

**GHANA INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISM**

**JOURNALISM, NEWS SOURCES AND CHANNELS: IMPLICATIONS  
OF PROFESSIONALISM IN POLITICAL REPORTING**

**GYAMBRAH EATRICE**

**MAJN 16012**

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## DECLARATION

I declare that, except for reference to other scholars works, which have been duly acknowledged in this dissertation, is as a result of my own research conducted at the Graduate school, Ghana Institute of Journalism. The work was supervised by Ebo Afful (PhD).



EboAfful (PhD)

Beatrice Gyamrah

(Supervisor)

(Student)

Date..... 6. 11. 17 .....

Date..... 3<sup>rd</sup> November, 2017 .....

## DEDICATION

This piece of work is dedicated to the glory of God Almighty, my family

&

To all lecturers of the Graduate school, Ghana Institute of Journalism

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I am forever grateful to the almighty God through his son Jesus Christ for his gift of life, health, goodness and mercies he has shown me my entire life. I am most appreciative to my caring mother Ms Rose Sarpong for her support and my siblings Mr. Felix Gyambrah, Ms Eunice Gyambrah, Mr. Gideon Gyambrah and Mr. Prince Antwi Boateng.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

**NPP** NEW PATRIOTIC PARTY

**NDC** NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC CONGRESS

## **ABSTRACT**

This study is a mixed method analysis of the *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* coverage of the 2016 general elections of Ghana. The primary goal is to determine the sources and channels of political news reporting. The study utilized the gate keeping theory as the bases for the analysis of the stories. Stories on the 2016 general elections were classified on the editors and how they determine the sources and channels of political news reporting. The findings showed that most sources and channels of news are from government officials and that influence the way in which news is presented to the public.

## Chapter one

### INTRODCUTION

The intent of this chapter is to introduce the research under study. Background of the study, background of selected newspapers under study, statement of the problem, significance of the study, scope and limitations, operational definitions of terms and organization of the study will be discussed in this chapter.

#### 1.1 Background to the study

News is everywhere. Anyone can access news through newspaper, radio, television or the internet. People can buy newspaper and get the information they need. People switch on their television sets and also get the news they need. One can also just log on to the internet to read the news. With so many options to choose from, source credibility is the most important factor that will determine how a reader or audience will believe the news. Also, since there are a lot of channels to tune in to, there is that believability of the news when it comes to the channel the viewer is watching or where the reader is listening to. We have come across statements and comments like, “If it is the *Daily Graphic*, it should be true.”

The principle is that the news media must verify the content of the news before putting it in the public domain. The credibility of the news is very important because it takes many years to establish a reputation but can only take a few minutes of dishonesty and false news to destroy that reputation. Despite the large number of studies that have examined the news making process, few have systematically examined the sources of the news. In 1987, Brown, Bybee, Wearden and Straughan found out that most front page stories came from routine channels and heavily used government officials as news sources (Soloski, 1989: p.864).

Framing events or issues into news influence the choices people make and how to process that information (Goofman, 1974). News is dialectical, in that it speaks to the public and makes citizens see the reality of the world. Thus, how reporters gather news and the types of sources they use are important to study because they determine not only what information is presented to the public but what image of society is presented. How a newspaper forms its local news net and issues determines what local events are presented as news. The purpose of this paper, therefore, is to examine how some major newspapers in Ghana cover their news and how that coverage determines what news is reported.

### **1.1.1 Profile of Graphic Communications Group Limited**

Graphic Communications Group Limited was established in 1950 in the then Gold Coast by the Daily Mirror Group in the United Kingdom, with Cecil King Jnr. as the first head of the company. Its original name was West African Graphic Company Limited. The company published its first newspaper, the *Daily Graphic*, on October 2, 1950 and followed it up in 1953 with the weekly *Sunday Mirror*, now called *The Mirror*. The company later changed its name from West African Graphic Company Limited to Ghana Graphic Company Limited after the Gold Coast gained independence from the British in 1957 and changed its name to Ghana.

By an Act of Parliament, the government of Ghana acquired the company from its private owners in 1962. In 1971, the company became a statutory corporation through a legislative instrument - the graphic corporation instrument, 1971, LI 709. This was in compliance with the Statutory Corporations Act, 1964 (Act 232). The company, therefore, became known as Graphic Corporation.

In response to market demands, the company added *Graphic Sports* in 1985 and *Graphic Showbiz* in 1998 to its publications. In 1999, the company took advantage of the Statutory Corporations (conversion to companies) Act, 1993, Act 461, to change from a corporation to an autonomous private limited liability company under the Companies Code, 1963, Act 179. This resulted in autonomy for the company. Also, as part of the change, the company renamed itself the Graphic Communications Group Limited and redefined its vision to become a multimedia organization.

After becoming a limited liability company, Graphic came up with four more publications: *Junior Graphic* (2000), *Graphic Advertiser* (2004), *Graphic Nsempa* (2007) and *Graphic Business* (2008). However, the company no longer publishes the *Graphic Advertiser* and *Graphic Nsempa*.

The company kept improving on its print quality by buying the state-of-the-art press of the time. It started in 1950 with the letterpress printing technology available at the time.

In 1976, the company installed the first web offset colour printing machine in Ghana. This was the semi automatic Harris web offset press manufactured in the USA. The company bought two production lines. One was a four-unit press and the other a two-unit press. However, both could be set to work together if the company needed to print more pages at the same time.

Again, in 1995, Graphic led the newspaper industry in Ghana with an upgraded version of the web offset color machine, Heidelberg Harris press. In 2011, the company again changed its printing machine with the installation of the KBA comet press, which was and still is the first of its kind in Ghana. Alongside the installation of this printing machine, the company

also switched from the printing technology that required the use of films to one that requires no film, which is technically called computer-to-plate (CTP). (CREDIT: *Ghana Yello*; company profile).

### 1.1.2 Profile of Western Publications Ghana Limited

The *Daily Guide*, Ghana's second largest newspaper, is published by Western Publications Ghana Limited, the biggest independent press house in Ghana. Launched in 1999, the *Daily Guide* newspaper ensures nationwide circulation by airlifting newspapers to all corners of Ghana. Its mission is to promote democracy in Ghana through objective and creative journalism which will inform, entertain and educate readers.

This press house also publishes four additional newspapers which focus on business, the youth, entertainment and current affairs. The organization is chaired by Mr. Freddie Blay, a lawyer and politician who has played a key role in solidifying Ghana's democracy, having served in Parliament for a total of 16 years, including time as deputy speaker of Ghana's Parliament. He continues to work as a lawyer and active politician in Ghana under the New Patriotic Party (NPP). His voice remains a highly esteemed one in African politics. *The Daily Guide* is a private daily newspaper owned by Mrs. Georgina Blay. This newspaper is published six times a week and is regarded as the most circulated independent paper in Ghana with a circulation of about 22,000 copies a day. The Editor of this newspaper is Fortune Alimi (*Ghanaweb.com*, 2012). This paper appears to be sympathetic to the cause of the NPP (*Daily Guide* Ghana, Africa intern 2010).

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

Sources and channels of political news are very important in news reporting because it gives reporters credibility in their reportage. News received by the public must be free from external influences. The question therefore is: Is news coming from reporters and journalists or from the sources of the news? Is the public consuming news that is reported based on the reporter's findings or based on what the sources of the news wants the public to know? Studies have found out that the heavy reliance on government officials presents a very specific picture of society and its institutions and therefore has major influence on the news consumed by the public. The interest of the study is, therefore, to investigate the sources and channels of political news reporting using the state owned *Daily Graphic* and private owned *Daily Guide* as newspapers for case study.

## **1.3 Significance of the study**

The findings will create awareness that there is a major reason some newspaper agencies rely heavily on government officials as sources and channels for their news. Also, the findings will add or confirm the speculation that customers buy various newspapers based on the image of the newspaper in the market and because of their truthfulness and accuracy of news stories, and not just based on the act of framing headlines. Furthermore, the findings will be important to the community as a whole in the sense that the public will be educated on the act of gate keeping and how it is used by journalists and gatekeepers to determine what is presented as news. The findings will also help managers of the questioned newspapers to ascertain whether or not their election and petition coverage was fair or not and lastly, the

study will add to literature on gate keeping theory in press coverage of election, especially from the Ghanaian perspective.

#### **1.4 Scope and limitations of the study**

The study will be limited to the 2016 general election and its aftermath. It will also focus on headlines and news stories related to the topic. *The Daily Graphic* and *the Daily Guide* have been chosen because they are considered among the topmost newspapers in the country. In order for me to complete my research on time, I will determine and document a list of specific goals, deliveries, costs and deadlines. The following is my scope of the study:

- **Goals**

As mentioned earlier in my objectives, my goal of the study is to investigate how selected newspapers use the framing theory as a way a communication to define and construct any piece of communicated information.

- **Deliveries**

In order to finish this project on time, I will make sure I gather my entire sample at the right time and analyze them thoroughly to be able to deliver well. I will also make room for corrections and improvement to be able to get a clear picture of the content and outcome of my study. I will give room for my supervisor to correct me and also make sure that communication is effective between us so that the best results will be generated and delivered to the public.

- **Cost and deadline**

Since I will have a deadline for the submission of my results after the findings, I will make sure I finish with the gathering of the data on time, analyze it on time and submit to my supervisor for review, analysis and corrections so that I can deliver on time. As mentioned above, since I will go the media houses who own the newspapers in question, my research will not be too costly. Each media house will be visited twice, that is for introduction and collection of data, and since they are both in the Greater Accra Region, I will not spend a lot of money going to and fro.

My sample size may limit me because the distance from my place of work to the various media houses in question is quite far; and since they are both not in the same vicinity or neighborhood, boarding a vehicle from one place to the other, looking at the distance between them, will be tiring.

### **1.5 Operational definition of terms**

Content analysis is a coding operation set of data. The content categories will be defined as follows:

**Source:** A source is someone or something that supplies information (dictionary.cambridge.org). It is someone or something that provides what is wanted or needed. (Meriam-webster.com)

**Channel:** A channel is a method or system of communication or distribution (dictionary.cambridge.org). It is a medium through which a message is transmitted to its intended audience, such as print media or broadcast media (businessdictionary.com)

**Gate keeping theory:** The gate keeping theory decides what information should move to a group of people or individuals and what information should not. In news media, the editor is the gate keeper because he decides what kind of news items should be published and what should not.

**Soli:** Soli is a word coined from soliciting, which has to do with financial inducement. It has to do with event organizers paying money to journalists for covering their activities.

**Type of story:** This is basically about the typology of the unit of analysis. This will be categorized as straight news, editorial, letter to the editor, etc.

- **Story size:** It is the physical space devoted to an element of a particular story in a print news medium. It frames the story in such a way that elements taking more space will be more influential in readers' interpretation of the story (Peng, 2008: p.363)
- **Placement of story:** This refers to the page on which a story is placed. For example, Sanders (2006) asserts that the front page articles are often reserved for the most high profile candidates and political personalities.
- **Size of headline:** This refers to the size of a story's headline and the different levels of prominence due to the differences in the size of headline.
- **Tone of headline:** Tone is an attitude of a writer towards a subject or audience. It is generally conveyed through the choice of words or the viewpoint of a writer on a particular subject. (literarydevices.net). In this case, the tone of a headline is the choice of words being positive, negative or neutral to a particular subject.

- **Bias:** This refers to whether an article is heavily slanted towards one side or it is neutral.

## **1.6 Organization of the study**

Chapter one will focus on the background of the study, background of newspapers under study, statement of the problem and significance of the study. This chapter will also include the scope of study, limitations of the study and operational definition of terms. Chapter two will focus on literature review and relevant research associated with the problem in this chapter. Written works by prominent authors on this same topic and deduce information will be critically analyzed from their works. Chapter three will focus on methods of information and procedures used for collecting data for analysis. Chapter four will contain an analysis of the data of the research and then present them as findings. Chapter five will be a summary and discussion of my findings, implications for practice and recommendations for future research.

## Chapter two

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Introduction

The intent of this chapter is to review existing literature on the sources and channels of Ghanaian news in relation to the problem that this study seeks to investigate. Key concepts argued by academics, theoretical perspectives and related studies which set the study in context are, therefore, discussed.

