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**ASSESSING THE PERCEIVED IMPACT OF U.S EMBASSY'S 'EDWARD
MURROW' EXCHANGE PROGRAM ON GHANAIAN JOURNALISTS.**

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**THIS DISSERTATION IS PRESENTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE
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DECLARATION

I declare that, with the exception of references made to other researchers, this dissertation is an original product of my own efforts under the supervision of Dr. Etse Sikanku.

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DEDICATION

I am thankful to the Almighty God, who granted me life and health to be able to complete this thesis at this point of my life. The paper is dedicated to my dear husband Ebenezer Okyere Asiedu for motivating me throughout the journey of this thesis and my three sons; David, Joseph and Emmanuel for taking good care of the home whilst assignments and lectures took me from home. This paper is above all dedicated to my supervisor and mentor, Dr. Etse Sikanku with whose great guidance and valuable advice I have completed this dissertation.

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the impact of the United States of America's International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP), particularly the Edward Murrow Exchange program on five (5) identified Ghanaian journalists who participated in the exchange program. Using the qualitative method in data collection and analysis, specifically in-depth interviews and content analysis, this study conducted five (5) in-depth interviews with Ghanaian journalists who took part in the exchange program. Grounded within the Social Responsibility Theory, this study explored the perceived impact of Edward Murrow Exchange program on the journalism profession in Ghana.

Diplomacy amongst countries, also known as international relations has been institutionalized by way of establishing institutions within counterpart countries. For instance, the relationship between Ghana is facilitated by the U.S. Embassy in Ghana and the Ghana Embassy in the USA. Findings indicate that all participants noted significantly, the impact of the Edward Murrow Exchange on their professional capabilities as journalist as well as their media organizations in general. This study also realized that there is a strong demand for the duration of the exchange program to be extended beyond the current three (3) weeks.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background to the study

There has been a long standing relationship between the Republic of Ghana and the United States of America. According to Cook (2019) this relationship between Ghana and the United States of America has been in existence since 1957 when Ghana became the foremost sub Saharan African country to gain Independence from colonial rule. Cook (2019) further indicated that the relationship between the duo have been centered on among others, democracy, human rights, rule of law and education. Diplomacy is the skill of dealing effectively with others countries by influencing their socio-economic and political decisions either by treaties, negotiations or any other mechanism without violence (Bakyereyele, 2019).

Relationship amongst countries, technically referred to as diplomacy or international relations, have been institutionalized by way of establishing institutions within counterpart countries. For instance, the relationship between Ghana is facilitated by the U.S. Embassy in Ghana and the Ghana Embassy in the USA. This study examined the capacity building and educational relationship between the Republic of Ghana and the United States of America (USA), particularly exchange programs that have been made available to Ghanaian Journalists by the USA. As indicated early on, the United States Embassy in Ghana is the institution solely mandated to represent all United States of America related matters in Ghana, thus this study was specifically centered on the operations of the US Embassy in Ghana. The Edward Murrow Exchange program was purposely chosen as the exchange program to be examined by this study.

The United States established diplomatic relations with Ghana in 1957, following Ghana's independence from the United Kingdom. In 1961, Ghana hosted the first cohort of Peace Corps Volunteers to serve overseas. The United States and Ghana share a long history of promoting democracy, human rights,

and the rule of law. Ghana has set an example for countries throughout Africa in promoting resilient democratic institutions, transparent and peaceful transitions of power, and regional stability (US Embassy report). Ghana also hosts the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) which is primarily responsible for foreign aid from the United States of America to Ghana. Ghana is again host to the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) regional offices and the USAID-administered West Africa Trade Hub. The West Africa Trade Hub focuses on expanding intra-regional and bilateral trade with countries in the region, a key area of current congressional interest and a pillar of the Obama Administration's U.S. Strategy toward Sub-Saharan Africa, initiated in June 2012.

Additionally, Ghana is one of four initial Partnerships for Growth (PfG) countries which began in 2011 in El Salvador. Partnership for Growth is intended to advance public and private bilateral cooperation with selected countries whose top leaders demonstrate commitment to good governance and sustainable development. Ghana welcomes regular visits by Members of Congress, and in 2009 President Barack Obama signaled that ties remain close by traveling to Ghana, the only sub-Saharan African country he (Obama) visited throughout his eight (8) years of being president of the U.S (Congressional research service, 2013).

1.1 U. S - Ghana relations

According to the US-Embassy report, dated June 2021, Ghana was elected to serve as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for 2022-2023. Ghana and the United States belong to a number of the same international organizations, including the United Nations (UN), International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, as well as the World Trade Organization (WTO). Furthermore, Ghana is an observer to the Organization of American States and has a strong track record of contributing troops to international peacekeeping forces. The goals of U.S in Ghana are to spur economic growth through increased trade and investment, invest in people, promote peace and regional security, and improve accountable governance and strengthen institutions. The U.S. government is the largest bilateral development partner in Ghana.

The United States and Ghana work together on various defense and law enforcement issues. Both countries' military forces cooperate in numerous joint training exercises through U.S. Africa Command. The United States and Ghana have a bilateral International Military Education and Training program, a Foreign Military Financing program, and numerous humanitarian affairs projects, including a relationship between the Government of Ghana and the North Dakota National Guard under the auspices of the U.S. Department of Defense State Partnership Program. Ghana continues to participate in the Global Peacekeeping Operations Initiative, in which the United States facilitates the development of an interoperable peacekeeping capacity among African nations. Ghana is a partner country to the African Peacekeeping Rapid Response Partnership. The Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) goal is to:

- Help build more accountable governance institutions within Ghana that respect human rights, and advance stability, peace, and security.
- Build institutional capacity in the criminal justice sector to curb transnational organized crime including financial crimes, drug trafficking, and human trafficking incidents.
- Combat rising drug abuse. In furtherance of these objectives, INL has supported institutional development across the criminal justice sector (U.S. Department of State).

Through the U.S. International Visitor Leadership Program, Ghanaian officials have become acquainted with U.S. congressional and state legislative practices and have participated in programs designed to address other issues of interest. Youth exchanges and study abroad programs are also robust and growing between U.S. and Ghanaian universities and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO). At the U.S. state level, the State Partnership Program aims to promote greater economic ties between Ghana and U.S. institutions, including the National Guard. The United States enjoys a dynamic people-to-people relationship with Ghana. Ghana participates in more than 25 U.S. funded exchange programs including the flagship Mandela Washington Fellowship (MWF) and hosts one of four Young African Leadership Initiative (YALI)

Regional Leadership Centers that train young leaders in leadership, entrepreneurship, and professional development. Tens of thousands of Ghanaians have been educated in the United States. Numerous partnerships exist between U.S. higher education and scientific institutions, and cultural links are strong, particularly between Ghanaians and African Americans.

U.S. Assistance to Ghana

U.S. development assistance to Ghana is implemented by the U.S Embassy in Ghana, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), just to mention but a few. U.S development assistance to Ghana has supported the country in improving the power sector, increasing food security, enhancing basic health care, increasing access to quality basic education, and strengthening local governance to benefit all Ghanaians. The West Africa Trade and Investment Hub, located in Ghana's capital city, Accra, provides technical assistance to help entrepreneurs grow their businesses and access new customers in the United States and the West African region. The Peace Corps intends to restart its large program in Ghana, with volunteers working in education, agriculture, and health (including HIV/AIDS, malaria, sanitation, and nutrition).

Bilateral Economic Relations

Ghana is taking an increasingly important continent-wide leadership role on bolstering intra-Africa trade after becoming the host of the Secretariat of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) in August 2020 and completing its first shipments under the agreement in January 2021. Once fully implemented, AfCFTA will present tremendous opportunities for U.S. companies operating on the African continent with harmonized rules of origin, reduced technical barriers to trade, and a new trade dispute settlement mechanism.

The U.S - Ghana bilateral economic relationship is focused on bolstering two-way trade and investment while promoting enterprise-driven development, particularly through the increased participation of women and youth, and better development outcomes for Ghana's most vulnerable citizens. The U.S.

Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) continues to implement its \$308 million Ghana Power Compact to transform Ghana's power sector through key infrastructure investments that will provide more reliable electricity to Ghana's businesses and households. The United States remains Ghana's largest bilateral development partner, with U.S. economic assistance focused on enhancing the competitiveness of local firms. As a focus country of the U.S. Feed the Future initiative, the U.S. Government in Ghana is strengthening market systems in Ghana's agricultural sector.

U.S. government agencies, including the U.S. Commercial Service, U.S. Foreign Agricultural Service, and the U.S. Trade and Development Agency are supporting new and stronger commercial partnerships between U.S. exporters and Ghanaian consumers. Bilateral trade between Ghana and the United States totaled \$1.5 billion in 2020, down from \$1.8 billion in 2019 due primarily to a drop in Ghana's oil exports. As a beneficiary of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), Ghana has duty-free access to the U.S. market for over 1,800 products, in addition to the more than 5,000 products that are eligible for duty-free access under the Generalized System of Preferences program. Roughly, one hundred (100) U.S. companies maintain operations in Ghana, including Coca Cola, Twitter, Cargill, Newmont, IBM, Cummins, ExxonMobil, PwC among others. Ghana's relative political stability and security, and its well-educated, English-speaking workforce makes it an attractive hub for doing business in West Africa.

According to the Congressional research service, 2013, Ghana is considered a model for many of the outcomes that many Members of Congress have long sought to achieve in sub-Saharan Africa in the areas of authorizations; appropriations, program guidance and oversight. Ghana has received a large U.S. Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) Compact and may soon receive a second It is also a recipient of substantial U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and State Department bilateral aid, much of which is channeled through three presidential development initiatives namely;

- The Global Climate Change (GCC) initiative.
- Feed the Future (FtF), a global food security and poverty reduction initiative.
- The President's Malaria Initiative (PMI) and the Global Health Initiative (GHI).

