



SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

**SUSTAINABLE FUNDING MODEL FOR PUBLIC SERVICE
BROADCASTING IN THE DIGITAL AGE: THE CASE OF GHANA
BROADCASTING CORPORATION**

BY

SETH J. BOKPE

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DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my original research, and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this Institute or elsewhere. I am solely responsible for any shortcomings.



DATE: January 14, 2025

SETH J. BOKPE

(Student)

SUPERVISORS' DECLARATION

This dissertation has been prepared and presented under my supervision according to the guidelines for supervision and formatting of theses as laid down by the University of Media Arts and Communication - Institute of Journalism



Kobina Ano Bedu-Addo Ph.D.

DATE: 16 January 2026

Supervisor

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated foremost to the almighty God, for giving me daily breath at no cost. Secondly to the memory memories of my parents, Patience Kumordzi and Maxwell Bokpe, and my dear friend, Niela Peach, whose sudden death blotted 2025 for me.

I also dedicate it to my wife, Edith and our children, Kekeli, Kimathi and Kafui.

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ABSTRACT

PSBs financial sustainability is a topic of keen scholarly interest. Their conventional funding model: government grants, television license fees and commercial revenue are shrinking largely because of audience fragmentation, declining compliance to payment of television license fees, and competition from commercial broadcasters and digital platforms. In view of this, this study sought to find out how GBC's PSB mandate has performed in the digital platform media environment; assess GBC's current funding arrangements and their adequacies to sustain its PSB mandate in the digital environment; and examine sustainable funding models being used by PSBs globally and assess their applicability to the GBC. The study was anchored on Political Economy of the Media theory, using mixed-methods research approach, the study purposively sampled data on GBC's sources of revenue from 2015 to 2024, GBC's social media metrics from September - November 2025, interviewed participants with expertise on GBC's operation. The study found that although GBC is delivering its public service mandate, it is grappling with volatile funding sources including government subvention and commercial revenue while television license, which is meant to be its main financial muscle has collapsed. This has compelled the corporation to lean more towards commercial broadcasting to stay afloat. Similarly, although the corporation has significant social media presence, the implementation of its digital media policy remains highly urbanised and has failed to yield significant revenue while it is confronted with a government bureaucracy that has left it with little room to manouvre to employ digitally savvy staff necessary to drive its digital strategy. These factors significantly affect GBC's quest to be sustainable. The study, therefore recommended the adoption of innovative funding mechanisms including

establishment of an independent funding architecture for GBC to replace the failed television license while strengthening and implementing its digital strategy to ensure the sustainability of the more than 90-year-old PSB in the digital age.

***Keywords:* Sustainable Funding, Public Service Broadcasting, Ghana Broadcasting Corporation, Digital age**

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

GTV	Ghana Television
KBS	Korea Broadcasting System
MBC	Malawi Broadcasting Corporation
NM	Representative of National Media Commission
NLCD	National Liberation Council Decree
NMBC	News Media Bargaining Code
NPR	National Public Radio
OTT	Over-the-Top
PBS	Public Broadcasting Service
PSB	Public Service Broadcasting
PSM	Public Service Media
SABC	South African Broadcasting Corporation
SIGA	State Interests and Governance Authority
SM	Senior management member of GBC
SVoD	Subscription Video on Demand
TVNZ	Television New Zealand
UK	United Kingdom

UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
US	United States
WNYC	New York Public Radio Station
YLE	Yleisradio Oy (Finnish Public Service Broadcaster)
ZDF	Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen (German Public Service Broadcaster)

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

This Chapter covers the background of the study, the statement of the problem, research objectives, and research questions. The significance of the study, the scope, and organization of the study are also presented in this chapter.

1.1 Background

The definition of Public Service Broadcasting (PSB) has been a subject of debate for decades, but across the world, there is a consensus that it must be independent of any form of control, and must represent the public interest (UNSECO, 2005; The United Kingdom House of Commons Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee, 2021)

Public Service Broadcasting (PSB) is an important vehicle for driving the public's right to access diverse, reliable, and high-quality content. In the digital age, however, the sustainability of this service, especially its funding, is under considerable stress. (Collin, 2011). The rise of digital platforms, including Netflix, Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok, has caused a seismic shift in audience behaviour (Public Media Alliance, 2024). With years of monopoly broken, competition from commercial broadcasters continues to deepen the financial woes of PSBs globally (Chrencik, 2023).

UNESCO defines Public Service Broadcasting as “broadcasting made, financed and controlled by the public, for the public. PSBs are neither commercial nor state-owned; they are free from political interference and pressure from commercial forces. Through PSBs, citizens are informed, educated, and also entertained. When guaranteed with pluralism, programming diversity, editorial

independence, appropriate funding, accountability, and transparency, public service broadcasting can serve as a cornerstone of democracy” (UNESCO, 2005, p.12).

On the other hand, Katsoulakis (2022) emphasises the non-profitable production and distribution of content for public interest. Martin (2021, p.1) asserts that “Public Service Broadcasting (PSB) is generally characterized by a remit to provide high-quality news, educational content, cultural enrichment and entertainment as free public goods with as broad a public reach as possible while also filling critical gaps in the media ecosystem—a multifaceted principle called universality.”

The United Kingdom House of Commons Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee (2021) highlights the core values of public service broadcasting to include universality, trusted news, and freedom from political inference.

The British Broadcasting Corporation is recognised as the pioneer of the concept, which its charter says is “to provide impartial news and information to help people understand and engage with the world around them. To support learning for people of all ages. To show the most creative, highest quality, and distinctive output and services. To reflect, represent, and serve the diverse communities of all of the United Kingdom’s nations and regions and, in doing so, support the creative economy across the United Kingdom. To reflect the United Kingdom, its culture and values to the world” (Scottish Parliament, 2025, p.3).

Given the rapidly changing landscapes of broadcasting, due to digitalization and technological changes, it has become common to refer to PSBs as public service media (PSM) in the digital age, where their work is influenced by technology, particularly the internet (Sehl, 2024). The disappearance of broadcasting monopolies triggered by technology and regulatory change has eliminated entry barriers to broadcasting, which in turn has had undesired consequences on the

competitive position of PSBs and their mandate to deliver social goals or “securing public goods such as universal provision, diversity and quality in programming, etc.” (Lowe, 2010, p.55).

In extolling the virtues of PSMs, Burnley (2023, p.14) argues that while in some countries a case has been made for a subscription-based system as a more progressive approach for funding PSM, that argument fails to recognise the “the central role of PSM, which is to promote democracy, social cohesion and cultural values.” Furthermore, he asserts that whichever form contributions from citizens take, it should be seen as a civic responsibility to contribute to a stable, democratic, and peaceful society as “the PSM viewer is a citizen, not simply a consumer – PSM content is tailored to reach all, not only the fee-paying few.”

1.1.1 Funding sources for PBS

A dominant public discourse today is how PSBs should be funded, who should pay for their operations, and how much the public should pay for their existence (Chrencik, 2023).

Across the world, different funding models underpin the financial muscle of PSBs. Ofcom (2020) suggests that a good practice is to fund PSBs through an established license or other fee, instead of government subvention. Burnley (2017) notes that public funding is recognised as a predictable funding source for public broadcasters as it makes room for planning, innovation, and long-term quality content. However, different countries have different approaches to public broadcast financing. This public funding comes from either only television license fees or a hybridized state funding model of license fees, state subventions, and commercial advertising (Asare, 2016).

An analysis of a 2021 European Broadcasting Union (EBU) report on 64 PSMs in 47 countries in Europe showed that 77 per cent of PSM funding came from public sources like “license fee (for example, Italy, Ireland or the UK), state budget (for example, Spain, Denmark or Norway) or funds

outside the state budget (for example, Finland or Sweden).” Staying true to the tenets of PSBs in these countries, the figures showed that advertising contributed only 19 per cent to the kitty of these broadcasters with other sources, four per cent (Sehl, 2024, p.78).

The United Kingdom operates a hybrid system of licenses and commercial advertising (House of Lords Library, 2022). In Finland and Denmark, public funding (not state budget) alone is sufficient for the operation of PSBs, which is actually the benchmark for the concept (Burnley, 2017).

Burnley (2017), however, admits that for most countries, the hybridized system provides the required finances to sustain their operations.

Europe’s sources of public funding demonstrate how some countries are moving away from the traditional TV license. For instance, in Germany, each household pays a €8.36 monthly levy, and those who live on social or unemployment benefits are exempted from payment (Sehl, 2024). In Finland, the funding for YLE, the PSB, is linked to individuals’ annual taxable income and capital income of taxpayers from 18 years and above. The Finnish government scrapped the TV license fee for the current new tax because, although the television license law required new TV users to inform their local councils to allow the collection of the fee, many failed to do so. Some Finns also complain that the flat fee was a burden on poorer households, triggering the government’s decision to scrap it (Zeldin, 2012). Similar arrangements apply in other Nordic countries—Iceland, Sweden, Denmark, and Norway (Nordicom, 2019).

In Italy, the public service broadcaster, Rai, is still funded by a TV license. However, the mode of collection is different. Since 2016, it has been collected through electricity bills, given the high rates of evasion and ineffective enforcement. But this has been criticized by Italians for

contributing to high electricity bills, compelling European lawmakers to propose a suspension or scrapping of the tax (Pion, 2023; European Parliament, 2022).

In New Zealand, TVNZ is 90% commercially funded with the remaining 10% from government funding agencies, such as NZ on Air, whose mandate is to provide financial incentives for local production (State Media Monitor, 2025).

1.1.2 Broken monopoly and competition

PSBs were birthed with a monopoly as the proverbial silver spoon in their mouths. However, decades of media liberalisation fueled by democracy have made them vulnerable in the face of stiff competition to the extent that today, they are required to justify their usefulness and existence in commerce-driven markets (Chrencik, 2023). This perspective is shared by neoliberals who hold the view that although public service broadcasting promotes social goals, their declining audience does not justify heavy state funding associated with their operation, which they say distorts fair competition with private media (Armstrong & Weeds, 2005). Others have also made a strong case against government subsidizing PSBs, given the current diversified media landscape (Háló et al., 2023). Proponents of PSBs, however, insist that such broadcasters are needed to serve the public interest, especially when private commercial media's interest is focused on profit (Martin, 2021).

Their importance notwithstanding, it is well known that the competitive media environment is stifling the finances of public service broadcasters as they have to compete for audience share and advertising pie with private commercial broadcasters who are adventurous and sensational with programming. This has led to the weakening of public service broadcasting in many countries, forcing them to become more dependent on governments (Council for Europe, 2017; Tami, 2024).

Lowe & Berg (2013, p.85) aptly captured this in saying that “although every PSM provider does not offer as much or for the same price, the example indicates that the reason these organizations are in trouble has little to do with claims of inefficiency or lack of popularity. They are mainly in trouble due to socio-political complications rooted in competition effects.”

This concept allows the British PSB to outsource content to independent producers. However, given the profit orientation of the private commercial media content producers, the central aim of fostering diversity is sacrificed for more lucrative genres, leaving gaps in areas the public service broadcaster is supposed to protect. (Nicoli, 2015, p 15).

Hjarvards (2018) suggests that a cure for this should be for the public service broadcaster and the independent content producers to demonstrate commitment to the values of public service broadcasting.

While liberalisation of the airwaves has expanded access to media content globally, it came with undesired consequences on smaller nations with little financial muscle to produce content, but rather rely on global information flow. Smaller countries have become vulnerable to acculturation given that big commercial media’s interests are engineered to produce content largely for international commercial markets, “which tends to reduce diversity and puts programming aimed at small nations and cultures at a disadvantage (Nissen 2006, p.16). In contrast, the same researcher argues that competition from private commercial media has not been purely corrosive, as it has stimulated public service broadcasters to be more innovative and efficient.

“Due to healthy competition from private media, public corporations have defined their remit, focused their powers, modernized their programming schedule and rationalized their operations.” (Nissen, 2006, p. 5).

1.1.3 The impact of digital media on PSB

The surge in internet use for social media, video on demand that provides viewership anywhere, and streaming platforms has massively shifted audiences from traditional media—radio and television—to customized, on-demand content. Platforms including Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, Showmax that put the audience in control of what they watch, when and where to watch it, instead of the highly regimented scheduling of traditional broadcast, including PSBs use (Widener et al, 2025). Platforms powered by algorithms such as YouTube, and social media platforms including Facebook, X, Instagram, are producing content that meets individual audience preferences, focusing on both specific and trending topics. The increase in user-generated content and autonomous creators on platforms like TikTok and X permits individuals to produce personalized content, further diverting attention from traditional media. The easy access to this diverse content on mobile phones allows audiences to gravitate toward hyper-specific topics, diminishing the reach of broad, unifying media. This fragmentation challenges advertisers and content creators to target increasingly specialized audiences effectively (Zhou, 2024; Graffius, 2024).

The digital influence on PSBs has been so grave that in 2022, the BBC announced that it would shut down two stations and move their (stations) content online as part of the vision for a “modern, digital-led and streamlined organisation” (BBC, 2022, p.1).

With these digital disruptions has come a massive change in media consumption habits as the audience, particularly the younger generation, gravitate towards digital platforms which they find more appealing compared to the traditional offerings of public service broadcasters, whose content remains largely confined to radio and television at home (Martin, 2021).

Such is the power of the digital platform that some of the world's most resourceful PSBs, such as the BBC are lamenting their powerlessness in the face of the growing influence of digital platforms.

“If you compare us to the digital media giants that are getting people's attention, we are a fraction of their size, and the amount of money we can put toward content development is now a fraction of what the new digital competitors are spending on content every year. We are being outbid.” The BBC Director of Audiences, Nick North, said, as cited in Martin (2021, p.5). Again, the BBC in April 2025 axed the popular and hard-hitting current affairs programme, *Hard Talk*, from its programme lineup as part of its cost-cutting measures to save some £700 million in the long term (Saunders, 2024).