#### 2.2 The media and the public sphere

According to Habermas (1984:49), the public sphere is a realm of our social life in which something approaching public opinion can be formed. In the public sphere, citizens are granted access to information and knowledge. The public sphere comes into being in every conversation in which private individuals assemble to form a public body. According to Habermas, the society we live in has to confront the state by addressing issues relating to the public. In order for the voices of citizens to be heard and their issues to be addressed, a platform that is free from government influence needs to be formed. This platform that Habermas talks about is the media. The media are supposed to be the watchdogs of the society. They are supposed to mediate on behalf of the people in the society and must be free from the government's influence. Journalists in general have overwhelming desire to get facts. He also maintains that not only are they responsible for providing information to the public, but they are also to provide feedback from the society at large to the powers that be (Ibrahim et al, 2011). However according to Deane (2005:177), the relationship among the media, democracy and the public sphere has been the subject of intensive and increasing

academic debate in the past years. The role of the media is very important when it comes to forming the crucial constituent and catalyst for the existence of the public sphere. According to Deane, the media as the fourth estate are to guide and guard the public interest into the media that commodify news and are more interested in people as consumers than as citizens. Since the media can be described as a network of communicating information and points of view which are reproduced through communicative action, the public sphere must presuppose freedom of speech and assembly, free press and the right to freely participate in political debate and decision making. Journalists see their job as seeking the truth, putting it into perspective and publishing it so that people can conduct their daily activities proficiently. However, the question that is asked by Ibrahim et al is: Who is watching the watchdogs? (Ibrahim et al, 2011).

In the global age, the media are no longer the public sphere of the society. This is because they no longer act in the interest of the public or citizens of the country but for their own interests and benefits (Johnson, 2011). The well-to-do or the powers that be have bought the media platforms with their advertising monies and are using the media to promote their agenda and propaganda instead of serving the interest of the people. In a society where the rich are always getting richer and the poor always getting poorer, the media have neglected their duties in fulfilling their role as the watchdogs in the society. According to Ibrahim et al (2011:1), the media are seen to have great potential to have enormous influence over decisions and public opinion, as well as national and international agenda. This, however, cannot be agreed upon in this era. Before news can come out for consumers to pounce on them, the news must also express the opinions of the public on the activities of government. Unfortunately, this is not the case. The question remains whether the media are fulfilling

their role as the watchdogs or they have other interests in monetary and political terms. Ibrahim et al (2011) asked these questions which are very relevant in the newsroom: “To what extent do local journalists and editors exercise journalistic professionalism and ethics in their role as disseminators of information, especially in times of politics; and to what extent are news sources considered by the disseminators in determining whether certain news see the light of day or get spiked?” This is what Douglas Cater (1972:82) makes readers understand, that the media’s power does not depend on their ability to slant material one way or another but rather in what words, deeds, events or issues they choose to define as news. According to him, the press has the power to select and to decide which events go on page one or the prime time TV news and which events get ignored (Douglas Cater 1972: 82).

### 2.3 Sources of news

News happens all the time. Every minute, something newsworthy is happening somewhere in the world, and so a journalist or reporter needs ways of getting information on all those hundreds of events they cannot witness themselves. Therefore, a significant source in the practice of journalism is someone or something that provides information (Ingram & Henshall, 2008). In effect, a source is a person, publication or document that gives timely information (Blur, 2015). When it comes to getting news about government and politics, there are stark ideological differences in the sources that America for instance uses, as well as in their awareness of and trust in those sources. In the United States of America, *CNN* and *Fox News* are major sources of news. Overall, when the respondents are asked what outlets they turn to most often for news about government and politics, the most frequent mentions are the two cable networks: *CNN and Fox News* (Michelle et al, 2014). A source is gathering or providing information from something or someone. (<http://thenewsmanual.net>. p.1). A

news source is, therefore, a place where stories are obtained from. Some of the sources of news are official records, publications or broadcasts, officials in government or business, organizations or corporations, witness of crime, accidents or other events, and people involved with or affected by news events or issues. Therefore, the source of news can be anyone or anything that gives out information to journalists or reporters to be used as news. According to the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism (2015), television and online media are the most popular ways of accessing news on a daily and weekly basis. It further went on to argue that television was ahead in Germany and France, with online winning in many other countries.

In Ghana, a lot of people rely on different sources for their news. While some may take the television and online information as the sources of their news, others may rely on the different newspapers in the country for their news. People could gather at a single space either listening to one radio or watching TV from a rich man's house. In this modern time, there is a rise for a new source of news which both the youth and adults, rich and old cling to. This is social media. Within online, there has been a sharp rise in the growth of social media in the past years as a source of news. This is as a result of the speed, serendipity and accuracy that people need to gather and read their news. Because of this, there have been different news sources that have emerged in the past years, with social media on the rise. Journalists who only report what they see can miss much of the news unless they have sources to give them more details (Jurat, 2011). Before a journalist can send out news to readers and listeners, he must make sure that the source of the news is credible. Some sources of news will give accurate information while others, although will not give accurate information, will provide useful information. Others cannot be trusted at all. Sources of information can be

judged based on their reliability. The *Daily Graphic* is one main source of news for the ordinary Ghanaian. It is said to be one of the most reliable sources of Ghanaian news; it claims its sources are based on accuracy and truth, making the paper to be considered as one of the best selling newspapers in the country.

All sources of information, including journalists, are said to be reliable if the public think so. If a news source is always correct in the information it provides, it will always be believed but if it makes mistakes, it will be doubted. That is why reliability is built over time (Ingram, Henshall, 2008). The news media are the most important channels for the propagation of culture, ideas and opinions. Most opinions formation take place when people sit and watch news and debates on television.

## **2.4 Channels of news**

One way of gauging the news gathering pattern used by reporters is by examining the types of channels reporters use to gather news (Soloski, 1989). According to Sigal (1973), there are three types of news channels: routine, informal and enterprise channels. The routine channel is the news that is covered during official proceedings such as meetings and trials, non-spontaneous events and stories based on press releases and press conferences. This means that the journalist is aware of the news and goes in prepared to cover it. They have their own questions and are prepared to ask when the need arises. Informal channels are channels that depend on the reporter's personal contact, unlike the routine channel. They are background briefings, news leaks, coverage of non-governmental proceedings and stories based on other news stories or editorials. Here, the journalist depends on citizen journalists and sources of information or other media houses for the news. The third type of channel is enterprise

channel which also involves stories that are based on a reporter's own initiative. It includes stories based on interviews, spontaneous events, the reporter's own research and a reporter's analysis of news events. The reporter in this case can do an ethnography research to gather information on a group of people and write the news. The reporter goes in-depth to seek knowledge of a situation and analyses it before placing it in the public domain. A channel is a separate path through which signals can flow. A channel can also be a medium through which a message is transmitted to its intended audience, such as print media or broadcast media. Without a channel, news cannot get to the intended audience. Therefore, a channel is a means of broadcasting. Viewers and listeners want to listen to or watch a trustworthy news channel for their daily and weekly news. Hence, it is very important for a news channel to transmit the best news to its audience. There are particular news channels in Ghana that are more trusted by their audiences than others. This has caused an increasingly fierce market of competition for parties.

## **2.5 Type of story**

News stories are basically divided into two main groups: hard news and soft news (Proffesorking, 2008). Hard news is news that is reported immediately it happens, while soft news is background information or human stories. Politics, war, economics and crime are the hard news because of the urgency with which they are reported; while arts, entertainment and lifestyle are considered soft news according to Proffesorking (2008). There is a difference between hard news and soft news based on the tone that the news is reported in. According to Proffesorking, hard news takes a factual approach. It asks the questions: What happened? Who was involved? Where and when did it happen? Why did it happen? A soft story, on the other hand, tries to entertain or advise the reader. The Graphic Communications Group

Limited, for instance, has divided its news into hard and soft news, hence the Proffesorcking analysis is followed. The *Daily Graphic* is for political, breaking news, economics and crime-related stories, while *The Mirror* and *Graphic Showbiz* are dedicated to entertainment, arts and crafts and also interviews with celebrities. It is important to distinguish the various types of news stories and also the type of stories that the audience want. Audiences are affected by the way the media report news. There are different types of stories, which are breaking news, feature and high impact stories. Not every assignment follows these very definite sets of instructions. Reporters may be assigned types of stories that require different considerations (Taylor, 2017). Most stories on the front pages of newspapers are news stories. They focus on events of importance to the paper's audience. We must know that news comes in all varieties, being it local, regional, national and international. The type of news that a journalist puts on the front page, in the middle page or the back page determines the prominence of the news. More and more frequently, one sees newspapers printing pieces that are not news articles, neither are they editorials nor features. They are called news analysis (Taylor, 2017). This news goes into more detail and tells the audience the real facts of the situation. This offers an analysis of events and, therefore, a great depth of knowledge is required. Analysis reporting contains everything; from big think policy analysis to investigative reporting. It requires deep dive work and is almost always in a long form (Vouchification, 2012). This means that this type of news, as said earlier, is the type that can be framed in such a way that it will sell. This is one of the reasons a lot of sources of news make sure that their news is credible, in-depth and can affect the reader or audience and their surroundings. An editorial is also a type of news found in newspapers. These are opinions of people. Most gatekeepers only accept editorials that have been researched thoroughly and

present a well-seasoned argument. Features build on the interests of the audience. It opens the doors to more creative approaches to traditional and straight news. These stories focus on people and what they like to do, where they live, what they eat and so on. Therefore, the type of news is also very important because they present hard news and are carefully constructed to enlighten readers (Encyclopedia of Public Relations, 2005).

## **2.6 Theoretical Framework**

Gate keeping is the process through which information is sieved or filtered for distribution, be it for publishing, broadcasting or any other form of communication. The theory of gate keeping is founded in multiple fields of study, including communication studies, journalism, political science and sociology (Nahon, 2009). Gate keeping is a process by which information is filtered to the public by the media. According to Pamela Shoemaker and Tim Vos, gate keeping is the "process of culling and crafting countless bits of information into the limited number of messages that reach people every day, and it is the center of the media's role in modern public life" (Shoemaker et al, 2009:1). This process determines not only which information is selected, but also what the content and nature of the messages, such as news, will be. (Shoemaker et al, 2009).

The term was coined in 1947 by Kurt Lewin. According to him, the food business plays a minor role in the development of the theory that considers how mass media whittle the large number of available messages into the selected few offered to an audience. Lewin, the founder of the theory, goes on to argue that housewives are key gatekeepers who control what food enters the channels that ultimately bring it from the garden or supermarket into the household and ultimately onto the dining room table. The mother selects which food is

supposed to be cooked and which one is supposed to be rejected; so one way or another, the mothers or housewives determine the food that the family will take that day. This makes housewives the gatekeepers of the family. However, Lewin goes on to further explain that gate keeping goes beyond food choices but also the travelling of news items through certain common channels in a group (Lewin,1947:145).

Lewin identified several parts of the gate keeping process in his 1943 article, and they are; information moves step by step through channels; the number of channels varies and the amount of time in each channel can vary; information must pass through a "gate" to move from one channel to the next, such that forces govern channels; and also, there may be opposing psychological forces causing conflict which creates resistance to movement through the channel. Further, there may be several channels that lead to the same end result and different actors may control the channels and act as gatekeepers at different times (Kurt, 1947).

The theory, according to Roberts (2015), has contributed to theories of social central and agenda setting. While spending the summer of 1947 working on the editorial copy desk of *The Peoria Star*, it occurred to White, an academia seeking his doctoral degree in English during the early 1940s in Bucolic Iowa City, Iowa, to watch how the newspaper's wire editor chose which of the scores of available stories would be published. His interest was which stories were given space and which stories were not given space in the newspaper. With his observation of the editor, he was convinced that the editor of the newspaper was not objective, considering the decisions he took before the news came out as news. He concluded that the decisions lay with him as to what news was supposed to come out. He further went on to claim that one-third of the news did not get to be published because he did not consider

them fit to be published, while two-thirds were also not published because of limited space. Therefore, in the study, 90 percent of the stories did not get to be published, which then gives the notion that editors are powerful gatekeepers.

Reese and Ballinger (2001) suggest that White's study fits the theoretical paradigm expounded by Schramm (who received footnoted thanks for his suggestions in the 1950 article) while expanding upon it. The "sender/receiver tradition of the engineering models" (p. 647) was assumed by White's approach, as was the focus on the individual who made the gate keeping decisions. Shoemaker (2005) also makes it known that the gate keeping theory has been a touchstone for research that has its focus on the individual elements of the model, that is; the channel, gatekeeper as an individual or group and the feedback of the news.

Tushman and Katz distinguished between gate keeping and boundary spanning, although researchers interchange their meaning. He claims that a gatekeeper must be strongly connected both internally and externally, but boundary spanners are connected only externally. Some scholars, particularly those in the current management literature, treat gatekeepers as boundary spanners and vice versa, therefore making the distinction between the two concepts blur (Pawlowski&Robey, 2004; Schultze&Orlikowski, 2004). Subsequently, the concept was applied to particular contexts in R&D management such as human resources issues (Katz, Tushman, & Allen, 1995) and technology alliances (Soh& Roberts, 2005).

