

GHANA INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISM

**PRINT MEDIA COVERAGE OF MALARIA STORIES UNDER COVID-19:
STAKEHOLDERS' ANALYSIS FOR HEALTH COMMUNICATION IN GHANA.**

BY

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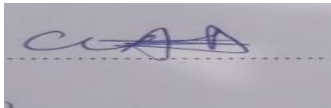
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STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that except for the references to other people 's work, which have been cited this work is the result of my own original research undertaken under the supervision of Dr. Stanley Semarco.

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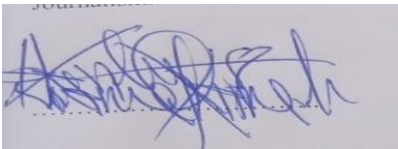
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A photograph of a handwritten signature in blue ink on a white background. The signature appears to be 'Gifty Adjei' written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned above a horizontal dashed line.

(Gifty Adjei)

SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation of this project work was supervised by me in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of project work laid down by the Ghana Institute of Journalism.



Dr. Stanley Semarco

(Supervisor)

DEDICATION

This dissertation would not have been possible without the support and guidance of many people. Thank you for your kindness, steady supports and guidance. God richly bless you. And also thank you Hon Wofa Yaw for your support both financially and logistically. I am grateful. Finally, personal gratitude to the following individuals for their assistance, perspective and overall contribution to my general sense of well-being: Ma, Daa, Natalie, Markus, Kobby, Joe, Nuti and Yaaya. None of these would have been possible without your love and good humour.

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ABSTRACT

With three percent of global malaria cases and deaths, Ghana is among the fifteen highest malaria burden countries in the world. Malaria accounts for about 32.5% of all hospital consultations, 44% of hospitalizations, and 18% of deaths occurring in health facilities in the country. In children under 5 years, 41% of deaths are due to malaria. The government of Ghana at various levels and many international health and funding agencies continue to make efforts to improve the wellbeing of individuals and the larger society. However, scholars have continued to identify and emphasise the need to use the media as a complementary approach to advance the health sector and to achieve good health outcomes among members of society.

This study examined the attention Ghanaian newspapers have given to malaria stories in their reportage under covid-19. The researcher performed content analysis on two daily newspapers (the Daily Graphic and Daily Guide) between March 2020 to December 2020. The study adopted both qualitative and quantitative methods. Thus, a technique of in-depth interview was used to assess what editorial policy guided the reportage of Malaria stories by the selected print media houses and also ascertain experts' opinions on how to eliminate malaria generally in Ghana.

Findings showed that the newspapers have not given adequate attention to malaria in their health coverage during covid-19. This, therefore, suggests that this may have contributed to the high prevalence of these diseases in Ghana. The study, therefore, recommends for more newspaper coverage of malaria as a disease as well as other media types in order to reduce

their prevalence in Ghana. Again, the study recommends that stakeholders in the health sector feed the media with adequate information on malaria for better prominence.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

For a very long time, man has suffered from the plasmodium falciparum, the parasite, which is responsible for the majority of global malaria cases and deaths. Malaria according to the World Health Organization is a life-threatening disease. Barnes, Chanda and Al Barnabas (2009), state that every year, nearly one million people die from Malaria. Packard (2008) gives a vivid description of the condition by highlighting that, "Of all diseases, malaria is perhaps the one with the most subtle interplay with human history. It has long affected human beings, and has left its genetic mark on modern populations".

According to the Carter Centre (2021) Malaria is a potentially fatal mosquito-borne parasitic disease which is wide spread in tropical and subtropical regions. For Li and Cheung (2016) Malaria remains a significant global health issue and is a medical emergency. In addition to its health toll, malaria places a heavy economic burden on many endemic countries, contributing to the cycle of poverty and limiting economic development. According to the Roll Back Malaria Partnership (2008), Africa alone is estimated to lose at least US\$ 12 billion per year in direct losses (e.g. illness, treatment, premature death), and many times more than that in lost economic growth.

The plasmodium parasite is spread by the female Anopheles mosquitoes which are known as "night biting "mosquitoes because they most commonly bite between dusk and dawn. As indicated by the Malaria Fact sheet (2021) there are five types of parasites that cause malaria in humans, of which Plasmodium falciparum and Plasmodium vivax pose the greatest threat. According to the Malaria Fact Sheet in 2018, Plasmodium falciparum accounted for 99.7% of suspected malaria cases in the WHO African Region, 50% in the W.H.O Southeast Asia Region, 71% in the Eastern Mediterranean, and 65% in the Western Pacific. Plasmodium

vivax is the main parasite in the WHO Region of the Americas, accounting for 75% of malaria cases. People with malaria often experience fever, chills, and flu-like illness. Left untreated, they may develop severe complications and die.

Carter and Mendis (2002) state that Malaria has been present in every country of the world except the Antarctica. The Encyclopaedia Britannica (2021) indicates that in ancient Egypt, malaria might have accounted for the deaths of some great leaders. It cites Tutankhamun, who reigned as king of ancient Egypt from 1333 to 1323 BC. In 2010 scientists recovered traces of malaria parasites from the mummified remains of Tutankhamun blood.

In ancient Greece, malaria appeared annually as an autumnal fever as described by early scientists including Hippocrates. By the later classical period of the Roman Empire, however, malaria was a much more serious disease than it had previously been. Modern malariologists like Caraballo and King (2014) have attributed this increase in the severity of malaria to ecological changes associated with deforestation that had accompanied intensified agricultural activities-changes that allowed new species of mosquitoes from North Africa to be introduced and successfully established in southern Europe. According to the Malaria Journal (2020), Alexander the Great, whose death on the banks of the Euphrates River in June 323 BC was attributed to malaria.

In the Italian peninsula, malaria killed Pope Innocent III as he was preparing to lead a Crusade to the Holy Land in 1216, the poet Dante Alighieri in 1321, and Pope Leo X in 1521. The artist Raphael, who painted a famous portrait of Leo X, also died of malaria in 1520. Thirty-eight years later the former Holy Roman emperor Charles V reportedly succumbed to the disease in Spain.

Many of the early Greeks thought the disease was contracted by drinking "swamp water". The Romans later attributed it to breathing "miasmas," or vapours, arising from bodies of

stagnant water, the disease came to be called malaria, or "bad air." In November 1880 Alphonse Laveran, a French military physician working in Algeria, showed that the elements seen in red blood cells of certain patients were parasites responsible for their hosts' malaria. According to Packard (2008) the discovery of the role of Anopheles in the transmission of malaria created a period of optimism.

In 1955 the World Health Organization (WHO) inaugurated its Global Malaria Eradication Campaign, to be based mainly on the spraying of insecticide in designated "malarious areas" of the world. The program resulted in the elimination of endemic malaria from Europe, Australia, and other developed areas and in a radical reduction of cases in less-developed countries such as India. According to the Malaria Journal, 1969 the WHO was forced to abandon its dream of complete eradication. Species of Anopheles mosquitoes had quickly developed resistance to DDT, and the insecticide itself fell out of favour owing to its cost and ecological effects.

More disturbing was the appearance of drug-resistant strains of the Plasmodium. The first chloroquine-resistant parasites emerged in the late 1950s and early 1960s in Asia and Latin America, and soon almost no country with endemic malaria was without drug-resistant parasites. In the late 1990s and early 2000s partnership-based aid programs, such as the Multilateral Initiative on Malaria and the Malaria Vaccine Initiative, were established to support the fight against malaria. Some of these programs aimed to fund a broad range of malaria research, whereas others aim to fund ongoing malaria control efforts in endemic areas. These control efforts, which are the focus of anti-malarial strategies established by the WHO, include the dissemination of insecticide-treated netting, the provision of prophylactic drugs to pregnant women, and earlier and more effective treatment of clinical cases, preferably through the use of multidrug "combination therapy" in order to attack drug-resistant parasites. In the early 21st century, declining numbers of malaria cases and deaths

suggested that efforts to control the disease were working. In 2011 officials estimated that, if control efforts were sustained, malaria could be eliminated from one-third of all affected countries within a decade.

1.1. MALARIA IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Exactly a decade after the 2011 set target, a World Health Organisation global report indicated that, as at the end of 2019, there were an estimated 229 million cases of malaria worldwide. The estimated number of malaria deaths also stood at 409,000 (WHO, 2019). Children aged under 5 years were the most vulnerable group affected by malaria; in 2019, they accounted for 67% (274 000) of all malaria deaths worldwide (WHO, 2019). The WHO African Region was identified to carry a disproportionately high share of the global malaria burden. In 2019, the region was home to 94% of malaria cases and deaths. Total funding for malaria control and elimination reached an estimated US\$ 3 billion in 2019. Contributions from governments of endemic countries amounted to US\$ 900 million, representing 31% of total funding (WHO, 2019).

According to the WHO report, nearly half of the world's population was at risk of malaria. Most malaria cases and deaths occur in sub-Saharan Africa. However, the WHO regions of South-East Asia, Eastern Mediterranean, Western Pacific, and the Americas are also at risk. Some population groups are at considerably higher risk of contracting malaria, and developing severe disease, than others. These include infants, children under 5 years of age, pregnant women and patients with HIV/AIDS, as well as non-immune migrants, mobile populations and travellers. As a way forward, National malaria control programmes were tasked to immediately take special measures to protect these population groups from malaria infection, taking into consideration their specific circumstances.

The WHO Global technical strategy for malaria 2016-2030 - adopted by the World Health Assembly in May 2015 - provides a technical framework for all malaria-endemic countries. It is intended to guide and support regional and country programmes as they work towards malaria control and elimination. The Strategy sets ambitious but achievable global targets, including: reducing malaria case incidence by at least 90% by 2030; reducing malaria mortality rates by at least 90% by 2030; eliminating malaria in at least 35 countries by 2030; preventing a resurgence of malaria in all countries that are malaria-free.

At the World Health Assembly in May 2018, the WHO Director-General, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, called for an aggressive new approach to jump-start progress against malaria. A new country-driven response - "High burden to high impact" - was launched in Mozambique in November 2018. The approach is currently being driven by the 11 countries that carry a high burden of the disease (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ghana, India, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Uganda and United Republic of Tanzania).

1.1.1 Malaria in Ghana

With three percent of global malaria cases and deaths, Ghana is among the fifteen highest malaria burden countries in the world. According to the Malaria Control Programme, attempts to control malaria in Ghana began in the 1950s. The Ghana Malaria Programme Review- Final Report (2013) states that the eradication methods then included massive drain construction, chloroquine impregnated salts, aerial spraying and weekly swallowing of daraprim called "Sunday-Sunday" medicine as preventive care. Despite government's efforts between 1960 and 2000, malaria continued to be one of the leading causes of premature deaths in the country.

According to the Ministry of Health (2013), the establishment of the Malaria Control Programme was strategic set to change the scene. Initially known at first as the Malaria Control Unit, it was under the Public Health Department of the Ministry of Health. It is now located under the Disease Control Unit. The government launched an aggressive Roll Back Malaria (RBM) initiative in 1999 that emphasized the strengthening of health services through multi and inter-sectoral partnerships and making treatment and prevention strategies more widely available. In the year 2000, the first National Malaria Strategic Plan (2000-2010) was developed with the goal to reduce malaria specific morbidity and mortality by 50% by the year 2010 thereby involving a broader group of stakeholders. Since that time, new and effective interventions such as treatment of uncomplicated malaria using artemisinin-based combination therapy (ACT), malaria prevention in pregnancy through use of sulfadoxine-pyrimethamine (SP), and indoor residual spraying (IRS) emerged.

The Abuja declaration of May 2006 aimed at achieving and sustaining universal access to appropriate interventions for all populations at risk of malaria. A second strategic plan (2008-2015) was developed to take care of these new developments as well as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The National Malaria Control Strategic Plan for 2014-2020 states the overall goal of the National Malaria Control Program in Ghana as "to reduce the malaria morbidity and mortality burden by 75% (baseline 2012) by the year 2020". In 2010, Ghana subscribed to the World Health Organization's recommendation and developed guidelines for implementing the test, treat and track (T3) strategy.