1.2 Diplomacy and bilateral relations

Diplomacy is the skill of dealing effectively with others countries by influencing their socio-economic and political decisions either by treaties, negotiations or any other mechanism without violence (Bakyereyele, 2019). In most recent research works conducted in the field of diplomacy and bilateral relations, natural resources are key influencers of these relations. In the field of oil and gas exploration for instance, Silverstein (2002) noted that specific kind of resources are of relevance and importance for exercising structural power while others are not and that oil and gas is one of the resources that forms a basis for structural power, hence, any country that possesses it attracts global attention. He notes that the strategic place of oil and gas makes global superpowers such Europe-American countries, China and Japan to compete for diplomatic alliance with any country that discovers it especially, African countries.

This diplomatic rivalry normally takes various forms. Kirkland (2004) notes that China and Japan oil diplomacy takes different approaches from others, mostly Euro-American oil interests in Africa. China and Japan do not rely on private, commercial interests to access energy resources, instead making use of state-owned enterprises to procure oil and oil products. They court oil-producing states by offering attractive financial terms for oil projects, extending soft loans, providing development initiatives, technical expertise and economic clout to (re)build energy infrastructure as part of their overall diplomatic bargaining strategies. According to Pakenham (2003), the Japanese government supports overseas oil ventures by fronting risk money and offering loans on favorable terms for exploration and production projects, reducing the costs to Japanese companies, thereby making it possible for them to submit lower bids than companies from countries that do not provide these subsidies.

The Japanese government also offers risk insurance, targeting development aid to oil producers. In Central Asia, Japan launched the Silk Road Energy Mission to Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, and Turkmenistan in 2002 and has intensified bilateral relations with the region through loans and development aids. Moreover, Bakyereyele (2019) asserts that China has provided military assistance and development aid to oil exporters, most recently through its \$5 billion China-Africa Development Fund. China has tried to avoid tensions with the United States by avoiding oil-producing regions with a strong U.S. corporate, diplomatic, or military presence. China also avoids countries where American citizens are more concentrated. Because of that, the U.S will always attempt to increase U.S participation in any country that has oil in order to prevent China from making inroads in those countries (Rutledge, 2006). Kraxberger (2005) argues Euro-American diplomatic strategies follows a very subtle path. For instance, he indicates that the interests in oil and other strategic materials, such as manganese, cobalt and chrome motivated the Bush administration to engage in a series of military, economic and diplomatic activities. Diplomatically, President Bush's administration orchestrated a series of shuttle diplomatic activities with visits of high-rank officials to the African oil-producing countries. For instance, in September 2002, Secretary of State, Colin Powell visited South Africa, Angola and Gabon. Two months earlier, Carlton Fulford, deputy commander of EUCOM, paid a visit to Sao Tome and Principe to discuss the safety of oil workers in the Gulf of Guinea and reported the possibility of establishing a US military base similar to the one in South Korea.

In the same year, President Bush hosted heads of state of 10 African oil-producing countries, including Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Chad, Congo and Sao Tome and Principe, for a breakfast gathering to secure their promises to back the U.S campaign against terrorism and protect American oil interest in their countries. In July 2003, President Bush visited five African countries; Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda, Senegal and Botswana. In the next three years, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld also visited Africa where they promised African countries that the

U.S would help them with weapons supplies, military training and other kind of joint activities.

American oil companies benefit from these frequent official exchanges in their expansion of oil production in Africa. For instance, a tiny country, Equatorial Guinea, which used to be a laughing stock in the U.S suddenly drew U.S attention and investments when oil was discovered there in commercial quantities. Moreover, a small country like Sao Tome and Principe drew the attention of the U.S when there was an attempted coup (Kraxberger, 2005, 32). Countries like to court their diplomatic relation through their oil for development programs and the provisions regulatory and institutional support for governments to help them govern the oil and gas sectors, especially, African countries. All these diplomatic strategies are means of getting access to cheap sources of oil and outcompeting their competitors.

1.3 Edward Murrow Exchange Program

Launched in the year 1949, the Edward Murrow Press Fellowship seeks to promote quality in responsible and discerning journalism that exemplifies the work of Edward R. Murrow, a prominent American broadcast journalist. This exchange program is one of the mobility learning programs of the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) which also happens to be the U.S. Department of State's premier professional exchange program (US State Department). Edward Murrow exchange program aims at enhancing responsible journalism in counterpart countries of which Ghana is no exception.

Studying abroad is an investment in the future aimed at the acquisition of knowledge, skills and experience that are necessary for success. Universities offer various exchange programs for students and staff in summer schools and training with international partner universities and organizations. To promote academic exchange, universities invite students to international academic presentations, assist them in the selection of partner universities and programs, provide scholarships and financial support, give additional foreign language classes, and hold lectures on the history and culture of other countries (Kuimova et al., 2017).

Exchange programs have been entrenched characteristics in U.S. foreign policy over the past 50 years and are given significant funding each year (Epstein, Lawson, & Gill, 2018). Going by 'over past 50 years' indicated by Epsein, et. Al, arguably, Ghanaian journalists have been sent to the United States of America to partake in exchange programs spanning over five decades. The US Embassy in Ghana annually conducts at least, a three-week training program in the United States of America for some select Ghanaian journalists. Exchange programs goes beyond sharing of knowledge to the sharing of cultural beliefs and norms like language, dressing, eating habits as well as lifestyle. This sharing of cultural beliefs and norms during exchange programs is termed as intercultural learning. (Bennett, 2012) defines intercultural learning as the ability of the individual to gain knowledge of the subjective cultural context, including knowledge of one's own culture, and develop skills to interact competently and sensitively across cultures.

Culture and exchange programs are of relative importance and can't be detached from exchange programs. To enhance the debate on the inextricable relationship between cultures and exchange programs, Rapoport (2008) opined that the success of an exchange program depends on the ability of participants to communicate effectively in the language of the hosts. Going by the notion of Rapoport, the Edward Murrow exchange program can be said to be one that has been successful. Successful in the sense that, both Ghanaian journalists and the US based facilitators of the exchange program share a common language which is the English language. Although there are some dissimilarities in American and British English, it is highly possible that Ghanaian journalists who have over the years, participated in the Edward Murrow exchange program, communicated effectively throughout the exchange program.

1.4 Problem statement

Exchange programs have been entrenched ethos in U.S. foreign policy over the past 50 years and are given significant funding each year. (Epstein, Lawson, & Gill, 2018). Going by the 'over past 50 years' indicated by Epsein, et. Al, Ghanaian journalists have been sent to the USA for training spanning over five decades, yet there has been no form of assessment or evaluation after these

exchange programs. This research problem was significantly influenced by (Fluery, Lublinski, Spurk & Schanne, 2010) who posit that, the evaluation of activities and outcomes of exchange programs are very limited if at all existent and that journalists are usually passive and not active participants of exchange programs.

Against the backdrop and paucity in empirical evidence and scholarly work, to either affirm or oppose the notion of perceived passiveness of journalists in exchange programs which is as a result of little or no evaluation, this study will attempt to provide empirical evidence to the perceived impact of exchange programs involving Ghanaian journalists, by examining the perceived impact of the Edward Murrow exchange program on five (5) Ghanaian journalists who are beneficiaries of the program.

In addition to the absence of literature on evaluation of the Edward Murrow exchange program in Ghana, there is also the absence of literature on the entirety of Edward Murrow as an exchange program. Researchers like (Donyina, 2020) have explored exchange programs by the US Embassy including the Fulbright Student Program, Fulbright Scholar Program, International Visitors Leadership Program (IVLP), Youth Exchange and Study Program (YES), Future Leaders Exchange (FLEX) Program, among others but Edward Murrow exchange program. Therefore, this study will attempt to minimize the gap in the evaluation of the perceived impact of Edward Murrow exchange program and literature gap in the available USA exchange programs for Ghanaians.

1.5 Objective of the Study

The objectives of the study include;

1. To examine the perceived impact of Edward Murrow exchange program on five (5) Ghanaian journalists who are beneficiaries of the exchange program.
2. To examine the experiences of the beneficiaries of Edward Murrow exchange program.

1.6 Research questions

The study used the research question below in order to achieve the already identified objectives.

1. What is the perceived impact of Edward Murrow exchange on your profession as a journalist?
2. What are the experiences of being a beneficiary of the Edward Murrow exchange program?

1.7 Significance of the research

This study will serve as a performance audit document on the Edward Murrow exchange program in Ghana as it will be the first of its kind. It will also serve as literature to future research on exchange programs and capacity building of journalists in Ghana. Through diplomacy and international relations, the US Embassy in Ghana has contributed to the development of media in Ghana by training some journalists under the Edward Murrow exchange program for some decades now. To realize the perceived impact of the training, it will be best appropriate to subject journalism in Ghana to examination and evaluation to ensure Ghana is indeed developing in terms of human capital from its diplomatic relationship with the USA. This evaluation will also find out if the U.S. State Department is fulfilling its aim of developing Edward Murrow like Journalists in Ghana. In simple terms, this paper ascertained if the United States of America has succeeded in training responsible journalists in Ghana.

1.8 Limitations of the study

The researcher intended to interview the trainers of the ‘Edward Murrow’ program to get their views on teaching and working with Ghanaian Journalists. This information would ensure a well-balanced analysis of the findings as it would have information from both trainers and trainees. Unfortunately, due to uncertain assurances from the trainers to be available for the interviews, this research did not get gather any data from the US based facilitators. As a result of the absence of data from the facilitators, the findings exhibited a little of bias

as analysis on the training processes were solely based on the perspective of the Ghanaian beneficiaries (journalists).

Furthermore, the US State Department has many exchange programs under the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP). This study was limited only to the Edward Murrow exchange program, hence cannot depict the perceived impact of all exchange programs run by the United States of America. Also, there are many other diplomatic missions that provide exchange programs to Ghana but this study was again limited to exchange programs by the US Embassy in Ghana. Therefore, it is the hope of the researcher that further research can explore exchange programs conducted by other diplomatic missions other than the US. Department of State.

1.10 Outline of the study

This study consists of five main chapters with each chapter comprising of at least three sub chapters. Below is a summary of the chapters that were used for this study.