Most of the theories coming from communication and management are vertical because they explore questions within the context of a certain profession or organization. For example, "How do editors/gatekeepers affect public opinion?" is a question that cannot be avoided

because it is normally focused on editors. This is because according to the University of Twente (2017), the gatekeeper decides which information will go forward and which will not and is able to control the public's knowledge of the actual events by letting some stories pass through the system while keeping others out. The gatekeeper affects the public's opinion and in this case can be dangerous, according to Berkowitz (1990). This is because it can lead to abuse of power since they decide what information to discard and what to let pass, making the editor or the gatekeeper's choice the ultimate.

The internet defies the whole concept of how people perceive a 'gate' and challenges the idea that journalists (or anyone else) can or should limit what passes through it (Singer, Jane B, 2010). The internet has made it so easy for anyone to publish any topic without the traditional gate keeping of traditional mass media; therefore, the emergence of weblogs and social media have returned the gate keeping theory to the forefront of research considerations according to scholars. Singer (2001) studied how traditional newspapers chose to link or not to link websites and how those decisions forced more decisions by gatekeepers. William and Carpini (2000) claim that gate keeping seems to be out of style or even old-fashioned because if the information source will not publish something, other sources will.

However, Shoemaker argues that gate keeping will continue to exist even though there are new technologies and new gatekeepers, but only being much faster and studying the issue on how much gate keeping has changed with the rise of the internet and social media, and how that may be changing the traditional news gatekeepers is a subject that will yield results for this and the next generation of gate keeping researchers (Shoemaker, 2005).

This theory is, therefore, significant to the study because it determines the impact that sources and channels have on the gatekeepers of newspaper organizations in determining

which news sees the light of day and which one gets ignored. The gatekeepers are powerful because they transition their ideas or their influence to the person, idea or product they are endorsing or rejecting. Gatekeepers have the power to select the sources that get a voice in news reporting because the selection of news items and the decisions as to which sources should be selected in stories are crucial aspects of the gate keeping theory (Shoemaker and Vos, 2009). Sources are an indispensable part of the news production process and matter in determining which information becomes manifest in the press (Gans, 1979). The gate keeping theory is, therefore, significant to the study as it helps to understand how journalists select their sources and how the sources and channels impact the selection of stories by the gatekeeper.

## 2.7 Related works

Despite the large number of studies that have examined the news making process, few have systematically examined the sources of the news (Soloskie, 1989). Sigal's (1973) study of news sources and news gathering channels showed that most front page stories in the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* relied heavily on government officials. In Ghana, the main source and channel for major media houses is either the *Ghana News Agency* or sources close to the government (Asamoah, 2017). The public's understanding of government and politics is also influenced by the extent to which they trust or distrust the information they hear from various news sources (Mitchell et al, 2014). How the news is retrieved and also how true the story is from the source is very important to the consumers. Therefore, journalists should deal with reliable facts and sources. This is because according to Blumer (1969), they determine not only what information is presented to the public but what image of society is presented. The news has to be processed to prove to its audience that the source is a trusted

one and that the information being sent across is accurate. The oceans of information and misinformation that are now accessible through social media can drown anyone trying to get at the truth ([www.bbc.co.uk/academy/journalism](http://www.bbc.co.uk/academy/journalism)). Truth of the source and channel of the news is very important to the journalist and, therefore, any judgment must go for the true source of their news. According to a PewResearchCenter (2014) survey to find out from consumers of news about how much they trusted or did not trust the news, the respondents were first asked whether they had heard of 36 individual news sources; and if they answered yes to the question, they were to indicate whether they trusted it or not. They were next asked if they distrusted the outlet. After all enquiries, the center found out that the sources trusted by the greatest percentage of respondents overall, along with those holding mixed political views, tended to be the most well known. This research confirms what Soloskie talks about, that the source of the news is very important. Some media outlets are better known than others and, thus, amass trust or distrust across a larger share of panelists. Rao & Ravi (2015), in their book: *Audience perception of the credibility of local news channels*, point out that the credibility of news organizations is important in evaluating its importance for the readers and the viewers and at the same time the influence or power it exerts on the power structure in the country. Michelle (2014) also argues that in order for the public to understand the government and politics, they must first trust the source of that news content. So the questions that emerge are how credible are the news sources, as well as the channels, and do the readers believe what they hear and see? In this case, which sources and channels do the press in a developing country such as Ghana use to tell their political stories that would be trusted or otherwise by the public?

Ghana has a vibrant press that plays a key role in political discourse, national identity and popular culture. Newspapers are a ubiquitous feature of everyday life in urban Ghana (Sarpong, 2016). At neighborhood markets and most major intersections, crowds gather every morning and afternoon to check out the lead stories of newspapers that hang across the frames of wooden kiosks. Top stories from the major newspaper organizations are patronized everyday not only because of their popularity but because of their catchy headlines. Also, the papers are highly patronized because of the trust the public or the audience of that particular newspaper brand has in them. Trust is a very important reason some major newspapers sell more than others in Ghana.

To fully understand how local news is produced requires more than just examining news-gathering channels and news sources, according to Soloski (1989). Of course, the news-gathering process is very important because it shows the ways that a reporter has to use to gather the news. But that is not all, at least according to Tuchman (1978) who makes it known that news is negotiated. If an individual needs something urgently, the person still has to talk his way through before finally purchasing it. This is called negotiating. Therefore, the news has to be negotiated before finally being produced. The selections of information to publish, the placement of news stories in the paper and the balance of stories on the front page are influenced by more than the intrinsic news value of stories (Gans, 1979). This means that there must be a form of relationship among the journalists, the news and their sources.

Breed (1955) notes that one important aspect of the news-making process that has not received much attention from researchers is that journalists are employed by bureaucratic business organizations. To account for the behavior of journalists, a researcher must go

beyond the formally stated policies and procedures to examine how interactions among journalists in the newsroom affect the news that is reported. Also, Breed found out that newsrooms tended to be friendly places where reporters and editors worked together closely. The team effort necessary to produce a newspaper requires that staff members learn how to act towards one another to facilitate the production of the newspaper. This aspect of the news source is very important because if the staff in the newsroom do not have good working relationships, that is going to affect the news. A friendly working environment, thus, affects news coverage (Breed, 1955).

Soloski (1989) makes us understand that just as the relationship among journalists affects local news coverage, so does the relationship between reporters and their sources. Journalistic professionalism calls on reporters to maintain a safe distance between themselves and sources so that personal relationships do not affect the reporting of the news. Vatalidis (2017) argues that workplace relationships are not the problem, but rather the effect of these relationships that can create difficulties for employers. Very few employers have policies on how to deal with personal relationships in the workplace but it is also better to be proactive and active, according to Vatalidis (2017). According to Brown (1987), a news reporter has been covering news city government for more than five years and has developed close relationships with his sources and in that case, tends to give the source a better treatment in his news stories. This shows that when reporters develop a close relationship with their sources, they tend to become bias.

Bischof (2000) wrote in his book that a reporter's involvement in a story may also have consequences in a libel action. According to Bischof (2000), an assistant general counsel for Gannet newspapers, Charles Tobin, pointed out that in some libel cases, plaintiffs try to pick

part articles and attribute weak spots to a reporter's personal prejudice. Also, plaintiffs argue that a lack of thoroughness by reporters is actually personal bias, an area libel plaintiffs seize on as evidence of malice. Some libel plaintiffs also accuse media defendants of being too cozy with a person or group that opposes the plaintiffs. According to Bischof, there is a difference between establishing rapport with a source and getting into personal disclosure - the kind of personal intimacies that will not be present in other personal relationships. If there is a line for a reporter's involvement in stories and with sources, it is hazy at its best and that is why according to Bischof, good reporters develop a rapport with sources in a way in which sources open up to them. The Pointer Institutes Ethics Program Director, Bob Steele, notes: "We have to be careful we don't inappropriately exploit people, that we don't take advantage of the vulnerable, that we aren't unfair, that we aren't disingenuous, that we don't lie." This is why according to Infinisource Newsroom (2016), without effective workplace communication, businesses cannot reach their full potential because of time wasted on misunderstandings. Productive employees need effective workplace communication, especially in the newsroom. Transparency, trust, understanding, morale and productivity all play roles in the continued growth of business.

Khudiyev (2002) also studied the 2003 post-election protests in Azerbaijan to determine bias in the press coverage of the protests. The study used a content analysis of three highly circulated local newspapers - one state-owned and the others privately owned - during a three-week period following the election day when the main subject of local newspapers coverage was protest actions in the streets of the capital city, Baku. The study found out that significant difference exists in newspaper coverage, reflecting differences in ownership. The study also showed how ownership of media outlets affects political coverage of the street

protests by opposition party supporters through unbalanced coverage and framing. It was found that the state-owned media had a favorable tone towards the government police and actions of the police forces during the mass disorders.

Just as Soloskie said, that government is the main source of news for the *New York Times* and the *Washington post*, journalists must do everything in their power to protect their sources. For a journalist, protecting the source and channel for your news or your information is very essential and according to Hupper (2015), many have gone to prison to defend these relationships knowing quite rightly that whistleblowers will not talk to them if they know their details can just be handed over.

Karthik (2017) argues that the news editor is the most important person who plans a daily newspaper. His role is very pervading when it comes to the weekly and monthly printing of the newspaper. An ideal news editor manages to get all the obvious stories into his paper with a good proportion of them as exclusives. Stevens (2012) calls the editor of the newspaper a gatekeeper. According to Stevens (2006), the proliferation of information on the internet has diminished the power of journalism gatekeepers but journalists can still serve the role in sorting, interpreting and lending credibility to news on behalf of the public. Trumper et al (2004) refer to the stage where the job of the news editor comes to play in a newspaper production as the selection bias. This, he explains, by saying that different news sources may have different policies for the selection of stories. For instance, an editor may want to report on only top issues while another editor may want to report on both major and minor issues. This, therefore, makes the job of an editor bias, according to Trumper et al (2004).

## Chapter three

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Introduction

The intent of this chapter was to discuss the methodology of the study under research. This chapter looked at the type and kinds of method used. The type of method used was the mixed method with content analysis, in-depth interview and participant observation as my research techniques. It also looked at how the data was found, treated, presented and analyzed.

Methodology, according to Henning (2004:36), is “a coherent group of methods that complement one another and that have the ability fit to deliver data and findings that will reflect the research questions and suit the research purpose.” The research questions were shaped by the methodology decisions. This chapter represents an overview of the research methodology used to find answers to the research questions of the study. The details of the methodology used in the study to gather, treat, present and analyse the data are presented in this chapter. It contained descriptions of the research design, research population, sample and sampling, types and sources of data and instrument used, data collection procedure, data presentation and analysis/discussion. In order for the questions that were raised in the research questions to be answered within the theoretical perspective of gate keeping, the study was conducted using mixed methods with content analysis, in-depth interview and participant observation. This study operated on four research objectives which were:

1. To explore the kinds of sources journalists and gatekeepers use
2. To examine the kinds of channels journalists and gatekeepers use

3. To find out why journalists and gatekeepers choose certain kinds sources and channels
4. To examine the implications of choosing certain kinds of sources and channels

### **3.2 Mixed methods approach**

Quantitative and qualitative research methods in research have been said to have merits and demerits if applied in a research study; therefore, in order for the study to correct the weakness and also use the best of the strength of both methods, the mixed method was used (Bryman, 2006). According to Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004:17), “the mixed research is defined as the class of research where the researcher combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study”. One advantage of using the mixed method is that it develops an understanding of a phenomenon in which either of the approaches for which either of the methods, if applied differently and separately, would be sufficient (Venkatesh et al, 2013). A disadvantage of using the mixed method is that the researcher would have to use large amounts of data and also, the research will be costly and time consuming. The kinds of methods used in this study are content analysis, in-depth interview and participant observation.

### **3.3 Getting the sample**

According to Fridah (2002), “sampling is the act, process or technique of selecting a suitable sample or a representative part of a population for the purpose of determining parameters or characteristics of the whole population”. It is necessary for the sample to be assembled in order for it to represent the whole population out of which the sample is being taken (Brink 2006:124) and (Bless et al, 2006:98). This study engaged two major newspapers in Ghana

and these were the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide*. These two newspapers were targeted for the study because they constituted the most prestigious newspapers in Ghana. Both newspapers have been consistent in terms of circulation. They are both published by state-owned newspaper organizations. Copies of the newspapers used for the study were from the library of the Graphic Communications Group Limited. The time period chosen to analyze these two newspapers was from the 6<sup>th</sup> of December, 2016 to the 10<sup>th</sup> of February, 2017, using Monday to Saturday editions. The study used a total of 56 newspapers. This is because each of the two newspapers contributed 28 editions. This study was concentrated on December 2016 and January 2017 because Ghanaians went to the polls to elect a new President and had its inauguration ceremony the said months, making every news published very important. The simple random technique was used in sampling the newspapers.