Recognising the effectiveness of the media and the role it plays in information dissemination and their agenda setting abilities, on September 2020 a Malaria Media Coalition in Ghana was launched by the Malaria Control Programme and partners to Accelerate Progress Towards Malaria Elimination by 2030. Over fifty journalists from both the Public and Private

media houses in Ghana pledged to play their part in the fight for a malaria-free Africa as part of the Zero Malaria Starts with Me campaign.

With these notwithstanding, current statistics from the WHO (2019), concluded that Ghana reported the highest increase in absolute case numbers, (500,000 new cases) from 2017 to 2018, which represents a five percent increase over 2017 levels (from 213 to 224 per 1000 of the population at risk). In comparison to 2015 levels, cases rose by three percent from 217 to 224 of the population at risk. Deaths, on the other hand, fell by 12%, from 0.42 to 0.37 per 1000 of the population at risk. As of 2017, less than 25% of the country's spending on health was from national resources.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Malaria is still a major global health disease. According to Sherman (1998) as cited by Opemipo and Koblwe (2013), of all the human afflictions, the greatest toll has been exacted by malaria. The Nature Reviews Microbiology journal (2009) hints that malaria is affecting the health and wealth of the nations in sub Saharan African. Sachs and Malaney (2002) state that the financial burden of malaria on Africa has been estimated to be around US\$12 billion per year. In Ghana statistics according to the National Malaria Control Programme (2013), indicate that malaria accounts for the about 32.5% of all hospital consultations, 44% of hospitalizations, and 18% of deaths occurring in health facilities in the country. In children under 5 years, 41% of deaths are due to malaria. According to the Malaria Control Programme (2013), if malaria is appropriately prevented, the individual, family, and the state will save lots of resources that will improve the standards of living of Ghanaians. Mozumder and Marathe (2007) are of the opinion that timely information can be very useful in reducing specially child mortality. Lettenmaier (2003) states that, relatively less attention has been paid to malaria communication. In the face of the outlined challenges, there is need to

critically examine the whole communication process of malaria messages covered by the Daily Graphic and Daily Guide, under the covid-19 pandemic and find out how these two print houses reported the malaria story especially in fulfilment of their core role of helping to transform society through information and communication. The outcome of the study will help stakeholders make recommendations to improve Ghana's situation in the fight against Malaria.

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The primary aim driving this study is to find out the value, how the print media (Daily Graphic and Daily Guide) attach to the coverage of Malaria stories especially during the covid-19 period in their effort to bring about behavioural and attitudinal change among the populace.

Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Investigate how frequent the Daily Graphic and Daily Guide carried stories on malaria during the study period (March 12th to December 31st 2020).
2. Determine the prominence and priority given to malaria stories by the Daily Graphic and Daily Guide by their specific placement.
3. Assess what editorial policy or general considerations, guiding the reportage of Malaria stories by the Daily Graphic and Daily Guide.
4. Ascertain experts' opinions on how to eliminate malaria in Ghana.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To facilitate the study, the following research questions have been formulated as pointers in finding out how the print media covered malaria stories under covid-19, as well as the experts' opinions on how Ghana could eliminate malaria in the shortest possible time.

1. How many times did the Daily Graphic and Daily Guide cover malaria stories under the study duration?
2. What level of prominence is given malaria stories by the Daily Guide and Daily Graphic?
3. What is the editorial policy of the Daily Graphic and Daily Guide on Malaria?
4. How can Ghana achieve total malaria elimination from stakeholders' opinions?

1.5 SCOPE OF STUDY

This study examined newspaper coverage of malaria stories under the outbreak of covid-19 in Ghana during 2020. Mendes (2011) states that newspapers have daily publication, circulates to a wide variety of audiences and are timely. This makes them a good option for content analysis for this study since it will be easy to access dated information. Newspapers also contain different styles of writing including features, news stories, editorials, letters to the editor, etc. which makes them a good resource to access different genres of news items. Even though newspapers are not as powerful and as widespread as radio, Midttun et al. (2011) noted that radio journalists depend heavily on newspapers for their news bulletins and current affairs shows. For this reason, Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide were selected for the study. These two newspapers were selected based on the fact that they are the leading newspapers in Ghana in terms of readership. Also, both newspapers were on the newsstands in the year 2020. The Daily Graphic is state-owned newspaper, while the Daily Guide is privately owned.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Malaria has been known to mankind for thousands of years. According to Mandal (2019), Malaria is thought to have spread with the army of Alexander the Great. It was described first by the Chinese in the Nei Ching (the Canon of Medicine) in 2700 BC, yet scientists have now been able to develop a vaccine, unlike the covid-19 that in less than a year various kinds of vaccines have been developed. For the experts, prevention therefore remains the mainstay of controlling the disease.

Although several works have been done on malaria, literature reviewed so far reveals that there is no dedicated work studying the coverage of malaria stories under covid-19. Also there have been no editorial policy influencing the coverage of malaria stories in Ghana. This study will evaluate the editorial policies of the two papers with regards to their social responsibility towards global effort at minimizing the impact of the disease.

It will again afford the experts the opportunity to propose the way forward. The research finding will help policy makers and malaria campaigners to develop policies and engage in programmes that may today be receiving little attention because they are not meeting the Ghanaian print media's expectations. Again the result would indicate to health workers whether or not the state owned or private media are likely to report their campaigns and why. This study also hopes to lay a foundation for future studies on media coverage of malaria stories during the outbreak of covid-19 in Ghana.

1.7 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

This study, which largely focuses on health communication scholarship, specifically examines the context of newspapers. Globally, health communication researchers continue to focus attention on the role of communications in health care delivery and the role the mass

media plays in health promotion. This study investigates print media coverage of malaria stories under covid-19 from March 12th to December 2020 in Ghana to determine the extent to which the print media covered and published malaria stories under covid-19 in a bid to possibly control incidences of malaria in Ghana.

The research project is packaged into five chapters. Chapter one gives a background into the studies. It looks at the history of malaria, the transitions of the disease over the years. Chapter one also includes the problem statement, objectives, research question and hypothesis. The significance, justification as well as the scope of the project. This chapter simply defines the major focus of the entire thesis.

In chapter two, the study explores relevant literature for the purpose of connecting the thesis to previous works, thereby crafting what research gaps to fill in order to make the thesis a valuable contribution to knowledge. The chapter further defines the theoretical framework of the study, which underpins priming and framing within the spectrum of agenda setting theory. This, therefore, explains the thesis as a media effect study. It also makes use of other theories including, the stakeholder's theory and the social and behaviour change communication theory.

Research method and design are outlined in chapter three under methodology. Based on the research questions and inferences from the literature review, this study adopted a mixed research method (quantitative and qualitative). The study combines content analysis and in-depth interview research methods. This chapter explains the justification for each method and how the two methods will be operationalized during the data collection process.

Chapter four of the study centres on data analysis and interpretation of findings. Specifically, this chapter discusses the data analysis and interpretation of findings related to the content

analysis portion of the study. This chapter is also devoted to the same engagement in relation to the in-depth interviews of the study also.

Discussion and Conclusion are the focus of Chapter five. This chapter discusses the research findings and also proposes some recommendations for further studies given that research as a phenomenon, is an ongoing process and no single study can explore an idea or issue without limitations.

1.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Chapter one sets the agenda for this thesis by highlighting the damaging impact of malaria on man and society. The areas of focus covered in this research are clearly defined in the introduction, thereby leading to the research gaps, statement of problems and the research objectives.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATUR REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This essay on literature review comes in two parts. The first part will highlight the theoretical perspectives underpinning the analysis of the study. The second part of the review will focus on the review of literature on the research topic.

2.1 THEORETICAL REVIEW

The theoretical framework is generally believed to be the key concept in the research project, proposes relations between them and discusses relevant theories based on the literature review. Vinz (2020) stipulates that a strong theoretical framework gives one's research direction, allowing the researcher to convincingly interpret, explain and generalize from his or her findings.

Merriam and Tisdell (2016) explain the theoretical framework as "the underlying structure, the scaffolding or frame of the study". Most of the studies reviewed used framing, agenda setting, the cultivation theory and the Health Believe Model to analyse newspaper coverage on malaria, as well as health stories in general. For this study the framing, the agenda setting and stakeholders theories were used.

2.1.1 Agenda Setting Theory

According to GMMP (2015) Media are powerful forces which shape how we perceive the world and how we conduct ourselves. Prishtina (2012) argues that the media plays a significant role in the "liberation of the mind. According to Mishra (2015), newspapers

provide adequate space to the news related to rape, crime, politics, sports and economics but serious debates and discussions on issues related to women and health are general inadequate.

The Agenda setting theory generally asserts that the mass media determines what the public thinks and worry about. Lippmann (1920) first observed this function and pointed out that the media dominates over the creation of pictures in our heads. He believed that the public reacts not to actual events but to the pictures created in their minds by media reports.

The term agenda-setting was first coined by McCombs and Shaw (1972) to describe in more general terms the phenomenon that had long been noticed and studied in the context of election campaign. Cohen (1963) had earlier pointed to the influence of the press to focus public attention in a particular direction. To quote Cohen: "The press may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about". (Cohen, 1963, p. 13).

This same point was emphasized by Lang and Lang (1986) who concluded that the mass media force attention to certain issues, whilst obscuring others. Asserting further that the media constantly present issues in a way that suggests what individuals should think about, know about and have feelings about. Iyengar and Kinder (1987) as cited by Cullen (2000) are critical of past agenda -setting researchers for neglecting the possible effects on what the people think concerning who is important, where important things happen and why things are important. The potential agenda-setting role of the media is discussed by Bonney and Wilson (1983) who note that it is strongly conditioned by the concept of "news value" as determined by news reporters and editors.

News value according to them acts as a critical element in the selection and organization of news items and as a consequence, they are significant in setting the agenda for editorial comments, features and documentaries and in shaping media audiences' conception.

Henningham (1990) lists several "traditional" newsworthy criteria which affect whether a news story is selected or shelved. These include, novelty, impact, proximity, conflict, well known people, importance, significance and general interest to large number of people.

Windschuttle and Windschuttle (1981) quoted by Cullen (2000) point to other news values like disasters, celebrities, politics, human conflicts and deviant behaviour. According to Abreu (2015) the central issue in the agenda-setting theory, is not the way a particular event is reported, but the amount of attention given to the event or its attributes by the media and the time individuals have been exposed to the coverage of the event.

Apart from the importance of news value, media researchers, Galtung and Ruge cited Bonney and Wilson (1983), outline three principles which actually, determine the marketability of a story in the mainstream press. Firstly, the researchers assert that an event is more likely to become news if it concerns elite nations, adding that certain aspects of malaria reporting match this requirement since the disease is endemic in certain parts of the world, affecting progressive nations like India.

Secondly, that elite people are news worthy especially if their illness can be described in personal terms and contain negative consequences. Elite personalities like Presidents, Ministers, Ambassadors, etc all fit this category. Thirdly stories that show people coping with a disease or helping others cope provide strong human interest angles.

Rogers, Dearing and Chang (1991) tested the agenda setting theory for HIV/AIDS in the United States from June 1981 to December 1988. The researchers discovered a number of personal and political factors that slowed the emergence of HIV/AIDS on the national media agenda. They observed that the disease had no familiar face and it had not been acknowledged by the US President. But once on the agenda, especially after the death of Rock Hudson HIV/AIDS was accorded a high visibility. Rogers et al state that, newsmakers

and the general public were for the first time touched in a direct and personal way by the epidemic.

