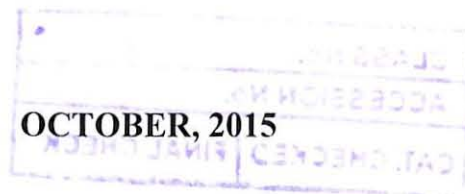


**GHANA INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISM**

**THE FATE OF GBC AS A PUBLIC SERVICE BROADCASTER IN A  
COMMERCIALY COMPETITIVE MEDIA ENVIRONMENT IN GHANA**

**SETH KOJO EYIAH**

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE GHANA INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISM IN  
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MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE IN JOURNALISM**



## DECLARATION

This project was carried out at the Ghana Institute of Journalism, Accra, as part of the requirements for the award of Master of Arts Degree in Journalism. It was under the supervision of Dr. Albert-James Sarpey Tayman, Programme Co-ordinator, School of Graduate Studies and Research. This work was the result of my own research, with the exception of the works of other authors which have been cited and duly acknowledged. I therefore, declare that this work has not been presented anywhere for any award.



Seth Kojo Eyah

(Student)

Date 18/02/2016



Dr. Albert-James Tayman

(Supervisor)

Date 18/02/2016

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this project work to my wife Rita and our children Kelvin, Emmanuel, Sophia and Grace. It also goes to my grandmother Sophia, my aunt Ernestina, my late parents Seth and Grace, my siblings, my in-laws and to all my GIJ mates, friends and lecturers.

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## ABSTRACT

This was a qualitative study which sought to ascertain the fate or future of Ghana Broadcasting Corporation as a public service broadcaster in the liberalized and commercially competitive media environment in the country. Eight respondents were purposively selected and interviewed. The theories of public sphere, the ownership, public broadcasting, libertarian and liberal pluralist formed the theoretical foundation for this study. Contrary to views held that GBC's commercial activities have blurred its public service mandate, the study revealed that the corporation was mindful of its mandate of providing public service as it struggled to meet revenue targets. The study also revealed that "paid for" news items were given priority attention in the broadcasting of news. The study suggests that though the fate or future of GBC is bright, its dominance over broadcasting and influence has nonetheless reduced. The study recommends the review or repeal of GBC's enabling statute, NLCD 226 of 1968, while efforts must be speeded up to pass into law the Broadcasting Bill to firmly position the corporation in the scheme of the liberalized and commercially competitive media environment it finds itself. Ghana's Parliament must not hesitate in adjusting the TV Licence fees accordingly when it becomes necessary to do so as it has proven to be the most effective source of funding of public service broadcasters.

# CHAPTER ONE

## OVERVIEW OF STUDY

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The corporate vision of GBC is “to be authentic and trustworthy voice in Ghana” and its mission statement is “to lead the broadcasting and communication industry through quality programming which promote the developmental and cultural aspirations of Ghana” and “to undertake viable commercial activities that promote aspirations of the Corporation”.

GBC relied in its early years mainly on government subvention, but has come under progressively greater pressure to generate commercial revenue while retaining its public service structure National Media Policy (1999). The promulgation of NLCD 226 and the act of inaugurating the commercial service of GBC, according to Bagbin (2015), “blurred the otherwise clear vision of the Corporation and ignited an unnecessary debate as to whether GBC should provide only public service or make some money”. The National Media Commission Act, 1993, Act 449, which mandates the Commission to “insulate the state-owned media from governmental control” among other functions, triggered the journey of transformation of GBC from a State Broadcaster to Public Service Broadcaster. The journey to full public service status commenced with great promise, especially when the TV Licensing Regulations, 1991, L.I. 1520 unveiled fairly reasonable TV licensing fees to ensure that GBC could operate without either the overbearing influence of government or the attractions of crass commercialism. Unfortunately, the journey of GBC from State Broadcaster to Public Service Broadcaster was negatively affected by the failure of governments from 1991 to 2014 to revise upward the TV License Fee, which stood at 30p by the end of 2014, dwindling government subvention and the pressure to generate revenue from

commercial self-financing. This was exacerbated by the introduction of private commercial broadcasting in 1995. The liberalization broke otherwise the long years of broadcasting monopoly enjoyed by the corporation and opened it up to plethora of media houses and competition. According to the Ghana Broadcasting Study (2005p.19) funding for GBC is partly provided through direct government support for salaries and partly internally generated through commercial activities. The Internally Generated Funding accounts for around 50 percent of the total revenues of GBC.

Though GBC's enabling statute NLCD 226, 1968 enjoins the corporation that to engage in commercial broadcasting through the sale of paid advertisements scheduled at prescribed spots in its programme service, it has rather become the source of financial mainstay of the corporation in view of fast dwindling government subvention.

As a result, this has affected programming and the corporation is vigorously competing with the private commercial media for adverts and also charging for news events to generate the needed financial resources to take care of its recurrent expenditures. As Steemers (2002:p.1) explained reliance on commercial sources of funding are a response to budgetary pressures and inadequate allocation of public funding, but continued that increasing reliance on commercial income may ultimately undermine the justification for public funding altogether. A McKinsey Report for the BBC (1999) cautioned that what may be harmful to public broadcasting is to be forced into a very competitive position and having to hustle for advertising revenue to ensure its survival. The temptation then is very strong to stray from public service obligations and produce the same type of programming as private competitors. The survey found evidence that the higher the advertising figure as a proportion of total revenues, the less distinctive a public service broadcaster is likely to be.

On a global basis, public service media face ideological, political, and technological challenges. At issue is whether they will be able to redefine their role in societies increasingly dominated by market values, and by a powerful sense that the private realm, rather than the collective and the public, is the defining sphere of human activity. Historically, public service broadcasting institutions represented key loci for democratic participation. It seems understandable then that concern is increasingly being expressed about the future of democratic principles and participation, if the institutions of public broadcasting are to be totally replaced by commercial and global media (Padovani and Tracey (2002)). According to them the interest in the fate of public media stems from the conviction that their function as spaces where to foster originality and innovation, and promote national, regional, and local identities, is more urgent now than it has ever been.

Most African countries inherited national broadcasting institutions at independence created for propaganda purposes during the colonial era but elected to retain their monopoly over the airwaves. It was not only the monopoly that was continued, but also the tradition of using broadcasting as an instrument to propagate government ideas and policies. In practice therefore national broadcasters, although officially designated as public service broadcasters became state broadcasters. That is broadcasting was in all respects owned, controlled and financed by the state. The justification used for control by post-colonial governments was that media and in particular broadcasting with its wide reach was an important tool for forging national unity, promoting development and fostering a national identity and protecting national culture (Article 19 (2003 p.139)).

The broadcasting landscape has undergone dramatic change in the past decades. In most countries, there exist mixed broadcasting models, with the co-existence of State or public service channels alongside fully commercial broadcasting enterprises. Private broadcasting has proliferated both nationally and internationally through the use of cable and satellite transmission systems. Given

the varying political, technological, and economic environments in every nation, PSB has taken different shapes and followed different models UNESCO (2005:pp.12-13).

The commercial model of broadcasting sprang from a strong belief in the ability of market mechanisms to respond to consumers' tastes, and an equally strong reluctance to let the State dominate a mass medium believed to have a great potential for information and influence. Direct state involvement in broadcasting was seen as dangerous World Radio and Television Council (2000: p.5). This mistrust of the State, like trust in market mechanisms, was not felt everywhere, however. In other countries, the State model of broadcasting developed in response to an interventionist concept of the role of broadcasting. Although the State could have exercised some control over private broadcasting, it was decided most often to entrust broadcasting to direct government responsibility. This centralized and monopolistic model of broadcasting rested on the notion that the State is justified in using the media for its own purpose. The State in this context, was seen as the guarantor of public interest-an interest that the State itself defined World Radio and Television Council (2000: p.5).

The public service model, while it stems from the vision some had for radio, was also based on mistrust: mistrust of the ability of market mechanisms to fulfill certain goals, and mistrust of the State's ability to achieve the same objectives, generally grouped under the broad expectations that still apply to public broadcasting today, that is, to inform, educate, and entertain. This vision of the role and importance of public broadcasting required a public organization, at the service of citizens, culture and democracy World Radio and Television Council (2000: p.5).

These three models, developed in the early years of radio, carried on into the television era-with varying degrees of success. The commercial model has become dominant, while since the 1990s the State model has been losing ground. Public service broadcasting for its part, while faced with

an increasingly commercial environment, is staying afloat World Radio and Television Council (ibid: p.6).

In common with most African countries, Ghana has a long-established publicly-owned and financed broadcaster, Ghana Broadcasting Corporation, (GBC), which provides national and regional radio services and a national television service. GBC has played a major role in engendering national identity and national development throughout the country's late colonial and post-colonial history Ghana Broadcasting Study (2005:p.5).

Before 1992, Broadcasting in Ghana had remained a de facto monopoly of the state for nearly 40 years after independence. It suffered from the weaknesses of a monopoly, especially in a one party state or military state, and was perceived, and often performed, as more of a government mouthpiece than an instrument of the people. Yet it also took seriously its responsibility as a national educational and development tool and, especially in the decade or so immediately after independence, discharged creditably National Media Policy (1999). However, according to the Ghana Broadcasting Study (2005 p.55) under the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation Decree 1968, GBC does not have a well-defined public service mandate and in particular the boundaries between its commercial and non-commercial activities are not clear. The decline of public revenues, and particularly the decreasing value of the television receiving set licence fee, has led GBC to rely increasingly on commercial revenue with a consequent reduction in public programming. It therefore tasks the NMC to commence a public consultation into the future of GBC with the aim of developing a new statute for GBC with a clear and more detailed public service broadcasting mandate. The consultation should have particular regard to consulting on GBC's public service responsibilities and performance, its commercial activities, the development of GBC online and digital services and its future funding.

From 1935 when a relay station christened “ZOY” was introduced by the then Governor of the Gold Coast, Sir Arnold Hudson, solely to redistribute the broadcast of Empire Service, now BBC World Service, through 1940, when wireless broadcasting was started with a 1.3 kilowatt transmitter, to the creation of the Gold Coast Broadcasting Service in 1955, radio broadcasting was seen as government service, Bagbin, (2015: GBC 80th Anniversary Lecture). However, in 1965, the Ghana Broadcasting Instrument, 1965 (LI 472) was passed under the Statutory Corporations Act, 1964 (Act 232) setting up GBC as a Public Service Broadcaster, PSB. The 1953 Broadcasting Commission had advised against commercial radio. The government endorsed this view which was echoed by successive Ministers of Information and later by President Nkrumah himself on more than one occasion.

However, in 1967, there was a policy shift and commercial broadcasting was introduced with the inauguration of a commercial service by Mr J.W.K. Harley, Vice Chairman of the National Liberation Council. According to Bagbin (2015) the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation Decree, NLCD 226, was variously amended and recently reviewed and commissioned as an Act, encapsulating the objects of the 1965 Instrument, LI 472 and the new policy of 1967, to “provide as a public service, independent and impartial broadcasting services, sound and television, for general reception in the Republic.....[and] may engage in commercial broadcasting through the sale of paid advertisements....”. The imposition of NLCD 226 and the act of inaugurating the commercial service of GBC, according to Bagbin (2015), “blurred the otherwise clear vision of the Corporation and ignited an unnecessary debate as to whether GBC should provide only public service or make some money”.

For Atuguba (2007) it is clear that the Decree that is often referred to as the source of authority for the commercialization of GBC, indeed the marketization of GBC, is not authority for that

proposition. That Decree specifically subjects whatever commercial activities GBC may engage in to three critical things: One is that such commercialization is for the extremely limited purpose of giving the business community the chance to sell their products on radio and television. It follows therefore that where business people have alternative avenues for selling their wares, it does not behove on GBC to struggle to provide them that service. GBC was mandated to do this in 1967 when it was the only broadcaster in Ghana. Today it does not have to do so. The second point is that, the commercialization of GBC was necessary in order to relief taxpayers of the burden providing for GBC. This means that if Ghanaians willingly assume that burden, GBC will have no business advertising medical potions which have no certification during primetime news. The last point is that commercial endeavours of GBC were clearly and distinctly subjected to its public service mandate and character. This means that, any commercial move of the GBC which is inconsistent with its public service character is illegal by legislative injunction and must not be allowed to occur Atuguba (2007).

## 1.1 BACKGROUND

Issues of financing public service broadcasting are-quite obviously-key to its success and its pattern of performance in a society. According to Price and Raboy (2001: p.10-11) pressures on funding are increasing as governments seek to reduce the overall tax burden and as increased competition reduces available advertising revenues. As a result of these challenges, and particularly the significant loss of share (and therefore influence) to the new commercial broadcasters, many observers over the past several years considered the PSB an outdated concept. Many PSBs were considered inefficient relics of an earlier, state-dominated age. The PSBs did tend to carry much higher overheads as they contained large production units, education

departments, and many other commitments, which more streamlined commercial broadcasters did not; the absence of competition had made many of them complacent and overstaffed. Furthermore, commercial broadcasters were often more sophisticated in their use of marketing techniques. The new commercial broadcasters were seen as more progressive and exciting than the staid, familiar PSBs.

However, the landscape has fundamentally changed. With the introduction of competition, broadcasting has been transformed from a simple, predictable monopoly into a complex, more volatile ecology, where the PSB is just one of a number of players fighting for survival.

Public broadcasting is faced with a radically new environment that poses numerous challenges to the functioning of any genuine PSB. Marc Raboy (UNESCO: 2005p.12) highlights three parallel developments that characterize this new broadcasting environment:

The explosion in channel capacity and disappearance of audio-visual borders made possible by new technology. The disintegration of the state broadcasting model, with the collapse of the socialist bloc and the move towards democratization in various parts of the world. The upsurge in market broadcasting and the introduction of mixed broadcasting systems in the countries with former public service monopolies.

After independence in 1957, GBC evolved from a colonial broadcasting entity into a State broadcaster committed to “nation-building” as well as playing a crucial role in the....GBC was proudly, overtly and truly a state broadcaster supervised and governed by either the Secretary or Minister of Information. The adoption of Ghana’s 1992 Constitution lifted the ban on political parties and the springing up of dozens of opposition newspapers appeared in the newsstands. This is because the Constitution guarantees freedom of expression and forbids the licensing of any

medium of mass communication, including radio and television (1992 Constitution, Article 162 [3]). By 1995 the state had begun to authorize private radio and television stations Heath (2001).

The new environment of political and media pluralism demanded that the role, status, and structure of the GBC be rethought. In a message to the corporation in 1995, then Minister of Information, (now Communications) Kofi Totobi Quakyi, wrote: it is “time to redefine the objectives of public service broadcasting in Ghana and to formulate GBC’s strategic plans for the next decade”. The government, he promised, would continue to fund infrastructure to enable the corporation to “share development information equitably and provide wide access throughout the country”. For its part “GBC should endeavour to forge a more participatory and collaborative relationship which would truly serve the public by expressing their political and cultural diversity while pursuing the national development agenda”. In reference to the anticipated opening of commercial stations, the Minister urged the GBC “to maintain its traditional broad spectrum role and not allow commercial considerations and the temptation to go in for imported programmes to turn the corporation into a cultural ghetto” (cited in Ghana Broadcasting Corporation, 1995, p. 10).

In May 2000, the National Institutional Renewal Programme Secretariat, commissioned a consultancy firm to undertake a diagnostic study of the GBC. The objectives of the study were to allow GBC to finance its operations and future investments without further subventions, offer improved value for money by providing high quality services for any given level of expenditure while remaining 100 per cent state-owned. As a result, then Minister of Public Sector Reforms, Dr Papa Kwesi Nduom, in 2006, announced that GBC will go off the government’s subvention in the course of the year (ModernGhana.com, January 20, 2006). He explained that the government took the decision because it believed the corporation had come of age and, therefore, it was time now for it to be on its own, having been provided with new equipment, vehicles and other logistics

costing millions of dollars. With this, “the GBC should be able to improve its revenue generation, organize properly, improve its programming as well as make judicious use of the huge investments”. Dr Nduom stated that “This does not mean the corporation will have to do things against the public interest but it needs to ensure that it commercializes its operations through proper management and judicious use of resources”.

A workshop held in Ho on Thursday, November 1, 2007, on Public Service Broadcasting in Ghana, called for the transformation of Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC) from a state reliant broadcaster into a fully-fledged Public Service Broadcasting entity supported by a funding arrangement that is independent of governmental control. It concluded that NLCD 226 of 1968 under which the GBC was incorporated be reviewed to state the public service functions of the corporation clearly and comprehensively (GNA, 2007 printed Friday, 3pm, July 3, 2015).

The Ghana Journalists Association, GJA, in a paper on the “Transformation of GBC into a True Public Service Broadcaster” to the then Minister of Information, Zita Okaikoi, called for the repeal of the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation’s enabling statute NLCD 226, for a legislation that defines the public service broadcasting mandate of the corporation in a comprehensive manner (GNA, 2009, printed Wednesday, January 20, 2015). The then President of the GJA, Mr Ransford Tetteh stated “the GJA recognizes the competitive advantage of the GBC as a state-owned broadcasting organization with limited public service mandate but needs to be supported to be transformed into a true public service broadcaster, especially in terms of its legal mandate, funding and philosophical outlook”.

During the 2014 mid-year review of the GBC at Dodowa, management and board mentioned they have approached government to consider increasing the new television license fee to meet the current economic situation. Other topical issues raised included how GBC would wean itself off

government subvention. Ato Sarpong, Deputy Minister of Communications confirmed that government is in talks with management and board of the GBC to come out with measures that will make the corporation self-sufficient as it prepares to wean itself from government subvention by close of next year (2015). However, while some staff of the corporation supported the move, others felt GBC cannot take care of itself because the corporation has been under government subvention since its inception and that GBC cannot cater for staff salaries and allowances and other expenses ([www.gbcghana.com](http://www.gbcghana.com)). In the September 2014 edition of the GBC News, views on weaning the corporation off government subvention were divided among personalities who have had working stints with the state broadcaster. Prof. Stephen Adei, a former Board Chairman of GBC and also former Rector of Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration, GIMPA, expressed support for moves by government to wean some public institutions including GBC off its subvention. He said the GBC could be self-financed, if it charges 10 Ghana cedis as television license fee. However, a former board member and lecturer at the School of Communication Studies, University of Ghana, Prof. Audrey Gadzekpo cautioned government against weaning GBC off its subvention. "There is a danger in weaning GBC off government subvention, because it will deepen the commercialization of its programming, and already, we feel there is more of that," she said. According to her "GBC's programme content should be culturally important, not just indigenous, but evolving cultures, and good quality intellectual programmes which cannot be seen on any other stations". What the authorities must do is to transit GBC from the State Broadcaster to true public service broadcasting". A former Director-General, William Ampem Darko, described the decision as suicidal. He stated that GBC should rather re-position itself to deliver its mandate as a public service broadcaster. He suggested upward review of the television license fee would help GBC to discharge its mandate effectively. Another former

Director General of GBC, David Anaglatey, believes that the public service broadcasting role of the corporation would be lost, if government takes GBC off its subvention. This according to him would mean that “the corporation would focus more of its attention on commercial activities, at the expense of public service duties (GBC News, Sept 2014: pp. 14-15).

In spite of these mixed views, management and board of GBC have proposed a three-year migration plan from government subvention beginning 2016 to 2018. The three-year transition plan: 2016-33%, 2017-33%, 2018-34%.