However, the situation is not entirely gloomy, Kiburi (2023) asserts that social media platforms provide an opportunity for greater interactivity between consumers and the media, with a feedback loop also available for audiences to engage directly with journalists and contribute to news stories through user-generated content. In fact, today, radio and television stations use social media to engage their audience for feedback and fact-checking purposes.

According to Okorie (2025), another feather in the cap of the digital era is the growing use of artificial intelligence (AI). The AI integration is reshaping content creation, distribution, and consumption, with AI technologies being deployed to improve efficiency, audience engagement, and automate aspects of news production. This contrasts with other scholars who fear that AI has the potential to be the most disruptive technology, which could further dig deeper holes into the finances of traditional media. Their case is that AI has the capacity to introduce a new wave of innovation and present more headaches for current technology companies, the news industry, and society as a whole (Newman et al, 2024).

Yet, Diedong (2021) believes there is a silver lining for PSB because, despite the exponential growth in digital media, a large chunk of populations in rural and deprived communities are still cut off from the information exchange between government and citizens. This creates an opportunity for PSBs to tap into a market with little digital disruption.

1.1.4 Africa's Public Service Broadcasting funding and the digital era

Across Africa, PSBs are on the cusp of financial meltdown as competition from private media platforms and the digital age bite hard on public broadcasters' operations and finances (Public Media Alliance, 2024).

This is largely borne out of multiple factors, including reforms that have opened the continent's airwaves to private participation, as well as its limited digital infrastructure in most countries across the continent. The inadequate digital skills among African broadcasters, including PSBs, have also been identified as a major barrier because broadcasters struggle to deliver content efficiently (African Union of Broadcasters, 2025).

The challenges notwithstanding, the African Union of Broadcasting (2025) states that the digital transformation provides money-making streams for broadcasters while using social media platforms to increase their reach to their audience.

“Digital transformation has also opened up new revenue streams for African broadcasters. With the rise of digital advertising, broadcasters can now monetize their online content and generate additional revenue streams. However, this requires broadcasters to invest in digital infrastructure and develop new skills to effectively monetize their content” (African Union of Broadcasting, 2025, p1).

African PSBs are mostly disposed towards a cocktail of license fees, which have become difficult to collect; state subventions and commercial activities, with the last two becoming the dominant resources for their operations (Banda, 2023).

In Zimbabwe, apart from the radio and television license fee, the public was recently slapped with what critics say is a draconian levy—a car radio levy (\$92)—to boost funding for the local public service broadcaster, Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (Mutsaka, 2025). In South Africa, the public service broadcaster, the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), is seeking to change the country’s National Broadcasting law to collect tax on mobile phones, tablets and monitors to increase its revenue (Asif, 2023). The country is also considering imposing a levy on streaming platforms such as Netflix to fund the SABC (Ndlovu, 2025).

In Mauritius, just like South Korea and Italy, television license fee levied on monthly electricity bills of Rs 150 (News Moris, 2024).

1.1.5 Ghana Broadcasting Corporation

Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC), particularly its flagship television station, GTV, is a ubiquitous name in Ghana. Most often during important national and international events, including football matches, the public automatically expects GTV to telecast such programmes live and free as a part of its mandate to provide universal access, ensuring that Ghanaians, irrespective of their location, can share in the national experience. For instance, when in 2009 GBC failed to telecast live the then President J.E.A Mills’ address to the United Nations, there was significant public uproar and the GBC administration was directed to apologize for the mishap (Myjoyonline 2009).

The failure of the ‘Station of the Nation’ as its slogan says to perform this role was met with public uproar on social media, suggesting that the broadcaster was not living up to expectations. This demand on the public broadcaster is pervasive in spite of the plethora of private media houses with equally impressive records for covering national events. This public expectation is borne out of the legal responsibility of GBC as a public service broadcaster to serve the public interest. GBC draws its mandate from the Broadcasting Corporation Decree or National Liberation Council Decree (NLCD) 226, 1968, which empowers the corporation for public service broadcasting, and it is expected to be independent and impartial (Ampaw, 2004).

1.1.6 Pluralism over monopoly

In Ghana, GBC has been playing the role of PSB highlighted in the literature above, since its establishment in 1935, having evolved from a colonial-era radio transmitter to a giant multimedia platform with multiple radio and television stations producing content covering the promotion of the country’s cultural heritage, and national integration (Anoff-Ntow, 2016; Banda, 2023).

From a broadcast monopoly with just a radio station in Accra during the colonial era, its tentacles have grown with at least 16 regional radio stations and six television channels over the decades. These stations cater for diverse demographics of the populace (State Media Monitor, 2025).

However, the liberalisation of the airwaves from the early mid-1990s, which opened doors for the proliferation of hundreds of radio and television stations and broke GBC’s monopoly, led to the growth of the independent commercial electronic media (Diendong, 2021; Asafo-Agyei, 2010).

The National Media Policy (2000, p.13) offers a pragmatic explanation of GBC’s importance.

“Broadcasting in Ghana remained a de facto monopoly [GBC] of the state for nearly 40 years after independence. It suffered from the weaknesses of a monopoly, especially in a one-party or military

state, and was perceived, and often performed, as more of a government mouthpiece than an instrument of the people. Yet it also took seriously its responsibility as a national educational and development tool and, especially in the decade or so immediately after independence, discharged it creditably.

However, 19 years down the line, media expert and former Director-General of GBC, Prof. Kwame Karikari had major concerns about the corporation's programming, describing it as "a mixture of timid attempts to maintain serious public service standards and an energetic effort to copy the banal programming of the philistine sections of the private sector" (Bokpe, 2019, p.1).

Other media scholars also argue that while the liberalisation of the broadcast sector has created a plural media market, there are concerns about compromised quality, diversity, and public interest value of programming. The increased commercialisation of the media ecosystem raises questions about who truly serves the public interest, especially when the national broadcaster, GBC, has been marginalised due to policy incoherence and weak regulation, leading to the state determining public interest for the national broadcaster (Bedu-Addo, 2022, p.45).

1.1.8 GBC's funding

In Ghana, GBC has lived on multiple funding sources since its establishment—TV license, advertising revenue, and government grants (Asare, 2016). The country's amended TV Licensing Act 1966 (NLCD 89) regulates TV license fee collection.

However, Twum (2023) asserts that the law over the years was relaxed as a result of GBC's challenges with collecting the fee. However, it was reintroduced in 2016.

The law was relaxed for more than a decade, primarily due to collection challenges GBC, the mandated institution to collect the fees, was facing. It was officially reintroduced in 2015. For

more than 30 years, the fee for domestic users with one television was pegged at GH¢0.30, a measure aimed at reducing the financial burden on the public amid persistent inflation and the depreciation of the Cedi. However, this was significantly adjusted to GH¢36, considering the prevailing economic conditions and the need to ensure that revenue collected was more than the cost of collection (Park, 2015).

Over the years, however, GBC has struggled to collect the TV license fees, creating a deficit in its finances filled by government grants. However, National Media Policy (2000) asserts that the broadcaster “has come under progressively greater pressure to generate commercial revenue while retaining its public service structure.”

During the inauguration, of the board of GBC, Blay-Amihere (2015) re-echoed the policy’s observations, insisting that GBC, like all state-owned media, was required to be profitable and become less of a burden on the state and tasked “management and staff to adopt policies and strategies that shall make GBC financially solvent and independent,” to be financially independent from government. In furtherance of this position, Asare (2016) argues that the current funding model of GBC is progressively shifting towards commercial activities as the public broadcaster’s license fees contribute insignificantly to the operations, with half of its operational expenditure coming from state subvention. State Interest and Governance Authority (2023) lists the public broadcaster’s revenue sources to include commercials, advertisements, announcements, and sponsorships, rental of floors, masts, space, and sites.

Although the government revised the television license fee to GHC 36 per set annually, that amount has been eaten away by inflation, while the public broadcaster appeals to the public to pay their TV license voluntarily (GBC, 2020). Ironically, a former Director-General, Dr Kwame Akufo-Anoff, was removed from office after he attempted to enforce the TV license law by

working with the Judicial Service for a court to prosecute defaulters. He was accused of single-handedly making the decision after a wave of public backlash greeted the decision (Myjoyonline, 2018). Asafo-Agyei (2010) points out that although GTV, the most visible of GBC’s television channels, was struggling financially, it had been forced over the years to compete for audience and its slice of the advertising market with commercial broadcasters while at the same time expected to deliver both public service and commercial goals simultaneously.

Comparatively, Ghana has arguably the lowest television license fee in the world at GHC 36 per set, but the payment is a drudgery for many Ghanaians.

Table 1: Licensing fee in Ghana and other countries

Country	License fee
Ghana	GHC 36
United Kingdom	£174.50
Ireland	€160
Austria	€335
South Africa	R265 (\$15)
Namibia	N\$20 (\$16.5)
Mauritius	Rs 1,800 (\$39)

There has also been significant opposition to the law, including civil society organisations such as Occupy Ghana, who argue that the current TV licensing Act 1966 (NLCD 89) is outdated and therefore has no place in the digital age (Myjoyonline, 2018).

The corporation's funding challenges continue to be a headache for its management. Its Director-General Corporation, Prof Amin Alhassan, during a recent engagement with the Constitutional Review Commission noted that its funding model has "proven inadequate to support the corporation's operations." He argues that GBC's universal access and content diversification requires sufficient funding. According to him, globally PSBs are typically fully financed by governments, allowing them to prioritize high-quality content without depending on advertising revenue (Abanonave, 2025).

1.2 Statement of the problem

It is a fact that PSBs financial sustainability is a topic of keen scholarship interest. Their conventional funding model— government grants, television license fees and advertising revenue are shrinking largely because of audience fragmentation, declining compliance to payment of license fees, and competition from commercial broadcasters and digital platforms (Zeneli, A. (2020).

Ghana's PSB exemplifies this crisis. Although GBC is required to provide unbiased, accessible, and high-quality content to the public, it has struggled with epileptic funding streams and a decline in public trust. Its current financial situation is as a result of challenges with compliance with TV license fee payments and diminishing revenue from adverts.

To deliver its public service mandate in 2020 for instance, the corporation spent \$ 3 per minute to cover the 2020 election petition live and GHC 7million on public service broadcasting in 2020 .(Ghana Broadcasting Corporation, 2021) These are funds that the Director-General of the 90-year-old broadcaster, Prof Amin Alhassan, says the corporation struggled to raise while asking for sustainable funding for the mandate of the corporation (Kakraba, 2025).

Across the world, countries are shifting away from the traditional television license as a source of funding. They are turning to options including levies charged on electricity bill, philanthropic and corporate donations, levies on smart phones and tablets and even car radios, individuals' annual taxable income and capital income of taxpayers (Sehl, 2024; Perlman & Shepperd, 2023; Pion, 2023; European Parliament, 2022; Whittock, 2023).

With PSBs globally strategically redefining their importance and funding models, there is a growing imperative for GBC to explore sustainable models that align with the rising digital influence in order not to be left behind.

Against all these challenges, this study seeks to investigate which funding model would best secure GBC's future in the digital age.

Accordingly, the study will be guided by the following research objectives:

1.3 Research Objectives

1. To find out how GBC's PSB mandate has performed in the digital platform media environment.
2. To assess GBC's current funding arrangements and their adequacies to sustain its PSB mandate in the digital environment.
3. To examine sustainable funding models being used by PSBs globally and assess their applicability to the GBC.

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions will be examined:

1. How has GBC performed in its PSB mandate in the digital platform media environment?

2. What is GBC's current funding arrangements and their adequacies to sustain its PSB mandate in the digital environment.
3. What sustainable funding models are being used by PSBs globally and can be applicable to the GBC?

1.5 Significance of the study

This study is vital for many reasons. To start with, it adds to the limited knowledge on sustainable funding models for PSB in the African context, especially in Ghana, where GBC plays a critical role in the promotion of the country's democratic values and cultural diversity. Secondly, the perspectives and knowledge produced from this research are intended to influence the development of a sustainable funding framework for the public broadcaster. To contribute to getting a policy framework that allows GBC to deliver its PSB mandate while maintaining a healthy balance sheet, be innovative, and survive a rapidly evolving digital media landscape. Apart from reigniting public conversations for the need to find alternative funding models for the GBC, this study will contribute to global literature about the future of public service broadcasting and offer recommendations that may be transferable to other developing economies.

1.6 Scope of the study

This study looks into GBC's funding mechanisms and challenges within the context of the digital age. It provides an analysis of GBC's current funding model, taking into consideration both traditional funding sources (including government subventions, TV license fees, and advertising) and innovative models (e.g., public-private partnerships, digital monetization, and tax on lottery). It also makes recommendations based on existing global funding models of PSBs. While the study is limited to GBC, its findings may have a broader impact for PSB in other African countries facing a similar fate.

1.7 Limitation of the study

The present study focused on the Political Economy of the media theory to establish the connection between the elite and funding for public service broadcasting. This decision was based on a careful consideration of various scholarly work on the two concepts. Inadequate updated literature on the subject was identified as a limitation of this study. The limited number of the respondent (five) for the study is also a limitation since it affects the extent to which it can be generalized. A larger sample would have contributed an expanded and nuanced understanding of the issues identified. The tight schedule of the respondents and the researcher given that study was conducted towards the end of the year, posed significant challenges to the study. Finally, the researcher's focus on follower counts of GBC's social media presence only instead of it being in addition to the corporation's digital media metrics, including audience demography and actual monetisation data was also a limitation of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Theoretical framework and Literature review

This section focuses on theoretical and conceptual frameworks and related literature of the study. It examines the key themes on sustainable funding for PSBs in an era where public broadcasters face stiff competition from commercial broadcasters while also losing a significant number of younger audiences to digital media— streaming platforms and social media. The various perspectives on funding models, digital adaptation and corporate governance provide insights into how the digital age can be an opportunity and a threat to financial sustainability.

