmick column'

212 'Constituency profile'

Parties/Party Leaders and Candidates

301 'Leadership Qualities/Image-Professional and/or Personal'

302 'Aims/Goals'

303 'Record/Achievement'

304 'Compare Qualities/Aims/Record'

305 'Manifesto (launch)'

306 'Manifesto Content'

307 'Conflict/Disagreement between Parties'

308 'Conflict/Disagreement within Parties'

309 'Party/leader/Candidate profile'

310 'Parties/Party Leaders/Candidates-Other'

311 'Reaction to electoral Promises'

Issues/Policy

401 'NHIS/Health'

402 'Education'

403 'Crime/Law & Order'

404 'Taxation'

405 'Pensions'

406 'Economy'

407 'Transport

408 'Employment'

409 'Environment,

410 'Farming/Agriculture'

411 'Culture/Arts/Sport,

412 'Local Government'

413 'Public Services in General'

414 'Social Security inc. Benefits, etc.'

415 'Rural Development'

416 'Housing'

417 'Parliamentary Reform'

418 'Information/Technology'

419 'Private Sector Involvement'

420 'Petrol Prices'

421 'Policies in General'

422 'Public Spending'

423 'Business'

424 'Care for the Elderly'

425 'Defence/Security'

426 'Poverty inc. Gap Between Rich & Poor'

427 'Welfare of Women'

428 'Gender of Balance/Gender equality'

429 'Infrastructure Expansion/Modernisation'

430 'Energy'

431 'Welfare of children'

432 'National Unity'

433 'Science and Technology'

434 'Water'

435 'Road Network'

436 'Fight Corruption'

437 'Factory/Industry

438 'Electricity'

439 'Free senior high school education'

440 'Youth development'

441 'Tourism'

442 'Peace'

TABLE 2: STORY ACTORS (WHOM?)

Political Parties/Institutions 2008

110 'Reformed Patriotic Democrats' (RPD)

111 'New Patriotic Party' (NPP)

112 'Democratic Freedom Party' (DFP)

113 'People's National Convention' (PNC)

114 'National Democratic Congress' (NDC)

115 'Convention People's Party' (CPP)

116 'Democratic People's Party' (DPP)

117 'EGLE Party' (EP)

118 'The Government'

119 'The Cabinet'

120 'Government Department'

121 'The Opposition'

122 'Parliament/MPs (in general)'

123 'Electoral Commission'

124 'Religious Institutions'

125 'Electoral Commissioner'

126 'Political Parties/Presidential Candidate/Politicians'

127 'National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE)'

128 'The Council of State'

Political-Presidential Candidates (2008)

210 'RPD'

211 'PNC'

212 'NPP'

213 'DPP'

214 'DFP'

215 'NDC'

216 'CPP'

217 'An independent candidate'

Vice Presidential Candidates (2008)

218 'RPD'

219 'PNC'

220 'NPP'

221 'DPP'

222 'DFP'

223 'NDC'

224 'CPP'

225 'An independent candidate'

Chairmen of Political Parties (2008)

226 'RPD'

227 'PNC'

228 'NPP'

229 'DPP'

230 'DFP'

231 'NDC'

232 'CPP'

233 'An independent candidate'

General Secretaries of Parties (2008)

234 'RPD'

235 'PNC'

236 'NPP'

237 'DPP'

238 'DFP'

239 'NDC'

240 'CPP'

Deputy General Secretaries of Parties (2008)

241 'RPD'

242 'PNC'

243 'NPP'

244 'DPP'

245 'DFP'

246 'NDC'

247 'CPP'

Campaign Managers (Chairmen Directors Coordinator) of Parties/Presidential Candidates/National Organiser (2008)

248 'RPD'

249 'PNC'

250 'NPP'

251 'DPP'

252 'DFP'

253 'NDC'

254 'CPP'

Spokespersons/Communication Directors (2008)

258 'RPD'

259 'PNC'

260 'NPP'

261 'DPP'

262 'DFP'

263 'NDC'

264 'CPP'

265 'An independent candidate'

Party Official/Aide/Special Advisor/Strategist (2008)

266 'RPD'

267 'PNC'

268 'NPP'

269 'DPP'

270 'DFP'

271 'NDC'

272 'CPP'

273 'An independent candidate'

Party Activist/Supporter (2008)

274 'RPD'

275 'PNC'

276 'NPP'

277 'DPP'

278 'DFP'

279 'NDC'

280 'CPP'

281 'An independent candidate'

Party MP/Candidate (2008)

282 'RPD'

283 'PNC'

284 'NPP'

285 'DPP'

286 'DFP'

287 'NDC'

288 'CPP'

Political Parties/Institutions 2012

110 'Convention Peoples Party' (CPP)

111 'United Front Party' (UFP)

112 'Independent People's Party' (IPP)

123 'National Democratic Congress' (NDC)

124 'New Patriotic Party' (NPP)

125 'Peoples National Convention' (PNC)

126 'Progressive People's Party' (PPP)

127 'Ghana Freedom Party' (GFP)

128 'Great Consolidated Popular Party' (GCPP)

129 'The Government'

130 'The Cabinet'

131 'Government Department'

132 'The Opposition'

133 'Parliament/MPs (in general)'

134 'Electoral Commission'

135 'Religious Institutions'

136 'Electoral Commissioner'

137 'Political Parties/Presidential Candidate/Politicians'

138 'National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE)'

139 'The Council of State'

140 'Other Institution'

Political-Presidential Candidates (2012)

210 'NDC'

211 'CPP'

212 'PNC'

213 'GCPP'

214 'UFP'

215 'GFP'

216 'PPP'

217 'IPP'

218 'NPP'

219 'Independent Candidate'

Vice Presidential Candidates (2012)

220 'NDC'

221 'CPP'

222 'PNC'

223 'GCPP'

224 'UFP'

225 'GFP'

226 'PPP'

227 'IPP'

228 'NPP'

229 'Independent Vice President Candidate'

Chairmen of Political Parties (2012)

230 'NDC'

231 'CPP'

232 'PNC'

233 'GCPP'

234 'UFP'

235 'GFP'

236 'PPP'

237 'IPP'

238 'NPP'

General Secretaries of Parties (2012)

239 'NDC'

240 'CPP'

241 'PNC'

242 'GCPP'

243 'UFP'

244 'GFP'

245 'PPP'

246 'IPP'

247 'NPP'

Deputy General Secretaries of Parties (2012)

248 'NDC'

249 'CPP'

250 'PNC'

251 'GCPP'

252 'UFP'

253 'GFP'

254 'PPP'

255 'IPP'

256 'NPP'

Campaign Managers of Parties of Presidential Candidates/National Organiser (2012)

257 'NDC'

259 'CPP'

260 'PNC'

261 'GCPP'

262 'UFP'

263 'GFP'

264 'PPP'

267 'IPP'

268 'NPP'

Spokesperson/Communication Directors (2012)

269 'NDC'

270 'CPP'

271 'PNC'

272 'GCPP'

273 'UFP'

274 'GFP'

275 'PPP'

276 'IPP'

278 'NPP'

279 'Independent Candidate'

Party Official/Aide/Special Advisor/Strategist

280 'NDC'

281 'CPP'

282 'PNC'

283 'GCPP'

284 'UFP'

285 'GFP'

286 'PPP'

287 'IPP'

288 'NPP'

Party Activist/Supporter

289 'NDC'

290 'CPP'

291 'PNC'

292 'GCPP'

293 'UFP'

294 'GFP'

295 'PPP'

296 'IPP'

297 'NPP'

Party MP/Candidate

298 'NDC'

299 'CPP'

300 'PNC'

301 'GCPP'

302 'UFP'

303 'GFP'

304 'PPP'

305 'IPP'

306 'NPP'

307 'Independent Candidate'

Other-Organisations/Individuals/Representatives

4010 'Agriculture Representative'

4011 'Business/Representative'

4012 'Business Organisation

4013 'Civil Servants'

4014 'Celebrity (state whom)'

4015 'Economist'

4016 'Farmer/Rural worker'

4017 'Film/Documentary Maker'

4018 'Heckler/Demonstrator'

4019 'Media Consultant Commentator/Journalist/Author'

4020 'The Media'

4021 'Police/Security Services

4022 'Pressure Group'

4023 'Professional Individual (teacher, lawyer, social worker, police etc.)

4024 'Pollster'

4025 'Pensioners'

4026 'Religious Spokesperson/Leader'

4027 'Scientist/Scientific Expert'

4028 'Social Service Representative'

4029 'Trade Union/Representative/Member'

4030 'Unnamed Source-Non-Party'

4031 'Universities Academic'

4032 'Voter/Citizen/Person in Street'

4033 'Think Tank'

4034 'European Union'

4035 'National Union of Ghana Students (NUGS)

4036 'Judiciary'

4037 'National Peace Council'

4038 'Women Group'

4039 'Students'

4040 'The National Media Commission (NMC)'

4041 'Politicians'

4042 'Traditional Rulers'

4043 'Ghana Journalists Association (GJA)'

4044 'National Association for Graduate Teachers (NAGRAT) Representation

4045 'Chief Justice'

4046 'Members of Parliament (MP)'

4047 'National Elections Security Task Force (NESFT)'

4048 'Ghana Education Service Representative'

4049 'Inter-Party Dialogue Committee (IPDC)'

4050 'Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT)'

4051 'Disabled'

4052 'Wife of Presidential Candidates'

4053 'Relative of Presidential Candidates'

4054 'Wife of Presidential Candidates

4055 'President'

4056 'Vice President'

4057 'Former President'

4058 'Former Vice President'

4059 'Minister'

4060 'Ghana Bar Association (GBA)'

4061 'National Security Co-ordinator'

Appendix B: Letter to editors

Ebo Afful

School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies

Cardiff University, Wales-UK

Dear Editor,

I am a PhD candidate of the above-named university conducting a study into ***Journalism, Election Campaigns and Democracy in Ghana***. The survey asks about the factors that your newspaper took into consideration in the coverage, selection and representation of 2008 and 2012 election campaigns in Ghana. Beside this there will be discussions on 'soli' and media bias.

Within the next few weeks, I will call on you for us to have discussions on the subject. The interview should take about an hour. I will be tape recording the session because I do not went to miss any of your comments though I will be taking down some notes. If you so wish I will ensure that in the write up of the thesis I will not identify you as the respondent.

I must add that I rely on editors' voluntary co-operation in undertaking such survey and so I would be very grateful if you would agree to take part in the survey which will go a long way to help me in achieving the objective for which this study is being undertaken.

Please for further information about the study, you may contact me by telephoning 0205958143.

Yours sincerely,

(EBO AFFUL)

Appendix C: Question guide for editors

The **editors** were asked questions about four broad areas:

1. **Gatekeeping**

    Under this category of the interview, the editors were asked about the factors that motivated them in their selection of political stories.

2. **Editorial policy**

    In this section, the editors were questioned about whether their media outlet has any policy that defines their coverage of election campaigns.

3. **Media corruption**

    In the media corruption category, the editors were asked questions about being influenced by political actors with gifts during election campaigns and whether they were aware that their journalists on covering election campaign activities were influenced with gifts.

4. **Media corruption**

    Under media bias, editors were asked questions about the election stories made available to them by their journalists and whether these represented equal and fair coverage of election campaigns. They were also asked about the stories they select and whether these were selected to reflect the principle of equal and fair coverage of candidates and political parties.

SAMPLES OF PUBLISHED ELECTION CAMPAIGNS STORIES

RI predicts victory for Akufo-Addo
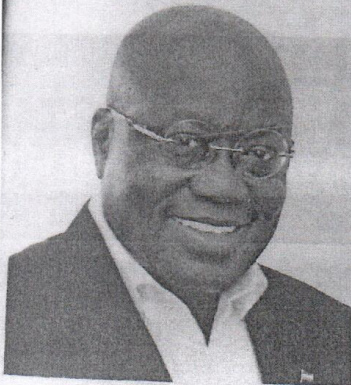
· Nana Akufo-Addo

WITH barely 15 days to the 2012 general election, an opinion poll conducted by Research International is predicting a first round victory for the 2012 Presidential Candidate of the New Patriotic Party, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo.

The research, carried out between September 16th and November 2nd sampled a total number of 4,600 respondents across different demographics in all parts of the country, with Nana Akufo-Addo obtaining 52.2 per cent of the vote representing 2,401 of the respondents.

The incumbent, President John Dramani Mahama, according to the opinion poll obtained 46.9 per cent of the vote representing 2,157 of the respondents sampled. The findings showed that the other smaller parties would barely make one per cent of the collective votes.

The opinion poll also revealed that the NPP Presidential Candidate was highly favoured by age groups from 18-49, with President Mahama leading the NPP Presidential Candidate amongst age groups above the age of 50 years.

For example, Nana Akufo-Addo obtained 63 per cent of the vote by age groups ranging between 18-19, whilst President Mahama obtained 40 per cent amongst the same catchment group.

Nana Akufo-Addo, within the age group of 20-24 obtained 56 per cent of the vote as against 41 per cent obtained by President Mahama.

President Mahama on the other hand obtained 54 per cent of the vote by the 50-54 age group, whilst Nana Akufo-Addo obtained 47 per cent of the vote.

58 per cent of the respondents with no education preferred President Mahama, whilst 42 per cent of respondents preferred the NPP flagbearer.

However, respondents who had some form of education stated that they would vote for the NPP and its Presidential Candidate.

52 per cent of respondents with basic education stated that they would vote for Nana Akufo-Addo, whilst 44 per cent stated they would vote for President Mahama. Similarly, 54 per cent of respondents with secondary education preferred the NPP whilst 41 per cent preferred the NDC.

On the tertiary front, 58 per cent of respondents stated they would vote for Nana Akufo-Addo, whilst 42 per cent stated that they would vote for President Mahama.

The poll, according to Research International, has a confidence level of 98 per cent with a margin of error of some ±1.8 per cent.

Research International is a market research company, founded in 1962 and part of the Kantar Group, the parent company for WPP's worldwide information and consultancy interests.

Research International has offices in 50 countries, including Ghana (Cantonments, Accra) and employs approximately 2,500 people across the world.

It specialises in qualitative and quantitative custom market research.

Research International's genesis was the market research division of Unilever. To this day, there remains a very strong link, with Unilever a major client in all significant markets.

'Politicians behind electoral violence'

Story: Zakaria Alhassan, Tamale

A RESEARCH conducted by the Northern Regional Directorate of the National Commission on Civic Education (NCCE) has established that some politicians are mostly behind electoral violence in the Tamale metropolis.

The research also noted that the

The research was conducted to understand the potential causes of electoral violence in the Tamale metropolis and its implications for the December general elections.

He explained that under the civic obligation and social responsibility contract, the commission was obliged to identify concerns or potential issues that may impede the

The director also underscored the need to deepen consultations with traditional rulers on tolerance and harmonious co-existence among people in their respective communities since chiefs wield influence in the happenings within their localities.

"There should be a roundtable discussion with the chiefs on topical

EDITORIAL

Wednesday, October 31, 2012

TOWARDS FREE AND CREDIBLE ELECTIONS!

THE quest for peaceful elections in December which would blaze the trail for a 21st century democratic renaissance in the country and Africa as a whole, should be a major concern for all stakeholders.

The government, political party leaders, the security agencies, judiciary, the media, churches and other religious bodies and Ghanaians in general, have roles to play, to ensure that the upcoming elections are free from violence and other practices which would disturb the peace we are enjoying.

An objective appreciation of political discourse in Africa shows that countries whose political leaders followed the path of hatred, intolerance and ethnic rivalry, among others, made their nations to suffer, through civil wars and ethnic conflicts, leading to destruction of lives and property.

Such countries as Liberia, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, and Cote d'Ivoire, to mention a few, where political intolerance resulted in the death of many of their citizens and others refugees in other countries, are still counting their losses.

It is in the light of this, that the *Times* welcomes the moves by the various churches in Ghana to add their voices to the calls by identifiable bodies, for a peaceful conduct of the December polls.

We appreciate and commend the flagbearers of the political parties for their statements of commitment towards peaceful elections on December 7, and entreat them to translate their pledges into practice, for peace to prevail in the country, subsequently.

It is our firm conviction that the Electoral Commission, with its vast experience and international recognition, would provide a level playing field for all the parties, to participate in the exercise.