## 1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

GBC is a public service broadcaster funded through sale of commercial airtime on its services and direct government subvention through the Ministry of Communications. The Corporation’s main line of business activity is the production and delivery of Television and Radio Programmes on its airwaves to consumers. The programmes are funded wholly from internally generated funds mostly through adverts, sponsorship, transmission mast and space rentals GBC News (January, 2015, No.:32). The sale of air time has impacted negatively on GBC’s public service operations as commercial interests in programming has grown over the years against other programmes. This is because government subvention over the period has been fast dwindling at the time the corporation has also been exposed to competitive private commercial media environment. In view of this, management of GBC has drawn up a three-year plan, beginning 2016 to 2018 to wean the corporation off the government subvention. This study is therefore, to ascertain the fate or future of GBC as a public service broadcaster, in the midst of commercially competitive media environment in Ghana.

### 1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The general objective of this study is to ascertain the fate or future of GBC as a Public Service Broadcaster in the commercially competitive media environment in Ghana.

### 1.4 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To find out if GBC's commercial activities have blurred or overshadowed its public service mandate
2. To determine whether the upward review and re-introduction of the TV License Fee is the panacea to GBC's financial predicament
3. To determine the relevance of GBC's enabling statute, NLCD 226, 1968, in the prevailing media environment and whether it should be maintained or repealed
4. To find out if GBC can survive on TV License Fee without government subvention

### 1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

The outcome of this study is expected to add to or enhance the existing studies, literatures and knowledge on the fate, status and mandate of the GBC as a public service broadcaster. It would also highlights efforts being made through the new Broadcasting Bill, to address the dilemma the corporation finds itself, as a result of NLCD 226, 1968

## 1.6 SCOPE OF STUDY

Broadcasting, both radio and television can be defined across a range of overlapping models of ownership and control, from state-controlled to public service broadcasters, to commercial ownership at global to local levels, to nonprofit and community ownership. Each is governed by different dynamics and embodies a different set of interests, but the configuration in any given country is the result generally of a unique, sometimes lengthy and complex, historical evolution (Buckley et al, 2008:p. 35). No two regimes are identical and the concept of an “ideal” model of broadcasting fails when confronted with the diversity of different national contexts. No single size fits all Buckley et al (2008:p. 35).

The study focused on the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation, GBC, arguably one of the oldest broadcasting institutions in Africa if not in the world. Established on July 31, 1935, GBC is 80 years this year. The corporation has survived from the colonial era as Empire Service, Gold Coast Broadcasting Service and now the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation. It has also survived throughout all the changing phases of the country’s political terrain from colonialism to independence, military and democratic regimes.

It has a corporate vision “to be authentic and trustworthy voice in Ghana”. The mission statement is: “to lead the broadcasting and communication industry through quality programming which promote the developmental and cultural aspirations of Ghana and to undertake viable commercial activities that promote the aspirations of the Corporation.”

There are a number of studies on GBC dealing with the various aspects of the corporation but little on the fate or future of GBC as a Public Service Broadcaster in a commercially competitive media

environment, hence this study. The Corporation as at December 2014, had staff strength of 1,764, made up of 1,252 males and 512 females GBC News ( No. 32, February 2014).

### 1.7 Organisation Of Study

The study was divided into five chapters. Chapter One comprised overview of and background to the study, statement of the problem, significance of study, objectives of study, scope of study, organization of study and definition of terms. Chapter Two consisted of theoretical framework, literature review, and definition of operational terms. Chapter Three focused on the methodology used for the study and the philosophical underpinning of the study. Chapter Four contained the analysis, findings and discussions of the data collected. Chapter Five provided the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study. References and appendices of the study concluded the organization of the study.

### 1.8 Operational Definition Of Terms

**Fate/future:** Outlook of now and coming years.

**Public Service Broadcasting:** Broadcasting made, financed and controlled by the public. It is neither commercial nor state-owned; it is free from political interference and pressure from commercial forces.

**Private Commercial Broadcasting:** Media entities owned by individual(s) or group(s) with profit as prime motive.

**Liberalization:** Opening up the media landscape or spectrum for greater participation.

**State/Government Controlled Broadcasting:** Direct monopoly government ownership and control of broadcasting. It is funded wholly by government or state

**Community Nonprofit Broadcasting:** An independent broadcasting that is provided by and for the members of a community in a particular geographical location or belonging to a particular community of interest. They are operated for social purposes by not-for-profit organizations.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2. INTRODUCTION

The literature review critically examined published or scholarly (and sometimes some unpublished) literature or information relating to the issue/problem/subject under investigation. This helped to form a foundation for the research and provided good understanding of, and insight into relevant previous research and emerging trends. The purpose of Literature Review according to Dominick (1997) is to convey what knowledge and ideas that have been established on a topic. This is guided by the Research Objective(s) and the Problem Statement. It therefore, provides the background for understanding the significance of the study. The sources for the Literature Review are often books, journals, internet among others. Some of the sources for the Literature Review for this study are books, journals and the internet.

##### 2.1.1 HISTORY OF BROADCASTING IN GHANA

Broadcasting and broadcast regulation in Ghana must first be understood in the context of the colonial and post-colonial political history of the country. Broadcasting was first introduced in the Gold Coast (Ghana) by Governor Sir Arnold Hodson on July 31, 1935. He had experimented with a wired radio distribution system in the Falkland Islands in 1929 with the assistance of an electrical engineer, F. A. W. Byron (Ansah, 1985). On his transfer to Sierra Leone as governor in 1931, he asked for the transfer of Byron to Freetown, and as soon as he arrived, plans were worked out for the establishment of another wired radio distribution system which was formally launched in 1934. In that same year, Sir Hodson was transferred to the Gold Coast as governor and he asked for and

obtained the transfer of Byron. They immediately set to work on the establishment of a wired radio distribution system in Accra, and on 31st July, 1935, the silver jubilee of the coronation of King George V provided an opportunity for experimenting with re-diffusion broadcast when the voice of the King was heard on the Empire Service. Thus was what was later to be known as Station ZOY (Ansah, 1985). By the end of the year, there were 400 subscribers and by February 1936, 750 homes in Accra were wired to receive broadcasts from the transmitters of the Empire Service.

According to Ansah (1985) in the case of the Gold Coast, the purpose of using broadcasting for general and political education was enunciated quite early on. Governor Hodson intended that radio should be a tool for in-and out-of-school education, and he planned that a transmitter should be installed in Accra to broadcast half an hour each day to schools. The programme content was not to be educational in the narrow, technical sense, but it was to include “general news items of World or Empire significance”. It was also to include local news items of interest to the teacher or of value in relation to the teaching of good citizenship in the schools. Additionally, it was to provide “information with regard to Government policy and the activities of the various Departments, with suggestions as to how teacher and pupil may assist in giving effect to schemes for the general betterment of the community”.

### 2.1.2 THE BIRTH AND MANDATE OF GBC

In 1953, the Gold Coast Government set up a Broadcasting Commission to report on the development of broadcasting. Three of the main recommendations made by the commission were: The establishment of a national station in Accra with regional transmitters at Tamale, Kumasi, Sekondi-Takoradi, Accra and Ho broadcasting in the main languages of the region; the retention

of the existing 24 relay centres but without any further development since the system was expensive and had been outstripped by more modern technology; and the organization of the broadcasting service into an independent statutory corporation on the model of the BBC.

Following the report, broadcasting in the Gold Coast was changed to the Gold Coast Broadcasting Service. When Ghana gained independence in 1957, the name was changed again to Ghana Broadcasting Corporation. Although the name was changed, control still remained in the hands of the government. Consequently, its programming policies continued to be closely linked to the priorities of the state. Thirty years after the introduction of radio, television was also introduced in 1965. Ghana's first President, Osagyefo Dr Kwame Nkrumah, decreed that television should be used to supplement education programmes in the broadest terms. So programming focused on all aspects of science and technical training, agricultural techniques and vocational skills. The Ghana Broadcasting Corporation was not allowed to produce any commercial programming. Throughout the years, GBC has always played a major role in engendering national identity and national development throughout the country during the colonial and post colonial period (World Bank 2005). GBC was also a tool for political propaganda and control.

The National Liberation Council overthrew Dr Kwame Nkrumah in 1966 and placed the country under military rule. Two years later, the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation Decree, NLCD 226, 1968, was promulgated to provide the corporation with its first statutory basis and governance.

The mandate of GBC, according to the Ghana Broadcasting Decree, NLCD 226, 1968 is as follows:

1. To broadcast programmes in the field of culture, education, information and entertainment to reflect national progress in the main Ghanaian languages and in English

2. To provide as a public service, independent and impartial broadcasting services (sound and television) for general reception in Ghana.
3. To, in collaboration with such departments of state as may be appropriate, provide an external sound service through transmission for general reception in Ghana
4. The Corporation may engage in commercial broadcasting through the sale of paid advertisement scheduled at prescribed spots in its programme service

In its public service broadcasting, the corporation is expected to provide for

- a) Government pronouncements or speeches by members of the National Liberation Council (the military junta in 1968).
- b) Party political speeches dealing with the views and policies of the various political parties
- c) Speeches expressing different points of view on matters of controversy
- d) Matters of any kind (including religious services or ceremonies) representing the main stream of religious thought or beliefs in the country.

The National Media Policy (1999:pp.46-47) of the National Media Commission also outlined some roles and additional responsibilities for the GBC:

- i. In recognition of the critical importance of public broadcasting to promoting national identity and overall national development, the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC) shall retain its role as a public broadcasting service.
- ii. GBC shall cover and represent the entire nation and in particular, her disadvantaged peoples and less accessible areas. It shall be the frontline support for the country's socio-economic

development goals. It shall be the primary showcase for the nation's culture in all its rich diversity. It shall be the arena for the nationwide discussion of issues and policies.

iii. To this end, local content on GBC's regular radio channels shall comprise 80% of total air time. For its regular television channels, it shall comprise 60% of total air time. At least 50% of local programmes shall be aired during prime time.

iv. GBC shall also play a leading role in supporting the country's formal education efforts. To this end, it shall operate distance education channels radio and for television.

v. GBC shall receive requisite subvention from Government to enable it effectively undertake its critical roles in support of national development.

vi. An enabling environment shall be provided for the significant investment in local production capacity required by the various public broadcasting services.

### 2.1.3 BROADCASTING IN GHANA TODAY

A media landscape that promotes accountability, participation, and development requires a diversity of content but also a diversity of ownership and forms of ownership, including commercial, noncommercial, public, and community ownership at both the national and local levels Buckley et al (2005: p. 154).

According to the UNDP (2004) it is wrong to assume that these different types of broadcasting are all mutually exclusive. For example broadcasting regulations might place public service obligations on commercial broadcasters. Most country presently aspire to a mixed broadcasting system which includes both public service and commercial broadcasters (and hybrids thereof).

What is considered the most desirable mix of all three types (state, public service and commercial) is shaped by the economic, social, political, and cultural factors that characterize a specific country. It notes that broadcasting systems can have any number of configurations: maintaining the state broadcaster in whole or in part, as well as permitting competition and / or moving the state broadcaster into a public service model, for example.

#### 2.1.4 MEDIA LIBERALIZATION IN GHANA

Media liberalization is seen as the opening up of the communication market to competition or loosening regulatory controls. Indeed framers of Ghana's 1992 constitution appear to have anticipated the inadequate role played by broadcasting in the country's efforts at integration and accordingly inserted the constitutional protection necessary to operate it. The constitution provided for the liberalization of the media. Article 162(3) is worth quoting in full "There shall be no impediments to the establishment of private press or media; and in particular, there shall be no law requiring any person to obtain a license as a prerequisite to the establishment or operation of a newspaper, journal or other media for the mass communication or information." And so the National Media Commission (NMC) was set up on July 7, 1993 by an act of Parliament (Act 449) in pursuant to Chapter 12 of the 1992 constitution of the Republic of Ghana. The NMC was established to promote free independent and responsible media so as to sustain democracy and national development.

Later on the National Communication Authority (NCA) was established with the mandate "to regulate communications by wire, cable, radio, television, satellite and similar means of technology to ensure that communications in Ghana contribute fairly and equitably to the nation's

economic, social and cultural prosperity in the information age” National Communication Authority Guidelines (2007).

### 2.1.5 GENESIS OF LIBERALIZATION IN GHANA

It all started in a daring move on November 19, 1994, when Radio EYE, operated by Independent Media Corporation of Ghana (IMCG) threw caution to the winds and began the country’s first private broadcast station. Broadcasting on frequency band 96.2 megahertz (MHz), Radio EYE’s test transmissions were unprecedented in the history of the country. Hitherto, the state-owned GBC had enjoyed monopoly of the airwaves. Radio EYE broadcast comprised music interspersed with a bit of talk. Starved of alternative station to tune in to, many people switched dials from GBC to Radio EYE. In the course of time, the euphoria was short-lived. On December 4, 1994, the premises of Radio EYE were raided by the police, its equipment seized and its owners and disk jockeys arrested. They were arraigned at an Accra circuit court on December 8, 1994 and charged with operating radio station without licence and written consent (Ayitevie 1996: 9). Following this incident there was a period of litigation in court between IMCG and the government of which the court ruled that the search and seizure of the equipment was not legal and that the security personnel were to return the equipment of IMCG to them. Additionally, there were a number of demonstrations by the public against the seizure of equipment and closure of Radio EYE following evidence that Ghana Frequency Registration Control Board (GFRCB) had failed to react to an application made by IMCG and several others for assignment of frequencies for radio and television broadcasting services. Radio EYE was not allocated any frequency to operate because according to the chairman of GFRCB, the station would only be given one after a Supreme Court judgement on the constitutionality of the seizure of Radio EYE’s broadcasting equipment.

However, a committee was soon set up chaired by Bonsu-Bruce and February 1995 was fixed as the period for the operation of properly authorised FM radio stations, but it was not until May that the GFRCB invited 41 companies out of 60 applicants for frequency allocation interviews (Ibid: 9, 10). 16

A number of frequencies were allocated for FM radio broadcast and a few for television following the screening of applicants. Among them were the applicants project studies namely engineering design systems of technical implementation plan; marketing plan namely market analysis; roll-out plan and coverage criteria; business plan, and programming philosophy (Sakyi-Addo 1996: 6). This is what the National Media Commission had to say in its National Media Policy; “liberalization has brought Ghana firmly within the inevitable sweep of globalization and communication. The trend is welcome for its current and potential impact on the increase and spread of knowledge and the efficient response to the technical problems of national development”.

According to the National Communications Authority (NCA), a total of 342 radio stations have been authorized to operate throughout the country as at the 4th quarter of 2014. Out of the total number, 234 are commercial, 59 community, 36 public and 13 campus broadcasters, with 56 not in operation. For television stations, a total of 28 have been authorized to operate as at the 4th quarter of 2014. The number of free on air are 20 (11 operational), pay per view 7 (6 operational), and for research purposes 1 (not operational). (See appendix 1).

From Station ZOY in 1935 to Radio 1, non-commercial local language service, and Radio II, a commercial English language service, (the two stations no longer exist) and an analogue television station in 1965, currently GBC alone wholly owns and manages eleven regional FM stations and

other affiliate radio stations, six digital television channels (GTV, GTV Govern, GBC Life, Obonu TV, GBC 24, GTV Sports+), and website ([www.gbcghana.com](http://www.gbcghana.com)).

The power to appoint and remove the governing board and the Director-General of the corporation now resides with the National Media Commission, which has oversight responsibility over all state-owned media. Today Ghana as a nation is seeing its most liberal media environment ever.

According to UNESCO it is appropriate to recognize that the old dichotomy between public sector (i.e. state-sponsored) broadcasting in relation to PSB has all but disappeared. The modern view gaining ground worldwide in the era of globalization, is that PSB is best promoted by a combination of public and commercial broadcasters, which has meant some important changes to the regulatory approaches adopted by governments UNESCO (2005: p. 46).

Ghana currently has a diverse and plural media landscape in addition to the state-owned media unlike previous occasions when one needed a licence and by implication the permission of the government to publish a newspaper, one can easily register a newspaper without any impediment with the National Media Commission. The state-owned media which in previous eras were domesticated and controlled by the Government today operate freely without governmental interference. Any control, direct or indirect from government can only take place if management and editors of the state-owned media allow themselves to be used. Government could in the past control the state-owned media because it appointed and dismissed editors at will, appointed managing directors and boards of directors at its own pleasure. In some instances Ministers/Commissioners/Secretaries of Information literally served as Supervising Editors and could determine what editorials were used or what headlines were written. According to Kabral Blay-Amihere, then Chairman of NMC, there is the famous case of a Commissioner of Information during the Acheampong regime, who in the middle of the night changed the front page headline

of a state-owned media from “GHANAIANS SAY NO TO UNIGOV” TO “ALL SAY YES TO UNIGOV”. He did not have to sneak into the production room like Nicodmus but did it openly without any opposition. That situation cannot happen in the new Ghana. Because although the government is a major stakeholder in the media, the Constitution of Ghana in order to insulate the state-owned media from governmental control, has given the oversight responsibilities over the state-owned media and the power to appoint the board and chief executives to the NMC. Even the NMC in performance of its duties has no power to interfere in the editorial work of the media. Neither has the governing boards that power even though the board appoints editors of the state-owned media (Blay-Amihere, 2010).

#### 2.1.6 PUBLIC SERVICE BROADCASTING STATUS OF GBC

Among the most important issues in determining the quality, diversity, independence, and distinctiveness of public service broadcasting are: the legal framework in which the broadcaster operates, including the powers and duties set down in law; the governance arrangements, including the process for appointment of the governing board and the senior management staff; and the funding arrangements Buckley et al (2005: p.192).

#### 2.1.7 GBC'S LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The status of public service broadcasters is normally defined by legislation setting out its duties, responsibilities, lines of accountability, and guarantees of editorial independence from government and protection from political or commercial. The governing legislation provides the first means of assurance that the broadcaster will operate in the public interest with public service objectives and accountability to the public Buckley et al (2005: p.193).

The mandate of GBC is set out in NLCD 226 (1968) and it includes a range of duties and responsibilities designed to serve the public interest.

#### 2.1.8 DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The mandate of GBC, is spelt out in the NLCD 226, 1968 (see appendix 2).

The National Media Commission in its National Media Policy (1999) assigns additional duties and responsibilities to the national broadcaster, GBC.

#### 2.1.9 STATUS AND INDEPENDENCE

Public service broadcasters should be prescribed in law as bodies that are editorially independent of the government, serve the public interest, and are protected against political and commercial interference. The framework for public service broadcasting balances the principles of independence and accountability. Accountability of the public service broadcaster should be to the public, through Parliament. If there is an independent regulator with responsibility over all of broadcasting, then accountability may be through the regulator Buckley et al (2005: p.192).

In the case of Ghana, Article 166 (1) of the 1992 Constitution, established the National Media Commission through an Act of Parliament (Act 449, 1993) as an independent regulator of the media and spells out its functions.

Article 172 states “Except as otherwise provided by this Constitution or by any other law not inconsistent with this Constitution, the National Media Commission shall not be subject to the direction or control of any person or authority in the performance of its functions”.

The functions of the Commission as spelt out in Article 167 include:

(a) To promote and ensure the freedom and independence of the media for mass communication or information;

(c) To insulate the state-owned media from governmental control. Additionally, Section 2 (d) of the National Media Commission Act, Act 449 (1993) enjoins the Commission “to take measures to ensure that persons responsible for state-owned media afford fair opportunities and facilities for the presentation of divergent views and dissenting options”.