Chapter 1

This chapter provides an introduction to the study by providing summaries on the key areas related to the study, the rationale for the study as well as the goals and challenges associated with the study. Areas covered in this chapter include exchange programs, diplomatic relations between the Republic of Ghana and the United States of America (USA) and media development in Ghana.

Chapter 2

Titled the Literature review chapter, it basically identifies, acknowledges and reviews already existing scholarly work in areas related to this study. Literature review involved areas like exchange programs, international relations and diplomacy, Ghanaian media and intercultural learning. This chapter further explores the theoretical framework upon which the research is hinged on.

Chapter 3

This chapter provides detail into how data was gathered and analyzed throughout the study. It identifies the methodological approach to data collection and analysis that was adopted by this study and provides justifications for the use of each method.

Chapter 4

At this chapter, the findings of the data gathered are made known and subjected to series of analyses using existing theories and perspectives relevant to the study.

Chapter 5

This chapter basically concludes the study by providing recommendations to the identified phenomenon.

1.11 Conclusion

This chapter provides an introduction to the study by providing summaries on the key areas related to the study, the rationale for the study as well as the goals and challenges associated with the study. Areas covered in this chapter include exchange programs, diplomatic relations between the Republic of Ghana and the United States of America (USA) and media development in Ghana.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviewed available/existing literature relating to the thesis topic. Literature was reviewed from the following sources; articles, journals, reports, books and internet sources as well. The review was conducted on topic such as US-Ghana relations, Diplomacy and bilateral relations and Journalism in Ghana.

2.1 U.S – Ghana Relations

Ghana, a country of over 28 million people on West Africa's Atlantic coast, faces diverse development challenges, but has built a robust democracy notable for consistent peaceful turnovers of executive power since a transition to constitutional democracy in the early 1990s. The country also has made progress towards many of the socioeconomic outcomes that successive U.S. administrations have sought to foster in Africa, and U.S. policymakers have tended to view Ghana as a stable U.S. partner in an often-volatile region. Substantial U.S. bilateral aid has both been premised on and arguably contributed to Ghana's generally positive development trajectory.

Amicable relations between the United States and Ghana, a former British colony, have persisted since 1957, when Ghana became the first colonized sub-Saharan African country to gain independence from colonial rule. In 2008, then President George W. Bush visited Ghana to showcase U.S. aid programs on trade, entrepreneurship, health, education, and Ghana's first Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) compact. In 2009, then President Barack Obama traveled to Ghana to highlight the nation as a democratic model for other African countries. The Trump Administration has signaled support for continued close cooperation, although there has been some recent tension over reported Ghanaian noncooperation with U.S. immigration law enforcement proceedings. The Administration also has proposed sharp cuts in bilateral aid as

part of its overall emphasis on reducing foreign assistance, which could affect relations.

During the Obama Administration, U.S. aid to Ghana was provided primarily under U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) administered global presidential development initiatives. These included Feed the Future (FTF, a global food security effort), the Global Health Initiative (GHI), the Global Climate Change Initiative (GCCCI), and several Africa-specific initiatives: Power Africa, Trade Africa, and the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI). In 2014 Ghana signed a second MCC compact focused on the electrical power sector. Ghana was also selected to join the Obama Administration's African Peacekeeping Rapid Response Partnership (APRRP) and its Security Governance Initiative (SGI), both launched in 2014. Ghana is a key international peacekeeping troop contributor in Africa, and engages in regular joint military training exercises and other security cooperation with the United States.

2.2 Journalism in Ghana

The inception of Journalism as a profession dates back to the days Ghana was then the Gold Coast under the British colonial rule in 1822, particularly the reign Sir Charles McCarthy. The main form of Journalism was the print journalism and the newspaper was known as the Royal Gold Coast Gazette. During this era, journalism in Ghana was mainly practiced by the westerners as they owned the Royal Gold Coast Gazette newspaper. However, there were few Ghanaians who practiced Journalism during the colonial era. They include Kwame Nkrumah who later became the first President of Ghana and J. B. Danquah, an astute Lawyer cum Nationalist and a member of the Big Six (Jones-Quartey, 1974 cited in Bofo, 1988). Fast forward to present day Ghana, Journalism has grown exponentially and is widely referred to as the fourth arm of government. Journalism has transcended beyond legacy/traditional media, that is print, television and radio to include new media such as online news portals and social media. Thanks to modern day technology, listeners and viewers no longer need to wait till evening, to hear the day's news on television and radio nor wait till the next day to read news in the dailies. Thanks to intermediated communication

technology which has been adopted in Journalism, one can access news at all times. The channel for Journalists to inform the public are now numerous for listeners to choose from. Bofo (1988) observed that, a key element of a profession like Journalism is training and inculcation of basic knowledge and skills to facilitate effective performance. For this reason, he suggested that the generally accepted definition of a Journalist should be that of the Ghana Journalists Association (GJA) which reads, "a journalist is someone who, by training and qualification in journalism and job specification collects and disseminates news and information for public consumption; and through which he informs, educates, entertains and motivates people for the benefit of society". Journalists in Ghana belong to a professional association known as the Ghana Journalists Association (GJA). This definition is in consonance with the aim of the 'Edward Murrow' exchange program, which is to train responsible journalists.

Journalism practice in the Ghanaian context has faced difficulties in terms of building capacity and developing resources in the field. A cursory look at the media landscape connotes deep seated challenges spanning the advent of journalism training in Ghana in the 1950's to date. The proliferation of the airwaves, as well as increase in broadcasting licenses and print have come with it, the challenge of uncontrollable and irresponsible behaviors such as sensationalism and fake news. In reviewing the book 'Responsible Journalism and Quest for Professional Standards in Ghana', (Diedong, 2016) opined that, the most strident concern in this Fourth Republic of Ghana's democracy has been about the performance of Ghana's media within the institutional arrangement of the country's governance and social structure. The concern has been rife that the Ghanaian media are not living up to general expectation.

Through exchange programs made through the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP), a select number of distinguished Ghanaian journalists have been to the U.S year on year. Through this 3- week exchange program, many of the Edward Murrow Fellows have changed the dynamics of their media houses and have brought to bear, knowledge acquired. Unfortunately, in the context of

Ghana, no institution or person has measured or assessed the impact the tours have had on participating journalists and on their peers.

Media, precisely journalism all over the world has been regarded as the fourth arm of government as a result of their role as watchdogs to ensure transparency and accountability of nations and states. Just like all the other three arms of government in Ghana namely, the Executive, Legislature and Judiciary, the 1992 Constitution of Ghana also dedicates a full chapter to the Media, that is, Chapter 12 'Freedom and the Independence Of The Media'. This signifies the level of utmost importance of the media in national development, hence there is the need to ensure the success of the media at all costs.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

This research explored the influence of the 'Edward Murrow' program on five (5) journalists in Ghana. The Edward Murrow exchange program seeks to produce responsible journalists, thus the theoretical perspective that best provides a comprehensive and convincing understanding of the perceived impact of the program is the Social Responsibility Theory. The social responsibility theory holds that the press has a right to criticize government and other institutions, but it also has a responsibility to preserve democracy by properly informing the public and by responding to society's needs and interests.

The press does not have the freedom to do as it pleases; it is obligated to respond to society's requirements (Uzuegbunam, 2013). The ability of the media to properly inform and respond to pressing needs of society is the ultimate goal of responsible journalism. This theory will provide understanding of the responsibility of journalists upon their return from the 'Edward Murrow' exchange program since the theory spells out the goals of the press as highlighted by the Commission on Freedom of the Press;

- Provide a truthful, comprehensive and intelligent account of the day's event in a context which gives them meaning.
- Serve as a forum for exchange of comment and criticism
- Project a representative picture of the constituent groups in society

- Be responsible for the presentation and clarification of the goals and values of the society.
- Provide full access to the day's intelligence.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter identified, acknowledged and reviewed already existing scholarly work in areas related to this study. Literature review involved areas such as international relations and diplomacy, Ghanaian media and intercultural learning. This chapter further explored the theoretical framework upon which the research is hinged on.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This section outlines the forms and methods of data collection and analysis the researcher used for the study. Data was collected through in-depth interviews. These interviews were audio recorded on a device, transcribed and subject to content analysis in order to thematically classify the findings. In all, a total number of five (5) phone call interviews were conducted for the study.

3.1 Research design (Qualitative)

According to Kumar et.al (2004:73), a research design is “the detailed blueprint used to direct the implementation of a research towards the understanding of its objectives”. In other words, it is the plan, framework, or the analogy of building a house. This study mainly adopted the qualitative method in data collection and analysis by using the qualitative data collection tool known as in-depth interviews. Almeida (2007) defines qualitative research methodology as an inquiry into non-statistical and numerical information about events or situations, but rather, it is an inquiry into viewpoints of persons that have knowledge and experience of events and situations.

This study seeks to inquire on the perceived impact of Edward Murrow exchange program on media development in Ghana, particularly how the Edward Murrow exchange program has impacted the journalistic works of five Ghanaian journalists who are beneficiaries of the exchange program. The most appropriate way to make the aforementioned inquiry is by getting viewpoints not numbers and thus the justification for the use of qualitative data collection tools.

3.2 Population and Sampling

Population is the total number of all the individuals who have certain characteristics and are of interest to the researcher. According to Polit and Hungler (1999), the study population is the aggregate or totality of all the objects, subjects or members that conform to a set of specifications. Thus, the population for this study consisted of the U.S Embassy in Ghana who run the Edward Murrow Exchange program as well as Ghanaian journalists who are beneficiaries of the exchange program under study.

Sample size is an integral part of a practical study with an objective of drawing samples from a given larger population. There are several approaches to estimating a sample size among which include; using a census for small populations, imitating a sample size of similar studies, using published tables, and applying formulas to calculate a sample size (Israel, 1992). To determine the sample for the study, the researcher adopted the non-probability sampling technique, referred to as purposive sampling technique.

Purposive sampling is used when the researcher identifies respondents based on purpose. This simply means that the researcher identifies those who can speak on authority and experience due to their status relative to the study (Lewis & Sheppard 2006). This study is about an exchange program by the U.S Embassy in Ghana for journalists in Ghana. For this reason, purposive sampling was used to select 5 participants who are beneficiaries of the exchange program. In the researcher's view, the selected 5 participants purposely fit into the focus of the study, hence the rationale for their selection.