Across the globe, PSBs have become digitally inclined and a means of reaching younger audiences while at the same time tapping into the opportunities the digital era offers (Scott, 2022). Many countries are also rethinking conventional sources of funding for public broadcasters and are exploring innovative ways to financially empower PSBs to deliver on their public interest mandate

Previous studies in other parts of the globe, including Europe, North America, Asia and Africa, highlight both conventional and innovative approaches – state grants, license fees, subscription services, advertising, taxes on income and household levies, levies on electricity, among others Burnley (2017); Sehl (2024) ; Nordicom (2019); Asare (2016).

In Ghana, however, literature is limited on the subject, especially on GBC’s sustainable funding challenges in a digital media environment, where stakeholders have raised questions about the sustainability of the corporation’s current funding model (Pubic Media Alliance, 2021).

2.1 Conceptual framework

The study builds a conceptual framework based on existing literature, which shows that PSB sustainability is highly dependent on a blend of funding mechanisms, digital adaptation and good corporate governance.

Collectively, the three variables determine whether PSBs such as GBC can remain relevant and financially sustainable in a digital age when audience shifts have led to fragmentation, competition and financial challenges for public broadcasters whose sources of revenue are dwindling (Ofcom, 2018)

Globally, broadcasters are digitally adapting in a self-driven process known as auto-disruption to be innovative and respond to the dynamic media environment where audience loyalty is fast shifting to social media and video-streaming apps, especially among the younger generation (Evans, 2018). For instance, in Europe, D'Arma et al. (2021) and Donders & Van den Bulck (2022) point out how PSBs such as the BBC, which had in the past been reluctant to deploy proprietary platforms, have now fully integrated its BBC iPlayer as part of its platforms while working with independent producers and commercial streaming platforms (Nicoli, 2015).

Similarly, PSBs have turned to social media to increase audience engagement by creating short-form content in an era when digital inequalities are still a challenge, especially in Africa (Jafri & Yahya, 2025; Katsoulakis, 2022; and Conroy-Krutz et al., 2024). Broadcasters, for that matter, public broadcasters are relying on social media analytics to make their programming decisions (Notara, 2024).

The literature also showed that digital adaptation is not the only antidote for financial sustainability, as PSBs need to diversify their sources of income while broader funding reforms are needed to make PSBs financially sustainable (Bickerton, 2025).

Within the African and Ghanaian context, corporate governance and managerial inefficiency undermined the sustainability of PSBs (Asafo-Agyei, 2010; Nyembezi et al., 2019). Specifically for GBC, its source of funding has been dominated by commercial revenue rather than television license, while it has also, over the years, failed to take advantage of the opportunities digital media offers. The public service broadcaster has also had managerial issues that have led to poor content delivery, thereby affecting sponsors' interest in its programmes (Asafo-Agyei, 2010).

While GBC today has significant social media presence, according to Penplusbyte (2023), it is not clear whether this is translating into revenue for the state broadcaster, which has come under public scrutiny for failing to telecast the country's 2026 World Cup qualifier matches.

This conceptual framework postulates that for PSBs, including GBC, to be financially viable would largely depend on funding reforms, digital innovation and efficient corporate governance. If GBC innovates and adapts digitally, it would increase its reach, good corporate governance would ensure accountability, and sustainable funding would provide stability for the public broadcaster to deliver its public interest mandate in an era where digital media is expanding the frontiers of competition and media consumption.

2.2 Theoretical framework

The study is grounded in the Political Economy of the Media, which is defined as “the study of the social relations, particularly the power relations, which mutually constitute the production, distribution, and consumption of communication resources” (Mosco, 1995, p2).

Herman and Chomsky (1988) outlined the theory in their co-authored book, *Manufacturing Consent – The Political Economy*, in which they introduced the propaganda model, and argued that the media is part of the market system and mirrors the class values and concerns of its owners.

The model states that:

“A propaganda model focuses on this inequality of wealth and power and its multilevel effects on mass-media interests and choices. It traces the routes by which money and power are able to filter out the news fit to print, marginalize dissent, and allow the government and dominant private interests to get their messages across to the public (Herman & Chomsky, 1988, p.61).

Key assumptions under the model are that the media in free market environments serve the interest of the elite through systemic and economic pressures instead of direct censorship. The model uses five filters to explain how information is selected, framed and circulated. These filters are media ownership, advertising, sourcing of information from business and government, flak, and ideology—anti-communism (Herman & Chomsky, 1988).

Ownership relates to how the priorities of the society’s most influential people determine what becomes news, while the high dependence on advertising promotes corporate capture of the media where commercial interest is put ahead of public interest, and content that threatens commercial interest is shelved. In terms of sourcing, they argue that reliance on political and corporate actors sets the agenda, while flak constitutes a system deliberately established by corporate and political actors to discipline media houses and journalists who go against conventional narratives. These media and journalists face criticism, lawsuits and funding threats. And finally, dominant ideologies, which in this case were anti-communism at the time the model was propagated, give credence to which viewpoints should be accepted or discarded (Herman & Chomsky, 1988).

Robinson (2015) explains Herman and Chomsky's work to mean that the media content was motivated by revenue from advertisements and the interest of business while being hindered by their over reliance on official sources, intimidating right-wing think tanks and Cold war ideological undertones to determine what needs to be in the public domain as news.

Citing Herman and Chomsky (1988), Asare (2016, p.18) notes that the "filters in effect limit what will become news in society and set parameters on acceptable coverage of daily events."

Ultimately, the model suggests that the media's bias is systemic and is as a result of how institutional structures are used to unconsciously define public opinion in ways that satisfy and protect influential people in public office and private business Klaehn (2002).

To quote Klaehn (2002, p.147): "The elite domination of the media and marginalization of dissidents that results from the operation of these filters occurs so naturally that media news people, frequently operating with complete integrity and goodwill, are able to convince themselves that they choose and interpret the news 'objectively' and on the basis of professional news values."

Pedro (2011) reinforces the political economy of the media, drawing from the propaganda model's take on advertising.

"This dependence on advertising revenue also promotes the commercialization of content (with the rise of "infotainment," lifestyle journalism, etc.) and the exclusion of information and programs that do not fit within this logic, due to the need to reach either wide audiences or audiences with purchasing power and the right psycho-demographic characteristics to form part of the advertiser's target market. In other words, the media financing model promotes types of content produced with a view to business, rather than to the democratization of society." (Ibid, p.17).

This position demonstrates the dilemma of public service broadcasters, including GBC which is compelled by its dwindling finances to operate as commercial broadcaster in order to deliver their public service mandate.

In Ghana, the state broadcaster, GBC's current situation reflects the power dynamics Herman and Chomsky alluded to as the ruling elite weigh influence on GBC with self-censorship big culture in the public broadcaster (Anoff-Ntow, 2016).

2.3 Propaganda model and the digital age

While this notion provides a valuable insight into how the media unconsciously does the bidding of the elite, it does not speak to the growing culture of independence/critical journalism among PSBs around the world, who hold the powerful accountable. Examples include Australia's PSB, ABC's investigative work, which exposed Australian soldiers' involvement in extrajudicial killings in Afghanistan (Willacy, 2020) and a BBC Panorama investigation which forced a British lawmaker, Patrick Mercer, to resign over accepting money to lobby for a foreign interest in the British Parliament (Wright, 2013).

In contemporary times, where the media has evolved courtesy of a digital transformation, the relevance of Herman and Chomsky (1988) has been challenged.

For instance, advertising, which Herman & Chomsky cite as a bargaining chip for elite influence, has moved from legacy media advertisement to surveillance capitalism, where big technology companies aggregate users' information, analyse it, monetise and sell it as a product to advertisers (Zuboff, 2019).

Editorial decisions in newsrooms used to play to the advantage of the elite because of advertising. The digital media is changing that. Today, data-driven behavioural systems target, personalise

and automate persuasion. The new wave of advertisement is built around digital communication, using algorithms that promote user engagement (Yuan et. al., 2013).

Furthermore, Hansen (2011, p 52), as cited by Robinson (2015), notes that “new media technologies have facilitated real-time global television coverage, and the Internet and cell phones with cameras and video-recording capacity have altered the relationship between producers and consumers and between elites and audiences”

While PSBs the global north have taken significant steps towards gravitating towards the new paradigm of digital media with innovative laboratories (López-Golán, 2024), their counterparts in the global south, including GBC, are struggling to adapt to the new digital era because of cost of innovation, leaving audiences dissatisfied while the public broadcasters’ audience and revenue shrink (Motsaathebe, 2022; Myjoyonline, 2025).

From the foregoing, in the digital age, the filters propounded by Herman & Chomsky mutate, in the face of digital media technology—algorithm and data-driven advertising-- which are not the forte of PSBs, thereby hindering public broadcasters’ viability. What drives revenue has moved beyond television license and traditional advertising.

A big question remains as to whether PSBs, particularly those in developing countries, including Ghana, are well equipped to adapt to the digital era to remain sustainable.

2.4 Related literature

2.4.1 Digital adaptation and innovation in broadcasting

The literature shows broadcasters, including PSBs, are adopting diverse strategies to adapt to the rapidly changing media ecosystem.

In the United States, Evans (2018) examined how PSBs are responding to the digital age. The study found that public broadcasters have been proactive in using auto disruption—self-driven innovation to match the disruptions from the digital media space. These public broadcasters, according to the study, are addressing the digital media deficit in their organisations through a multifaceted approach, including staff diversification and programming, which it identified as a major barrier for PSMs' performance.

The public broadcasters set up a structure and systems to formalise their innovations, which were tested before being rolled out. For instance, WNYC -FM developed a system that allows it to test two ideas every year. They achieve this through pairing a radio and digital staff to develop and test these ideas (Evans, 2018, p13-14).

Ultimately, the objective of these ideas is to increase audience reach and loyalty and increase revenue. These allow tackling what could have been a threat from external forces—streaming platforms and social media.

What the study does not detail is whether auto-disruption is financially viable for public broadcasters already struggling amidst competition from public broadcasters and audience fragmentation triggered by the increasing popularity of streaming platforms and social media.

In contrast, European broadcasters' adoption and implementation of convergence media has been more cautious. An analysis of strategies PSMs in some European countries —United Kingdom, Italy and Belgium, have deployed to tackle digital media's competition in the broadcasting space showed European public broadcasters, who were hitherto either cautious or hesitant in adopting streaming platforms, have now fully integrated them into their operations to reverse the rapidly declining audience numbers. For instance, the BBC's adoption of online streaming (iPlayer) was

cited as a response to external influence that was biting hard on the corporation's audience statistics. In context, the decision to introduce these platforms is meant to grow audience engagement, which ultimately may result in revenue growth (D'Arma et al.2021).

The differences in the European and the United States approaches could also be explained in terms of the difference in the years the two studies were conducted. There is, however no evidence pointing to increase in revenue from these investments in digital platforms.

In bridging these perspectives, Donders and Van den Bulck (2022) assert that while public broadcasters are struggling to deal with the disruptions being caused by streaming platforms, including YouTube and Netflix, they are adopting hybrid strategies, combining proprietary platforms such as BBC iPlayer and ZDF mediathek, with selective partnerships with commercial platforms to reach audiences while maintaining editorial control.

This hybrid model demonstrates the tension that emerges as PSBs seek a consensus in innovation, and adaptation while in search of a sustainable avenue to execute their mandate in a competitive digital media environment.

Building on this debate, Notara (2024) explored social media influence on conventional broadcasting and asserts that broadcasters are able to customise content for different audience demographics effectively falling on social media platforms' data-driven algorithms. The platforms' analytical tools allow broadcasters including PSBs to analyse contents audience engage with, which helps to hone programming strategies and maximise their content strategies to retain their viewers. The study also found that social media's real-time updates pose a challenge to legacy media's ability to provide updates, noting that Twitter (now X) allows users to break news. This feature, the study indicated, reshapes audience expectations of broadcasters to provide real-time

updates. Furthermore, the study observed that conventional revenue sources of broadcasters, including PSBs, have been disrupted by the monetisation of social media, which allows content creators to monetise their following through sponsored posts and affiliate marketing.

While this view is valid, particularly the adaptation of social media, the commercial argument loses sight of the public service broadcasting mandate to serve the public interest and the need for alternative funding models.

In the same vein, in Malaysia, broadcasters are adapting to digital platforms through content diversification and technological advancement to reach audience more effectively. The broadcasters deploy social media, Over-the-top (OTT) platforms and mobile apps to complement their traditional offerings. To fit into the content offerings of social media platforms, the broadcasters tailor content with lengthy programming shortened to meet the requirements of digital media platforms (Jafri and Yahya, 2025).

The adoption of short-format videos to meet the needs of broadcasters' audience on social media reflects a prevalent shift in audience engagement and the recognition of the influence of social media in a competitive media environment where audience attention span is short. An analysis of the broadcaster's revenue after the adoption of this approach should be of research interest to determine if it is yielding results financially.

It mirrors the emerging trend in media consumption globally. For example, Katsoulakis (2022) probed into how digital media streaming services reformed the role of the Greek public network, ERT, from state to public service broadcaster. Younger audiences (Generation Z) between the ages of 18-29 showed little engagement with conventional broadcast channels but were interested in digital platforms. They subscribe to digital service platforms. This finding highlights a global

pattern of younger people shifting to the convenience offered by video streaming platforms, which offer them control over the content they watch, where to watch it and when to watch it.

Katsoulakis' (2022) aligns with broader global patterns, as is the case of South Korea, where user preferences for digital platform-based subscription services is growing. Television audiences preferred video streaming platforms because of how their content was organised, which allows them to easily find the exact movie, series, show or video clips they want compared to channel surfing associated with live conventional TV. Additionally, the study also found a relationship between options available to users, and users' preference for streaming platforms (Kim et. al., 2020). This would mean that public service broadcasters would suffer audience fragmentation and revenue loss to digital platforms-based subscription services. Research into which kind of content attracts consumers of video streaming platforms will be useful for PSBs.