#### 2.1.10 GOVERNANCE

The appointment of board chairmen and members of state-owned media is now the responsibility of the NMC, which either to, was done by the sitting President or Head of State. “The Commission shall appoint the chairmen and other members of the governing bodies of public corporations managing the state-owned media in consultation with the President”

Article 168 (1992 Constitution). On the other hand, the authority to appoint Editors of the state-owned media in Article 169 is vested with the governing bodies of the respective corporations in consultation with the Public Services Commission Article 169 (1992 Constitution). For GBC, the Director-General and the Deputy Director-General of the Corporation are appointed by the NMC in consultation with the sitting President.

### 2.1.11 FUNDING MODELS

The true test of any PSB is its funding model and how independent that model is from governmental control and manipulation, as well as commercial pressures and enticements. Funding is a key factor that influences independence and the ability of public broadcasters to play a positive social role. Many public broadcasters face serious funding constraints. Audience fees levied on television or radio receiver ownership, represent a stable, independent, and often relatively rich source. The mechanisms by which public service broadcasting is funded are of critical importance both to its independence and to the quality of its output, but they are often among the most difficult ones to get right. The financing system must be insulated from political pressures, permit some form of accountability, and be sufficiently predictable to allow for the multilayer investments that the public service broadcaster needs to make to deliver on its mandate Buckley et al (2008:p.203).

### 2.1.12 HYBRID FUNDING

According to UNESCO (2005:p.115) the main forms of financing public broadcasting around the world are direct government grants, licence fees, advertising, and voluntary subscriptions. Only a small number of PSB systems use any of these forms as a “pure” model. The evidence is that most systems use a combination of some of the four forms. Within the Commonwealth group of nations most public broadcasting systems were modeled on the BBC, although there is no exact copy. The various systems have been adapted to meet local circumstances. In most of South Asia, public broadcasting is financed in part by licence fee, the exceptions being India and Nepal. India abolished the licence fee in 1985. In the United Kingdom, a substantial proportion (over 80 percent) of the revenue for the BBC comes from a licence fee, which every person who operates a

television set within the country is legally obliged to pay. Other sources of revenue include income from commercial activities. In respect of its World Service broadcasting, the BBC receives a direct grant from the British Government that accounts for nearly 90 percent of that service's budget UNESCO (2005:p.49).

Funding for both the PSBs in Australia is also provided by a direct grant from the government, which accounts for well over 75 percent of their respective revenue. The Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) is allowed to generate some advertisement/sponsorship revenue, but there are strict conditions attached to such activities-advertising, for example, is only allowed to be carried for a maximum of five minutes in any hour of broadcasting (SBS Act, s. 45). The Australian Parliament determines the quantum of the grant based on estimates of income and expenditure submitted to it in advance UNESCO (2005:p.49). The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) also relies heavily on state funding of its activities. It needs to be noted, however, that the CBC is allowed to accept commercial advertising, and has derived some one-fifth of its revenue from this source in recent years to offset some of the funding cuts from the government.

Interestingly, the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), almost uniquely among PSBs, relies largely on advertising and commercial activities for its revenue. In 1999, this accounted for some 76.5 percent of the SABC's total budget, with only 10 percent coming from the Government and only 13.5 percent from the licence fee. By contrast, Japan's Nippon Hoso Kyokai (NHK) received as much as 98 percent of its income from the licence fee. Increasingly, PSBs tend to look for a mix of public/state and commercial revenues. The key is to find an appropriate balance between public and commercial revenues, as an excessively commercially-based revenue stream could have potentially harmful implications on the independence, quality, and programming of PSBs UNESCO (2005:p.50). Another interesting hybrid combination is the "contestable funding

model”, whereby public money is allocated from a central fund to broadcasters (or directly to producers) via a competitive tendering process to support specific programming with PSB values. This type of model has been in place in New Zealand since 1989 UNESCO (2005:p.118).

### 2.1.13 FUNDING AND COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES OF GBC

The mission statement of GBC is to lead the broadcasting and communication industry through quality programming which promote the developmental and cultural aspirations of Ghana and “to undertake viable commercial activities that promote the aspirations of the Corporation.

According to Apenteng (2002) cited in Broadcasting Policy and Practice in Africa (2003, p.152) only 26% of the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation’s revenue came from advertising. The GBC had never developed its capacity to collect the licence fee or increase its capacity to get commercial revenue. Although GBC’s major source of revenue was still government funding this has dwindled as the economy declined and new economic policies, favouring withdrawal or gradual reduction of state subsidies were introduced in the 1990s. Government funding amounted to very little in relation to the needs of the broadcaster, leading to the decline of services. In the new context of competition with new private stations, the GBC has increased its proportion of advertising revenue to state grants with the balance coming from television licence fee, which have been declining. The government is determined to further reduce its grants as part of its public expenditure reduction strategy. Apenteng projected that in the foreseeable future GBC will have to generate most of its revenue from commercial sources.

But is reliance on commercial sources of financing acceptable for public broadcasting, considering it owes its existence to the desire to shelter this cultural sector from commercial pressures? The

easiest answer perhaps, and also the most realistic, particularly as regards advertising income, is to say that it may be acceptable provided it does not interfere with the public service obligations incumbent upon public broadcasting. But beyond a certain level, if the need for commercial financing becomes a dominant concern for the public broadcaster and changes the nature of the programming, we should be concerned World Radio and Television Council (2000).

Section 8 (1) of GBC's statute NLCD 226 (1968) states "It shall be the duty of the Corporation to provide as a public service, independent and impartial broadcasting services (sound and television) for general reception in Ghana". The clause 3 also states "The Corporation may engage in commercial broadcasting through the sale of paid advertisements scheduled at prescribed spots in its programme service". Section 2 (1a) states "The objects of the Corporation shall be to undertake sound, commercial and television broadcasts". One important policy shift in the operations of GBC was the introduction of commercial broadcasting in 1967 "to give our business community and other individuals the chance of selling their goods and services through the fastest available means-radio and television. It was also intended to generate revenue to supplement government subvention and thereby lighten the burden of the taxpayer" Ansah, (1985:pp.10-11). According to Ansah "this caveat was necessary because in certain parts of the world, commercial broadcasting has earned a bad name and is seen as the antithesis of public service broadcasting". But Ansah (1985:11) is convinced that sponsorship and advertising can be so controlled that social, educational and cultural needs can be satisfied through the maintenance of high standards in programming. He cited the high quality output of the Independent Television Authority in Britain as a demonstration of compatibility of high standards in programming with controlled commercialism. "In terms of time allocated to advertising on radio and television and the revenue generated, the system operating in Ghana is only partially commercial. Programming is done

independently of advertisers and there is no danger yet of advertisers influencing programme content". This means that PSBs can engage in commercial activities and still deliver on their mandate to the public in accordance with their legal regime.

However, Bagbin (2015:6) hardly supports the idea of partial or total commercializing of GBC's operations. "Profit-making is like honey, a little drop on your tongue and you would lick and lick and lick until you finish the honeycombs". In other words "small profit-making soon yields to the temptation of capitalist supernormal profiteering". He continues that "after all, there is no guarantee that commercializing some or all the operations of GBC will make it discharge the functions of serving the public better than a public institution solely financed by the public". This is corroborated by a McKinsey Report for the BBC (1999) in a survey which found evidence that the higher the advertising figure as a proportion of total revenues, the less distinctive a public service broadcaster is likely to be. This, however, does not mean it ceases to serve a PSB mandate.

Others, to the contrary, warn against advertising phobia. A French Senate report points out that to the younger generation, the absence of advertising would seem suspicious, "a sign of something elitist, therefore boring, even square". The report considers that advertising, "used in moderation", prevents public networks from cutting themselves off from the rest of the audiovisual landscape, while showing their difference World Radio and Television Council, (2000).

A variety of financial models are used to provide the principal public funding mechanism. These include a household levy (a licence fee), direct government funding, a levy on commercial broadcasting, and advertising Buckley et al (2008:p.203). Any model chosen strives to both guarantee independence and ensure an adequate financial base for the fulfillment of its duties and responsibilities. There are pros and cons to the current options. Direct government funding entails a risk of government interference. Overdependence on advertising subjects the public broadcaster

to some of the same pressures as commercial broadcasters, which can undermine its scope to develop diverse informational programming and in-depth news coverage Buckley et al (2008:p.204). This is the fate that has befallen GBC over the years for over relying on direct government funding and lately on advertising. Still the Corporation's annual budget is routed through the Ministry of Communications and Ministry of Finance before it is approved by Parliament.

For Atuguba (2007) Ghanaian governments are all too willing to fund global corporate giants with enormous tax reliefs. And the Ghanaian public is all too willing to fund global food and supermarket corporations by buying greasy food and expired wares. "I propose that the Ghanaian government and the Ghanaian public must be willing to fund the GBC into a global media giant in the order of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), Voice of America (VOA), Cable News Network (CNN), Aljazeera and the like. This is what Dr. Nkrumah intended for GBC. This is what we must all intend for GBC. The distinguishing mark between GBC and other global media giants must be that the GBC will not use media as a tool of oppression and will always seek to serve the public interest".

Parliament in 2014 approved GHC137.5 million Government of Ghana budget for GBC. As at 30th September, an amount of 23.7 million had been received for employee compensation (staff salary), representing 17%. Revenue accrued to GBC as at September 2014 stood at GHC17.7 million, representing 48% of an approved budget of GHC37 million. The Headquarters (BH3) Accra, contributed 92% and the regions 8%. For 2015, the Corporation expects to increase its Internally Generated Fund (IGF) by 27% from GHC26.4 million to GHC33.5 million. Expected support from the Government of Ghana in 2015 amounted to GHC156.2 million.

## 2.1.14 UPWARD REVIEW AND RE-INTRODUCTION OF TV LICENCE FEES

Section 1(1) of the Television License Act, 1991, (NLCD 89) states “Except as otherwise prescribed, a person shall not install or use a television receiving set unless there is in existence in relation to that set a valid television receiving set licence granted by the licencing authority under this Act”. The TV Licence law according to the former Chairman of the NMC, Kabral Blay Amihere, (2015) was passed to regulate the installation and use of television receiving sets in order to generate revenue to support public service broadcasting in Ghana. In 1991, the Television License Regulations 1991, (L.I. 1520) was issued, setting fees to be charged for domestic users, commercial users and dealers respectively. These fees ranged from GHC 3000 cedis or 30p per annum for domestic users of 1 (one) TV set to GHC 20,000 cedis or GHC 2 cedis per annum for dealers in TV sets.

Since 1991, in spite of the continuous depreciation of the national currency, the cedi, these fees remained unchanged until the cost of collection became uneconomic and irrelevant and exceeded whatever funds were collected. Consequently, collection was suspended. Buckley et al (2008:p.205) believe the television licence fee is not a guaranteed solution. This according to them has led GBC, the public broadcaster, to a growing dependence on commercial revenue sources and reduction in investment in quality programme making. Some countries, to prevent this, have instituted automatic fee adjustments based on the cost-of-living index.

After 23 years, Ghana’s Parliament in March 2014, revoked the Fees and Charges (Amendment) Instrument, 2013 (L.I. 2206) and replaced it with the Fees and Charges (Amendment) Instrument 2014 (L.I. 2216). GBC is expected to earn a total of 75% of the revenue from the TV License Fee. According to Blay-Amihere, “with the resumption of the collection of TV Licence at the adjusted rates, it is hoped that GBC will be better placed financially to fulfill its public service broadcasting

mandate, obligations under the 1992 Constitution and offer its viewers and listeners programmes that are educative, informative and entertaining”. It is also expected that “the collection of a realistic TV License fee will in time enable GBC to be weaned off government subvention”. For UNESCO (2005:p.115) the licence fee is arguably the best method of funding public service broadcasting because it is largely independent of government or commercial pressures, even though governments set the level of the licence fee.

This model ensures that it is the people who pay for the PSB, not the government, so the finances of the entity do not form part of the government’s annual spending reviews or budget setting. The licence fee provides citizens with a sense of ownership of PSBs forcing them to be more responsible and accountable to their citizen-owners.

## 2.2 Theoretical Framework

This study adopted as its theoretical foundation Jurgen Habermas’ Public Sphere, the Ownership Theory, the Public Broadcasting Theory and the Liberalisation Theories.

### 2.2.1 The Theory of Public Sphere

The German critical theorist, Jurgen Habermas (1962) developed the concept of the public sphere as ‘a realm of our social life in which something approaching public opinion can be formed. Access is guaranteed to all citizens’. Habermas’ conception of the public sphere locates it outside the state and the market and conceives of it as an institutionalized platform from which citizens produce and circulate discourses with the potential to influence and control the activities of the state. The public sphere is therefore, an avenue for the generation of political participation through talk, an

important underpinning for democratic associations which complement the state apparatus and the market institutions of modern capitalist society.

According to Habermas, (2006) to function effectively, the public sphere must meet some institutional criteria. Firstly, it must ideally be inclusive. It must never close itself off into a clique and access must be as universal as possible. Secondly, there must be a disregard for social status and hierarchies. All participants must be treated as equals, even when they are obviously not. Thirdly, participants must have autonomy and must not be subject to any forms of coercion. Fourthly, the quality of participation must reflect a common commitment to rationality and logic. And finally, there must be no monopoly of interpretation by either the state or the church and the domain of common concern is discursively established by the participants themselves, not imposed by any authority of whatever description Habermas (2006:p.76).

The theory of public sphere is in line with the definition of PSB by the (World Radio and Television Council, 2000) thus “Neither commercial nor state-controlled, public broadcasting’s *raison d’etre* is public service. It is the public’s broadcasting organization; it speaks to everyone as a citizen. Public broadcasters encourage access to and participation in public life. They develop knowledge, broaden horizons and enable people to better understand themselves by better understanding the world and others”. UNESCO (2008) goes further to define PSB as “Broadcasting made, financed and controlled by the public. It is neither commercial nor state-owned; it is free from political interference and pressure from commercial forces”. Public service broadcasting rests on certain basic principles, and according to UNESCO (2008), these principles are universality, diversity and independence. To these principles must be added a fourth-distinctiveness-particularly important when the public broadcaster exists side by side with commercial broadcasters.

In an article on “Public Service Broadcasting and the Public Sphere: Normative Arguments from Habermasian Theory”, Phil Ramsey (2010) addressed the principles of inclusion, deliberation, and opinion formation, mainly set out in Habermas’ Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere (1989). According to Ramsey, the principle of inclusion can be seen throughout Habermas’ public sphere account: “Access to the public sphere is open in principle to all citizens” Habermas (1997: 105). He states that whilst this was not the case in the historic setting as Habermas initially wanted to suggest, as a principle it remains important kernel to the idea of a public sphere: PSB is in principle open to all, as well as being fairly successful at achieving inclusiveness. Ramsey (2010) posits that the principle of deliberation is at the centre of the public sphere, and has led to much shared scholarly work between public sphere theory and deliberative democratic theory. As citizens debate and deliberate on ideas the public sphere is formed and reformed. Habermas argues that “a set of basic rights concerned the sphere of the public engaged in rational-critical debate (freedom of opinion and speech, freedom of press, freedom of assembly and association etc.)” and the political function of private people in this public sphere (right of petition, equality of vote etc” (1989:83). In order to debate in an informed manner, interlocutors in the public sphere must have access to information of a political nature. Whilst this is by no means limited to PSB, it is perhaps public service broadcasters who provide the most accessible and voluminous content of a serious political nature. Public service content provides the material needed for interlocutors to participate in what Habermas calls “rational-critical” debate (ibid:58)

The principle of opinion formation is one that is central to the public sphere, Habermas states: ‘By “public sphere”, we mean first of all a domain of our social life in which such a thing as public opinion can be formed’ (1997:105). Interlocutors within the public sphere carry out reasoned and rational debate and from this have the ability to form critical opinions on matters of public

importance. Through exposure to ideas, members of the public formulate opinions which taken collectively formulate public opinion. On this principle, PSB provides a crucial means to enabling this. Ramsey concludes that the theory of the public sphere as forwarded by Habermas remains a cogent and critical theory to apply to PSB, and is useful for making arguments in its favour. In particular, the theory of the public sphere remains flexible enough to change with developments in the media and culture.

### 2.2.2 The Ownership Theory

The Ownership Theory addresses the notion that whatever is produced as an industry is to some degree dictated by kind of ownership of the particular industry. In the case of the media, the programming and news reportage is influenced by the ownership whether state or private. Strinati (2004) stated that because governments understand the political and social importance of the media, they tend to develop some policies aimed at regulating and controlling media vehicles and outlets. Discussing the ownership and control of the media, Dominick (2000) contends that one way of distinguishing among the various media systems throughout the world is to classify them along the dimensions of ownership and control. This control can range from private to public (public ownership usually means some of government ownership), while control can range from centralized to decentralized.

Mcquail (2007) asserts that most media belong to one of three categories of ownership; commercial companies, private non-profit bodies and the public sector. Within each of these three, Mcquail further asserts are three significant divisions; public or private, large media chain or conglomerate or a small independent (Tunstall and Palmer, 1991 as cited in Mcquail, 2007) also

revealed that it may also matter whether or not a media enterprise is owned by a so called “media tycoon” or “mogul”, typified as wanting to take a personal interest in editorial policy. Non-profit bodies can be neutral or social task such as political parties and churches. Public ownership also comes in many different forms ranging from direct state administration to elaborate and diversified constructions designed to maximize independence of decision making about content.

Part of the owner’s authority is exercised in the subtle slant of coverage by employees who try to anticipate what he wants. The assumption therefore is that news content is determined by the stated political beliefs of those who own and finance the media enterprise, the editors who try to anticipate what the owners want and the columnists and reporters who impose self-censorship in order to please superiors.

In their study, Djakov, Nenova, McLeish and Shleifer (2003) examined the patterns of media ownership of 97 countries around the globe and found that media forum universally have ownership structures that have stakeholders largely by government or families. The audience is consistent with the idea that there is large amenity potential (control benefit) associated with owning media, be it political influence or fame. The study suggested that governments regulate media using measures ranging from content restrictions in broadcasting licence to constitutional freedom of expression provisions. The type of regulations and their enforcement, vary significantly within the countries sampled.

Their findings collaborated those by Strinati (2004) that the methods which governments try to achieve such controls over the media vary. While some nations have taken direct authoritarian control of the media through state ownership and the banning of opposition media, other nations engage in media regulation that is non-authoritarian in nature combining government influence with market forces.

### 2.2.3 The Public Broadcasting Theory

The public broadcasting theory is based on the expectations of the public broadcasting media to meet the collective needs of citizens. The main goals of public service broadcasting as enumerated by Mcquail (2005) are to:

1. Ensure universality of geographic coverage in terms of reception and transmission.
2. Ensure diversity in providing for all main tastes, interest and needs as well as matching the full range of opinions and beliefs.
3. Provide for special minorities.
4. Have concern for the national culture.
5. Provide balanced and impartial information on issues of conflict.
6. Have a specific concern for quality as defined in different ways.
7. Put public interest before financial objectives
8. Serve the needs of the political system.

Mcquail further asserts that a public broadcasting system should have the following:

1. A founding charter or mission.
2. Public financing to some degree
3. Independence from government
4. Mechanisms of accountability to the society and general public
5. Mechanisms of accountability to the audience.