Editors are also influential in the selection of malaria stories. Veitch (1986) describes how news accounts are the outcomes of a process of negotiation between reporters, the news desk and the editorial line of the news organisation. Veitch observes: "I think we have failed to get through to the people who really make the papers, -the editors and sub-editors. They decide what goes in to the pages (Veitch, p. 128). These points are of vital importance to us in Ghana. It will be interesting to find out what extent editors and reporters in the Ghanaian media are influenced by this theory.

2.1.2 Framing Theory

According to Shih, Wijaya and Brossard (2008), one of the most commonly used theories where media coverage is concerned, is framing. Entman (1993 p.52) explains that "to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them salient in a communication text, in such a way as to promote problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described".

In highlighting some parts of information, the media is able to make it seem more important and memorable to audiences thereby influencing the way they interpret the message. Entman (1993, p.52) therefore suggested that "frames then define problems (that is, determine what a causal agent is doing with what costs and benefits, usually measured in terms of common cultural values), diagnose causes (that is, identify the forces creating the problems), make moral judgments (that is, evaluate causal agents and their effects) and suggest remedies (that is, offer and justify treatments for the problems and predict their likely effects)".

This simply means that framing is able to present a problem, state the cause of the problem, suggests how wrong or right it is and finally provide a solution to the problem all in one. The

media relies on the framing theory when covering political issues because with framing, journalists determine exactly what information they want to include in, or exclude from a story and also how they want to present it to audiences. This in turn influences how the audience will perceive the information they have received McQuail (2005).

According to Iyengar (2005), candidates and partisan pundits are also known to employ framing although the actual framers are increasingly journalists. This means that the media plays a crucial role where the successes or failures of politicians are concerned because they are able to present them to audiences either in negative or positive ways. However, the politicians themselves are able to control how the public perceive them, through the use of framing, so as to appear more appealing to them, especially the voting public.

Gameson and Modigliani (1989), suggested that framing can be done through the use of metaphors, exemplars, catch-phrases, depictions and visual images. However, Tankard (2001), identified 11 ways in which the media employs framing in news stories. They are through: headlines, subheads, photos, photo captions, leads, source selection, quote selection, pull quotes, logos, statistics and charts and finally, concluding statements and paragraphs. This suggest that framing is not only employed by use of text only but also through visuals, where the visuals have a more profound effect when used as compared to the text.

This means that photos are more memorable to viewers than text. So if in an article, a gendered photo is used in addition to text that makes no reference to gender, the effects would be more damaging than using a neutral photo in addition to misogynistic words (Coleman, 2010). Framing, especially in broadcast news coverage of political issues, can be categorized into two genres, namely thematic and episodic frames. Thematic frames show issues in a more general context and could take the form of a comprehensive background

report while episodic frames portray issues in more individual or specific contexts (Iyengar, 1991).

The media employs more of episodic framing than thematic framing because it is more engaging for audiences. Although research has shown that episodic framing trivializes public discourse and does not encourage citizens to make the necessary links among issues, leading to the exclusion of important issues, compared to thematic framing which is more effective at promoting learning and informing of citizens (Iyengar, 1991).

From the above, it can be argued that framing theory is very useful in political news coverage, in that politicians themselves can employ it to present themselves in a more appealing light to audiences or give themselves an edge over their competitors and even the media, so as to dispel the notions the media might present to the audiences concerning them. They do this by highlighting their strengths and achievements and do not focus on their shortcomings.

The media is not left out of the framing discourse since they are known to rely more on framing in their work, by focusing on the issues that will best compliment the story they are trying to tell. Some weakness of the framing theory has been documented to include the fact that every individual or person has their own different mind frames. The effect of particular news or a piece of information can also have a negative and damaging impact on the individual. The positive and negative impact of the event or scenario is individual and according to their frames. According to Borah (2011) the experiences of the individual must not intervene with the field of meaning.

2.1.3 Relevance of The Theories

The agenda setting theory is relevant to the study because it explains how the media constantly present issues in a way that suggests what individuals should think about, know about and have feelings about. It takes into cognizance the amount of attention given to the event or attributes by the media. Again, the theoretical underpinning of framing theory will help the study explore the nature of how both the print media's report of malaria. Thus allowing the researcher to gain deep insight into how reports on malaria during covid-19 pandemic were presented in the media.

2.2 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Salkind (2010) defines Literature Review as systematic syntheses of previous work around a particular topic. Vom Brocke et al. (2009) indicate that, Literature reviews play a critical role in scholarship because science remains, first and foremost, a cumulative endeavour. Byrne (2017) however cautions that before undertaking any research, it is important to fully understand the shape of the literature in the area. In the words of McCombes (2019) the literature review gives the researcher the chance to demonstrate his or her familiarity with the topic and scholarly context by developing a theoretical framework and methodology for the research.

2.2.1 Reports on malaria

A study by Bello (2015) on Newspaper coverage of health issues in Nigeria: the frequency of reporting malaria, HIV/AIDS and polio and the effect of seeking health information on the health behaviours of newspaper readers examined the prevalence of various health problems in Nigeria and their devastating consequences on the socio-economic status of the nation seems to have defied all logics. The Nigerian government at various levels and many international health and funding agencies continue to make efforts to improve the health

status of the individual members of Nigerian society and the health sector at large. However, Bello (2015) states those scholars have continued to identify and emphasise the strategic position and the need to use the media as a complementary approach to advance the health sector and to achieve good health outcomes among members of society.

Bello (2015), therefore, examined the coverage of health issues by Nigerian newspapers, emphasising the degree of attention given to HIV/AIDS, malaria, polio and the northern region. The study further examined the relationship between dissemination of health information by Nigerian newspapers and the health behaviours of newspaper readers and the challenges being encountered by health reporters in the field of health reporting in Nigeria. With a literature review underpinning priming and framing within the framework of agenda setting theory; and a triangular methodological approach of content analysis of 844 editions of four national newspapers from 2010-2013, survey and in-depth interviews.

Bello (2015) found out that there was a moderate coverage of HIV/AIDS, malaria and polio in Nigerian newspapers in relation to other diseases studied. These three diseases were also reported in relation to northern Nigeria more than other regions included in the study. But in general, Nigerian newspapers did not give prominent coverage to health issues in their leads, editorials and other important pages. This finding from Bello (2015), suggests that Nigerian newspapers appear to give prominent attention to other issues which, as noted by health reporters interviewed, include politics and economy, over health issues. Given that Nigerian newspapers have not given prominent coverage to health issues, this suggests that Nigerian newspapers may have less influence in directing the attention of the Nigerian government towards making health a top priority in the government agenda. The study also shows that dissemination of health information by Nigerian newspapers correlates with an improvement in the health behaviours of newspaper readers in the country.

Furthermore, Bello (2015) interviewed 13 newspapers health reporters across the national newspapers in Nigeria and concluded that health reporters generally face a wide range of challenges due to the specialised and technical nature of health reporting. Health reporters who were trained in health and sciences demonstrate better expertise and skills in health reporting in Nigeria than health reporters who were trained in the arts and social sciences. This finding from Bello (2015) suggested that health and science training have a major influence in health reporting in Nigeria. The finding may further imply that health and science background may be considered important in employing health reporters for the field of health reporting given the technical nature and some degree of health and science expertise required for optimal job performance in the field.

Peng and Tang (2010) launched a study into the coverage of health issues in Chinese newspapers. According to the researchers, newspapers are one of the most important sources of health information for the public in China. Using the theories of agenda setting and framing, they explored research questions such as what health-related topics were covered and how they were covered in Chinese newspapers. The study used a sample of two constructed weeks in 2007 of one national and five leading local newspapers of the five most populated cities in China: 558 health-related articles were identified.

Peng and Tang (2010) found out that certain diseases and risk factors were underreported as compared with their actual morbidity and mortality rates in China. Most of the health reporting was framed in a non-negative frame. It was also found that causes and preventions of diseases were more likely to be attributed to the individual than to the society. As one of the first comprehensive content analyses on the coverage of health-related issues in China, Peng and Tang (2010) provided health care professionals and policymakers with a broad picture of health information available to the public in Chinese newspapers.

In a study conducted by Gupta and Sinha (2010), the researchers examined health related messages that appeared in print media (Newspaper and Magazine) and electronic media (Television and Radio). Findings from Gupta and Sinha (2010) concluded that politics was the most preferred type of news in both the print and broadcast media. Gupta and Sinha (2010) citing Weber (1990) and Oso and Odunlami (2008), supported the assertion that the "health beat" was not high news yielding beat compared to politics or the economy.

Based on the conclusion of a research by Oso and Odunlami (2008), they noted that the newspapers did not give prominence to the selected health issues. They reasoned that the stories were not given front page prominence and that spaces given to health news were small. This conclusion is consistent with conclusions drawn by the other researchers. The above studies also showed that health news relied mostly on experts Wang and Gantz (2007) and Gupta and Sinha (2010).

Onyeizu and Binta (2014) conducted a study that sought to establish the extent to which the media sets the agenda for the health sector so that it could mobilize both the government and citizens towards achieving a healthy state. The research methodology used was content analysis and purposive sampling technique was adopted. The Guardian and The Punch newspapers were monitored over a 24-month time period. A total 554 health reports were selected and analysed on health issues.

According to Onyeizu and Binta (2014) the single disease that garnered the most media attention was HIV/AIDS, and the most reported genre was straight news stories. The researcher found out that the newspapers were in tandem with previous studies that the print media does not give enough attention to health stories. The researcher pointed out the role the pivotal role the broadcast media especially plays in transmitting information and educating the public through message construction and presentation, a role which can be

directed in the area of health. Based on the findings of this research, Onyeizu and Binta (2014) made the following recommendations, that the media can contribute to health discourse by facilitating and sustaining debate especially among policy makers to make policies that could aid the people towards achieving good health. They can do this through their write-up emphasising the magnitude of the situations people face as regards health. Some specific recommendations are:

The newspaper should cover more reports on health as 554 stories in two years are inadequate. They should give more coverage to health by placing the stories in prominent positions even though there is a dedicated health page on specific days and also giving more space to the stories. Health reporters are to liaise with health professionals and medical researchers to understand some of the reports they get and be able to internalize it and simplify it for public consumption. By understanding the information, they get, they can package it in simple language by breaking down the scientific jargons without distorting the actual information. The media should publish more features or news analyses and editorials and not just straight news.

The newspapers should give more coverage to other health issues. Though HIV/AIDS is a global problem, there are other silent killers which have attracted global attention and are also enlisted in the Millennium Development Goals. The media can do a sustained coverage like having serial feature reports and not bombard readers with a particular report all at once. This means for an edition they can introduce an issue (disease) and maybe the causes; for another edition they can highlight what medical experts have to say on the issue and the solution to that issue either as treatment or cure. They can also highlight preventive measures for those who don't have the disease already. The government should provide an enabling environment for media to perform by providing them with information when required.

In their study, *Health Content in Local Television News*, Wang and Gantz (2007) content analysed 1,863 news stories that aired on four English-language channels and one Spanish channel in seven U.S. markets. Adopting the composite week methodology, the researchers found out that about 10% of news stories focused on health topics. Specific diseases and healthy living issues received the most frequent coverage. However, core health news stories were less than one-minute long. Using the agenda setting, cultivation, and social learning theories, Wang and Gantz (2007) noted that agenda setting and cultivation of understanding of a given health issue were likely to require lengthy news stories and repeated exposure to those stories.

Wang and Gantz (2007) pointed out that since health is one of the many beats covered in local newscasts, health was not likely to receive a large slice of news time and would therefore be brief. They further argued that because many health news stories are complex and technical in nature, health news may need more time than other topics to be truly beneficial to viewers. Important health news stories may gain placement early in a newscast thereby exerting greater influence on viewer's health agenda. In this study placement of health story in the headline and its position in the headline were both coded to determine the importance of a health story. The duration of a health story was also an index of salience. Wang and Gantz (2007) added that it was important for news programs to have their own health segments to make it easier for audiences to attend to health information.