Africa is not left out of how broadcasters are reshaping content to fit digital platforms. Conroy-Krutz et. al. (2024, p.1-2) explored a multi-country analysis of 39 countries in Africa's shifting media landscape. They found a shift towards digital media consumption through social media or the internet, while radio remains the dominant platform for news and other forms of entertainment and information. The study also highlighted a wide digital gap between rural and urban dwellers in terms of access to digital media and the internet in general. This provides a major challenge for public service broadcasters who, amidst resource constraints, would have to find resources to be digitally compliant while a section of their intended audience is cut off from the internet.

Similarly, new media technologies and their challenges to broadcasting in Nigeria is the subject of study of Olley (2009). The research employed a survey and sampled respondents from radio and television stations in Edo State and found that broadcasters, both television and radio, are using new media to complement their broadcasting to increase their audience reach. This reflects

the findings of earlier literature reviewed, reflecting a global phenomenon. Given that social media platforms are monetised, this approach provides an avenue for sustainable revenue for the broadcasters, including PSBs, who are now eagerly embracing social media in order to maximise their audience reach.

Within the Nigerian context broadcasters show preference for adaptation and new media integration. However, in South African, television broadcast industry players were aware of audience fragmentation with the majority being neutral about the implications. Nevertheless, the majority of them believe fragmentation has not reached its peak, and at the same it cannot be reversed. However, many also believe countermeasures are needed to reverse the fragmentation trend, having become a deep-rooted feature of today's media with little attempt at prevention (Tengeh & Udoakpan, 2023). Audience research into viewers satisfaction rate of the SABC will be insightful.

2.4.2 Digital media adaption in Ghana

The case is not different in the Ghanaian context, where Penplusbyte's (2023) social media index report analysed the social media performance of 111 Ghanaian media outlets, including the public service broadcaster, GBC. It found that most of the country's major media platforms, both public and private, have turned to social media and streaming platforms—Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube to gain traction for their brands, and have collectively attracted 8.8 million followers. The research found Facebook to be the most dominant brand. While GTV did not make it to the list of the top 10 media platforms with the highest following on social media, its sister station, GTV Sports+, featured on the list. The research, however, noted that growing misinformation, challenges how media platforms can take advantage of social media metrics to maximise their effective use of their platforms. What this study lacks is an analysis of the reasons the audience

follow and engage or whether followership translates into viewership credibility and ultimately financial sustainability. Given the increase in social media interest, GBC is tapping into the potential of social media. However, the question that needs answering is whether this is translating into sustainable revenue for the public broadcaster.

While legacy media in Ghana turn to social media to increase visibility and audience reach, there is a growing audience on the social media app, Tiktok. The app is impacting traditional television audience and causing a shift to its use over television because the app is simple to use and offering users the opportunity to create content almost instantly. The algorithms are able to recommend a pattern of users' favourite content based on viewing history. The study also found that Tiktok impacts the digital advertising ecosystem as users chose Tiktok adverts over traditional media ones because "they felt more connected and got better buying influences" while Tiktok's interactive features and user-generated content, and viral trends functions allow better user engagement (Gyasi et al., 2025, p1). While the trend does not favour GBC, it highlights the impact of social media platforms on the broader issues of the broadcaster's funding constraints as social media influencers are bucking the trend of traditional advertising.

Multiple studies into the rising consumer preference for Over the Top (OTT) video streaming apps found the reasons underpinning the growing shift to the digital entertainment platforms at the expense of traditional media, for that matter, public service broadcasters.

Collectively, the literature reviewed above demonstrates that social media and streaming services and digital platforms are impacting how public broadcasters are adapting to digital media to address the issues of audience fragmentation, while at the same time taking advantage of opportunities digital media offers to grow their audience and improve their finances.

2.4.3 Sustainable funding alternatives

Public service broadcasting funding in 19 countries, including Canada, are turning to other sources of income to complement public funding with commercial income to sustain their operations. Beyond advertising, PSBs can generate income from sources like private and corporate donations, content sales, real estate rentals, retransmission royalties, and leasing transmission site space. This diversification has become critical in the digital age, where declining public funding has become a challenge amidst stiff competition from commercial and online media, creating sustainability challenges for PSBs (Bickerton, 2025).

Similarly, Lin & Tsai (2023) analysed the Taiwan PSB, Taiwan PTS+ through a content analysis of annual reports, media coverage, magazine issues, and the PTS+ website (2017–2022) to understand its digital distribution strategy and content recommendation system of the Taiwanese broadcaster. The findings show that the public broadcaster partners with commercial streaming platforms, Netflix and MyVideo, to co-produce and distribute high-quality dramas. Apart from increasing the broadcaster's audience reach to a younger audience online, this approach also boosts revenue through licensing of content as well as co-production deals. What the study lacks is a comparative analysis of audience satisfaction with Taiwan PTS+ content and how this could be reformed into internal programming to attract a younger audience to watch the broadcaster and increase its internal revenue.

Apart from market-driven strategies, available literature also provides policy alternatives for sustainable funding for PSBs.

Australia introduced an innovation into the sustainability literature. The country implementation of the News Media Bargaining Code (NMBC) in 2021, has marked a turning point in the financial

fortunes of the Australian media, including two of its public service broadcasters—the Australian Broadcasting Corporation and Special Broadcasting Service. The code required big tech platforms, including Google and Meta to negotiate payments for news content, culminating in approximately annual revenue of nearly AU\$250 million to Australian news media. This approach guarantees sustainable funding for public service broadcasters, given that big technology companies aggregate content and make money from it while the broadcasters struggle to raise enough to fund their operations (Molitorisz and Attard, 2024).

Equally unconventional is the PSB funding in Germany and Switzerland, where funding models transitioned from device-specific license fees to tax-based funding models aimed at stabilising the finances of their public service broadcaster (Berg & Lund, 2024). This provides a documentary analysis of funds annually to show the efficiency of compliance compared to television license fees. By implication, this means that funding models based on taxes offer a more sustainable and equitable financing model for public broadcasters, particularly when television license fee enforcement has become a challenge. A study into how this approach can affect programming and editorial independence may fill an important gap in the literature.

Other scholars found that in the era of platformisation PSMs that depend on television licenses and contributions from the public are under pressure to reform. It is an approach that emphasises the growing consensus for sustainable funding for public broadcasters to shift away from the revenue model of commercial broadcasters, which includes subscription and rather focus on tax-based funding options. This is meant to ensure that PSMs stick to their core mandate without compromising on their editorial independence, which has become a major concern for public broadcasters who depend on state funding (Dragomir et. al.,2025). Further research into how tax-

based funding impacts the sustainability and editorial independence of public broadcasters that rely on state funding would offer a nuanced understanding of such funding mechanisms.

Mediatique (2020) findings from research that assessed the future of public service broadcasting assert that advertising and sponsorship, the conventional revenue for public broadcasters, are shrinking, while the justification for public service broadcasting has been eroded because of PSBs' shrinking audience and stiff competition from video-streaming platforms. To mitigate these challenges, the study asserts that in the UK, the BBC and other broadcasters are providing their own on-demand services. However, the study observed that innovations have not made up for the decline in audience engagement.

Across regions, there is evidence to show that while digital adaptation is now part of media, for that matter, PSB culture, and contributes to expanding reach and engagement, it has not translated into financial sustainability for PSBs as Fray et. al. (2024) asserts in a study that explored Africa's media post COVID-19. There is a significant shift towards digital media, with the media, including public broadcasters, customising content to suit digital platforms as they adapt to meet their audience's consumption patterns. However, the study notes that the strong digital adaptation is not translating into a sustainable revenue stream. The study also shows that media houses are exploring diverse ways of raising revenues, including digital subscriptions and consultancy services.

While Mediatique (2020) and Fray et al. (2024) demonstrate that digital media migration does not necessarily translate into financial stability, Nyembezi et al. (2019) shift the focus to good corporate governance as a pathway to financial sustainability in a study that focused on how SABC's internal workings affect its financial viability.

2.4.4 Corporate governance and staff capacity

Financial sustainability is not limited to the availability of funds but also how the funds are managed within the structures of an institution. There is growing scholarly work that suggests that the South African broadcaster, SABC's struggles has a lot to do with the boardroom as it does it with its finances. There are complaints about employees not being actively involved in decision-making. The SABC's financial sustainability, media scholars argued would be enhanced if its internal stakeholders are actively engaged in decision-making and its policies mirror its operational realities. Equally important is how a competitive media ecosystem backed by effective policies and regulations creates efficiency and innovation that can help the South African public broadcaster deliver on its mandate (Nyembezi et. al., 2019). A deficiency in the study is the specific innovations required alongside good corporate governance to ensure SABC is financially sustainable in a competitive media environment where audience fragmentation is rife and revenue continuously shrinks.

Buttressing Nyembezi (2019) position, Asare (2016) asserts that GBC's current financial predicament flows from direct and indirect managerial challenges, including inefficient monitoring and supervision of the public broadcaster's employees. Beyond the poor supervision, the study also highlights a lack of capacity for GBC staff to deliver quality content to attract sponsorship, which is a key revenue component. Additionally, the study also draws attention to comparatively low 10% proceeds from television license and 80% from the corporation's internally generated funds, which tilts the broadcaster's financial outlook as a commercial entity, thereby clouding its mandate as a public broadcaster. The study attributes the rather low collection of television licenses to factors including the inefficient manual collection system and GBC's inability to terminate viewership of people who default in payment, which has worsened its financial woes.

This raises critical issues about managerial inefficiencies and how it impacts productivity, while the public broadcaster's revenue sources heavily gravitated towards commercial activities, but its staff lack the capacity to produce quality content that should attract revenue from sponsors. A noticeable gap in the study is the lack of modern strategies that connect good corporate governance reforms, digital innovation and a sustainable funding framework that works for PSBS like GBC.

Although GBC was expected to be sustainably funded through the television license fee, the collection of the fee has been largely ineffective, and generated less than 0.5% of the corporation's revenue. Media scholars have attributed the challenge to factors including a weak collection system, outmoded database of television set ownership, lack of property address system and the corporation's lack of eagerness to collect the fee. In the absence of such means to fund its operation, the public broadcaster heavily relied on internally generated funds dominated by programme sponsorship, advertising, transmission and mast rentals, news coverage, and public announcements. GBC also failed to leverage digital media opportunities to increase its revenue, as it failed to take advantage of the internet to expand its online presence with a functional website (Asafo-Agyei, 2010).

GBC struggles with revenue collection through its ineffective television license fee collection and commercial revenue dominating its kitty, while billing businesses to cover news shows a broadcaster moving away from its core mandate and rather satisfying commercial interest in order to remain functional. This makes it difficult to distinguish between GBC's public interest mandate and public relations. Future research could explore how digital revolution is boosting revenue growth and audience engagement while also examining how other PSBs in GBC's socio-economic context are navigating the challenge of television license collection or alternatives for the fee.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Methodology

This chapter provides details of the research methodology used in the study. It covers the design, population, sampling methods, data collection tools, and procedures employed to gather and analyse data to achieve the research objectives. It also covers the ethical considerations and measures taken to ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings.

3.1 Research approach

The research study used a mixed method to guarantee that both qualitative and quantitative methodologies were used to gain a thorough understanding of the roles of the public service broadcast in the digital age. The use of quantitative and qualitative methodologies enabled the study to address the research issues in a variety of ways.

3.2 Research design

The present study used mixed methods research. It answered the study's objectives through the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods study. Mixed methods design among other things, offers completeness, complementarity, development of appropriate research tools and strategies for a study to ensure generalizability of the findings and also provide "underlying nuances and meanings that can help the researcher make sense of the numbers. (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015, p. 229). The weakness of qualitative data is addressed by quantitative data and vice-versa. Mixed methods design is used when exploring relationships between multiple variables which cannot be achieved through a single research design (Sharma, 2023); see also Maxwell (2016). Throwing

more light on mixed methods, McLeod (2024) asserts that mixed methods are suitable when research questions need a multifaceted approach that can explore trends in data and nuances of people's experiences at the same time.

The study, specifically uses an Explanatory sequential design. This design begins with the collection and analysis of quantitative data, followed by the second phase which is qualitative data collection and analysis to nuance the understanding of the quantitative data (Creswell, 2009). In this study, the quantitative data shows the trends of the dominant sources of GBC's revenue and how it is using its digital platforms to perform its public service mandate at a time the younger generation has shifted towards digital media. The qualitative data provides deeper insights and understanding of the quantitative data.

3.3. Research paradigm

The study's epistemological assumption is grounded in Pragmatism. This foundation gives overriding importance to research questions above either the positivist (quantitative) or the constructivist (qualitative) paradigms. Its appropriateness is based on the fact that it facilitates the collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data in parallel, followed by integration during the interpretation process. This design ensures that empirical patterns (e.g., full statistical correlations) are directly compared and enriched with cultural narratives (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

3.4 Study Population

The population for quantitative section of the study included all publicly-available records of GBC covering the public service broadcaster's funding from 2015 to 2024 and social media metrics as of November 2025. The financial records are the corporation's internally generated funds—

commercial revenue, state subvention, television license and rental income. The qualitative population comprised participants with knowledge of GBC's operations.

3.5 Sample and Sampling technique

Since the study relied on documentary sources, sampling was purposive, focusing exclusively on documents containing verifiable financial information or digital metrics. The unit of analysis for the quantitative component comprised: annual financial records and audited accounts; SIGA annual reports; and Official social media performance data from GBC's platforms. Purposive sampling was appropriate because it ensured that only documents relevant to the research questions were selected, thereby enhancing the depth and relevance of the analysis. The population for the qualitative data on the other hand is all key stakeholders who have knowledge of the operations of GBC, have influence over it through policy and whose actions affect its funding model and adaptation to the digital age. Given the research design, the study employed a non-probability sampling technique, purposive sampling. Purposive sampling allowed participants to be interviewed on the basis of the researcher's judgement about which respondent will be the most useful or representative. Purposive sampling suits this aspect of the study because it does not involve random selection, thus assisting the researcher to identify specific respondents with the characteristics that are of importance to the study (Odoom & Agyepong, 2022) see also Barbie (2005). In total, the researcher sampled five respondents being respondents from academia, the National Media Commission, two from GBC, civil society, and a media expert.