### **3.4 Content analysis**

Content analysis is a research technique used to make inferences about the content of recorded text (Miller and Whicker, 1999). Bradley also notes that content analysis is the systematization of text analysis which analyzes the form and substance of communication. Content analysis was chosen because it is one of the most practical methods for examining media content (Rife et al, 1998). Also, content analysis is a readily understood inexpensive research method which is unobtrusive and does not require contact with people. The technique also has its limitations. Content analysis may not reveal the underlying motives for the observed pattern and also, it can be extremely time consuming. It can also be difficult to automate or computerize.

### **3.5 Participant observation**

Participant observation has been used in a variety of disciplines as a tool for collecting data about people, processes and cultures in a number of researches (Kawulich, 2005). Participant observation is a qualitative method with its root in traditional ethnographic research whose objective is to help researchers learn the perspectives held by study populations (Lacono, 2009). Marshall and Rossman (1989) define observation as the systematic description of events, behaviors and artifacts in the social setting chosen for a study. This study called for the researcher to participate and also observe the activities of participants in the community. Participant observation always takes place in community settings or locations believed to have some relevance to the research questions. The advantages of using participant observation is that it produces rich qualitative data which shows pictures of how people really live as researchers can see for themselves. It is also more flexible and allows the researcher follow up different directions/ideas if something interesting occurs. The limitations of participant observation is that it is very time consuming and also, there is a risk of getting involved therefore giving bias data, or even sympathizing with the group under study. The Graphic Communications Group Limited is the media organization I chose for my participant observation of their news making process; observing what stories they put prominence on and how stories are chosen to be on the front pages of their newspapers.

### **3.6 In-depth interview**

An in-depth interview is an open-ended, discovery-oriented method that is well suited for describing both program processes and outcomes from the perspective of the target audience or key stakeholder (Pereira et al). An in-depth interview is a conversation with an individual

conducted by trained staff. The goal of the interview is to deeply explore respondents' point of view, feelings and perspectives. According to Legard (2017), an in-depth interview is a loosely structured interview that allows freedom for both the interviewer and the interviewee to explore additional points and change direction, if necessary. An in-depth interview is conducted to have a conversation and discuss issues using the art of questioning for the respondents to provide insights into the investigation themes. It is important to use interview because they provide detailed and specific data. It may also provide a relaxed environment for the interviewer and the interviewee. An advantage of using the in-depth interview is that it can establish rapport with participants to make them feel more comfortable and at ease which can generate more insightful responses especially regarding sensitive topics. Also, interviewers have much more opportunity to follow up questions, probe for additional information and circle back to the key questions later to generate rich understanding of the topic. Limitations of the in-depth interview are that it is quite time consuming as interviews must be transcribed, organized, analyzed and reported and also, if the interviewer is not highly skilled and experienced, the entire process can be undermined.

### **3.7 Data treatment, presentation and analysis processes/methods/procedures**

Transcription of data was done from the newspapers used and responses were recorded with the aid of a voice recorder to get a general sense of all the ideas presented. Therefore, the qualitative data for this study were initially in the form of newspaper analysis and interview transcripts based on the recorded responses of the respondent. The interview transcript was the outcome of transcribing the recorded responses. There was an extraction of significant statements and phrases pertaining to the phenomenon investigated - the sources and channels of political news reporting. The organizations of meanings were put into themes, after which

they were developed into theme clusters and eventually into theme categories. In other words, in order to make the data and results more objective, a number of themes were identified among categories of the data based on the interview transcript and the newspaper analysis, the objectives of the study and research questions. This was done to buttress the points raised. A preliminary analysis was carried out and this advanced into writing of a rich and exhaustive description of the role of the editor in determining what is presented as news, the use of framing in the political reporting before, during and after the 2016 general election and the sources and channels of news gathering. Presentation and description of the data collected can, therefore, be found in chapter four of this research. The data analysis carried out was based on the identified and listed themes. The quantitative part of the study saw the use of the descriptive statistical method of analysis being used in analyzing content categories. In cognisance of the research objectives, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) computer software was used to analyze coded categories from the content analysis. Through the use of the SPSS software, data from the content analysis was converted into frequency tables and cross-tabulations as a way of summarizing them into formats that can easily be understood. The development of frequency tables from the content analysis also helped to discover and compare patterns and relations that emerged.

## Chapter four

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

#### 4.1 Introduction

The findings of the research are presented in this chapter. The findings were arrived at through the analysis of data that were collected via the processes described in chapter three. The results were submitted using narrative descriptions and SPSS data analysis. This dissertation is aimed at finding out and discussing the kinds of sources and channels journalists and gatekeepers use, why they use such sources and channels and the implications of using such sources and channels. The study is also aimed at finding out the gate keeping role of editors and how this was effected in the 2016 general election. Analysis of data was, therefore, conducted in line with these objectives. The findings will be used to address and discuss the four research questions that engaged the attention and directed the course of this study.

#### 4.2 Sources of news (*Daily Graphic and Daily Guide*)

**Research question 1:**  
**What are the sources of political news reporting?**

*Table 1*

#### **Break down of sources of news in the 2016 election**

<b>Sources of news</b>	<b>no. of stories</b>	<b>percentage%</b>
Government officials	18	50
Official records	10	28
Public relations officers	5	14
Others	3	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100</b>

The table above presents findings on the sources of news that *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* used 2016 general election.

This category consists of stories based on a variety of news sources from the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide*. 36 stories out of the 56 stories analyzed were recognized as from sources. They were further broken down into government officials, official records, public relations officers and others. The data support the claim that reporters rely heavily on government officials as news sources. Government officials were the primary sources in 18 or 50% of the stories. Official records such as archives, election manuals and the constitution of Ghana were the primary sources in 10 stories or 28%, public relations officers were the primary sources in 5 stories or 14% and others constituted 3 stories or 8 %. Overall, the data above show the daily graphic and the daily guide news net is firmly anchored in the power structure of the society.

In the literature review, it was revealed that when it comes to getting news about government and politics, there are stark ideological differences in the sources that Americans use, as well as in their awareness of and trust in those sources (Ingram&Henshall, 2008). Therefore, the public's understanding of government and politics is also influenced by the extent to which they trust or distrust the information they hear from various news sources (Mitchell, et al, 2014). A news source has to do with where stories are obtained from. According to the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism (2015), television and online media are the most popular ways of accessing news on a daily and weekly basis. Some of the sources of news are official records, publications or broadcasts, officials in government or business, organizations or corporations, witnesses of crime, accidents or other events, and people involved with or affected by news events or issues.

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The use of multileveled sources will enable journalists to gather various opinions from multiplicity of perspectives in a single story, especially a lead story. (Ibrahim et al, 2011). Soloski (1989) gives two types of sources, which are the primary and the secondary sources. Gans (1980) also identifies two types of sources, which are the knowns and the unknowns. Both researchers explain that the primary or the knowns are the official sources while the unknowns or the secondary sources are the unofficial sources. The findings of the research revealed that there are a lot of sources that newspapers obtain their news stories from. This list was provided by the news editor of the *Daily Graphic*, Mr Nehemiah Owusu.

**Daily Roster/Schedule:** According to a reporter of the *Daily Graphic*, the newsroom has a daily roster or schedule which reporters check daily to know where they are assigned to and where to go and gather their news. A reporter has to be given an assignment, otherwise he does not go out on his own. This is a source of gathering news for the paper.

**Invitations:** Invitations are brought by event organizers and programmers for the *Daily Graphic* to cover their events and programs. Therefore, events attended are a key source of news.

**Interviews:** Reporters also go out there when there is a trending issue and conduct interviews. In the lead-up to the 2016 general election, reporters interviewed the member of Parliament aspirants and the presidential candidates. The interviews, therefore, were a way by which reporters gathered some information to be made public. Some Ghanaians were also interviewed to give their opinions on the election.

**Key institutions:** The *Daily Graphic*, just like any other media organization, has its reporters stationed at key institutions such as the court, Parliament and the Presidency. These reporters

have their offices there permanently and their role is to make sure that they report on any event that occurs in these institutions.

**Observation:** Reporters also make their own observations about the development in their societies and report on them.

**Ordinary Ghanaians:** Ordinary Ghanaians or people in the street or in commercial vehicles also give reporters information that lead to news. Most people talk about issues relating to them or happening in the society in commercial vehicles or even engage in discourse on the street with their peers about issues affecting them. In this case, when a journalist chances on such a discourse, it gives him or her signals to follow up on such issues.

**Social media:** Social media is also a platform where reporters gather information and present them as news to the public.

**Competitors:** Radio and television stations are also a source of news. Since the radio and television stations are faster than the newspaper industry, the newspaper industry sometimes depends on these competitors for their news. The radio and television stations have specific times for providing news stories, but they also report as and when there is breaking news. The newspaper industry has to wait for a whole 24 hours before reporting on the same news. Therefore, these competitors also become sources of news for the newspaper industry. In a study of U.S television networks and news magazine, it came to light that the knowns or the primary sources appeared four times more as news sources compared to the unknowns or secondary sources, Gans (1980). However, the table below revealed otherwise after an interview with the news editor of the *Daily Graphic*, Mr Nehemiah Owusu.

Table 2

**Primary and secondary sources used by *Daily Graphic***

<b>Primary sources</b>	<b>Secondary sources</b>
Invitations	Daily schedule
Key institutions	Interviews
Competitions	Observations
	Ordinary Ghanaians
	Social media

This, therefore, revealed that the knowns or the primary sources are not the major sources of news as the unknowns or the secondary sources are taking over the newspaper industry with their daily and 'ready' news. However, when it comes to the authenticity of the news items, it was also revealed that the knowns were contacted more frequently because of their authenticity and reliability compared to the unknowns. This is because news values are often quoted with the kind of sources used in the news (Ibrahim et al, 2011)

The sources that the news editor mentioned did not include public relations officers. This is interesting because the most sought-after sources by journalists are the official spokespersons or the public relations officers of companies. According to Ibrahim et al (2011), as news sources or providers, the public relations officers have their own roles and responsibilities through networks to be able to protect and defend the organizations that they represent. Table 1 show that public relations officers were the primary sources in 5 stories or 14%. Therefore, the role of the public relations officers/practitioners, popularly called PRPs, is very important when it comes to the sources of news. According to Sardisco (2017), public relation is the lifeblood of any company, be it private, profit or non-profit. Journalists are better off getting credible and factual news from companies if they first get in contact with the public relations officers of the company. However according to Ibrahim et al, journalists have mixed feelings towards PRPs because they suspect them of manipulation while depending on them for

information. Talking to Charles Okine, a reporter of the *Daily Guide*, about the authenticity of their sources, he disclosed that;

“It is the duty of the reporter to always check, recheck and check again. The principle of every journalist is to make sure that the source they are gathering their news from is authentic. In election reporting, a journalist must be very careful so as not to be misled by any source who may be affiliated to a particular political party. This can be very dangerous to the reporter and may even end the career of the journalist and the media institution he/she is affiliated to. Not every information is correct and genuine. Some of the information are either exaggerated or hoaxed. If a journalist reports on hoax news during an election, it is going to bring conflict to the parties involved, and also the institution the paper is coming from. When this happens, it will tarnish the image of the institution. Election reporting is very sensitive and, therefore, every reporter must verify their sources before publishing any information and presenting them to the public as news”. (Charles Okine, Daily Graphic, October, 2017).

Analyzing the above statement by the journalist, journalists have a professional demand and must be very discreet. This is not surprising as it is argued that if news sources are always correct in the information they provide, they will always be believed but if they make a mistake, they will be doubted the next time. However, Rosho (1975) contends that objectivity does not reside in news stories themselves; rather it resides in the behavior of the journalists. In an interview with Emmanuel Ntiamoah, a national service person with the *Daily Guide*, it was revealed that journalists desire to not only get the news from the source, but also to get the facts of the matter. This is in line with what the BBC Academy argued: The oceans of information and misinformation that are now accessible through social media can drown anyone trying to get at the truth (the BBC Academy, 2017). That is why reliability is built over time (Ingram and Henshall 2008). Political news reporters have to make sure that the sources they are gathering their news from are authentic and reliable.

To conclude, this section sought to answer research question 1 which is the sources for gathering news in relation to the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide*. It also sought to verify how reporters and editors of the various newspapers verify the authenticity of their news

sources to prevent harm to the parties involved, especially during political reporting, the newspaper organization and the reporters as well.

#### 4.3 Channels of news (*Daily Graphic and Daily Guide*)

Research question 2:

What are the channels of political news reporting?

Table 3

##### Breakdown of channels of news in the 2016 election stories

channels of news	no of stories	%
press conference	8	25
press release	5	40
rallies	4	20
official proceedings	2	10
Interviews	1	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>

The table above presents findings on the channels of news that *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* used 2016 general election.