We also expect our security agencies, especially the police, to discharge their duties with fairness, neutrality and without any political biases.

It is a fact that any form of media reportage, laced with biases and falsehoods, has the potential of inciting political opponents, and thereby promoting chaos and violence.

The *Times*, therefore, cautions the media, both state and private, to play their roles effectively, to ensure the elections become peaceful and violence-free.

We need to create a heathly environment, for peaceful and credible elections, come December 7.

Presidentia for Supreme

By Winston Tamakloe

TWO President nominees for the Supreme Court were yesterday vetted by the Appointments Committee of Parliament.

They were Justices Anthony Alfred Benin and Joseph Bawa Akamba.

Justice Benin was drilled for one hour 45 minutes while Justice Akamba took 50 minutes.

Justice Benin indicated that empanelling full members of the Su-

Justice Anthony Alfred

preme Court to rule on a constitutional matter would hardly give opportunity for review while sitting in batches would pave the way for review and the ruling would be binding on other who did not sit.

On the possibility for a citizen to seek a Supreme Cour order to compel Parliament from sitting on a particular Bill before the House, he intimated that there was that possibility the Constitution was being breached.

He agreed to a suggestion that the Transitional Provision in the Constitution should be timed out depending on the fact and circumstances of the provision.

Justice Benin disagreed with political coloration in the appointment of judges to the superior courts since it would no be in the interest of the nation and the judicial system.

Asked whether the Supreme Court would allow Parliamen to amend an error on an instrument before the House, he explained that Parliament could go back to the Supreme Court for consequential orders to have the error corrected without altering the judgement.

Justice Benin said it was the prerogative for every government to decide on a limitless number of Supreme Court judges however, it should be based on merit.

He said the decentralisation of the Court of Appeal would reduce stress on the parties and the judiciary and called for an independent prosecutor to handle cases involving the Attor

Court rules on

By Stephen Kwabena Effah

THE Accra Fast Track High Court will on November 6, decide whether to compel the Electoral Commission to register the flag-bearer

of the I (IPP), K December

Mr. A the Pres nominat commiss what it e Mr. Akpa the EC r

In cou counsel t their state which la Quarshie posed.

Mr. Ja tion to th Akpaleo' blank, ad forms wer printed".

No sub the court U.P Derry on the ma filed by b Speakir court proc

Mrs Georgina Wood — Chief Justice

Work to begin on Winneba Fishing Port

SUPPORTERS of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) have undertaken a keep-fit exercise in Winneba in the Central Region.

They were led by the Member of Parliament for Effutu, Mr. Mike Hammah.

Addressing them after the exercise, he said work on the safe landing fishing harbour and the ongoing project at Winneba Junction would begin soon.

The projects would be completed within three years, Mr. Hammah said.

He appealed to the people to remain calm and avoid politics of insult, personal attacks and other behaviours that could create problems before, during and after the December elections.

Mr. Afloeny Jacobs, Central Regional propaganda secretary of the party, also appealed to members to desist from acts that could tarnish the image of the party.— GNA

• Mr. Hammah (middle), with members of the party.

PPP will make Ghana a better place to live in — Nduom

DR. Paa Kwesi Nduom, presidential candidate of the Progressive People's Party (PPP), has called on Ghanaians to vote the party into power to make the nation a better place to live in.

He said the PPP had come to rescue Ghanaians from economic hardship and mismanagement by the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP) who have been ruling the nation.

Dr Nduom made the appeal at the launch of the campaign of Nana Owusu Ofori, Effutu constituency parliamentary candidate of the PPP, at Winneba.

He asked the electorate to come out in their numbers and vote massively for the PPP which had visionary, competent, selfless and incorruptible men and women to perform creditably when voted into power.

According to him, no member of his government will be allowed to abuse his or her position when the party was voted to power.

Dr Nduom called on Ghanaians to view politicians who incited people to create confusion as unpatriotic citizens who had nothing better to offer the country, and advised the youth in the area not to allow themselves to be used as destructive tools by politicians who only used them to achieve their selfish ambitions, and then abandoned them afterwards.

He said the nation was their future and they should not give any chance to those who wanted to destabilise it.

Dr Nduom who is accompanied by some National Executives of the party later introduced Nana Ofori to the people as their Parliamentary candidate.

He appealed to them to vote for the candidate to become their MP since he had the qualities to deliver to bring total development to the area.

He also introduced some parliamentary candidates in the Central Region who graced the occasion.

• Dr. Paa Kwesi Nduom — PPP.

Nana Ofori assured people of an open administration and pledged to distribute development projects evenly to every corner of the constituency.— GNA

TUC cautions workers

… 'Don't be swayed by sweet promises'

MR. Kofi Asamoah, Secretary-General of the Trades Union Congress (TUC), has called on Ghanaian workers not to be swayed by the "sweet" campaign promises of the various political parties, but to make informed decisions and vote wisely during the upcoming general elections.

He said workers should analyse effectively political party manifestoes and promises and vote for candidates who had the most convincing and pragmatic ideas about the creation of jobs, improvement in incomes and access to housing, education, health, electricity, water and sanitation.

Speaking at the Eastern Regional Council of Labour meeting at Koforidua on Tuesday, Mr Asamoah said workers have permanent interests in seeking improved working conditions as well as their well-being and aspirations, therefore they should look out for their allies in development during elections.

Mr. Asamoah said politicians had failed over the years to fulfill their campaign promises of job creation and urged workers to examine critically the one who could really live up to expectation.

On the employment situation in the country, he said the informal sector of the economy employed about 80 per cent of the workforce, and contributed to the production of goods and services.

Mr. Asamoah appealed to the government to support the informal sector to be able to create more jobs for the youth and advised workers of the sector to form unions to articulate their views.

He cautioned workers against allowing self-seeking politicians to use them to foment trouble, before, during, and after the December elections. — GNA

• Mr. Kofi Asamoah, TUC boss

'Load-shedding to end in December'

By Castro Zangina-
Tong & Samuel
Nuamah

THE Chief Executive of the Ghana Grid Company Limited (GRIDCO) has confirmed that the load-shedding exercise, which was occasioned by the interruption in gas supply from the West African Gas Pipeline, will be over by December this year.

Mr. Charles Darko, the Chief Executive of

President John Mahama (right) answering questions at the consultative forum. With him are Mr. Alex Bonney (middle) Acting chairman, PURC and Mr Samuel Kwadwo Sarpong (left) Executive secretary PURC.
Photo: Seth Adu Agyei

the company stated this at a stakeholder consultation on the energy crisis in Accra yesterday and explained that the distribution network and the generation situation was getting better.

He stated however that "isolated situations can arise, which cannot rule out load-shedding."

The consultative meeting, which was attended by President John Mahama, was to afford stakeholders in the energy sector the opportunity to discuss ways of mitigating the impact of the crisis on consumers and industry.

It brought together heads of the GRIDCO, the Volta River Authority (VRA), the Public Utilities Regulatory Commission (PURC), the Ghana Water Company Limited (GWCL),the Ghana Urban Water Limited, the Electricity Company of Ghana (ECG), consumer associations and captains of industry.

It would be recalled that last August this year, a portion of the West African Gas Pipeline which transports gas from Nigeria to Ghana for the generation of electricity got damaged, due to a naval accident.

The incident, though not anticipated, has incapacitated most of the country's gas- fired thermal plants like the Sunon Asogli Power, an independent power producer, which produces 200MW of the country's energy need.

However, Mr. Darko said a steam turbine component is being brought on board the Aboadze Thermal plant, to augment the shortfall in electricity supply, and that coupled with the SNNIT Plant at Tema and the Takoradi T3 Thermal project, a total of 320 MW of electricity should be added to the national grid, by November.

In a keynote address, President Mahama said the situation provides lessons for the country to accelerate its own gas development, and not

to rely solely on gas supply from other countries.

"With the Bui Hydro Electric Project and other power plants like the T3 at Aboadze and the SNNIT plant at Tema and our own gas from the Jubilee Fields, it is hoped that enough electricity would be generated to meet the growing demands," he stated.

President Mahama called on the utility service providers to ensure that any intervention they put in place to deal with situations like the current load shedding as published, would be strictly adhered to, so as to minimise its impact on consumers.

"I say this because, as I read the length and breadth of this country, I have had complaints from consumers who are unhappy with the way the utility service providers are handling the load-shedding programme," he said.

President Mahama appealed to industry to shift production from peak periods to off peak times, to conserve available power to be used for other purposes, or even as a reserve margin, whenever necessary.

"I am also tasking the Public utilities and regulatory Commission to consider the introduction of demand side management and time use of mechanisms, so that electricity can be managed in an efficient and resourceful manner," he said.

As communication is key, he urged the utilities to communicate effectively and openly on issues regarding their operations to consumers.

Mr Kweku Awotwe, Chief Executive of the VRA said that the use of the thermal plants is costlier than gas and assured that all things being equal, the energy crisis would be addressed, to bring comfort to both residential and commercial consumers.

Representatives of the consumer associations asked the PURC to sustain the interaction between service providers and consumers to enable them (Consumers) know why issues such as the load shedding is being embarked upon throughout the country.

Wednesday, October 17, 2012

GIVE PEACE A CHANCE!

TEN years after the unfortunate events which led to the death of Ya Na Yakubu Andani II, the time has come for all Dagombas to reflect on the effect of the protracted dispute on one of the nation's well-endowed societies.

The Dagbon area is the country's bread basket, yet there is widespread poverty and deprivation among the people there.

The protracted chieftaincy crisis has undermined the people's ability to improve their lot, and ruining the progress and stability of the entire Dagbon area.

It is, therefore, timely that President John Mahama has advised the people, to view poverty as the common enemy to be fought, instead of fighting among themselves.

During his visit to the area last week as part of his campaign tour of the Northern Region, the President urged the people to put aside their differences and forge ahead in unity, and help the government to develop the area, and lift them from poverty and deprivation.

Responding, the Regent of Dagbon, Kampakuyana Yakubu, appealed to President Mahama to make the area's security and development a priority, noting that the area has been relatively peaceful in recent times, except for some pockets of sporadic skirmishes.

He cautioned against the tendency of politicians to incite violence during the up-coming elections.

Like all well-meaning Ghanaians, the *Times* would like to advise the people in the north, especially Dagbon, to be more concerned about improving their lot, instead of engaging in disputes which only worsen their plight in the long run.

They should ask themselves how many children of those fomenting the crisis are actually in the frontline of the conflicts?

When resources meant to improve the quality of life of the people are dissipated on conflicts, very little is left for development.

That is why we plead with the people to reflect soberly on their circumstances and find a lasting solution to the conflict in Dagbon.

The solution lies in their own hands!

Politics now a lucrative profession, says Pastor

POLITICS has become the most lucrative and rewarding profession in Ghana today, providing opportunities for people to enrich themselves in the shortest possible time, and most often, through corrupt practices.

Rt. Rev. Justice Kwamena Ayemin Dadson

"A few months after being voted into office on promises they would not fulfil, the politicians, some of whom hitherto were poor and could not afford a bicycle, suddenly ride in huge Land Cruiser vehicles, and enjoy other accessories of power and riches, as relatives and friends flock to them for their share of the sudden wealth."

This view was expressed by the Rt. Rev. Justice Kwamena Ayemin Dadson, the out-going Minister-In-Charge of the Immanuel Methodist Society, East Airport, in the Reginamuel-Gray Estate, in a Valedictory and Superannuation service held at the church to bid him farewell, after 41 years of active service to the Methodist Church, Ghana.

"We cannot, however, blame the politicians for being corrupt, because it is the citizens who encourage and compel them to engage in corruption," he lamented.

He explained that most Ghanaians voted, expecting some personal gains from the politicians they voted for, instead of looking out for national or community development.

This, he said, placed the citizens or voters in an awkward situation since they are not able to turn around and accuse the politician of being corrupt.

He called on Christians to serve in whatever capacities wherever they are

without lording it over the people, in service to mankind is a commandment of the Lord Jesus Christ, who himself came to serve.

He said the current campaigns of the political parties were a means by the politicians to pledge their readiness to serve society, but as to whether they would fulfil those promises when voted into office is another matter.

The Very Rev. Dr Kwesi Author-Mensah, the Superintendent Minister of the Accra North Circuit of the Methodist church, described Rt. Rev. Dadson as a forthright Minister of God, and known for his discipline.

Very Rev. Author-Mensah said Rt. Rev. Dadson does not compromise on principles and truth and credited him with the introduction of Sunday Second Services into the Methodist Church.

The Rt. Rev. Dadson has been the Minister-In-Charge of the Immanuel Methodist Society since 2009, when he relocated from Tema West Circuit of the church where he served as the Minister-In-Charge of the Mt. Zion Methodist Church in Sakumono.

The Immanuel Methodist Society, its various organisations and others in the Accra North Circuit, including the Calvary Methodist and the Adjiriganu Methodist Societies paid glowing tributes to the out-going Minister and presented he and his wife, Mrs. Lily Love Dadson with various gifts.

Mrs. Cl[...] for Ben[...]

Mrs.

US Secretary of [...] takes responsib[...] the Benghazi con[...] four Americans in [...]

Mrs Clinton sto[...] matic staff oversea[...] House

US Republicans [...] Barack Obama over [...]

And Republican [...] raise it again in the [...] Obama.

It seems Mrs C[...] clear from Mr Obam[...] Romance if he is to [...] BBC's Adam Broo[...] in her interview[...]

Peinyina residents threaten to boycott polls

RESIDENTS of Peinyina, a settler farming community in the Nkoranza North District, have decided not to vote during the Election 2012 due to lack of development projects in the community.

They said "we are fed up with vane promises that would not take us anywhere," and advised leaders of political parties not to waste their time to campaign in the area for votes.

Mr Kwaku Obeng, a former assemblyman the area and an elder of the community, told the Ghana News Agency at Nkoranza that the people took the decision during a meeting organised by the unit committee, chiefs and elders of the community.

He said the entire community was unhappy with the deplorable state of the 15-kilometre road linking Dromankese to Peinyina and said because of its poor state, drivers had refused to ply it.

Mr Obeng said the people grow food crops such as maize, yam, rice, cowpea, cassava and vegetables but their efforts were threatened by post-harvest losses especially during the rainy season.

He complained of the lack of potable water as one of the major problems, since their only source of water from a stream had been polluted leading to an outbreak of Buruli ulcer. He said the community had no health facility and the people travelled a distance of about 18 kilometres before accessing health facility at Dromankese or Ejura in the Ashanti Region.

Mr Obeng said it was unfortunate that the local primary school had only three classrooms to cater for all pupils of the six classes.

He said the school also lacked furniture and all efforts by the community leaders and the teachers for furniture from the Nkoranza North District Assembly had proved futile.

Mr Obeng said they had resolved not to vote during Election 2012 to draw the attention of the government to their problems and bring some improvement into the lives of the people.

"We are fed up with politics of lies as we only see politicians when they want our votes," he said. — GNA

☐ Dr Kwadwo Afari-Gyan

Female parliamentary aspirants sensitised

THE Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA) in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the European Union (EU) has organised a four-day capacity building workshop for aspiring female parliamentary candidates at Elmina.

The workshop which is the second of its kind and under the theme: "Strengthening the Capacity of Female Parliamentary Candidates for Election 2012," has brought together aspiring female parliamentary candidates of the National Democratic Congress, the New Patriotic Party, the Convention Peoples Party, the Progressive People's Party and the People's National Convention.

Brigadier General Francis A. Agyemfra (Rtd), Senior Fellow of the IEA, said Ghana's population was dominated by women, who represented 51.2 per cent but were less than 10 per cent in the country's Parliament.

He said women were the prime actors of development and that this is evidenced by their role in the household, in agriculture and food processing and their contribution towards national development.

Brig Agyemfra (Rtd) said Ghanaian women occupy a small percentage of managerial positions saying "in the current Government, only three women are in the cabinet, while in the diplomatic corps, only nine women hold ambassadorial ranks."

He said women were 2.5 million more than men in Ghana and the workshop is aimed at enhancing the skills of female parliamentary aspirants by taking them through subject areas such as, electoral laws, networking and human relations, gender analysis of party manifesto, ethnicity and its implications, gender and politics and development of campaign messages.

