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Media representation of LGBTQ+ issues in Ghana

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DECLARATION

Student

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere:

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ABSTRACT

Press accounts in Ghana reflect the prejudices against LGBTQ+ concerns. This study focused on how LGBTQ+ issues were covered in the Daily Graphic and Daily Guide newspapers in Ghana from June 1, 2021, to December 31, 2021 following the introduction of the anti-gay bill. Using a mixed research method, the objectives of the study analyzed the importance given to LGBTQ+ issues in the media, the examination of frames adopted to portray issues of LGBTQ+, and finally consider the factors that affect how media professionals cover LGBTQ+. The study drew on framing theory.

The main findings show that the two publications gave LGBTQ+ issues little prominence between June 1 and December 31, 2021. Only two of the 45 stories that were discovered within the suggested time frame—out of the total—were printed on the front page. Prominence was given in terms of story size and enhancement. Most of the stories on LGBTQ+ issues were straight news from religious leaders, politicians, and medical experts. The morality frame was used the most by the two media outlets, followed by the human-interest frame. Given the population's predominance by Muslims and Christians, this was expected.

It became apparent that most of the pieces were hard news, indicating that LGBTQ+ concerns are covered as routine stories with sparse use of more in-depth formats like features and interviews. Media professionals acknowledged that religion, culture, and the laws of Ghana have influenced their views on LGBTQ+ issues, but they nevertheless uphold their professional standards when reporting on these matters.

This article's conclusion is that media content, framing and reporting styles all reflected the dominant views of Ghanaian society, which are opposed to LGBTQ+ issues, making it difficult for gays, lesbians, and those who support them to express their opinions through these two media outlets and constricting audiences' perspectives on these issues.

Key words.

LGBTQ+ issues, media representation, newspapers, framing, journalists, respondents, Daily Graphic, Daily Guide.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to Nana Kweku Agyemang, Bright Baffour Antwi and those who motivated me to achieve a higher academic height.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

LGBTQ+   Lesbianism, gayism, bisexual, trans-gender, queer and plus

UN   United Nations

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background to the study.

The general consensus among Ghanaians is that LGBTQ+ orientation predated colonial times in Africa. The Horn of Africa has evidence of boy-wives, female- husbands as early as the 13th century (Murray & Roscoe, 1998). Garlake, an archaeologist, discovered detailed drawings of male-males' sexual actions in Zimbabwe Bushman caves. This discovery is just one of many examples used to bolster claims that LGBTQ+ or same sex partnerships were common in Africa preceding colonialism (Epprecht, 1998). However, it is argued that while gayism or lesbianism was present in Africa, they were sexual acts performed other specific objectives rather than for amusement. As a result, same sex relationships were used as a technique of birth control or fertility management in various regions of the continent. In addition, they were employed in rituals and for dominance or love displays. In some parts of Africa, young adults were reportedly involved in many same sex partnerships as a way to get ready for their future marriages (Epprecht, 2008). It was also thought that anal penetration or sex between two men under the correct circumstances was a sign of riches in pre-colonial Cameroon. Additionally, it was also rumored that chiefs and soldiers engaged in same-sex behaviour to strengthen their control over political opponents and be to be ready for battle (Epprecht, 2008). However, there were several African countries that frowned upon relationships between people of the same sex (Mabvurira & Matsika, 2013). Two mature men were accused of witchcraft or thought to have been charmed in pre-colonial Zimbabwe after being caught having intercourse with one another for pleasure (Mabvurira & Matsika, 2013).

In modern-day Ghana and many African countries, LGBTQ+ is prevalent even though most countries forbid it. Same-sex sexual behaviour between men is forbidden by Ghanaian law. It is unclear whether females engaging in the same-sex relationship is against the law. Homosexuality is illegal in accordance with chapter 6 of the Criminal Code of 1960 as revised by the Criminal Code (Amendment) Act of 2003. In fact, gay coercion is prohibited by Ghana's Constitution (1992, Constitution of Ghana). Today, there is a bill before parliament to criminalize all LGBTQ+ activities in Ghana which is the motivation of this study as it examines the significance the media accord to LGBTQ+ issues, the frames used in communicating

LGBTQ+ issues as well as the factors that influences media professionals in the coverage of LGBTQ+ issues.

Significantly, LGBTQ+ has become a topical issue of discussion in the Ghanaian media. The media feed on divisive topics like LGBTQ+ and mirrors and propagates the prevailing mind-set in society (Tan & Xiang, 1999). Tan and Xiang further added that, the media's agenda influences the public's agenda. In the same vein, Conrad, and Markens' (2001) also claim that media construction can affect how the public perceive LGBTQ+ issues, homosexual orientation, and LGBTQ+ persons. This is because the media play part in creating social realities and identities. The media serve as a platform for the presentation, construction, and dissemination of society's shifting customs, and values. The overarching theme in news coverage and reporting is framed in a way that influences people and their understanding of issues. Printed publications such as newspapers frame issues through placement for instance headlines at the front pages, by use of coloured photographs, spaces, editorials, opinions and among others (Gideon, 2003).

1.1 Historical context of Ghana and the media.

Ghana's political history has been tumultuous, and it has witnessed several democratic regimes. This is because previous democratic governments were not permitted to complete their full terms and were, as a result, overthrown in sometimes extremely violent coups d'état and replaced by military dictatorships (Ninsin, 1998).

After decades as a British colony, Ghana became the first Black African nation south of the Sahara to gain independence on March 6, 1957. Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, who became the country's first president in 1960, led the Convention People's Party, which founded the first democratic government. The constitution of Ghana was then embedded in the rule of law, which enshrined a number of fundamental rights including, among others, freedom of the press, association, and speech. Public debates and multi-party politics characterized the country's politics until the early 1960s, when the country was forced to adopt a one-party socialist regime. This altered the country's vibrant pluralistic democratic life and paved the way for the first coup d'état on February 24, 1966, which led to a long series of military interventions in the country's politics until 1992 (Ninsin, 1998). Currently, Ghana has a population of about 31 million (Ghana Statistical Service, 2021).

Without a doubt, the current democratic regime has persisted because certain institutions were meticulously established. Since private individuals and groups were permitted to establish newspapers, radio stations, and even television stations in Ghana, however, the country's media have been thriving. Ghana has a high level of media freedom, and there are no significant restrictions on the activities of the press and broadcasters. Numerous private FM stations are easily accessible, and radio is the most popular form of media in Ghana. Private newspapers and radio stations have multiplied as a result of the liberalization of the media (Ninsin, 1998).

The National Media Commission (NMC, 2017) estimates Ghana has over 100 newspapers. The state-owned Daily Graphic is Ghana's oldest and most widely read newspaper, delivered in all 216 districts. Daily Graphic, established in 1950, is the most popular newspaper. Daily Guide also established in 1999 is the second-most-circulated national daily after Graphic. It is privately owned and the only national daily newspaper that competes with the Daily Graphic. Owusu (2006, NMC, 2017).

Only two Ghanaian regional publications exist. The Pioneer in Kumasi (Ashanti) and the Northern Advocate in Tamale (Owusu, 2006, NMC, 2022). Several publications dedicate pages to regional news on certain days. Large circulating papers control most advertising money, making it difficult for smaller businesses. Pro- or anti-government views dominate privately owned newspapers. Therefore, it's easy to predict a publication's national stance. Periodicals in Ghana worry about polarization (Owusu, 2006). Publications are divided by government and opposition support. According to Hallin and Mancini (2011), Ghana is part of the Global South's media scenario.

Today, newspapers are gradually losing readers to radio, TV, and the internet. Before Ghana's airwaves were privatized and the internet was available, newspapers were the principal source of news and public debate. Due to radio and TV's fast news distribution and the internet's apparent unregulation, this pattern appears to be changing (NMC, 2017).

Newspaper revenues and circulation have declined due to electronic media's news sources. New websites and news aggregators have grown in popularity in Ghana's Internet usage data. In August 2013, Ghana's internet penetration rate climbed from 40% to 40.7% (NCA, 2017). As of 2021, 50% of the country's population can access the Internet via home, Internet cafes, or cell phones (African Media Barometer, 2021). Internet news service providers have

multiplied to reach increasingly split audiences. The two Ghanaian media firms under study offer online platforms where users can subscribe to news pieces. Despite the reduction in audience, Ghanaian newspapers set the agender for media discussions.