The remaining 20 out of the 56 stories analyzed came from a wide variety of channels. Analyzing the stories based on the channels found in the various newspapers analysis, it was found that press conference which was lead by government officials constituted to 8 stories or 25%, press release by the electoral commission and the various party leaders lead by their representatives also constituted 5 stories or 40%, rallies organized by the various political parties constituted 4 stories or 20%, official proceedings like the inauguration of the new president constituted 2 stories or 10% while interviews constituted 1 story or 5 %. This also shows that the various newspapers are very dependent on government officials for most of their stories.

According to Soloski (1989), one way of gauging the news gathering pattern used by reporters is to examine the types of channels reporters use to gather news. It was discussed in the literature review that there are three types of channels according to Soloski (1989), which are routine, informal and enterprise. An interview with the Deputy News Editor of the *Graphic Business*, one of the brands of the Graphic Communications Group Limited, Mr. Charles Okine, revealed that the *Daily Graphic* depended heavily on press releases, invitations and rallies for their stories. When asked why this heavy reliance, he said;

"Resource persons and government officials are mostly found in these places and that will be a good place to interview government sources and other elites for the news. Therefore, rallies and press conferences are channels that journalists mostly use to obtain their news."

Mr. Okine also revealed that the journalists or reporters gather news based on their own intuition. According to him, a journalist might want to complete a story on political news and for that matter, it will be necessary for him/her to attend a rally or a press conference being organized by a political party because the source of that information he is looking for will be found in that environment. This is what Soloski (1989) terms as enterprise channel, where the reporter follows his own intuition to gather news from sources. According to Mr. Okine:

"Sixty percent of news comes from different channels other than sources. This is because a reporter must always make sure that he/she is presenting the facts and truth. During an interview or a conference or a rally, a minister or a politician may say something in passing but once the reporter has access to the person, it's very necessary to make him/her explain further or give clarity to the information given. You do that to get scope, which is to get the details of the event."

News leak is a very important channel that every newspaper organization must use, according to Ebenezer Donkor, a reporter of the *Daily Guide*. Looking at figure 1, it can be seen that the *Daily Guide* had only 2 of their election stories coming from channels and 3 coming from sources. When asked why this was so, he indicated that:

"The coverage that is given during political reporting is so important because the reification of the socio-political system by journalists can be identified by examining the types of events covered by reporters. Also, reporters are expected to rely more on channels such as government meetings and trials."

According to Nana Konadu, a reporter of the *Daily Graphic*, during political reporting, it is very important to not make a mistake by going straight to a source to gather information.

This is because the reporter may be misled by the informants. According to him:

"Some sources want reporters to report on news that will make their stories good in the eyes of the public. Oppositions are inevitably of less interest to the media than the governing party. Even opposition leaders and MPs tend to struggle to gain publicity on the most important issues. Therefore, an opposition person will say or do anything to gain the media attention in a way that will unpopulise the governing party. It is, therefore, very important for a journalist to rather get the story from a channel like a press statement or a rally where there is an evidence of what is being said."

To conclude, this section sought to answer research question 2 which is the channels for gathering news in relation to the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide*. The findings revealed that the channels used to gather news are not necessarily a measure of a newspaper's professionalism. Just like Soloski (1989) revealed in his work, the study also revealed that reporters are dependent on government officials for most of their news. Also, reporters report what the government officials want the public to hear and know concerning a particular issue. It can, therefore, be concluded based on this report that the power structure in the community regards reporters as objective; and thus they will be presented to news consumers as an objective force. As Tushman (1985) points out, "The reification of the power structure effectively controls dissent by eliminating sources of news who would radically challenge the status quo."

#### 4.4 Determination of news (*Daily Graphic and Daily Guide*)

##### Research question 3:

##### Why do journalists and gatekeepers use certain sources and channels?

This section aims at discussing why journalists use certain sources and channels and who determines what news is. Usually, not-so-important stories get relatively prominent coverage from a range of news organizations. This makes people raise their eyebrows and wonder who determines news and why. As mentioned in the literature review, the editor of a newspaper is one of the most important people who plan the daily newspaper. His role in any newspaper office, be it weekly or daily, is all pervading. To a national newspaper, an active, intelligent and enterprising news editor is the vital spark which energizes its news coverage and outlook (Karthik, 2012). During an interview with the news editor of the *Daily Graphic*, it was revealed that the editor has the responsibility of deciding which news stories are printed in the paper. According to him:

“The editor determines the policy direction of the newspaper in terms of editorial or writing of the editorial to be specific. The editorial reflects the opinion of the people and so whatever the editor writes is the opinion of the paper even though it is his opinion. He supervises the work that goes on in the newsroom and because of that, any news item brought in by the reporters has to be monitored by the news editor who in turn forwards it to the editor to be supervised before publishing. The editor heads the editors meeting, which is also known as the editorial conference, and determines which story must come to the front page, the spread or the back. He presents all the stories that he has selected for the day and considered for publication in the next day’s paper. The editor has the veto power when there is a disagreement on the selection of a particular story” (Nehemiah Owusu, *Daily Graphic*, 1<sup>st</sup> June, 2017).

It is, therefore, not surprising that Stevens (2017) argues that the editor is the gatekeeper of the newspaper industry. This, the news editor describes, as the process by which news stories are filtered by journalists and editors for dispersal in any medium. Analyzing the interview conducted, it was revealed that the editor heads the editorial conference and determines

which story comes out as news, as Stevens posits. The story has to pass through the editor before coming out as news and that makes him a significant gatekeeper of the newspaper industry.

According to Ibrahim et al (2001), although citizen journalists are available all the time and are ready to give readers news, being objective and accountable for information and professionalism in gathering news are questionable issues that beset the world of journalism today. This is because the rise of social media has given impatient readers another source for their daily news, therefore it is very important for a newspaper industry to get a gatekeeper who filters the news before making it public. With this, readers will always be assured that their news is coming from a good source. This is exactly what the news editor of the *Daily Graphic* revealed during the interview.

“The editor is a very important person in the newspaper industry because he needs to make sure that the news presented in the paper is exactly what the news item contains so that the readers will be assured of the authenticity of the source” (Nehemiah Owusu, *Daily Graphic*, June 1, 2017).

The findings also revealed that there is a difference between a news editor and an editor. In political reporting, it is very important to make sure that whatever is being published is very true and is a true reflection of an unfolding drama. The news reporters present their news stories to the news editors of the various newspapers, but the news editor has to consult the editor before taking any actions on the stories because what is to be presented as news is to be determined by the editor and not the news editor. The study also identified that it is imperative for a newspaper to have a news editor and an editor because if a news editor does not report to an editor, the news elements might not be able to depict what exactly the writer

intends to portray. When asked about the difference between the work of the editor and that of the news editor, a participant of the study clarified by saying:

“A news editor sends the unedited story to the editor, while the editor polishes and refines a story towards a particular dimension. He cuts out what doesn't fit and enhances the major points of the news. He draws attention to places where the audience should focus” (Albert Saliah, *Daily Graphic*, June 1, 2017).

More so, for political reporting, it is mostly assumed that the editor will do more than he is supposed to do as an editor or play a different role because political parties are involved. This is because of the gate keeping role of the editor. As mentioned above, he determines what is supposed to be news, how the news is supposed to be written and in which direction it should go. In other words, the editor is assumed to be subjective towards a particular political party when reporting on political issues. An interview with a reporter of the *Daily Graphic* revealed, however, that what is normally assumed is not always the case. According to her:

“The editor does the front page and the headline and nothing changes in political reporting. He plays the normal role the editor plays every day and neither politics nor the 2016 election was an exception. He gives headlines concerning what happened in the course of the election and normalizes the headlines. Headlines are not framed to suit a particular political party. In the 2016 general election, he presided over what was to be published and what was not to be published. News that he thinks will make the headline and sell is what he presents as news. But also, all the news related to the election was reported as they were without framing anything”. (Hannah Amoah, *Daily Graphic*, May 30, 2017).

If the news editor has the power to determine what is supposed to come out as news and what is not, and also if headlines are not framed to suit a particular political party, then the interview supports what Trumper et al describe in their work as selection bias, which is the power of the editor in determining the news, as he selects what is supposed to come out as news and writes the headline he thinks will make sales to favor him.

To conclude, this section sought to answer research question 3 which is why certain kinds of sources and channels are used by journalists in relation to the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily*

*Guide* and also sought to present the role of the editor or the gate keeper with respect to the *Daily Graphic*, in determining what events are presented as news.

## Chapter five

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

#### 5.1 Introduction

This study explored how the state-owned *Daily Graphic* and private-owned *Daily Guide* reported the 2016 general election. It involved a content analysis of 10 newspapers to determine sources and channels that newspapers used to gather their stories. The study attempted to answer the research questions posed at the beginning of the study. This discussion entailed an assessment of key points noted in the findings with inferences from the perspectives gained through a review of gate keeping and other related studies discussed in chapter two. This chapter also answers the fourth research question:

#### **Research question 4:**

**What is the implication of sources and channels in political news reporting?**

Also, the chapter acknowledges the limitations of the study, makes recommendations for future studies and finally draws some conclusions.

#### 5.2 Summary

There are types of news sources and channels that reporters use. This is important to study because it gives a fair idea of how reporters, journalists and editors gather their stories and present them as news. The *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* are the two newspapers that were analyzed for this study. The objectives of the study were to find out the kinds of sources and channels of news, reasons for such sources and channels and their implications. The

study is relevant because it is to find out why newspaper organizations rely heavily on government officials as sources and channels of news.

This study used the mixed method approach with content analysis, in-depth interview and participant observation. The sample size for the study was 28 newspapers each of the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide*, totaling 56, selected through the simple random sampling technique.

The media are regarded as the public sphere since they are supposed to act as watchdogs of the society. This is because the society has a lot of issues to confront because of the “powers that be”. They, thus, have to address the issues to better the lives of the public. However according to the study, the public sphere no longer acts in the interest of the public; they rather have gone to bed with the “powers that be” to the disadvantage of the public, thereby defying their role as watchdogs of the society. This is because the press has the power to select and decide which events or stories get on the front page and which ones get ignored. The sources and channels that journalists make use of today are government officials who one way or another use their wealth and government influence to shield the truth from the public. This has become problematic because the stories that the media report to the public have become the voice of their sources, thereby tuning and turning the minds of the public wherever they want it to go. Gatekeepers, as Lenin calls them, are the editors of newspaper organizations who determine the power that sources and channels have. They choose which news sees the light of day and which one gets ignored. The study found out that gatekeepers have also become barriers to some truths. This is because with the friendship or affiliations of the gatekeeper, some truths will be kept aside, making the public ignorant of such news. Even though the study somehow proved that gatekeepers are always objective and act in the

interest of the public, it can also be said that gatekeepers and their reporters act in the interest of the government officials and feed the public with the words of the government instead of bringing out the truth since those are their main sources of information.

### 5.3 Conclusion

By looking at the type of stories that is given to news consumers and the sources they use, this study can be concluded that the newspapers rely heavily on the government officials who in this case constitute the power structure in the society. By choosing to rely heavily on officials in government, reporters and journalists depict a certain picture of the society that is full of bias and subjectivity.

The collusive or subversive relationship among the media, politicians, government officials, sources and channels raises ethical and professional questions. In Ghana for example, there are newspaper organizations and media houses owned by private people and individuals stringently regulated by governments in what they can and cannot publish. This has brought about the notion that the media or the public sphere cannot be trusted. One question running through the minds of news consumers is whether they are receiving the news from the government or from the media houses. Interviews were conducted on the streets of Accra and views on how the media is seen and perceived were given by ordinary Ghanaians. Mildred Oppong, a trader on the streets of Accra, revealed that sometimes she felt like she was being spoon-fed with the words of the government rather than the truth. According to her: "Anytime I hear the news, it is either government officials reporting on it or the news was covered from a channel. In this case, the journalist or the reporter is still reporting it

from a government source. This makes me feel like the same politicians are telling me what they want me to know.”