Laryea (2015) conducted a "content analysis of Ghana Television (GTV) and JOY News TV coverage of health news". According to Laryea (2015) health is important in socio-economic development as well as the well-being of the public globally. The media play a pivotal role in transmitting information and educating the public through message construction and presentation, a role which can be directed in the area of health. The purpose of the study therefore was to content analyse health news coverage by GTV and Joy News TV from 1st

July, 2015 to 31st August, 2015 to determine how much attention health news received in their news bulletins and how they were framed. The theories that guided the analysis were framing and agenda-setting.

Results from the data indicated that 12.6% (199) out of a total of 1,585 stories covered by both television stations were on health. Strike actions among health professionals received the most coverage (38.1%) with health policy, health insurance and Millennium Development Goals/Sustainable Development Goals related issues receiving as low as 1.5%, 2.5% and 1% respectively. Twenty-one percent of the stories appeared in the headlines of both TV stations with 60% of the stories being presented within the duration of 30 and 120 seconds. Health stories were covered using more episodic frames (65%) than thematic frames. The study concluded that the television stations did not attach enough attention to health-related stories and that stories that were covered used more episodic than thematic frames.

2.2.2 Malaria and Covid-19

A study on "Surge in HIV, TB and Malaria Deaths Predicted Following COVID-19 Pandemic" was undertaken by Hogan et al. (2020). The researchers had modelled the public health impact of COVID-19 on HIV, TB and malaria in low- and middle-income countries. The analysis was presented in the two latest reports by The WHO Collaborating Centre for Infectious Disease Modelling within the MRC Centre for Global Infectious Disease Analysis (GIDA), and Abdul Latif Jameel Institute for Disease and Emergency Analytics (J-IDEA).

Findings were that COVID-19 had the potential to cause disruptions to health services in different ways: through the health system becoming overwhelmed with COVID-19 patients, through measures introduced to slow transmission of COVID-19 inhibiting access to preventative interventions and services, and through supplies of medicine being interrupted.

In the case of Sub-Saharan Africa, it was feared that the pandemic was likely to severely interrupt health systems.

The team used COVID-19 and malaria transmission models to understand the impact on health services and distribution. The results demonstrated that depending on the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, a disruption of all malaria-control activities will result in large malaria epidemics across the region. The report concludes that the malaria burden - the toll of new cases and deaths - in 2020 could be more than double that in the previous year and for the next five years, the number of deaths could increase by 36 percent.

The researchers suggested a Prioritization of a routine prevention strategies. As it was essential to prioritize the distribution of long-lasting insecticide-treated nets to mitigate the risk. Additional planning to ensure other malaria prevention activities are continued where possible, alongside planning to ensure basic access to anti-malarial treatment, will further minimize the risk of substantial additional mortality associated with any malaria epidemics. Dr. Thomas Churcher, from the School of Public Health at Imperial, said COVID-19 will substantially increase the burden of malaria in Africa unless routine preventative strategies were prioritized now.

"The Potential Public Health Consequences of COVID-19 on malaria in Africa", was a study conducted by Sherrard-Smith, Hogan and Churcher (2020). The scientists used COVID-19 and malaria transmission models to estimate the impact of disruption of malaria prevention activities and other core health services under four different COVID-19 epidemic scenarios. According to the researchers, the burden of malaria was heavily concentrated in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) where cases and deaths associated with COVID-19 are rising. In response, countries are implementing societal measures aimed at curtailing transmission of SARS-CoV

2 -Despite these measures, the COVID-19 epidemic could still result in millions of deaths as local health facilities become overwhelmed.

Meanwhile advances in malaria control this century have been largely due to distribution of long-lasting insecticidal nets (LLINs), with many SSA countries having planned campaigns for 2020. They were pessimistic that if activities are halted, the malaria burden in 2020 could be more than double that of 2019. In Nigeria alone, reducing case management for six months and delaying LLIN campaigns could result in 81,000 (44,000-119,000) additional deaths. Mitigating these negative impacts is achievable, and LLIN distributions in particular should be prioritized alongside access to anti-malarial treatments to prevent substantial malaria epidemics.

A previously published model of malaria transmission dynamics was used to predict malaria deaths resulting from different COVID-19 scenarios. Simulations were run at the administrative 1-unit level (where, for each region, the model was calibrated to capture the seasonality, prevalence, vector composition, treatment coverage and vector control coverage, incorporating levels of pyrethroid resistance in each unit) and results was aggregated across regions according to the size of the population at risk of malaria. Results were presented for the high malaria burden country of Nigeria and for SSA as a whole.

An article which published by former Presidents of Liberia and Tanzania, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and Jakaya Kikwete (2021) highlighted the enormity of the malaria burden on especially, Africa and how the news media can help the continent to fight the pandemic. In their words, "If we are to successfully manage endemic diseases such as malaria, empowered communities must be at the heart of our efforts" p.10. Thus, the researcher cited the success story of Sierra Leone, where Comic Relief and GlaxoSmithKline have been supporting

community-based journalists to uncover local stories about the impact of malaria and COVID-19.

In their words "The reporters are dispelling myths, ensuring people seek the treatment they need, and holding the local government to account." The researchers therefore called for increased funding in the fight against malaria especially under the current outbreak of covid-19. Thus, Governments need to invest in bolstering surveillance and health information management systems that can inform public health policy decisions. Sirleaf and Kikwete (2021) however charged African leaders to make equal efforts both domestically and in their talks with international partners to invest in Africa's health systems to ensure that diseases including malaria are no longer an impediment to the continent's development.

The World Health Organization (2020) Predicted doubling of malaria deaths in Africa if access to malaria prevention programs and treatments were severely interrupted. The modelling analysis was conducted by WHO in close collaboration with partners, including PATH, the Malaria Atlas Project and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Statistical modelling as explained by Stobierski (2019) is the process of applying statistical analysis to a dataset. Basically a statistical model is a mathematical representation (or mathematical model) of observed data. The analysis was subject to uncertainties. In the literature, the WHO said the effects of an interruption in indoor residual spraying or seasonal malaria chemoprevention (except in Burkina Faso); a suspension of these core malaria prevention tools would also lead to considerable loss of life.

In addition, there is limited understanding of the spread of COVID-19, its epidemiology and interactions with malaria. But these deaths were averted as malaria programming went forward as planned. According to the World malaria report 2019, sub-Saharan Africa accounted for approximately 93% of all malaria cases and 94% of deaths in 2018. More than

two-thirds of deaths were among children under the age of five. But the global body identified a window of opportunity.

In the words of the WHO, the number of reported cases of COVID-19 in sub-Saharan Africa has represented only a small proportion of the global total, though cases are increasing every week. This means that countries across the region have a critical window of opportunity to minimize disruptions in malaria prevention and treatment and save lives at this stage of the COVID-19 outbreak.

2.3 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The media has been identified as a powerful tool for influencing public opinion. They do this through the process of media framing, where media texts give or withhold emphasis on specific attributes of political issues or candidates. Media addenda setting and framing therefore emerged as helpful framework to examine the topic.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This study sought to examine how the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide newspapers covered malaria stories under covid-18 (refer to chapter one). This chapter described and explained the strategies that were used for data collection, analysis and reporting of findings. Specifically, it includes an outline of the research design, unit of analysis, the content categories and data analysis employed in the study.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

The Research Design according to Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (2006), refers to the overall strategy that one chooses to integrate the different components of the study into a coherent and logical way, thereby, ensuring that the research will effectively address the research problem; it constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data. The researchers further give the clue that, one's research problem determines the type of design you can use. The function of a research design as stipulated by Trochim (2006) is to ensure that the evidence obtained enables the individual to effectively address the research problem as unambiguously as possible. Previous studies by Adey and Devit (2001); Heldman et al; (2005), Anderson et al (2011) that examined coverage of events adopted this design.

3.1.1 Mixed method or triangulation

This study primarily opted for the combined use of quantitative and qualitative design to find answers to the research objectives. The study adopted a qualitative content analysis to measure objectives one to three and used quantitative in-depth interview to answer objective four. Editors of the two media houses were interviewed. Caracelli and Greene (1997) state,

that integrating different methods is likely to produce better results in terms of quality and scope.

Kemper, Springfield and Teddlie (2003) define mixed methods design as a method that includes both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis in parallel form (concurrent mixed method design in which two types of data are collected and analysed in sequential form). Bazely (2003) further opines that this method makes use of mixed data (numerical and text) and alternative tools (statistics and analysis), but apply the same method.

For emphasis Burke and Onwuegbuzie (2005:1) establish that, “mixed methods research is a natural complement to using either of the traditional qualitative or quantitative research methods in isolation. They view it as the class of research where the researcher combines or mixes qualitative and quantitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language in a single study”. On the philosophical level, according to Burke et al. (2005), mixed methods research is a —third wave, or third research movement that moves past paradigm wars by offering a logical and practical alternative.

As captured by Johnson et al. (2007, p. 123): Mixed methods research is the type of research in which a researcher or team of researchers combines elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches (e. g., use of qualitative and quantitative viewpoints, data collection, analysis, inference techniques) for the broad purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration.

According to Ivankova (2006) purposeful data integration enables researchers to seek a more panoramic view of their research landscape, viewing phenomena from different viewpoints and through diverse research lenses. Johnson and Onwuegbuzi (2004:17) reinforce that mixed methods research includes the use of induction which refers to the discovery of patterns, deduction which involves testing theories and hypotheses, and abduction which

refers to uncovering and relying on the best set of explanations for understanding one 's results. There are several viewpoints as to why qualitative and quantitative research methods can be combined.

Sale, Lohfeld and Brazil (2002:46) comment as follows with regard to the combination of the two methods: "Both approaches can be combined because they share the goal of understanding the world in which we live. They share a unified logic, and the same rules of inference apply to both. A combination of both approaches provides a variety of perspectives from which a particular phenomenon can be studied and they share a common commitment to understanding and improving the human condition, a common goal of disseminating knowledge for practical use.

They further indicate that," Both approaches provide for cross-validation or triangulation – combining two or more theories or sources of data to study the same phenomena in order to gain a more complete understanding of that phenomenon (interdependence of research methods) and they also provide for the achievement of complementary results by using the strengths of one method to enhance the other (independence of research methods)."

The integration of qualitative and quantitative data always offers better understanding of the studied concepts Runeson and Höst, (2009). Likewise, quantitative research lacks deep insights of context and reactions from people. Quantitative data consists of numbers and classes whereas qualitative data consists of words and descriptions. Quantitative data is analysed by statistics whereas qualitative data is analysed using coding and categorization. The researcher adopted the Exploratory Sequential: Qualitative data collection and analysis occurs first, followed by quantitative data collection and analysis.

3.2 RESEARCH METHOD

As explained by Brookshier (2018), Research Method represents the technical steps involved in conducting the research. Bowers et al. (2013) point out, that research design and methods are different but closely related, because good research design ensures that the data the researcher obtains will help the individual to answer your research question more effectively. However, Research methods are the strategies, processes or techniques utilized in the collection of data or evidence for analysis in order to uncover new information or create better understanding of a topic.

3.2.1 Case study

Case study research method is said to have originated in clinical medicine (the case history, i.e. the patient's personal history). Case studies are in-depth investigations of a single person, group, event or community. Typically, data are gathered from a variety of sources and by using several different methods (e.g. observations & interviews). According to Gustafsson (2017) there is no one definition of the concept case study research. As explained by John (2007) there are multiple definitions of Case Studies, which may emphasize the number of observations (a small N), the method (qualitative), the thickness of the research (a comprehensive examination of a phenomenon and its context), and the naturalism (a "real-life context" is being examined) involved in the research.

Cresswell et al. (2011) highlight, that the case study approach is particularly useful to employ when there is a need to obtain an in-depth appreciation of an issue, event or phenomenon of interest, in its natural real-life context. They further reveal that unlike quantitative or experimental research, a strong case study does not require a random or representative sample. They are further of the view that, in fact, case studies often deliberately focus on unusual, neglected, or outlying cases which may shed new light on the research problem.