For confidentiality purposes, the respondents have been coded as follows:

Table 2: Profile of Respondents

Respondent	Code
Senior management member of GBC	SM
Senior official GBC Digital Media Unit	DA
Representative of National Media Commission	NM
Civil Society media analyst	CS
Academic	AC
TOTAL	5

3.6 Data collection instruments

The study employed multiple methods of data collection aligned with the mixed-methods design. These included documentary analysis for quantitative data, and secondary qualitative review for institutional and contextual interpretation. A question guide was designed and vetted by the supervisor to help address all weaknesses. Towards obtaining detailed, textured and rich layers of information from key informants, a semi-structured interview guide was deployed. Research scientists allude to semi-structured interview questions being effective in exploring complex topics and their inherent flexibility in unveiling emerging themes (Ruslin et al., 2022). Their use is also to allow reliable and fairly consistent information from the respondent. Follow-up questions that would enable the researcher to probe and seek clarifications were asked. The in-depth interviews were recorded with the permission of the respondents. Each interview was transcribed verbatim

using Turboscribe, an artificial intelligence platform and cleaned manually for typos and grammar and grammatical errors. The findings were presented and the analysis done.

3.7 Reliability and Validity

To promote content validity, the development of the interview guide was informed by a thorough review of relevant scholarly literature on public service broadcasting in the digital era. The instruments were reviewed by the supervisor of the study, a media scholar at the University of Media, Arts and Communication, who provided feedback on conceptual validity, clarity, and contextual applicability. The recommendations were incorporated to strengthen the alignment between the items and the study objectives, as well as to ensure cultural appropriateness.

Procedural reliability was strengthened through the use of standardized administration procedures that will be applied in both the pre-test and the main data collection. All participants received clear instructions.

3.8 Data Collection Procedure

Quantitative data on GBC's revenue data from 2015-2024 was collected using Ghana's Right to Information (RTI) law. The data covered the public broadcaster's internally generated funds while that of its state subventions were obtained from the State Interest and Governance Authority (SIGA) annual reports published on its website. Data on GBC's digital footprints was collected from the broadcaster's social media handles – Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Tiktok, Instagram and Youtube. Qualitative data was collected through in-depth interview. To obtain reliable and fairly consistent information from the respondents, the researcher developed a question guide. There were, however, follow-up questions that enabled the researcher to probe and seek clarifications. The interview durations were between 20 to 45 minutes in the offices of all

respondents, except that of the National Media Commission. Each interview was transcribed. The findings were then presented and the analysis done.

3.9. Data analysis

While the quantitative data covering GBC's sources of revenue and its digital footprint was analysed using trend analysis, cross-category comparisons and graphic representation, the qualitative part, data from interviews were transcribed and coded for thematic analysis using the following themes: GBC's PSB mandate's performance in the digital platform media environment; GBC's managerial challenges; GBC's current funding arrangements and their adequacy to sustain its PSB mandate in the digital environment; and examine sustainable funding models used by PSBs globally and assess their applicability to the GBC. The thematic analysis allowed interpretation and expanded on the quantitative results, thereby ensuring a detailed understanding of the funding challenges and opportunities of GBC. The integration of both phases occurred at the interpretation stage, where the qualitative findings were used to explain and refine the quantitative outcomes, ultimately generating evidence-based recommendations for sustainable funding strategies for GBC in the digital age. The analysis and discussion compared findings in the literature review to that of the present findings

3.9.1 Ethical considerations

Ethics is the bedrock of rigorous research and it steered every step of the process. The research obtained the necessary ethical approval from Ethics Review Board to conduct the study. Before the collection of data, the respondents were informed about the purpose of the study, its procedures and their rights. All aspects of identifying information were anonymized before analysis. (Wa-Mbaleka, 2019). To obtain the highest form of integrity, autonomy and voluntary participation, informed consent was secured from respondents regarding the study's objectives, procedures, risks

and benefits. Respondents were reminded that they reserve the right to opt out at any stage. By adhering to established ethical guidelines, credibility, trustworthiness, and compliance with institutional review requirements were ensured (Davis & Lachlan, 2017).

The findings and analysis of the study have been presented in the next chapter. It shows patterns and insights and answers the research questions.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the findings and discussions of the results in relation to the research objectives and the broader scholarly work on PSB funding. The thesis sought to address three key research questions as follows:

1. How has GBC performed in its PSB mandate in the digital platform media environment?
2. What is GBC's current funding arrangements and their adequacies to sustain its PSB mandate in the digital environment.
3. What sustainable funding models are being used by PSBs globally and can be applicable to the GBC?

4.1 Quantitative findings

4.2 GBC's mandate and digital media use

The documentary findings show that GBC has an active digital media presence across six platforms: YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, X and its official website, www.gbcghanaonline.com. The tables below show the various platforms and GBC's performance in terms of its digital presence.

Table 3: GBC's Facebook Pages and their Followers

Digital media platform	Channel	Number of followers/ subscribers
Facebook	Ghana Broadcasting Corporation	554,000
	GTV	715,000
	GTV Sports+	910,000
Total		2,179,000

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

In table 1 above, GBC has more than 2.1 million followers on Facebook. The text, video and photo-sharing platform is the most dominant of GBC's digital footprint where it has three pages. This reflects the social media policy of GBC's peers around the world, including the BBC, who run multiple accounts of their channels and content streams. In GBC's case, it is GTV Sports, and GTV Sports +. Apart from the core channels, some regional radio and television stations including Obonu TV, Garden City TV and GBC are also represented on Facebook with comparatively lower following. The figures mean that GBC although is attracting interest from social media audience, it still lags behind commercial broadcasters. For example, TV3 has 4.2 million followers and Joy News 2.4 million.

GBC uses Facebook for live streaming of its prime-time programmes including its breakfast show, a magazine show that deals with issues of national importance. The accounts also post news, State events, including the Accountability Series which provides the platform for Ministers to update the public on happenings in their institutions, sports and entertainment content.

Table 4: GBC's Various TikTok Pages and their Followers

Digital media platform	Channel	Number of followers/ subscribers
Tiktok	GBC News	52,000
	GTV_Ghana	272,000
	GTV Sports +	531,000
Total		855,000

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

For table 2, Tiktok follows strongly with a combined 855,000 followers for three pages GBC News, GTV Ghana and GTV Sports. There was, however, no page for Ghana Broadcasting Corporation. In keeping with the features of Tiktok, GBC's videos posted on the platform are mainly entertainment content and condensed news updates. This shows that GTV is focused on using Tiktok as an extension of its traditional media role to engage younger audience.

Table 5: GBC's YouTube Pages and their Subscribers

Digital media platform	Channel	Number of followers/ subscribers
Youtube	Ghana Broadcasting Corporation	127,000
	GTV	374,000
	GTV Sports+	
Total		501,000

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

From Table 3, Youtube, a video streaming platform, has GBC’s third highest digital media following with two channels (Ghana Broadcasting Corporation and GTV) raking 501,000 subscribers. Its Youtube accounts mirrors what is streamed on its Facebook pages, in addition to documentaries and archival materials. This helps it to serve both as a historical and current public service purposes.

Table 6: X (formerly Twitter) Pages of GBC and their Followers

Digital media platform	Channel	Number of followers/ subscribers
X (formerly Twitter)	Ghana Broadcasting Corporation	
	GTV Ghana	67,300
	GTV Sports+	287,100
	GBC News	107,100
Total		461,500

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

Table 4 shows that a total of 461,500 people follow GBC-affiliated accounts on X (formerly Twitter), a social media platform that allows short posts (tweets) with text, photos, and videos. The platform hosts three accounts of the public service broadcaster. GBC’s contents on X were focused on short videos and graphic cards on real time updates on current affairs, sports and entertainment. While showing inadequate uniformity of its branding, it also shows that GBC uses the platform to attract middle and upper middle-class users who consumes X as a source of information.

Table 7: The Followers of GBC's Various Pages on Instagram

Digital media platform	Channel	Number of followers/ subscribers
Instagram	Ghana Broadcasting Corporation	
	GBC News	12, 400
	GTV	
	GTV Sports+	21,000
Total		33,400

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

From Table 5, Instagram, the social media platform for sharing photos and short videos, accounted for GBC’s least digital media following with 33,400 people. The contents were dedicated to graphic cards and short video content mostly on current affairs and sports. This implies that GBC has not done enough to attract its audience on Instagram which tends to be more attractive to women.

4.3 What is in the contents?

Table 8: Some of GBC's Regional Stations and the Data they Posted Content

Regional station	Date of last post	Digital media platform
Volta Star FM	June 2025	Facebook
Radio Upper West	March 2025	Facebook
Radio Savannah	January 2013	X

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

A content analysis of the public broadcasters' social media platforms conducted from September 10- November 10, 2025 indicated that GBC uses Facebook for live streaming of its prime-time programmes including its breakfast show, a magazine show that deals with issues of national importance. The accounts also post news, state events, including the Accountability Series which provides the platform for Ministers to update the public on happenings in their institutions, sports and entertainment content

Furthermore, the study found that across the platforms, the content focused on a cocktail of national news, cultural promotion, health, sports, current affairs, government accountability among others. While the social media pages are also used in driving traffic to the website, www.gbcghana.com through the sharing of links.

Additionally, the findings show that most of these regional platforms have been dormant. Out of its 10 regional stations, less than half of them have an active digital presence to increase their reach among digital natives who are mostly young people. For instance, Volta Star FM, GBC's Volta regional station, last posted a content in June 2025; Radio Upper West in March 2025; Radio Savannah in the Northern Region is not Facebook but X with a negligible number of followers, and its last post was in January 2013. The exceptions being Radio Central, Twi-City Radio, Garden City TV, and URA Radio. This shows a lack of consistency in engaging audiences through digital platforms at the regional level. This impacts GBC's obligation to be inclusive in the delivery of its PSB mandate.

The findings also show that while GBC has a multi-platform presence, its follower base is heavily skewed towards sports (GTV Sports+) and entertainment-focused platforms (TikTok), raising questions about the prominence of its core news and civic content mandate online.

4.4 Qualitative findings and analysis of GBC’s performance in digital media environment

To deepen understanding and contextualise data from GBC’s digital platforms, the study further triangulated the quantitative data provided above with insights from qualitative data—in-depth interviews with key stakeholders with knowledge of GBC’s operations.

The quantitative findings above provided insights into the nature, scope and challenges of GBC’s digital footprint. However, it does not contextualise the key factors that impact GBC’s performance in the digital media environment, which has been done extensively below.

4.4.1 GBC’s public service broadcasting mandate

Respondents outside GBC from academia, civil society and regulatory perspective had mixed perspectives about the corporation’s delivery of its mandate via its legacy platforms amid a myriad of problems including technological, financial and structural that threaten the public service broadcaster’s existence in a media ecosystem that has evolved into a digital one.

To illustrate this point, AC noted that:

“To the extent that it is set out to provide a nationally inclusive voice and visibility to all the citizens of the land, I would rate it high. Why? Because there are places that GBC radio would extend signals or services to that are not necessarily economically prudent or viable. The regional stations also do content that resonates or responds to the local, regional, and community needs and interests. In doing so, it is serving the interests of inclusiveness, because it has local staff and it uses local languages. In addition to the kinds of things that it may do broadly. And if you take GTV, you will find that, similarly, GTV signals, it will have towers and transmitters in places that our commercial broadcasters, for

example, may not do. Even if they [commercial broadcasters] do, you may need a certain technology or Digibox. Without GBC some members of our society, especially the minority cultures, minority identities, ethnicities, and so on would be anonymous to our cultural national identity.”

CS, agreed and noted that GBC’s strength over the years had been “inclusivity in terms of language, geographical locations and also promotes diversity in the employment of staff with persons with disability (PWDs). GBC is able to reach almost every corner of the corner.”

However, CS had issues with GBC’s content diversity, and contended that the corporation had in recent times underperformed in children programming—content that should endear it to the next generation of audience and cultivate their loyalty, and further stated that the situation was a just reflection of the broader media landscape.

CS had other concerns with GBC’s status as one that was lost between a state broadcaster and a public service broadcaster and asserted that until that was resolved, GBC’s mandate would continue to be murky and skewed towards serving government interest rather than the public interest.

However, SM, a senior management member of GBC, insisted that with all the resource constraints to battle with, the corporation had discharged its duty creditably. The respondent argued that public discourse about GBC had most often ignored the fact that apart from GTV, there were multiple channels and radio stations that the corporation operate in 27 languages, all of which required stringent financing to be sustainable.

4.4.2 Use of digital media to deliver PSB mandate

As the quantitative data has shown, GBC has digital footprints across multiple digital platforms producing diverse contents.

Respondents within and outside GBC acknowledged the broadcaster's deliberate effort to adapt digital media to further expand the corporation's reach and engage younger viewers, known as digital natives, who are consuming more content via mobile devices than conventional broadcast channels. This supports general media consumption trends in Ghana, where mobile data penetration stands at 26.7 million out of Ghana's estimated population of 34.4 million (National Communication Authority, 2025) while interest in social media platforms including Facebook, Tiktok, Youtube and Instagram among young audience soars.

Providing further details, DA noted that the corporation as part of its digital media adaptation set up a new digital media unit staffed mainly with national service personnel and interns.

On the question of the absence of some of GBC's regional radio channels on social media platforms, DA explained that it was work in progress.

“We are on most digital media platforms. We are on Facebook. We are on Instagram. We are on TikTok and then YouTube. Now, we have accounts for our TV channels. And we have for some radio stations as well we are hoping to create more.”

DA confirmed the findings of the study in respect of content GBC churns out online and explained that the digital media unit creates targeted-like content to augment the one done by the traditional media while repurposing some of GBC's archival content, which he revealed attracts substantial eyeballs.

SM noted that in conformity with global PSB trends, GBC has to position itself to take advantage of the opportunities that are available in digital media as more Ghanaians shift their media consumption habits to digital content than traditional media ones.