The Public Broadcasting Theory has inherent problems. According to Tambini (2003), as cited in Mcquail (2005), the main weakness of the theory lies in two sources of tension. One is between the necessary independence and the necessary accountability for finance received and goals achieved or missed. The other is between achieving the goals set by “society” in the public interest and meeting the demands of the audience as a set of consumers in the wider media market. Without public interest goals there is no rationale for continuing, but, without audiences, public service goals cannot really be achieved. Tambini (2003) as cited in Mcquail (2005) further asserts that there is a third source of tension. Intense competition in globalised markets and the increasing reliance on the market to provide for all public services have weakened the position of public broadcasting in respect of political support in the face of predatory enemies and reduced its capacity to compete on equal terms.

In reviewing Keane’s (2007) work, he reiterates that a major weakness of the system is that, it is easily manipulated by those who exercise such powers and control to their advantage. It is also thought to be unrepresentative.

#### 2.2.4 Libertarian Theory

Libertarianism emerged from the premise that the government should exist solely to serve the people rather than the government and that the best way to find the truth is to have as many opinions as possible. It is based on the assumption that man is intelligent enough to make his own decisions. For this reason the individual should be given the freedom to read different publications and make his own judgment.

Here, there is no control of the press, but a market place of ideas where people have the freedom to choose what they want to read or watch. Under libertarianism, the press is owned by private individuals and organizations.

### 2.2.5 Liberal Pluralist

This is based on the Western free press concept which associates press freedom with the ability to own and operate media without permission or the interference from the state. The key factor here is, “free market place of ideas”.

The application of these theories to the study was to ascertain the fate or future of GBC as a public service broadcaster in the liberalized and commercially competitive media environment in Ghana, to find out if GBC’s commercial activities have blurred or overshadowed its public service mandate, to determine whether the upward review and re-introduction of the TV Licence Fee is the panacea to GBC’s financial predicament, and determine the relevance of GBC’s enabling statute, NLCD 226, 1968, in the prevailing media environment and whether it should be maintained or repealed.

## 2.3 REVIEW OF RELATED STUDIES

Until the 1992 Constitution, the mass media, broadcast and print, were dominated by the State. Broadcasting, controlled through the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation, GBC, operated as a state monopoly. GBC relied in its early years mainly on government subvention, but has come under

progressively greater pressure to generate commercial revenue while retaining its public service structure National Media Policy (1999).

UNESCO (2005) defined PSB as Broadcasting made, financed and controlled by the public. It is neither commercial nor state-owned; it is free from political interference and pressure from commercial forces. It highlights the fact that State-owned broadcasting systems cannot be referred to as Public Service Broadcasters, PSB. UNESCO points out that there is a widely held misconception that PSB and State broadcasters are synonymous. This error stems from the fact very few countries in the world have genuine PSB and that most countries do have State broadcasting systems. Moreover, when compared to commercial broadcasting, State broadcasting is perceived to be more public service oriented, which leads to this common confusion between PSB and State broadcasting systems UNESCO (2005, p:14). It continued that while state-controlled broadcasting systems do perform certain public service functions, their control by governments, funding models, lack of independence and impartiality in programming and management, prevent them from being identified as PSB (ibid p: 15). It noted that since the global range of the PSB experience is so varied and complex, there is no PSB 'gold standard', however, there are certain characteristics and mechanisms of PSB that have wide validity and merit study by those interested in its implementation (ibid.11).

For Werner Rumphorst (1998) cited in UNESCO (2005) public service broadcasting is a unique concept. Although easy to understand, it is more often than not misunderstood, sometimes profoundly, sometimes even intentionally. Some languages do not even have a term fully corresponding to the English word "public", and the closest translation appears to confer the notion of state/government/official. Where this is the case in a country which has had a tradition of state broadcasting, this linguistic barrier constitutes the first obstacle to a clear understanding of the real

nature of public service broadcasting (which is anything but ‘state’, ‘government’ or ‘official’ broadcasting).

### 2.3.1 Public Service Principles

Public broadcasting rests on certain basic principles, defined in an era of general-interest media, long before the multiplication of channels and the era of specialization. The principles of universality, diversity and independence remain today, like yesterday, essential goals for public broadcasting. To these three principles must be added a fourth, particularly important when the public broadcaster exists side by side with commercial broadcasters: distinctiveness (World Radio and Television Council (2000:p.6)

**Universality:** Public broadcasting must be accessible to every citizen throughout the country. This is a deeply egalitarian and democratic goal to the extent that it puts all citizens on the same footing, whatever their social status or income. It forces the public broadcaster to address the entire population and seek to be “used” by the largest possible number UNESCO (2005:p.15).

**Diversity:** The services offered by public broadcasting should be diversified in at least three ways: the genres of programmes offered, the audiences targeted, and the subjects discussed. Public broadcasting must reflect the diversity of public interests by offering different types of programmes, from newscast to light programmes. Some programmes may be aimed at only part of the public, whose expectations are varied. In the end, public broadcasting should reach everyone, not through each programme, but through all programmes and their variety. Diversity and universality are complementary in that producing programmes intended sometimes for youth,

sometimes for older people and sometimes for other groups ultimately means that public broadcasting appeals to all UNESCO (2005:p.15).

**Independence:** Public broadcasting is a forum where ideas should be expressed freely, where information, opinions and criticisms can circulate. This is possible only if the broadcaster is independent, thereby, allowing the freedom of public broadcasting to be maintained against commercial or political influence. If the information provided by the public broadcaster was influenced by the government, people are less likely to believe the content. Likewise, if the public broadcaster's programming were designed for commercial ends, people would not understand why they are being asked to finance a service providing programming that is not substantially different from those provided by commercial broadcasters UNESCO (2005:p.16).

**Distinctiveness:** Services offered by public broadcasting must be distinguished from that of other broadcasting services. In public service programming, in the quality and particular character of its programmes, the public must be able to identify what distinguishes this service from other services. It is not merely a matter of producing the type of programmes other services are not interested in, aiming at audiences neglected by others, or dealing with subjects ignored by others, or dealing with subjects ignored by others. It is a matter of doing things differently, without excluding any genre. This principle must lead public broadcasters to innovate, create new slots, new genres, set the pace in the audiovisual world and pull other broadcasting networks in their wake UNESCO (2005:p.16).

### 2.3.2 Journals, Presentations And Research

In a study of GBC's regional stations, Heath (2001) argued that with the opening of these stations, the GBC has come closer to realizing public service ideals of universality of access and particular provisions for the least advantaged citizens than it has in the past. However, lack of clear direction for the GBC under the new democratic dispensation as well as structural constraints and scarce financial resources prevent the corporation from fully realizing public service broadcasting ideals. Heath adds that the GBC is not yet independent of vested interests and commercial imperatives threaten to override public service considerations. Heath concludes that the prospects for public service broadcasting in Ghana are mixed; what is needed are steady, reliable sources of revenue that do not depend upon the whims of politicians, agendas of NGOs, or imperatives of the market place.

Damnyag, Tapegnuu, Der and Arkum (2014) in a study that assessed the core mandate of the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation as a Public Service Broadcaster concluded that GBC is executing its core functions of informing, educating and entertaining well. GBC should also use the excess airtime for commercial broadcasting since there is no absolute Public Service Broadcaster in the world.

Whaites (2005:127) used both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and concluded that "GBC stations have also been influenced by the liberalization of the airwaves, forcing them to re-examine programming and, for the first time, to compete for listeners and advertisers. ...if they are to accurately fulfill their role as public service broadcaster and remain competitive with the commercial stations, they will need to continue to reformat broadcasting....".

In a paper presented at the RIPE@2002 Conference in Finland, Steemers (2002) points out that public service broadcasting institutions themselves have been formulating and fine-tuning their strategies for many years in response to the loss of monopoly, budgetary pressures, and onslaught of less heavily regulated commercial competition. While 'higher' order values such as universal service, diversity and pluralism, continue to underpin the case for public service broadcasting, the competitive environment has encouraged some public service broadcasters to adopt a controversial range of expansionary and commercial strategies, which brings them into conflict with their traditional remit and their commercial competitors. She adds that supporters of PSB point to market failure as one of the main justifications for its continuance. They suggest that competition alone is no guarantee of audiovisual diversity because unregulated commercial broadcasting has tended to reduce the diversity, range and accessibility of television in order to appeal to the lowest denominator. According to this view, under market conditions audiences are targeted as consumers rather than citizens. Steemers states that no public service broadcaster is immune to commercial pressures, but there are varying degrees of commercialism and dependency on commercial income, which taken to the ultimate degree weaken the 'market failure' case for public service broadcasting and render public service broadcasters too similar to their commercial competitors. Steemers concludes that reliance on commercial sources of funding are a response to budgetary pressures and inadequate allocation of public funding, but continued or increasing reliance on commercial income may ultimately undermine the justification for public funding altogether.

Karol Melkizedek (2013) using a survey approach in assessing programming in African Public Service Broadcasters, with prime focus on Tanzania Broadcasting Corporation as a case study concluded that there is no difference between TBC scheduling of programmes and other commercial stations. While in determining content for programmes, it also considers what

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3. INTRODUCTION

This study aimed to ascertain the fate of Ghana Broadcasting Corporation as a Public Service Broadcaster in the midst of commercially competitive media environment in Ghana. GBC until 1995 had enjoyed monopoly of broadcasting in Ghana since 1935. It was therefore funded directly through government subvention for its programmes output and salary of staff. For years government subvention has been dwindling very fast and the liberalization of the broadcasting environment have forced the corporation to increase commercial activities to generate revenue to support its activities in order to provide public service. A school of thought believes this has blurred the public service mandate of the GBC and there is therefore the need to either repeal or amend the corporation's enabling statute to clearly restate its role and commercial activities. The fate of GBC hangs in the balance as the private commercial broadcasting media have overshadowed the corporation through competition and attraction of audience. The management of the GBC has drawn up a three year plan from 2016 to 2018 to wean the corporation off government subvention at the time that TV License fee has also been adjusted upward and re-introduced.

This chapter deals with the method used in gathering the data necessary for the study. It entails the Research Philosophy, Research Design, Data Collection Technique, the Population and Sample Size and Evaluation of the methods selected.

### 3.1.1 Research Philosophy

With the idea of ascertaining the fate or future of GBC as a public service broadcaster in a commercially competitive media environment in Ghana, the study adopted the constructivism approach to providing an interpretation. According to Creswell (2009, p.8), social constructivism often combined with interpretivism, is such a perspective, and it is typically seen as an approach to qualitative research. Social constructivists hold assumptions that individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live or work. Individuals develop subjective meanings of their experiences-meanings directed toward certain objects or things. These meanings are varied and multiple, leading the researcher to look for the complexity of views rather than narrowing meanings into a few categories or ideas. The goal of the research is to rely as much as possible on the participants' views of the situation being studied.

In discussing constructivism, Crotty (1998) cited in Creswell (2009, p. 8) identified several assumptions that: Meanings are constructed by human beings as they engage with the world they are interpreting. Qualitative researchers tend to use open-ended questions so that participants can share their views.

Humans engage with their world and make sense of it based on their historical and social perspectives. Thus, qualitative researchers seek to understand the context or setting of the participants through visiting this context and gathering information personally. They also interpret what they find, an interpretation shaped by the researcher's own experiences and background. The basic generation of meaning is always social, arising in and out of interaction with a human community. The process of qualitative research is largely inductive, with the inquirer generating meaning from the data collected on the field.

The reason for choosing qualitative data is that the study sought to ascertain the fate or future of GBC as a public service broadcaster in a commercially competitive media environment in Ghana. It also assessed how GBC is faring in the liberalized and commercially competitive media environment, to find out if GBC's commercial activities have blurred or overshadowed its public service mandate, to determine whether the upward review and re-introduction of the TV License Fee is the panacea to GBC's financial challenges, the relevance of GBC's enabling statute, NLCD 226, 1968, in the prevailing media environment and whether it should be maintained or repealed, and if the plan to wean GBC off government subvention will guarantee its independence and survival.

### 3.1.2 Research Design

The research design employs the qualitative approach where the ontology of the study is subjective. Respondents were interviewed via telephone and inductive conclusion drawn.

According to Hesse-Biber et al (2010, p.5) an inductive approach is usually emphasized in interpretive and critical belief systems. The inductive approach was chosen because it leans more on the constructivism approach, where theories are built based on data and empirical findings. This helped in providing answers to the research questions by giving deeper understanding of the fate or future of the GBC as a public service broadcaster in a commercially competitive media environment.

Compared to quantitative research, qualitative research is more flexible and adaptable. It allows researchers to use various methods to observe and discover, and enable participants to respond and express their specific feelings and thoughts in the context Malhortra et al, (2007). In addition

Alvesson and Skoldberg (1994) discuss that qualitative research aims at generating theory rather than verifying a scale of a theory.

The study is not designed to generalize the results to the population but to investigate variable relationships Wimmer and Dominick (2003: p.90).

According to Fitch (1994a, p.384) qualitative research approach examines the quality of communication phenomenon whereby data tend to be continuous rather than discrete, and the emphasis is on description and explanation more than on measurement and prediction.

Qualitative research also takes into account time, history, and context. This means the examination of unplanned as well as unanticipated occurrences is permitted Weiss (1998). Therefore, the issue under examination can be investigated in detail and depth without interruptions. Additionally, qualitative analysis accommodates the broader context of the area or issue being examined. As a result, the study is able to engage in a more holistic approach, where the specific nuances, background, and idiosyncrasies can be explored (Patton, 2002). Qualitative research has thus been defined as multi-trend in focus, involving an interpretive approach to its subject matter (Thomas, 2003). According to Trochim (2006) the criteria for judging qualitative research are credibility, that is, it should be believable, transferability, dependability, and conformability.

In this study of the of ascertaining the fate or future of GBC as a public service broadcaster in a commercially competitive media environment in Ghana, telephone interviews were conducted with three Regional Directors of GBC, and five well experienced media personalities, using semi-structured questionnaire which allowed for flexibility and adjustments when necessary.

One of the reasons for the achievement of such detail and depth is a result of data collection not being predetermined by specific categories that need to be used in analysis Garnham (1997) Patton

(2002) Baxter and Babbie (2004). Therefore, the sampling design of non-probability method of purposive sampling was used for the study. The worldview of the GBC as a public service broadcaster in a commercially competitive media environment cannot be quantified and hence the appropriateness of the qualitative research approaches.

However, qualitative research has its limitations. The problem of adequate validity or reliability is a major criticism. Owing to the subjective nature of qualitative data and its origin in single contexts, it is difficult to apply conventional standards of reliability and validity. Contexts, situations, events, conditions and interactions cannot be replicated to any extent nor can generalizations be made to a wider context than the one studied with any confidence. The time required for data collection, analysis and interpretation is lengthy Wimmer & Dominick (2006).

### 3.1.3 Sampled Population

In all, a sample size of eight respondents were purposively selected and interviewed for the study. The appropriateness of this sample size is supported by the argument put up by Creswell (2007) that for qualitative research, a sample between three and three hundred and ten is acceptable.

Respondents were informally contacted directly and scheduled for interviews according to their convenience. GBC broadcasts throughout the whole country through the ten political regions and each region is headed by a Regional Director. Three of the Regional Directors were purposively selected to represent the three geographical sections of the country: Upper West Regional Director to represent the northern sector; Ashanti Regional Director to represent the middle belt; and the Western Regional Director to represent the southern sector. The other five respondents are experienced people who have had long working association or relationship with the GBC and the

Ghanaian media in general. The selection of the interviewees was purposively done. Hawkins and Mothersbaugh (2010) think that individual depth interview can be applied in situation where professional people or people on the subject of their jobs are involved.

#### 3.1.4 Sources Of Data

This study relied on primary and secondary data to obtain evidence to address the research problem. The primary data were obtained from respondents through the use of self-developed semi-structured interview questionnaire. Secondary data were derived mainly from the analysis of policy documents of the GBC, studies on the corporation and others elsewhere regarding media systems or models. Issues regarding the current fate or future of the GBC, why is it like that, and how it can be changed Bertrand and Hughes (2005). The aim of looking critically at these policies is to ascertain the fate or future of the GBC in the commercially competitive media environment in the country and whether these policies and regulation pertaining to the media landscape in Ghana promote the public service broadcaster.

#### 3.1.5 Instruments For Data Collection

The primary data collection method or instrument used was a self-developed semi-structured interview guide through the use of the telephone for the collection of primary data. Interviews were conducted to gain an in-depth understanding of what the respondents think and feel about the fate or future of GBC as a public service broadcaster in the commercially competitive media environment in Ghana. The interviews took the form of semi-structured interviews and it comprised predominantly open-ended questions. This was intended to remove all restrictions that

might hinder the interviewees from answering the questions thereby allowing for flexibility in the order and arrangements of questions Baxter & Babbie (2004). These open-ended questions will assist in further probing (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) so that the desired responses and the opinion of the interviewees will be obtained. According to Guion et al (2001) the questions need to be designed for respondents so that respondents need to explain , not just giving “Yes” or “No” answers. The responses were electronically recorded and transcribed and coded in line with the questions and research objectives.

### 3.1.6 Sampling Technique

The non-probability technique of purposive sampling was employed for this study. The researcher chose this sampling technique based on who is an appropriate respondent in line with resources, time and study’s objectives. This is because in purposive sampling, the units of the sample are selected not by a random procedure, but they are intentionally picked for study because of their characteristics or because they satisfy certain qualities which are not randomly distributed in the universe, but they are typical or they exhibit most of the characteristics of interest to the study Kumeckpor (2002, p:138). Thus, in purposive sampling, judgement and knowledge of the characteristics of units of the universe as to the object of the study is important. So, where it is known that certain individual units, by their very characteristics, will provide more and better information on a particular subject than randomly-selected unit, then such units are purposefully picked up for study Kumeckpor (2002: p. 138). Kumeckpor (2002, p.135) notes that the fact that there is no way of estimating the chance or the probability of each unit of the universe being included or excluded from the selected sample, non-probability samples are nevertheless, used in a number of studies. This is because they are convenient to use and have relatively lower cost per

unit studied. Non-probability samples also provide quick results, if only such results are indicative, rather than accurate and realistic or definitive of the situation studied.

### 3.1.7 Data Handling

The responses of the interviewees were electronically recorded and saved. The responses were transcribed and coded based on the research questions and in relation to the objectives. The coded responses were categorized into two sections to reflect the viewpoints of the interviewees.

### 3.1.8 Evaluation Of Research Results

In conducting qualitative research, the ways to measure the conclusion can be reliable or valid.

Wimmer and Dominic (2006, pp.119-120) cautions qualitative researchers to pay attention to several different concerns that may call the credibility of their research into question. First there is the matter of the completeness of the data. A second problem concerns selective perception and thirdly the question of reactivity. For them, taken together, these three factors suggest that qualitative researchers, much like quantitative researchers, must pay attention to the reliability and validity of their data.

The logic of imposing rigorous quality tests in terms of “reliability” and “validity” rejected by qualitative methodology traditions owing to inherent inferences to “measurement” and replication Bryman (2008, pg.376). Interpretivists suggest that the nature of qualitative data requires that data be judged on the basis of “trustworthiness” and “authenticity” (ibid 377-378), which would strengthen the world views described and explained; using multiple sources of data to build depth, cross-checking data-recording with “members of the social world” for fidelity, ensuring data

integrity and giving fitting, accurate contextual links to employed theories, and within the society, that helps its members connect to the research (Bryman 2008, citing Guba 1985; Guba and Lincoln 1994; Geertz 1973a).