Jonathan Agblo, a storekeeper at the Tip Toe Lane at Circle, also made it known that he did not care whether the news was coming from the government or not or whether the reporter wrote the news based on a channel but rather, he was more focused on the content of the news. These two revelations by ordinary Ghanaians made the researcher want to know whether reporters knew what the public thought about their news content. Ebenezer Donkor of the *Daily Guide* revealed that the heavy reliance on official sources tended to make legitimatethe power structure in the society. According to him, the stress journalists place on reporting facts means that news stories make the world objective for both news consumers and journalists. For journalists, the existing socio-political system is experienced as a naturally occurring phenomenon which is beyond the abilities of journalists and news consumers to influence or change. Journalists do not report the news to support the status quo in the society, but rather news stories support the status quo because journalists are objective in the way they break such news. This claim supports that of Soloski (1989) that the society’s power structure becomes the legitimate site for gathering news and in turn these news stories further make legitimate that structure. According to him, “By identifying centralized sources of information as legitimated social institutions, news organizations and news workers wed themselves to specific beats and bureaus. Those sites are then objectified as the appropriate sites at which information should be gathered and also, legitimate sources of both information and governance.” It should, however, be noted that the heavy reliance on government sources for news has its implications on the government official, the reporter and the reader. This whole project has been to find out the kind of sources and channels used by

the two major newspapers, the *Daily Guide* and the *Daily Graphic*, and the implications of using them. It was also revealed that there is heavy reliance on government officials for both papers. It was, therefore, established that if there is this heavy reliance on government officials for news, then there will be bias and untruths in the news, with one side of the story being told, although it is unethical on the part of the reporters or the journalists.

News is negotiated (Tuchman1989). That is why it is very important to have a relationship between the journalists and their sources and also journalists and their colleagues in the newsroom. The relationship between the journalist and the source will have an implication on the news produced at the end of the day. It has been revealed that if the reporter and his source have any other relationship aside from work relationship, it can affect the news. If a journalist is friends with a source, the tone of the news he is reporting on can be directed in favor of the source. Therefore if the news is coming from a government source and there is such friendship with the reporter, then the news is going to be biased. For example, there is a reported case of corruption in the government which someone is being accused of; the case has, however, not gained public knowledge yet. A journalist has a source in the government who can give him a detailed account of what happened but that source has friendship ties with the accused person. Additionally, both the source and the accused are friends with the reporter. In this case, what would happen? The source will give his version of the story to the reporter that will not make his friend, the accused, look guilty in the eyes of the public. The reporter will also write the story in favor of his friends. In this case, there will be a biased representation of the story from all sides. This will mean that the public or the receiver of the news is not going to get the truth of what really happened.

When the news that is published is bias and one-sided, then the question that will follow is: Who does that have an effect on? Analyzing the interview conducted with Mildred Oppong, it can be concluded that the reader or the consumer will never get the truth. This is because if the news is coming from the government source and the reporter is not doing any thorough investigation on the issue, then whatever the reporter reports on from the government source is what the reader is going to take home at the end of the day. The reader is, therefore, deprived of the facts and the truth of the issue and the reporter would not have played his role as the watchdog of the society. The readers or the consumers also never get the opportunity to judge for themselves issues of the matter because in this case, they have been misled.

According to Deane (2005), the media, as the fourth estate, are to guide and guard the public interest. This means that writing the news is supposed to benefit the interest of the public and not the people in the government. Herbamas (1989) makes it known that the media is to protect the public from the government and not otherwise. This is by bringing out the truth that the government would otherwise have hidden from the public. In this case, is the media acting in the interest of the people or the government officials? The media, instead of guiding and guarding the public interest and providing them with news that reflect the true situation on the ground, they are rather more interested in people as consumers than as citizens; so if the people are deprived of the truth and accuracy of the matter at hand, then the watchdog does not guide and guard the people but rather barks at them. The media and the government have become one and in this case, the truth is always being shielded from the people, as Johnson (2011) puts it: "The media no longer act in the interest of the public or the citizens of the country but for their own interest and benefits."

If a news consumer is taken for granted and is always being spoon-fed with news from government officials, then the future is also going to be affected. As Tuchman (1989) points out, news helps to form an image of the society and therefore if this image is distorted because journalists decide to give the public news that are directly from the powers that be, then it would be difficult to explain the willingness of journalists to take on powerful institutions and individuals in the society, thus, making their role as the watchdogs of the society not useful.

The media have severally been criticized for overstepping their boundaries when it comes to making sensitive, classified or confidential issues public. According to Svennevig (2002), providing information about the world is in the public interest but many a time, the public sphere or the media turn to be bias and rather put the news out in the interest of the government and government officials. Simonov and Rao (2017) argue two types of news bias, which are censorship and propaganda. According to these two scholars, when a government instructs a news outlet not to cover a story about a corruption scheme organized by some government officials in the scheme, then there is censorship biasness in the news. Propaganda is when both the reporter and the government officials connive to omit certain facts and truths from a story. Since the findings identified government officials as the main source of reporters' stories, then it can be concluded that there could be biasness in news stories, the stories might be one-sided, the readers will not be the judge of the story and they might not get to know the facts and truths about a story.

Since ethical issues in journalism and news reporting are very critical and important, it is very important for a reporter to have a friendly working relationship with his colleagues. The news editor at the Graphic Communications Group Ltd confirmed that ethics in the

newsroom are very critical as this may directly or indirectly influence a source. According to him:

"The work relationship among reporters in the newsroom is very important as what happens in the newsroom can also affect the ethics of the company. Also, the relationship with peers must be ethical and professional so as not to affect the integrity of the newspaper organization. In journalism, if anyone is doing advertising or wants certain features to be published for them, that can be arranged. Apart from the content for sale and the advertisement, there is no way any external person or institution can influence the Graphic Communications Group Ltd, but considerations could be given to matters concerning national security or if the publication is going to cause confusion. Apart from the security considerations, nothing can influence the media organization from being objective. Even with the issue of national security, the editor handles it because if the news is not published by your organization, another organization or even someone can publish it. In this era of social media, news can be everywhere at the same time. Therefore if a person can control as many as 19 million people who use mobile phones in Ghana, then anyone trying to influence the newspaper must as well be able to control the newspapers but if no one will be able to control these many people, then it is a waste of time to try and influence a newspaper to write a story in favor of someone. This is because even if the newspaper does not report it, the social media will." (Nehemiah Owusu, 1<sup>st</sup> June, 2017).

There is a question involved here: What is the implication of ethics in the newsroom relating to a source? Ethics in the newsroom affects a source directly or indirectly. If there is a line for a reporter's involvement in stories and with sources, it is hazy at its best and that is why according to Bischof, good reporters develop a rapport with sources in a way that makes sources open up to them. Sources opening up to reporters must also be ethical and professional. If a reporter puts too much trust in a source, the news that will be published will not be accurate because there will be emotional connection to the source and the source will take advantage of that. The news will, therefore, not be factual. The Pointer Institutes Ethics Program Director Bob Steele said, "We have to be careful we don't inappropriately exploit people, that we don't take advantage of the vulnerable, that we aren't unfair, that we aren't disingenuous, that we don't lie," and that is why according to Infinisource Newsroom (2016),

without effective workplace communication, businesses cannot reach their full potential because of time wasted on misunderstandings.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

Although findings generated from the study were very useful, the generalizability of the results to other media types such as radio and television should be treated with caution. This is because the study was limited to only the *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* newspaper's coverage of the 2016 general election. It is therefore recommended that future studies consider a comparative study of *Daily Graphic*, *Daily Guide* and other leading newspapers in Ghana. It would also be very interesting to adopt a broader media studies in the coverage of election issues by not looking at only newspapers, but also at television and radio stories

#### **5.5 Limitations**

This study had some limitations. There was limited literature on the subject, hence digging for literature from sources was tedious and time consuming.

Regardless of the limitations, the researcher believes that this study has provided an insightful view into the coverage of the 2016 general election in Ghana. It is the hope of the researcher that the findings and recommendations made will go a long way to improve research in the media coverage of election issues. The researcher considers this study as an addition to the body of knowledge in the study of gate keeping, implications of sources and channels and newspaper coverage of election issues.

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**APENDIX A: NEWSPAPERS ENGAGED**

*DailyGraphic* December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2016

*Daily Graphic* December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016

*Daily Graphic* December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016

*Daily Graphic* December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016

*Daily Graphic* January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2017

*Daily Guide* December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2016

*Daily Guide* December, 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016

*Daily Guide* December, 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016

*Daily Guide* December, 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016

*Daily Guide* January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2017

## **APPENDIX B: CODEBOOK**

### **Content analysis of the 2016 GENERAL ELECTIONS IN GHANA**

#### **Population:**

This was a Content analysis of the 2016 general elections in Ghana. Articles were identified from two daily newspapers (Monday-Saturday): *Daily Graphic and Daily Guide*. This included news stories, opinion, feature stories, editorials and front page stories.

#### **Kind of data:**

Textual data.

#### **Data sources:**

The originals of newspapers were from the library of Graphic Communications Group Ltd.

#### **Method of data collection:**

Articles relating to the 2016 general elections were identified from hard copies of newspapers.

#### **Story type:**

1. Straight news
2. Feature
3. Editorial
4. Column/Opinion

#### **Story size:**

1. More than full page
2. Full page

3. Between full and half page
4. Half page
5. Between half page and one-third page
6. One-third page
7. Between one-third page and quarter page
8. Quarter page
9. Between quarter page and one-eighth page
10. One-eighth page
11. Less than one-eighth page

**Placement of the story:**

1. Front Page (Lead)
2. Front Page (Other)
3. Back page
4. Center spread
5. Other

**Headline size**

1. Streamer
2. Spread head
3. Two-column head
4. One-column head

**Political parties:**

New Patriotic Party (NPP)  
National Democratic Congress (NDC)

**APPENDIX C: LETTER TO THE EDITOR (Daily Graphic)**

**Beatrice Gyambrah**

Ghana school of journalism

Accra Ghana

Dear Editor,

I am a Master of Arts student of the above-named university conducting a study into the **2016 general elections in Ghana**. The survey asks about the factors that your newspaper took into consideration in the coverage, selection and representation of 2016 general election in Ghana. Beside this there will be discussions on gate keeping and role of editors in news reportage. 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 want 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 0241645467 or emailing [bgyambrah33@gmail.com](mailto:bgyambrah33@gmail.com).

Yours sincerely

(Beatrice Gyambrah)

## **APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR NEWS EDITORS**

The news editors were asked questions about five broad areas:

### **1. Gate keeping**

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

### **2. Sources of news**

In this section, editors and the actors were asked how they choose sources for their news and how they choose them

### **3. Channels of news**

In this section, the editors and other actors were asked questions on why they prefer channels to sources or why some of their newspaper coverage was from channels.

### **4. Implications of sources and channels of news**

In this section, the editors and actors were asked on the effects on using government sources for their news

### **5. Professionalism and ethics in news reporting**

In this section, editors and other actors were asked about the ethics and professionalism regarding sources of news and colleagues in the newsroom. They were also asked the effects of not holding on to the ethics regarding the sources and their colleagues.

## **APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR REPORTERS**

My name is Beatrice Gyambrah, an MA student at the Ghana Institute of Journalism studying Master of Arts in Communication Studies. I would be grateful if you could take some time off your busy schedules to grant me an interview on sources and channels of political news and the implication of professionalism in news reporting. You are assured that any information provided will be treated as confidential and used for academic purposes only.

### **1. Reliance of government officials**

In this section, the reporters were asked why the heavy reliance on government officials.

### **2. Authenticity of sources**

In this section, the reporters were asked why sources are checked and rechecked before using their stories. They were also asked whether they check the authenticity of their sources before publishing a story.

### **3. Relationship with sources**

In this section, the reporters were asked whether their relationship with sources compromises their stories and if it does, what measures are taken to control relationship with sources.

### **4. Professionalism at the workplace**

In this section, the reporters were asked how they relate to their colleagues at the workplace and how that affects their work ethics.

## **APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE PUBLIC**

My name is Beatrice Gyambrah, an MA student at the Ghana Institute of Journalism studying Master of Arts in Communication Studies. I would be grateful if you could take some time to grant me an interview on your views on the media and the effect of the heavy reliance of government officials as sources by reporters, have on the general public. The interview will be treated confidentially as none of the information given will be passed on to a third party and will be used for purposes of the research.

### **1. View on the media**

In this section, the public was asked how they view the media in relation to the news they consume.

### **2. Effects of heavy reliance on government officials**

In this section, the reporters were asked the effects of the heavy reliance of government officials as sources by reporters and how that makes them rate news they consume.

APPENDIX G

SAMPLES  
OF  
PUBLISHED  
ELECTION  
STORIES

# It's Nana Vrs Mahama

«« Continued from page 3

"Together, we have come this far. Vigilance is key for change," a statement issued by John Baidoo, acting General Secretary of the party, said.

## Atmosphere

The elections were thought to be largely peaceful, with pockets of fracas in some parts of the country, while there appeared to be an appreciable voter turnout for the exercise.

Allegations of ballot snatching, intimidation of some voters by security personnel, particularly soldiers, were rife as voting proceeded.

The issue of missing names leading to possible disenfranchisement, dominated in many constituencies similar to what happened during the special voting.

## Intimidation

Voting in the Ablekuma South Constituency in Accra was characterized by heightened tension with the presence of gun-wielding soldiers.