1.2 LGBTQ+ in historical perspective.

Many western nations currently allow LGBTQ+ issues and practices. Denmark had legalized same-sex relationships by 1930. Today, most countries in Europe are liberal to LGBTQ+ issues as compared to Africa. However, up until the 1970s, the practice was seen as a mental disease in most European countries (Sullivan, 2003; Baughey-Gill, 2011). Years of political and public discussion have preceded some of these nations' journeys toward the legalization of LGBTQ+. Factors influencing the legalization of LGBTQ+ issues in some of the nations where the practice is recognized by law include the political structure of a nation, public sentiments, and the fall in value placed on the institution of marriage (Pettinicchio, 2012).

In several African nations, it is against the law to speak in favour of LGBTQ+ issues. In 69 of the UN's member states, LGBTQ+ issues are illegal, and most of these countries are in Africa (ILGA World Updates 2020). Several actions have been made by various African leaders to deter citizens from speaking in favour of LGBTQ+ issues. These include strict regulations that have drawn the ire of international organizations and human rights advocates (Rodenbough, 2014; Carroll, 2016).

Among the most criticized homophobic legislation in Africa are Nigeria's LGBTQ+ Prohibition Bill 2013, also known as "Jail the homosexuals," and Uganda's Anti-LGBTQ+ Act 2014, also known as the "Kill the gays bill" (CNN News, 2014; Carroll, 2016). Yoweri Museveni, the president of Uganda, signed the Anti-LGBTQ+ Bill 2014 into law on February 24, 2014, outlawing LGBTQ+ issues and practices as well as their promotion and acceptance. Life imprisonment is the consequence for breaking the law (Laccino, 2015). In a similar vein, Nigeria's LGBTQ+ Prohibition Bill 2013 sentences those who enter into gay marriages or civil unions to 14 years in prison. The bill also imposes a 10-year prison sentence on anyone who openly exhibit their involvement in LGBTQ+ issues (Laccino, 2015).

The former president of Kenya, Uhuru Kenyatta during his interview with CNN in 2022 stated that there is no room for homosexuality in African society. He asserted that Kenya has it laws, constitution, traditions, and customs, and Kenya will continue to respect other people's customs

as they respect ''our'' customs and traditions. He again stated that LGBTQ+ as a subject of discussion is not of any major importance to the people under the Republic of Kenya. "LGBTQ+ is not an issue of human right, but it is an issue of society, it is an issue of culture and deeds of people regardless of any society you come from," he stated. He further added that when LGBTQ+ becomes a big issue the people of Kenya will make a choice. At the moment, the most important issue is the five million young people who do not have a job, the four million people who are hungry and that is the focus of the people of Kenya at the moment (September 2022, CNN).

However, only a few African nations have friendly laws on LGBTQ+ issues, like Cape Verde and South Africa. When same-sex partnerships between those older than 16 years old, deemed the age of consent, were made legal in Cape Verde in 2004, the nation's tolerance for such relationships increased (Epprecht, 2012). As the first African nation to legalize same-sex unions, South Africa did so in 2007. (Epprecht, 2012).

According to the Pew Center (2013), attitudes among African publics or citizens have been shown to be significantly homophobic, with some African leaders openly condemning and expressing their dislike against LGBTQ+ issues and practices. When some Western nations like the United State announced their plans to condition aid on acceptance of LGBT+ rights, the late Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe reportedly said the following: ''Then there is this American president, a child of an African father, who threatens to withhold help if LGBTQ+ is not accepted. Was he born gay? is the question we pose. The continuity we need for our race comes from women, not from homosexuals. No to John and John; no to Maria and Maria'' (Robert Mugabe, November 27, 2015, Zimbabwe Independent, 2015).

The public is generally very hostile toward same-sex unions in nations like Nigeria and Uganda as well as Ghana which is the center of this research. As reported in a 2003 Pew Center study, up to 98% of Nigerians and 96% of Ugandans who took part in the research voiced their disgust with the practice. The majority of its residents find LGBTQ+ issues such as same-sex marriage abhorrent, even in South Africa where it is permitted. In a Pew Center survey done in 2013, up to 61 percent of participants believed that South Africans should not accept LGBTQ+ issues.

In order to prevent others from engaging in homosexuality, those who are suspected of being lesbians or gays in Africa frequently endure stigmatization, assaults, and even murder

(Rodenbough, 2014; Carroll, 2016). After receiving several death threats because of his views on LGBTQ+, Ugandan gay rights activist David Kato was tortured and murdered in his neighborhood (NY Times, 2011). Eric Lembembe, a journalist and advocate for LGBTQ+ rights from Cameroon, was also discovered dead at his residence with his feet and neck broken. He also had iron burns on other areas of his body, his face, and hands (BBC, 2013). Due to Lembembe's involvement in the struggle for same-sex rights, his death has been connected.

Murray (2001) asserts that the media's influence is responsible for the rights that gays enjoy in the US, Europe, and various Latin American nations, like Brazil. The media (both print and electronic) emphasized homosexuality as an unstoppable movement to which the government bowed to pressure from human rights activists and civic right leaders.

1.3 LGBTQ+ issues in Ghana.

Allotey (2015) argues that contrary to popular opinion, LGBTQ+ issues have always existed in Ghana and have been practiced there in both public and private settings. In Allotey's view, it is possible that Ghanaians were aware of the practice given the availability of labels like "Obaa barima," which literally translates as "man woman" in Akan. Additionally, some academics contend that terms like "Kojo Besia" (Akan) and "supi" were used to refer to males who are emotionally associated with other men and women who engage in sensual relationships with other women, respectively (Allotey, 2015; Dankwa, 2009; Ajen, 1998 cited in Murray and Roscoe, 1998).

But scholars like Asante and Roberts (2014) shared a different opinion. In Asante and Roberts opinion, the mere existence of these identities does not imply romantic interactions or desire to one's own sex. They contend that terms like "obaa Barima" and "Kojo Besia" are not compatible with the Western concept of "LGBTQ+" because they are solely used to mock people who do not act their gender.

The media and public debate about LGBTQ+ issues have been shaped by recent developments on the national and international levels (Tettey, 2016). When the then-Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, David Cameron, threatened to halt help to homophobic countries like Ghana, it became one of the high points of the public and media debates about LGBTQ+ issues and same-sex marriage in Ghana (GhanaWeb, 2011). This threat sparked public uproar, which led

to the then-President John Evans Atta Mills declaring that the Ghanaian government would not accept financial aid with the requirement that same-sex relationships be made legal as a condition. President Mills asserted that Ghana's social norms, which differ from those of the United Kingdom, forbid same-sex unions (Myjoyonline, 2011). The arrest, trial, and conviction of Sulley Ali-Gabass, a well-known doctor, for sodomizing a 16-year-old boy, as well as other occurrences, such as assaults on suspected gays, also sparked media and public discussion about the epidemic (Graphiconline.com, 2015).

The suspension of a Ghanaian law student popularly called Ama Governor on Facebook and Twitter into the Ghana Bar Association (GBA) because of her support for lesbianism demonstrates how serious LGBTQ+ issues are in Ghana (Modern Ghana, Nov. 14, 2022/https://www.modernghana.com).

Discussions over LGBTQ+ issues have also been influenced by whether same-sex partnerships are legal or not in Ghana. Laws have been cited by both proponents and opponents of same-sex relationships to support their claims. The most frequently cited section in discussions of same-sex relationships in Ghana is Section 104 of Chapter 6 of the Criminal Law (1960) of Ghana (amended in 2003), which states: 1. Anyone with unnatural carnal knowledge of any of the following is guilty of a misdemeanor; (a) any person of the age of sixteen (16) years or over without his consent; (b) any person of the age of sixteen (16) years or over with his consent; or (c) any animal.
2. Unnatural carnal knowledge refers to sexual activity with a person in an unnatural way or with an animal.