3.3 Sources of Data

Data for this study was obtained mainly from primary sources with supporting secondary sources. Primary data refers to data that was either not available or not significantly available in literature prior to this current study. The opinions expressed in the separate phone call interviews with the participants formed the primary data for this study. Secondary data refers to data that this study sought from already existing sources such as journals, websites like the U.S. Department of State, online libraries and other such engines like Google scholar. The

purpose of both secondary and primary data was to provide a comprehensive background to achieving the objectives of the study.

3.4 Data collection instruments (interview guide)

Data collection instruments refers to tools that were used by the researcher in gathering data from the various sources. Data for this study was collected through in-depth interviews and online search engines. Data from online sources such as journals and articles was used together with opinions gathered from the interview with five (5) participants. In all, five (5) semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted through phone calls.

3.6 In-depth interviews

This research relied on the use of in-depth interviews to obtain information regarding the impact of the Edward Murrow Exchange program. In-depth interview is a qualitative tool used for data collection that seeks to explore and gain opinions of groups and individuals on a particular situation (Creswell, 2017). Furthermore, Strand (2012) argued that in-depth interviews can be the most suitable qualitative approach to data collection when dealing with situations that involve a professional society and thus in-depth interviews as relied on in this study is in consonance with the notion indicated above. Enhancing the argument for the use of in-depth interviews in qualitative data methodology is Chang and Ren (2016) who posit that for a researcher to successfully examine characteristics of human society, in-depth interviews is recommended.

Moreover, May (1997) indicated that in-depth interviews presents participants an opportunity to provide opinions and viewpoints based on their experiences regarding the phenomenon in question hence, this study's use of in-depth interviews as the qualitative approach to data collection is again appropriate since the views derived from the participants are based on their experiences from participating in the Edward Murrow Exchange program. Lastly, the justification for the use of in-depth interviews for qualitative data collection in this study was derived from Rubin and Rubin (1995) who argued that for data

collection to be effective and useful, it ought to take the form of a natural conversation which will build the ability to freely express oneself.

According to Bariball and While (1994) using semi-structured interviews provides the researcher the opportunity to ask follow-up questions to get better clarification on opinions of the participants. Also, using semi-structured interviews as a qualitative approach to data collection gives the participants flexibility by leaving rooms for further probing (May, 1997). In addition, Anipah (2017) is of the view that using semi-structured interviews in gathering qualitative data gives the participants the opportunity to freely narrate their opinions and experiences without restrictions and limitations from the researcher. Therefore, this research used the semi-structured interview in all interview sessions with the participants in order to further probe on answers provided by the participants.

This research also considered the issue of high cost and time consuming nature associated with the use of in-depth interviews as highlighted in Showkat and Parveen (2017). To minimize cost and time, this research limited the number of participants to 5 and also leveraged on technology by conducting the interviews on phone.

3.7 Data Analysis

To successfully analyze data for this study, the interviews were recorded using an audio recorder and saved according to the names and dates of interview and later transcribed. The transcripts of the in-depth interviews were carefully scrutinized and subjected to qualitative content analysis to understand the perceived impact of U.S Embassy's 'Edward Murrow' Exchange program on Ghanaian journalists.

3.8 Qualitative content analysis

The transcripts of the interview sessions with participants were analyzed using qualitative content analysis. This form of data analysis is widely used in qualitative research. Qualitative content analysis refers to the subjective act of interpreting meaning from the content of text through a systematic process

(Shannon & Hsieh 2005). Moreover, Downe-Wamboldt (1992) have argued that for a researcher to thoroughly grasp a situation or phenomenon under study, qualitative content analysis is mostly preferred to other forms of data analysis and thus the justification for the use of qualitative content analysis in this study

Thematic analysis was again used in analyzing the information gathered from the in-depth interviews. The interview sessions were recorded, transcribed and subjected to thematic analysis in order to examine the perceived impact of the Edward Murrow Exchange program on the journalism profession in Ghana. Thematic analysis includes identifying and interpreting the meanings of textual content into themes. Thematic analysis best applies to information derived from interviews (Kondracki & Wellman, 2002).

3.9 Ethical considerations

Before the researcher conducted all interviews with the participants, the researcher fully disclosed the purpose of the data collection to all participants in order to uphold the principle of transparency and honest in conducting research. Also, all participants were given an option to either accept or decline the interview. This was to ensure the right to association and speech was respected. Throughout the interviews, no participant was compelled to be a part of the process or forced to answer any question posed by the researcher.

3.10 Conclusion

This chapter provides details on how qualitative data was gathered and analyzed for the study. It describes how opinions from the three (3) Edward Murrow trained journalists and one (1) staff of the U.S Embassy in Ghana were gathered and analyzed.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

This section focuses on the analysis derived from the transcripts of the interview sessions in which participants presented from their perspective, experiences as well as the impact of the Edward Murrow exchange program. For the purpose of anonymity, when citing quotes of the participants, this research intends to refer to the participants as the following: **P1** (1st participant), **P2** (2nd participant), **P3** (3rd participant), **P4** (4th participant) and **P5** (5th participant). The themes that emerged from the qualitative content analyses of the findings include: Professional network, journalistic prowess, international media exposure, knowledge sharing, recommendations and tensed nature of program.

4.1 Qualitative analysis of findings

4.1.1 Professional network

Throughout all interview sessions with the participants, in providing evidence to the perceived impact of the Edward Murrow exchange program on their various journalistic professions, the formation and benefits of professional network(s) established from their stay in the USA was overwhelmingly realized. Participants indicated that they came into contact with journalists from all over the world including Brazil, Nigeria and Ethiopia among others and that these networks have been leveraged upon relative to the improvement of their roles in their respective media organizations. For instance as a result of these networks, P5 (November 05, 2021) noted that 'I have become the go to person in my media organization. They'll come to me and I just place a call to any of my networks, depending on which country they're looking at'. This assertion suggests that the exchange program has contributed in broadening the scope of the media organization in searching for international information to broadcast. The following remarks are examples of instances in which the beneficiaries of the Edward Murrow exchange program relied on their professional networks established from their three (3) weeks stay in the USA:

‘My colleague that I met is like my news correspondents in Nigeria. Anytime any issue happens in Nigeria, I call him live on the radio. Also the last time Zimbabwe had a change of government, there was a journalist I called for details. The Ugandan journalists, I’m always interviewing her on my show and it’s been a wonderful resource’ (P2, November 06, 2021).

My contact in Nigeria easily shared the Minister for Communications’ contact with us and that of his personal assistant when Nigeria did the whole Twitter suspension and we interviewed him (P5, November 05, 2021).

I spoke with one of them from Mozambique, Charles Maputo, who was given us a reportage as to what was happening in Mozambique some time back. So that network has really helped me (P1, November 06, 2021).

One of the journalists in India shared with us the COVID-19 updates in India and the reports and she even gave me articles of how the cases were surging (P3, November 06, 2021).

It was very impactful. I mean, for me, I’m still benefiting from it. I mean my contacts who are in Nigeria, India, and Russia. I rely on them for news when the need arises (P4, November, 05, 2021).

The aforementioned statements by some participants confirm that the beneficiaries have considerably contributed to increasing the scope with which their media organization operates as their media organizations, arguably did not have such networks prior to them being beneficiaries of the exchange program. These networks established transcend the continent of Africa as has been indicated by the participants.

4.1.2 Journalistic prowess

Participants also highlighted the areas in which the Edward Murrow exchange program has contributed to their journalistic profession. When the researcher

quizzed participants on their journalistic prowess before and after the exchange program, the views expressed suggested that their careers have been enhanced in various ways. For instance, P5 (November 05, 2021) indicated how they were taken through lessons on Investigative Journalism, particularly the theoretical aspects of investigative journalism and how to avoid things like defamation when writing stories. Additionally, P4 (November 05, 2021) stated that ‘... the program added a lot more to my output and how I would go about my work. For example, I became more sensitive to fake news and misinformation, because of some of the things we were exposed to’. Furthermore, P1 (November 06, 2021) stated that being a beneficiary of this exchange program gives him leverage over others anytime he submits his resume for consideration for other roles.

Other views concerning how their profession have been enhanced include:

‘There was a video of how Edward Murrow was reporting and that one actually gave me a lot of confidence to enter areas that I could not enter including the places labeled as security zones, depending on your conduct, to get information for public consumption’ (P3, November 06, 2021).

‘I would say I have improved prior to going on that fellowship. Misinformation wasn't really a big deal for me but when I went, I came face to face with how people can create fake news and spread it and for me returning from that place, I have learned a lot about how to be extra careful about the spread of misinformation’ (P2, November 06, 2021).

I got to know much more than I knew before I went, and it has expanded my horizon and territories for me and that, for me, is a great positive that I can never underestimate (P1, November 06, 2021).

‘Through the new media lessons, I've been able to move some of my stories onto the digital platform. So not just for TV and radio, but also online stories. I've been able to share some of my stories on social media, specifically, Instagram and on YouTube as well’ (P5, November 05, 2021)

The professional knowledge and experienced gained further resulted in contributing to the leadership traits of these journalists. This was narrated by P1 (November 06, 2021) who attained a higher role in his organization upon his return from the fellowship. In the words of P1 (November 06, 2021),

I used to be a middle level staff at my organization and after the program, I was given bigger responsibilities beyond our news desk. My employers saw potentials in me as being a leader, hence tasked me with new responsibilities to coordinate partnerships between CSOs/NGOs and our radio station’.

This notion of leadership accruing from being a beneficiary of the exchange program was further evidenced when P3 (November 06, 2021) stated that,

‘...we learned a lot on how to conduct yourself to become a good leader and it was after I came back that I became the Northern Regional Chairman of the Ghana Journalists Association for two consecutive terms. Currently, I'm contesting for a national executive position within the Ghana Journalists Association and this is somebody coming from the Northern region. This has never happened in the history of the GJA. The exchange program gave me the courage to contest for such positions’.