Dr Rose Mensah-Kutin, Executive Director for ABANTU for Development, said the campaign of women should focus on their strengths and maintain an acute awareness of potential areas of risks or vulnerability.

She said women should encourage the door-to-door canvassing of votes, community events, political debates and speaking with the media and identifying target audience who would determine their approach of engagement in their campaigns.

Dr Mensah-Kutin was speaking on the topic: "Campaign Strategies" which was aimed at equipping the participants with the knowledge in strategising in their campaigns.

She said there was the need for women candidates to pursue a strong financial budget to provide an outline of expected expenses and revenue and create an organisational plan to guide their programmes and projects. — GNA

☐ Brig. Gen. Francis Agyemfra

GAF to boost personnel in regions towards election 2012

THE Ghana Armed Forces are putting in place special arrangements to post more personnel to strengthen the capacity of its troops in the regions to help safeguard the 2012 general election.

Lieutenant-General Peter Augustine Blay, the Chief of Defence Staff, said this when he led a team of high ranking military officers to pay a courtesy call on the Upper West Regional Minister, Alhaji Amidu Sulemana, in Wa

He said the visit was to afford them the opportunity to interact with the troops, identify their challenges and to see how best they could support them to function effectively.

The Chief of Defence Staff said he was impressed with the way security commanders in the region came together to receive him when he arrived and commended them for their great show of collaboration.

Lieutenant General Blay thanked the regional Minister for the assistance he had been giving to the security agencies in the region, especially the military.

Alhaji Sulemana said the military is very important to the country, adding that the peace the country continued to enjoy was because of the sacrifices made by the various security agencies.

He said the military had been very supportive of the police in maintaining law and order in the region.

Alhaji Sulemana said the country needs peace and the military could best tell the story about the consequences of instability because of their exposure in peace keeping, adding that they should therefore, ensure that no stone was left unturned as far as the security of the election was concerned.

'Pass RTI now'

MRS Theresa Adjei-Mensah, Vice-Chairperson of Brong-Ahafo Network of Non-Governmental Organisations (BANGOs), has called on Parliament to speed up with the passage of the Right to Information Bill (RTI).

She said the delay with the passage had greatly affected the scope of the Right To Know Day (RTKD) in the country.

Mrs Adjei-Mensah said this when launching the Brong-Ahafo Regional RTKD on the theme: "Our Rights to Know – An Effective Right to Information Law or None", at Techiman.

It was organised by BANGOs and supported by Ahenkronoso Care Foundation, a Techiman-based NGO.

The launch was attended by more than 1,000 hairdressers, tailors and other youth organisations, who carried placards some of which read "Crucify corruption by passing Right to Information Bill", "Information denied threatens our democracy", "Ghanaians have the right to know", "Right to Information would enhance Rule of Law", "Where is the Information Bill?".

Mrs Adjei-Mensah said, since 2002 the popularity and scope of RTKD had increased with about 60 NGOs associated with it and the annual event has been celebrated in over 40 countries worldwide.

Mr Raphael Ahenu, Brong-Ahafo Regional secretary of BANGOs, said over 50 NGOs had joined the Coalition and impressed upon other NGOs to join to fight for the enactment of the RTI in the country.
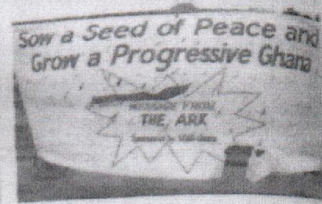
Campaign for peaceful polls intensified

Article: Rebecca Quaicoe-Duho

WITH barely six weeks to the general election in December, non-governmental, religious and faith-based organisations and civil society groups have intensified their campaign for peaceful elections.

Some have mounted billboards at strategic locations while others have erected banners on major streets, which are all calling for a peaceful election.

At the Abeka Junction on the Achimota - Accra Highway, a billboard calls on the Lord to save Ghana. It also calls on politicians not to start war as well as on journalists not to fuel war. The same billboard can be seen at the Kaneshie Estates behind Pamprom.

Banners erected by the Ark foundation, a g e n d e r - b a s e d organisation, calls for the promotion of a violence-free election. Another one calls on people to "sow a seed of peace and grow a progressive Ghana".

Sponsored by Star-Ghana, the Ark Foundation banner also calls on all to "Think about Ivory Coast; Think about Liberia" and asserts that women and children were the losers and, therefore, people should not allow themselves to be misused. It further calls on everyone to think about peace.

Another banner located between Circle and Avenor says: "Peace in Ghana depends on us" and also calls on people to pray for peace.

Backed by scriptures, another poster calls on all to trust in God and not politicians.

Ghana, since it began its democratic processes of electing presidents and parliamentarians two decades ago, has been touted as an oasis of peace in the midst of war and civil strife in surrounding countries.

Calls for peace have also been at the centre stage at many functions where people are asked to pray for peace in the upcoming elections.

The 2012 general election is seen as a crucial one, especially for the two main political parties in the country, the National Democratic Congress (NDC), which is the incumbent government, and the New Patriotic Party (NPP), which is working at wresting power from its opponent after it lost it to them in 2008.

The 2008 elections which went into a third round was seen by many as a test case in the country's democracy, since the present government won by a small margin, a situation which many say would have been a ground for civil war had it occurred in any other country, especially in Africa.

Recently, the United Kingdom's Ambassador to Ghana, Mr Peter Jones, commended the country's democratic processes, saying that it had earned a "fantastic reputation" on the continent and across the world.
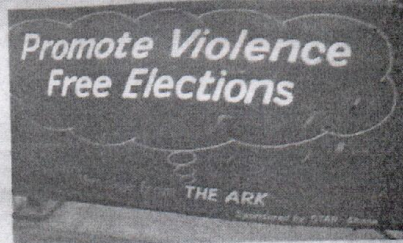
Also, an Ivorian lay preacher, Mr Jean Claude Dogo, in a programme recently, called on Ghanaians not to jeopardise the peaceful atmosphere that was currently being enjoyed since any outbreak of war would send the country back in its development agenda.

Again, the Taifa Area Pastor of the Christ Apostolic Church International (CACI), Reverend Augustine Bugyei, at a religious programme called on political parties to endeavour to maintain the prevailing peace in the country.

He said Ghanaians should not allow politics to divide their ranks but they should rather strive to sustain the prevailing peace in the country.

According to him, Ghanaians had nowhere else to seek refuge if there is any conflict and that the whole world was looking up to Ghana to emerge victorious once again from Election 2012 and to stand out once more from the lot.

Veep urges electorate to examine free SHS policy

Story: Timothy Gobah, Wa

GHANAIANS must critically examine the free senior high School (SHS) policy being taunted by the New Patriotic Party (NPP) the Vice President, Paa Kwesi Bekoe Amissah-Arthur, has said.

He said besides burdening the national budget, the NPP had no track record to convince Ghanaians that it was capable of fulfilling that promise.

Mr Amissah-Arthur made the call when he met students of the UDS as part of a five-day campaign tour of the three northern regions of Ghana.

He said the ruling National Democratic Congress (NDC) had a better strategy for educational development for the benefit of Ghanaians.

At the University, Mr Amissah-Arthur, an economist, used part of the programme to engage the students in the basic economic lectures on the concept of how the free SHS policy could have a dire consequence on the other aspects of the economic sectors.

He said the nation would have to find a way to finance the promised free senior high school education policy being proposed by other political parties, explaining that the "free" really had a price be paid for it to be achieved.

With an analysis of the concept of Opportunity Cost in economics, the Vice President said the provision of free senior high school education would definitely have to be paid for from other sectors of the economy, thus depriving Ghanaians of qualitative services from equally important sectors.

At the Wa Senior High Technical School, Vice President Amissah-Arthur, commissioned projects that began in the last two years, which included a new assembly hall, an administration block and two storey girls's dormitory all constructed with funding from the Ghana Education Trust Fund.

Addressing staff and students later, Vice President Amissah-Arthur said free education could never take place without the necessary facilities.

keeping the students in school was about GH¢ 600 million.

He said even at the basic level, where the current Ghanaian constitution stipulates that education must be free and compulsory there were problems because of lack of facilities.

The government was, therefore, concentrating on the provision of facilities and conditions which would make it possible for children to go to school and stay in the classroom.

Aside the provision of more classrooms, the NDC Government has enhanced the School Feeding Programme, providing free textbooks as well as other interventions to enhance accessibility to quality education.

"How can children concentrate in school when they are hungry? Where there are no classrooms, when it rains, it's a holiday," Vice President Amissah-Arthur said, adding "the current Free SHS does not provide the necessary conditions.

education had to be progressively free.

Vice President Amissah-Arthur said the financing of SHS education had to be subjected to a national debate.

He reiterated the commitment of the NDC Government to ensure equal and fair access to quality education, which he had featured prominently when he earlier addressed students and staff of the Wa Campus of the University for Development Studies.

He described the University as a baby of the NDC, and urged the people to vote massively for the NDC for a "one-touch" victory on December 7 to continue to serve in the interest of the education sector.

He assured the electorate that the NDC had a superior strategy for development, and calling on them to reject what he called "textbook economics".

He had earlier called on the Vicar General of the Wa Diocese of the Catholic Church, who prayed the Catholic Church...

Vice President, Paa Kwesi Bekoe Amissah-Arthur

Let us do decent politics

POLITICS in Ghana today is moving in a different direction, with politicians attacking one another's personality and harping on issues like the social status, family issues, religious background and ethnocentrism for their own benefit.

This does not speak well of us as citizens of a country that is seen as a bastion of democracy and the gateway to Africa. Politicians who are willing to seek power to contribute their quota to national development and improve the lives of the people should discuss, debate and concentrate on issues confronting the country and find ways to bring development to the nation as a whole and not attack personalities with insults and false allegations.

I have come to respect the country's former presidents for how they have conducted themselves and the most astonishing part is how the last President Mills always pledged to move away from politics of vilification.

I hope President John Mahama will do the same as he has called on various political leaders to talk about national issues.

All politicians must also conduct themselves in a manner to show the electorate that the politics they are engaged in is for the development of the nation and the betterment of the people.

I would like all Ghanaians to recall a statement made by our late President John Evans Attah-Mills: "As a nation, it is God who is the President of Ghana. We are one people with a common destiny; we should, therefore, hold arms and be able to strive together. Let us aim at the ultimate prize and objectives. We may belong to different backgrounds but we all serve one God, so let us know there is only one country we can call our own and that is Ghana."

Minnow John Ductus
Student, Prempeh College.

Peace be unto Ghana

We know in the Bible that Jesus Christ our Lord came from heaven and died on the cross to sacrifice himself just to make peace among God and man, among himself and man, among man and his fellow brethren.

So did our fore fathers sacrifice their blood and fight for our peace today.

That is why we are being called a country of peace. They fought for today, but not only for themselves.

We must, therefore, make sure we maintain that peace for the future.

For these reasons, I am pleading with Mr President, all political parties, all ministers, all politicians and the nation as a whole to bear in mind that there is no King saved by a multitude.

A soldier does not triumph because of his strength. War horses are useless for victory; their great strength cannot save.

Rather, the Lord watches over those who obey him, those who trust in his constant love. He saves them from death, he keeps them alive in times of famine

(Psalm 33:16-19).

Whatever the political party or politician does, God is going to make the best choice for his country.

Thus the right ruler for the nation will surely be the winner.

The Bible says , "Where do all the fights and quarrels among you come from? They come from your desires for pleasure, which are constantly fighting within you" (James 4:1).

Let us put aside our own desires, our selfish being and rather fight for a better Ghana just like our forefathers did.

If our forefathers had followed their own desires, we would not have got our peace today.

Therefore I am urging you that "With love, understanding humility and the fear of God, let us all remain at peace with one another till God comes".

Jeremiah Agbenyenu
Accra

Corruption and abuse of power in Ghana

...fry where over eight ...le earn less than $2 ...president travels to ...on's session with ... of 60 people, each

violence and strife that so often characterises African countries. Initially, Ghanaians living abroad paid little attention to corruption in Ghana.

by just a handful of people," said Rawlings.

The flagrant abuse of power in Ghana has awakened Ghanaian

"Millions do not even get a square meal in Ghana. But judgment debts, like the Woyome

Use of Computerised Placement System – Lack of Transparency

I recently visited the Wesley Girls High School, Cape Coast, and was shocked to discover that the marks and aggregates of students were not published this year.

Students with aggregates as high as 28 and 30 have their names on the school's admission list, while other students with far better aggregates have not gained admission. How could this be?

In my opinion, the grades of students were intentionally not published in order to give unscrupulous individuals the opportunity to take advantage of the situation to satisfy their selfish interests and alter the schools that their wards were qualified for.

The Computerised School Selection and Placement System (CSSPS) is gravely flawed, and is much worse than the system we used to have, which was based on good grades and individual merit, instead of on bribery and corruption.

What legacy are we leaving for our children? Are we aware that our children are our future and that in order to preserve our moral uprightness we need to instil good values in them for posterity?

The purpose for writing this was to notify concerned individuals as well as the authorities about this unfair and underhanded occurrence and pray that something is done about it because the truth never hides.

Concerned Parent
Accra.

Mercy Adu-Tiwaa, well done!

I would like to commend Ms Mercy Adu-Tiwaa, headmistress of S.D.A. Senior High School, Bekwai, for the great work she did for the students of the school during her administration.

She and her team were able to build a sick bay, renovate the science resource centre and currently she is almost completing one of the biggest assembly halls in Ghana and also a stool-shaped classroom block.

Maame, we the students thank you very much. God richly bless you.

Peaceful elections will boost Ghana's image — Ansah-Koi

Story: Benjamin Xornam Glover, Bolgatanga

A LECTURER with the Political Science Department of the University of Ghana, Legon, Dr Kumi Ansah Koi, has said Ghana stands to gain a lot if she goes through peaceful and violence-free elections in December, this year.

Presenting a paper on "The Elections and National Security—Opportunities and Challenges", Dr Ansah-Koi said Ghana's present attractiveness to the international business community was attributable to the democratic and peaceful atmosphere prevailing in the country.

He therefore called on Ghanaians to preserve that peace, stressing that a successful outcome of the elections in December would further boost Ghana's image as the beacon of hope in Africa.

Dr Ansah-Koi expressed this view in Bolgatanga during the fourth workshop by the National Peace Council (NPC) on "Election Security Management, Harnessing Resources of Key Actors for Peaceful Election".

Dr Ansah-Koi called on the electorate to reject all politicians who preach or resort to insults on the campaign platforms, in order to send a strong signal to the politicians that they are committed to peace.

He said Ghana had provided an inspirational leadership role in Africa, having held four successful elections since it embarked on the Fourth Republic in 1992, and the rest of the world was looking to her.

The overall objective of the workshop was to build trust and confidence among the principal actors in the peace and security spheres of the state.

About 40 participants made up of chiefs and opinion leaders, youth associations, religious bodies, civil society organisations, the media and security agencies from the Northern, Upper East and Upper West regions attended the two-day workshop.

Topics discussed included the role of the media in peaceful elections and inter-agency collaboration for peaceful elections.

Dr Ansah-Koi reiterated the fact that elections are not a "do or die affair", emphasising that if there is violence it is the ordinary man on the street that suffers.

He pointed out that Ghana is the only country for Ghanaians and appealed to both losers and winners to graciously accept the outcome of the polls to preserve the peace.

A member of the NPC, Maulvi Wahab Adam, said the council was committed to highlighting the need for Ghanaians to live at peace through its numerous activities and interventions to enhance the development of the nation.

He encouraged Ghanaians to travel round the nation in order to identify and deal with the negative perceptions that they might have against one another.

Nduom to tap experiences from Rawlings, Kufuor

Story: Donald Ato Dapatem, Mepe, Volta Region

THE presidential candidate of the Convention People's Party (CPP), Dr Paa Kwesi Nduom, has said if elected President he would hold monthly meetings with former President Rawlings and President Kufuor to tap their rich experience for the good of the nation.

Dr Nduom who promised to make the National Democratic Congress (NDC) presidential candidate, Prof. J.E.A. Mills the Chairman of the Council of State, added that he had nothing against the NDC and the New Patriotic Party (NPP).

He added that elections were about sharing ideas and that for this reason the CPP under his presidency would tap the needed expertise for the development and unity of the nation.