1.4 Why the Anti-LGBTQ+ Bill when Ghana already has a law on LGBTQ+?
According to Honorable Sam George, a member of parliament who introduced the bill, section 104 of Act 29 of the 1992 constitution of Ghana only deals with gayism. He said in 1960 when the criminal offence act was passed where section 104 of Act 29 which refers to unnatural canal knowledge the intent was to ban homosexuality. During the 1960s the main threat of homosexuality was gayism. There were no issues of lesbianism, no transgenders, no bisexuals and among others in Ghana. The focus was on men to men. The law was on penetration sex. Because of this Sam George said Ghana must review its laws to make sure the law is responsive to 2021 and its current issues. The motive of the bill as Sam George asserted is to promote proper human sexual rights and Ghanaian family values and make section 104 of Act 29 of the

1992 constitution of Ghana tighter (Cititv, 2021, Ghanaweb.com, 2021). The bill will criminalize, or shades of homosexuality, criminalize the promotion, advocacy, propaganda, funding, same sex marriage, and any issues of support of LGBTQ+ (Citivtv, 2021).

Honorable Sam George in his interview with Citi TV in Ghana criticized foreign diplomats for engaging in LGBTQ+ issues. He said the Vienna Convention prevents diplomats from engaging in local politics or issues of contention in the host country, and therefore, it is disheartening to see high commissioners, ambassadors, Reps of EU organizing and attending LGBTQ+ events in Ghana. He said this is a violation of the Vienna Convention. Sam George is of the view that no high commissioner or ambassador can engage in LGBTQ+ related issues in Saudi Arabia or in the Gulf States, and therefore, they should be punished when they do so in Ghana. The bill he added is to send a strong warning to the Western world, and to criminalize fully LGBTQ+ issues. The bill according to the honorable member of parliament is not a hate against LGBTQ+, but rather it is love. He said LGBTQ+ is addictive, it is like taking a drug when you get into it and therefore, the goal is to prevent that (Citi TV, 2021).

1.5 Role of the media.

The media are significant sources of information for the public on many topics, particularly delicate and divisive topics like LGBTQ+ issues (Calzo & Ward, 2009). The majority of people, according to Calzo and Ward are unlikely to come into contact with homosexuals in their lifetimes due to their closeted lifestyle especially in countries that LGBTQ+ issues are prohibited or forbidden. As a result, a lot of people rely on the media for knowledge on LGBT+ issues (Calzo & Ward, 2009). Calzo and Ward see a strong link between media use and attitudes. They believe that media representation influences how people view and understand issues. This viewpoint is shared by media historian Alwood (1996), who claims that given the forced closeted existence that most homosexuals have been obliged to live to avoid social stigma, the news media have long been one of the public's only sources of information about LGBTQ+ issues. People believe the news as fact because of what they see and hear there (Alwood, 1996).

The media can also serve as a reflection of societal attitudes and views. Depending on how such groups are portrayed in the media, they have the ability to shape people's opinions on societal standards and, in doing so, to either support or refute the stereotypes that members of a society have about that group (Bangwayo-Skeete & Zikhali, 2011). According to a research

by Calzo and Ward (2009), for instance, how homosexuality is portrayed in the media affects viewers' opinions and their behavior. In a similar vein, Wusu's (2013) research in Nigeria found that exposure to media information on sexuality had an impact on behavior in one way or another.

As a result, media exposure may influence how people receive, process and relate to issues in society. Therefore, it is likely that the way LGBTQ+ issues are portrayed in the media may impact how Ghanaians view the practice and issues or cause them to adopt a different attitude.

1.6 Problem statement.

The media play part in socialization and shaping viewpoints on LGBTQ+ issues (Calzo & Ward, 2009). Therefore, is it crucial to look at how the media presents a significant but divisive issue like LGBTQ+. As a result of numerous research looking at how the media frames LGBTQ+ issues, the body of knowledge regarding media coverage of same-sex relationships is gradually expanding (Adams, 2013; Zhou, 2010; Landau, 2009). However, it seems that most of the research on LGBTQ+ issues originate in Western countries, where same-sex partnerships are either accepted or homophobia is less prevalent than it is in Africa. Few of these studies come from Ghana where same-sex partnerships were taboo in public discussions. In Mabvurira et al. (2012) opinion, the lack of African literature may be due to African professionals' and researchers' fear of being branded as "one of them" should they publish anything that is in any way perceived to be a defense of LGBTQ+ issues.

Additionally, most studies on LGBTQ+ issues in Africa and Western countries have concentrated on the tone of media publications (Quist-Adade et al., 2014; Tettey, 2016). The working context of journalists, sources and other external and internal factors that affect the creation of media content have been ignored in such research (Li & Liu, 2010). Consequently, the goal of this study is to close the information gap or to contribute to make the information gap smaller. This study examines the significance the two prominent Ghanaian print media give to LGBTQ+ issues as well as the frames employed. Since research indicates factors both internal and external to journalists can influence news content, the study also examines the factor that influences how media practitioners cover LGBTQ+ issues (Li & Liu, 2010).

1.7 Research objectives.

The study's major goal is to investigate how LGBTQ+ issues are represented in Ghanaian print media. The study's primary goals include the following:

1. To determine the degree of prominence that the print media give to LGBTQ+ issues

2. To examine the frames the print media use when reporting on LGBTQ+ issues.

3. To identity the factors influencing how LGBTQ+ issues are covered by print media professionals.

1.8 Research questions.

1. What degree of importance do the print media give to LGBTQ+ issues?

2. What frames do the print media use in the coverage of LGBTQ+ issues?

3. What factors affect how media professionals cover LGBTQ+ issues?

1.9 Significance of the study.

The study comes at an appropriate time because Ghana's government is considering a measure that would prosecute all LGBTQ+-related concerns, whereas in other parts of the world, laws in favor of the acknowledgment of LGBTQ+ rights have already been passed. The media also contribute significantly to the dissemination of knowledge regarding LGBTQ+ issues. As a result, the findings of this study will serve as a starting point for a conversation on how the two newspapers under study handle the delicate matter of balance and impartiality in their coverage of LGBTQ+ issues, a subject that is highly divisive in this nation. This study's findings will contribute to the ongoing discussion about LGBTQ+ issues.

Secondly, this study is important because it offers a Ghanaian viewpoint on how the media portray LGBTQ+ issues and factors that affect journalists' coverage of LGBTQ+. By doing this, it advances knowledge about LGBTQ+ issues in Ghana and Africa. This study is significant since it addresses a subject that most African researchers sometimes avoid because of how delicate the subject is. This research adds to the body of knowledge by examining how LGBTQ+ issues are represented in the media in a nation and on a continent where homophobia is pervasive.

Finally, this study will be helpful for lecturers, researchers, and students who are interested in the subject because the results will serve as a crucial resource for knowledge on how LGBTQ+ issues are represented in the Ghanaian media.

1.1.0 Operational definition of concepts.

To facilitate understanding of the study, the following key terms have been operationally defined:

LGBTQ+: This acronym stands for lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgender, queers and other.

Same-sex relationships: This is a relation between people of the same sex (Tabengwa, 2013).

Gay: A male person who engages in same-sex relationship.

Lesbian: A female person who engages in same-sex relationship

Homosexual: A male or female person who engages in same-sex relationship (Tabengwa, 2013).

Homophobia: A dislike of or prejudice against LGBTQ+ or homosexuality (Tabengwa, 2013).

1.1.1 Thesis outline.

There are five chapters in this thesis. In the first chapter, the thesis is presented, and in the second chapter, the literature review and the theory employed for the study is presented. The following is a breakdown of each section in the literature review: (i) the media's portrayal of LGBTQ+ issues; (ii) the media's portrayal of LGBTQ+ issues in Ghana; (iii) journalists' perspectives on LGBTQ+ issues; and (iv) the framing theory and its application to LGBTQ+ issues in the media. The cognitive paradigm, the critical paradigm, and the constructionist paradigm are outlined in this chapter after a discussion on the media framing. The presentation continues with a discussion of selected aspects of framing, including the identification of frames, framing as a process, and, lastly, framing in relation to prejudice.

Chapter three outlines the chosen research methodology and methods. The chapter describes the research design and method, rational for newspaper selection, sampling techniques, unit of analysis, data collection instruments, ethical considerations and challenges of the study.