4.1.3 International Media Exposure

The beneficiaries visited notable media organization in the USA during their exchange program to have a feel and understanding on how their counterparts in the USA operate. Beneficiaries indicated that they had access to international media organizations. These narrations were given by respondents;

We were engaged by journalists who do investigative pieces when we went to for the training at the Hill, Washington Post and other news outlets and TV outlets. It was it was very good to see how they also go about to their news. (P5, November 05, 2021).

We went to the Poynter Institute for Media Studies that is in Florida where we learnt about fact checking, investigative journalism and

research. We also went to the Tampa Bay Times, which is owned by the Poynter Institute and met some very award winning journalists (P4, November 05, 2021).

The visit to the Poynter Institute in Florida was awesome. I loved everything that was taught us there. It was practical journalism at play (P2, November 05, 2021).

I visited a bigger media house at and smaller one in the community in Mississippi then a bigger media organization in New York. I visited ABC news to understand how they operate (P1, November 06, 2021).

This media exposure was not limited to news outlets but journalism schools and the history of journalism. Participants narrated their visits to journalism schools and the Newseum. The impact of being exposed to the history of journalism was highlighted by P2 (November 06, 2021).

‘I saw for the first time those who died for the profession that I'm practicing today. Journalism is just like the fight against colonialism, people really struggled to get us here... and looking at their photos and their stories on all those effigies in the newseum. I felt encouraged and empowered, and I felt that some have done more and I also can do more so it challenged me to do better’ (P2, November 06, 2021).

The visit to the newseum gave me a newer perspective about Journalism having read about the first amendment and how the American press system operates and relating it that what we do back home (P1, November 06, 2021).

4.1.4 Knowledge sharing

Upon their return from the fellowship, participants discussed how they shared the knowledge gained from the fellowship with their various colleagues in the newsrooms. This was revealed throughout all interview sessions. P5 (November 05, 2021) indicated that her news editor gave her the opportunity to share her experience and knowledge gathered from the program with the members of their

newsrooms which she gladly did. Other responses concerning the sharing of knowledge with colleagues include:

I have been able to do two sessions. One was on misinformation, fake news and fact checking. I got to share some fact-checking tools that we were exposed to at the Poynter Institute in Florida, with our programs and news department (P4, November 05, 2021).

...when I have the opportunity to address journalist at such a function organized by the Ghana Journalists Association, I remind them about professional ethics and it was also based on what I learned from that particular program (P3, November 06, 2021).

When I returned, I organized a session especially for my newsroom, members of my newsroom and I broke down the American system to them. In the 2020 election, I was even guiding a lot of people about how the elections are conducted in the USA, how the Electoral College looks and so on (P2, November 06, 2021).

The above assertions clearly suggest that the impact was ultimately felt in the newsroom and was not only limited to the beneficiaries.

4.1.5 Recommendation

The findings further provided evidences to the effect that all journalists in Ghana should grab the Edward Murrow exchange program anytime it is available in order to equally benefit immensely just as they have benefited. When asked on whether they would recommend the Edward Murrow exchange program to colleagues journalists, P1 (November 06, 2021) opined that 'I think it is a distinct program especially for us as journalists and all journalists have to chase such opportunities because it is good for your career development'. Other responses include;

It is very important that you also go out to see how stories are being told in other countries. How advanced some of these countries are, what media freedom is like in some of these countries, and then when you

come back how best you can improve your storytelling. (P5, November 05, 2021).

I would more than encourage I mean, it's a learning experience to be in the same place with 40 plus or 50 journalists from across the world, learning from their individual countries and all of us coming together to learn from the US system. I think that's a priceless opportunity that everybody should get if they can (P2, November 05, 2021).

4.1.6 Tensed nature of program

Some participants believed that the Edward Murrow exchange program was quite tensed considering the numerous number of activities to be performed vis-a-vis what they described as limited duration. However they opine that this tense nature did not downplay the impact of the exchange program. According to P1 (November 06, 2021), 'I wouldn't call it negative was a packed program not one that you think you are going on a jolly ride. Waking up in the morning and running into a bus. It was so much pressure and it was worth it'. Also P4 (November 05, 2021) reiterated the tense nature of the program by stating that 'I think in terms of the duration, maybe they will be able to extend it a bit, maybe by a week more people feel a bit relaxed. We realized, yeah, it was quite packed'.

4.2 Conclusion

This chapter described the themes that emerged from the qualitative content analysis conducted on the transcripts of the interview sessions held with the various participants.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This section of the study provides a summary of the findings derived from the in-depth interviews. It also includes the conclusion of the study as well as recommendations for the study

5.1 Summary of Findings

The study examined the impact of Edward Murrow exchange program on five (5) Ghanaian journalists through in-depth interviews. Findings revealed that the exchange program was impactful in various ways including professional network, journalistic prowess, international media exposure and knowledge sharing among others. However, it was realized that despite the significant impact of the exchange program, the program was associated with limited duration, hence it was described as tenses by some respondents. Moreover, the exposure to international media included the visits to the Newseum where the beneficiaries gained deeper insight of the American media history. This buttresses the argument indicated in Bennett (2012) that intercultural learning is an intrinsic component of exchange programs.

5.2 Conclusion

This study examined the perceived impact of the Edward Murrow exchange program on Ghanaian journalists. In doing so, the study relied on the qualitative approach to data collection and analysis by conducting in-depth phone call interviews with five (5) Ghanaian journalists who were beneficiaries of the exchange program. These interviews were recorded with the permission of participants and later on transcribed for purposes of data analysis. The narratives from these interviews served as the primary source of data for this study. These transcripts were analyzed using qualitative content analysis.

Furthermore, this data relied on secondary data to get a comprehensive understanding of the study. Secondary data included journals, publications, books and conferences which were obtained using Google search engine. The secondary data used for the study ranged from fields including but not limited to diplomacy and international relations, US-Ghana relationship, exchange programs and journalism in Ghana. These identified secondary data were reviewed by the researcher in the literature review section.

In conclusion, the beneficiaries of the exchange program provided enormous evidence to the effect that the exchange program was of immense benefit to them and their media organizations and thus all journalists should wish to be part of such exchange programs in order to develop their journalistic careers just as they have done.

5.3 Recommendation

Based on the findings of this study, this study recommends that either the duration or activities of the Edward Murrow exchange program be critically relooked at to reduce the tense nature of the program. Also, beneficiaries of the exchange program should, if possible, should extend their knowledge sharing activities beyond their various newsrooms to include other journalists.

Lastly, the researcher recommends that further studies by researchers and the US-State Department be conducted on the alumni of the various exchange programs in order to provide empirical evidence to the impact of exchange programs.

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Appendices

Interview Guide for Participants

1. Which year did you go on this exchange program and what was the title of the tour
2. How would you describe your professional output before and after the Edward Murrow Exchange program?
3. In what ways have the Edward Murrow Exchange program contributed to your work as a journalist?
4. What is your opinion on the curricula of the Edward Murrow Exchange program?
5. How accommodating was the US environment to you throughout the Edward Murrow Exchange program?
6. How has the training from the Edward Murrow Exchange program affected your media organization?
7. Any trainings you have organized for your colleagues since you came back?
8. Would you encourage more of your colleagues to benefit from the Edward Murrow Exchange program? Kindly justify if Yes/No
9. What were the highlights of the program and how did that influence your career (positively or negatively)
10. Would you say the Edward Murrow Exchange program is impactful? Kindly justify if Yes/No

Transcripts of Interviews

Interview 1

Interviewer: So which did you go on the exchange and what was the title of the tour?

Respondent: It was in 2008 Edward R. Murrow Program for Journalists.

Interviewer: Did you specialize in any area?

Respondent: No

Interviewer: okay. How would you describe your professional output before and after the exchange program?

Respondent: I used to be a middle level at my organization and after the program, I was given bigger responsibilities. Somewhat, I was a middle level staff playing roles as a reporter and also filling in for my superiors, however after the program and with my news experiences; I was given bigger responsibilities beyond our news desk. My employers saw potentials in me as being a leader, hence tasked me with new responsibilities to coordinate partnerships between CSOs/NGOs and our radio station.

Interviewer: In what ways has the program contributed to your work as a journalist?

Respondent: I think it gave me a newer perspective about Journalism having read about the first amendment, and how the American press system operates and relating it that what we do back home, and we can do better and as a result of that exchange program we've been able to incorporate some of those learnings into our ways of doing things. The program also ignited my leadership skills in terms of critical thinking, taking decisions, team works among others – when to act, when to delegate or assign tasks, how to communicate my ideas effectively and also how to deal with feedback.

Interviewer: So what is your opinion on the exchange program? Is it a good thing?

I think it is a distinct program especially for us as journalists, is one platform where we meet other colleagues from different background different countries, where we say ideas and this cross fertilization of ideas as I see the Murrow program as we have in the voice already seen how, with our new learning, new experiences, new ideas that we take from others, we can improve things back home and for me, it's very unique. I have had other fellowships but for me this one is unique I must say.

Interviewer: Were you given any information as to who Edward Morrow was because I know that he was a journalist?

Respondent: He was a journalist, and I think he had a powerful voice as in standing up against authority without fear. He was one that always wanted to be on the side even if it means losing friends he will not compromise. He will still do what is right

Interviewer: How accommodating was the US environment to you throughout the exchange? Was there any cultural shock like us to food and stuff?

Respondent: It was very receptive like we felt welcomed into homes even you walk into programs and their environment was very warm but there were few cultural shocks like having heard about these Indians that have lived in some part of American society. We had to go to the environment and see their ways of doing things. This was the first time of seeing that but through that program I saw a lot.

Interviewer: Did you visit any media houses?

Yes, I visited a bigger Media House at and smaller one in the community in Mississippi then a bigger media organization in New York. So the experience is like seeing how the bigger environments and how they work and operate. In Mississippi it was a smaller community radio.

Interviewer: Do you remember the names?

Respondent: The New York one I remember is ABC, if I got the name right. I have documents on that but the time was limited yesterday so I couldn't go through.