Dr Nduom was addressing some party faithful, chiefs and elders at the forecourt of the Mepe palace in the Volta Region last Tuesday.

He said the two parties, the NDC and the NPP, had antagonised themselves so much and rained insults and accusations at each other for far too long, a situation which he described as having the potential to derail the peace the nation was enjoying.

He, therefore, urged the people to vote for the CPP as a sure way of securing the peace and stability of the nation.

Dr Nduom said the Volta Region was a stronghold of the CPP during the First Republic but due to the turbulent times that the party went through after it had been proscribed, the NDC through hard work took over.

He said further that the CPP had come back in full force and would work assiduously to claim its stronghold back, especially the Volta Region.

On the Aveyime Rice Project, he said there was no need delaying the project which could have generated employment for the teeming youth in the area and revenue for the nation.

He said a CPP government would never hesitate to ensure that all rice and factories established by the CPP government or any other government were developed to provide the people with decent jobs.

Conduct campaign with decorum —Ahiable

Story: Samuel Kyei-Boateng, Okumaning

AN independent parliamentary candidate in the Kade Constituency in the Eastern Region, Mr Basil Ahiable, has called on activists of the various political parties in the area to conduct their campaigns with decorum and refrain from intimidation and other negative acts that have the potential of creating violence.

He also advised politicians and their supporters who have made some communities "no-go areas" for other political activists to desist from this.

Mr Ahiable, who made the call at a political rally at Okumaning last weekend, alleged that he and his supporters were attacked and their canopies destroyed by some people perceived to be New Patriotic Party (NPP) activists during a campaign at Akyem Wenchi.

He enjoined all Ghanaians to ensure that no nasty incidents would occur before, during or after the December 7, 2008 general election in order to sustain the peace and unity in the country that had won the nation international recognition.

Mr Ahiable stressed that he had the brightest chance of winning the forthcoming parliamentary polls as the masses had embraced his message and were rooting for him.

He said when given the mandate to represent the people in Parliament, he would promote education and diversify the economy of the area now that the people could no longer depend on diamonds for their livelihood.

Mr Ahiable promised to set up an endowment fund to sponsor the education of brilliant, poor pupils and students.

According to him, he had concluded arrangements for an Indian investor to establish a modern Information and Communication Technology (ICT) centre at Akwatia in January 2009 to create employment for the youth and also make many people computer literate.

Elaborating, Mr Ahiable said he would bring investors to encourage the people to go into large-scale oil palm plantation and fish farming for their livelihood.

He said development of road infrastructure would also be his priority. The aspiring parliamentarian stressed that he would lobby policy makers to include Akwatia that had been neglected over a long period of time, in their development agenda.

The First Vice Chairman of Mr Ahiable's campaign team, Mr Isaac Ahiable Amunike, also expressed optimism that Mr Ahiable would come out with flying colours considering the massive support he was enjoying from the electorate.

He said the Akwatia Constituency had lagged behind for a long time because both the NDC and NPP governments forgot about the area.

He promised that if given the mandate, Mr Ahiable would turn the fortunes of the area around.

Vice-Prez inaugurates cenotaph for peacekeepers

Story: Timothy Gobah

THE Vice-President, Mr Kwesi Bekoe Amissah-Arthur, has inaugurated a cenotaph in memory of Ghanaian peacekeepers who died in course of duty in Lebanon.

Known as the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) Memorial Peacekeepers Cenotaph, the monument specifically captures the 34 Ghanaian military personnel who gallantly died during peacekeeping operations in Lebanon.

Their names are appropriately embossed on the brass work tablet that is fixed on the impressive monument at Burma Camp.

Performing the ceremony at the Burma Camp in Accra, the Vice-President said, "The monument will continue to be a reminder of the nation's appreciation of the ultimate sacrifice in the service of humanity and in our quest for international peace and security."

Mr Amissah-Arthur expressed the commitment of the government to peace, security and stability in the world in which all people were free to work towards economic development and human dignity.

"Ghana, as a proud member of the United Nations, will always be committed to this path. We will, therefore, continue to support world peace by providing both military and civilian personnel to the course" he said.

The Ghana Armed Forces' (GAFs) involvement and contribution to the peace in Southern Lebanon dates back to 1978. During the 34 years of its participation in that peace process, a number of Ghanaian soldiers have lost their lives.

Mr Amissah-Arthur said the GFA operated with significant logistical constraints, but noted that in spite of the limitations, Ghana had developed as one of the leading countries in peacekeeping.

"The government of Ghana will continue to make the necessary sacrifice by providing the Ghana Armed Forces with logistic and material requirement in order to position them to not only better professionally equip themselves in their areas of operation, but also to provide them with greater protection to reduce casualties," he said.

He said improved training programmes would also contribute to produce more combat ready troops for the forces.

He commended the move by UNIFIL to build the memorial in honour of Ghanaian soldiers who fell in Lebanon in the course of duty.

The Lebanese Charges D'Affair, Mr Ahmed Soueidan, lauded the bravely work Ghanaian soldiers did for the Lebanese people, saying " their contribution was felt on many levels- the humanitarian, civil and peacekeeping".

"I will like to take this opportunity to pray for the souls of the martyrs of the Ghanaian Armed Forces whose sacrifice helped Lebanon in our most difficult days." he said.
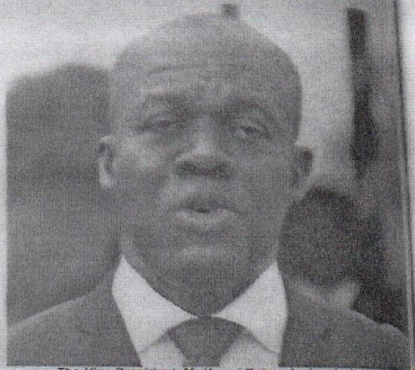
• The Vice-President, Mr Kwesi Bekoe Amissah-Arthur

Resist schemes to turn Ghana into two-party state — Nduom

Story: Kofi Yeboah

THE presidential candidate of the Progressive People's Party (PPP), Dr Papa Kwesi Nduom, has urged Ghanaians to resist schemes by some people to turn Ghana into a two-party state because that political system does not augur well for the country's democracy.

He said the two-party state agenda was only born out of selfish interest, and not one that was in the best interest of the country.

"We are doing what I consider to be quite dangerous", he lamented, as he shared his concerns over the matter with journalists in Accra.

Dr Nduom cited some journalists and media houses as accomplices to the two-party state scheme, saying they sought to promote the interest of only the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP) at the expense of other political parties.

"It makes me very unhappy, and it is because many of the media people who either are affiliated to or support some NDC or NPP candidate, have made it a deliberate policy to only want to talk about the NDC candidate or the NPP candidate", he submitted.

Dr Nduom said the two-party state scheme was often anchored on the premonition that the Americans had the Democrats and the Republicans, while the British had the Conservatives and the Labour, which was not true, anyway.

He said the two-party state schemers also asserted that Ghanaians did not want a second round because it brought too much tension and cost too much money.

Furthermore, he said, they pushed a certain agenda that people should not vote for a candidate who could not win the election.

"It is wrong, and it is not that they are doing it in the name of democracy or in the interest of the people. For many of them, it is because they have been bought. It is as simple as that", he indicated.

Dr Nduom said the state-owned media in particular had been even and fair in this year's electioneering, citing the Daily Graphic, the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation and the Ghana News Agency for plaudits.

But he did not have the same compliments for the private media.

"If a private media decides that I am for NDC or NPP and so we are going to promote an NDC or NPP agenda, I will not quarrel. But once you put yourself up that you are having an election platform and promoting democracy, you must promote the interest of everybody, and let that person fail or succeed based on their own merit", he remarked.

Dr Nduom said the 1992 Constitution also perpetuated what he described as "an elected dictatorship" because it gave everything to the winner.

He urged the electorate to vote for the best candidate in the December polls based on the person's competence and track record.

"So there is no such thing as a wasted vote; the only vote that is wasted is the one that you cast for somebody who ignores you, doesn't do anything for
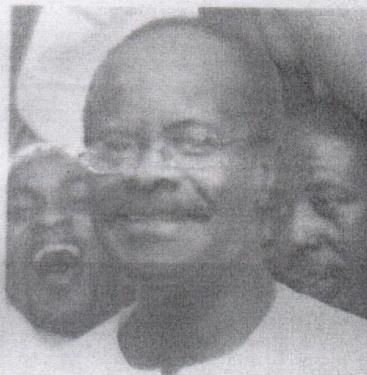
• Papa Kwesi Nduom

you and doesn't deliver on his promises. That is the wasted vote, not the prospective one", he said.

Drawing some examples from Africa to buttress his confidence in the chances of the PPP in the election, even as a minority party, the PPP presidential candidate cast a glance at neighbouring Benin where Yayi Boni came from outside the two main political parties in that country to win an election and become president.

In a similar manner, he said, President Michael Sata of Zambia, after some persistence, contested and won presidential election in Zambia.

"So what makes some people want to force a two-party state in Ghana? It won't work. We are not going anywhere; we are going to be here and we'll compele and win", he submitted.

Writer's Email:
kofi.yeboah@graphic.com.gh

Elections taskforce warns parties over defacing posters

Story: Gilbert Mawuli Agbey, Agona Swedru

THE Agona West District Election Security Taskforce has warned supporters of political parties to desist from defacing posters of their political opponents to prevent conflict in the area.

According to the taskforce, it would not spare any supporter of a political party caught engaging in that act.

The Chairman of the taskforce, Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Anthony Nana Ekow Yawson, said this at a meeting held recently between the taskforce and representatives of all the political parties contesting the upcoming elections.

The meeting was to deliberate on security issues concerning the elections and strategise for peace in the district before, during and after the elections

DSP Yawson charged the party representatives to restrain their supporters from engaging in acts that would disrupt the peaceful conduct of the polls.

He bemoaned the campaign of character assassination among the political parties in the area, adding that a candidate's private life should not be part of the campaign.

He added that campaigning should be based on issues that would help address the needs of the electorate and advised the parties against the use of brute force against their opponents.

DSP Yawson, who is also the Swedru District Police Commander, noted that the taskforce would not spare troublemakers, especially macho men engaged by the parties to destabilise the peace.

"Macho men have no role to play in the elections and the taskforce has strategised to deal with them ruthlessly", he added.

He urged the party representatives to educate their supporters to leave the polling stations and return only when voting was over to know the results.

He further entreated the political parties to use their polling agents, enlightened people who would understand the voting process to prevent conflict.

The NPP parliamentary candidate for Gomoa Central, Dr Edward Cudjoe, said was pathetic that some politicians had decided not to campaign on issues but appealed to all the parties to engage in campaigning that would better the lot of the people.

The NDC parliamentary candidate for Agona West, Mr Charles Obeng-Inkoom, commended the security taskforce for maintaining the peace in the area.

He lamented over the activities of some local radio stations that offered their platforms to some political activists to spew lies and insult their opponents.

He appealed to the taskforce to meet managers of the radio stations to discuss their operations as the election drew closer to prevent tension in the district

CPP to produce fertiliser in four years

Story: Mark-Anthony Vinorkor

THE Convention People's Party (CPP) has said it will, within four years, establish a fertiliser plant which will produce 100,000 tonnes of urea per day.

To make the plant viable, it said a rail network linking the site of production with Togo, Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso would be developed.

The Presidential Candidate of the CPP, Dr Abu Sakara, said in a document detailing his plans for Ghana that the network would support cheaper transportation of fertiliser, thereby reducing transaction costs and enhancing productivity.

He said contrary to the popular perception that arrangements were underway to establish a fertiliser plant associated with the country's petroleum industry, the building of the factory was far from being realised, and added that only the CPP could bring that

dream into fruition.

To maximise the operation of the plant the CPP sought to tap phosphated. At Sakara said, phosphate rock from Togo would be processed to formulate phosphate fertiliser.

Meeting domestic demand of both urea and phosphate fertilisers, he added, would save significant foreign exchange.

Furthermore, the sale of fertiliser to regional neighbours would also appreciably enhance national revenue streams.

According to Dr Sakara, a network of roads would be constructed to link the eastern and western corridors at coastal, mid-belt and most northerly locations. That would permit easier movement of goods from farms to markets with less spoilage.

On poultry and animal husbandry, he said the CPP would initiate and support targeted investments in that area to increase productivity and expand the capacity of the country's existing poultry

and animal husbandry enterprises.

Interventions, he said, would comprise further investments and policy measures to reduce transaction costs along the value chain for poultry production, after critical review with the association of poultry farmers.

He said market demand for local poultry products would be boosted through a policy of one egg per day per child in primary schools.

That, he noted, would require a daily production of at least three million eggs per day and an estimated demand increase of one billion eggs per annum.

The current capacity of local poultry producers, in his estimation, was two billion and that the intervention would strengthen market demand for local poultry products and encourage expansion to meet the national deficit of 180 million birds consumed per year of which the country produced only two per cent.

On oil palm, Dr Sakara

said the industry would be expanded in the western and central zones of the country to take advantage of the record high prices associated with the advent of bio-fuels.

"This neglected part of the country's agro industry is a shameful wasted opportunity that is clearly illustrated by Malaysia's performance and its big windfall from the oil palm price hike," he said.

Dr Sakara said young agricultural graduates would be recruited to expand oil palm nurseries to make available a supply of six million seedlings for planting on 100,000 acres of land in four years.

That, he added, would make available sufficient supply of primary produce to exploit existing processing capacity to its maximum.

Editor's Note

WE inadvertently used the picture of Dr Papa Kwesi Nduom alongside this story instead of Dr Abu Sakara
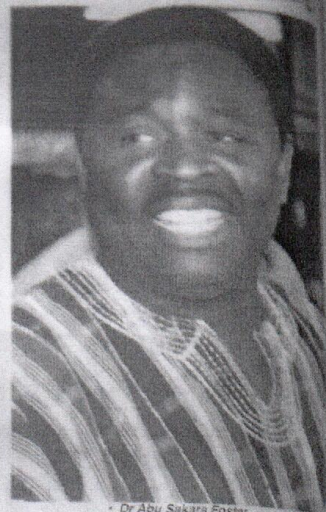
Foster, the flag bearer of CPP on page 63 of yesterday's issue of the paper.

We have therefore

reproduced the story with the appropriate picture of Dr Sakara.

We apologise for the mix up.

· Dr Abu Sakara Foster

· President Mahama addressing a rally at Sandema. Picture: EBOW HANSON

Free SHS policy a ploy — Prez Mahama

Story: Musah Yahaya Jafaru, Bolga

PRESIDENT John Dramani Mahama says the free senior high education policy being touted by the New Patriotic Party (NPP) is just a political ploy to convince Ghanaians to vote for them. He said the NPP does not have any good record of delivery in the educational sector.

For instance, he explained, when the NPP government extended the duration of the senior high school (SHS) from three to four years, it failed to expand infrastructure to accommodate the fourth year students.

He said it was when the NDC took over power in 2009 that the NDC government constructed emergency school blocks to cater for the fourth year students.

President Mahama made the remarks when he addressed students of the Bolgatanga Polytechnic at Bolgatanga in the Upper East Region last Saturday.

The students in the packed assembly hall cheered the President on with intermittent applause as he delivered his 10-minute-address.

President Mahama, who is the Presidential

candidate of the NDC for the 2012 election, said the NPP was able to construct only ... SHS in its eight years in office as against those put up by the previous NDC government.

Besides, he said, the NPP could ... achieve the free universal basic education and wondered how the party could succeed in implementing free SHS.

The President said the educational sector had linkages, and so any programme to take any of the stages would have an effect on the others.

He said it was for that reason that he said the previous NDC government put up 20 SHSs, seven polytechnics and three universities to cater for all the stages.

President Mahama said currently about ... per cent of children who were supposed to be in basic school and 40 per cent of those who were supposed to be in SHS were not in school due to the lack of infrastructure.

Therefore, he said, the next NDC government intended to build 200 community SHSs to cater for the students from the basic level.

Again, he said, the government would put up 10 teacher training colleges, more nurses and midwifery training colleges and another public university in the Eastern Region.

In a related development, President Mahama visited the University for Development Studies (UDS) at Navrongo and informed the students of the government's programme to create jobs for the youth.

For instance, he said, $100 million would be provided for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to access credit to grow their businesses.