Chapters four presents the results of the first, second and third research questions respectively. The first research question is: What degree of prominence do the print media give to LGBTQ+ issues? The second research question is: What frames do the print media use in the coverage of LGBTQ+ issues? And finally, the third research question which is: What factors affect how media professionals cover LGBTQ+ issues? The first research question seeks to investigate the number of stories on LGBTQ+ issues from June to December 2021, the number of stories published in each month, type of stories, story placement, size of stories and story enhancement. Research question two also seeks to examine the types of frames employed by the two print media houses in communicating LGBTQ+ issues such as the morality frame, the respobsibility frame, the conflict frame and finally the human-interest frame. The third research question is interested in finding out factors both internal and external as well as other belief systems that influence how LGBTQ+ issues are covered by media professionals.

Chapter 5 presents the conclusions. This chapter also discusses the implications derived from the findings, the researchers' personal thoughts and reflections, summary of findings, suggestions for future research and conclusion.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0. Introduction

This chapter reviews literature on media representation of LGBTQ+ issues as well as elaborating on the framing theory which is employed for study. Principally, it will identify gaps in the study of media representation. Due to the difficulty of getting enough literature on LGBTQ+ issues from African and Ghana to specific, the study relied most on literature from western countries before finally focusing on Ghana.

2.1 Media representation of LGBTQ+.

The media cover several controversial topics including LGBTQ+ issues around the world. There are patterns in the frequency coverage and attitudes of the press regarding LGBTQ+, according to previous studies on media representation of the topic. From the historical analyses of media representation of LGBTQ+ in the United States and from the conclusions of World War II until the late 1990s, gays were more visible in the news media than straight people because of controversies (Alwood, 1996; Bennett, 1998). The beginning of the gay liberation movement, gay and lesbian journalists coming out and covering LGBTQ+ issues, gay and lesbian riots, psychiatric research that supported or contradicted preexisting negative beliefs about LGBTQ+, and police raids of gay clubs and restaurants were all factors that contributed to this increase in visibility (Alwood, 1996; Bennett, 1998).

The media representation of the prevailing ideologies of the time, for instance, in the years following World War II, LGBTQ+ or homosexuality was demonized as a mental illness and a menace to society that needed to be cured with psychological assistance (Sullivan, 2003). As a result, LGBTQ+ issues were portrayed negatively and pathologically in the American media (Alwood, 1996). However, after the American Psychiatric Association declassified homosexuality in December 1973, media reports adopted a more positive tone, visibility doubled, derogatory terms were less frequently used, there were more visual representations of real gay men and women, and people were frequently quoted (Alwood, 1996).

Alwood (1996) and Bennett (1998) draw the conclusion that despite progress in the coverage of gay rights, LGBTQ+ is still viewed by the media as a divisive issue in need of balance. The media create the idea that a topic is delicate and requires cautious handling by framing it as a divisive issue that requires balance, for instance by employing sources that present "both" sides of the story. This means that media reports in civilizations where an issue like LGBTQ+ is perceived adversely would never print a story utilizing only a homosexual man or woman as a source but would instead have to locate other sources to counter the LGBTQ+ stance (Borlase, 2012). This is due to the fact that the sexuality debate calls into question enduring ideas, cultural values, and conventions (Tereskinas, 2002).

Using four general frames, Kenix (2008) undertook a comparison of how the rights of LGBTQ+ were represented in newspapers in New Zealand and the United State (human interest, conflict, morality and responsibility frames). From 2003 to 2005, 277 newspaper items were analyzed by Kenix. A total of 146 of these items were found in American publications, while 131 of them were in New Zealand newspapers. According to the findings, New Zealand newspapers generally presented LGBTQ+ rights more favourably than American publications, while US newspapers were impartial in their coverage. It was again discovered that whereas New Zealand media frequently used the human-interest frame, American publications tended to rely more on the conflict frame. However, the research showed that American newspapers used the duty and morality frames more frequently than New Zealand publications. In contrast to New Zealand publications, which barely recognized a responsible agent for addressing the issue, American newspapers named both the government and specific individuals as responsible for "fixing" concerns of LGBTQ+ rights. Kenix further added that cultural differences between the two countries such as those relating to religion, education, and morals maybe the cause of the disparity in the frames employed by the two countries newspapers. Cultural influences have an impact on media content.

Adams (2013) used qualitative framing analysis to examine frames the Los Angeles Times employed when covering two referenda that targeted LGBTQ+ issues in California: Proposition 6 of 1978 and Proposition 8 of 2008. Adams also looked at the ways the coverage of the two ideas varied through time, as well as how coverage of LGBTQ+ issues altered. The researcher examined newspaper articles for Propositions 6 and 8 from September 1 to November 4 and November 7 respectively. In total, 54 texts for Proposition 6 and 62 for Proposition 8 were analyzed. The results showed that the two concepts were covered differently

by the media. One such framing change that occurred between 1978 and 2008 was the change from depicting LGBTQ+ as a "sexual preference" to a "sexual orientation." Regarding the support for LGBTQ+, the researcher discovered that in 2008, prominent figures were unafraid to publicly state their support for same sex relationships, in contrast to 1978, when very few public figures came out to declare their support or otherwise for the practice. Additionally, whereas homosexuality was stigmatized and viewed as sinful in 1978, its legalization was the main topic in 2008. As a result, the focus moved from morality to legality. Thus, Adams research demonstrates how media representation of LGBTQ+ issues can evolve over time.

In a different study, Person (2015) investigated how Russian mainstream media represented LGBTQ+ issues during the adoption of a law intended to outlaw "non-traditional sexual relations." A quantitative textual study of bill-related articles from newspapers and television shows that ran between January 25 and June 2013 was conducted. The researcher used an approach similar to the current study to undertake a thorough analysis of two newspapers, one of which was sensationalist and the other was connected to both government but both of which were widely read. The study discovered that because same-sex relationships fundamentally prevent the state from reproducing, they were depicted negatively and created as a threat to national survival. This supports the findings of Meyers (1994) and Adams (2013) that homosexuals were negatively portrayed in the media and were seen as a threat to society. However, Person (2015) discovered that some news stories from the Russian media contested the generally unfavourable representation of LGBTQ+ issues. This was accomplished through accounts of homophobic assaults on suspected homosexuals, the humanization of homosexuality, and divergent viewpoints of how alien LGBTQ+ is.

In order to determine how the Malaysian news perceived concerns around LGBTQ+, Algappar and Kaur (2009) looked at press coverage of same sex partnerships in Malaysia from September 1, 1999 to December 31, 2006. All local news stories including comments, editorials, and letters to the editor about same-sex couples served as the unit of analysis for the study, which was carried out utilizing a mixed method approach to quantitative and qualitative content analysis. The news items came from the New Straits Times (STN), the oldest and most important newspaper in Malaysia. Additionally, it was one of the most read newspapers in the nation. The results of the quantitative analysis showed that 64 of the 86 articles that were examined adversely represented same sex partnerships. This result reflected the largely Islamic society of Malaysia, where all religious groups, according to the researchers, condemned

homosexuality. 13 articles were indifferent while only 9 were positive. Additionally, it was discovered that stories were strategically placed to draw readers, indicating that same sex relationships were given importance. The results of the qualitative research revealed that homosexuality was perceived as being contrary to religion. It was also portrayed as a societal illness that was foreign, punishable, and that needed to be regulated.

In 2012 Strand examined Ugandan news coverage of the well-known Anti-Homosexual Bill (AHB), which catapulted Uganda to international attention. The goal of the study, as with other studies, was to determine whether the media could fairly cover topics of homosexuality in a homophobic society and to what extent such a society expressed itself in media contexts. This study was supported by the idea of agenda-setting and framing like the current study does with framing. Over a three-month period, Strand conducted critical discourse and content assessment of the online and print versions of two newspapers. Publicly owned newspaper and a privately owned newspaper similar to the current study were employed to accomplish the objectives. Initial findings showed that both newspapers had equally covered 115 news items. However, once the AHB garnered international condemnation, there was a decline in coverage from the state-owned newspaper. The data also showed that gays and homosexuality were adversely represented and "othered" by both publications, which is consistent with earlier scholarships (Algappar & Kaur, 2009; Tettey, 2016; Quist-Adade et al., 2014). In contrast to the pro-government daily, the privately held publication was more impartial in its reporting.