As captured by McCombes (2019), in the publication, *Descriptive Research*, the research hinted that in the 1960s the town of Roseto, Pennsylvania was discovered to have extremely low rates of heart disease compared to the US average. It then became an important case study for understanding previously neglected causes of heart disease. The study also stated that in the 1920s, two sociologists used Muncie, Indiana as a case study of a typical American city that supposedly exemplified the changing culture of the US at the time. Case studies are widely used in psychology and amongst the best known were the ones carried out by Sigmund Freud, including Anna O and Little Hans.

Freud (1909a, 1909b) conducted very detailed investigations into the private lives of his patients in an attempt to both understand and help them overcome their illnesses. John (2007) is of the position that case studies are often a good choice in a thesis or dissertation as they keep one's project focused and manageable when the researcher don't have the time or resources to do large-scale research.

3.2.2 Content Analysis

Krippendorff (2004) defines Content Analysis as “a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use” (p. 18). Holsti (1968) states that Content Analysis is, “any technique for making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying special characteristics of messages.” In the words of Berelson (1952) it is a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication.”

Content analysis as explained by Luo (2019) is a research method used to identify patterns in recorded communication. According to the researcher, to conduct content analysis, one has to systematically collect data from a set of texts, which can be written, oral, or visual. Luo (2019) further explains that Content analysis can be both quantitative (focused on counting

and measuring) and qualitative (focused on interpreting and understanding). In both types, one must categorize or “code” words, themes, and concepts within the texts and then analyse the results.

Goffman (1979) defines content analysis as the systematic coding and objective recording of data guided by rationale. Using Kerlinger (2000) definition, content analysis is defined as “a method of studying and analysing communication in a systematic, objective and quantitative manner for the purpose of measuring variables” (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011, p.156 citing Kerlinger, 2011). To be systematic means that the content to be analysed is selected according to explicit and consistently applied rules with all content under consideration being treated in the same way. Objectivity means the analysis is devoid of the researcher’s biases such that the analysis should yield the same results if the study is replicated by another researcher (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011).

According to Wimmer and Dominic (2011) operational definitions and the rules for classification of variables should be clear and comprehensive so when other researchers repeat the process the same decisions would be arrived at. The goal of content analysis is an accurate representation of a body of messages and this is achieved through its quantitative nature. Wimmer and Dominick (2011) noted that quantification aids researchers in their quest for precision and gives them additional statistical tools which are useful during interpretation and analysis. Content analysis is usually conducted for one of five purposes, which are, describing communication content, testing hypotheses of message characteristics, comparing media content to the “real world”, assessing the image of particular groups in society, and establishing a starting point for studies of media effects, (Wimmer and Dominick, 2011, pp. 157-159).

The study will combine aspects of classical qualitative content analysis to provide statistics about the content and interpretative qualitative assessment of the major themes and issues predominating in the study. To use content analysis in print media coverage on health has proven not to be new, but probably the most prevalent as evidenced by the literature reviewed. Over the past decade, content analysis has been used as a major method for analysing media content. There have been several definitions of content analysis, (Wimmer and Dominick, 2011).

In this study content analysis will be used to describe the content of health stories in the Daily Graphic and Daily Guide newspapers from the very day Ghana announced recording its first two cases of covid-19 to 31 December 2020. Steps involved in content analysis (which need not follow in the order given) are: Formulating the research questions or hypotheses, defining the universe in question, selecting an appropriate sample from the population and selecting a unit of analysis.

The others are constructing the categories of content to be analysed, establishing a quantification system, training coders and conducting a pilot study, coding the content according to established definitions, analysing the collected data and drawing conclusions (Wimmer and Dominick, 2011, p.160). Within the academic literature content analysis is useful because it helps to systematically analyse. This method will be used to ascertain coverage of health news by the Daily Graphic and Daily Guide.

According to Yang (2008), content analysis is the systematization of text analysis and it analyses the form and substance of communication. Yang further states that underlying meanings and ideas are revealed through analysing patterns in elements of the text, such as words or phrases. The researcher believed that this method of data collection would provide an opportunity for carrying out in-depth analysis of news stories to determine whether they

perpetuate gender inequality as other researchers have indicated. Weber (1990) argues that content analysis has several advantages over the other methods of data collection because it is applied directly to texts which are the products of human communication and they cater for both qualitative and quantitative analysis of texts. Weber further states that mixing methods is generally acknowledged as an effective way to ensure validity and reliability.

3.2.3 Conceptual analysis

According to most qualitative researchers, people typically think of conceptual analysis when they think of content analysis. In conceptual analysis, a concept is chosen for examination and the analysis involves quantifying and counting its presence. The main goal is to examine the occurrence of selected terms in the data. According to Berelson (1952) terms may be explicit or implicit.

To begin a conceptual content analysis, the researcher first has to identify the research question and choose a sample or samples for analysis. Next, the text must be coded into manageable content categories. This is basically a process of selective reduction. By reducing the text to categories, the researcher can focus on and code for specific words or patterns that inform the research question.

3.2.4 In-Depth-Interview

Vivian (2003) highlights that in-depth interview offers researchers the opportunity to gather information from individuals in an audience of interest in a more private setting in which group dynamics and social conformity are less likely to influence responses (Vivian, 2003).

According to Babbie (2010) response rates tend to be higher with interviews than with mailed questionnaires). Roller and Lavrakas (2015) posit that the potential advantages or strengths of the in-depth interview method reside in three key areas: (1) the interviewer–

interviewee relationship, (2) the interview itself, and (3) the analytical component Two people talking of the process. An additional strength of the in-depth interview method according to Seidman (1998) is the flexibility of the interview format, which allows the interviewer to tailor the order in which questions are asked, modify the question wording as appropriate, ask follow-up questions to clarify interviewees' responses, and use indirect questions.

3.3 POPULATION

Globally, the print media (newspapers) are considered very vital instruments to the social, political and economic growth of nations. In the words of Babalola (2002), "newspapers are very common to both young and old generation due to the important role they play in connecting governments with its people". He further posits that; they are very useful tools for promoting literacy. Cheyney (1992) further demonstrated the significance of newspapers when he described newspapers as the textbooks that provide updated information on every aspect of human society as well as local and international affairs.

Hamilton (1992:43) also affirms that, "newspapers are the first draft of history" and that through their reporting and commentaries; they influence politics, make or break public careers and even decide the fate of governments". He further argues that, there is no other medium in our history that records every aspect of human life over the last 300 years on a daily basis like newspapers.

As of 2015, 135 newspapers were counted at the National Media. The figure according to the Media Foundation for West Africa leads up to a penetration of 87% (2016). The Top four companies - state-owned Graphic Communications Group Limited, state-owned New Times

Corporation, Western Publication Limited, and The Business and Financial Times Limited (B&FT) – together get 95.87% of the readership.

Especially concerning is the fact that there is a high concentration even only looking at the two state-owned companies, which get over two third (72.11%) of the readership, with the Graphic Communications Group Limited publishing a number of news and entertainment papers. Western Publications Limited (Daily Guide, News One) is privately-owned. The flurry of private newspapers in Ghana can apparently be attributed to the liberalization of the media in the country in the latter part of the 90s.

Mendes (2011) states that newspapers have daily publication, circulates to a wide variety of audiences and are timely. This makes them a good option for content analysis for this study since it will be easy to access dated information. Newspapers also contain different styles of writing including features, news stories, editorials, letters to the editor, etc. which makes them a good resource to access different genres of news items.

Even though newspapers are not as powerful and as widespread as radio, Midttun et al. (2011) noted that radio journalists depend heavily on newspapers for their news bulletins and current affairs shows. For this reason, two daily newspapers — Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide, were selected for the study. These two newspapers were selected based on the fact that they are the leading newspapers in Ghana in terms of readership. Also, all two newspapers were on the newsstands in the year 2020. Thus, two newspapers were put together to represent the print media.

3.4 SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUES/METHODS

The sampling design used the multistage sampling technique, exclusively, stratified sampling technique and purposive sampling methods.

3.4.1 Multistage sampling

Multi-stage sampling (also known as multi-stage cluster sampling) is a more complex form of cluster sampling which contains two or more stages in sample selection. In simple terms, in multi-stage sampling large clusters of population are divided into smaller clusters in several stages in order to make primary data collection more manageable. It has to be acknowledged that multi-stage sampling is not as effective as true random sampling; however, it addresses certain disadvantages associated with true random sampling such as being overly expensive and time-consuming.

The Multistage Sampling is the probability sampling technique wherein the sampling is carried out in several stages such that the sample size gets reduced at each stage. The multistage sampling is a complex form of cluster sampling. The cluster sampling is yet another random sampling technique wherein the population is divided into subgroups called as clusters; then few clusters are chosen randomly for the survey. Effective in primary data collection from geographically dispersed. population when face-to-face contact is required (e.g. semi-structured in-depth interviews). Cost-effectiveness and time-effectiveness. High level of flexibility.

In Iyoke et al. (2006) Researchers used a multi-stage sampling design to survey teachers in Enugu, Nigeria, in order to examine whether socio-demographic characteristics determine teachers' attitudes towards adolescent sexuality education. First-stage sampling included a simple random sample to select 20 secondary schools in the region. The second stage of sampling selected 13 teachers from each of these schools, who were then administered questionnaires.

3.4.2 Stratified sampling

Stratified Sampling technique was used to create a dichotomy between public and private newspapers, which is made up of 135 papers according to the National media commission. Stratified sampling technique was further used to arrive at Public and Private newspapers which stood at four (4) newspapers and 131 private newspapers. Stratified Sampling Technique was further used to create a distinction among dailies, weeklies, fortnight and monthly, bi-monthly, and tri-weekly and quarterly newspapers in the country.

3.4.3 Purposive sampling

A purposive sampling design is a sampling technique which is selected by the researcher subjectively, as the researcher attempts to obtain a sample that appears to representative of the population. The researcher intuitively has selected the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide which accordingly is the best representations considering the study. Though Wimmer and Dominick say that sampling from the population of events must be large enough to permit meaningful conclusion to be drawn, Berelson (1954) agrees with Krippendor (1980), when Berelson advises that a small carefully chosen sample of relevant content will produce just as valid a result as the analysis of a great deal more and with the expenditure of much less time and difficulty.

The reason for this sampling technique is that the two selected media houses are the largest public and private daily circulating newspapers in the country. As public and private media, they have unique specific editorial policies, aims and objectives. According to Tsikata (2015) and Geopoll (2017) Four of the leading print newspapers in terms of circulation, reach and readership in Ghana; the Daily Graphic, the Daily Guide, the Ghanaian Times, and the Business and Financial Times. These four newspapers according to the Media Ownership Monitor Ghana report by the Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA, 2017), have a combined national print newspaper readership reach of 95.83%.

Lear (1992) states that the private press aims at maximizing profit by maintaining readership and wooing potential one. On the contrary Lear (1989) and Ansah (1985) both agree that often a time, many governments expect the state owned media to be an extension of their propaganda machinery for their socio economic and cultural development agenda. It is against this background that this study sought to measure the extent to which these two objectives affected media coverage of malaria stories in Ghana.

Two newspapers were purposively selected due to their popularity: the state-owned Daily Graphic, which is the widest circulating daily newspaper in the country, and Daily Guide, the widest circulating privately owned newspaper. The former reflects officialdom; the latter, popular attitudes. Midttun, Coulter and Gadzekpo et al. (2011).

3.4.5 Daily Graphic

The Daily Graphic is the most popular daily newspaper in Ghana with 1.5 million readers per day, according to a survey conducted by GeoPoll, the leading mobile surveying platform in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. The paper produces an average of 72 pages, depending on the day of the week (Public Relations Department, GCGL). The Daily Graphic, which is a state-owned daily newspaper, appeared on the newsstand on 2nd October, 1950 as one of a chain of newspapers owned by private interest group, the Daily Mirror Group of London.