Hours after voting began on a good note, a team of gun-wielding military men stormed the area in droves, moving from one polling station to the other.

By that time, long queues had started forming at the various centres, with people anxious to cast their votes.

The mere sight of the gun-wielding soldiers put fear in some of the voters, considering the fact that there were no reported incidents of violence at the various polling stations.

Everywhere they went, these soldiers, wearing grim and long faces, ordered people who had formed long queues to rearrange themselves or got beaten, creating some level of apprehension among potential voters.

Some expressed concern about the way the soldiers were going about their duties since their posture was intimidating.

In one of such incidents which occurred at the Korle-Bu police station polling station, some of these overzealous soldiers in a truck with registration number 74 GA 60, went to the centre, issuing strict instructions for those who had formed queues to move back amidst threats to whip them.

In the process, one of the military

that the process is transparent and credible. Ghana is, then, the winner."

His running mate, Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia, voted in his hometown of Walewale in the Northern Region at about 9:44 am and was expected in Accra to monitor the situation.

## Mahama

President John Mahama, who is seeking re-election, cast his vote in his hometown, Bole, in the Northern Region and took to social media - Twitter - to urge people to vote.

The NDC candidate tweeted: "Finished casting my vote. It's your civic responsibility too. #Vote4JM."

His wife, Lordina Mahama, voted at Rangoon Cluster of Schools polling station in the La Dadekotopon Constituency in Accra.

## Veep

President Mahama's running mate, Pan Kwesi Bekoe Amlssah-Arthur, together with his wife Matilda, voted at about 11:30 am at a polling station at Accra High School and expressed his excitement with the voting system.

## Smiles

Dr Bawumia expressed satisfaction with the conduct of the exercise, and remarked that "God will bring smiles on the faces of the NPP by the end of the day."

He advised the people to comport themselves and refrain from engaging in any acts that would disturb the peace in the country.

He was accompanied by his wife, Hajia Samira Bawumia, who exercised her franchise at the Kperiga D/A Primary School Polling Station 'B' in the same constituency.

Ex-President J.A. Kufuor voted around mid-day at Dzorwulu, Accra in the Ayawaso West Wuogon Constituency. Although he did not disclose his ballot, his comments showed clearly that he voted for change.

"I am very confident, I don't talk 100 percent, but I expect Ghana will give it to NPP this time," he said.

He further called for calm and admonished Ghanaians to eschew violence during the election process.

Ex-President J.J. Rawlings voted at Kloitay Korley Constituency but shied from stating that the party he

By William Yao  
Owusu & Charles  
Lakyi Baidoo

# It's Nana Vrs Mahama

**G**HANAIANS TROOPED to the various polling stations throughout the country yesterday to elect a new president to renew the mandate of President Mahama and the next parliament in what many experts believe will be a historic election.

Seven persons contested for the position of president, with incumbent President John Dramani Mahama representing the National Democratic Congress (NDC), Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo Addo, the New Patriotic Party (NPP), Ivor Greenstreet, the Convention People's Party (CPP), Dr Edward Mahama, the People's National Congress (PNC), Dr Papa Kwesi Nduom, the Progressive People's Party (PPP), Nana Konadu Agyeman Rawlings, the National Democratic Party (NDP) and an independent candidate, Jacob Osei Yebash.

By the close of polls, it was emerging that the contest had narrowed to a straight fight between President Mahama and Nana Akufo-Addo.

The rest of the candidates were terribly trailing behind the two, with most of them recording zilch while Dr Nduom, who seemed to be showing a

slight impact, was trailing behind the two main candidates. The NPP seemed to have closed its lead in the 100 in some of the latter's strongholds.

### Results

There were interesting provisional results coming in as it progressed but the trend showed that the main parties performed abnormally.

In the provisional presidential results in Lastra Ochi Council, NDC garnered 195 votes with the NPP getting 123.

At Faith Evangelical Church, Kuku Hill, Elotey Korle, the NDC polled 345 and the NPP 345.

Ash-Town/Mbrom Preby NDC had 83 votes while the NPP had 449.

At the University of Education, Winneba, Kamasasi Campus, NDC polled 3-23 against the NPP's 1,507.

Madina Social Welfare Polling Station 1C in Accra, the NPP had 262 against the NDC's 199 and at 1A Polling Station, NPP had 258 and the NDC 206, indicating that the NPP may snatch the seat from the NDC's Amadu Sorogho.

It appears that the NDC may drop more parliamentary seats by the close of today as some of the results coming from its strongholds are nothing to write home about. Some of the seats to watch are La Dadektoyon,

Leshokko, Cediakofie, Adentan, Madina, Agona West, Heman, Lassa, Dedebya in the Central Region, Jansah and Akropong in the Western Region, among others.

At Wa Central Polling Station, A. NDC had 62 and the NPP 106, while at Polling Station B, NDC polled 61 and NPP 145.

### Commendation

In a statement issued in Accra yesterday by the New Patriotic Party, commended Ghanaians for coming to a peaceful and orderly vote.

At Akropong-Madina Polling Station A the NPP had 106 and NDC 62 and at Polling Station B the NPP had 145 with NDC 61.

"We urge all Ghanaians to remain patient as they await the final results of the election," the statement said.

## RESULTS TENSION



Continued on page 7

## ... Locked In Achanti



# Retain NDC to consolidate gains — President Mahama

By Edmund Smith-Asante  
& Sebastian Syme, ACCRA

**T**HOUSANDS of National Democratic Congress (NDC) faithful yesterday turned up at the Accra Sports Stadium for their last rally, at which President John Dramani Mahama said the December 7 general election was a choice between consolidating the gains his government has made over the years and a stagnation of Ghana's prospects without the guarantee of success.

Addressing the supporters at the event to round off the party's campaign for the 2016 general election, Mr Mahama asked the electorate to retain the NDC to continue to keep the country in safe hands to safeguard its future.

He said the country had been in safe hands under his watch and the fact that it was the most stable country in the sub-region pointed to brighter prospects which Ghanaians should embrace.

The supporters, from all walks of life and made up of all ages, were clad in the party's colours of red, white, green and black.

What prevented an overflow of the people at the stadium was that some of them managed to get onto the pitch, thereby freeing some space in the stands.

Also, not all the people entered the stadium. There was a very large number of party supporters outside the stadium enjoying the fanfare while the rally lasted.

They had no plans of getting inside to listen to speeches and were content with dancing to music, taking selfies with friends and on horseback and generally having a good time as if they were at a carnival.

## Dressed for NDC

Some wore white 'T' shirts, some green, others red or black, all with one inscription or another asking for a vote for President Mahama or an NDC parliamentary candidate.

From the early afternoon when the party faithful began arriving on buses, motorbikes and in cars draped in party paraphernalia, amidst the tooting of horns, they blew mini vuvuzelas to begin a celebration that was to run into the night.

The massive crowd did not hide their excitement as they danced to chants and music that interspersed the statements by the party leadership.

But when the anthem of the NDC was played, the atmosphere was immediately electrified, with the supporters singing along with the anthem blaring from the speakers, with

• Continued on Page 52



## Adehyan Savings & Loans

The ruling National Democratic Congress (NDC) held a mammoth rally at the Accra Sports Stadium yesterday to climax its campaign across the country, at which the party's leadership urged supporters to cast their votes for President John Mahama and all NDC parliamentary candidates.



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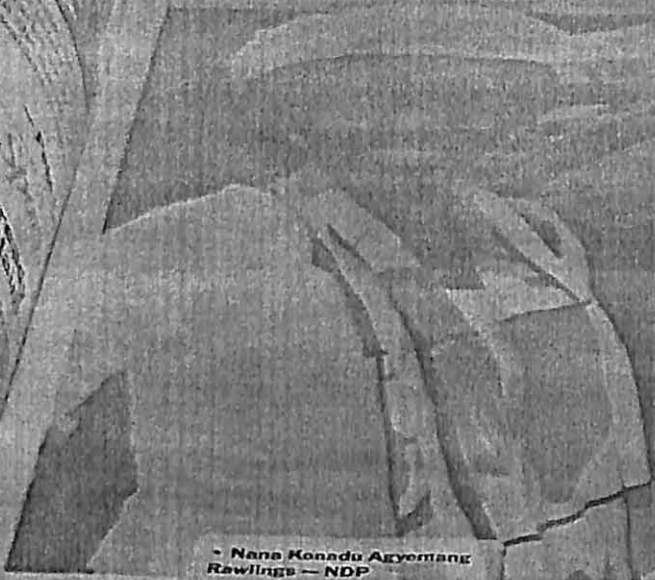
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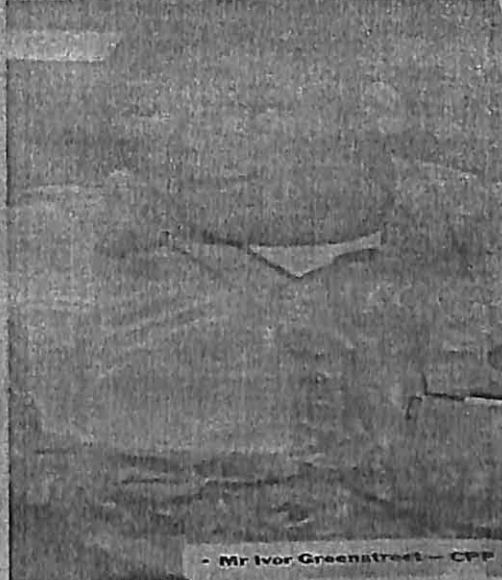
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- Nana Konadu Agyemang Rawlings - NDP



- Mr Ivor Greenstreet - CPP

# Prez Mahama vs Akufo-Addo Who is who? • Too close to call at press time

**A**t the time of going to press yesterday, the results of the presidential and parliamentary elections were still being sent to the collation centres with no clear picture emerging.

The race appeared to be a keen contest between President John Dramani Mahama of the governing National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the opposition New Patriotic

Party (NPP) candidate, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo. Sources close to both parties were still upbeat of carrying the day.

In line with the caution by the Electoral Commission (EC) and the National Media Commission (NMC) that the media should not be declaring the results of the elections until they are certified by the EC, the *Daily Graphic* was not in the position of indicating the direction of the

**Continued on page 20**



**Adohyeman Savh**

THE John Mahama Campaign has called on voters for the orderly manner votes.

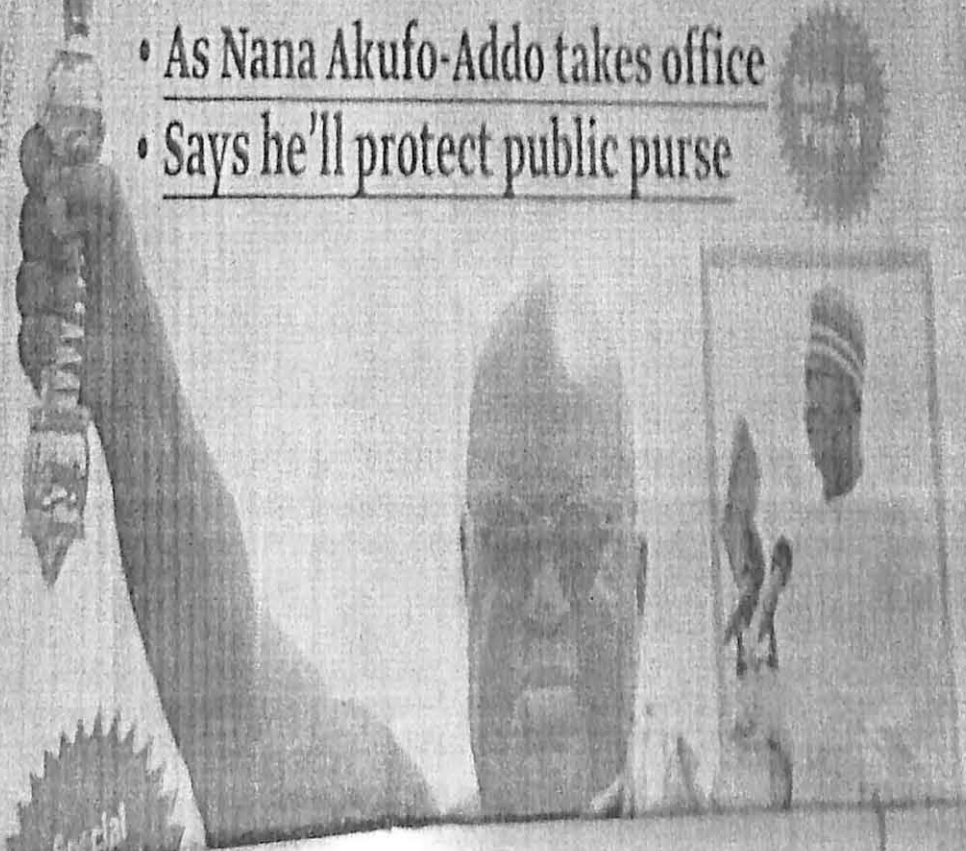
# Daily Graphic

Presidential inauguration...