Interviewer: If you if you get the name you can just text it to me. So your visitor like to media houses.

Respondent: Yes and some journalism schools too in Missisipi

Interviewer: How many states did you visit?

Respondent: The program covered four states. I started in Washington, Nevada, Mississippi and we ended up in New York.

Interviewer: In Washington, did you have the chance of visiting the Newseum?

Respondent: Yes I was at the Newseum

Interviewer: I see what was your impression about the Newseum?

Respondent: One thing that I came and told colleagues about was the need to archive whatever we do. We need to document whatever because at the Newseum you will see all those that they at that point in time the US News collected since...and is serving them a very good purpose.

Interviewer: How has the program affected your media organization itself? Have you had the chance of retraining some of your people in the office?

Respondent: Yeah when I came back there was this debriefing session that we had. Its always been a part of my tours I will need to tell the house the new things I learned and can share with others. There were some resource materials that were given which I shared with my colleagues too.

Interviewer: Would you encourage your colleagues to be out on the lookout for such programs?

Respondent: It is something that I tell them all the time. We have to chase those opportunities because it is good for your career development. It opens your eyes in other ways so those are things we shouldn't just allowed to go.

Interviewer: What were the highlights of the program?

Respondents: How orderly, well organized and timely programmes/activities are undertaken. These are positives that I carried home with me. The Newseum in Washington had everything newsy about American society stored and documented. It brought me to the point of keeping data, documenting events and not leaving anything to change for future seek. The White House experience. This is the World's most powerful place where decisions are taken; yet, the environment was free and allowing room for some picketing/demonstrations alongside tourists having a field day. By ways of influence I learnt tolerance, openness and calmness in going about things while still keeping an eye on the goal. There were interactive sessions with top US Government officials on US- Africa relations where open and frank discussions were held with those of us participating in the exchange program. Though packed, yet the program had made room for sightseeing and trips for us to refresh ourselves. This influenced me in a manner that sometimes in the business with things, a break is necessary.

Interviewer: Any negatives?

Respondent: I wouldn't call it negative was a packed program not one that you think you are going on a jolly ride. Waking up in the morning and running into a bus. It was so much pressure and it was worth it.

Interviewer: Would you say this thing was impactful?

Respondent:

Yes, in many ways. In my own career development is helped. When I develop my CV and add the Edward Murrow exchange program, it gives me leverage over others.

Interviewer: I see this has been very insightful. I want to thank you so much this afternoon for your time. And I know you guys are so busy all the time. Thank you so very much.

Respondent: It will hit your inbox.

Interviewer: Right. Thank you. Thank you.

Interview 2

Interviewer: I want to interview you on the Edward Murrow agenda you did. Which year was it?

Respondent: 2018

Interviewer: And that title was what?

Respondent: So it was Edward Murrow IVLP. I think it had to do with misinformation or disinformation or misinformation on something. If I refer to my documents I will get the full title.

Interviewer: Alright I want to get the actual. How would you describe your output before and after the program?

Respondent: I mean the reason for the program was to enrich my knowledge, enhance my knowledge in journalism and issues of disinformation and definitely, I have had to improve and I would say I have improved prior to going on that fellowship. Misinformation wasn't really a big deal for me but when I went and for instance I went to the Poynter Institute in Florida, I mean, I came face to face with how people can create fake news and spread it. And for me returning from that place, I have learned a lot about how to be extra careful about the spread of misinformation. And so yes, I will say I will become better for it.

Interviewer: So it means I have contributed a lot to the work you do as a journalist immensely.

Respondent: Indeed it did, immensely.

Interviewer: In your opinion, the curricula of the Edward Murrow exchange what do you think the curricula and how do you think it should be improved if you had the chance?

Respondent: Okay, so I think it was just one program I went on so I can only speak to that one. We were taking through four states. If the idea was to teach us how American systems work and you're taking us to four states, I think that

time should have been a little longer. We did a total of 21 days. If we did one week in each state, that would have been much helpful. For instance, when we in Louisville we moved to Florida then we had to go to New Mexico. Now, I mean, there are a lot of the places that are rushed. Even in Washington, DC, I feel we were rushed, because we could have gotten to a lot of places interacted with more people. The only time we ever had to interact with a family at an American family was when we went to do the breakout sessions and I felt that we could have done more. For instance when went to New Mexico, which is just like Ghana, we could have done more than that, I think. So maybe expand the duration otherwise reduce the places of visit.

Interviewer: Which places of interests do you recall?

Respondent: The visit to the Poynter Institute in in Florida was awesome. I loved everything that was taught us there. It was practical journalism at play, and that will be my favorite as my highlights.

Interviewer: Did you have the chance to visit the Newseum?

Respondent: Yes, we did. We visited a neuseum in Washington.

Interviewer: What are your impressions of the Newseum?

Respondent: I saw for the first time those who died for the profession that I'm practicing today. Journalism is just like the fight against colonialism and all of that people really struggled to get us here. And looking at their photos and their stories on, on all those effigies in the newseum. I felt encouraged and empowered, and I felt that some have done more and I also can do more so it challenged me to do better.

Interviewer: Did you recall any other media house that you visited, apart from the Newseum and the other places? Did you visit any journalism school or a media house?

Respondent: We visited about 2 or 3 media houses in Louisville Kentucky then we visited a school where we interacted with students but they are not journalism students necessarily. They are like high school students that we went

to speak to. And so this was me, a journalist from Ghana general from Albania, a journalist from Croatia, and other journalists from Vietnam and a journalist from India. Imagine all of us in a classroom trying to speak to student journalists. And then there was a point where we did an exchange program with Russian journalists were in the country we met also, and then haven't had an interaction. So we had a better understanding on how news in Russia, and what the Russians think of our respective country. I remember asking the lady from Russia, if she knew of Ghana or she had heard of Ghana, and she said no so I should give her a second. She was going to google it and return. She researched and came back and told me that Russia Ghana used to be a colony of Russia or is like she I tried it to me something to the effect that we used to belong to the country and so on and I was scandalized.

Interviewer: That's interesting.

Respondent: Yeah, I added it to my article, maybe I'll just I would advise maybe just look through my article again, may give you more ideas on what I felt when I went to that.

Interviewer: Yeah, that article was very interesting. I remember but I have forgotten the details of it. So how accommodating was the environment, the US environment, any cultural shocks?

Respondent: The environment generally was accommodating, but the food was not. The African contingents. I can say to you that we were starving for close to five days while we were in Washington, DC, because the food looked strange to us. And when we said we wanted good food, they gave us tacos, and I had no idea what tacos was. And one day, we discovered that there was a Nigerian restaurant somewhere in the DC area, that even when we went to the restaurant, so it was me, a journalist from Nigeria, a gentleman from Uganda, Zimbabwe, Mali w Niger, Morocco and even Tunisia. When we arrived at this Nigerian restaurant, and when we asked what they had, and they said they had egusi, eba and soup and I remember we were dancing. I remember we ordered twice everything that we had and then even bought some and took it with us to the hotel. For the rest of these in DC. That's where we used to eat our food. So yes,

the food for me maybe I'm a village boy. The weather of course, I wouldn't expect the weather to be as nice as our weather here. They were that was really a problem. But we survived. Thank God.

Interviewer: What period of the year did you?

Respondent: I went in November and arrived in December and we're falling into this snow.

I saw snow for the first time in my life when we went to New Mexico in Santa Fe, I was in Santa Fe.

Interviewer: Yes. I see. Okay, so how has that training affected your organization? Have you done anything with what you learnt so far?

Respondent: Yes. When I returned, I organized a session especially for my newsroom, members of my newsroom and I broke down the American system to them. I explained to them how different the American system was from ours. Because they were running a federal system, we were running a unitary system. Even though we had an executive president just like them, a lot of things are different the Senate system, how many senators come from which state and how that is chosen, the election process and all of that. So I give them a whole lesson on what I went to learn. And I believe that has helped shape our understanding of the American system, and visa a vis our own system. So in the 2020 election, I was I was even guiding a lot of people about how the elections are conducted, or the Electoral College looks and so on.

Interviewer: Wow. But you haven't done anything in the area of disinformation and stuff?

Respondent: No, I did not but for my personal consumption, I use that a lot. So I have learned to be careful about everything I see online.

Interviewer: So would you encourage your colleagues to benefit from such an exchange?

Respondent: I would more than encourage I mean, it's a learning experience to be in the same place with 40 plus or 50 journalists from across the world, learning from their individual countries and all of us coming together to learn from the US system. I think that's a priceless opportunity that everybody should get if they can.

Interviewer: And then networks that you created from the exchange. How has it benefited? Do you still talk to them? Do they get in touch?

Respondent: Yes, yes, very beneficial. Up to today, if I need information or news from any country, country in any of those places, I contact, especially the African continent, so my current colleague that I met in Nigeria from Nigeria, is like my news correspondents in Nigeria. So anytime any issue happens in Nigeria, I call him live on the radio. And the last time Zimbabwe had a change of government, there was a journalist, I met her I spoke to. The Ugandan journalists, I'm always interviewing her on my show. The Nigerian journalist also calls me and we do interviews, so is the Ugandan journalist also called me to talk news. The Ivorian journalist, she understands English, so she always contact me for news in Ghana, and I also do same. India Veerendra, I'm still in touch with Veerendra and we always talk. Anytime I need information, I call him and I say I have heard thus about Modi, your Prime Minister, what is he saying then he explains to me. So that network has really helped me. And I still have it pretty much in touch. And it's been a wonderful resource.

Interviewer: Wow. So what are what were the highlights of the program, and the influence on your carrier, positively or negatively, anything that influenced your career after this?

Respondent: It influenced me positively that's what I can say because I got an improvement in knowledge. I got to know much more than I knew before I went, and it has expanded my horizon and territories for me and that, for me, is a great positive that I can never underestimate.

Interviewer: Then it means that has been very impactful. So I don't think I have to ask the 10th question. But if you have anything to add, because..