The government of Ghana acquired the company by an Act of Parliament in 1962. The Daily Graphic has carved out a certain niche market based on its distinctive house style (Hasty, 2006). It has the largest nationwide readership which includes elites who influence government decisions and make national policies. Though a state-owned newspaper, the Daily Graphic operates as an independent newspaper.

Again, appointment of the board's Chairperson and the board members is done by the National Media Commission in consultation with the president of Ghana and in accordance

with Article 168 of the 1992 Constitution and section 2(1)(e) of the National Media Commission Act, 1993 (Act 449). The mission of the Graphic Communications Group Limited (GCGL) is to empower its readers and consumers with reliable and credible information, communication and entertainment that create the best possible customer experience (Public Relations Department, GCGL).

3.4.6 Daily Guide

The Daily Guide is a privately-owned newspaper published by Western Publications Limited. Daily Guide is on the newsstand six days in the week (from Monday to Saturday). It covers sports, politics, social issues and international news. It was registered in January 1988 but started publication in 1991. From the Daily Guide's mission statement, the agenda of the newspaper is to promote democracy through freedom of speech, association and the rule of law. The Daily Guide, which started as a four-page weekly, changed to a bi-weekly publication until 2005 when it became a 16-page daily newspaper. The newspaper circulates around 60,000 copies daily to all the ten regions of the country. Stories of the paper are also carried online on its website: <http://www.dailyguideghana.com/>. For this study, the Daily Guide is a paper of choice because it is a private newspaper that boasts of a wide readership compared to other private newspapers in the country. It also provides an alternative to the Daily Graphic, which is a state-owned newspaper that regularly covers the government in a favourable light, detailing and boosting national unity and government policy (Hasty, 2005).

3.4.7 Rotating Composite Week Method

Due to the limited time and resources, the researcher used a total seventy-six editions of both the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide to represent the nine months of the study. The rotating composite week ensured a more representative sample since the composite week was used through the entire nine months' period of the study. A rotating composite week method was used to select numbers from one to six, representing each day of the publishing week.

The days are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday. The first three editions were chosen from March 13th 21st and April 9th published.

Riffe, Aust and Lucy (1993) and Acheampong (1994) have demonstrated in similar works that a composite week technique was superior when dealing with newspaper content. Budol, Throp and Donohew (1967) allude that researcher may select a reduced number of events, as there are many ways to sample and there is no best method.

3.5 UNIT OF ANALYSIS

A unit of analysis is the smallest element of a phenomenon of interest in a content analysis. Wimmer and Dominick (2011) posit that a unit of analysis in a written content might be a single word or symbol, a theme or an entire article or story. The unit of analysis for this study was straight news items, editorials, features, letters to the editor, and opinions, in which malaria were mentioned from March to December 2020. A sample size of seventy- six (76) has been generated through the rotating composite week and it will be used for stories containing key words like, malaria, malaria cases, malaria cases, malaria treatment, malaria statistics, malaria vaccine etc.

3.6 DATA COLLECTION METHODS AND INSTRUMENT

3.6.1 Content categories

Content categories made use of priori coding instead of emergent coding. Coding, according to Wimmer and Dominick (2011) is the process of placing a unit of analysis into a content category. Two ways of establishing content categories are emergent coding and a priori coding. Emergent coding establishes categories after a preliminary examination of data. A priori, on the other hand establishes the categories before data are collected (Wimmer and

Dominick, 2011). Berelson (1952) reiterates that the priori coding system enables the researcher as well as research assistants and other researchers to categorize and code the same data the same way over a period of time. In this regard, the following content categories were used in this study: placement, headline size and frequency of malaria stories and articles. The categories were operationalised as follows:

Total number of stories: This is the overall number of stories on malaria which were covered by both papers (Daily Graphic and Daily Guide).

Placement of story: This refers to the page and position on which a story is placed to indicate the prominence attached to the story. There is a correlation between the page on which a newspaper story is placed and the prominence given to it by editors and the importance readers attach to it (Danso, 2012). Stories on front pages obviously gain more attention than those in the inside pages. Other important stories are also found on page three, back page, or centre spread.

Length of story: this is the space apportioned to the particular story on malaria to show the prominence and attention attached to the story. A longer story can be considered more prominent than a relatively short one. In this study, coding was done for full page, half a page, one quarter of a page and any other space which doesn't fall within the above named significant sizes.

3.6.2 Instrument

The researcher used a standard interview guide which was designed and administered by Cullen (2000), who did similar work in the Papua New Guinea, to conduct the in-depth interview. However, in order to fit the current malaria trend and context, in Ghana the tool was piloted and the questions modified.

3.6.3 Inclusion and exclusion criteria

There are no publications by the two media houses on Sundays and Sundays. Therefore, stories from Monday to Saturday with the central thrust on the subject of malaria were included. Stories in which malaria were incidentally mentioned but not principally or substantially (that is, at least half the content) were excluded. Stories on other health conditions including diabetes, hypertension, hiv/aids, on crime, natural disasters, accidents and politics among others were excluded.

3.6.4 Data collection tool pre-test

The interview guide was pre-tested to validate that the tool content was valid or not in the sense of the respondents' understanding. The pilot test was conducted on two individuals. The outcome of the pilot study helped the researcher to modify the interview guide tool.

3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

Ethical clearance was obtained from the Ghana Institution Journalist, Accra Ghana. Official letters were written to the interviewees. The purpose of the study was explained to the study subjects. They were told that the information they provided will be kept confidential and that their identities would not be revealed in association with the information they provided. Informed consent was secured from each participant.

3.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter introduced the study by looking at the problem that has been presented. Thus, although a lot of efforts have been put in the fight against malaria, the disease continues to

kill millions of the world's population every year. It also gave a background to the study by looking at the impact of the disease globally as well as in Ghana. The two newspapers to be content analysed are discussed with reasons for the choices. The objectives, research hypothesis and significance of the study are also stated.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings of the study. The research analyses how the media reported on malaria stories under covid-19 by the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide, in 2020. The objective of the study was to explore in the mist of covid-19, how the media carried stories on malaria.

Data was generally collected through two different techniques content analysing and interviews. The discussions are presented under these broad categories. For the purposes of ensuring anonymity of the research participants, and in line with Creswell's (2013) argument that researchers must make efforts at respecting the privacy and anonymity of the participants, the researcher avoided the names of participants. Thus, the findings are presented in line with the objectives of the study. By doing so, the research questions were used as a guide to conduct analyses as follows;

1. How frequent did the Daily Graphic and Daily Guide cover malaria stories under the study period?
2. What level of prominence is given malaria stories by the Daily Guide and Daily Graphic?
3. What is the editorial policy of the Daily Graphic and Daily Guide on Malaria?
4. How can Ghana achieve total malaria elimination from stakeholders' opinions?

4.1 FREQUENCY OF COVERAGE

In all, 9 news stories were harvested from the various print media for analysis. A breakdown is 8 stories from Daily Graphic and 1 story from daily guide. Table 1 illustrates the sources of stories used.

Table4. 1: Type of Print Media

Type of Print media	Frequency	Percent
Daily Graphic	8	89
Daily Guide	1	11
Total	9	100.0

Source: Adjei (2021)

From table 4.1 the frequency of coverage was determined by the selected number of stories that were covered by both the Daily Graphic and Daily Guide from March to December 2020. Out of the total sample size of (76) stories, a total of nine (n=9) stories representing 89% on malaria were published by the Daily Graphic. They included the following editions, March 13th, 21st, April 7th, May 1st, and 18th, June 12th, November 9th and 3rd December. The Daily Guide however published 11% (n=1) story on malaria story and the edition was November 16th.

4.1.2 News Categories

The researcher was also interested in finding the type/categories of News used by the sources under study. As such, straight news, feature, editorial, and opinion were part of the categories of story sources used for this study. Table 4.2 present a more pictorial view of the results.

Table 4. 2: Type of Story/Category

Type of Story/Category	Frequency (Daily Graphic)	Frequency (Daily Guide)	Total Frequency	Percent
Straight News	4	1	5	56
Feature	2	0	2	22
Editorial/Opinion	2	0	2	22
Total	8	1	9	100

Source: Adjei (2021)

A look at the table 4.2 shows that majority of stories used were straight news appearing 5 times while the least is feature and editorial/Opinion. Feature and editorial/opinion had same frequency 2 counts representing 22% each.

4.2 MEDIA PROMINENCE TO MALARIA STORIES

The prominence of the newspaper stories was analysed in terms of placement of stories, headline size and use of visuals to stories.

4.2.1 Placement of Stories

In analysing the prominence of the stories by the print media, the following categories were analysed based on the front page, centre spread and back page publications.

Table 4.3 Placement Of Stories

PLACEMENT	DAILY GRAPHIC (EDITIONS)	DAILY GUIDE (EDITIONS)
FRONT PAGE	1	0
CENTRE SPREAD	7	1
BACK PAGE	0	0
TOTAL	8	1

Source: Adjei (2021)

From table 4.3, the result for the Media's Prominence in publishing malaria stories during the outbreak of covid-19 pandemic, in terms of placement of stories show, that 1 story was placed on the front page by Daily Graphic with no story for Daily Guide. Also, a frequency count of 7 was recorded for Daily Graphic of placing stories in centre spreads, while 1 story was in the centre spread of the Daily Guide newspaper. However, no story was published at the back page for both newspapers (Daily Graphic and Daily Guide). It can therefore be concluded that stories with prominence are usually put on the front page, page three, centre spread and the back page, while others they consider less important are placed in the inside pages. Thus, the results proved less prominence given to malaria stories during the period of covid-19.

4.2.2 Length of story

The study categorized the length of stories into full page and one third of a page in finding the prominence given to malaria stories by the print media. The results are presented and analyzed below.

Table 4.4: Length Of Story

Type of Media	Full Page	Half Page	One Third Page	Total
Daily Graphic	7	1	0	8
Daily Guide	1	0	0	1

Source: Adjei (2021)

Table 4.4 shows the size or length of stories published in the various print media. A frequency count of 8 was gotten from story size which comprises of a full page publication on malaria stories. Thus, Daily Graphic published 7 full page stories with Daily Guide

publishing 1 page full story. However, a frequency count of 1 was recorded for Daily Graphic on a half paged publication on malaria story.

4.2.3 Story Enhancement

The study categorised stories from the print media publications based on picture or in a text only form. Thus, these were ascertained to assist the researcher on how enhanced the stories were, hence the prominence given to each malaria published story.

Table 4.5: Story enhancement

Type of Media	Story with picture	Text only	Total
Daily Graphic	8	0	8
Daily Guide	1	0	1
Total	9	0	9

Source: Adjei (2021)

A look at table 4.5 shows that majority of stories covered were published with pictures relating to the subject attached. Out of the stories published, Daily Graphic had a frequency of 8 stories published with an image whereas Daily Guide had a frequency of 1. Thus, all stories published were enhanced with images to urge readers interest.

4.3 EDITORIAL POLICY OF THE DAILY GRAPHIC AND DAILY GUIDE ON MALARIA

Low attention to Malaria Reportage

Analysis of data gathered established that covid-19 is currently dominating headlines globally. Thus, there has been a shift of attention on equally important stories to Covid-19. The interviewee A disclosed that the covid-19 pandemic is considered more deadly as

compared to other ailment, therefore, the need to extensively report on it to create awareness and sensitize Ghanaians on the need to avoid contracting the disease the disease. Again, interviewee A disclosed that the rate of mortality of covid-19 was high due to the mode of transmission, hence the media's focus on paying critical attention to the disease. The interviewee A notes the following during the interview;

“Covid is taking the shine from all the diseases. Everybody is talking about Covid. Even if you go to the hospitals the outpatient department is empty. People might have malaria but they are not reporting to the hospitals. People are afraid that they might be diagnosed with Covid. It might not be a deliberate policy but it was because of the outbreak of Covid. Covid has taken the shine from the other diseases. Malaria kills its true but we cannot let Covid kill us like it killed people in other countries. Those elsewhere had better facilities to manage the disease but don't so the media had to focused more on public education. And that is why we did not record mass death like in other countries.