The human rights frame and the religious frame were discernible, according to Namusoga (2016), who examined how two publications in Uganda framed LGBTQ+. The study found that both newspapers treated LGBTQ+ issues in terms of morality and human rights, and that news items constituted the majority of the publications' content during the study. A few feature articles and interviews were published. The researcher believes that interviews and features may not be popular as news reports because the public may wish to avoid being labeled as being friendly toward LGBTQ+, which may affect the negative framing of the issue. It is important to know that Uganda's anti-homosexuality statute includes a life sentence (Namusoga, 2016).

According to Vincent and Howell (2014), homophobia in South Africa is on par with that found in other African nations despite the Civil Union Act No. 17, 2006 making it the first African nation to formally recognize the rights for LGBTQ+ in 2006. According to the researchers'

gays were painted as violent offenders and child killers, portraying them as a threat to society. Other frames used to deter gays and portray LGBTQ+ unfavourably were the ungodly, unnatural sex, and un-African frames. Politicians and religious leaders had a significant impact on how LGBTQ+ issues were portrayed in the media as claimed (Vincent & Howell, 2014).

Chang and Ren (2016) used a critical discourse analysis to investigate the same-sex relationship coverage in five prominent and widely read newspapers in Beijing between 2010 and 2015. The study's foundations were the framing theory and the notion of representation. Due to the lack of stories, a census was done on all five publications. 71 news in all stories in all were located and examined. Chang and Ren (2016) found that the media frequently represented gays as helpless individuals who frequently became the victims of crimes. The study also demonstrated how homosexuals were portrayed as violent people. The researchers further discovered that gays were depicted by the media as adversaries of traditional values and a cause of social unrest, which is consistent with earlier findings by Meyers (1998) and Person (2015).

For a span of three decades, from 1970 to 2000, Kuhar (2003) investigated how LGBTQ+ issues were represented in Slovenian press. Domestic journalistic reports were examined using a critical discourse analysis of local media stories in daily newspapers and magazines. The sample consisted of 644 writings that were published between 1970 and 2000 and came from more than 30 newspapers and periodicals that addressed the social, political, and economic aspects of homosexuality. The 30 years of the press coverage was divided into five stages: stereotyping, medicalization, sexualization, concealment and normalization. In the first stage, categorizing homosexuality, it was determined that the media's depiction of the practice leaned on the stereotypes of gays and lesbians as effeminates and masculine, respectively, that already existed. Additionally, these preconceptions were founded on socially constructed gender perceptions. As time went on, the media further medicalized same sex- relationships by portraying them as a mental illness. In addition, the media portrayed LGBTQ+ as a sexuality issue. Kuhar discovered as well that same sex relationships were depicted in the media as a degrading and shameful habit that needed to be concealed. This led to the secrecy around same-sex partnerships. Same-sex relationships have become more common, as seen by news portrayals in the final stage. Homosexuality was portrayed by the press as a normal activity when it had past the stages of stereotyping, medicalization, and sexualization. In contrast to other studies (Adade et al., 2014; Algappar & Kaur, 2009) and Kuhar conclude that from 1970 to 2000, media representation of same-sex couples were simply sympathetic and neutral.

Despite this, the media's representation of gays continued to be negative, relying on outdated preconceptions.

2.2 Media representation of LGBTQ+ issues in Ghana.

The representation of LGBTQ+ issues in Ghanaian media was investigated by Adade et al. (2014). From 2008 to 2011, 42 newspaper articles from GhanaWeb were subjected to content analysis. Surprisingly, the study indicated that opinions on LGBTQ+ issues were mixed. Just over half (52%) of the views were unfavourable, while a sizeable 40% were favourable. Neutral opinions made about 7% of the total. It is possible that individuals felt as ease airing their opinions online. Furthermore, Adade et al. discovered that unfavourable attitudes steadily faded throughout the course of the investigation. As a result, there were four fewer negative views in 2011 than there were in 2008 (eight negative views). The good opinions that were published over the years, however, remained mostly unchanged, which led to the introduction of neutral opinions where there had previously only been positive or purely negative opinions. According to Adade et al. the actions of religious leaders who held and spread unfavourable beliefs were the cause of the continuation of negative opinions on the LGBTQ+ issues.

Similar to this, Tettey, (2016) investigated how LGBTQ+ issues were represented in Ghanaian media from 2010 to 2014. In order to reflect state-owned, pro-government, opposition, and neutral ownerships, 492 news pieces from radio, print, online, and portals were purposefully chosen. The content of reports including key phrases like "homosexuals," "gay," "bisexuals," "gayism," "lesbianism," were recognized and qualitatively analyzed. The researcher discovered that homosexuals were characterized as "bad citizens" whose goal was to subvert social norms. This study also found out that morality was employed as a criterion to assess the morality of same sex partnerships. Therefore, morality based on a religious ethos, was a crucial frame for representing LGBTQ+ issues in Ghana.

Additionally, the results showed that media outlets, regardless of ownership, tended to "other" homosexuals through their reporting, characterizing them as distinct from other people. Pro-gay voices were scarcely employed, according to Tettey, who discovered that this was consistent with earlier findings when looking at the sources (Algappar & Kaur, 2009). Anti-gay sources and authorities, including medical and legal professionals, were frequently given the chance to voice their opinions. The study further revealed that despite the possibility that

the opinions expressed in the media reflects public opinion, anti-gay sources received a lot more exposure from the media. The overreliance on sources other than homosexuals, according to Tettey frequently results in a problematization of homosexuality because these experts' sources have a propensity to medicalize same-sex relationships.

2.3 Journalists' perspectives on LGBTQ+ issues.

One of the research objectives of this study is to look at the factors that affect how media professionals cover LGBTQ+ issues. It is, therefore, important to review literature on journalists view on the topic.

The opinions and experiences of Ugandan journalists in covering LGBTQ+ issues were examined by Borlase (2001). Using a semi-structured interview guide, a face-to-face in-depth interview with journalists who have previously covered some LGBTQ+ related topics were undertaken. Both the convenient sampling method and the snowball sampling method were applied. Eleven journalists in total, three editors included, were interviewed. Thematic analysis was done on interview transcripts. In terms of their own opinions on LGBTQ+ issues, Borlase discovered that some respondent supported sexual freedom while others had no opinion. Additionally, while some journalists held the view that LGBTQ+ was a lifestyle choice, others held the opposite view and denounced it. Religious and cultural values both had an impact on whether the practice was accepted or rejected. But more frequently than not, respondents' attitudes about homosexuality were influenced by African cultural norms rather than religious considerations.

 In order to limit media exposure to LGBTQ+ issues, the study discovered that some journalists purposefully avoided writing stories about them. The journalists said that this was the case because media coverage may persuade or draw people into engaging in gay or lesbian behaviour. However, some of the respondent felt that it was important for the media to cover homosexuality issues since it would inform and encourage homosexuals to stop. Additionally, Borlase discovered that journalists´ coverage of the practice was influenced by the attitudes of media consumers and society at large. For example, several respondents stated that they felt their viewers were just uninterested in stories about LGBTQ+. According to the respondents, media consumers preferred to cover LGBTQ+ issues with negative articles more often than positive ones. Journalists have been revealed that some journalists have been afraid to mention

pro-gay or homosexual opinions for fear of being labeled as such. The research also showed that media owners and public servants all slightly influenced how LGBTQ+ issues were discovered. Because the current study similarly tries to cover media professionals' perspectives on LGBTQ+ in Ghana, Borlase´s (2001) study is pertinent to the current study.

Nhamo and Lanre (2014) conducted a study to see why LGBTQ+ issues were negatively portrayed in the Zimbabwean print media. Five print media houses were purposively selected to form part of the study: out of these five media houses 40 journalists were purposively sampled and interviewed. According to Nhamo and Lanre, 30 out of the 40 journalists who were sampled and interviewed categorically stated that homosexuality was demonic, ungodly, unnatural, and therefore needed to be reported as such. Religion was a point of reference by these journalists. The remaining 10 journalists held the view that homosexuality was un-African and therefore is against the Zimbabwean culture. Nhamo and Lanre discovered that religion, culture, and the Zimbabwean law on LGBTQ+ has a great influence on the negative portrayal of LGBTQ+ issues.