### 3.1.9 Reliability

Reliability refers to the trustworthiness of the data and the analysis of the data. It focuses on testing accuracy of the research, and whether the research is using the right method to gather data (Mason, 2002). The choice of the telephone interview using the semi-structured interview guide was the fact that the study wanted to ascertain the respondents' views on the fate of the GBC as a public service broadcaster in the commercially competitive media environment. In order to avoid biases, the interviews were directed towards three sides. That is; the three Regional Directors of GBC, one person from Media General Ltd and the other six respondents. The choice of the semi-structured interview guide enabled respondents to speak freely without restrictions for more information to be generated. It also allowed the researcher to seek further clarifications.

### 3.1.10 Validity

To get credible results from interviews and minimize the risk of not answering the research questions, the validity of a study refers to what degree a research actually measures what it was intended to measure (Saunders et al, 2003). To ensure the validity of this study therefore, three Regional Directors of the GBC, who see to the implementation of all management decisions including engaging in commercial activities to generate revenue, were selected for the interview to give valid responses.

### 3.1.11 Limitations

This study did not consider the demographics of the respondents. They were purposively selected though other respondents with equal knowledge in the study area could have been included. Also, though there are many electronic media stations in the country which could have been selected for this study, the researcher chose to focus only on GBC because of the unique position it occupies in Ghana's broadcasting landscape.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

#### 4. INTRODUCTION

This chapter focused on the analysis, findings and discussions of the data collected. The thrust of this study was to ascertain the fate or future of GBC as a public service broadcaster in the commercially competitive media environment in Ghana. It also sought to find out if GBC's commercial activities have blurred or overshadowed its public service mandate, determine whether the upward review and re-introduction of the TV License Fee is the panacea to GBC's financial predicament, and to determine the relevance of GBC's enabling statute, NLCD 226, 1968, in the prevailing media environment and whether it should be maintained or repealed.

##### 4.1 Interview Results

In all, eight respondents were interviewed. The data obtained have been presented under two sections in a narrative form, based on the research questions in relation to the objectives and the views of the respondents.

##### 4.1.2 Section One

###### GBC's Commercial Activities And Its Public Service Mandate

This section sought to address the research objective of finding out if GBC's commercial activities have overshadowed or blurred its public service mandate. The researcher therefore interviewed three Regional Directors of GBC, representing the three geographical zones of the country-Ashanti Region (middle sector), Upper West Region (northern sector) and Western Region (southern sector).

How are you able to meet your revenue target?

During the interview, the Ashanti and the Western Regional Directors of GBC were emphatic that they had never been able to meet their revenue target. This they attributed to the public service mandate of the corporation:

“In view of our public role, it is very difficult to meet our revenue targets. The commercial component of our operations constitutes only thirty percent to forty percent. As a result, we are unable to meet targets set because most of the things we do are free of charge”.

The Upper West Regional Director was upbeat about the station’s revenue generation but could not tell whether the station is able to meet its revenue target or not.

“The Wa station is confronted with many challenges but with some level of ingenuity and financial discipline, we have been able to financially weather the storm. First and foremost, I make sure that the workforce delivers on their core mandate of doing their work as that generates direct revenue for the station”.

But further search revealed that the Upper West Region had a revenue target of 300 thousand Ghana cedis

Do you charge for coverage of news events? All the Regional Directors said they charge for the coverage of news events, especially those news events that are commercial and promotional:

“We only charge for news items that are commercially inclined. Any news that is promotional of activities or events are charged. All other news items are covered for free”.

Can you categorize or list them? All the Regional Directors mentioned the banks or financial institutions, promotional activities by organizations or individuals.

“We target Non-Governmental Organisations, commercial interest such as the rural banks. We also deal with outfits such as the banks, and sometimes individuals with commercial news are charged. Those that fall under financial institutions when we cover their assignments we charge them. Banks’ annual general meetings, private entities’ programmes that promote their businesses and all others determined by the Marketing Department as being promotional event”.

How do you juxtapose your revenue generating methods, with the corporation's public service mandate and editorial policy? The Regional Directors made it clear that while they make all efforts to meet their revenue obligations, they are mindful of the public service mandate of GBC. They however give priority attention to paid for news events in their news broadcasting:

“What we do is that we always try to see what we are doing is of public interest. All paid for news events are always given number one attention in our news bulletins. We are running programmes for public good but what is happening is that if the airtime is bought for another programme, we quickly inform producers and adjust the situation. There have been times when selling of airtime would compromise editorial policy, we will not sell the airtime since that comes first as part of our core mandate. We differentiate between public activities that we undertake as part of our public service mandate which is mainly free and commercial activities that we charge for. But our public service activities constitute a larger percentage than the commercial part”.

GBC relied in its early years mainly on government subvention, but has come under progressively greater pressure to generate commercial revenue while retaining its public service structure (National Media Policy, 1999). As Steemers (2002) explained reliance on commercial sources of funding are a response to budgetary pressures and inadequate allocation of public funding.

The NLCD 226, 1968, which spelt out the public service mandate of GBC enjoins the corporation to engage in commercial broadcasting through the sale of paid advertisement scheduled at prescribed spots in its programme service. But according to Bagbin (2007) the promulgation of NLCD 226 and the act of inaugurating the commercial service of GBC “blurred the otherwise clear vision of the Corporation and ignited an unnecessary debate as to whether GBC should provide only public service or make some money”. For Atuguba (2007) it is clear that the Decree that is often referred to as the source of authority for the commercialization of GBC, indeed the marketization of GBC, is not authority for that proposition. That Decree specifically subjects whatever commercial activities GBC may engage in to three critical things: One is that such commercialization is for the extremely limited purpose of giving the business community the chance to sell their products on radio and television. It follows therefore that where business people have alternative avenues for selling their wares, it does not behove on GBC to struggle to provide them that service. GBC was mandated to do this in 1967 when it was the only broadcaster in Ghana. Today it does not have to do so. The second point is that, the commercialization of GBC was necessary in order to relief taxpayers of the burden providing for GBC. This means that if Ghanaians willingly assume that burden, GBC will have no business advertising medical potions which have no certification during primetime news. The last point is that commercial endeavours of GBC were clearly and distinctly subjected to its public service mandate and character. This means that, any commercial move of the GBC which is inconsistent with its public service character is illegal by legislative injunction and must not be allowed to occur.

The finding is consistent with the main goals of public service broadcasting theory as espoused by Mcquail (2007) based on expectations and meeting the collective needs of citizens is to put public interest before financial objectives. It was obvious from the interviews with the Regional Directors

that they struggle to generate revenue to meet their target vis-à-vis the need to uphold the stations' public service mandate. This means the corporation is alive to its public service mandate. A study by Christopher Asiedu (2011: p.47) concluded that even though the corporation is expected to undertake commercial activities to supplement the budget from the government, this does not override its core function of providing public service broadcast.

As one Regional Director said:

“Some time ago there was a memo from headquarters demanding that certain news coverage be charged in most cases using discretionary methods. One of the challenges we face as a regional FM station is the inability to raise revenue and still go ahead and carry out our core mandate as public corporation with corporate social responsibility of a public broadcaster. It is indeed difficult for us to combine corporate social responsibility with money making but the bottom line still remains that money must be made to headquarters and we are so mindful of such a demand and well aware of the fact that revenue generation is rated by headquarters, we combine public service with revenue generation in a way that it does not affect corporate editorial policies”.

This goes to buttress the need for a new legislation to properly demarcate between the revenue generating activities of GBC and its public service remit. According to the Ghana Broadcasting Study (2005 p.55) under the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation Decree 1968, GBC does not have a well-defined public service mandate and in particular the boundaries between its commercial and non-commercial activities are not clear. The use of discretionary methods as stated by the Upper West Regional Director can be abused in favour of commercial activities to meet revenue target and thereby satisfying the headquarters. It was also evident that GBC's commercial activities do not generate the required revenue and coupled with the dwindling government subvention continue to affect its operations. Perhaps the upward review and re-introduction of the TV License Fee has

come at an opportune time to supplement the revenue generation of the corporation so that it can effectively and efficiently deliver on its public service mandate.

#### 4.1.3 SECTION TWO

Section Two elicited views of personalities who are well versed in matters of the media on the fate or future of GBC as a public service broadcaster in the prevailing commercially competitive media environment, and the specific objectives of determining whether the upward review and re-introduction of the TV License Fee is the panacea to GBC's financial predicament, determine the relevance of GBC's enabling statute, NLCD 226, 1968, in the prevailing media environment and whether it should be maintained or repealed, find out if the plan to wean GBC off government subvention will guarantee its independence and survival.

#### 4.1.4 THE FATE OF GBC AS A PUBLIC SERVICE BROADCASTER IN THE LIBERALISED AND COMMERCIALY COMPETITIVE MEDIA ENVIRONMENT

Findings under this title mainly related to answers to the research question:

What do you think is the fate or future of GBC as a public service broadcaster in the prevailing commercially competitive media environment?

All the respondents stated that the fate or future of GBC is bright, positive, relevant and viable, and potential to grow. The following are the reasons for their responses:

Dr. Etse Sikanku said:

“GBC has always maintained very high quality standards when it comes to broadcasting and journalism in the country. The BBC has survived despite the upsurge in new media technologies and media houses. The National Public Radio in the US has also survived and there is absolutely no reason why GBC cannot continue to flourish even within this current media landscape”.

Daniel Kondor said:

“GBC has a very high potential to grow and even outgrow competition given the quality of its well trained staff. There is no indication of a likelihood of this public broadcaster collapsing, so we cannot even talk about what its fate is”.

Eva Lokko, who was a former Director-General of the corporation stated:

“GBC has a clear mandate which is different from the private broadcasters, and so long as it adheres to this mandate, GBC will remain relevant and viable. GBC does not need to be commercially competitive, it just has to provide content that is relevant, useful and informative, which drives development and engenders patriotism”.

For Dr Messan Mawugbe:

“The future of GBC is bright if it clouds itself with national-oriented programmes”.

Roland Affail Monney was of the view that:

“GBC’s survival as the state broadcaster depends on its ability to reinvent and position itself in response to the challenges of the growing competition”. However, “GBC can take inspiration from

other public service broadcasters like the BBC and guarantee its sustenance and secure its future through a reliable funding mechanism while sticking to public service values”.

Though the fate or future outlook of GBC has been found to be bright or encouraging, the liberalization of the airwaves in Ghana has had many implications for the corporation as a public service broadcaster with keen commercial competition from the private media entities. The loss of skilled staff and audience, revenue shortfalls and dwindling government subvention have collectively made it difficult for the GBC to produce programmes of a distinct nature. As Miss Eva Lokko puts it “GBC does not need to be commercially competitive, it just has to provide content that is relevant, useful and informative, which drives development and engenders patriotism”.

In terms of reach, GBC still broadcast to all parts of the country in a real time situation. However, with the advent of digital broadcasting, it will share the monopoly of that platform with the private media. In this regard, the corporation has taken the lead with six free on-air digital channels already. Radio will follow soon. As the GJA President Roland Affail Monney put it “GBC’s survival as the state broadcaster depends on its ability to reinvent and position itself in response to the challenges of the growing competition”. However, “GBC can take inspiration from other public service broadcasters like the BBC and guarantee its sustenance and secure its future through a reliable funding mechanism while sticking to public service values”.

Stemers (2002, p.1) argued that public service broadcasters have survived by reinventing themselves to meet the challenges of new technology, competition and regulatory change; and that they are past and present masters of justifying the grounds for their future.

#### 4.1. 5 THE UPWARD REVIEW AND RE-INTRODUCTION OF TV LICENCE FEE AS A PANACEA TO GBC'S FINANCIAL PREDICAMENT

The following findings are related to the research question:

Can GBC survive on TV Licence without government subvention? The responses and the reasons are presented as follows:

Four respondents unanimously stated that GBC can survive on TV License without government subvention but advocated effective collection system.

Eva Lokko said:

“GBC will not only survive on TV Licence, it will thrive on the revenue from the TV Licence without government subvention. The TV License can be a replacement for government subvention”.

Roland Affail Monney stated that:

“Conservative estimates indicate that GBC can do without government subvention if all things are equal. Contextually if owners of TV sets and the generality of the public fulfill their civic responsibilities. Again, the BBC model inspires hope that GBC can stand on its feet if it transits with the right support from state-owned to public service broadcaster”.

For Daniel Kondor:

“GBC can survive on TV License without government subvention only if all TV sets owners will be captured to pay the licence fee and not having the corporation chasing after only those who willingly go to pay and for once when they default in payment”.

However, Dr Messan Mawugbe wanted the TV Licence fee and the government subvention to operate in tandem:

“I think public media agency such as GBC in the context of our economic challenges should adopt a mix-financing of public licence fee and statutory financial injections”.

The true test of any PSB is its funding model and how independent that model is from governmental control and manipulation, as well as commercial pressures and enticements. Funding is a key factor that influences independence and the ability of public broadcasters to play a positive social role. Many public broadcasters face serious funding constraints. The mechanisms by which public service broadcasting is funded are of critical importance both to its independence and to the quality of its output, but they are often among the most difficult ones to get right. The financing system must be insulated from political pressures, permit some form of accountability, and be sufficiently predictable to allow for the multilayer investments that the public service broadcaster needs to make to deliver on its mandate Buckley et al (2008:p.203).

According to UNESCO (2005:p.115) the main forms of financing public broadcasting around the world are direct government grants, licence fees, advertising, and voluntary subscriptions. Only a small number of PSB systems use any of these forms as a “pure” model. The evidence is that most systems use a combination of some of the four forms. Within the Commonwealth group of nations most public broadcasting systems were modeled on the BBC, although there is no exact copy. The various systems have been adapted to meet local circumstances. In most of South Asia, public broadcasting is financed in part by licence fee, the exceptions being India and Nepal. India abolished the licence fee in 1985. In the United Kingdom, a substantial proportion (over 80 percent) of the revenue for the BBC comes from a licence fee, which every person who operates a television set within the country is legally obliged to pay. Other sources of revenue include income

from commercial activities. In respect of its World Service broadcasting, the BBC receives a direct grant from the British Government that accounts for nearly 90 percent of that service's budget UNESCO (2005:p.49)

Funding for both the PSBs in Australia is also provided by a direct grant from the government, which accounts for well over 75 percent of their respective revenue. The Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) is allowed to generate some advertisement/sponsorship revenue, but there are strict conditions attached to such activities-advertising, for example, is only allowed to be carried for a maximum of five minutes in any hour of broadcasting (SBS Act, s. 45). The Australian Parliament determines the quantum of the grant based on estimates of income and expenditure submitted to it in advance UNESCO (2005:p.49).

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) also relies heavily on state funding of its activities. It needs to be noted, however, that the CBC is allowed to accept commercial advertising, and has derived some one-fifth of its revenue from this source in recent years to offset some of the funding cuts from the government.

Interestingly, the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), almost uniquely among PSBs, relies largely on advertising and commercial activities for its revenue. In 1999, this accounted for some 76.5 percent of the SABC's total budget, with only 10 percent coming from the Government and only 13.5 percent from the licence fee. By contrast, Japan's Nippon Hoso Kyokai (NHK) received as much as 98 percent of its income from the licence fee. Increasingly, PSBs tend to look for a mix of public/state and commercial revenues. The key is to find an appropriate balance between public and commercial revenues, as an excessively commercially-based revenue stream could have potentially harmful implications on the independence, quality, and programming of PSBs UNESCO (2005:p.50).

Currently, GBC relies on government subvention just for the payments of staff salary, paid for adverts and TV License Fee. Roland Affail Monney stated that:

“GBC’s enabling statute NLCD 226, does not frown on GBC carrying paid for ads. It states clearly that GBC may undertake commercial broadcasting. This reflects its hybrid status and complements government subvention which

For UNESCO (2005:p.115) the licence fee is arguably the best method of funding public service broadcasting because it is largely independent of government or commercial pressures, even though governments set the level of the licence fee. This model ensures that it is the people who pay for the PSB, not the government, so the finances of the entity do not form part of the government’s annual spending reviews or budget setting. The licence fee provides citizens with a sense of ownership of PSBs forcing them to be more responsible and accountable to their citizen-owners.

The TV License Fee is expected to supplement and complement the meager government subvention, advertising revenue and commercial activities of GBC. The former Chairman of NMC Kabral Blay-Amihere had this to say when he launched the TV Licence Fee in 2015 on the premises of GBC: “With the resumption of the collection of TV Licence at the adjusted rates, it is hoped that GBC will be better placed financially to fulfill its public service broadcasting mandate, obligations under the 1992 Constitution and offer its viewers and listeners programmes that are educative, informative and entertaining”. It is also expected that “the collection of a realistic TV License fee will in time enable GBC to be weaned off government subvention”.

#### 4.1.6 PERFORMANCE OF PRIVATE COMMERCIAL MEDIA OVERSHADOWING THAT OF GBC

Findings under this title are mainly related to answers to research question:

Has the performance of the private commercial media overshadowed that of GBC? Four out of the five respondents were emphatic that the performance of the private commercial media has overshadowed that of GBC. They however gave varied reasons to support their assertion.

Miss Eva Lokko said:

“Unfortunately, the answer is yes. This is because the private houses tend to have better content, better overall production and specific targets to meet. Employees in the private sector have to "earn" their salaries while employees in GBC get paid "no matter what". There is also the fact that several good GBC production employees were poached by some private houses. Furthermore, GBC now has to contend with intense competition when it comes to training opportunities, especially outside Ghana, since they have to compete with the numerous broadcasting and production houses. In addition, GBC's claim of nationwide coverage is being eroded year by year with the private houses spreading their wings through modern technologies and partnerships”.

Dr Etse Sikanku said:

“We know that in terms of just the sheer numbers of private media stations we do know that the numbers have been increasing as compared to the public station. So yes there is multiplicity of the private stations which have eroded the dominance or the monopoly GBC has had in previous years. Have they overshadowed GBC in terms of content yes, and in terms of numbers yes”.

“The performance of the private commercial media has overshadowed GBC only in so far as they give viewers or listeners alternatives to the public broadcaster, splitting its audience share of the market and not for the quality of the private commercial electronic media. Of course, some private commercial stations are doing very well in terms of their appeal to audiences with programmes”, Daniel Kondor said.

Roland Affail Monney stated that:

“In terms of reach and content, GBC is still unrivalled throughout the country. But reality dictates we weigh the relevance of GBC not on its own scale but on the scale of value of listeners and viewers. Unfortunately, our present generation of listeners are addicted to entertainment and sensationalism, not quality programming. On this score the private commercial media outrank GBC”.

But for Dr Messan Mawugbe:

“GBC is a household name and can’t be overshadowed in a simplistic terms. For instance, GBC per her mandate can’t just telecast a programme content in English and ends with Akan translation as experienced on UTV. GBC is enjoined to be national in colour”.

The growth of private commercial broadcasting can pose a deep challenge to the future of public service broadcasting. In countries with traditions of public service broadcasting, opening up to commercial competition has led to declining audiences, which, in turn, has led to pressure to reduce public subsidies; “dumbing down” of programming including the provision of more populist and less costly productions; and, in some cases, to full or partial privatization Buckley et al (2008:p.191). As Miss Eva Lokko stated “... the private media houses tend to have better content, better overall production and specific targets to meet. Employees in the private sector have to

"earn" their salaries while employees in GBC get paid "no matter what". There is also the fact that several good GBC production employees were poached by some private houses. Furthermore, GBC now has to contend with intense competition when it comes to training opportunities, especially outside Ghana, since they have to compete with the numerous broadcasting and production houses".