Nonetheless, the interviewee further reveals that stories on malaria are not neglected, however, the need to prioritize both for the benefit of everyone. Thus, the media have no dedicated page for malaria as well as health stories, however, greater attention is given to the story when there is an outbreak. Again, malaria stories get regular and extensive publication when stakeholders in health organize frequent programmes on malaria. The Interviewee A disclosed the following statement;

So it not that we are neglecting malaria. We still cover them. The authorities we are supposed to lead are also doing something else maybe focusing on other things. Covid-19 is communicable but attention should also be put on other non-communicable diseases. As I told you we may not have a dedicated page but

when we have we publish them. When a reporter files the story we publish it. Sometimes we do follow ups. Let's say if there is an outbreak of a particular disease we do a follow up. We have a health reporter. We have a dedicated health reporter. Who cover health issues. She writes on health stories and lifestyles.

Malaria Media Fatigue

According to interviewee B, the media prioritises on health stories to help create the needed sensitization on outbreaks of diseases. The interviewee B disclosed that the policy of the organization is to gather and disseminate information worthy of time bound to the public. Thus, the need to make conscious effort to promote health activities, and not only malaria, since there are other pertaining health issues which need public awareness. Stories that are published by the media organization are driven by events of the day. The interviewee B disclosed the following;

There is a conscious effort to publish stories on health. So, for instance on World Malaria Day for instance, the focus and attention will be on how to create the needed awareness and enhance mass public education on the disease. On such an occasion, we do multiple articles on it. On such a day there is a deliberate effort to make the World Malaria Day the main highlight of our publication by creating consciousness among the citizenry. But clearly, there is a conscious effort to promote health activities, and not only malaria, there are a whole lot of issues that the paper looks at, you know. The UN has commemorating days and any time we find ourselves celebrating the days we raise public knowledge of those event. The papers key mandate you know, to gather and disseminate information. Therefore, you can gather and disseminate information on many activities, and related issues. Nevertheless, we realize that today's media must go beyond just gathering and disseminating, and could also play an active role in helping society

bring a change to society. So even today, when you look at our publication today, though, not on malaria, but it's on breast screaming. so we are talking about breast cancer day. And like I told you, it's an event driven activity. So you see the back of the paper.

Similarly, interviewee B also disclosed that Covid-19 is gaining attention in the media, and that attention is paid on issues of public interest. The media reflects issues that catches its attention, hence giving those events the needed attention. The interviewee B indicated that there must be a free flow of information from experts or stakeholders in the health sector. Thus, the flow of information would help increase the publication and content of malaria stories in the prints. The following was disclosed by the interviewee B;

“The media defiantly reflects what it sees. So there must be conscious effort from the stakeholders also to provide the media with the needed information. So that the media can carry across those messages. The media cannot be walking and doing the work of stakeholders. So people who are interested in malaria issues also have that bigger responsibilities to make sure that whatever they are doing, the media is also with them step by step. Meanwhile those who are in the malaria sector would have wished that the media keep talking malaria but, yes we can be talking malaria 24/7 if stakeholders themselves also pushes their way into the media. It's extremely important. You can't keep be sleeping and expect the media to automatically do your work for you. Look sometimes even fact to support editorial write ups becomes difficult to get. Those who are experts in the field should support with information here and there”.

Analysis established from interview B disclosed that there is no media fatigue on malaria reportage. Thus, field experts are not offering the media with information hence becoming a

challenge for having enough and accurate data on press releases. He further noted that opened spaces are limited due to the increasing demand on reporting stories (religious, social, political). Thus, the media is dragged by the masses. He further revealed the need for stories on malaria to have editorial competence, thus, to help promote the media's role in health care. The following was disclosed by interviewee B;

“We are complementing the politicians work, business man's work, the religious community. We are complementing everybody's work, festivals and space is so limited so constrained. So how can we effectively have everybody satisfied. The serious ones will get space. The media can never grow weary. Once we have the news every newspaper is so interested in reporting the news. But news abounds If you go to the beaches news abound with plastics waste. Again, if the media walks there it will pick but everybody is dragging the media. So where does the media goes and make an impactful. Really those who are on top of their game will get coverage. If those in malaria field are bombarding the media with information, press statement, releases but if no I don't have all these then I will go for where my competencies lie, maybe my area is politics”.

4.4 EXPERTS' OPINIONS ON ELIMINATING MALARIA IN GHANA

Malaria is endemic and perennial in all parts of the country, with varying transmission intensity and seasonal variations that are more pronounced in the north. In Ghana malaria affects people of all ages. The burden of malaria affects every aspect of the health, social and economic life of the people. According to the National Malaria Control Programme, the parasite *Plasmodium falciparum* accounts for over 90% of the malaria illness in Ghana with

the principal vectors (mosquitoes) being *Anopheles gambiae* and *Anopheles funestus* (NMCP,2021).

Thus, parasite prevalence among children in Ghana has reduced from 27.5% (MICS, 2011) to 14.1% in 2019 (MIS 2019), with regional variations lowest of 2.4% in Greater Accra Region to 27% in Western Region (NMCP, 2021). Hence, malaria admissions nationwide have reduced from 22.6% of total admissions in 2017 to 18.4% in 2020 (MICS, 2020).

According to the National Malaria and control programme several preventive measures such as distribution of LLINs through mass campaign and continuous (facility-based and school-based), seasonal Malaria Chemoprevention (SMC), Indoor Residual Spraying (IRS), Intermittent Preventive Treatment of malaria in pregnancy (IPTp), Limited larviciding and diagnostics and treatment have been adopted to fight the disease over the years. Nonetheless, there were support for SBC activities, use of civil society organizations and NGOs to support rural districts and communities in terms of SBC for uptake of interventions.

In the case of examining media's coverage on malaria stories, this research question seeks to investigate experts' opinion on how to eliminate malaria in Ghana. From the analysis of data gathered, the following themes; Coordination, Commitment and Partnership and Resource Mobilization and Sustained Financing were identified to answer the research question. The themes are examined to explaining the elimination of malaria.

4.4.1 Coordination, Commitment and Partnership

Analysis of data gathered established that malaria can be eliminated when there is stronger or greater political commitment. The interviewee admitted that eliminating malaria in Ghana needs enhanced political commitment to ensure this set of objective. Malaria related mortality is considered high in poverty prone areas. The expert revealed that concerted efforts and action must be taken to reduce malaria cases and deaths. Thus, a strong political commitment

in reaching all affected communities in the country with malaria interventions and resources is a goal achievable.

Again, the expert indicated that political commitment tends to encourage investment in malaria prevention and control to successfully reduce the burden on the disease. Thus, these political leaders need to ensure effective collaboration, coordination and dedication to the NMCP to accelerate their actions to achieve malaria free in the country. Thus, the expert notes this in the interview;

“You know, as a country if we want to eliminate malaria then there is the need for enhanced political commitment”

Again, the expert posited that eradicating malaria proceeds with the conscious effort of creating awareness for change in behaviour towards malaria interventions and ownership of malaria across diverse stakeholders. He revealed that the “Zero Malaria Starts with Me” campaign is done to signal stakeholders commitment in fighting to end malaria in light of the challenges imposed by Covid-19. Thus, malaria fight should be considered a priority and not neglected although the country faces the covid-19 pandemic. He revealed this during the interview;

“We need to create the awareness for change in behaviour towards malaria interventions and ownership of malaria across diverse stakeholders. So the “Zero Malaria Starts with Me” campaign must be taken seriously by sensitizing Ghanaians on the disease and the preventive measures”

4.4.2 Resource Mobilization and Sustained Financing

Analysis of data gathered established that the National Malaria Control Programme can effectively eliminate malaria if there is an increased and sustained financing of malaria control programmes in the country. Thus, the expert revealed that for Ghana to make

impressive progress against malaria, decrease mortality and morbidity, there must be increased financial commitment from government and donors.

He further indicated that eliminating malaria requires robust epidemiological and economic benefits if financial commitment is increased and sustained. Hence the need to consider allocating funds in the district assembly common fund for malaria to ensure robust domestic strategy to overcome financial barriers to achieving malaria elimination in Ghana. This is what the expert indicated to the researcher in the interview:

“You see, there must be an increased and sustained financing. This includes government allocation of funds in the district assembly common fund for malaria, and I am hopeful that by doing this we can eliminate malaria together as a nation.”

Furthermore, the expert revealed that mobilizing the private sector to support efforts being made to eliminate malaria is a key factor in the set objectives. The private sector should increasingly invest and engage in activities to improve the health of its workers and communities in which they operate. Thus, the need to ensure that resources are channelled properly and thus creating partnership for stronger engagements.

“Again, there must be resource mobilization especially from the private sector we really we want to eliminate malaria...”

4.5 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The discussions of the findings are done in themes which guides the study. Thus, the thematic analyses are drawn from the research questions: How frequent did the Daily Graphic and Daily Guide cover malaria stories under the study duration? What level of prominence is

given malaria stories by the Daily Guide and Daily Graphic? What is the editorial policy of the Daily Graphic and Daily Guide on Malaria? How can Ghana achieve total malaria elimination from stakeholders' opinions?

4.5.1 RQ1: Frequency of Daily Graphic and Daily Guide coverage on malaria stories under the study duration?

In answering the research question “How frequent did the Daily Graphic and Daily Guide cover malaria stories under the study duration?” the SPSS statistics of the frequency distribution table 4.1 revealed that the number of malaria stories covered by the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide were nine (9). Thus, out of the sample size of 76 a total of nine (n=9) stories representing 89% on malaria were published by both print media during covid-19. They included the following editions, March 13th, 21st, April 7th, May 1st, and 18th, June 12th, November 9th and 3rd December. This means that the media did not publish many stories on malaria during the outbreak of covid-19.

Pertaining to findings of the frequency of stories covered, the researcher was interested in knowing the type/categories of news used by the sources under study, thus considering the, straight news, feature, editorial, and opinion categories of the newspapers. Findings revealed that out of the nine (9) stories, five (5) were straight news stories on malaria. These findings were supported by Peng and Tang (2010); Bello (2015); findings that there were less coverage of malaria and other health related diseases by the print media. Also, the findings fall in line with Onyeizu and Binta (2014) that most genre of health stories are straight news stories which do not give enough attention to health stories.

4.5.2. RQ2. Level of prominence given to malaria stories by the Daily Guide and Daily Graphic

The study examined the level of prominence given to stories on malaria by the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide. The prominence of the newspaper stories was analysed in terms of placement of stories, headline size and use of visuals in enhancing the stories. The results of the findings indicate that most of the stories were placed in the centre spread of the newspapers. Thus, a frequency count of seven (7) out of nine (9) stories were published in the centre of both newspapers (Daily Guide and Daily Graphic).

Table 4.4 shows that most stories on malaria were given full length which were published in the newspapers. A frequency count of 8 was gotten from story size which comprises of a full page publication, and a frequency count of 2 was recorded for a half paged publication on malaria stories by both prints. In terms of story enhancement, it was ascertained that majority of stories covered were published with pictures relating to the subject attached. Out of the stories published, Daily Graphic had a frequency of 8 stories published with an image whereas Daily Guide had a frequency of 1. Thus, all stories published were enhanced with images to urge readers interest. These findings are in line with what Peng and Tang (2010); Gupta and Sinha (2010); Laryea (2015); Bello (2015) said about media's prominence to stories. Thus, they reasoned that stories which are not given front page prominence and spaces are not considered the most important to the media organization. Thus, the newspapers do not give prominent coverage to health issues which suggest that the newspapers may have less influence in directing the readers' attention covid-19.