The study further revealed that positive representatives of LGBTQ+ issues lead to stigmatization, public condemnation and reduction in newspapers purchase and readership. Even though there might be some journalists who support LGBTQ+ issues the environment in which they find themselves is not conducive for them to share their views on the matter. For journalists to have a good reputation in society they must either not write anything positive about homosexuality or remain neutral. Nhamo and Lanre conclude that it will be difficult to understand journalists' perceptions on LGBTQ+ issues without taking the environment in which they find themselves into consideration. The two researchers agree with D'Angelo (2002) because journalists are "information processors," which means they do not only decide what material to include or remove but also how to present it so that it accurately reflects the context in which they work. The environment influences people's perceptions on issues.

2.4 Theoretical Overview.
The theoretical framework that guides this study is the framing theory. The theory's application was inspired by earlier studies on media representation of LGBTQ+ issues. The theory was applied as well because it could aid in achieving the study's goal.

2.5 Media framing.

The study and use of framing have attracted the attention of numerous academic fields over time. The most notable disciplines for establishing the theoretical frameworks are sociology and psychology (Pan & Kosicki, 1993). The social and psychological underpinnings were established by Erving Goffman in 1974 and by Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky in 1979 and 1984 respectively. Kahneman and Tversky (1979; 1984) examined how people assessed the various presentations they saw and how they made decisions based on how same information was presented in different ways. Goffman (1974) operated under the assumption that people struggle to make sense of the world due to its complexity by using interpretive schemas, or principal frameworks in order to efficiently digest new information.

According to Entman (2004), Dimitriv et al. (2005), Williams (2007) and Stromback et al. (2008) political communication has dominated framing research in media studies. However, other fields have also used framing theory, including science, particularly climate change, as well as new technologies and stem cell research (Nisbet et al., 2003; Boyd & Paveglio, 2014). The use of framing theory in the investigation of social issues like HIV/AIDS (Kiwanuka et al., 2012) and race and LGBTQ+ issues (Kuypers, 2002, Brewer, 2002; 2003; Gibson & Hester, 2007, Li & Liu, 2010; Pan et al., 2010) has been crucial and significant to this current study on media representation of LGBTQ+ issues in Ghana.

The important work on media and framing theory is due to Robert Entman (1993). (Fairhurst, 2005; Wadud, 2021). Entman referred to framing as a "broken paradigm" in his study, noting that while being widely used in the social sciences and humanities, framing theory has never been generalized to explain how frames reveal themselves in texts or how they affect thinking. Therefore, he recommended that future research concentrate on creating a single, well-defined paradigm for framing. Entman argued that framing research was a useful method for examining the persuasiveness of a text by relating it to politics. According to his theory, framing essentially involves selection and salience, and it plays four different roles: problem characterization, cause diagnosis, moral assessment, and cure recommendation. For instance, by focusing on the cultural aspects of LGBTQ+ issues, the media restricts knowledge of LGBTQ+ and issues related to it to the cultural sphere. When culture as in most African societies, has a negative attitude of LGBTQ+, for instance, this should raise a warning flag for media academics and critics. Entman's study is beneficial in that it draws attention to the fact

that, through framing, the media makes some part of reality stand out more than others and, as a result, gave them more impression that they are more significant than other aspects.

As a result, further studies heeded Entman's plea to advance framing research (Scheufele, 1999; Tankard, 2003). These studies focused on specific framing components, including the creation, use, transmission from the audience to the journalists, and audience impact of frames as well as empirical frame analysis approaches. Dietram (1999) emphasized the importance of four key aspects of framing: frame-building, frame-setting, frame-processing at the individual level, and frame- feedback loop from audiences to journalists. He presented a model that explained how frames enter the media and how media discourse affects public opinion. He concluded that Entman (1993) description of the framing´s shattered nature still applied, and that extra strengthening was necessary.

Tankard (2003), for his part described framing as "a multidimensional term" and suggested that a different technique to measure media frames. Tankard proposed a methodical approach to frame analysis based on the various elements of the news stories such as the gender of the writer, placement of an article, and the morality of the article. He recognized that frames have the power to exclude voices and downplay arguments during debate as well as to determine the conditions of a debate without the audience noticing (Swenson, 1990). His definition of framing study was that it "deals more with how a problem or occurrence is portrayed in the media" (Tankard, 2003). Therefore, it would seem that factors like the tone of a newspaper story, the length of an article, and the placement of that piece were significant and plays a crucial role in figuring out how an issue is portrayed in the media and the level of significance awarded to those issues.

In direct response to Entman (1993), D´Angelo (2002) asserted that there was no need for a single paradigm for framing because doing so would deprive scholars the opportunity to engage with many images to study the connection between media and certain frames. As a result, D´Angelo suggested the cognitive, critical and constructive paradigms. Each of these is examined in turn since they offer an important perspective on how to study the media.

2.6 The cognitive paradigm.

This paradigm's central tenet is that throughout decision making, interpretation, judgement formation, and opinion development, frames affect how people think. Therefore, research motivated by this paradigm is interested in how frames function to impact the processes (D´Angelo, 2002) based on social information (Higgins & King, 1981, Wyer & Srull, 1986; Shrum, 2002). The simplest way to put this is in the words of Lugalambi (2006), who writes "to approach framing from the cognitive perspective implies responding to the information processing patterns involved when individuals confront and engage with media messages." When making decisions, having access to information is crucial (Iyengar, 1991). But in order to make decisions and generate interpretations fast, this information is processed utilizing prior knowledge or schemata. Schemata are "mental clusters of ideas that organize people's processing of information," according to Entman (1984). Although schemata are particularly active when an individual encounters new information, Rummelhart (1984) argues that their presence does not necessarily imply that they will affect information processing. Instead, they are likely to influence what information becomes important to an individual (Entman, 1993).

According to D'Angelo (2002), "semantic associations inside an individual's schemata" are what media frames are thought to cause when viewed by someone. As a result, an individual will find it helpful to update and adapt their schemata when reading news reports. (Patterson, 1993; Rhee, 1997). Although cognitive academics accept the existence of information unrelated to a frame, their research focuses on ideas that are in line with the stored frames (Schenck-Hamlin et al., 2000; Sotirovic, 2000).

Therefore, a frame is only effective if it can determine whether people notice, comprehend, and remember a problem, just as a photo frame, for instance, draws attention to the picture and emphasizes the elements in the picture as opposed to those elements that are not in the picture. Additionally, a frame might affect how people perceive and respond to a problem. In other words, the, the presence of schemata or prior information restricts a person´s ability to make decisions, form judgements or develop opinions. Winning an argument depends on convincing opponents to accept one's framing (Tankard, 2003).

In another study, Valkenburg et al. (1999) looked at how readers' thoughts and recall of article details were affected by using news frames. Their research found that news frames may, in the short term, have an impact on readers perceptions of and memories of news events.

Furthermore, they discovered that they could generalize their arguments across a variety of topics and that news frames genuinely influence how audiences see certain issues or events. They concluded that the news media had the ability to instruct the public on how to think about issues as well as what issues they should think about (Valkenburg et al. 1999).

In the same vein, Brewer (2002) conducted a study to look at how framing affected how voters used value language to express their opinions on political matters. In relation to LGBTQ+ rights in America, he researched the two principles of morality and equality. According to the results of the study, those who were exposed to the equality frame were more inclined to explain their position on same-sex marriage in terms of values, and those who were exposed to the morality frame were more likely to base their arguments on morality principles. His research again revealed that participants questioned the frames using the value language of the one they had previously encountered. Similar to Valkenburg et al. (1999), this study showed that media frameworks influence how the general public view political issues.

2.7 The critical paradigm.

The critical paradigm offers an effective method for understanding how news frames originate. According to this view, the frameworks that journalists use to convey the values of political and economic elites to their audiences come from their daily activities (Gitlin, 1980; Entman & Rojecki, 1993). Scheufele (2000) discovered that, in addition to the journalists' daily routines, frames were as a result of organizational pressure and limits, reportorial and editorial routines, ideological inclinations, as well as pressure from interest groups. Therefore, it can be claimed that the political, social, and economic structures of society influence the way that frames develop. One of the fundamental tenets of this paradigm is that, when there is a disagreement, the elite frames dominate in news coverage of events and topics (Martin & Oshagen, 1997; Hertog & McLeod, 2003).