He said under the Young Entrepreneurs Programme, $10 million would be allocated to support the youth to start up their businesses.

Meanwhile, President Mahama also visited the Kongo Senior High School where he inaugurated two boys dormitories.

He said the Kongo SHS was one of the examples of schools that the NDC government had put up in the country.

President Mahama assured both schools of the government's commitment to improve their road networks and water situation.

Vote against NDC, NPP

THE Progressive People's Party (PPP)parliamentary candidate for the Amasaman Constituency, Madam Thelma Lamptey, has urged Ghanaians to vote against the ruling National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the opposition New Patriotic Party (NPP), because they do not have anything good for Ghanians.

The aspiring PPP MP noted that over the years Ghanaians had not benefitted from anything meaningful from both parties and advised the electorate to make a sound judgement by giving the PPP the mandate to handle the affairs of the nation.

Addressing executives of the PPP in the Amasaman Constituency, she explained that the need to vote out the NDC and NPP was imperative now more than ever

because during their tenure of office they did not pursue policies to remove the financial burden of the people.

She said it was time for the electorate to change their political fortunes and vote for the PPP to move the country forward.

"The PPP is poised to bring fresh ideas into the political landscape of the country," she said and added that corruption would be a thing of the past.

Madam Lamptey advised her audience to make the right choice and vote for the PPP whose leadership was without blemish.

She said free basic education for all children was dear to the heart of the new and vibrant PPP, with Edwumawura Papa Kwesi Nduom at the helm of affairs.

A former member of the Convention People's Party (CPP),

Madam Lamptey was optimistic that she would win her fourth attempt to represent her people in Parliament, saying that as an indigene of the constituency, she is ready to give her all to bring development to the area.

Madam Lamptey also said she was a professional teacher and the proprietress of Paradise Academy at Pokuase and claimed that her entrepreneurial acumen and political experience had prepared her enough to serve her people in Parliament.

"We are adequately prepared to deliver on our promises," she said, adding that it is time for a change for the better.

On education and health facilities, she said her party was ready to deliver on its promises to the people.
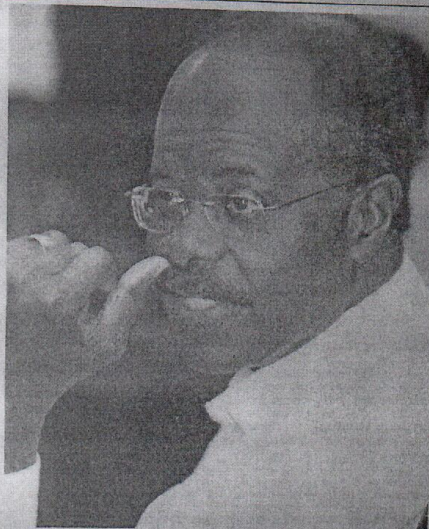
· Dr Papa Kwesi Nduom

Political campaign intensifies in Tema

Story: Rose Hayford Darko, Tema

POLITICAL campaign in the Tema Metropolis has been intensified as candidates and supporters of various political parties adopt strategies to woo

Ofosuware, while the New Patriotic Party (NPP) presents Mr Daniel Titus Glover for the seat. The Peoples National Convention (PNC) has Madam Jemilatu Mumudu ,Peoples Progressive Party is Mr

North Dayi candidate launches campaign

Story: Tim Dzamboe, Vakpo

THE parliamentary candidate for the National Democratic Congress (NDC) in the North Dayi Constituency in the Volta Region, Mr George Loh, has

on the people, especially the youth, to rally behind their leaders to achieve the desired goals.

Mr Loh recounted the vain promises made by the past government and said it had a

Ashanti Police nab secret tape recorders

From Nyarkotey Bonu, Kumasi

NDC will win the elections massively -DCE

From Ernest Best Anane, Agona-Ashanti

Edward Kwei Asarkwah, DCE of Sekyere South

KMA investigates seizure of toilet
...by NDC Chairman

From Sebastian R. Freiku, Kumasi

Nana Asare Bediako, DCE of Atwima Nwabiagya

NDC you

Kyei-Men

From Sebastian R. Freiku, Kumasi

NPP promises far fetched — Bagbin

Story: Victor Kwawukume, Ho

THE Minority Leader in Parliament, Mr Alban Bagbin, has described the promise by the New Patriotic Party (NPP) to make Ghana a first world country as a far fetched dream.

He said the NPP government could not maintain a 25,000 police force, but its flag bearer, Nana Akufo-Addo, is promising to increase the police force to 50,000.

At the launch of the campaign of Captain George Nfojoh (retd), Member of Parliament(MP) for the Ho Central Constituency and parliamentary candidate for the same constituency, Mr Bagbin said the NPP was resorting to all means to hold on to power against the true will of Ghanaians.

Announcing that the National Democratic Congress (NDC) would win the December polls by not less than 60 per cent, he said the NPP, "like a drowning person, hangs onto every little straw".

Mr Bagbin described the NPP as a suffocating party, whose membership continued to dwindle day after day and were therefore bent on winning power through foul means.

The gathering drew a huge crowd that had not been witnessed in the regional capital since the last elections.

The NPP, he said, did not want a campaign based on the character of candidates, adding that sterling leadership qualities on the part of those who want to lead the country was a crucial requirement that was worthy of scrutiny by Ghanaians.

According to him, contrary to the campaign of the NPP to disintegrate the NDC, in a bid to destroy it perpetually in 2004, the party went ahead to win an impressive percentage but Ghanaians have now lost faith with the NPP and would vote them out massively in spite of their advantage of incumbency.

Mr Bagbin called on politicians from the NPP to maintain the small respect that they had by telling Ghanaians the truth rather than attempting to throw dust into their eyes.

The MP for Keta, Mr Dan Abodakpi, claimed that oil had been discovered in the Keta Basin, for which the government had signed a secret agreement with a foreign entity, but had kept it out of the scrutiny of Parliament and the Ghanaian public.

He, therefore, called on the government to show true faith to the people of Ghana by making that agreement public for the scrutiny of all Ghanaians.

Sustain culture of democracy — Opoku-Mensah

Story: Kwame Asiedu Marfo, Fijai

THE Western Regional Director of the Electoral Commission (EC), Mr Stephen Opoku-Mensah, has called on Ghanaians to sustain the culture of the democracy prevailing in the country to facilitate free, fair and peaceful election.

He said ensuring peaceful elections was a collective responsibility of everybody and not the EC alone.

Mr Opoku-Mensah was speaking at a press briefing on forthcoming peace walk by two officers of the Western Regional Command of the Ghana National Fire Service towards peaceful elections in the country. They are Fireman John Domici Dadzie who is the main walker and is supported by Station Officer Joseph C. Ampiah.

Mr Opoku-Mensah said the Commission was committed to the delivery of free and fair elections as a means of advancing the course of democracy and good governance in the country.

He said through the development of a professionally competent workforce that would exhibit a high sense of personal integrity, the EC would work to achieve free and fair elections this year.

He further said the EC would build confidence and trust in the electoral system through transparent and verifiable electoral practices as well as treat all stakeholders in the elections fairly.

Mr Opoku-Mensah said one of the conditions that would be relevant to ensuring peaceful elections was that the various contestants in the elections should regard and respect one another as a legitimate aspirant to a political office.

"Our political parties, which say that they want free, fair and incident-free elections should be ready to abide by the rules of competitive democratic party politics and play it fair with one another," he emphasised, adding, "Our political parties should refrain from doing acts and playing 'tricks' that undermine or circumvent laid down rules and regulations."

The Ghanaian people as a whole, he said, should be prepared to exercise the self-discipline and vigilance required to prevent cheating at elections, while the media should be circumspect in their reportage.

Mr Opoku-Mensah called on the security agencies to check all forms of intimidation and keep the general peace in order to create the right atmosphere for democratic politics.

Fianoo predicts massive win for NPP at Keta

Story: Timothy Gobah, Keta

THE parliamentary candidate of the New Patriotic Party (NPP) in the Keta Constituency, Mr Kodjoe Fianoo, has predicted a massive win for the NPP because of its numerous achievements.

He made the remark when he presented party ID cards to more than 100 youth in Keta who defected from other political parties to the NPP last weekend.

Mr Fianoo expressed surprise at the massive turnout of the youth to register to become full NPP members and said "gone are the days when NPP was seen as an Ashanti party".

He mentioned some of the laudable successes chalked up by the party as the National Youth Employment Programme (NYEP), the National Health Insurance Scheme, the Capitation Grant and the School Feeding Programme and implored NPP members, especially the youth, to highlight those achievements.

Mr Fianoo urged the youth to remain calm in the face of provocation and canvass for votes for the NPP to win massively.

He promised to bring a lot of development projects to the constituency and create employment opportunities for the youth when elected as Member of Parliament.

Mr Fianoo expressed his desire to produce great sports men and women from the area.

The Constituency Youth Secretary, Mr Innocent Gobah, appealed to the youth to acquire employable skills to make them marketable.

He also urged them to do away with negative attitudes and work extra hard for the party to retain power.

Actualisation of Nana Addo's vision on education

By Prof (Emeritus) Samuel K. Amoako,
MP, Akim Abuakwa North

THERE has been a lot of talk about the free senior high school (SHS) promise of the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and Nana Addo Danquah Akufo Addo, the flag bearer.

There have been several schools of thought on how the diverse challenges of education should be tackled, and indeed how the whole enterprise of education and its development should be approached and improved.

The article will try to discuss the imperatives of free senior high school education, and how it can be actualised given the resources of Ghana and the will and focus of a determined and competent government.

I draw my strength and inspiration from the doctoral dissertation I wrote several years ago on the topic: "Financing Education: A Case of the Boarding School System in Ghana" (Dec, 1986).

Ghana's 1992 Constitution specifies in Article 25(1) that "All persons shall have the right to equal educational opportunities and facilities and with a view to achieving the full realisation of that right, (a) basic education shall be free, compulsory and available to all; (b) secondary education in its different forms, including technical and vocational education, shall be made generally available and accessible to all by every appropriate means, and in particular, by progressive introduction of free education".

This provision presupposes that basic education is a fundamental human right of every Ghanaian child. Furthermore, Article 25 (1)(b) requires of the government to make secondary education, including technical and vocational education, generally available and accessible.

It is the latter part of this provision that is significant for our discussion: namely, that every appropriate means should be used to make the availability and accessibility possible.

Nana Addo's vision ensures availability and accessibility via the fee free secondary education initiative or policy. I like to believe that the policy will be implemented in a progressively pragmatic manner to achieve success.

The bedrock or foundation of all development, and indeed the transformation of any economy rests on education. That is why education is so critical and has become the cornerstone of the transformational agenda of the Akufo-Addo vision.

The entire economy can be transformed and modernised if education is overhauled and designed to meet the futuristic demands and needs of Ghana's economy. The decision to make secondary education free for all is part of the whole idea of the educational rearrangement and positional re-focusing of the transformational agenda of the economy.

The NPP manifesto makes education a priority and the focus of its transformational agenda. The aim at the primary and secondary school levels is to get all our children to be functionally literate, numerate and ICT competent, among other things. That explains why basic education has been re-defined.

Basic Education Re-defined

Currently, basic education terminates at the junior high school (JHS) level. Nana Akufo-Addo's vision as expressed in the NPP manifesto redefines basic education as beginning from kindergarten and terminating at the SHS level.

The thinking behind this re-definition arises from the fact that over fifty per cent of Ghanaian children who sit the BECE do not progress to secondary school. There is therefore the unacceptable situation where 150,000 Ghanaian children are thrown out of the system.

"There are approximately 3.8 million persons of secondary school age in Ghana of which 1.2 million are enrolled in 415 public secondary schools and 100 privately owned and managed ones. Less than half of our children are in secondary school." (p.23)

At the time I conducted the research for my doctoral dissertation in 1986, there were only 255 public secondary schools. The societal and educational imperatives have changed drastically. To solve the access problem, Nana's visionary initiative of free secondary education will be extended to every Ghanaian child. This is a constitutional mandate. It is policy that will transform the constitutional requirement into reality. Without policy initiatives, constitutional requirements remain unattainable wishes.

The concept of free education is not mutually exclusive from the ideals of quality education. The erroneous impression being created in some circles that free education in not compatible with quality education is misleading and neither here nor there.
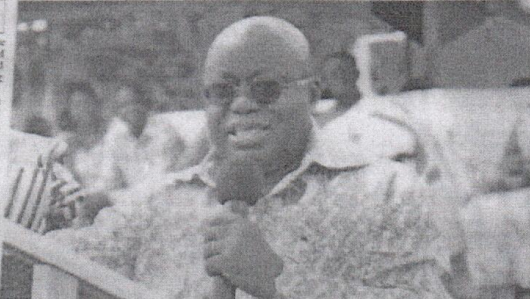
In fact, free secondary education is not antagonistic to quality education; it can even allow for quality education. What is important and indeed imperative, remains the provision of the necessary resources and the output of well trained, motivated and closely supervised teachers.

History of Free Secondary Education

Ghana has a history of free secondary school education. In the 1960s, during the First Republic, the Nkrumah regime realising the wide educational gap between the North and the South, and the need to bridge the gap introduced free secondary school education.

All residents in the now three northern regions, that is, Upper East, Upper West and Northern, enjoyed free secondary school education.

At that time, there was only one secondary school in those three regions; that is, Tamale Secondary School. That school had inadequate infrastructure. The free secondary school education policy was widely embraced and implemented, and nobody raised a question about inadequate infrastructure then.

Clearly, it is untenable to justify and defend a position that there should be adequate educational infrastructure before the implementation of a free secondary education policy.

In fact, that stage of "adequate educational infrastructure" will never be achieved; not even in 20 years as believed in some circles. For as long as the population keeps growing, no government can completely satisfy educational infrastructural needs.

Rather, the provision of educational infrastructure should be a part of the entire imperatives of free secondary school policy. Educational infrastructure should be provided alongside the implementation of free secondary education.

Similarly, it is unreasonable to say that all schools under trees should be removed before the implementation of a fee free primary education. As the policy persists, the schools under trees continue to be removed as part of the policy implementation.

Financing the Free Secondary Education

Given the resources of Ghana, free secondary education is possible; indeed it is implementable. Two conditions should be fulfilled. First, the determination and commitment of a disciplined government, and, second the prudent allocation of the resources of the country.

A large amount of the resources of Ghana has been committed to education. At the time I conducted my research in 1986, Ghana spent 26 per cent of the national budget on education. By the year 2006, Ghana spent 30 per cent of the national budget on education (Thompson and Casely-Hayford, 2006).

Of the 30 per cent that is spent on education, 25 per cent goes into teacher salaries. For as long as our population keeps increasing, the country will spend a lot on education. Education's share of our Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was 5.0 per cent in 1999, and rose to 5.7 per cent in 2006 (Thompson, 2008). Most of the allocations for education come from the national budget, but there are other sources.

Sources of Financial Resources for Education

The main sources of finance for education include the budgetary allocation from the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MOFEP), the Ghana Education Fund (GETFund), the District Assemblies Common Fund (DACF), Internally Generated Funds (IGF) and Donor Contributions.

The allocation from MOFEP constitutes about 80 per cent of the total expenditure on education out of which 95 per cent is spent on teacher salaries. A free secondary school policy will mean an increase in the budgetary allocation for education. This will be more pertinent since Nana's vision includes an improvement in the working conditions of the teacher. Giving education priority, in essence, means there will be an increase in the budgetary allocation to education.

Implementing a free secondary school policy will demand an increase in the contribution from GETFund not only for infrastructure, but for other purposes. Indeed, there must be a change in the formula for the allocation of GETFund resources to reflect the priority accorded education.

The DACF is one area that should be reviewed to reflect the emphasis on education. I hold a strong belief that a rigorous de-centralization policy should go alongside the free secondary school policy in its implementation.

The capacity of the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies should be strengthened, for them to be in a position to implement the policy. It will be important to strengthen the capacity of the Assemblies by increasing their resources, and ensuring that they get their allocations regularly and on time. In fact, schools should be locally managed.

Internally Generated Funds (IGF) constitute only three to five per cent of the total expenditure on education. Almost all of this is generated in the tertiary institutions and may not be relevant in the financing of a free secondary education. It is only important to observe that if the IGFs are properly managed and monitored, they could free some funds for utilization by the free secondary school policy.