Respondent: I don't have much to say, but to say that I was not chosen because I applied for this program. There was your stuff at the embassy that decided after scanning the media landscape that this journalist deserves to go and you contacted me and said, come and go for this training. I think it's a beautiful idea. Keep it up. Don't change it. Don't let people apply or anything because that may be susceptible to maybe corruption or undue influence. A journalist from a radio station in the Eastern Region contacted me and said, he had been chosen and he read that I had attended, so he wanted me to give him guidance on how to attend. And I thought that was a beautiful way to reward hard working journalists, or to support journalists that you think deserve credit and give it to them without them necessarily applied for it.

Interviewer: Thank you so much. Thank you so much. This is so helpful.

Respondent: Thanks so I will send you my article again just saw you brush through if you have time.

Interview 3

Interviewer: Which year and what was the title of the tour?

Respondent: Edward Murrow Program for Journalist. October 2010

Interviewer: How would you describe your professional output before and after the exchange program?

Respondent: I will say that it has enlightened me a lot. Before then you realize that some of us as journalists, sometimes we work with fear or under fear of reporting certain issues. When I got there, there was a video of how Edward Murrow was reporting and that one actually motivated me. When I came back, I was still a reporter so there are certain issues that when I'm reporting them, I know that they are facts, I don't care what happens to me, I realized that as journalists we dine with the rich and eat with the poor. Sometimes you get yourself in a situation that is not favorable.

Interviewer: Thank you very much. So in a way that program contributed to your work as a journalist.

Respondent: It contributed a lot. It gave me a lot of confidence to enter areas that I could not enter including the places labeled as security zones, depending on your conduct, enter places and get information as you want and sometimes you use it for your public consumption. So I think it gave me a lot of confidence coming back from that particular place. When I came back, and because it was also a leadership program, we learned a lot from the and how to conduct yourself to become a good leader. And it was after I came back that I became the Northern Regional Chairman of the Ghana Journalists Association for two consecutive terms. Association and currently, I'm contesting for a national executive within the Ghana Journalists Association and this is somebody coming from the Northern region and it never happened in the history of the GJA that somebody outside the corridors of Greater Accra is contesting for a national position. The exchange program gave me the courage to contest for such positions.

Interviewer: Any networks formed?

I think the US embassy came to Northern region and tried linking us together that's not only Edward Murrow but those who benefited from other programs.

Interviewer: Do you get in touch with some of the people that you were in that training with like those from other countries?

Respondent: Yeah, so other countries especially the one from Nigeria for instance, is my personal friend and we speak like almost every week. Friends with Jacqueline Porsche from Tanzania who became a close friend and we still communicate.

Interviewer: Do you share information from your various country?

Respondent: When we talk, sometimes we remind ourselves of what we went for in the US, some of the interesting places that we went. But beyond that, we don't tell ourselves what we are doing in our countries. But when whenever we are speaking, we seem to remind ourselves of what we went to US to do and the interesting places that we went

Interviewer: Has the program affected your media organization in any way?

Respondent: For the media organization, I will say that, because when I came up back to the northern region, it rather affected some other people who are working in northern region, because sometimes as a leader, when I have the opportunity to speak to journalists, I tell them the benefits of being a very professional journalist, trying to conduct yourself you should not try to be a mediocre journalist, and sometimes I use the Edward Murrow program to give an example anytime I had the opportunity of speaking to a group of journalist, but there has never been a deliberate time that I organize people that I am going to speak to them specifically about the Edward Murrow program. But once in a while when I have the opportunity to address journalist at such a function, organized by the Ghana Journalists Association, I remind them about professional ethics and it was also based on what I learned from that particular program. And, and I got the motivation, also, you know when you get there, the

first point was in Washington, DC, where we had the opportunity of visiting the newseum. The newseum is place that all the media as well as the countries in the world are labeled from first where there is media freedom to even the last. When I got there, they used the color green to represent countries that were among the first and I was so proud that when Ghana was among the green countries and our freedom at that time were freer than the US.

Interviewer: How many states did you visit?

Respondent: We were in Washington, DC, Florida, and Seattle and came back to New York.

Interviewer: Did you have any cultural shock?

Respondent: They rather has a shock when I told them certain things about Ghana, regarding our elections and how we use mobile phone text messages to campaign. I gave them an example of a text message that was sent to me in 2008. The students were shocked that in Africa, we could use phones. The next day, it was in their dailies that students were shocked when I pulled a mobile phone to read a text message. They were thinking that in Africa, when growing up, they were hearing monkeys and all that.

Interview: Any highlights positive or negative that has influenced your career?

Respondents: For the negatives, no, but for the positive yes. It has humbled me in such a way at the time I went there I was having diploma as my higher level of education and a 23 year old lady introduced herself as Dr, a PhD already

Interviewer: Thank you so much. I'm humbled to hear all that. So would you would you say this change program was impactful?

Respondent: Very impactful.

Interviewer: Thanks so much for having time for me. I wish you well in your elections.

Interview 4

Interviewer: The Edward Murrow exchange program you attended, what year was that and what was the title?

Respondent: It was in 2019. The topic was research and investigation,

Interviewer: How will you describe your professional output before and after this program?

Respondent: Okay. So before the exchange program, I would say I was quite hard working and quite professional in terms of my outputs in what I do, but the program added a lot more to my output in how I would go about my work, for example, I became more sensitive to fake news and misinformation, because of some of the things we were exposed to. During the training, I got to realize that though we normally say seeing is believing but not everything you see is something you ought to believe. Sometimes you need to prove further to verify and some fact checking to ensure that indeed, what you are seeing is true. So I think in terms of sensitivity to fake news, and, you know, sad stuff, I became more sensitive. It also helped me to have a better appreciation of American democracy and journalistic practices as against how we do things here. And it has made me to focus more on solutions analysis. Yeah. So let me say that's really broadened my scope and horizon.

Interviewer: So in your opinion, this curricula for the moral exchange program, how do you see it?

Respondent: I think so far, so good. The curriculum is quite apt and was designed to offer journalists an all round sort of experience in the United States. I should say, meetings, visits, conferences, cultural activities, I think they all contribute to the very good experience over a lifetime that we had overriding the curriculum isn't bad, and then the geographical distribution of the city. We went to Washington, DC, and then we moved on to New Mexico, and then Florida and then to Philadelphia, and then New York City.

Interviewer: That's impressive and so these places that you visited, how accommodating were they? Their environment? Any cultural shocks?

Respondent: Quite interesting, even within the United States, depending on the state we were in, you could see some difference in terms of even the infrastructure in terms of people in terms of the food, for example, when it comes to food, I got to enjoy more when we were in New York, that was where like, I got something much closer to what I was used to, apart from that. Unless maybe I take some drinks, or bread or booze, like common food items here. The people were very accommodating. We went about activities in a free, safe and dignified manner. And I was particularly impressed by the manner in which some Americans who go the extra mile like to help you when you need it.

Interviewer: How was the weather at the time when you went?

Respondent: I thought it was quite cool. For instance, the weather in Washington DC was quite rocky. But then the weather in New Mexico was colder. Not unbearable, not something you could not cope with. And then Florida for the same as New York, I think it was quite cold and we experienced some rainy days. I remember when we visited the UN headquarters it rained heavily that day and some of us had to buy an umbrella but we went prepared because the US embassy in Ghana briefed us.

Interviewer: How has this training affected your media organization? Anything you have done since you came back?

Respondent: Yes, I originally had plans of having an organizing training program, quarterly for the programs and then the news department. But we have been able to do two. I remember the first one was on misinformation, fake news and fact checking. I got to share some fact-checking tools with them and other software that we were exposed to at the Poynter Institute in Florida. The other one was on political reporting that was ahead of the 2020 elections. So we looking forward to doing more

Interviewer: The people that you were in the fellowship with? Have you done anything with them since you came back?

Respondent: Yes, we are in touch. The group was more active during the early days, like when we attended but then as time goes on, the gap was widening. But once in a while when somebody does something worth sharing and celebrating they put it there. And then at the personnel level, you also reach out each other once in a while. I remember there's this guy for Matt, I think he's from Myanmar, who wanted information from me concerning the participation or enrollment of a certain organization in my elections. Yeah, so I recently you know, due to the unrest over there, he was wanted by the military junta. So he had to escape. One of the participants from Zimbabwe. I think he's an executive of one of the international journalists groups came to Ghana for a meeting and got in touch just that we couldn't meet.

Interviewer: Would you encourage your colleagues to be on such program?

Respondent: I will, I think it's something worth experiencing. If as many journalists as possible in Ghana will get a chance to experience I think, too often.

Interviewer: If I may send you back a little. Did you have the chance to visit any media institutions or training schools or any anything of that nature, like a journalism training school or a media house?

Respondent: We went to the Poynter Institute for Media Studies that is in Florida where we learnt about the fact checking, investigative journalism and research. We also went to the Tampa Bay Times, which is owned by the Poynter Institute and met some very award winning journalists. Remember, there was this attempt, temporary? Was the name Neil Bedi and Catling. I think they did a very good investigative piece on some fatalities that was happening at local pediatric cancer treatment facility, were able to unravel certain fatalities that have been kept under cover.

Interviewer: Okay, so talking about investigative journalism, how different is that from the research thing that you were talking about?

Respondent: I think investigative journalism and research, I think they go hand in hand. For investigative journalism, you have to go the extra mile and sometimes, depending on the story you want to do, it can be really difficult.

Interviewer: Any criticisms or recommendation, perhaps that you have for the curriculum?

Respondent: For the curriculum, I don't. I think in terms of the duration, maybe they will be able to extend it a bit, maybe by a week more so and then make it a bit relaxed. We realized, yeah, it was quite packed, though, we had some very free periods, for other activities, but looking at the size of the United States, and the number of things that are happening every second every minutes, which you want to like, have a good feel of

Interviewer: So what were the highlights of the program and how did they influence your career?

. Florida was quite a good place for me and the experience was a good experience with the visit to Tampa Bay Times meeting with an Emmy award winning journalist, Mr. Mark Douglas. You know and then cultural activities.

Interviewer: Where did you go in Philadelphia?