A study by Dormon, C. (2013:p.126) concluded that the liberalization of the airwaves has had many implications for the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation, a public service broadcaster, with keen competition from private commercial radio and TV stations, putting it in serious revenue shortfalls from advertising and TV License fees. Its public status notwithstanding, it is believed that GBC can still be competitive in the market place by being more innovative in programming, independent of governmental influences and control and providing training for its staff and motivating them with better conditions of service.

However, the liberalization of the broadcasting spectrum especially in Ghana has not been all that negative. According to the Buckley et al (2008:p.40) the ending of state broadcasting monopolies and the introduction of choice and competition have brought significant benefits for audiences both by increasing the range and diversity of programming and by enabling greater responsiveness to audience demand and interest. The negative implications of deregulation appear to be many for GBC but the credit side, the liberalization has made GBC to be on its toes and awaken it to the realities of the problems facing it in the wake of media plurality in Ghana Dormon (2011:p.127).

#### 4.1.7 REPEAL OR MAINTENANCE OF GBC'S ENABLING STATUTE, NLCD 226 1968

Findings are related to answers to the question:

Should GBC's enabling statute, NLCD 226, 1968, be repealed or maintained? Three out of the five respondents stated that GBC's enabling statute, NLCD 226, 1968 should to be reviewed instead of being repealed or maintained. They were of the view that the review is necessary to reflect the changes in the twenty first century broadcasting.

Dr. Messan Mawugbe said:

"It should be reviewed to some extent to meet our 21st century challenges".

Miss Eva Lokko was emphatic that:

"It should not be repealed. It should however be reviewed for requisite modifications that will make it more relevant to today's environment and changes in laws that affect some of the articles in the act".

For Dr. Etse Sikanku:

"If the Decree is not clear on the functions of GBC within the current contemporary era then yes. Every law needs to be reviewed in order to make it better. If there are concerns about aspects of the decree which do not allow GBC to fulfill its public service mandate then definitely it has to be reviewed. What we all want is a public service agency which fosters national unity, national development, a public service agency which plays its appropriate role within our democratic system and if it is not doing that then of course, it is only appropriate that we review the decree to let it achieve that particular aim so that it does not achieve any parochial and subjective aim".

While Daniel Kondor wanted the Decree to be maintained:

“My answer is, it should be maintained”.

Roland Affail Monney wanted it to be repealed citing certain inconsistencies in the decree:

“GBC’s enabling statute, NLCD 226 of 1968 states in part that GBC may undertake commercial broadcasting. Other elements of the law put GBC in the category of state-owned not a public service broadcaster. It is therefore clear that this legislation needs to be repealed to enable GBC to function as a public service broadcaster, backed of course by adequate, reliable and secure funding mechanism which will guarantee its independence”.

The status of public service broadcasters is normally defined by legislation setting out its duties, responsibilities, lines of accountability, and guarantees of editorial independence from government and protection from political or commercial interferences. The governing legislation provides the first means of assurance that the broadcaster will operate in the public interest with public service objectives and accountability to the public Buckley et al (2008, p.193).

The Ghana Broadcasting Policy (2005:p.3) recommended among other things that the NMC should commence a public consultation into the future of the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation with the aim of developing a new statute for GBC with a clear and more detailed public service broadcasting mandate. The consultation should have particular regard to consulting on GBC’s public service responsibilities and performance, its commercial activities, the development of GBC online and digital services, and its future funding.

Emanating from this was a new Broadcasting Bill in 2007 but as at 2016, it is yet to be endorsed by Cabinet for onward transfer to Parliament for debate and approval. The Bill proposes that GBC be made a full Public Service Broadcaster which will serve the overall national interest, avoid one-sided reporting and programming with regard to religion, political belief, culture, race and gender.

It also seeks to ensure that GBC provides comprehensive news and current affairs programmes in a professional manner exhibiting fairness, impartiality, balance and objectivity. The Bill also provides that as a public service broadcaster, GBC will be independent of government, political, economic control by any other vested interest.

#### 4.1.8 DETERMINATION OF WHETHER GBC MUST CONTINUE TO CARRY PAID FOR ADVERTISEMENTS

Findings under this objective represent answers to research question:

Must GBC continue to carry paid for advertisements? Four out of the five respondents said GBC must continue to carry paid for advertisements. They ascribed varied reasons to their responses.

Miss Eva Lokko said:

“Yes, it is part of its mandate. However, as a public broadcaster, it will be appropriate that it carries only adverts that are placed around its own content in a "take it or leave it" manner and that are acceptable, palatable and decent. No advertiser should be allowed to influence GBC's content in anyway. Such paid adverts should also not be allowed within the content itself, i.e. adverts should be placed before and/or at the end of programmes. Paid adverts are also a good portion of GBC's internally generated funds, so GBC needs to continue with it”.

Daniel Kondor said:

“GBC must continue to carry paid advertisements. It is an acceptable practice in public broadcasting. I mean semi-commercialisation in the functioning of public broadcasting”.

Dr. Messan Mawugbe:

“This should be encouraged. Public media agency such as GBC in the context of our economic challenges should adopt a mix-financing of Public Licence fee and statutory financial injections”.

Roland Affail Monney stated that:

“GBC’s enabling statute NLCD 226, does not frown on GBC carrying paid for ads. It states clearly that GBC may undertake commercial broadcasting. This reflects its hybrid status and complements government subvention which is woefully inadequate to run the state broadcaster”.

However, Dr. Etse Sikanku was of the view that:

“If the TV Licence Fee is enough to support the Corporation to effectively and efficiently deliver on its mandate then I support this view. But if the paid for advertisements continue to be just another additional source that doesn’t help our public service broadcaster to give us quality programming then I don’t think that is worth supporting”.

Funding is a key factor that influences independence and the ability of public broadcasters to play a positive social role. A variety of financial models are used to provide the principal public funding mechanism. These include a household levy (licence fee), a direct government funding, a levy on commercial broadcasting, and advertising Buckley et al (2008:p.203).

Price and Raboy (2001 p. 10-11) added that issues of financing public service broadcasting are quite obviously-key to its success and its pattern of performance in a society. Pressures on funding are increasing as governments seek to reduce the overall tax burden and as increased competition reduces available advertising revenues.

Clause 3 of NLCD 226, 1968 states that “The Corporation may engage in commercial broadcasting through the sale of paid advertisements scheduled at prescribed spots in its programme service”.

Ansah (1985:pp.10-11) one important policy shift in the operations of GBC was the introduction of commercial broadcasting in 1967 “to give our business community and other individuals the chance of selling their goods and services through the fastest available means-radio and television. It was also intended to generate revenue to supplement government subvention and thereby lighten the burden of the taxpayer”.

According to Apenteng (2002) cited in *Broadcasting Policy and Practice in Africa* (2003, p.152) only 26% of the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation’s revenue came from advertising. In the new context of competition with new private stations, the GBC has increased its proportion of advertising revenue to state grants with the balance coming from television licence fees, which have been declining.

In the 1993/94 financial year, the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) achieved 74 percent of its total annual revenue from advertising revenue. But with greater competition from private media since democratization began, SABC has less command of advertising revenue and faces severe hurdles in delivering its public service remit in the new South Africa UNESCO (2008:p.120). The Chilean public service broadcaster, TVN, is funded almost entirely through advertising Buckley et al (2008:p.204).

However, over dependence on advertising subjects the public broadcaster to some of the same pressures as commercial broadcasters, which can undermine its scope to develop diverse informational programming and in-depth news coverage. For example, the BBC is precluded from selling advertising or sponsorship in its broadcasts, but it has an expanding portfolio of commercial business activities mainly based on the commercial exploitation of BBC programs, other assets, and skill base Buckley et al (2008:p.204-205). In France, too, advertising revenues are strictly controlled with an overall limit set by Parliament.

With the challenges associated with advertising and the public service mandate of GBC, there is the need for a comprehensive legislation to determine the specific placement and duration of advertisements in every programme as suggested by Miss Eva Lokko:

“... as a public broadcaster, it will be appropriate that it carries only adverts that are placed around its own content in a "take it or leave it" manner and that are acceptable, palatable and decent. No advertiser should be allowed to influence GBC's content in anyway. Such paid adverts should also not be allowed within the content itself, i.e. adverts should be placed before and/or at the end of programmes”.

Steevers (2002) stated that no public service broadcaster is immune to commercial pressures, but there are varying degrees of commercialism and dependency on commercial income, which taken to the ultimate degree weaken the ‘market failure’ case for public service broadcasting and render public service broadcasters too similar to their commercial competitors.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5. INTRODUCTION

This is the last and concluding chapter of this study. It comprises the summary of the entire work with recommendations made from the facts of the research findings as well as the conclusions drawn the logic of the realization or otherwise of the objectives and answers to the research questions. The study attempted to ascertain the fate or future of GBC as a public service broadcaster in the commercially competitive media environment in Ghana. The study aimed specifically to:

#### Specific Objectives

1. To find out if GBC's commercial activities have blurred or overshadowed its public service mandate
2. To determine whether the upward review and re-introduction of the TV License Fee is the panacea to GBC's financial predicament
3. To determine the relevance of GBC's enabling statute, NLCD 226, 1968, in the prevailing media environment and whether it should be maintained or repealed
4. To find out if GBC can survive on TV License Fee without government subvention

The fate or future of GBC as a public service broadcaster in the country's liberalized and commercially competitive media environment is bright, positive, relevant and viable, and potential to grow. This is in spite of the high staff attrition to the private media houses, which provide better salaries and good working conditions. However, the impact or implications of the liberalization of

the broadcasting airwaves has not been all that negative for the corporation. It has rather awoken and put staff on their toes to work harder than before. The corporation will have to reinvent and position itself in response to the challenges of the growing competition. It can take inspiration from other public service broadcasters like the BBC and guarantee its sustenance and secure its future through a reliable funding mechanism while sticking to public service values. To succeed both as a business and a social institution, broadcast stations must attract and retain massive acceptance among viewers and listeners, otherwise advertisers, who contribute immensely to their revenue base would ignore such stations. As Salihu (2004:17) has observed “The challenges of management of broadcasting stations include finding the right caliber of staff who can deliver on the mission and the vision of the station”. Therefore, it behooves GBC to employ the best of available hands. And to be employable and retainable, employees and potential employees of GBC have no option than to strive for and to operate at the highest level of professionalism, and this they have been able to maintain for this while.

GBC can survive on TV Licence Fee and be a replacement for government subvention. This is because conservative estimates indicate that GBC can do without government subvention with sufficient revenue from the collection of the TV License Fee. Management of the corporation has therefore put in place a three year plan to wean the corporation off government subvention. Bearing in mind some of the factors that contributed to the corporation’s failure or inability to effectively and sufficiently collect the fee, management of GBC appear determined this time round by putting in place structures that will enable the corporation to generate sufficient revenue from the collection of the TV Licence Fee. As a result, management has created the TV License Division and requested applications from innovative, enterprising, self-motivated, and qualified Ghanaians who are goal-oriented, result-driven with exceptional leadership qualities for the position of

Director of TV Licence. The job purpose is generally responsible for the day-to-day administration and operations of the TV Licence Division and will be reporting to the Director-General (GBC Notice Board, No.11/16, 14/02/16). The licence fee is arguably the best method of funding public service broadcasting because it is largely independent of government or commercial pressures, even though government sets the level of the fee. This model of funding ensures that it is the people who pay for the PSB as a civic responsibility, not the government, so the finances of the entity do not form part of the government's annual budgets. According to the Public Funding Principles for Public Service Media of the European Broadcasting Union (2015:p.6) the main advantage of the Licence Fee is that it is more stable and predictable than most other means of public service media funding. Furthermore, it is relatively independent from political interference and it establishes a direct link between broadcaster and public-the broadcaster is more accountable to its audience. Usually, public service media organizations funded by the licence fee also benefit from the right to self-administration in the internal allocation of their funding, allowing them to remain competitive in the market (whilst at the same time fulfilling the high levels of transparency and efficiency expected of a public service).

The commercial activities of GBC have not blurred the delivery of its public service mandate. The corporation generates revenue by charging for the coverage of promotional or activities of financial institutions. Paid for news items or sponsored programmes are given priority attention in broadcasting. It also came out that the corporation is struggling in its revenue generation effort to keep on providing public service. The use of discretionary in deciding which news events to be paid for before it is covered is subject to abuse.

Public service broadcasters should be prescribed in law as bodies that are editorially independent of government, serve the public interest, and are protected against political and commercial

interference. GBC's enabling statute, NLCD 226 of 1968 states in part that GBC may undertake commercial broadcasting. Other elements of the law put GBC in the category of state-owned not a public service broadcaster. It is therefore clear that this legislation needs to be reviewed repealed to enable GBC to function as a public service broadcaster. Because of ownership, governments over the years have either refused or failed to approve a new broadcasting bill to be passed into law since 2007. A new law will not only redefine broadcasting in Ghana, it will also spell out clearly the boundaries between GBC's commercial activities and public service delivery. For instance the placement and duration of advertisements can be catered for. The NLCD enjoins the Corporation to engage in commercial broadcasting through the sale of paid advertisement scheduled at prescribed spots in its programme service. A new legislation will be specific on placement, duration or the number of minutes or hours an advert can be aired during a programme and throughout each day.

Though the general conclusion is that GBC can continue to carry paid for advertisements, there is however the need for a review or a repeal of the NLCD 226 of 1968 for a new law or legislation that reflects broadcasting in the 21st century in the country. This will also be a reflection of Jurgen Habermas' Public Sphere as GBC will be insulated from political, governmental and commercial pressures. It can then serve as an appropriate forum for debates, leading to the formation and shaping of public opinions and galvanizing the citizenry for national development.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings from the study, the following recommendations have been made with the expectations that they would be useful in helping in restructuring and repositioning the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation to be effective and competitive:

1. It is recommended that the Broadcasting Bill must be passed into law as soon as possible so that GBC can be properly positioned in the scheme of the liberalized and commercially competitive media environment it finds itself. The citizenry stands to benefit from quality programming and distinct broadcasting instead of the cacophonous, unprofessional and profanity associated with the private commercial broadcasters.
2. Management of GBC must put in more effort to effectively collect and generate maximum revenue from the TV Licence Fees in order to reduce dependence on advertising revenue. In some countries, to prevent the licence fees from being hit by inflationary pressures have instituted automatic fee adjustments based on the cost of living index. Ghana's Parliament must therefore not hesitate in adjusting the fees accordingly when it becomes necessary to do so to enable the corporation to continuously offer distinctive and quality programming to the citizenry.
3. Staff attrition as a result of the liberalization of the broadcasting airwaves has adversely affected or robbed the corporation of some of its well trained and experienced staff. Management must identify the core staff and offer them incentives and improved working conditions so that they can be retained and also attract more qualified ones into its fold.

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## APPENDICE 1:

LIST OF AUTHORISED TV AND RADIO STATIONS IN GHANA BY THE NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS AUTHORITY:

LIST OF AUTHORISED TV BROADCASTING STATIONS

IN GHANA AS AT FOURTH QUARTER OF 2015

As at the fourth quarter of 2015, the total number of TV operators authorised by the National Communications Authority (NCA) in Ghana stood at 63. This number is made up of:

21 Analogue Terrestrial Television (free on air)

23 Satellite Television Broadcasting (Free-To-Air Direct-Home Single Channel)

7 Satellite Television Broadcasting (Pay TV Direct-To-Home Bouquet)

6 Satellite Television Broadcasting (Free-To-Air Direct-To-Home Bouquet)

4 Digital Terrestrial Pay Television (Service and Frequency)

1 Digital Terrestrial Pay Television (Service Only) and

1 Digital Cable Television

Out of these, a total of 30 stations were broadcasting on air as at the end of 31st December, 2015.

## LIST OF AUTHORISED FM BROADCASTING STATIONS

AS AT FOURTH QUARTER OF 2015

The full list of authorised FM Radio broadcasting stations in Ghana as at the end of December 2015 totaled 412. Out of this number 313 stations are currently operational.

The breakdown is as follows:

- 30 Public radio stations
- 5 public (Foreign) radio stations
- 68 Community radio stations
- 17 Campus radio stations and
- 292 Commercial radio stations

## APPENDICE 2:

### CHAPTER 12 OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE FOURTH REBUPLIC OF GHANA

#### FREEDOM AND INDEPENDENCE OF THE MEDIA

162 (1) Freedom and independence of the media are hereby guaranteed.

(2) Subject to this Constitution and any other law not inconsistent with this Constitution, there shall be no censorship in Ghana.

(3) There shall be no impediments to the establishment of private press or media; and in particular, there shall be no law requiring any person to obtain a licence as a prerequisite to the establishment or operation of a newspaper, journal or other media for mass communication or information.

(4) Editors and publishers of newspapers and other institutions of the mass media shall not be subject to control or interference by Government, not shall they be penalized or harassed for their editorial opinions and views, or the content of their publications.

(5) All agencies of the mass media shall, at all times, be free to uphold the principles, provisions and objectives of this Constitution, and shall uphold the responsibility and accountability of the Government to the people of Ghana..

(6) Any medium for the dissemination of information to the public which publishes a statement about or against any person shall be obliged to publish a rejoinder, if any, from the person in respect of whom the publication was made.

163. All state-owned media shall afford fair opportunities and facilities for the presentation of divergent views and dissenting opinions.

164. The provisions of articles 162 and 163 of this Constitution are subject to laws that are reasonably required in the interest of national security, public order, public morality and for the purpose of protecting the reputations, rights and freedoms of other persons.

165. For the avoidance of doubt, the provisions of this Chapter shall not be taken to limit the enjoyment of any of the fundamental human rights and freedoms guaranteed under Chapter 5 of this Constitution.

166. (1) There shall be established by Act of Parliament within six months after Parliament first meets after the coming into force of this Constitution, a National Media Commission which shall consist of fifteen members as follows –

(a) one representative each nominated by

(i) the Ghana Bar Association;

(ii) the Publishers and Owners of the Private Press;

(iii) the Ghana Association of Writers and the Ghana Library Association;

(iv) the Christian group (the National Catholic Secretariat, the Christian Council, and the Ghana Pentecostal Council)

(v) the Federation of Muslim Councils and Ahmadiyya Mission;

(vi) the training institutions of journalists and communicators;

((vii) the Ghana Advertising Association and the Institute of Public Relations of Ghana; and

(viii) the Ghana National Association of Teachers;

(b) two representatives nominated by the Ghana Journalists Association;

(c) two persons appointed by the President; and

(d) three persons nominated by Parliament.

(2) The Commission shall elect its own Chairman.

167. The functions of the National Media Commission are-

(a) to promote and ensure the freedom and independence of the media for mass communication or information;

(b) to take all appropriate measures to ensure the establishment and maintenance of the highest journalistic standards in the mass media, including the investigation, mediation and settlement of complaints made against or by the press or other mass media;

(c) to insulate the state-owned media from governmental control;

(d) to make regulations by constitutional instrument for the registration of newspapers and other publications, except that the regulations shall not provide for the exercise of any direction or control over the professional functions of a person engaged in the production of newspapers or other means of mass communication; and

(e) to perform such other functions as may be prescribed by law not inconsistent with this constitution.

168. The Commission shall appoint the chairmen and other members of the governing bodies of public corporations managing the state -owned media in consultation with the President.

169. Editors of the state-owned media shall be appointed by the governing bodies of the respective corporations in consultation with the Public Services Commission.

170. The Commission shall appoint the officers and other employees of the Commission in consultation with the Public Services Commission.