4.5.3 R.Q 3 Editorial policy of the Daily Graphic and Daily Guide on Malaria

In answering the research question on the editorial policy of the Daily Graphic and Daily Guide on Malaria, findings of the results revealed that there has been a low attention given to stories on malaria during this covid-19 period. Thus, there has been a shift of attention on equally important stories on malaria to Covid-19 which is making headlines. This was triggered by the rate of mortality of covid-19 which was high due to the lack of mode of transmission, hence the media's focus on the disease. The study further revealed that although less attention is given to malaria stories however, major concentration is done when there is an intense outbreak of the disease in some major areas of the country.

Again, stories on malaria also get regular and extensive publication when stakeholders in health organize frequent programmes; such as press conferences, press release, and other sensitization programmes. With this realization notwithstanding, it is also worth mentioning that, stories that are published by the media organization are driven by events of the day to help create the needed sensitization. Hence, the policy of these media organization is to gather and disseminate information worthy of time bound to the public. This finding is coterminous to Onyeizu and Binta (2014) research findings of the media contributing to health discourse by facilitating and sustaining debate especially among policy makers to make policies that could aid the people towards achieving good health.

4.5.4 R.Q 4 Stakeholders' opinion on achieving a total malaria elimination

The researchers in the quest to answer the fourth objective found out stakeholders' opinion on achieving a total malaria elimination in Ghana found out that malaria can be eliminated by stronger political commitment. The expert revealed that concerted efforts and action must be

taken to reduce malaria cases and deaths. Thus, an enhanced political commitment is needed to reach all affected communities in the country with malaria interventions and resources. Hence, effective collaboration, coordination and dedication to the NMCP will accelerate actions to achieve malaria free in the country. Again, the expert revealed the need for awareness creation in behaviour change towards malaria interventions and ownership of malaria across diverse stakeholders. Thus, the fight against malaria should be considered a priority. This is in line with what Hong et al (2020) said about the need to prioritize the distribution of long-lasting insecticide-treated nets to mitigate the risk of malaria.

Furthermore, there was a call for an increased and sustained financing of malaria control programmes to make impressive progress by decreasing mortality and morbidity. Thus, there is the need for increased financial commitment from government and private donors. The private sector should more often than not invest and engage in activities to improve the health of its workers and communities in which they operate. This could be equally assigned to organizations performing CSR as a core mandate. Sirleaf and Kikwete (2021) have also stated that an increased funding is needed in the fight against malaria especially under the current outbreak of covid-19. Thus, governments and other entities should invest in bolstering surveillance and health information management systems that can inform public health policy decisions. Hence, international partners must invest in Africa's health systems to ensure that malaria is eliminated.

4.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter presented the findings and discussions of the research questions. The study sought to find out the value, how the print media (Daily Graphic and Daily Guide) attach to

the coverage of Malaria stories especially during the covid-19 period in their effort to bring about behavioural and attitudinal change among the populace. Specifically, to investigate how frequent the Daily Graphic and Daily Guide carried stories on malaria, determine the prominence and priority given to malaria stories by the Daily Graphic and Daily Guide by their specific placement, as front page stories, assess what editorial policy or general considerations, guiding the reportage of Malaria stories by the Daily Graphic and Daily Guide and ascertain experts' opinions on how to eliminate malaria in Ghana.

The study found out that there was low or less number of stories published by the print media on malaria under covid-19 pandemic. Again, it was revealed that less prominence was given by the media on malaria stories, thus in terms of placement of stories, enhancement of story and the size or length of the stories. Furthermore, it was revealed that the policy of these media organization are guided by time bound to gather and disseminate information to the public, hence reporting on issues of the day to the masses. Nonetheless, opinion of experts indicated that much concerted effort in terms of commitment, coordination, partnership, resource mobilization and sustained financing are the drive to achieving malaria free in Ghana.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter summarizes the entire study and most importantly, focuses attention on drawing conclusions from the major findings this study has unravelled. The chapter also seeks to make key recommendations to academia based on the observations and research findings that have emerged from the data gathered. The conclusions and recommendations are mainly hinged on the issues of Print media coverage of malaria stories under covid-19.

5.1 SUMMARY

The researcher undertook this study to ascertain print media's coverage of malaria stories under covid-19 and get stakeholders' insight in the aspect of health communication. Specifically, the study used the agenda setting theory and the framing theory to ascertain the importance of the media paying critical attention to issues on its fronts. In attaining this aim set out by the researcher, four major research questions were posed.

1. How many times did the Daily Graphic and Daily Guide cover malaria stories under the study duration?
2. What level of prominence is given malaria stories by the Daily Guide and Daily Graphic?
3. What is the editorial policy of the Daily Graphic and Daily Guide on Malaria?
4. How can Ghana achieve total malaria elimination from stakeholders' opinions?

Furthermore, the researcher also did a thorough literature review on the subject matter. Thus, literature ranging from reports on malaria, and malaria and covid-19 were reviewed.

The study employed a quantitative and qualitative (mixed) research approach in gathering data. Specifically, quantitative content analysis was used to gather data on how the print media published stories on malaria. In-depth interview was adopted as the second part of the design for the study, and in gathering data from stakeholders in the media and health officials. The quantitative research approach gathered data from the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide in investigating the frequency of coverage of malaria stories and determining the prominence given to such stories. This research design was used to answer research questions 1 and 2. The data collected were thematically analysed from the interview. All themes emerged were duly analysed to answer research questions 3 and 4.

5.2 SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

The frequency of coverage of malaria stories showed that out of the 9 stories on malaria published, Daily Graphic published a total of eight (8) stories while Daily Guide published one (1) story. The results showed that Daily Graphic had the highest count (89%) on number of malaria stories published under covid-19. Again, the study showed that Daily Graphic had the highest frequency count on news categories or types under the study. Thus, the results revealed that majority of the malaria stories published were straight news with a count of 4 while Daily Guide only had one straight news story published. This shows that majority of news categories were gotten from the publications of Daily Graphic.

The second research question sought to examine the level of prominence given to malaria stories by the Daily Guide and Daily Graphic. The prominence of the newspaper stories were analysed in terms of how the media enhanced the stories to its readers, placement of stories, and length of the stories. Thus, to know if the story was published with picture or just texts, hence findings revealed that these print media (Daily Graphic and Daily Guide) employed

majority of pictures and to enhance their stories. Also, most stories covered; with a frequency count of 8 (both media) had full paged written stories on malaria. Nonetheless, the study revealed a frequency count of 7 for Daily Graphic on placing stories in its centre spreads, while one (1) story was in the centre spread of the Daily Guide newspaper. Thus, only one story was published at the front page of the Daily Graphic. This was concluded that, the media gave no prominence to malaria stories during covid-19 pandemic.

Top among the findings under research question three is that there has been a shift of attention on malaria stories to Covid-19 stories. Thus, media organizations pay little or no attention to malaria stories as covid-19 makes the headlines. However, the interviewees claimed that there was the need to extensively report on it to create awareness to sensitize Ghanaians on the need to prevent the disease. The interviewees disclosed that although stories on malaria are not neglected, the media organization have no dedicated page for malaria stories only to be given much prominence. However, such stories get regular and extensive publication when frequent programmes and events are organized by stakeholders. Thus, Stories that are published by the media organization are driven by events of the day hence, the conscious efforts made to promote health activities, and not only malaria during the pandemic. Furthermore, the study revealed the lack of free flow of information from experts or stakeholders in the health sector to the media. Thus, the inaccessible information contributes to the decline of malaria stories publication in the prints.

For the third research question which sought to ascertain experts' opinions on how to eliminate malaria in Ghana emerged that, several preventive measures such as distribution of LLINs through mass campaign and continuous (facility-based and school-based), seasonal Malaria Chemoprevention (SMC), Indoor Residual Spraying (IRS), Intermittent Preventive Treatment of malaria in pregnancy (IPTp), Limited larviciding and diagnostics and treatment have been adopted to fight malaria in Ghana. However, the interviewee disclosed new

strategies in eradicating malaria Ghana. The interviewee stated that there is the need for enhanced political will and concerted effort to eliminate malaria. Thus, a stronger political commitment in reaching all affected communities in the country with malaria interventions and resources to ensure effective collaboration, coordination and dedication to the NMCP to accelerate their actions to achieve malaria free in the country. Again, the interviewee revealed that eradicating malaria proceeds with the conscious effort for awareness creation for change in behaviour. Thus, malaria fight should be considered a priority and not neglected.

Furthermore, the study revealed that NMCP can effectively eliminate malaria if there is an increased and sustained financing of malaria control programmes by the government and the private sectors in the country. Thus, increased financial commitment from government and donors will help decrease mortality and morbidity.

5.3 CONCLUSION

The objectives of the study were to find out the value, how the print media (Daily Graphic and Daily Guide) attached to the coverage of Malaria stories especially during the covid-19 period in their effort to bring about behavioural and attitudinal change among the populace. The following conclusions were drawn based on the outcome of the study.

The research also concludes based on the analysis and findings from the study, the print media did not publish many stories on malaria during the covid-19 pandemic in Ghana. Thus, nine (9) stories were available during the duration of 9 months of study. Again, conclusion is drawn based on findings that the media did not give much prominence to stories on malaria. The prominence of the newspaper stories was analysed in terms of how the media enhanced the stories to its readers on where the story was placed, the length of the story and the enhancement of the stories to readers. Furthermore, the print media paid no attention to

malaria stories as covid-19 disease was making headlines across all section of the media space. Thus, stories that were published by the media were driven by events to promote health activities. Nonetheless, the study also concludes that Ghana can eliminate malaria by increasing and sustaining finance on malaria control programmes by the government and the private sectors entities in the country. Also, there should be an effective collaboration, coordination and dedication to the NMCP to accelerate their actions to achieve malaria free in Ghana.

5.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Although content analysis was enough for the purposes of this study, findings would have been richer if the mixed method adopted was complemented with other research techniques, such as a survey or a focus group discussion. Thus, readers will be able to understand issues on health covered by the media. Information on how and where public viewers seek health information would be useful and should be looked at in future studies.

One of the major limitations of this study is the fact that, it is one of the few media researches conducted under covid-19. This therefore affected the availability of information for the researcher. Again, the researcher was unable to get more detailed information from health professionals or experts in the aspect of eradicating malaria in Ghana. This would have given diverse pictorial views of eliminating malaria. Future studies can pay more attention to that.

The result of the study was limited to only two print media house in the Greater Accra region, thus, the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide. This may not reflect coverage of other print media in Ghana unless context is similar to the topic of study. Thus, a more pictorial study of the radio, television and some online news sources could be explored in future studies.

5.5 RECOMMENDATION FOR FUTURE STUDIES

Future researchers should widen the period beyond nine months, especially for the coverage on malaria stories. This will ensure data adequacy and help the researcher incorporate changing trends within the print media space and how are adapting to developments in the news production and publication of stories.

It is recommended that opinions or perceptions of health experts and professionals in the health sector in Ghana are examined on the quality of health stories being published in Ghanaian newspapers. This could reveal and confirm the conflicts that health professionals often have with health reporters.

Furthermore, the study recommends that a survey is carried on related topic, which would help sample the opinions of newspaper readers and analyse health stories in the Ghanaian newspapers. It is also important to note that the current study focused on newspapers alone. Other studies could explore the coverage of health issues on radio and television, and the promotion of malaria health information on social media. This could be used to determine the level of attention these types of media give to malaria during their health coverage or publication.

5.5.1 Recommendations

These recommendations are made based on the research questions and objectives findings, discussions and conclusions of the research in the area of malaria related stories coverage and health communication;

1. The study recommends to all stakeholders and experts in the health sector to enable free flow to information to the media to access. This will place much attention on malaria stories as well although covid-19 pandemic exists.
2. To ensure efficient coverage and public awareness, the study recommends that media organizations should also prioritize malaria stories on front pages of newspapers. This the study establishes that prominence would then be given to such stories.
3. Most importantly the media must engage in precision journalism in order to be proactive with information.
4. Media newsrooms must have research as one of their core departments to provide information for some complex stories they might not have adequate information on.

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