According to Hertog and McLeod (2003), the dominate frames serve to support and represent the "main institutions of society." As in the case of Ghana, if the media support a religious perspective on a topic, it will highlight the perspectives of the relevant religious institutions and preserve these important institutions. According to the findings of these two researchers, social groups share certain frames, which in turn shape people's perceptions and affect how social issues are discussed. When General Motors announced in December 1991 that one of its

production facilities would be shutting down, for instance, the media presented the story in terms of how people had to adjust to challenging but essential business decisions (Martin & Oshagen, 1997). This type of coverage, in their opinion helps to spread the notion that "downsizing is inevitable, and complicity is vital for success" (Martin & Oshagen, 1997). Thus, it is not surprising that the news frequently favors the elite and controls the audience, thereby restricting the scope of discussion and of a welcoming public sphere (Entman, 1991). Journalists maintain the existing status quo by allowing some frames to emerge at the expense of others by deciding what to selectively include and exclude. (D'Aangelo, 2002). This paradigm is a helpful method for examining how people decide who gets to speak during public debate. Furthermore, the study of generalizations in news gathering can benefit from using this paradigm.

According to Iyengar (1991), generalized patterns seen in the presentation of television news, might be applied to different media forms and systems. This is a result of the media's adherence to common journalistic standards and news patterns, despite their varied organizational structures and formats (Gans, 1997; Glitlin, 1980).

2.8 The constructionist paradigm.

According to the constructionist paradigm, journalistic reporting reflects culture and offers "interpretative packages" of the opinions of political actors, such as sources (Gamson & Modigiliani, 1989; Gerbner, 1998). Given Ghana's hostile attitude against LGBTQ+, this suggests that the media are most likely to be biased in its reporting of matters relating to LGBTQ+. Additionally, it is very possible that the news will reflect the opinions of people who support the dominant position, which is against LGBTQ+. Politicians, religious leaders, and laypersons are examples of these sources.

According to D'Angelo (2002), journalists are "information processors," which means they don't only decide what material to include or remove but also how to present it so that it accurately reflects the context in which they work. This may, however, lead to other dominant groups "coopting" particular organizations topics, or actors. For instance, news frames set the parameters for policy discussions without necessarily adhering to democratic standards (Andsager & Powers, 1999; Andsager, 2000). This paradigm also makes the premise that frames can dominate in the news for extended periods of time and serve as guides for people

as they form opinions on various topics (Gamson, 1996). It is possible that the media representations are to blame for the unfavourable public perception of LGBTQ+ in the Ghanaian society.

The critical paradigm, on the other hand, believes that dominating frames render fewer dominant frames irrelevant. Additionally, constructionists think that media outlets limit the amount of information they disclose about a topic by keeping to a small number of reliable sources. Critical academics assert that source selection is hegemonic in the meantime (D'Angelo, 2002). Because of this, constructionists think that even a dominant frame still allows for a larger range of perspectives that are helpful for comprehending a subject (Andsager, 2000).

2.9 Identification and studying of frames.

Entman, (1993) asserts that news frames can be recognized and investigated based on "the existence or absence of keywords, stock phrases, stereotyped pictures, sources of information, and sentences that give thematically reinforcing clusters of facts or judgement." According Gamson and Modigliani (1989, in De Vreese, 2005), there may also be "metaphors," exemplars, catchphrases, portrayals and visual images" that can be used as a guide for recognizing frames. De Vreese asserts that Tankard (2001) provided the most comprehensive list for the recognition of frames. They consist of the headings, the images and their captions, the leads, the information sources, and the last sentences of paragraphs. The remaining elements are pull quotes, subheads, logos, statistics, and charts. Additionally, media frames can be recognized and studied inductively or deductively (De Vreese, 2005). The inductive method entails examining media information without pre-established frameworks. During the course of the study, frames are permitted to emerge from the media content. The inductive approach has drawn criticism for its difficulties in replication and usage of tiny samples, despite being beneficial in the discovery of novel frames. Because researching frames inductively can take time, studies that employ this methodology tend to use small sample (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000, De Vreese, 2005).

Scheufele (1999) asserts that frames may be investigated as dependent or independent variables. By looking at the elements that go into their formation, frames can be analyzed as dependent variables. According to Shoemakers and Reese (1996), some of these elements

include effects on both the organizational and individual levels, such as individual attitudes, beliefs, and values as well as professional positions and ethics. Issue-specific and generic frames are another technique to categorize frames (De Vreese, 2005). Issue-specific frames are pertinent to or confined to the study of certain issues, themes, or events. 78% of research that applied the framing theory and were published in prestigious communication journals used issue-specific frames, according to an examination of those studies (Vliegenthart, 2012). Due to the use of small samples, one significant drawback of using issue-specific frames in research is the difficulty of generalizing results to other populations. Despite the drawback, issue-specific frames enable a high level of precision for information pertinent to research. On the other hand, generic frames are not constrained to a certain subject or occasion. Any news coverage, regardless of the subject, setting, or time, can use them (Vliegenhart, 2012).

Iyengar's (1991) episodic and thematic frames as well as Semetko and Valkenburg's (2000) conflict, responsibility, human interest, economic consequences, and morality frames are the most often utilized generic frames, according to Vliegenhart (2012).

2.1.0 Framing as a process.

According to De Vreese (2005) framing entails four stages: frame-building, frame setting, degree of consequence on individuals, and level of consequences on society. The first phase, frame building, which was taken from agenda-setting research, discusses how frames develop and are produced (Scheufele, 1999). Bruggemann (2014) asserts that this aspect of framing has been rather disregarded by scholars and demands attention. Personal convictions and media ownership are two examples of internal and external elements that may contribute to frame-building. These elements have an impact on how journalists conduct their work (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996).

However, the impact of external elements on the construction of the frame is limited to a certain degree. These aspects will most likely be successful during the coverage of a new subject whose frames have not previously been defined. For example, when the online community initiates a discussion that the traditional media subsequently picks up and reports on (Zhou & Moy, 2007), these factors will most likely be successful. While this was going on, Zhou and Moy's inquiry into the role of public opinion on news framing contradicted Entman's (2004) viewpoint when their research demonstrated that internal pressure is more influential than government pressure

in creating news frames. This was a direct response to Entman's assertion that government pressure is the most influential factor. The authors of the article argued that "the media applied rhetorical tactics to adjust the relatively 'aggressive' public opinion frames to 'mild but constructive' media frames" (Zhou & Moy, 2007). In a similar vein, Hertog and McLeod (2003) discovered in their research on the coverage of social protests that newspaper editors were aware of attempts made by protest organizations to 'reframe' the problem, but they chose to disregard these efforts.

Hertog and McLeod (2003) cited a statement made by the editors of the newspaper as follows: "They want to tell me what the story is. I am the one who decides what the story is about" (Hertog & McLeod 2003). That is to say, the newspaper consciously decided to publish the protests in their own way rather than the way that the protest organizations intended the events to be reported. The editors changed the way the protests were presented as a result of this action. There are occasions when both internal and external variables come together to impact the construction of the frame.

During the frame-building phase, journalists may engage in frame-sending, frame-setting or a combination of the two. The texts or news information that is delivered to the public is the outcome of these exchanges (Bruggemann, 2014). By focusing on the factors that affects media professionals' coverage of LGBTQ+ issues, this study aimed to add to the sparse body of work in the frame-building phase. The frame-setting stage is an interaction or interplay between the media's frame and the individual's own predispositions. It is also similar to agenda-setting and sometimes referred to as second level agenda setting (Scheufele; 1999). This encounter may alter people's opinions and perspectives on a subject. In the phases of personal and societal implications, it may also result in the acquisition of views. The outcome of media frames or the impact that media frames have on people's perceptions and attitudes are thus considered the consequences at the individual level. The last step of media frames' effects on society, however, may influence how policies or actions are taken at the societal level.

2.1.1 Framing and bias.

The tenacity with which frames are held in place is another factor that adds to their ability to successfully influence how a society understands situations. This is particularly significant for frames as cultural phenomena because, as frames develop over time with input from a

significant number of social actors, they eventually become part of "social knowledge." This makes it extremely difficult for new information to "significantly alter their meanings" (Hertog & McLeod, 2003), which is why this aspect of frame development is particularly important. To put it another way, "the significance of frames lies in their durability, their persistent and routine use over time" (Reese, 2003).