Production Units should be established in the Technical and Vocational Schools to increase their capacity to create IGFs. The production units which should be semi-autonomous could contribute to the education budget for using the facilities of the various institutions.

Donor Contributions could be substantial if the policy is appreciated and respected by the donor partners.

Teachers First

As an extension of the free secondary education policy, the NPP Manifesto addresses the issue of teachers.

"Teachers first" is even discussed before the issue of free secondary school education. This underscores the importance attached to the quality, capacity and adequacy of our teachers.

According to the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service, there is a teacher deficit of 60,000 in the country. It beats my understanding why in the face of this huge deficit there are only 38 Colleges of Education with a limitation on the number of students they can

Ironically, there is a large number of unemployed senior high school teachers roaming our streets or selling on our streets. This is a waste of human resources.

Since I became a member of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Education, I have struggled to get answers to this anomaly, and the only explanation I get is that the students who are not paid are a huge drain on the government. This, hence the restrictions on student intake. This as untenable as it is unreasonable.

The policy of "restricted admission" should be abrogated if the free secondary school policy is to succeed. The capacity of the teachers should be upgraded and the teacher education institutions should be expanded. There were several teacher training colleges in the 1960s and 1970s and the decision to convert teacher training colleges into secondary schools was a short-sighted one.

There should be a transformation of our teachers to enable them to lead the transformation of the quality of our students under the free secondary school policy.

To me, it is unacceptable to admit only students who do not gain admission into the universities into our colleges of education. In other jurisdictions, the best students are attracted into teaching. For Ghana, some of the best academically endowed students should be admitted into the teaching profession.

However, this can only be appealing and will succeed if an attractive career package is available and offered to teachers. For example, teachers should be paid good salaries, given government support to acquire houses, given loans to buy vehicles, and paid substantial allowances to serve in the rural areas.

The Way Forward

The free secondary school policy needs a gradualist approach for effective implementation.

The gradualist approach means that in 2013 the policy will affect students who will enter the first year in September of that year. Therefore, the estimated GHC75 million will be for only one term, and that will be to kick-start the policy.

The NPP government will come into office in January, 2013, and put structures in place for full implementation of the policy. New infrastructure will be started in places where they are needed for full implementation to commence in September, 2014.

Once the policy rolls out, I anticipate an expansion and upgrading of the Colleges of Education to train teachers. The capacity of the colleges should be enhanced to motivate those that are capable to award degrees in education and in various subjects to do so to enable their graduates to teach in the senior high schools and the technical and vocational schools, while the diploma holders teach in the kindergarten, primary and junior high schools.

Furthermore, I anticipate a situation where teachers will be trained to staff private schools. I can even foresee a time when teachers will be licensed to teach specific subjects in primary and junior high schools instead of class teachers teaching all subjects.

With the implementation of the policy, there will be the construction of community senior high schools, vocational and technical institutes resulting from the increase in student population.

Without a doubt, there will be a need for new schools to provide accessibility for all. An effective Day School programme will be initiated to cater for students who do not get admission into the boarding schools. Along with this, there should be a "schools transportation system" to cater principally for Day Students.

Conclusion

Undoubtedly, the free secondary school policy is possible. It will succeed for as long as the government has the political will to do it.

The NPP government under Nana Addo Danquah Akufo-Addo does not only have the political will to do it, but has the commitment and the desire to make it happen.

The policy will translate a constitutional mandate into reality, give financial relief to parents and guardians, and more importantly, ascertain the transformational agenda of the Ghanaian economy as promised in the NPP Manifesto.

Surely, there are resources in the country to implement the policy if we prioritize right. The policy will not be sacrificed on the altar of quality education, and it will promote the professionalism and motivation of teachers. Ghanaians should give it a shot by voting massively for the flag bearer of the NPP.

Finally, as a national posturing for future endeavours, an educational policy should be formulated, a policy that will be backed by an entrenched legislation and which cannot be altered by any succeeding governments except through a referendum. That will serve the nation and posterity well and ensure a sustainable development and economic transformation.

The Chronicle

Editorial

A strong case for fee-free education

Education must not fail another generation

By General Obasanjo

Nana will rapidl...

...says Cape Coast So...

From David Allan Palenut

Volunteers For M... launched in K...

From Ernest Bett Anane

NDC's position on free SHS keeps shifting -Bawumia

A section of the students listening attentively

Dr Bawumia addressing the students

Mahama, Amissah-Arthur intensify campaigns

From Alfred Adams,
Takoradi

PRESIDENT JOHN Dramani Mahama has given the assurance that government would not give room to persons who would want to destabilize the country ahead of the December 7 general elections.

Vice President Amissah-Arthur addressing students of the UDS yesterday

MPs b
teeth at

By Fatima Adam

Obasan
state-fund

News Desk Report

Free Education: Quality, Quantity, Ignorance

My Beef

By Kwasi Ansu-Kyeremeh

Nzema Chiefs Debunk NDC Lies

Your Daily Stars

Aries — Marc. 3 - April 19

A big opportunity comes knocking, probably fairly early in the day — so go for it! You need to be ready for anything, so make sure that you can move when the situation calls for action.

Taurus — April 20 - May 20

Your emotional state is terrific for relationship work, emotional clearing and just generally doing what it takes to live more authentically. You should feel much better by this time tomorrow!

Gemini — May 21 - June 21

Socializing is tougher than usual, which can be really frustrating for you. Just try to get along with those who are willing to meet you halfway and ignore those who are all about themselves.

Cancer — June 22 - July 22

That one big issue isn't going anywhere — and it's likely to get worse if you don't do something about it! Try to make sure that your people are on your side, but don't be afraid to go it alone.

Leo — July 23 - August 22

Though you are quite enthusiastic about some big idea or project, others may not see things in quite the same way. You've got to make sure that they are in no position to bring you down.

Virgo — August 23 - Sept 22

Your romantic energy is engaged today — even if you're single and happy that way. Make sure that you're out there and looking, or that you're focusing all your attention on your sweetie.

Libra — Sept 23 - Oct 22

Your mood may be pretty low, but that doesn't mean that you have to mope around like things are falling apart! Just take a moment to reflect on what is going right and you should feel much better.

Scorpio — Oct 23 - Nov 21

Dream big today — opportunities await, but you have to go in search of them. As long as you're looking, good fortune should smile upon you, so don't give up. Get a friend to help out.

Chief Roots For Nana's Free SHS

•Nana Owusu Barimma - Atasemansohene

FROM I.F. Joe Awuah Jnr., Kumasi

THE ATASEMANSOHENE, Nana Owusu Barimma III, has insisted that Nana Akufo Addo's free Senior High School (SHS) promise is best for the country, passionately appealing to the electorate to vote massively for the NPP flagbearer in the December polls.

The chief said the free SHS promise of the NPP presidential candidate would be one of the best social intervention programmes ever witnessed in the annals of the country, hence everybody should support it.

Considering the fact that every Ghanaian school-going child would benefit from the programme, the Atasemansohene stated, anyone that opposed the programme was an enemy of the country.

He said traditional leaders were debarred from taking part in active politics, but having realized that the free SHS programme would be beneficial to the people, he had decided to support Nana Akufo Addo.

The traditional leader insisted that Nana Akufo Addo's free SHS was feasible, stressing that Ghana had enough money and natural resources to fund the social intervention programme.

Nana Barimma III charged the government to stop corruption and use the monies paid to people wrongly to sponsor the free SHS to benefit everybody.

Addressing a mammoth rally at Atasemanso recently when Nana Akufo Addo visited the area, the Atasemanso chief said a vote for the NPP was a vote for development and improvement of the lives of the people.

Nana Barimma III expressed satisfaction about the prevailing peace in the country, however cautioning the Electoral Commission (EC) to remain neutral and ensure that the polls were conducted in a free and fair manner.

He cautioned the EC to refrain from acts that could create unnecessary tension in the country, especially in the days leading to the polls, stressing that the timing for the creation of the newly created 45 parliamentary seats was wrong.

Ghana, he observed, was a peaceful country, asking politicians to shun politics of insults when they mounted political platforms, to best maintain the country's peace.

Nana Akufo Addo, in his address, expressed joy over the huge crowd that had thronged the place to welcome him to Atasemanso and for that matter the Nhyiaeso Constituency, stating that the large crowd was an indication that the people of Ashanti Region had accepted his message and would vote for him.

He lamented that Ghana's gains had retarded within the last three years, laying the blame at the doorstep of the President John Mahama-led NDC government for doing nothing to transform the country.

Nana Addo observed that the country experienced immense development under the NPP administration for eight years, lamenting that the NDC had so far failed to build on the gains of the NPP government.

Due to poor governing style of the NDC, Nana Addo said, all the social intervention programmes started by the NPP government like the NHIS, School Feeding programme among others had been destroyed.

For Ghana to return to the path of glory, the NPP leader urged the electorate to give him their mandate, promising to restore the country to the path of prosperity, and topping it up with free SHS so that the youth in the country could at least be in school till they turned 18.

The MP for Nhyiaeso, Dr. Richard Anane, on his part, decried the hardships that had hit the country lately due to the NDC government's poor showing, urging the people to vote massively for Nana Addo to transform the country.

Dr. Anane said the unemployment situation in the country which was on the ascendancy and other challenges facing the country would come to a halt with Nana Akufo Addo as president.

He said Nana Addo, with his immense knowledge and experience in politics, was the best person to lead Ghana, appealing to the people to vote for the NPP to enable it to win a first round victory in the December polls.

•The three suspected conmen

3 Conmen Nabbed

BY Rocklyn Antonio

THREE PERSONS suspected to be conmen have been arrested by officers from the Vetting and Crime Analysis (VCA) Unit of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) Headquarters for the various role they played in an attempt to defraud one Emmanuel Kojo Mensah.

The three suspects are Edward Koffie aka Mr. Amoah, 60, electrician, Joseph Mensah aka Asare Bediako, 49, trader and Kwamena Sintim Misah aka Engineer Amoah, 33, farmer.

They were arrested on September 27, 2012 at a hotel in Dzorwulu, Accra, where they had met the complainant to take an amount of $1000, being the cost of a fake oil drilling equipment.

The Director of VCA, Chief Superintendent Denis Abade, explained that the complainant, Kojo Mensah, received a telephone call on September 26, 2012 from one of the three fraudsters, Kwamena Sintim Misah, who introduced himself as Engineer Amoah, a worker of the Jubilee Oil Fields in Takoradi in the Western Region.

The supposed engineer went on to say his company was in need of some equipment to sell some parts of the oil fields which were leaking.

The supposed leakage could only be stopped by an a distributor he [Sintim Misah] would introduce to him.

However, Kojo Mensah was smart to detect that the deal was fake since a relative of his had been defrauded a few months ago through the same modus.

He therefore became suspicious and reported the matter to the police upon whose advice he goaded the suspects by feigning interest in the so-called oil business.

He agreed to start with a seed capital of $1000 the suspects but the three were ambushed and arrested by the police when they showed up for the money.

The police boss used the opportunity to warn the public against accepting such lucrative business proposals from strangers.

He said there were some unscrupulous persons taking advantage of the oil find in the country to defraud unsuspecting victims, adding that very prominent persons even became victims of such conmen because most unlettered moneywasting benefits.

He said greed and the quest to make quick money were the two instances which made some one to become a victim of fraudulent persons.

The police chief mentioned very low gold prices, good beam construction over flashy charm diet, super fast diet, wages and lottery...

•Ibrahim Baidoo...

Galo

FROM I.F. Joe... Jnr., Kumasi

THE MINISTER... port, Collins Dauda... eventually blamed... that have developed... runway at the Ku... port to a "galamsey"... has consequences... massive infrastructure... prevention at the air... the country.

Unity Oil Boss Prays For Peace

A SPECIAL prayer session had a beautiful meeting when... Some of the pastors were... needed to realise in full prayer... will continue to honour...

I'll change voting pattern of Tema West — Ofosu Ampofo

Story: Rosa Rayford Darko, Tema

THE Minister of Local Government and Rural Development, Mr Samuel Ofosu Ampofo, who is the National Democratic Congress (NDC) parliamentary candidate for Tema West has advised the New Patriotic Party (NPP) to start packing because he has come to change the voting pattern in the Tema West Constituency.

He explained that voting generally in Tema had all these years favoured the NPP and was optimistic that with his track record, the people would this time show their support for the NDC in the area.

Mr Ofosu Ampofo called on the people to vote massively for the NDC during the December 2012 general election for progressive and achievable development.

He noted that Tema had had leadership problems under the NPP and would need experienced and down-to-earth leaders like him to bring the needed change to the area.

Mr Ofosu Ampofo was speaking in Tema last Sunday at the inauguration of a political pressure group within the Tema West NDC known as 'Youth for Mahama and Ampofo in Tema West' which embraces youthful members of the party.

He commended the group for coming together to form the club to assist in campaigning for the Presidential and parliamentary slots to help retain the party in power in 2013.

The Tema West candidate urged his constituents to work hard and intensify their interactions with the people from house to house, markets, shops, among others, to defuse lies being peddled against the party and use the platform to educate them on the achievable programmes of the NDC.

Mr Ofosu Ampofo indicated that President John Mahama was an experienced politician who went through the mill before becoming the President and called for help to make him deliver promptly.

He called for a unified front to enable the youth, who have volunteered to work for the party, to make positive strides which would lead to victory for the party.

Mr Ofosu Ampofo said he would not be an 'air-conditioned car MP' but where necessary, he would be on foot with the people to ensure that the needed projects and environmental cleanliness were achieved.

He enumerated some projects which he had undertaken and those in the offing for the area.

Mr Ofosu Ampofo expressed optimism in winning the seat because those who took the lead did not do anything for the people of Tema.

He declared that he had vision and passion for hard work, hence the name 'adwumawura' having been bestowed on him by people who knew how he worked and promised to create jobs for the youth in the constituency.

Mr Ofosu Ampofo appealed to the people to ensure that they voted for achievable dreams and not statements which would only turn out to be vanity.

Touching on education, he cautioned the people to be firm and not to allow themselves to be swayed with the unachievable promise of free education policy.

He explained that free education was a process and not an event which could just be picked up and put down in a day.

Mr Ofosu Ampofo said government's strategy towards free education started as a process and was targeted to provide quality education and improve access to it instead of just talking about it and at the end fail to achieve results.

He gave the assurance that the NDC had vision and greater plans for the people of Ghana and hope to exhibit them when given the opportunity to serve by winning the December elections.

Mr Ofosu Ampofo inaugurated the Youth for Mahama and Ampofo Club, calling on them to be a force to reckon with in order to help the party win massively in the coming elections.

The Presiding Member of the Tema Metropolitan Assembly (TMA), Mr Romeo Akahoho, noted that the NDC would win the elections one touch and called for a greater support to help the party achieve its goals for the nation.

He said the youth formed the bedrock of the nation and, therefore, must be given the chance to perform to transform the country's resources.

The Chairman of the club, Tanko Alhassan, pledged the determination of the club to work hard to ensure victory for the party they (the youth) could have a bright future.

· Mr Ampofo leading some party faithful to congratulate executive members of the 'Mahama and Ampofo club.

Free SHS policy possible — Kufuor

Story Shirley Asiedu-Addo, Cape Coast

FORMER President John Kufuor says the New Patriotic Party's free senior high school policy is possible with the country's oil find.

He said considering major polices put in place by the NPP government under its governance, even without the oil find, it was possible to implement the free SHS policy with the oil find.

President Kufuor was speaking at the campaign launch of NPP's parliamentary candidate for Cape Coast South, Mr Alfred Thompson, at the Chapel Square in Cape Coast last Tuesday.

He also introduced Dr Mrs Henrietta Abane, NPP parliamentary candidate for Cape Coast North Constituency.

Hundreds of NPP supporters, including leading party functionaries in the Central Region such as former Central Regional Minister Dr Nana Ato Arthur, former Minister for Information, Stephen Asamoah Boateng, and Member of Parliament for Asikuma North, Mr Kennedy Agyapong, in party colours, thronged the Chapel Square for the launch.

President Kufuor said the significant success under the NPP in the area of health care, education and transportation, culminating in the introduction of the National Health Insurance Scheme, the Metro Mass Transit and free bussing of schoolchildren even without the revenue from oil was indicative that the free SHS was possible with the oil find.