“We have realised that we need to expand our presence on the digital platforms. Digital platforms offer vast opportunities. There's a lot of discussion internationally about that conversation. It is about how public service media can deliver on digital platforms. And we are working to ensure that GBC's stations are on platforms that can be accessible everywhere.”

These responses demonstrate GBC's intention to increase its public service mandate beyond its traditional media offerings. However, the initiative has been overly concentrated on television stations at the expense of radio audience, which constitutes Ghana's most consumed media (Isbell & Appiah-Nyamekye, 2018).

CS, agreed with this observation and argued that GBC's digital media innovation was skewed towards television while the corporation's radio platforms most of which were in rural Ghana barely make a social media investment.

That notwithstanding, CS applauded GBC's digital footprints and asserted that they remained the most visible and lively media platform of the corporation in recent times.

Offering insights from a regulatory view, NM commended GBC's adaptation to digital media and asserted that “any conceptualization of innovation that sees GBC's legacy media different from digital media is already running into trouble.”

This respondent, however, argued that the decision to adapt should not be to match competition from private and commercial broadcasters as this would mean that adopting the profit-oriented, audience maximisation and content strategies of commercial broadcasters.

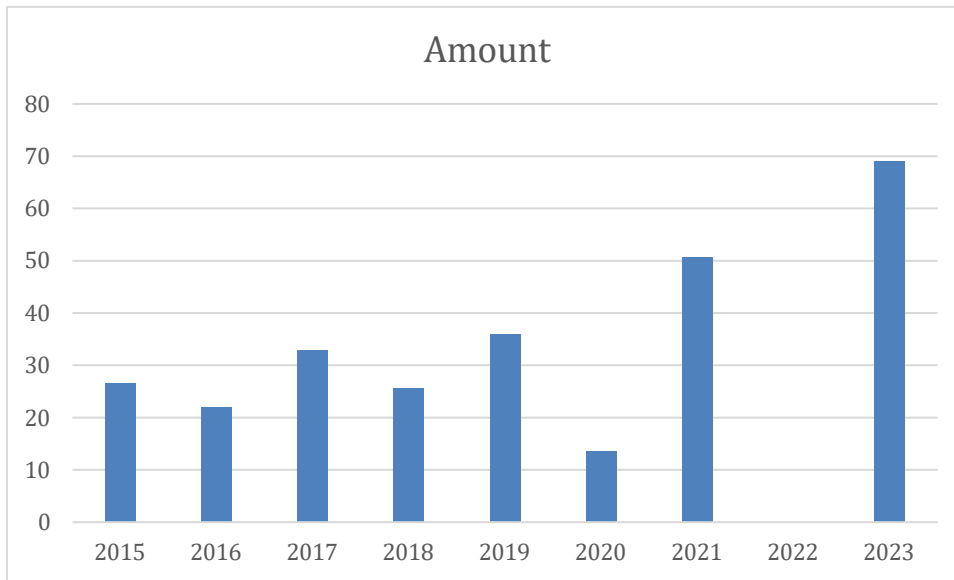
To institutionalize GBC's adaptation of digital media and establish the required structures and guidelines to regulate the corporation's online presence, the two respondents within GBC indicated that the digital drive had been captured in a digital policy as well as GBC's five-year strategy document from 2026-2030.

DA noted that GBC had its digital unit established prior to the corporation formulating its digital media policy to guide the operation on the various digital platforms. The key focus areas of the policy include content creation, dealing with third parties, ethical considerations including language use, regulatory compliance and data protection.

NM commended GBC for the policy but noted that digital unit must not be a periphery but rather central to GBC's overall strategy with the head of digital at the same level as the director of radio or television.

4.4.3 GBC's revenue sources

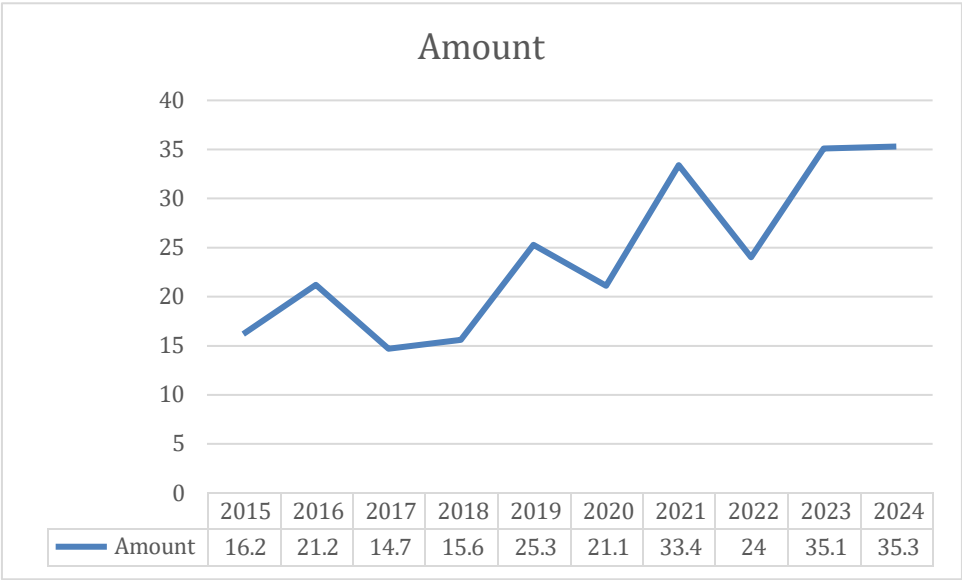
Figure 1: State Subventions (million)



Source: State Interest and Governance Authority

Figure 1 shows a decade of the state's financial commitment to GBC. In 2015, the government released GHC 26.6 million, it dropped to GHC 21.9 million in 2016 and went up to GHC 32.9 million in 2017. This pattern of irregularity continued, with a drop to GHC 25.61 million in 2018, an increase to GHC 35.82 million in 2019, and a sharp decline to GHC 13.56 million in 2020, the lowest recorded in the dataset. This could be attributed to the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic. Funding then rose dramatically to GHC 50.58 million in 2021 and peaked at GHC 69.1 million in 2023. Data for 2022 and 2024 were not available on the State Interest and Governance Authority website, neither did GBC grant it when the researcher requested for it.

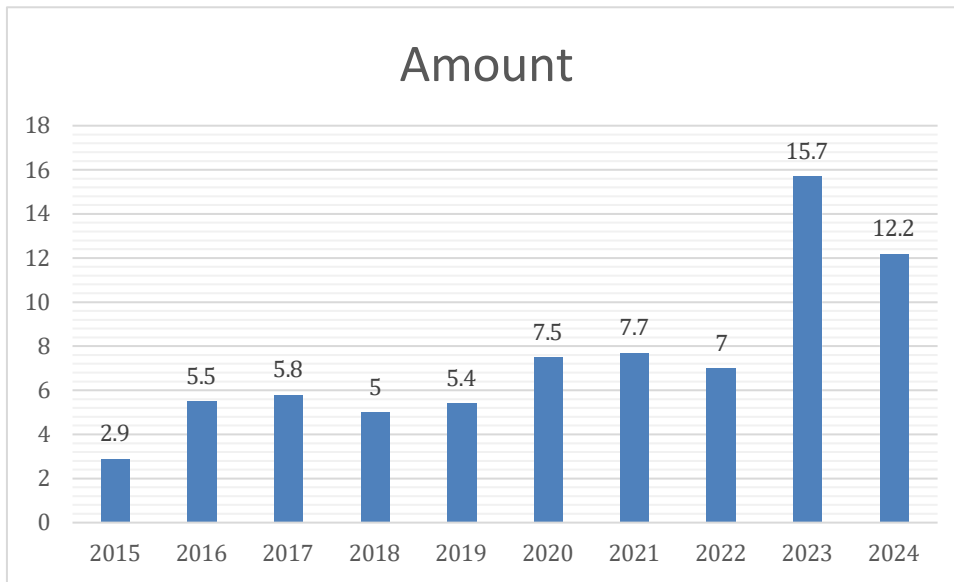
Figure 2: Commercial Revenue (million)



Source: GBC

According to figure 2, from GHC 16.2 in 2015, commercial revenue shot up to GHC 21.2 million in 2016, reduced sharply to GHC 14.7 million in 2017, and climbed up marginally to GHC 15.6 million in 2018. It shot up astronomically in 2019 to GHC 25.3 million and then dipped to GHC 21.1 million in 2020. The funds from advertisers and sponsors shot up dramatically in 2021 to GHC 33.4 million, before reducing again in 2022 to GHC 24 million. Stabilisation came in 2023 and 2024 with GHC 35.1 million and GH 35.3 million respectively, with 2024 being the year, GBC earned the highest revenue in the entire dataset.

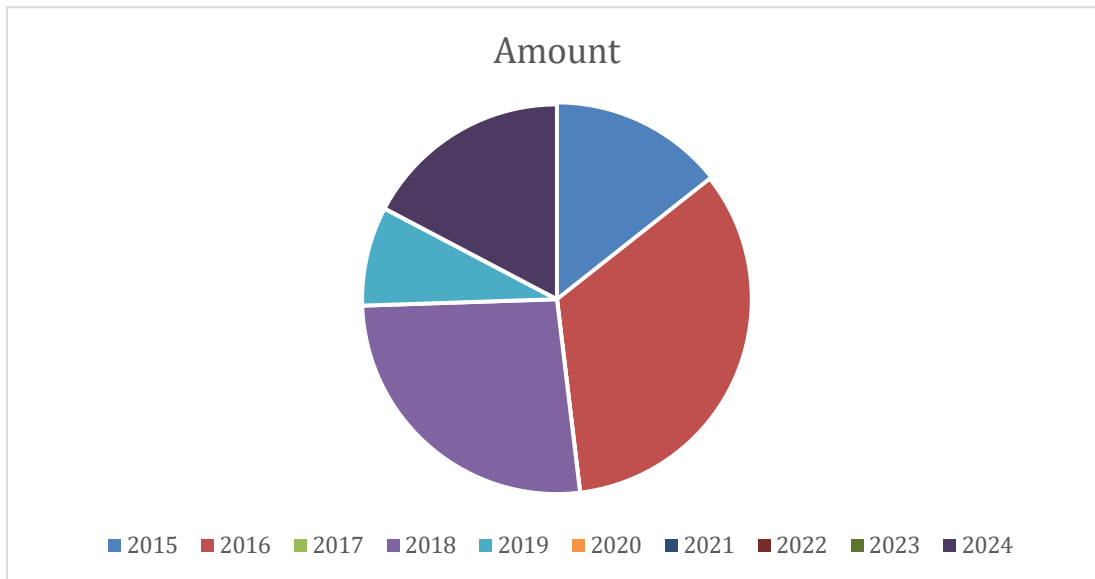
Figure 3: Rental Income (million)



Source: GBC

Insights from figure 3 above shows that GBC’s rental income was GHC 2.9 million in 2015. It increased to GHC 5.5 million in 2016, maintain its rise to GHC 5.8 million in 2017, and continued fairly steadily between GHC 5 million and GHC 7.7 million from 2018 to 2021 but reduced to GHC 7 million in 2022 before spiking astronomically to GHC 15.7 (the highest figure) during the 10-year period. It however, suffered a second decline in 10 years in 2024. From the data, rental income unexpectedly emerged as GBC’s most predictable and consistent source of revenue. Compared to commercial revenue, rental income is less dependent on the interest of advertisers and sponsors. Similarly, rental revenue is less vulnerable to citizens compliance unlike television license. The revenue from rentals also suggest that GBC has valuable assets that it could leverage to support its public service sustainability in a digitalised media environment.

Figure 4: Television License Revenue



Source: GBC

Figure 4 shows a 10-year analysis of the funding meant to be GBC’s financial muscle—television license. During the period, television license collection grew progressively from GHC 394,633 in 2015 to GHC 1.1 million in 2017. However, TV license revenue began to shrink from 2018, recording GHC 724,581. The Steep decline continued to GHC 226,360 in 2019, fell further to GHC 128, 272 in 2020, declined again to GHC 41,435 in 2021 and then GHC 25,000, the worst revenue was recorded in 2022. It shot up to GHC 78,713 in 2023 and jumped to GHC 474,960 in 2024.

4.4.4 Qualitative findings

Collectively, the insights from the quantitative patterns show that GBC’s financial challenge is not just about its revenue fluctuations but also structural problems in its funding arrangement. To comprehend whether the current financial architecture is adequate to sustainably promote the corporation’s PSB mandate, the study gained qualitative insights from key stakeholders.

4.4.5 Failure of television license fee as revenue source

From the quantitative data, television license went from GHC 1.1 million in 2017 to as low as GHC 25,000, which represents payment for 694 television sets or households. This means more than 97 percent loss in 2022 within seven years. Respondents unanimously agreed that structural and cultural barriers to television license fee collection remain a major hindrance to GBC's sustainability.

SM provided the contradictory context in local and international television license fee collection.

“For TV license collection across Africa, South Africa has the best story. They collect between 30-35 percent. Even that is a disaster. Ghana, I don't think it is even 1% compliance. TV revenue, you can see that accounted for less than 2% of our IGF [annually].”

The respondent compared the unfavourable Ghanaian and African situation to the BBC, and asserted that the BBC's 80% collection rate shows that TV license is not working in Ghana, for that matter, Africa. In reality, however, South Africa delinquency rate for the payment of TV license has shrunk to 13%, according to Vermeulen (2024). In contrast, AC points to insufficient knowledge on the part of the populace about GBC's role in Ghana's media ecosystem.

“We tend by default always compare GBC to the commercial actors and say, why not GBC, as others are succeeding. But we know why others are succeeding. They are not GBC; they are not public broadcasters. That is why, for example, there is strong pushback when there is a call for paying the TV license.”

For CS, GBC's TV license collection faced a chicken and egg dilemma where the public expects the broadcaster to deliver content to justify the payment of TV license. Meanwhile, GTV needed

money for production at a time the payment was now voluntary and there was no pressure on the public to pay.

Put together, these concerns fuel public resistance against the payment of television license, particularly when the widely held perception is that GBC has failed to deliver contents that are competitive compared to its peers in the private sector who do not receive mandatory public contribution.