171. The administrative expenses of the National Media Commission, including salaries, allowances and pensions payable to or in respect of persons serving with the Commission shall be charged on the Consolidated Fund.

172. Except as otherwise provided by this Constitution or by any other law not inconsistent with this Constitution, the National Media Commission shall not be subject to the direction or control of any person or authority in the performance of its functions.

173. Subject to article 167 of this Constitution, the National Media Commission shall not exercise any control or direction over the professional functions of a person engaged in the production of newspapers or other means of communication.

### APPENDICE 3:

#### GHANA BROADCASTING CORPORATION ACT - 1968 (NLCD 226)

##### Section - 1 - Establishment Of Ghana Broadcasting Corporation.

(1) There is hereby established a body corporate to be known as the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation, in this Decree referred to as "the Corporation".

(2) The Corporation shall have perpetual succession and a common seal and may sue and be sued in the name assigned to it by sub-paragraph (1) of this paragraph.

(3) The Corporation shall have power, for the discharge of any of its functions, to acquire and hold any movable or immovable property and to dispose of such property, and to enter into any contract or other transaction.

(4) Where there is any hindrance to the acquisition of any property under sub-paragraph (3) of this paragraph, the property may be acquired for the Corporation under the State Property and Contracts Act, 1960 (CA 6) or as the case may be, under the State Lands Act, 1962 (Act 125), and each such Act shall, as the case may be, apply with respect to any such acquisition with such modifications as may be necessary to provide for the vesting of the property acquired there under in the Corporation and for the cost of acquisition to be defrayed by the Corporation.

##### Section - 2 - Objects Of The Corporation.

(1) The objects of the Corporation shall be—

(a) to undertake Sound, Commercial and Television broadcasts;

(b) to prepare in the field of culture, education, information and entertainment programmes reflecting National progress and aspirations;

(c) to broadcast the programmes prepared under sub-paragraph (b) in the main Ghanaian languages and in English and such other foreign languages as the Corporation may determine;

(d) to carry on an external service of sound broadcasting;

(e) to enter into agreement for the utilisation of programmes prepared in other countries; and

(f) to carry on such other activities as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of all or any of the foregoing.

(2) Without prejudice to the general effect of sub-paragraph (1) of this paragraph, the Corporation shall have power to carry out all or any of the following activities:

(a) to erect, maintain and operate transmitting and receiving stations;

(b) to install and operate wired broadcasting services;

(c) to enter into arrangements for the purpose of obtaining rights, privileges and concessions;

(d) to produce, manufacture, purchase or otherwise acquire films, television, gramophone and other mechanical or electronic records, and materials and apparatus associated therewith, and to use them in connection with the broadcast services;

(e) to provide to and to receive from other corporations and persons matter to be broadcast;

(f) to organise, provide and subsidise public entertainment for the purpose of broadcasting;

(g) to collect news and information in any manner that the Corporation deems fit in any part of the world and to subscribe to news agencies and services;

(h) to acquire copyrights;

(i) to publish printed matter that may be conducive to the discharge of any of the functions of the Corporation;

(j) to do such other things conducive to attaining the objects of the Corporation including the provision of facilities for training and education for the purpose of advancing the skill of persons employed by the Corporation and the carrying out of research to improve the efficiency of the equipment of the Corporation and the manner in which that equipment is operated.

### Section - 3 - The Board.

(1) The governing body of the Corporation shall be a Board.

(2) The Board shall consist of:

(a) a Chairman;

(b) the Director-General of the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation referred to in paragraph 6 of this Decree; and

(c) eight other members.

(3) The Chairman and the other members of the Board to be appointed under sub-paragraph (2) (c) of this paragraph shall be appointed by the National Liberation Council on the recommendations of the Commissioner and shall hold office for a period of two years: Provided that of the first members to be appointed under sub-paragraph (2)(c) of this paragraph four shall hold office for one year and such period shall be specified in their instruments of appointment.

(4) Persons to be appointed Chairman of the Corporation or as members of the Board under sub-paragraph (2) (c) of this paragraph shall be persons who have recognised public standing in the community or persons who have had experience in and shown capacity in any of the following

fields of endeavour that is to say- industry, trade, finance, science, administration, education, public entertainment, social service, journalism, broadcasting and law.

(5) No person shall be qualified to be a member of the Board

(a) if he has been sentenced to death or to a term of imprisonment exceeding twelve months without option of a fine or has been convicted of an offence involving dishonesty and has not, in each case been granted a free pardon,

(b) if he is a person who, having been declared insolvent or bankrupt under any law for the time being in force in Ghana or in any other country is an undischarged insolvent or bankrupt,

(c) if he is a member of any Legislative Assembly or other body having for the time being authority either alone or in conjunction with any other body to enact laws which have effect throughout Ghana,

(d) if he is adjudged to be of unsound mind,

(e) if in the case of a person possessed of a professional qualification, he is disqualified or suspended, otherwise than at his own request, from practising his profession in Ghana or in any other country by order of any competent authority made in respect of him personally,

(f) if he is an officer of the Corporation other than the Director-General or is a public officer where there are already not less than three public officers on the membership of the Board.

(6) Without prejudice to sub-paragraph (5) of this paragraph, a member of the Board other than the Director-General may be removed from the Board by the National Liberation Council on the recommendation of the Commissioner

(a) if he suspends payment with his creditors,

(b) if he is absent from three or more consecutive meetings of the Board without such ground as appears to the National Liberation Council as reasonable,

(c) if he is guilty of unethical behaviour or if he is guilty of any serious misconduct in respect of his duties as a member of the Board and such behaviour or misconduct is certified in writing by not less than seven members of the Board.

(7) Any member of the Board other than the Director-General may resign his office by notice in writing addressed to the Commissioner.

(8) Where the office of a member of the Board becomes vacant prior to the expiry of his full term of office the National Liberation Council shall, upon the recommendation of the Commissioner and subject to the provisions of this Decree appoint another person in his place to hold office for the unexpired portion of his term.

(9) All persons ceasing to be members of the Board shall be eligible for re- appointment to the Board.

(10) The Board may pay to its members and also to persons co-opted under paragraph 4 of this Decree to attend any meeting of the Board such subsistence, travelling and other allowances and at such rates as the Board may with the joint approval of the Commissioner and the Commissioner responsible for Finance determine either in relation to any particular member or generally.

(11) The Chairman and members of the Board while holding office on the Board shall not

(a) hold any office in or be a member of any committee of any political organisation;

(b) offer themselves as candidates or nominate any other persons as candidates at any election of members to any Legislative Assembly or other body having for the time being authority either

alone or in conjunction with any other body, to enact laws which have effect throughout Ghana or to a Council within the meaning of the Local Government Act, 1961 (Act 54);

(c) indicate publicly their support for or opposition to any political parties or candidates or to the political programmes of such parties or candidates;

(d) publish or cause to be published any article or other matter of a partisan political nature;

(e) canvass on behalf of political candidates;

(f) speak in public or broadcast on any subject of a partisan political nature;

(g) allow themselves to be interviewed or express any opinion for publication on any subject of a partisan political nature, and any contravention of the provisions of this sub-paragraph may be certified to be a serious misconduct in relation to the duties of a member of the Board for the purposes of sub-paragraph (6) of this paragraph.

(12) There shall be a Secretary to the Board who shall be an officer of the Corporation and who shall, subject to such general directions as the Board may give and subject to the other provisions of this Decree, arrange the business for, and cause to be recorded and kept the minutes of all meetings of the Board.

#### Section - 4 - Meetings Of The Board.

(1) The Board shall ordinarily meet for the despatch of business at such times and at such places as the Chairman may appoint but shall meet at least once in every month.

(2) A special meeting of the Board shall be called by the Secretary to the Board upon a request made to him for that purpose in writing signed by not less than four members of the Board including the Director-General.

(3) At every meeting of the Board at which he is present, the Chairman shall preside and in his absence, a member of the Board appointed by the members present from among themselves shall preside.

(4) Questions proposed at a meeting of the Board shall be determined by simple majority of members present and voting and in the event of an equality of votes, the person presiding shall have a second or casting vote.

(5) The quorum at any meeting of the Board shall be four so however that no quorum shall be formed unless the Director-General is present at the meeting.

(6) The Board may at any time co-opt any person or persons to act as an adviser or advisers at any of its meetings so, however, that no person so co-opted shall be entitled to vote at any such meeting on any matter for decision by the Board.

(7) The validity of any proceedings of the Board shall not be affected by any vacancy among its members or by any defect in the appointment of any of them.

(8) Any member of the Board who has any financial interest in any company or undertaking with which the Corporation proposes to enter into any contract or who has any financial interest in any contract which the Corporation proposes to make shall disclose to the Board in writing the nature of his interest and shall be disqualified from participating in any deliberations of the Board on the contract or voting in any decision of the Board on such contract.

(9) Any contravention of the provisions of sub-paragraph (8) of this paragraph may be certified to be a serious misconduct in relation to the duties of a member of the Board for the purposes of sub-paragraph (6) of paragraph 3 of this Decree.

## Section - 5 - Role Of The Board.

(1) The Board shall be responsible for the broad direction of the affairs of the Corporation, the conduct of corporate relations with the Government and its agencies and the authorization of the annual report of the Corporation's activities.

(2) For its deliberations, the Board may utilize Finance, Programme Advisory and Staff committees which may deal with such matters as the following which are not necessarily limiting in scope:

(a) establishment and revision of bye-laws and other instruments made under paragraph 19 of this Decree;

(b) establishment of basic policies and directives deemed necessary for the guidance of the Director-General;

(c) establishment or approval of objectives with respect to administrative, coverage, finance and control, management, programming and sales;

(d) Consideration of bi-annual reports of accountability by the Director-General;

(e) Advice and guidance with respect to any aspect of the affairs of the Corporation.

## Section - 6 - Director-General And Deputy Directors-General.

(1) There shall be a Director-General of the Corporation who shall be the chief executive officer of the Corporation and shall be responsible to the Board for the day-to-day administration of the Corporation.

(2) There shall also be two Deputy Directors-General of the Corporation who shall, subject to the provisions of this Decree

(a) be charged with the performance of any of the functions of the Director-General when the Director-General is absent from Ghana or is otherwise incapacitated from performing that function, and

(b) otherwise assist the Director-General in the discharge of the said functions and perform such functions as the Director-General may delegate to any of them, and accordingly unless the context otherwise requires any reference in this Decree to Director-General shall include reference to a Deputy Director-General.

(3) The Director-General and the two Deputy Directors-General shall be appointed by the National Redemption Council and shall hold and vacate office upon such terms and conditions as the National Redemption Council may determine.

(4) A person to be appointed Director-General or Deputy Director-General shall be a person who has had experience of and has demonstrated competence in one or more of the following fields of endeavour, that is to say, public utility operation and practice, industry, broadcasting, trade, finance, science and administration.

(5) The Director-General shall exercise supervision and control over the acts of all employees of the Corporation and shall be responsible for disposing of all questions relating to the pay, privileges and allowances of the Corporation's employees as laid down by the Board.

(6) The Director-General is responsible for the implementation of the Corporation's policies, bye-laws, other instruments and objectives in the day-to-day operations of the affairs of the Corporation. [As substituted by the Ghana Broadcasting

Corporation (Amendment) Decree, 1975, (NRCD 334) s. 1a].

Section - 6 - (A) Directors And Regional Directors/Managers.

(1) There shall be in charge of each division and regional office of the Corporation a Director and Regional Director/Manager respectively.

(2) The Director or Regional Director/Manager shall be appointed by the National Redemption Council on the advice of the Director-General";

Section - 7 - Staff.

(1) The Board may from time to time appoint such employees as may be necessary for the proper and efficient conduct of the business and functions of the Corporation.

(2) Employees of the Corporation shall hold and vacate office upon such terms and conditions as the Board may determine.

(3) The Corporation may also engage the services of such consultants, advisers and other persons as the Board may determine and upon such conditions as the Board may prescribe.

(4) Public officers may be transferred to the Corporation or may otherwise give assistance thereto.

(5) The Corporation shall have an Internal Auditor and the appointment and dismissal of any person to or from the post of Internal Auditor shall be made by the Auditor-General. [As inserted by the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation

(Amendment) Decree, 1975, (NRCD 334) s. 1b].

(6) Subject to the provisions of this Decree, an Internal Auditor shall be responsible to the Director-General for the performance of his functions.

(7) As part of his functions under this Decree, an Internal Auditor shall, at intervals of three months, prepare a report on the internal audit work carried out by him during the period of three months immediately preceding the preparation of the report and shall, as soon as practicable after the preparation of the report, submit the report to the Director-General.

(8) The Director-General shall, as soon as practicable after receiving any report submitted to him under sub-paragraph (7) of this paragraph, forward a copy of the report to the Chairman and also a copy thereof to the Auditor-General.

(9) Without prejudice to the general effect of sub-paragraph (7) of this paragraph, an Internal Auditor shall make in each report such observations as appear to him necessary as to the conduct of the financial affairs of the Corporation during the period to which the report relates.

#### Section - 8 - National Requirements Of The Corporation.

(1) It shall be the duty of the Corporation to provide as a public service, independent and impartial broadcasting services (sound and television) for general reception in Ghana.

(2) The Corporation shall in collaboration with such departments of State as may be appropriate provide an external sound service through transmission for general reception in countries and places outside Ghana.

(3) The Corporation may engage in commercial broadcasting through the sale of paid advertisements scheduled at prescribed spots in its programme service.

#### Section - 9 - Output Requirements.

(1) In its public service broadcasting, the Corporation is expected to provide for

(a) Government pronouncements, that is, speeches by members of the National Liberation Council and Commissioners responsible for departments of State consisting of statements of fact or explaining the policies and actions of the Government;

(b) party political speeches dealing with the views and policies of the various political parties (when they come into being);

(c) speeches expressing different points of view on matters of controversy;

(d) matters of any kind (including religious services or ceremonies) representing the main stream of religious thought or belief in the country.

(2) In its broadcasting of the items mentioned in sub-paragraph (1) of this paragraph the Corporation shall allocate and apportion air-time equitably between the parties, points of view and religious bodies according to their respective claims upon the interest of members of the public of Ghana.

#### Section - 10 - Funds Of Corporation.

(1) The funds of the Corporation shall include-

(a) grants made by the Government to the Corporation;

(b) loans obtained on the guarantee of the Government from the National Investment Bank or such other Banks as the Commissioner responsible for Finance may approve;

(c) any moneys accruing to the Corporation in the course of the discharge of its functions.

(2) All moneys received by the Corporation shall be deposited to the credit of the Corporation in the Ghana Commercial Bank or such other bank as the Commissioner responsible for Finance may approve.

(3) No loans shall be raised by the Corporation except with the prior approval of the Commissioner responsible for Finance.

#### Section - 11 - Accounts.

(1) The Corporation shall keep proper books of account and proper records in relation thereto.

(2) The Corporation shall prepare, in respect of each financial year, a statement of account which shall include:

(a) a balance sheet, a statement of income and expenditure and a statement of surplus containing such information as had the Corporation been a company registered under the Companies Code (Act 179) would be required to be laid before the company by the Directors at an annual meeting, and

(b) such other information in respect of the financial affairs of the Corporation as the Commissioner or the Commissioner responsible for Finance may require.

(3) The Corporation shall, as soon as possible but within three months after the termination of each financial year, submit to the Commissioner an annual report which shall include the statements of account specified in sub-paragraph (2) of this paragraph and the Commissioner responsible for Information shall as soon as practicable cause it to be laid before the National Liberation Council.

(4) The Corporation's financial year shall end on the 30th day of June in each year.

(5) For the purposes of this paragraph the period extending from the commencement of this Decree to the 30th day of June, 1968, shall be deemed to be a financial year.

#### Section - 12 - Audit.

(1) The books and accounts of the Corporation shall be audited each year by the Auditor-General or an auditor appointed by him.

(2) The Auditor-General shall, not later than the 30th day of September in each year, forward to the Commissioner a copy of the audited accounts of the Corporation for the financial year ending the 30th day of June immediately preceding and his report thereon.

(3) The Auditor-General or the auditor appointed by him shall report annually to the Board the result of his examination of the accounts and financial statement of the Corporation, and the report shall state whether in his opinion

(a) proper books of accounts have been kept by the Corporation;

(b) the financial statement of the Corporation:

(i) was prepared on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year and is in agreement with the books of accounts;

(ii) in the case of the balance sheet, gives a true and fair view of the state of the Corporation's affairs as at the end of the financial year;

(iii) in the case of the statement of income and expenditure, gives a true and fair view of the income and expenditure or profit and loss of the Corporation for the financial year; and the Auditor-General or the auditor appointed by him shall call the attention of the Board to any other matter falling within the scope of his examination which, in his opinion, should be brought to the attention of the Board.

(4) The Auditor-General or the auditor appointed by him shall, from time to time make to the Corporation such other reports as he may deem necessary or as the Commissioner responsible for Finance may require.

(5) The annual report of the Auditor General or the auditor appointed by him shall be included in the annual report of the Corporation.

#### Section - 13 - Power Of Corporation To Authorise Entry Of Lands.

(1) Subject to the provisions of this paragraph any person authorised in that behalf by the Corporation for the discharge of its functions under this Decree may enter and remain on any land

(a) for the purpose of erecting, maintaining and inspecting any installations belonging to the Corporation (such as its wired broadcasting installations) or for the purpose of repairing, altering or removing any such installations;

(b) to cut and remove on the site of any proposed or existing installation all such trees and underwood as may interfere or be likely to interfere with the construction or proper working of any installation; and

(c) for the purpose of carrying out any other work or activity reasonably necessary for giving effect to the principles and purposes of this Decree.

(2) Except with the consent of the owner or occupier of the land or of his authorised agent no person shall enter upon any land under sub-paragraph (1) of this paragraph except by day or unless the owner or occupier or his authorised agent has been given reasonable notice of the intention to enter the land and of the purpose of such entry: Provided that where the condition of any installation is such as to endanger life or property a person authorised by the Corporation may

enter any land on which the installation is situated at any reasonable time for any of the purposes set out in sub-paragraph (1) of this paragraph.

(3) If the owner or occupier of any land to be entered under this paragraph or his authorised agent cannot be found after reasonable enquiry it shall be sufficient for the purposes of sub-paragraph (2) of this paragraph if the notice referred to in that sub-paragraph is put into writing and affixed to some conspicuous place on the land proposed to be entered for a reasonable length of time.

(4) Any person authorised to enter any land under this paragraph shall, in discharging any function under this paragraph do as little damage as possible and the Corporation shall pay compensation in respect of such damage and where the surface of any road or street has been disturbed in the discharge of any such function, the Corporation shall, as far as practicable restore it to its former condition.

(5) The amount of any compensation to be paid under sub-paragraph (4) of this paragraph shall, in the case of difference, be settled by arbitration in accordance with the provisions of the Arbitration Act, 1961 (Act 38).

#### Section - 14 - Interference With Wires, Etc. Of Corporation By Other Person.

Where any Government Department, local authority, statutory corporation or any individual or other person undertakes any repairs or alterations of any road, street, railway, wharf, pier, bridge, waterworks or of any telegraphic, telephonic, or

electric power cables, entailing the removal of or any injury to any wired broadcasting output or plant, works or equipment belonging to the Corporation, the expenses of the repair, removal and replacement of such wired broadcasting

output, plant, works or equipment shall be borne as the case may be, by the Government Department, local authority, statutory corporation, individual or other person concerned.