He said such policies were major policies that brought a lot of relief to the people of this country and noted that the free SHS policy would enable the country to prepare quality people to take up the leadership of the nation in future.

President Kufuor said the country's gains under the New Patriotic Party government during its eight-year rule had been seriously eroded by the National Democratic Congress (NDC) government.

He indicated that to restore the country on the road to progress and success, the people must re-elect the NPP into government to ensure accelerated development in the country.

Today, he said, the NDC had done little to promote those policies and sustain them to ensure better lives for Ghanaians.

Former President Kufuor said Ghana needed a visionary president and a good governance team to manage its vast resources efficiently and ensure that Ghanaians were better off.

He questioned where all the monies for the one million tonnes of cocoa had gone under the governance of the NDC.

He said Ghanaians must look out for a leader who would strategise to move the nation's development forward, adding that the NPP was the best option Ghanaians had in this year's election.

Mr Thompson called for change now in governance to move the nation forward, adding that it was obvious that the NDC was not the party that would make lives better for Ghanaians.

He thanked President Kufuor for the support.

Dr Ato Arthur said the two parliamentary candidates were the best for Cape Coast, adding that it was time to get the right people in the position to do the right job that would bring progress.

Mr Agyapong advised the electorate, particularly NPP supporters, to be extra vigilant and ensure that the elections were free and fair.

He urged the Central Region not to make the mistake of retaining the NDC government, saying that the NDC had indeed disappointed the people of the region by leaving them poorer than they were.

Mr Asamoah Boateng said major projects for Cape Coast, including the Kotokuraba Market and the Cape Coast Stadium, had been a fiasco under the NDC and urged the people to vote the NPP to restore hope to all.

· Former President J.A. Kufuor

Nana Leads Latest Polls

By Halifax Ansah-Addo

NANA AKUFO-ADDO, presidential candidate of the New Patriotic Party (NPP), would win Ghana's impending presidential elections by between 52 and 54 percent, says the latest poll results collected from both foreign and local reputable research firms.

Some of the pollsters are Primary Research Associates, Research International (RI) and Danquah Institute, an Accra-based research and communication outfit.

The surveys conducted in October 2008 show that Nana Addo's chances gradually accelerated from a little above 40 percent in March, to 47 percent in August and currently hovers between 52 to 54 percent.

NPP National Campaign Chairman, Jake Obetsebi-Lamptey, disclosed the results last Thursday at an urbane soiree the flagbearer held for journalists.

In the latest opinion poll by the Primary Research Associates, Nana Akufo-Addo is in the lead with 50.5 percent. The survey polled 3,000 respondents in 30 constituencies in all the 10 regions of Ghana.

The question put to respondents was: "If the 2008 Presidential election was held today, who will you vote for?"

NDC's Prof J.E.A Mills had 35.6 percent; Dr Nduom of CPP polled 7 percent and PNC's Dr Edward Mahama got 2.1 percent with DFP's Emmanuel Ansah-Antwi having 0.4 percent while 4.2 percent of the respondents were undecided.

The poll targeted 100 respondents in 5 electoral areas in each of the 30 constituencies.

The highest constituency percentage polled by Nana Akufo-Addo was in Asante Akyem North with 89 percent whilst the highest constituency percentage won by Prof Atta-Mills was in Ketu South with 78 percent. Nana Akufo-Addo's worst showing was in Ketu South with 10 percent.

Walewale, Bongo, Yilo Krobo and Pru which were won by Prof Mills in the 2004 elections have turned in favour of Nana Akufo-Addo.

Mr. Obetsebi-Lamptey said a significant factor boosting the NPP's chances has been the approval ratings of President John Agyekum Kufuor.

He said contrary to the perception by critics in Accra, President Kufuor's approval ratings moved from 75 percent to 80 percent between August and October this year, and that the goodwill he enjoys among Ghanaians has trickled down on the NPP's chances at the polls.

"And if you do not believe me, there are other things that you can look at. Ben Ephson has come out with a survey on the regions where he says that the NPP would increase its seats but drop marginally in the presidential elections. Now, since the Central region has 19 seats and we have about 16 of those 19, for us to increase our seats mean that we have something close to the whole 19", the campaign chairman noted.

Mr. Obetsebi-Lamptey continued: "I am a firm believer in market surveys, research and I believe research should be a guide post, not something that you lean on but something that you lean against. And within this campaign we have extensively used polling and market researches for our own, kept an eye on what others are doing and we also busy out from reputable research companies."

Speaking on the current state of the party's campaign, Mr. Obetsebi-Lamptey said the NPP strategically waged a campaign that was based on timing in a bid to ensure that the campaign peaks at the time the voting would take place.

He said the above informed the party's decision to hold early presidential primary as well as the time to launch its manifesto.

He sounded very confident that the NPP would win the December polls, and said that reports from the various regions support his belief.

The soiree, aimed at growing the support between the NPP and the Ghanaian media, had a dramatic twist when journalists present were asked by celebrated musician, Kwabena Kwabena, to join him in singing a campaign song he had composed for the NPP.

Kwabena Kwabena, who performed the song at the event, put the entire house in a sort of stunning tension as journalists, wanting to appear apolitical, could not join in singing an NPP campaign song but waved their lips and smiling faces, each only responded to the music by slight body movements, as they remained seated.

JJ Sacks Team

A DAILY GUIDE Report

FORMER PRESIDENT Jerry John Rawlings has disbanded the team working in his office, just six months after its appointment, naming Joseph Otoo as his new Special Assistant.

The dismissed team was put in place after Rawlings' former special aide, Victor Emmanuel Smith, was sacked through an sms text message.

An official statement from the office of the former President was however silent on the role of Kofi Adams, who had hitherto styled himself as a special aide to Mr. Rawlings after the exit of Victor Smith. Adams told Citi Fm on Friday that his position was a media creation which he never rejected.

The statement signed by Mr Otoo said the new appointment followed the conclusion of a restructuring exercise at the office of the former President.

The statement said Mr Otoo would run the day-to-day activities of the office and coordinate all official functions.

"His Excellency wishes to thank Dr. Hanna Bissiw and Dr. K. Caesar for their assistance in the transforming exercise and to offer them well in their technology," the statement said.

However Mr Rawlings distanced himself from the pronouncements of Dr Bissiw, saying that all her comments had nothing to do with his office.

"His Excellency would also like to state categorically that Dr Hannah Bissiw's appearance on various platforms has not been in an official capacity from his office but rather on the recommendation of Kwesi Ahwoi of the flagbearer's office and Ms Hannah Tetteh of the NDC headquarters and should be duly noted as such."

Victor Smith, a long-serving special assistant to the former president was axed following his open support for John Mahama in the heat of the vice presidential race of the NDC. Mr Smith was said to have shown strong support for the Bole-Bamboi MP against the choice of the Rawlingses which was Betty Mould-Iddrisu, wife of NDC patriarch and former Defence Minister, Alhaji Mahama Iddrisu.

In an sms text message, the former President asked Mr Smith to draft his own dismissal letter.

He was subsequently replaced by a new team including Kofi Adams whose role is not yet clear in the new arrangement.

No mention was made of Madam Valerie Sackey, former Press Secretary who was drafted in as part of Mr Rawlings' communication team in the post-Victor Smith era.

NDC Polls Bogus - Gabby

MR. GABBY Asare Otchere-Darko, Executive Director of the Danquah Institute, has described as bogus and misleading an opinion poll advertised on media networks over the weekend.

According to Otchere-Darko the 16th November 2008 "poll" released by a so-called Policy & Strategy Associates Inc purportedly of London, UK, with results stating that the National Democratic Congress' (NDC's) Prof. Mills was in the lead with 53.6% and Akufo-Addo 42.0% can only be charitably described as bogus.

He said opinion polls are increasingly serving as a useful guide for not only elections but for decision-makers generally. "While Ghanaians must welcome the growth in surveys, especially for our political competition, we should also ensure that the pollsters respect the principles associated with it. The kind of scrutiny by journalists given to the recent polls conducted by the Danquah Institute (DI) was most welcome and must be encouraged."

He then placed question marks on the NDC survey which he said stood out as questionable. The institute made the following observations with regard to the polls:

NON-EXISTENT COMPANY

Policy and Research Associates Inc is nowhere on the radar. A preliminary check made by the Danquah Institute has drawn a blank on the existence of Policy & Strategy Associates Inc anywhere in the world. The publication cites it as a UK-based firm. Though the legal concept of incorporation is common across the globe, the term Inc (meaning Incorporated) is never used in the UK to refer to any registered organisation. So, Policy & Strategy Associates Inc cannot be a British firm as claimed by the publication planted on www.ghanaweb.com and www.myjoyonline.com.

In the United States, corporations are identified by the term "incorporated" (Inc.), in Germany, GmbH and for much of Europe SA and Latin America.

The organisation does not appear to exist (no website nor postal address is mentioned).

WRONG MARGIN OF ERROR

Analysing the data, statisticians of DI were quick to dismiss the survey as a "shameless exercise of creative armchair opinion sampling." No specific sample size is mentioned. The publishers give a range of sample sizes from about 720-765 per region. A 4% margin of error, taking account of a minimum sample size of 7,600 to 7,200 or a maximum of 7,650 is woefully incorrect and insulting to the principles of sampling.

The margin of error is a statistic expressing the amount of random sampling error in a survey's results. The larger the margin of error, the less faith one should have that the poll's reported results are close to reality, that is, the figures for the whole population.

The margin of error is calculated from this formula:

0.98 = M.E.

Where n = 7,000, 7,200 or 7,650 (Sample Size)

The margin of error calculated with 7,000, 7,200 or 7,650 will give you a margin of error of ± 1.17%, ± 1.15% and ± 1.12% respectively, which is totally way off 4%, stated by the supposed pollsters.

EQUAL WEIGHTING

Equal weighting of respondents across the 10 regions of Ghana is highly unscientific. At least 700 respondents per region as it is supposed in this case. When you assign the statistical figures in percentages and count Upper West (percentile equal to Ashanti Region, you are going to make a kind of error that could be generously described as 'Opinion Poll Rigging.'

The authors are guilty of statistical illiteracy. It is mathematically lazy and disingenuous to equate the various regions when they have vast and varied sizes in number of registered voters. Perhaps their calculation was premised on the fact that each of the regions has one regional minister, rather than the fact that the number of districts, constituencies and registered voters differ from region to region.

INFORMAL INTERVIEWS AND SCIENTIFIC POLLING CONTRADICTION

"Informal" and "scientific polling" said in same breath contradict by themselves. Polls are conducted by the surveyor's own informal interviews, which is, in fact that most un-structured questions are, if it fits into a sketch to be borne out and taking the advantage to ask these questions.

SELECTION OF SAMPLE SIZE PER REGION

What is the basis for selecting at least 700 respondents per region? Which constituencies in each region were selected? What informed the selection of constituencies? Do you pick only perceived NDC strongholds leaving out NPP, PNC or CPP strongholds?

What was the sampling method and how did they arrive at the sample size of 720-765 per region? What was the basis of deciding on this sample size?

Mr Otchere-Darko said that the poll result carried the authorship of Prince Kassim, Associate & Report Editor, Policy & Strategy Associates, Inc E-mail policystrategies@econsultant.com

"We would advise Ghanaians to go on the web and find out a bit more about this Consultant.com."

'Don't Hang Around Polling Centres - EC

Some Participants at the training exercise. Inset: Mr. Kofi Asomaning

From Stella Danso, Kumasi

THE ASHANTI Regional Police Commander, DCOP Kwaku Ayensu Opare Addo and the regional director of the Electoral Commission, Kofi Asomaning have condemned calls by leading members of the opposition political parties particularly the National Democratic Congress (NDC) for their members to hang around polling centers during the December 7 polls, saying the advice is unhealthy for the electoral process.

DCOP Opare Addo and Mr. Asomaning said these when they took turns to speak at a joint Security Services Training Exercise organized for security personnel in Kumasi on Wednesday.

The exercise code-named 'Exercise Peace Angel' is in two phases and forms part of preparations for the forthcoming general elections.

The first phase is a co-ordinating exercise, organized for senior officers to brainstorm on the possible occurrences during the elections whilst the second phase is a field exercise for all ranks from selected security services.

The participants are drawn from the Military Police, Fire, Immigration and Prisons Services and the Customs Excise and Preventive Service.

The Regional Police Commander and the EC boss indicated that it was an offence for anybody to hang around after casting his or her vote.

DCOP Opare Addo stressed that "those people that will be selected by various parties to monitor the electoral process are people who will be considered to law during Election Day and not all supporters of various political parties".

He added that however, people would be allowed to be at the centres after the close of the polls at 5pm.

He stressed that the security forces will make every effort to ensure that nobody mars the electoral process.

Mr Asomaning stressed that there should be a good rapport between the security personnel and the electoral officers to ensure a successful election.

Akufo-Addo Leads Polls

THE DANQUAH Institute, Ghana's leading centre for research and political analysis, has conducted a nationwide survey of voters' intentions ahead of the general elections in December.

The poll asked prospective voters who they think will win the 2008 presidential elections, as well as who they would vote for in case there is a runoff between the two leading candidates.
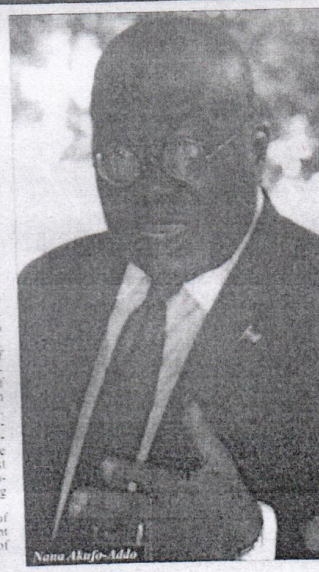
Of those who took part in the survey, 56 percent predicted a win for Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, the New Patriotic Party's (NPP's) flagbearer. This constituted a clear lead over the next most favoured candidate, Prof Evans John Atta Mills, with 33 percent. The CPP was predicted to succeed 4 percent of the votes that would be cast, with the remainder mostly undecided.

Judging by those figures, the NPP candidate can expect to win the popular vote by a clear margin of almost one quarter of the electorate in the first round.

Respondents were also asked to name the candidate they would vote for in the event of a second round runoff between the NPP and NDC candidates. Fifty-seven percent told the survey team they would choose to vote for Akufo-Addo, confirming the general conclusion of the Danquah Institute's researchers that the NPP candidate has the upper hand.

Research teams travelled to all 10 regions to achieve an accurate sample of 3,483 people. Respondents were asked for their views on what to expect when Ghana goes to the polls in a month's time.

Eighty-two percent of those surveyed were voters under the age of 44, of whom 41 percent were in the key 22 to 32 age range. The proportionate representation from all 10 regions and of each age group makes this the most accurate picture yet compiled of the nation's voting intentions.

The survey's margin of error is just 1.66 percent with a confidence level of 95 percent.

Nana Akufo-Addo

Azorka Boys Ready For Elections

By Frank Muzu

THE LEADER of the notorious Tamale-based Azorka Boys, Sofo Azorka has indicated that his boys are ready for the forthcoming general elections.

Speaking on Citi FM on Wednesday, Mr. Azorka, who described himself as a cool guy said his boys were only a group of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) sympathisers who would ensure that peace prevailed before, during and after elections.

A member of the group interviewed stated that the group, which is made up of males between the ages of 13 and 35 and were mostly unemployed, would do everything possible to ensure that their beloved NDC was not cheated by any party.

"We are the Azorka Boys, otherwise known as Aluta Boys who stand for peace but anyone who brings himself would have himself to blame," the member stated.

Asked about the relationship between them and the New Patriotic Party (NPP), he said, "In fact we were brothers if not friends, until they (NPP) started misbehaving."

He revealed that they were prepared to bring together as one people of everybody allowed the elections to go the normal way.

Sofo Azorka is a porter at the Tamale Market but his more political influence around Ghana stems from his leadership of a group called 'Azorka Boys' which believes in the ideals of ex-president Jerry Rawlings and also that of the NDC in Ghana's past, hope for the NDC stated.

Azomanie, it is reported that the Tamale-based Azorka Boys group and residents...