4.4.6 Volatility of state subventions

State subvention is the single most significant source of funding for GBC as the quantitative data (where available) has shown—outperforming all other sources of revenue for GBC except in 2020 when commercial revenue did better with GHC 21.1 million against GHC 13.5 million.

SM asserted while the unpredictability of state subvention gave cause for worry, in the last 25 years, it only covered wages in GBC’s expenditure head, leaving the corporation to fall on its internally-generated funds to fund its core operations, including equipment, utilities, content production and maintenance.

NM, whose institution has a regulatory function over GBC admitted that the corporation was in such a precarious financial position that it had to fall on IGF to finance its technological upgrade.

CS, however, pointed out the political economy perspective of the inadequate funding for GBC:

“It is more about control of GBC by successive governments. GBC’s funding should be independent from state subventions. The current funding approach is the reason GBC is not able to do critical journalism that sets national agenda and hold government accountable for its action and inactions.”

NM and AC agreed with this assertion. However, NM stated that GBC's independence was not just about financial resources but also the orientation of its staff members who still view the corporation more as a state broadcaster than public service broadcaster.

These arguments suggests that successive governments over the last 25 years have not appreciated broadcasting as a capital-intensive public service. This is particularly critical because the television license, which is another state funding intervention, has failed terribly to deliver the required financial comfort GBC needs to be sustainable, pushing the institution into the realm of commercial broadcasting.

4.4.7 The commercialisation trap

From the quantitative data above, commercial revenue is GBC's second most important source of funding, outpacing television license and even beating government subvention in 2020. Respondents however, cautioned that GBC's commercial revenue inclination has the propensity to compromise its public service obligations.

AC observed that commercial revenue had its own motives which ultimately influenced decisions on content production. The respondent argued that whenever financial survival depended on commercial activities, including sponsorship and advertising, decisions a public broadcaster made reflected that of commercial broadcasters.

NM agreed with the notion and argued that "It is not prudent that a public broadcaster enters the same market with commercial broadcasters, because then you would be forcing them to adopt the content methodology that the commercial broadcasters use to survive."

However, given GBC's dire financial situation. SM defended GBC's commercial outlook in agreement with AC.

“We will do commercial, in order to stay alive, until the taxpayer and the public officeholders decide to commit more resources to keep us going. When that is granted, we will reduce our commercial orientation but we are not being too commercial. But insofar as we have to survive and pay our bills, we will continue to do commercial in order to deliver our public service mandate.”

These perspectives suggest that while GBC is surviving on commercial revenue, that approach to funding blurs its public service mandate and constrains its ability to deliver independent and less-market-oriented content as AC asserted above. This reflects in the content, including the showing of cheap South American telenovelas considered alien to Ghanaian culture.

4.4.8 Rising rental revenue

Respondents had a mixed reaction to the contribution of rental revenue to GBC’s IGF and described it as a coping mechanism rather than a funding strategy.

However, SM indicated that given GBC’s financial difficulties, rental income was deliberately engineered as a dependable revenue and in 2025 account for 45-50 percent of GBC’s revenue, even beating television license, while becoming a lifeline for the corporation.

“If you study financial records in the last 4-5 years, you will witness an ascendancy of rentals. It was deliberate. We had to do that to increase our stake in rentals, because otherwise we should have gone down by now.”

Monetization of digital platforms and content

It is evident from the quantitative data that GBC has cumulatively more than four million following across various social media platforms. However, SM and DA noted that this digital audience have not been converted into significant funds.

They attribute it to bureaucracy in the employment of permanent staff for the digital unit and other bureaucracies, which has been discussed below.

While it has struggled to monetise its platforms, the study found that GBC has used its social platforms particularly Facebook and X (formerly Twitter) to rally public support for the payment of television license, which has witnessed some prominent Ghanaians paying their TV license.

DA argued that the astronomical increase in television license fee collection from less than GHC 80,000 in 2023 to nearly GHC 500,000 and the possibility of even higher figures in 2025.

“We are monetizing and making some money. However, to be able to make good money, you need to target your content towards a specific audience. There are bloggers and content creators who make good money, real money, like Mr. Beast. Mr. Beast, is now a millionaire from just making YouTube videos. GBC is bigger than him with bigger infrastructure we can make more.”

Asked about the impact digital media has on GBC’s operation, DA noted that it had been both positive and negative with the former being the availability of opportunities to monetise content and reach a wider audience while the latter is the increasing audience shift away from traditional media to online.

4.4.9 Managerial challenges

Apart from the financial constraints, the study also found that GBC faces managerial challenges that threaten its sustainability. The most crippling being a depleting and ageing workforce that is largely digitally challenged, while the attempt to replace exited staff is impeded by government bureaucracy.

SM offered an explanation in a human resource headache that had confronted the public service broadcaster in the last five years:

“Close to 500 people that have left GBC... through retirement, resignation, and death. And we will need the express solicited approval of the minister of finance to hire and replace these people who have retired, resigned, or died... What the government is doing invariably is to use time as a way of depopulating our staff strength, reducing our staff strength.”

With GBC embarking on digital transformation, the situation is taking a toll on the corporation, SM indicated.

" If they had allowed us to replace [those who have left], we would hire very young and digitally savvy workforce for our online presence. That is what we need. Even though the attrition has been over 500, if you[government] just give me only 15, I will hire 15 young digitally savvy, recent university graduates into GBC. And we will be all over the place. And we'll increase our revenue from the digital platforms."

NM argued that GBC faced even a much fiercer managerial challenge in employee attitude with the union being a major stumbling block to productivity where its leaders easily instigate workers against management and also fight reforms.

This confirms DA's earlier point about the digital unit being staffed with temporary staff. It is even more crucial when DA asserted that journalists in the traditional news are resistant to producing content for digital media while the union resist change. Furthermore, DA had concerns about the bureaucracy in equipping the unit which could in the near future become GBC's cash cow if well equipped.

This conundrum shows that GBC's sustainability does not depend solely on its financial muscle but also a human capital that understands the value of digital media in an age where youthful

audience form 11.7 million of Ghana's over 30 million population, according to the 2021 Population and Housing Census (Ghana Statistical Service, 2021).

4.5 Alternative sources of revenue

With GBC's traditional funding sources failing to deliver the needed funds to sustain its operations, the new direction is for the corporation to explore alternative sources of income that are not subject to political manipulation nor sacrifice its public interest mandate for commercial interest.

The respondents made proposals that insulates GBC from the challenges enumerated above.

NM opted for an endowment fund with heavily capitalized from the onset to completely remove the persistent reliance on state funding since GBC's current funding model depended on generosity of government instead of a sustainable funding source.

AC stopped short of making specific proposals but suggested that the global trends included broadcasting tax on utilities on condition that urgent reforms insulate the corporation from political control.

Building on revenue from GBC's rental revenue, SM indicated that with GBC's 2026-2030 strategy document the corporation would focus on asset optimization for revenue generation.

The respondent made a case for compensation from private television stations who use the National Digital Terrestrial Platform (NDTP) in compliance with the global movement from analogue transmission to Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT). Secondly, given GBC's vast swath of land-across the country, the respondent asserted that GBC intended to partner the private sector to convert these dormant assets into revenue yielding assets.

4.5.1 Discussion

The broad objective of this study was to examine sustainable funding regime for GBC in an era of digital evolution, which has caused significant audience shift away from traditional broadcasting to online. More specifically, the study sought to find out how GBC's PSB mandate has performed in the digital platform media environment, to assess GBC's current funding arrangements and their adequacies to sustain its PSB mandate in the digital environment and to examine sustainable funding models being used by PSBs globally and assess their applicability to the GBC.

4.5.2 Objective one

To answer the question on how GBC has performed in its PSB mandate in the digital platform media environment, the study found that while GBC continues to deliver its PSB mandate via its traditional media platforms, it has established a digital unit to implement its digital policy which includes idea generation and content creation for its digital platforms. It is a basic response to digital media that aligns with Evans (2018) and López-Golán et al. (2024) which recorded public service broadcasters WNYC-FM promote cross-departmental idea generation and roll out of innovation known as auto-disrupt to benefit from digital intrusion of the media ecosystem. While GBC has also initiated an auto-disrupt strategy to build capacity to expand its reach, the plan remains a pipeline dream frustrated by bureaucracy, which is discussed later in this study. In contrast to the internal departmental collaboration Evans (2018) projected, GBC's attempt at digital innovation faces internal resistance from its traditional media newsroom, where some journalists are yet to buy into the 'digital first' idea.

Additionally, the present study found that GBC's performance is anchored on managerial challenges that hinder its adaptation to the digital media environment and ultimately its sustainability. Key among them is the five-year employment hiatus, an extension of the

managerial problems Asare (2016) and Asafo-Agyei (2010) identified. It blocks GBC from implementing adaptive digital media strategies which requires talents for superior platform-specific, social media management skills, and data analytics which are critical for PSBs operations.

Related to this are challenges with GBC's staff union, who NM indicated were antagonistic towards change while DA pointed to some journalists who would not make content available to the digital platform. This supports the findings of Nyembezi et al. (2019) who acknowledged inadequate staff involvement in decision-making and absence of policies that reflect the realities of the South Africa Public Service broadcaster as a contributing factor to its sustainability struggles. However, the point of differential is that GBC has a digital media policy, which while not made available to this researcher, should indicate the realities of benefits of digital media and the dangers of being left out to its staff members.

From the findings, GBC's radio and television stations have migrated their traditional media platforms online and have been streaming public interest content online via Youtube and Facebook while creating platform specific content to drive audience engagement through Tiktok, X, and Instagram. This is consistent with Penplusbyte (2023) which point to Ghanaian media presence on social media. This approach reflects earlier findings of Notara (2024); Jafri and Yahya, (2025) and Olley (2009) who all point to a global trend of traditional media, including PSBs, turning to social media to increase their reach and court loyalty from the younger generation of viewers attracted to the content and convenience of digital media on their mobile devices. This, however, diverges from D'Arma et al. (2021) and Donders & Van den Bulck (2022) who noted that beyond social media, PSBs in Europe were adding propriety platforms like BBC's iPlayer to their list of digital offerings while working with commercial actors to increase their reach. GBC's strategy has been

limited to the adoption of social media and not apps, as for instance has been the case of BBC. Similarly, it does not support Nicoli's (2015) literature about the BBC's partnership with producers and commercial streaming platforms to produce content for distribution just as Lin & Tsai (2023) found in the case of the Taiwanese PSB. This clearly manifests in GBC's inability to acquire the rights to the 2026 World Cup qualifiers—a licensed product and a basic broadcast right, although the corporation has massive sports followers across social media platforms.

Contrary to the inclusivity tenet of PSBs, most of the videos on GBC's social media platforms were in English and a few on Tiktok in Twi. This excludes all the other Ghanaian languages. Content from GBC's flagship Adult Education programme which are in multiple local languages, and generates public interest sound bites that could be used for short form content on multiple social media platforms. This possibly leads to the audience fragmentation that is a growing headache of public service broadcasters, as observed by Tengeh & Udoakpan (2023). It is also consistent with Conroy-Krutz et. al. (2024) who pointed to rural urban divide despite the growing presence of African media on digital platforms. It must be pointed out that the regional media houses are in a position to fulfill the public service mandate online and not only the national platforms managed from Accra.

Overall, while GBC is making efforts to adapt to the digital media environment, these energies are centralised in Accra and does not reflect across the regional stations, where its public service output is equally critical for promoting national heritage, inclusion and civic duty.

This signals that while online presence is relevant and critical for the reach of PSBs, and for that matter public engagement, it must be done in a way that does not sacrifice fidelity to the core values of PSB which includes inclusivity, diversity and less of commercial interest.

4.5.3 Objective 2

In seeking answers to GBC's current funding arrangements and their adequacies to sustain its PSB mandate in the digital environment, the findings of the study align with the political economy theory postulated by Chomsky and Herman (1988). GBC's dependence on state subvention and commercial revenue hinders it from doing accountability journalism that holds the government accountable. To nuance the influence of the country's political elite more critically, the study notes a structural conflict of interest in which the political elite who have the power to appropriate funds or enact laws that would guarantee sustainable funding for GBC are themselves acquiring radio or television frequencies or have vested interest in owning one. The conflict of interest in this situation does little to motivate these powerful people, including legislators and political appointees, both present and former, to empower GBC to deliver its public service mandate. This has implications for the independence of GBC particularly now that government realignment of ministries has pushed GBC under the Office of Government Machinery where the management and the board of GBC are now directly answerable to the Presidency. This fosters self-censorship culture and confirms Anoff-Ntow's (2016) study which found that at GBC staff owe allegiance to government interest than the public interest.

The findings show that state subvention, which covers salaries of staff of GBC is aligned with political economy theory which shows the state's influence on GBC. The discretionary state funding does not lend itself to long-term financing strategy for a broadcaster that requires long term investment—infrastructure, upgrade of its equipment and content production—to produce relevant content and keep up with the changing needs of the digital era. The volatility of subventions points to the absence of a consistent or a ring-fenced funding that protects and ensured the predictability of subventions for GBC. This does not support sustainability of GBC's public

service mandate and its independence from political control. This unstable funding threatens GBC's ability to transform itself into a digital public broadcaster that delivers its PSB mandate without financial hitches.

From the findings, commercial revenue was largely volatile during the decade under review, coming second to state subvention in terms of quantum. Given the unstable nature of funds from sponsorship and advertising, the present study's finding support that of Mediatique (2020) who document core funding sources for PSBs, including commercial revenue shrinking, similar to Lin & Tsai (2023), who focused on the Tai PSB and showed that a collaboration with commercial streaming apps for content production brought commercial revenue, albeit not the orthodox advertising and sponsorship. This shows that commercial revenue is changing form. It is possible that advertisers and sponsors found GBC attractive to market their products and the corporation's content attractive enough to be worthy of sponsorship. As SM, a respondent and a management member of GBC explained, the corporation had to depend on commercial revenue to fill the deep financial void created by absence of a sustainable funding. By implication, the reliance on commercial revenue has the propensity to push GBC to profit and market-oriented activities that undermine its public service mandate.