Respondent: We went to democracy that is where the US Constitution was drafted so for me it got me closer to history. We also went to Temple School of Media and Communication and the Philadelphia gay newspaper,

Interviewer: Okay, did you have the chance of visiting the Newseum?

Respondent: Yes a couple of them I think we visited the African American Neuseum officially in Washington DC and I spent almost the whole day over there and I couldn't have enough of the place. We have a history of black Americans right from the word go and some of the challenges they went through.

Interviewer: So it tells me that the program was very impactful.

Respondent: It has changed my perspective, my understanding and our position of issues, for instance, concerning the United States, you know, if you talk about, for instance, democracy, we are learning from them, because they have been practicing this for over 200 years also. I can see that they have really gone ahead. Because, for instance, as journalists over the people are really free to, to practice, knowing very well that the law is on your side, either First Amendment, or in very well that they also have some law firms have, you know, lawyers who would stand up for them in case somebody wants to infringe on the underwriters journalists

Interviewer: Right. Thank you so much, Muhammad.

Interview 5

Interviewer: Which year and what was the title of the tour?

Respondent: Okay, so in 2019, I was part of the international visitor leadership program.

Interviewer: So there wasn't any special area was it, like tailored to a special area of your career, or it was just all journalism.

Respondent: It was tied to the traditional media and new media. So this was a program in relation to journalism, of course, and then, in terms of reporters, or how we tell our stories, and as how we could also improve on our career using both the traditional and then the new media.

Interviewer: How do you describe your professional output before and after the exchange program?

Respondent: So before the exchange program, I was more in tuned with traditional media, as in reporting just for TV and for radio but after the program, I was able to understand the dynamics when it comes to the new media being social media, because first of all, the state's media has truly advanced in that area. So adding things like info graphics to the stories, being able to put out just shots, breaking news, captions, sending it out. And as the story unfolds, to get them the people that follow us on social media, you know, tune to the story. So by the time the full report is ready, at least you've been able to create a certain awareness, you've been able to get people to understand that this is what is happening, but it is building up and then it will be shared. I say that also, I've been able to move some of my stories onto the digital platform. So not just for TV and radio, but also online stories. I've been able to share some of my stories on social media, specifically, Instagram and on YouTube as well.

Interviewer: What is your opinion on the curricula of the exchange?

Respondent: It's really intense. The exchange is really, really intense and also, because you're dealing not just with yourself, but other journalists. In fact, other experienced journalists from other countries, my turn for instance, we had about

25 journalists in all pulled from different countries, and countries that are also known to be when it comes to ranking. Countries that really practice media freedom, especially Finland. It was good to have journalists from Finland to come and share the experience with us what even makes the country stand or remain at the first and second position when it comes to media freedom. And the fact that we also met with other journalists from other African countries, who do not even have the freedom that we have, as journalists in Ghana, for example, Mozambique, where most of the journalists even are threatened, they are afraid to come out to do a reportage because of the political situation there. And then also, the fact the freedom that we have as journalists in Ghana is not really seen in Mozambique. So it was quite intense as the lineup was put together. What we did was to engage journalists who do investigative pieces, and in the states and even in the sub Saharan region, where we went to for the training like view a, like the hill, Washington Post, and other you know, news outlets and TV outlets. It was it was very good to see how they also go about to their news, what it means to them. What proximity when it comes to news, tell him is to them so their curriculum is very high, because it was for three weeks. So it was really packed really intense. And it had a lot of practical approach to it.

Interviewer: Let me just put in this since you came back, how has your networking with this groups of people helped?

Respondent: I remember in 2020, I spoke with one of them from Mozambique, Charles Maputo, who was given us a reportage as to what was happening in Mozambique some time back. And there were two Ethiopian journalists. For instance, I was able to contact here this year, when Ethiopia was going through some political unrest, where there were reports that some people flee Ethiopia to other countries because of an attack. So I was able to get her as a contact person, to link us even to persons as high their Information ministers. One of the journalists in India, she will share with us the COVID-19 updates in India and the reports and she even gave me articles of how the cases were surging. In India, she even had COVID and was willing to do an interview to share the experience as a journalist who had contracted the COVID. For journalists in

Brazil, even though we haven't had reports concerning Brazil, we still do have that connection, where she's closely interested in what I do. She actually paid attention for my movement from GH one to TV3. We actually keep in touch we did, we did create a platform, a WhatsApp group in 2019, when we all met and to date the group is still active.

Interviewer: Can you say you have leveraged this network gain from this change program?

Respondent: Yeah. I think we're even in 2020. I forgot to mention in 2020, I went to Nigeria for a program in 2020. But I decided to do a report in Nigeria, because we were getting close to election in December and because the border had been closed, some Ghanaians who went to other countries like Togo, Benin, Nigeria, who couldn't come to Ghana. I did a story where I met a Ghanaian community and spoke to their leaders, and how it was disappointing that they could not be able to come to Ghana. Some of them would rather prefer to come by road that is the land borders, which remained closed. So that was a challenge for them. So after I did that, I actually used my phone to do that. And then I called one of the people who was part of my group. He's a leader and news editor in Nigeria, TVC news. So I called him and he actually did the editing for me. So he helped me put together the story and sent it here via email, and then the story was played on in Ghana. So in case there's something happening in Nigeria, for instance, and fast like this, that took place, he was given us contacts with given us correspondents were on the ground, he was helping us with people who were part of the insights, progress and progress and all. So yes, I had opportunity to get contacts from him that we used on our platform. And also when do I cases in Ghana, that had to do for instance, when Rawlings died, they called and they had like a live interview with me to gauge the mood, how Ghanaians were taking the death of Rawlings, and when we had our first COVID outbreak to I did a live report with them on their news channel TVC news about Ghana's first COVID outbreak and how we were also preparing to nip it in the bud as to how to control the whole COVID You know, situation and then also after the BBC reportage on the sex scandals or the investees. They also called me to do a report and asked me how the Ghanaian community were taking

such reports that had come out remembering that Nigeria was also mentioned in that sex car now. So it's been an exchange of ideas, exchange of contacts, exchange of stories, you know, and yes, is I'm really, really leveraged on that on that network.

Interviewer: So how do your bosses feel about you being able to get all these networks?

Respondent: I become like the go to person in my media organization. They'll come to me and I just place a call to any of them, depending on which country they're looking at. Oh, please, can you help me get this person. And most of them are more than willing, they're more than willing to help, if they will, if they can speak themselves on network declined required to do it. If there's a contact person, they would want to share, like, for instance, the Ethiopian Information Minister, they shared their contacts with us. I think Nigeria also easily shared the Minister for Communications contact with us when Nigeria did the whole Twitter suspension.

Interviewer: How accommodating was the US environment to you throughout the exchange program?

Respondent: It was very accommodating. Because first of all, we had lessons who were very, very open and willing to support us in terms of anything, even though the weather was different in some states, because we kept rotating. And, you know, if it's there somewhere for a short period, some people react immediately to the change in weather. It wasn't always sunny or cold in depending on which states you were in. So we had liaisons who were like, on our side, all the time to be of assistance to us whether it was medical attention, or anything we needed, they were always there, you know, to support for us. It was easy for us to even transport ourselves because we always moved in groups, you know, so it was easy for us to transport ourselves from one place to the other as if we're going out on our own in terms of food was very easy to get food because our liaisons were also like very much invested in us. So it wasn't just Oh, they're here for the program. So if the program ends, that's it. No, no, they're also very, very invested in us and for my group, they divided us so we

had an A, B, C, and D because of our numbers. So I was a group leader for A so I even had a much you know, better connection with our liaison.

Interviewer: So there wasn't like any cultural shocks

Respondent: Oh no, even amongst as I say that we were a lot I think they said our group was like the group with the highest number I think for some time now so we were a lot and we had people who were Philippine people from Singapore people were Chinese and all that we never felt like outcasts you know when I felt like oh this one is too black or this one is to buy does nothing like Contra discrimination. Literally want everyone so that I said we moved in groups nobody moved alone if we are going somewhere war wants to go together if they want to eat or not everybody just wants to hang out with you. You know and beyond. He said there was nothing like Contra discrimination. No, we never I mean, I personally I never encountered that. **Interviewer:** How many states did you visit?

Respondent: I think it was five Washington DC and Santa Fe, New Mexico, Florida. New York, and which I think was full in New York. I'm missing one.

Interviewer: and how many media houses did you visit? Happened to go to the Newseum?

Respondent: We went to the hill in DC and went to Voice of America in DC.

Interviewer: I think we are now on six because we've already done the environmental and from what we have discussed so far, it looks like you have told us all that. Your media houses also gaining from that experience. I will go to seven which talks about any trainings that you have organized for your colleagues since you came back? If any?

Respondent: When I returned the news editor by then Nana Aba gave me the opportunity to share my experience with colleagues in the newsroom so that I did, but when I moved to TV three, no, I haven't had any opportunity to say experiences or team colleagues.

Interviewer: So would you encourage more of your colleagues to chase this program?

Respondent: I think that it also depends on the individual and what you seek to achieve at the end of it all. The stay is relatively short three weeks, but you come across a lot of things that will help you grow personally and professionally. I mean, some of the contacts that you make the become friends for a lifetime. You can even if that if the training fits what you are specializing in as a journalist, you can be part of it. And usually, it's free, because you are an alumni of IVLP. So you're able to enjoy some of these things. So it depends on the individual who is going there, what you're looking out for. But definitely is one thing that I recommend to every journalist, whether you are budding journalists, or you as journalists, is very important that you also go out to see, you know, how stories have been told, in other countries, how advanced some of these countries are, what media freedom is like in some of these countries, and then when you come back how best you can improve your storytelling, you know, as a journalist, even from experiences that other journalists Share, share with you.

Interviewer: Great, great, thank you very much.

Respondent: Also we learnt Investigative Journalism, how you would like the theoretical aspects of investigative journalism and how you can be able to get away things like defamation.

Interviewer: Would you say the program was impactful?

Respondent: It was very impactful. I mean, for me, I'm still benefiting from it. I mean my contacts who are in Nigeria, India, and Russia. I rely on them for news when the need arises.

Interviewer: Thank you so much.