**Section - 14 - (A) Unauthorised Connection To Broadcasting Output, Etc. of Corporation.**

Any person who with intent to receive or disrupt any broadcasting service of the Corporation and without the authority of the Corporation, makes a connection to any part of the wired broadcasting output, network, plant or equipment, of the

Corporation commits an offence and shall be liable on a first conviction to a fine not exceeding fifty new cedis, and on a subsequent conviction to a fine not exceeding one hundred new cedis or to a term of imprisonment not exceeding six months or to both such fine and imprisonment. [As inserted by Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (Amendment) Decree, 1969 (NLCD 385) s.1].

**Section - 15 - Radio and Television Receiving Set Licence Fees To Be Fixed On The Recommendations Of The Corporation.**

Where power is granted by any enactment to any authority or person to fix the fees to be paid for obtaining a radio receiving set licence or a television receiving set licence the power shall only be exercisable upon the recommendations of the Corporation and the Telecommunications Act, 1961 (Act 112) and the Television

Licensing Decree, 1966 (NLCD 89) shall have effect accordingly.

**Section - 16 - Corporation Exempted From Provisions Of Act 112.**

The provisions of the Telecommunications Act, 1962 (Act 112) shall not apply so as to require the Corporation to obtain any licence under that Act.

**Section - 17 - Exemption From Income Tax.**

The Corporation in its commercial and ancillary business operations shall be exempted from the provisions of the Income Tax Decree, 1966 (NLCD 78).

#### Section - 18 - Emergency Power of the Government.

(1) Where at any time the National Liberation Council is of the opinion that a national emergency has arisen in which it is necessary in the public interest that the Government should control broadcasts made by the Corporation, the National Liberation Council may so declare by notice published in the Gazette or by such other mode of public announcement or notification as the circumstances may permit.

(2) Where an emergency has been declared under sub-paragraph (1) of this paragraph:

(a) the Commissioner may give such directions to the Corporation as the National Liberation Council may deem to be necessary to meet the requirements of the emergency so declared, and the Corporation shall give effect to such directions,

(b) the Government may take over the Broadcasting Service of the Corporation, so, however, that it shall only do so by specific demand made in that respect by the Chairman or in his absence by the Deputy Chairman of the National Liberation Council.

#### Section - 19 - Power to Make Bye-laws And Other Instruments.

The Corporation may by the Board make bye-laws and other instruments not being inconsistent with the provisions of this Decree for the purpose of regulating its business or any matter falling within the scope of its functions and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, such bye-laws or other instruments may regulate the application of the Corporation's seal to legal documents and may also regulate the conditions of service of the employees of the Corporation.

Section - 20 - Interpretation.

In this Decree, unless the context otherwise requires, "Corporation" means the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation established by this Decree; "Commissioner" means the Commissioner responsible for Information.

Section - 21 - Dissolution And Transfer Of Assets And Liabilities.

(1) The body corporate known immediately before the commencement of this Decree as the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation is hereby dissolved and consequently the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation Instrument, 1965 (LI 472) is hereby revoked.

(2) All assets, rights and liabilities of the said body are hereby transferred to the Corporation.

(3) The Director-General, the Deputy Director-General and all employees of the said body holding office immediately before the commencement of this Decree shall continue in office subject to the provisions of this Decree.

(4) Any instrument made under Part X of the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation Instrument, 1965 (LI 472) and in force immediately before the commencement of this Decree shall continue in force as if made under paragraph 19 of this Decree.

(5) Any reference in any enactment in existence at the commencement of this Decree to the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation shall be construed as a reference to

## APPENDICE 4

### INTERVIEW QUESTIONS GUIDE AND RESPONSES

#### SECTION 1

Sam Kwatia (Ashanti Regional Director of GBC)

How are you able to meet your revenue target?

Unfortunately, we have never been able to meet our revenue target. The target of six hundred thousand thousand cedis has never been met. We, however, try and get to the target but our highest has been five hundred and sixty thousand cedis.

Do you charge for coverage of news events?

Not at all. We charge for those news events that are commercial

Can you categorize or list them?

For instance, those that fall under financial institutions when we cover their assignments we charge them. But there are non-commercial. For instance, if the Regional Minister goes to commission a project or a government agency or institution organizes a programme we cover for free. We don't charge anything. But any news event that is commercial or financial we charge a fee.

How would you juxtapose your revenue generating methods, with the corporation's public service mandate and editorial policy?

What we do is that we always try to see what we are doing is of public interest. All paid for news events that we cover, we send them to Accra, especially in the case of television. But if the client

wants it to be broadcast in Kumasi on radio, we do it here. All paid for news events are always given number one attention in our news bulletins.

Philip Baidoo (Western Regional Director of GBC)

How are you able to meet your revenue target?

In view of our public service role it is very difficult to meet our revenue targets. Our commercial component of our operations constitutes only 30 to 40 percent. As a result we are unable to meet targets set because most of the things we do are free of charge.

Do you charge for coverage of news events?

We only charge for news items that are commercially inclined. Any news that is promotional of activities or events are charged. All other news items are covered for free.

Can you categorize or list them?

Banks annual general meetings

Private entities programmes that promote their businesses

All others determined by the marketing department as being promotional event.

How do you juxtapose your revenue generating methods, with the corporation's public service mandate and editorial policy?

We combine the two. We differentiate between public activities that we undertake as part of our public service mandate which is mainly free and commercial activities that we charge for. But our public service activities constitute a larger percentage than the commercial part.

Judith Bagiro (Upper West Regional Director of GBC)

How are you able to meet your revenue target?

The Wa Station is confronted with many challenges but with some level of ingenuity and financial discipline we have been able to financially weather the storm. First and foremost I make sure that the workforce delivers on their core mandate of doing their work as that generates direct revenue for the station. For example all presenters must be punctual and well time since one the areas we generate money is through Live Presenter Mention (LPM) and the monitoring of these presenters and making sure that they do what is expected of us has indeed endeared the station to its clients and so we generate some revenue from there

Do you charge for coverage of news events?

Some time ago there was a memo from headquarters demanding that certain news coverage be charged in most cases using discretionary methods. That has also been put to good use. We first met as management team and deliberated exhaustively on the matter and we made the news room understand our plight and one of them being part of management cooperated and so for now some of our revenue is generated from news coverage.

Can you categorise or list them?

We target Non-Governmental organizations, commercial interest such as rural banks. Because it is a grey area of operation we use great element of discretion to our advantage and it pays off since

we are ready to negotiate with such business interests in the region. We also deal outfits such as the banks, and sometimes individuals with commercial news are charged. For example a poultry farmer who wants coverage about his work to shown or aired must be ready to pay for the services. We also deal with clients outside the region who use our network for advertisement. These are mostly advertising agencies who deal with us on behalf of their client, Payments are not immediate but we 'chase them' from time to time for our checks. And this has also being very helpful in revenue generation.

How do you juxtapose your revenue generating methods, with the corporation's public service mandate and editorial policy?

One of the challenges we face as a regional FM station is the ability to raise revenue and still go ahead and carry out our core mandate as public corporation with corporate social responsibility of a public broadcaster. We are running programs for public good but what is happening is that if the airtime is bought for another program we quickly inform producers and adjust the situation. Over the years this has been the situation but it is hardly discernible by the public especially the use of the morning shows for such purpose. It is indeed difficult for us to combine corporate social responsibility with money making but the bottom line still remains that money must be made to headquarters and we are so mindful of such a demand and well aware of the fact that revenue generation is rated by headquarters we combine public service with revenue generation in a way that it does not affect corporate editorial policies. There have been times when selling of airtime would compromise editorial policy, we will not sell the airtime since that comes first as part of our core mandate. Some time ago there was a memo from headquarters demanding that certain news coverage be charged in most cases using discretionary methods. That has also been put to good use. We first met as management team and deliberated exhaustively on the matter and we made

the news room understand our plight and one of them being part of management cooperated and so for now some of our revenue is generated from news coverage.

## SECTION 2

Eva Lokko (former Director-General of GBC)

In your view, what do you think is the fate of GBC as a public service broadcaster in the prevailing commercially competitive media environment?

GBC has a clear mandate which is different from the private broadcaster, and so long as it adheres to this mandate, GBC will remain relevant and viable. GBC does not need to be commercially competitive, it just has to provide content that is relevant, useful and informative, which drives development and engenders patriotism (national policies, civic responsibilities, culture, educational programs for children and adults, especially in science and technology, entertainment and sports, etc). These programmes should be presented in a way that will inspire support and patronage by companies, institutions and individuals. They should also be so popular that they will attract substantial paid advertisements, without digressing from their mandate.

Do you think GBC can survive on TV Licence without Government subvention?

GBC will not only survive on TV license, it will thrive on the revenue from the TV license without government subvention. GBC in the past made so much money through adverts, sale of airtime for external programmes, sale of mast and ground space to telcos, sports feed agreements, audiovision adverts, video billboards, etc., when the TV license was only three cedis, and majority of the public were not paying. Consequently, GBC proved that it did not need the TV License while on

subvention. So, one can say that the TV license can be a replacement for government subvention. If GBC goes off subvention and gets its business Division working efficiently and effectively, the additional revenue from the TV license will allow GBC to pay its employees even better salaries as well as provide needed resources for production. Employees will also work harder and ensure that all revenue comes into GBC coffers so that they can always be asked for realistic salary increases across board. GBC can also go ahead to implement pending 2005 planned activities including the three stage sales strategy - "Outdoor-Cinema-to-TV-to-DVD", full revival and expansion of the GBC training school (engineering, production, News, etc), extension of "Radiovision" to other popular programmes for double-advert earnings, sale of studio space/crew for external producers, use of virtual studios (cost-savings for design and construction), completing the digitalization of the records from the Records Library for commercial purposes, proper use of the new archival system to produce documentaries for sales, etc., etc. GBC can also reduce its production costs for specific programmes by reducing the number of staff per production, especially for outside broadcast. All these and others will provide huge cost-savings and earnings.

Has the performance of the private commercial media overshadowed that of GBC?

Unfortunately, the answer is yes. This is because the private houses tend to have better content, better overall production and specific targets to meet (or else ...). Employees in the private sector have to "earn" their salaries while employees in GBC get paid "no matter what" (i.e.: even though we have great radio and television professionals who do a fantastic job, there are also those who do terrible jobs, but both groups get paid). One should also not forget that unfortunately, some GBC employees do what is popularly known as "PJ" - Private Jobs, for private houses which enhance their (the private houses') scripts, programmes, props, graphic designs, etc). This in turn drives adverts away from GBC to these houses. There is also the fact that several good GBC

production employees were poached by some private houses. Furthermore, GBC now has to contend with intense competition when it comes to training opportunities, especially outside Ghana, since they have to compete with the numerous broadcasting and production houses. DSTV and now Netflix has brought in new pressures which is giving more room for comparison of programme quality. In addition GBC's claim of nationwide coverage is being eroded year by year with the private houses spreading their wings through modern technologies and partnerships. GBC is also yet to maximize on its new equipment, tools, software, etc. that it acquired/installed.

Should GBC's enabling statute NLCD226, 1968, be repealed or maintained?

A4. It should not be repealed. It should however be reviewed for requisite modifications that will make it more relevant to today's environment and changes in laws that affects some of the articles in the act.

Must GBC continue to carry paid for advertisement?

A5. Yes, it is part of its mandate. However, as a public broadcaster, it will be appropriate that it carries only adverts that are placed around its own content in a "take it or leave it" manner and that are acceptable, palatable and decent. No advertiser should be allowed to influence GBC's content in anyway. Such paid adverts should also not be allowed within the content itself, i.e.: adverts should be placed before and/or at the end of programmes. This will be part of the attraction of GBC programmes. Paid adverts are also a good portion of GBC's internally generated funds, so GBC needs to continue with it.

Daniel Kondor

What do you think is the fate/future of GBC as a public service broadcaster in the prevailing commercially competitive media environment?

GBC has a very high potential to grow and even outgrow competition given the quality of its well trained staff. I don't know about its equipment but I do know they are very good. There is no indication of a likelihood of this public broadcaster collapsing, so we cannot even talk about what its fate is. So GBC can compete well if it can offload self-censorship, rid itself of self-constraint and outdated constraining factors as a public broadcaster as though it is not allowed to raise funds in ways not inimical to public service broadcasting.

Do you think GBC can survive on TV Licence without Government subvention?

GBC can survive on TV licence without government subvention only if all TVs will be captured to pay the licence fee and not having the corporation chasing after only those who willingly go to pay and for once when they default in payment. TV licence can take care of GBC but there should be other avenues for raising money to fund it. Now the mechanisms for collecting TV licence had in the past been very weak. What shows GBC can do better this time around at licence fee collection?

Has the performance of the private commercial media overshadowed that of GBC?

The performance of the private commercial media have overshadowed GBC only insofar as they give viewers alternatives to the public broadcaster, splitting its audience share of the market and not for the quality of the private commercial electronic media. Of course, some private commercial radios are doing very well in terms of their appeal to audiences with their programmes and even poor unprofessional styles to audiences that delight in celebrating mediocrity.

Should GBC's enabling statute NLCD226, 1968, be repealed or maintained?

My answer is, it should be maintained.

Must GBC continue to carry paid for advertisement?

GBC must continue to carry paid advertisements. It is an acceptable practice in public broadcasting. I mean semi-commercialisation in the functioning of public broadcasting.

Dr. Messan Mawugbe

What is the fate/future of GBC as a public service broadcaster in the commercially competitive media environment in Ghana?

The future of GBC is positive especially if it clouds itself with national oriented program. The Ghanaian Media market is still viable for innovative media bites - such as national appeals, W/Africa or Africa appeals and many more. GBC is a pace setter and .can lead the way. I think GBC should inject personality re-branding cos 21st century media is linked to the intrinsic texture of a program hostess/host. CNN for instance is not driven only by the news edge but the personality behind the segments.

Do you think GBC can survive on TV Licence Fee without government subvention?-

I think public Media Agency such as GBC in the context of our economic challenges should adopt a mix-financing of Public Licence fee and statutory financial injections.

Has the performance of the private commercial broadcast media overshadowed that of GBC?

GBC is a household name and cannot be overshadowed in simplistic terms as you have expressed. For instance GBC per her mandate cannot just telecast a program content in English and ends it with Akan translation as experienced on UTV- GBC is enjoined to be national in color.

Should GBC'S enabling statute, NLCD 226, 1968 be repealed or maintained?

It should be reviewed to some extent to meet our 21st century challenges

Must GBC continue to carry paid for advertisement?

This should be encouraged in the sense of the financial mix I talked about in the preceding questions.

Dr. Etse Sikanku

What is the fate/future of GBC as a public service broadcaster in the prevailing commercially competitive media environment?

I think it still has a bright future in the sense that GBC has always maintained very high quality standards when it comes to broadcasting and journalism in this country. It still maintains the high water mark when it comes to journalistic practice in terms of maintaining the object nationalistic coverage and also non-bias in their reportage. Even despite the fact that we have preponderance or a multiplicity of media houses, quality always wins or quality always triumph and so that is the space and that is the opportunity that the GBC can exploit to maintain its relevance even within this current media landscape. There are examples from other parts of the world which demonstrate that public media houses or public service broadcasting still does have a role. The BBC has survived despite the upsurge of new media technologies and media houses. The National Public Radio (NPR) in the US has also survived over a long period of time and there is absolutely no reason why GBC cannot continue to flourish even within this current media landscape.

Do you think GBC can survive on TV Licence Fee without government subvention?

The fact of the matter is that there is absolutely nothing wrong with government sub venting or supporting GBC because it is not the government but the state or the product and it is owned by everybody. And so there is absolutely nothing wrong with that. In the US for instance, we do know that the government still support NPP even if it is to a limited extend. So what I will say as a person is that there is nothing wrong that the government wants to reduce its stake that is fine. If GBC wants to mean itself the better because then it means that it will not be subjected to governmental control or governmental interference. At the end of the day, we just have to make sure that from a media ownership or from political economy point of view, that the economics and the finances do not interfere with the work of the journalist. If the management thinks that this is one way to go in order to make GBC more independent and in order to make the corporation more independent and less dependent in other sources all the better.

Has the performance of the private commercial media overshadowed that of GBC?

Of course we know that in terms of just the sheer numbers of private stations we do know that the numbers have been increasing as compared to the public station. But we also do know that even GBC has different channels and stations. So yes there is multiplicity of the private stations which have eroded the dominance or the monopoly GBC has had in previous years. Have they overshadowed GBC in terms of content, yes maybe and in terms of numbers yes may be. But have they overshadowed the GBC in terms of the impact and in terms of the effect? The verdict is out there.

Should GBC's enabling statute, NLCD 226, be repealed or maintained?

If the Decree is not clear on the function of GBC within the current contemporary era then yes. Every law needs to be reviewed in order to make it better. If there are concerns about aspects of

the decree which do not allow GBC to fulfill its public service mandate then definitely it has to be reviewed. What we all want is a public service agency which fosters national unity, national development, a public service agency which plays its appropriate role within our democratic system and if it is not doing that then of course, it is only appropriate that we review the decree to let it achieve that particular aim so that it does not achieve any parochial and subjective aim. But it must achieve a goal that allow the institution to play its role in a way that any good media house worth its sort will be expected to play in our democracy.

Must GBC continue to carry paid for advertisement?

If the TV Licence Fee is enough to support the Corporation to effectively and efficiently deliver on its mandate then I support this view. But if the paid for advertisements continue to be just another additional source that doesn't help our public service broadcaster to give us quality programming then I don't think that is worth supporting.

Roland Affail Monney

What do you think is the fate/future of GBC as a public service broadcaster in the prevailing commercially competitive media environment?

The Ghanaian media now can be likened to a competitive jingle. It is the fittest which stands to the chance to survival. GBC's survival as the state broadcaster depends on its ability to reinvent and position itself in response to the challenges of the growing competition. Digital migration which will expand the media space and will fuel the competition makes this more imperative.

However, GBC can take inspiration from other public service broadcasters like the BBC and guarantee its sustenance and secure its future through a reliable funding mechanism while sticking to public service values.

Do you think GBC can survive on TV Licence without Government subvention?

Conservative estimates indicate that GBC can do without government subvention if all things are equal – contextually if owners of TV sets and the generality of the public fulfil their civic responsibilities. Again, the BBC model inspires hope that GBC can stand on its feet if it transits with the right support from state-owned to public service broadcaster.

Has the performance of the private commercial media overshadowed that of GBC?

It terms of reach and content, GBC is still unrivalled throughout the country. But reality dictates we weigh the relevance of GBC not on its own scale but on the scale of value of listeners and viewers. Unfortunately, our present generation of listeners are addicted to entertainment and sensationalism, not quality programming. On this score the private commercial media outrank GBC in surveys some of which scientific purity is highly questionable.

Should GBC's enabling statute NLCD226, 1968, be repealed or maintained?

GBC's enabling statute of NLCD 226 of 1968 states in part that GBC may undertake commercial broadcasting. Other elements of the law put GBC in the category of state-owned not a public service broadcaster. It is therefore clear that this legislation needs to be repealed to enable GBC to function as a public service broadcaster, backed of course by adequate, reliable and secure funding mechanism which will guarantee its independence.

Must GBC continue to carry paid for advertisement?

GBC's enabling statute NLDD 226, does not frown on GBC carrying paid for ads. It states clearly that GBC may undertake commercial broadcasting. This reflects its hybrid status and complements government subvention which is woefully inadequate to run the state broadcaster.