Consistent with prior works of Nordicom (2019) who indicates that in the face of increasing non-compliance, Scandinavian countries have become innovative in television license collection by taxing annual incomes, the evidence from this study shows that TV license fee collection has collapsed in Ghana. In line with global trends, the evidence from the present study suggests that television license has failed for GBC as a funding arrangement for the public service broadcaster at a time commercial revenue and state subvention continue to fluctuate. The astronomical decline is suggestive of the global public perception of the relevance of PSBs and a growing resistance to

the payment of television license, particularly in an era of media pluralism and digital choice, where media consumption habit has shifted significantly from legacy media to mobile devices. This reinforces the need to reexamine television license as a source of revenue for GBC, as a revival of television license via a social media campaign would be counterproductive since the public does not see GBC to be delivering the public good, including international football matches. It would require a broader systemic reform to enforce compliance, including possibly scrapping it altogether. It must however be pointed out that GBC lately enjoys some goodwill in TV license collection because of a viral social media campaign to enforce voluntary compliance. The campaign is, however, struggling to be momentous because of GBC's failure to air the 2026 World Cup qualifiers.

Amidst the financial gloom of GBC, the study established that rental income has become a bright spot as the corporation leverages on its transmission towers that management of GBC says could soon constitute 50% of its internally generated funds. This extends existing literature by Bickerton (2025) which found PSBs in 19 countries, including Canada have diversified the revenue to include leasing transmission site space, as GBC is currently doing. This creates an opportunity for GBC to sustain the use of its physical assets to generate revenue that is not dependent on government purse. Unlike other revenue sources, rental revenue presents a long-term outlook that creates room for sustainability. This is especially because of the value and demand for transmission towers within the telecommunication sector as demand for internet increases.

Regarding the monetization of GBC's social media platforms as an alternative source of revenue, the findings show that although GBC has four million followers on its social media platforms, its revenue from the platforms is negligible, a claim the study could not substantiate empirically. This finding, however aligns with Mediatique (2020) and Fray et al. (2024) who state that for many

PSBs across the world, online presence is not resulting in revenue generation. The claim of DA that GBC's capacity should convert into revenue from digital media does not corroborate the works of Mediatique (2020) and Fray et al. (2024) findings that social presence does not automatically translate into revenue. It takes purposeful planning and appealing content to grow audience and monetise. Further adding credence to this, the work of Gyasi et al. (2025) which suggests that Tiktok users feel more connected to platform advertising and that it has more influence on their buying choices than traditional media implies that GBC has to go an extra length to satisfy its 855,000 followers to convert them into revenue. This is because these audience consume content on a platform that thrives on engagement bait and advertiser targeting rather than PSB values including inclusivity, diversity, accountability among others. While this does not corroborate the findings of Molitorisz & Attard (2024) which asserts that Australia is taxing big tech companies including Google and Meta who benefit significantly from content created by PSBs including GBC, it opens the door for digital tax on these multinational companies.

4.5.4 Objective 3

To examine sustainable funding models being used by PSBs globally and assess their applicability to the GBC, tax on utilities—water and electricity— was recommended by a respondent. This is consistent with Berg & Lund, (2024), who indicated that most European countries are moving away from television license to tax-based funding models including household taxes as is the case of Scandinavian countries and Germany and taxes on electricity in the case of Italy. Evidently, these reforms are based on the high levels of non-compliance and the regressive nature of television license fees,

4.5.5 Implication of findings

The findings of the research shows that GBC's sustainability challenges are deeply structural in nature. Currently, the corporation's funding is heavily dependent on unpredictable state subventions, which goes into paying only salaries at expense of investment in infrastructure, its fluctuating commercial revenue has pushed it towards commercial broadcasting to survive its financial deficits, while revenue from television license, which was envisaged to be its main financial backbone has flopped. Operating with these financial constraints, in a digital media environment that is changing at a lightning speed, compromises the corporation's ability to deliver its public service duties.

4.5.6 Theoretical relevance

The study, in part, gives further credence to the political economy theory by providing evidence to support the argument that funding influences the behaviour of media organisations, hampers editorial independence and discourages public interest journalism. It further expands the tenets of theory by showing that adapting the fluid digital environment does automatically diminish the power relations that controls the state, the market and PSBs.

4.5.7 Practica relevance

The findings documented a compelling reason for GBC's funding to be reformed with a legislation that guarantees the corporation sustainable funding, alternative tax-based revenue and optimization of its vast infrastructure to increase its revenue sustainably while resourcing and prioritising its digital unit as a critical institutional work and not a periphery. GBC's digital development will become mundane without these reforms, which has been found to be lacking in the corporation current financial architecture and digital strategy.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5. 0 Summary of key findings

This study looked into GBC's funding architecture and the challenges within the context of the digital era, and documented the following:

Having identified the importance of digital media as a critical platform for its existence in the ever-evolving media landscape, GBC has established a digital media unit, developed a digital media policy and has migrated some of its key programmes onto social media platforms. This has resulted in significant digital milestone of a cumulative four million followers across five social media platforms, and a revival of its dormant website. However, the implementation of the plan has been fraught with enormous bureaucracy, leaving its online presence highly urbanized while the corporation's rural stations, which serve the inclusive function remain dormant online.

Moreso, beyond financial impediments, the study documented managerial and corporate governance issues. After approximately 500 members of staff exited the public service broadcaster through resignations, retirements or deaths in the last five years, it has been difficult for the corporation to replace them with young, digitally-competent talents to drive its digital media agenda. This has been caused by government's freeze on employment for the past five years. The study further documented internal resistance from GBC staff to its digital first agenda.

Additionally, GBC's significant social media following has not correspondingly resulted in substantial monetisation of its digital platforms. This is no different from trends around the world

which show that PSBs online presence has failed to automatically convert into money without being strategic in audience engagement and having purposeful content.

GBC's current funding arrangement is fragile as three sources of funding—television license, commercial revenue and state subvention have either collapsed or shown disturbing fluctuation in a way that hampers long-term planning and investment. State subvention which over the years has been the highest form of revenue is now volatile as it has been restricted to paying salaries since 2000, rather than investing in capital expenditure. Television license which was supposed to be the financial muscle of the corporation has capitulated terribly, from GHC 1.1 million in 2017 to GHS 25,512 in 2022, representing over 97% decline and barely 1% compliance rate. Commercial revenue has become the second biggest source of funding for GBC, which creates a 'commercial trap', that could possibly compromise the corporation's PSB obligation via its current market-oriented programming and activities that are typical features of commercial broadcasters.

The study, however, found rental income, which flows from the leasing of GBC's transmission infrastructure to be the unanticipated brightest spot. This revenue has risen from GHS 2.9 million in 2015 to GHS 15.7 million in 2023 and anticipated to contribute 45-50% of GBC's IGF in 2025.

About GBC's building on rental income, the study found that GBC has the National Digital Terrestrial Platform (NDTP), which is being used by private broadcasters for free as well its vast landed properties that could be optimized to increase its revenue that makes it less dependent on state and commercial revenues that threaten its independence.

Furthermore, the study noted that there is a potential for GBC to have an endowment fund similar to those operated by Public Broadcasting Services (PBS) and NPR, both in the United States. This fund, if independently managed can be a panacea for GBC's sustainable funding challenges.

In conclusion, Taxed-based funding was also identified as a potential replacement for television license fees whose compliance has become a global headache for PSBs. The evidence shows the model has been adopted in Italy on electricity bills and as household levy in Germany, and annual tax on income in the Scandinavian countries.

5.1 Policy recommendations

Based on the findings, this study offers the following recommendations to make GBC a viable PSB that is adequately financed in the long-term to deliver its mandate in the digital age:

Establish an independent funding architecture for GBC: It has become obvious that the current sources of revenue sanctioned by law are not sustainable in the long-term. GBC would need an endowment fund initially heavily capitalized by the state, and with contributions from willing members of the public. This fund should be managed by independent expert fund managers supervised by a board of trustees. This will help insulate GBC from political shenanigans and conflict of interest that hinders GBC's funding.

Introduce digital service tax on big technological companies: the likes of Meta and Google make significant revenue from the advertisers in Ghana, the literature shows this approach is raising significant funds in Australia. While both markets are not the same, digital service tax is being implemented across the world (Tax Foundation, 2024).

Scrap television license fee and replace it with levy on utilities/lottery: Television license fee has proven to be an unreliable source of funding for GBC. Ghana can fall on global precedents to scrap the fee and put a small levy on utilities including electricity, water or internet subscription or lottery to raise the needed sustainable revenue for GBC.

Strengthen and implement a digital strategy: Although GBC has a digital strategy, its implementation is not national in character. To cure this, the corporation must have a devoted digital team to fill the inclusivity gap on its digital media platforms while also reaching the rural audience who are left out of its digital reach. The implementation of the strategy should promote cross-department collaboration particularly between the digital unit and the newsroom while setting up a modern digital studio for the unit.

5.2 Practical recommendations

Push human resource reforms: Given the critical role GBC plays in an era of media pluralism, the government must grant GBC autonomy to be able to tackle the digital staff deficit which contributes to its inability to roll out its digital media strategy to deliver its PSB mandate and raise more revenue from its online presence. All staff of the corporation must be reoriented to appreciate the essence of digital media in the corporation's future.

Implement an asset monetization strategy: Stemming from the success story of revenue generated from transmission tower rentals, GBC must implement its asset optimization strategy to convert its National Digital Terrestrial Platform by making a case to government to ensure that private broadcasters on the platform compensate GBC for using it, while it also seeks government approval for public-private partnerships to develop its vast landed property into real estates that could contribute to its fortunes.

5.3 Suggestions for future research

This study found that GBC's funding as a public broadcaster is fragile with its main funding sources, television license collapsed while commercial revenue and state subvention are volatile

although it has considerable presence in the digital media. These findings notwithstanding, the researcher makes the following recommendations for consideration for future research

- Future research should consider focusing on public perception of GBC's performance as a Public Service Broadcaster.
- Another research topic worth investigating is a Longitudinal study into audience perception of GBC's use of digital platforms to deliver its public service mandate.
- Future study should also consider comparative research into digital monetisation models for PSBs outside orthodox advertising and sponsorship models in Ghana and the UK

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APPENDIX: INTERVIEW GUIDE

Interview guide for interview with research participants on Sustainable Funding Model for Public Service Broadcasting in the Digital Age: The Case of Ghana Broadcasting Corporation

A. Senior Official GBC

Public service mandate

1. How is GBC attracting younger audiences into its fold given the growing influence of digital media?
2. How is GBC using digital media to deliver its public service mandate?
3. How is GBC taking advantage of digital media for its content monetization as part of efforts to diversify its revenue?

Funding

4. How would you describe GBC's current funding structure and its sustainability in the long term?
5. An analysis of GBC's funding shows that the corporation is not making much from television license while state subventions over the years are focused on the payment of staff emoluments. What are the main challenges GBC faces in achieving financial independence?
6. What reforms or innovations are being implemented to diversify funding sources beyond conventional revenue sources and government subventions?

Managerial challenges

7. What are GBC's managerial challenges that affect its operations?
8. How do government policies or political influences affect GBC's autonomy and funding decisions?
9. What are policy reforms necessary for GBC's sustainability in the digital age?

B. Representative of Regulator (National Media Commission)

1. How do you assess GBC's role in serving democracy, inclusion, and cultural diversity today?
2. How can regulatory policy support GBC's transition to digital platforms while maintaining its public service mandate?
3. From a regulatory perspective, how sustainable is GBC's current funding model?
4. What are the main challenges GBC faces in achieving financial independence while maintaining its public service mandate?
5. What specific policy interventions will the NMC champion to guarantee GBC's operational and financial independence from undue governmental influence, thereby securing its long-term financial sustainability.

6. Looking around the globe, what funding alternatives can GBC explore to guarantee GBC's sustainability?
7. What is your assessment of the quality of corporate governance and managerial efficiency at GBC, and what regulatory reforms are needed to make it more sustainable?

C. Media Expert / Analyst from a civil society organisation

1. How do you assess GBC's role in serving democracy, inclusion, and cultural diversity today?
2. By your assessment is GBC adapting to the digital media environment in a way that helps it deliver a PSB mandate?
3. From the data, internally, rental of GBC's telecom towers brings its more revenue than television license. What does this mean?
4. To what extent does advertising dependence threaten editorial independence in public broadcasting?
5. What governance and managerial reforms do you think GBC needs most urgently to ensure its sustainability?
6. Looking around the globe, what funding alternatives can GBC explore to guarantee its sustainability?

D. Official of GBC's Digital Media Unit

1. What digital platforms and strategies currently drive GBC's online presence and audience engagement?
2. GBC is operating in a highly competitive media environment with commercial broadcasters and growing influence of digital platforms affecting your performance.
3. How are these platforms contributing to GBC's revenue in a way that will make the broadcaster sustainable?
4. What are the biggest technical or organizational barriers to full digital transformation that allows GBC to effectively use digital media to deliver its mandate while making money?

5. Are there partnerships or collaborations with commercial or streaming platforms to expand reach or revenue?
6. How does GBC's digital strategy align with its public service mandate?

E. Academic/Media Scholar

1. How do you assess GBC's role in serving democracy, inclusion, and cultural diversity today?
2. GBC is operating in a highly competitive media environment with commercial broadcasters and growing influence of digital platforms. In what ways is the digital media environment affecting the operations of the corporation?
3. By your assessment is GBC adapting to the digital media environment in a way that helps it deliver a PSB mandate?
4. An analysis of GBC's funding shows that the corporation is not making much from television license and state subventions over the years are focused on the payment of staff emoluments. How does this affect GBC's operations.
5. What lessons can Ghana draw from PSBs in other regions—like Europe, Asia and America—on sustainable funding?
6. What governance and managerial reforms do you think GBC needs most urgently to ensure its sustainability?