## Momentous!

- As Nana Akufo-Addo takes office
- Says he'll protect public purse

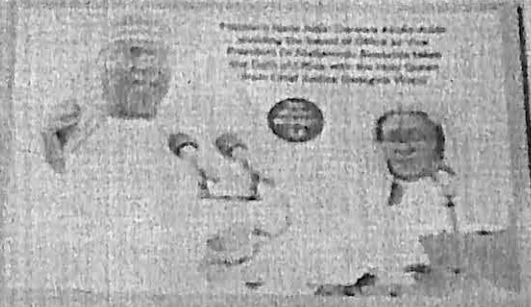
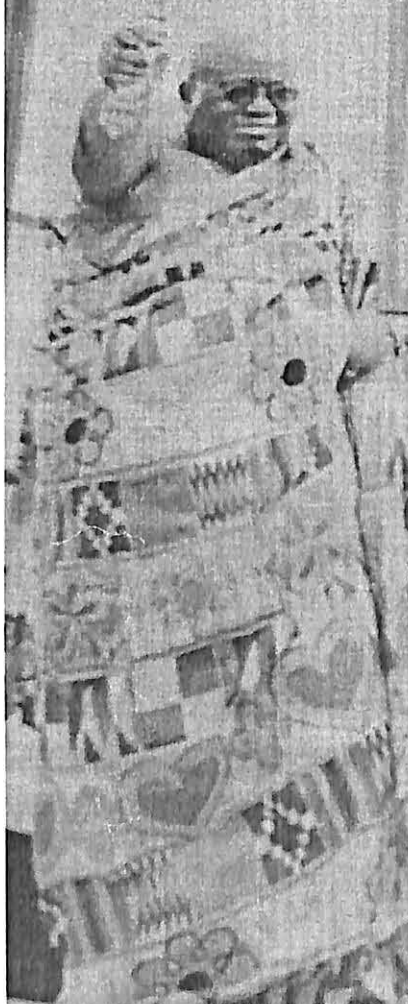
COMPLIMENTARY  
AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT



# Daily Guide

Monday, July 6, 2014 | Issue 626/17

www.dailyguidetv.com | Ghana's Favorite Newspaper | Price GH¢2.50



President Nana Akufo-Addo (center) is sworn in as the 5th President of Ghana during his inauguration ceremony at the State House in Accra, Ghana, on Monday, July 6, 2014. He is surrounded by other officials and family members.

## NANA TAKES OVER

As 5th President

All Hail President  
Akufu-Addo

# EC boss declares Akufo-Addo as Prez-elect

By Severious Kale-Dery & Mursah Jafaru, ELECTIONAL COMMISSION

**A**FTER long hours of keeping Ghanaists on tenterhooks regarding the outcome of the 2016 general election, the Chief Electoral Commission (EC), Mrs Charlotte Osei, last night declared Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo the presidential candidate of the New Patriotic Party (NPP), winner of the 2016 presidential election.

Nana Akufo-Addo secured 5,716,609 votes, representing 51.84 per cent, to snatch the presidency from the incumbent, President John Dramani Mahama, who secured 4,713,277 votes, representing 41.40 per cent in the general election held last Wednesday.

The results excluded those of Kwahu Afram Plains North which were outstanding, as well as those of Upper West Akyem, Sawa-Tuma-Yalbu and Tama Central which were being contested.

At a press conference to announce the results to Mrs A. Mahama, flanked by 10 other members of the EC, and the chief of the legal department, she said that 100,270,438 and 100,270,438 votes were counted in the final election of the polls.

Therefore, by the powers entrusted to her by the 1992 Constitution of Ghana, the Chairperson declared Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo the President-elect of the Republic of Ghana.

She said the commission had kept its promise to let Ghanaians know the winner of the election within 72 hours.

### Other results

Apart from the election results of President Mahama and Nana Akufo-Addo, the EC said Mr Ibrahim Gbewaa of the Convention People's Party (CPP), got 25,393 votes, representing 0.24 per cent; Dr Fapo Kwesi Nduom of the Progressive People's Party (PPP), won 105,642, representing 1.0 per cent, while Nana Kennedy Agyeman Rawlings obtained 15,673, constituting 0.16 per cent.

In the case of Dr Edward Mahama of the People's National Convention (PNC), he had 22,214 votes, constituting 0.21 per cent.

She said the commission had kept its promise to let Ghanaians know the winner of the election within 72 hours.

At a press conference to announce the results to Mrs A. Mahama, flanked by 10 other members of the EC, and the chief of the legal department, she said that 100,270,438 and 100,270,438 votes were counted in the final election of the polls.

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Adeshyan Savings & Loans

The Chairperson of the Electoral Commission, Mrs Charlotte Osei, last night declared Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo the presidential candidate of the New Patriotic Party (NPP), winner of the 2016 presidential election.

Even before Mrs Osei, who is the acting officer for the presidential election, could finish talking to the various political party representatives who were awaiting the official results, she had already been interrupted by jubilant supporters of the NPP on the commission's premises.

### The collation centre drama

Even before Mrs Osei, who is the acting officer for the presidential election, could finish talking to the various political party representatives who were awaiting the official results, she had already been interrupted by jubilant supporters of the NPP on the commission's premises.

But it was one of the NPP representatives in the National Collation Centre, Mr John Akrash, who broke the news when he said: "The President of the Republic of Ghana, Mr John Dramani Mahama, has done the best possible thing. He has called Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo to congratulate him."

Until that time, there was a security and seeming tension in the National Collation Centre and within the EC premises with a heavy presence of security in the premises of the EC.

### The end of the John era

The election of Nana Addo-Addo ends the era when Ghanaian leaders elected from 1946 to 2012 have all borne John as their first name.

Nana Akufo-Addo clinched the victory after his three attempts at the presidency. He contested the 2008 election against the late President John Evans Atta Mills and in 2012 against President John Dramani, but lost in those elections.

### Jubilations

Deafening cheers and shouts of excitement greeted the declaration of Nana Akufo-Addo as the President-elect.

Speaking to journalists, the National Campaign Manager of the NPP, Mr Peter Mac Manu, described the victory as a "sweet victory", and indicated that the party had worked for it.

He said the results of the EC confirmed the position of the NPP that the party had won the presidential election.

Mr Mac Manu lauded President John Dramani Mahama for conceding defeat which was good for his image and the image of Ghana as a thriving democracy.

The General Secretary of the NDC, Mr

## RAL COMMISSION GHANA



• Mrs Charlotte Osei (middle), EC Chairman, announcing the presidential results at a press conference at the EC headquarters in Accra. Picture: EMMANUEL ASAMOAH ADDAI

# The statistics

# Ghana has done it again, Welcome President-elect Nana Akufo-Addo

# I Won't Let You Down

Single women of color are becoming a visible force in the workplace. They have earned the right to be taken seriously and are now leading the way in many industries.

These women are not just surviving; they are thriving. They are the ones who are leading the way in many industries, from technology to healthcare, from education to business.

They are the ones who are leading the way in many industries, from technology to healthcare, from education to business. They are the ones who are leading the way in many industries, from technology to healthcare, from education to business.

# Transition Team Meets

A transition team met to discuss the future of the organization. The team members discussed various options and strategies for moving forward.

The meeting was held in a conference room and was attended by several key members of the organization. The team discussed the current state of the organization and the challenges it faces.

They also discussed various options for moving forward and the pros and cons of each. The team agreed to continue to work together to find the best solution for the organization.

# GAME OVER

THE LORD'S BATTLE  
 KEE-KIM KEE-KIM  
 KEE-KIM KEE-KIM  
 KEE-KIM  
 A LOT OF  
 A LOT

# Big Guns Shot Down

Several large guns were shot down during the recent conflict. The military forces were successful in neutralizing these threats.

The military forces were successful in neutralizing these threats. The guns were shot down by precision strikes from the air.

The military forces were successful in neutralizing these threats. The guns were shot down by precision strikes from the air.

# Commitment

The commitment to excellence is a key factor in the success of any organization. It is the dedication to doing things right, every time.

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The commitment to excellence is a key factor in the success of any organization. It is the dedication to doing things right, every time.

# Accountability

Accountability is a crucial part of any organization's success. It is the responsibility to take ownership of one's actions and the results they produce.

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Accountability is a crucial part of any organization's success. It is the responsibility to take ownership of one's actions and the results they produce.



# Transition Team Meets

The transition team met to discuss the future of the organization. The team members discussed various options and strategies for moving forward.

The meeting was held in a conference room and was attended by several key members of the organization. The team discussed the current state of the organization and the challenges it faces.

They also discussed various options for moving forward and the pros and cons of each. The team agreed to continue to work together to find the best solution for the organization.

# Big Guns Shot Down

Several large guns were shot down during the recent conflict. The military forces were successful in neutralizing these threats.

The military forces were successful in neutralizing these threats. The guns were shot down by precision strikes from the air.

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It's D-Day

**NANA**

**TO WIN**

**Vote Akufo-Addo**

**NPP Raises Alarm Over Arms Movement**



**GH¢83,000 Voter Bribe Cash Grabbed**



...Nana Akufo-Addo's victory in the 2016 Presidential Election. He is surrounded by supporters who are taking photos and videos of him. (Photo: Reuters)

# Akufo-Addo our next President

## • I'll not let you down, he assures Ghanaians

By Edmund Smith-Asante, ACCRA

**P**RESIDENT-ELECT Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo has given a solemn pledge to be President for all and not let any Ghanaian down in the discharge of his duties.

"I will do all in my power to live up to the hope and expectation of all Ghanaians," he said.

**Quick Read**

**Hyman Savings & Loans**

President-elect Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo has pledged to be President for all Ghanaians including those who did not vote for him during the election.

Delivering his maiden speech after being declared the winner of the 2016 Presidential Election at his Nima residence in Accra yesterday, he said there had never been a more humbling moment in his life and, therefore, thanked the good people of Ghana for their support.

Flanked by his wife Mrs Rebecca Akufo-Addo,

his running mate Allan Dr Mahamudu Bawumia, his campaign chairman Mr Peter Mac Maru, and a host of senior party executives, he said he had received a congratulatory message from the incumbent President and National Democratic Congress (NDC) presidential candidate, Mr John Dramani Mahama.

"At 7:53p.m, the President of the Republic, His Excellency John Dramani Mahama, called me to congratulate and wish me well. I also thanked him for his contribution to the welfare of Ghana. I told him his contribution to Ghana was not yet over," he stated.

He also thanked the President for his graceful gesture and assured him of his cooperation for a successful transition.

"I also received words of congratulation from my competitors. 'I am grateful to them,' he stated.

On how he was declared the winner in the presidential election, Nana Akufo-Addo narrated, "The Chairperson of the Electoral Commission, Mrs Charlotte Osei, has tonight at 8:45p.m. declared me the winner

of the 2016 Presidential Election with 5,718,705 representing 59.9 per cent of valid votes cast and I am grateful."

He thanked God for granting victory to him and the New Patriotic Party (NPP) which he leads.

For those who had given him invaluable advice, including former presidents Kufuor and Rawlings, former UN Secretary General, Mr Kofi Annan, Ghanabon Osei Fosu, the Asantehene, the Chairman of the NPP Council of Elders C. K. Teddie, Captain Koyo Tsikata, General J. B. Danquah among others, he thanked them and expressed the conviction that, "I can count on you for your continuing counsel."

He further thanked the religious leaders, notably the National Chief Imam Sheikh Dr Nuhu Shariq, Rt. Rev. Professor Emmanuel Martey, Pastor Mensa Otabil, Archbishop Duncan-Williams, Apostle Opolo Onyinah, Rev. Owusu Bempah, and Prophet Ebenezer Boakye Nyadom, among a host of others, saying "I am dearly grateful to them all."

He also thanked members of the

party for their unwavering support and commitment to serving the people of Ghana as well as the international Ghanaian diaspora.

He also thanked the Electoral Commission and the Judiciary for their impartiality and integrity in conducting the election.

"The Ghanaian people should be congratulated for electing the Commission to oversee the free and fair election," he asserted.

In the presence of the Vice President, the 2016 election has contributed to the democratic accountability in Ghana, and he was full of praise for the electoral management body.

He also thanked the people of Ghana for helping to organize a peaceful and free election, saying "that is what the Ghanaian people are all about."

While addressing the 100,000 members and supporters of the party, he urged them to continue to work together in moderation and moderation in moderation, and to uphold the values of the NPP which is a law-abiding political party.