Sofo Azorka

CDD Hosts MPs

By Grace Eyram Dartey

THE CENTRE for Democratic Development (CDD) will from Saturday November 15, organise a series of parliamentary debates for selected aspiring Members of Parliament (MPs).

Issues of the debates would centre on corruption, youth employment, security, disability, gender, local government and decentralisation as well as health and education.

It would be held in 30 constituencies across the country.

The exercise, according to Theodore Dzebie, CDD's Public Affairs Director, forms part of the centre's efforts at entrenching democracy at the constituency level and helping voters make objective electoral choices.

"Constituencies selected for the debates include Tema West, Okaikoi North, Odododiodioo, Madina/Abokobi, Offinso North, Nhyiaeso, Asawasi, Bekwai and Adansie East constituencies.

"Others are Navrongo Central, Builsa North, Zabzugu Wa Central and Amenfi West among others," she stated in a release.

CDD, she said, was currently organising preparatory workshops for the participants in their respective regions with the view to strengthening the capacity of the candidates ahead of the debates.

Campaign enters final phase... Campaign

Picture: EMMANUEL QUAYE

· Nana Akufo Addo addressing the rally in Ho.

NPP attracts big crowd in Ho

**Story: Tim Dzamboe &
Kofi Yeboah, Ho**

THE flag bearer of the New Patriotic Party (NPP), Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, has assured the people of the Volta Region of massive development of the region under his leadership as President of Ghana.

He expressed belief that there was oil in the Keta Basin which his government would endeavour to find to help accelerate the development of the region.

Nana Akufo-Addo gave the assurance last Monday when he addressed a regional rally of the NPP at the RTC Park in Ho.

Turnout was very encouraging and underlined the in-roads being made by the NPP in a region considered to be the "World Bank" of the main minority party, the National Democratic Congress (NDC).

"If the crowd here is anything to go by, then it's clear that there is a new wind of change in the Volta Region. Four years ago we could not have seen such a crowd," a leading member of the NPP, Mr Alan Kyerematen, said.

Although political watchers in the region are not excited by the size of crowds at rallies as a reflection of the strength of political parties on the ground, they nevertheless admit that the NPP has been more organised in the region, particularly in Ho Central, for this year's elections than ever before and that will most likely change its political fortunes in the region at the December 7 polls.

The gradual and effective penetration of the NPP in the region is said to have caused the NDC to revise its strategy in order to consolidate its overwhelming hold on the region.

Traditionally, the Volta Region has been the stronghold of the NDC since the advent of the Fourth Republic in 1992. Currently, out of the 22 parliamentary seats in the region, the NPP has only one — Nkwanta North.

While acknowledging the difficult political terrain in the region, NPP insiders are confident that the party will make a huge impact there at the December 7 polls by improving on its fortunes. The party's strategy in the region for Election 2008 is to increase its parliamentary seats and its presidential votes.

That was the expectation with which Nana Akufo-Addo invited the electorate in the Volta Region to join forces with the NPP to help accelerate the development of the region and build a new Ghana that held enormous promise for the youth.

Outlining his vision for that new Ghana, he said a government under his leadership would pursue policies such as free education to the senior high school level, science and technology, information and communications technology (ICT), modernised agriculture, industrialisation and the spirit of oneness among the people.

Commenting on the agenda for change, which had been the campaign message of some political parties, Nana Akufo-Addo cautioned Ghanaians not to be swayed by such a clarion call because change could be good or bad.

He asked the people not to accept any change that would take the nation back to the era of the "cash-and-carry" system, human rights abuses, the Criminal Libel Law, bad economic management and a change that would abolish good policies such as the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS), the Capitation Grant and the School Feeding Programme.

He said he would continue the good policies of the NPP administration since it took office in 2001 to improve the lot of Ghanaians.

He said he was not in politics for personal gain.

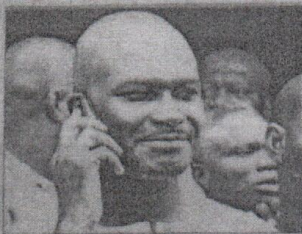"I'm a famous lawyer and if I want to make money, I will stay in my chambers," he remarked.

Nana Akufo-Addo urged the electorate to go out in their numbers to peacefully manner to vote on election day, adding that Ghanaians must demonstrate to the world that the Black man was capable of managing his own affairs.

A leading member of the NPP, Mr Yaw Osafo-Maafo, said Election 2008 was a straight contest between the NPP and the NDC, and that comparing the records of the two parties in government, particularly their management of the economy, the NPP was far ahead of the NDC.

He, therefore, urged the electorate to return the NPP to power to enable it to continue its good works.

Speakers who mounted the dais at the rally included Mr Kyerematen and the Campaign Manager of the party, Mr Jake Obetsebi-Lamptey.

NDC Oils Rigging Machine

NDC Secret Meeting

Mr Agyapong said he had a tape of proper taping at a meeting of the NDC held at the Regional Coordinating Council in Kumasi, where Deputy Minister of Information Samuel Okudzeto Ablakwa claimed that the NDC should use the special voting to rig the 2012 polls.

According to him, Okudzeto told the NDC members present at the meeting that the ruling political party should formulate lies against the NPP which was now popular in the country with its free SHS policy, in order to discredit it, thereby enhancing the chances of the NDC.

Mr Agyapong alleged that Okudzeto said the NDC members should start lying to the public that if Nana Akufo-Addo won the elections, he would legalize homosexualism, and that the NDC should also lie that the NPP leader did not respect Ashantis.

Okudzeto, the Asam North MP alleged, also entreated the NDC members to start spreading rumours that the NPP was bent on instigating Akans to fight Gas and Ewes when it emerged victorious in the elections.

The NPP guru claimed that the said secret meeting was held on Sunday, September 23, 2012 at the Ashanti Regional Coordinating Council where some NDC leaders discussed what they had to do to win the elections at all cost.

Elvis Afriyie Ankrah, Okudzeto Ablakwa, Dr Omane Boamah, Francis Dedavi, the Ashanti regional minister's spokesperson Adu Anane, the Ashanti regional women's organiser and Appiah Stadium, a former NPP serial caller who recently crossed carpets to the NDC, were said to be present at the meeting.

Francis Dedavi was said to have read the agenda of the crucial meeting which included how to get severity to protect the people that would cam-

[Photo caption:]
•Kennedy Agyapong

FROM I.F. Joe Awuah Jnr, Kumasi

THE RULING National Democratic Congress (NDC), in a desperate attempts to hang on to political power at all cost, has allegedly started piling an assortment of sinmunitions in a certain chief's house at Denyanhe, a serene place in Kumasi.

The NPP MP for Asam North, Kennedy Agyapong, who has lately been unveiling clandestine moves of the NDC, claimed that he was privy to credible information about how the NDC was piling ammunition in a traditional leader's house for reasons best known to the party.

Speaking on Oman FM's political programme The Boiling Point on Tuesday, the Asam North MP would not mention the name of the said chief whose house the NDC was piling the offensive weapons, but said the chief was suffering from stroke.

According to him, a son of the said chief, whose house is located at Denyanhe near the former Ashanti Regional NDC Chairman, Daniel Ohene Agyekum's house, was spearheading the NDC's illegal act.

Mr Agyapong alleged that the said chief even owed him huge sums of money and he would soon storm the chief's house in a brutal style to retrieve his money, stressing that he was closely monitoring the evil deeds of the NDC.

He said the NDC gurus behind the piling of ammunitions normally sat in front of a popular drinking spot at Denyanhe, where they parked their flashy cars and planned their evil works.

Mr Agyapong stated that if the NDC was planning to use force to retain political power after failing to honour its countless promises to Ghanaians, after four years in office, then it should quickly rescind its decision because it would not work.

Asked whether he would report the NDC's arms piling to the security agencies, he said no, insisting that he had no hope and trust in the National Security, especially its coordinator, Larry Gbevlo-Lartey.

He said he used to trust Gbevlo-Lartey but not anymore, after the Yaa Boateng Gyan secret tape on which the NDC national organiser stated that he would be recruiting staff for the National Security, ahead of the 2012, polls to come mayhem.

The NPP top guru said the NDC had realized that it had failed the populace; therefore it would shamibaly lose the coming elections so it was trying to use foul means to win.

Agyapong entreated the Muslim and Christian Councils to quickly intervene by condemning the actions of the NDC so as to help make the impending elections incident-free.

NDC Needs 25% In Ashanti

Mr Agyapong said during the said secret meeting, Elvis Afriyie Ankrah said the NDC would only retain political power in December if the party was able to win 25 percent of votes in the Ashanti Region, the strong hold of the NPP.

The NDC man allegedly told his colleagues at the meeting that the party would lose the polls if it failed to win the 25 percent target of the Ashanti regional votes, urging them to do everything possible to win more votes.

Mr. Afriyie Ankrah, the NPP top man alleged, insisted that the NDC had plans of coming out with 50-polar lies about the NPP which the party would soon use to campaign in order to paint the NPP black in the eye of the public.

Bribes TESCON

The Asam North MP claimed that he also had credible information to the effect that the NDC was trying to bribe some leading members of TESCON to work against the NPP in the coming polls.

According to him, the NDC was ready to pay huge sums of money to the TESCON members who would be expected to leak vital information about the NPP to the NDC to help the ruling party to retain power.

Shoots Nana

He claimed that as far back

as September 2012, a young boy informed him that the NDC was planning to select NPP members that were outspoken, as a form of intimidation.

Mr Agyapong alleged that as part of the NDC's grand scheme, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo's ear would be shot at, close to the December elections, just to put fear in him.

The Asam North MP noted that the NDC was also planning to eliminate leading members of the NPP like himself, stressing that the evil plans of the ruling party would not work.

Free SHS

Mr Agyapong noted that the NDC, which had also understood that the NPP's free SHS policy was now attracting massive members who were trooping to join them, that the NPP was the only party which would benefit the free education.

He alleged that the NDC members that were piling some ammunitions would be using the picture of President John Dramani Mahama in their devilish planning that the mere sight of it would intimidate his supporters.

Supreme Court Rules On 45 New Seats

BY Awudu Mahama & Mary Anane

A SEVEN-member panel of the Supreme Court will on October 24, 2012 give its judgment on an application by a concerned citizen, Armah Amartey, who is praying the highest court of the land to declare as unconstitutional the Constitutional Instrument (C I 78) which has created 45 new constituencies for the 2012 general elections.

This was after the lawyer for the plaintiff and the Electoral Commission (EC) as well as the Attorney-General's representative had argued the motion put before the court presided over by Justice William Atuguba.

The other Justices of the court included Dotse/Dah, Jaliua Amah, Rose Owusu, Anin/Yeboah, Vida Akoto Bamfo and Sule Gbadegbe.

The plaintiff's lawyer, former Attorney-General Nii Ayikoi Otoo, is also urging the Supreme Court to declare Legislative Instrument (L I 1983) of 2010 as the Minister for the Local Government and EC's C I 78, which came into force on October 2, 2012, null and void.

He argued that the CI was illegal because in Ghana, it is only the EC that had the mandate to create electoral areas and not Local Government.

According to him, CI 78 was based on a flawed law, LI 1983, which the EC had admitted in court.

In his submission, Ayikoi Otoo further prayed the court to declare all the electoral areas created by the Minister for Local Government and Rural Development invalid because he had no authority to do so.

In his statement of reliefs, the former Attorney-General argued that LI 1983 of 2010 created new districts and was laid before Parliament by the Minister of Local Government based on which the CI 78 was created for the new constituencies and therefore should be declared an absolute nullity.

Nii Ayikoi Otoo is invoking the original jurisdiction of the Supreme Court to declare that the Local Government (Creation of New District (Electoral) Areas and Designation of Units) Instrument, LI 1983 of 2010, laid in Parliament by the Local Government Minister which came into force after 21 parliamentary sitting days from the day it was gazetted.

The Minister's purported act, the former Attorney-General averred, had usurped the powers of the EC in contravention of the LI in relation of Article 45(b) of the 1992 Constitution, and it is the duty of the court to determine the boundaries (areas) for both national and local government elections and not for Local Government Minister.

He contended that the outcome of the December 7, 2012 presidential and parliamentary elections would be rendered invalid if LI 1983 of 2010 was not nullified. However, defendants EC and Attorney-General prayed the court to declare the CI 78 valid for the conduct of the 2012 general elections.

Counsel for EC Quashie Idun argued that CI 78 stood "on its own feet" and not dependant on L. I 1983.

He prayed the court to allow the district created by the Local Government Minister to stand within the EC passed an amended legislation for the creation of the electoral areas.

Representing the Attorney-General, Principal State Attorney Sylvester Williams contended that the CI 78 was a valid law passed by Parliament and instrument under which the 2012 elections would be governed.

He further averred that the CI 78 and LI 1983 were two separate instruments by two different bodies.

The principal state agency contended that even if there were some similarities in the two documents, the LI 1983 must not affect the CI 78.

In a related development, the Supreme Court has fixed October 15 to hear the case brought before it by Ransford Francis, who is also challenging the authority of the EC to create the 45 new constituencies.

Francis, being represented by another former Attorney-General Joe Ghartey, is praying the Supreme Court to declare as unconstitutional and illegal the EC's creation of 45 new constituencies, arguing that due process was not followed.

The court presided over by Justice William Atuguba informed the case for the parties listened to articulate their write as a result of the passing of CI 78 into law.

It would be recalled that despite numerous legal suits against the EC and the Attorney-General depending the creation of the new constituencies, the Parliament passed CI 78 into law on October 3, 2012.

This paved the way for the newly created constituencies to have representatives in Parliament in 2013.

The Supreme Court earlier dismissed an interim injunction filed by the citizen, the lawyer for the plaintiff, Raymond Bird Freeman, to prevent Parliament from considering the controversial Instrument (CI 78) which were in Parliament on October 3, 2012.

Isofoton Floors AG

BY Raphael Adeniran

THE COURT of Appeal has dismissed an application filed by the Attorney General for the lifting of a garnishee order issued by an Accra High Court over the Ministry of Agriculture's account.

The ruling which was handed down by an Accra High Court early May was in favour of the Spanish company, Isofoton, which is claiming an outstanding $1.3 million in judgment debt, for the government of Ghana defaulting in payment.

The controversial judgment debt was necessitated through claims by Isofoton that the previous New Patriotic Party (NPP) government unfairly abrogated a contract it secured for the supply and installation of solar powered water irrigation system in remote areas of the country.

The ruling National Democratic Congress (NDC) government subsequently entered into a settlement agreement to pay the company $1.3 million. However, only $450,000 was paid. This clearly drew the attention of Isofoton which headed to court for a garnishee order that would freeze the accounts of the engineering department of the Ministry of Agriculture.

The lid on the issue was blown when Deputy Minister of Information Samuel Okudzeto Ablakwa, on July 7, hinted that government was planning to pay Isofoton its balance of almost $1 million.

Apparently, the long string of controversies made his famous announcement in July.

The NPP, which has been blamed for the judgment debt, has denied any wrongdoing and incidentally, former Attorney General Martin Alamisi B.K Amidu has also entered the basis of the payment and has filed a writ at the Supreme Court.

According to Martin Amidu, he had a counter opinion about the whole procedures that resulted in the Isofoton judgment debt.

In the writ filed late July, Martin Amidu is seeking nine separate declarations, including an interpretation of Article 181 of the Constitution that questions the basis of the NDC government's intention to pay a balance on the judgment debt from a 2006 protocol between the Spanish government and the Ghanaian government.

The arrangement that brought Isofoton to the fore was a deal for Ghana to engage certain Spanish companies for rural and agricultural investments in the country in return for a US$16 million grant from the Spanish government.

The said arrangement saw Isofoton setting up a shop in Ghana and executing a rural solar electrification project in 2006. But Isofoton was stopped by the Kufuor-led NPP government in 2007.

Consequently, in 2008, a judgment of US$1.3 million was awarded to Isofoton for what it endorsed as a wrongful abrogation. Former Chief of Staff in the Kufuor administration Kwadwo Mpiani had, on several media platforms abrogated because Isofoton deceived the then NPP government into believing it was part of the companies covered by the Spanish protocol.

The NDC government, in early July made a huge hype out of the Isofoton judgment debt. This culminated in the famous gaffe of the Ministry of Information which sought to splash dirt on the NPP Paperweight for offering certain clarifications on the judgment debt.