The aforementioned characteristics give rise to the problem of bias in the reporting on contentious issues since certain frames begin to dominate the conversation and are easy for journalists to recall. As a result, journalists may come to rely on certain frames while neglecting alternative frames. According to the findings of a number of research (Kuypers, 2002; Hertog & McLeod, 2003), the dominant frames in society are those that originate from the most influential social institutions or actors and are widely disseminated among individual members of society. Kuypers (2002) asserts that LGBTQ+ issues are given more importance in the American press, even though it is not necessarily the case that most of the American public is in favour of LGBTQ+ issues. Because of this, most of the time, the American audience is presented with pro-LGBTQ+ frames, which are the ones most likely to influence the way people think about LGBTQ+ issues. This result is especially noteworthy in light of the fact that the material that is currently available suggests that the Ghanaian press is biased in their coverage of LGBTQ+ issues, favouring the anti-LGBTQ+ attitudes (Strand, 2011). The fact that the current study is not an experimental study makes this point more significant.

In contrast to the findings of Kuypers (2002), Gibson and Hester (2007) discovered that a frame was unlikely to alter an individual's attitude towards a problem if the individual was able to perceive the lack of balance in the sources that were utilized in a news item. This was the case even though Kuyper found that the frame did affect an individual's attitude towards the issue. This study examined the factors that contribute to the general public's perception of LGBTQ+ issues and how those factors are influenced by various sources. It was hypothesized that if members were exposed to a news report that featured only highly privileged sources hostile to LGBTQ+ issues, then those members would be more likely to oppose LGBTQ+ issues. It also assumed that members would support LGBTQ+ issues if they were exposed to a news article that featured only highly privileged sources in support of LGBTQ+ issues and that narrative was carried out in front of those members. In conclusion, the study tested the hypothesis that participants' attitudes towards LGBTQ+ issues would be more even keeled if they were shown a news story that had a variety of perspectives from different sources. The first two hypotheses

were not validated since the participants were able to point out that the stories did not have a balanced amount of each element. The study concluded that the use of official sources to privilege anti-LGBTQ+ sentiment did not necessarily lead to greater anti-LGBTQ+ emotions among participants. Because of this, the researchers concluded that frame effects are likely to be limited for an active audience. In the authors' own words, "these results suggest that news consumers are savvier than some scholars give them credit for and that readers possess the ability to recognize a lack of balance in regard to source prestige" (Gibson & Hester, 2007).

One of the primary premises of this investigation is that the way in which the media present a problem will influence the way in which the audience understands that problem. This study is predicated on several basic assumptions, one of which is that the media should make it easier for audiences to form their own interpretations of contentious matters by presenting both sides of an argument without displaying any prejudice. For instance, if the media solely covers LGBTQ+ issues from a cultural point of view, then the audience will start to consider LGBTQ+ issues from a cultural point of view rather than from a religious or health point of view. In addition, if the media continue to place an excessive amount of focus on the unfavourable parts of the cultural viewpoint, they prevent members of the public from having access to the good side of the cultural argument. By acting in this manner, the media not only restrict the ways in which the public can view LGBTQ+ issues, but they also report from a biased perspective.

It is possible to claim that the news media invariably prejudice their audience whenever they frame a problem since the primary purpose of a frame (or frames) is to organize information that is coming in and information that is going out. Actually, Entman (2007) asserts that news bias is unavoidable due to the fact that framing is the outcome of the media deciding what to put on their agenda and how to include it in their coverage of the topic. He contends that "systematically employing framing under the conceptual umbrella of bias would advance understanding of the media's role in distributing power, revealing new dimensions and processes of critically political communication" (Entman, 2007). According to the research done on objectivity and balance, these two characteristics should be prioritized when compiling a report, particularly when the topic at hand is politically contentious. However, there is sufficient evidence to imply that the media are not always impartial and balanced in their reporting, even when they claim to be liberal. This is true even though the media portray themselves as being on the liberal side. Researchers have found a "decided tilt" on topics such as congressional candidates (Kahn & Kenney, 2002; Druckman & Parkin, 2005), protest

movements (Rojecki, 1999), tax policy (Entman et al. 2005), unions (Martin, 2004), and media bias, as Entman correctly points out. This is in addition to the coverage of international affairs and racial issues.

The media, as national institutions, respond to domestic and societal pressure in their own countries in accordance with the expectations of their audiences. This contrasts with other global media institutions, which are more comparable to one another. As a result, they end up bending their own norms and turning to serving the national interest, which is established by other, more powerful institutions and individuals (McQuail, 2010). During times of crisis, the ability of the media to maintain objectivity and balance is put to the test according to Topoushian (2002).

During the events of September 11, 2001, in the United States, this scenario was played out, and "Journalists quickly abandoned all pretense of objectivity and become the uncritical mouthpiece of the United States" (Williams, 2003). In a similar vein, Alwood (1996) suggested that the American media was biased towards LGBTQ+ issues and pro-LGBTQ+ voices from the time period of the 1940s to the early 1990s when it came to coverage of LGBTQ+ issues. This was because LGBTQ+ issues were considered illegal in most states in the United States at the time. Strand (2012) conducted research in Uganda and discovered that the prevalent anti-homosexual climate made its way into the Ugandan news coverage of the anti-homosexuality bill that was passed in 2009.

It was observed that the framing of news items utilizing value phrases can influence public opinion on an issue (Brewer, 2002). This was specifically found to be the case regarding LGBTQ+ issues. After being exposed to stories structured using the equality frame and the morality frame, participants in the experimental study conducted by Brewer were tested on their opinion towards gay rights. According to the findings, individuals who were given a frame focusing on equality were more likely to explain their viewpoint in terms of equality, and the same was true for participants who were given a frame focusing on morality.

Even so, it is important to keep in mind that the media may not always be successful in swaying the opinions of individuals. This was proved in an experimental study (Gibson & Hester, 2007) that attempted to evaluate the role of highly prestigious sources to influence public opinion about LGBTQ+, a sensitive issue. Per the findings of the study, the participants were able to

detect bias and an absence of balance in the news sources that were used in the stories. This demonstrates the argument made by Entman (1993), which is that "the frames that guide the receiver's thinking and conclusion may or may not reflect the frames in the text and the framing intention of the communicator" (this sentence). According to the findings that Gibson and Hester came at, contrary to what scholars typically consider to be the case, audiences are not always affected by news from the media.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction.

This study examines how the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide which are both print media represent LGBTQ+ issues in Ghana. It also sought to understand the representation of the issue from the perspective of media professionals in order to look at the factors that affect the coverage of LGBTQ+ issues. The methodology of the study is the main topic of this chapter. According to Wiersman (2000), research methodology refers to the approach by which data is extracted to be clearly understood. This chapter therefore discusses the following: research design, target population, sampling strategies and data collection instruments.

3.1 Research design: mixed method.

For gathering data and conducting analysis on the three research questions which are what prominence do the print media give to LGBTQ+ issues? What type of frames are used by the two-print media in communicating LGBTQ+ issues? And finally what factors influence media professionals in the coverage of LGBTQ+ issues? This study used a hybrid methodology that included both in-depth interviews and quantitative content analysis. Many different titles, such as blended research and mixed research, have been used by researchers to describe this methodology. To give the study breadth and depth, Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, and Turner (2007) defined mixed methods research as research that combines qualitative and quantitative components throughout data collecting and analysis.

Data triangulation, investigator triangulation, theory triangulation, and methodological triangulation are the four different types of triangulations that Denzin (1978) distinguished. Denzin added more distinctions between triangulation conducted inside and between methods. Whereas between-methods triangulation uses one or more methods from both the quantitative and qualitative research approaches, within-method triangulation uses numerous methods from only one of the two research approaches which are qualitative or quantitative in a study. With within-methods triangulation, which essentially employs many methods inside one approach, biases that may be inherent in one method, source, or set of data may not be as easily shown and overcome as they might be with the between-methods approach, which was used for this study.

Because it produces complete, richer, and thicker data, researchers have encouraged the use of mixed approaches, which have been more popular (Johnson et al., 2007). A mixed methodology is the best way for fulfilling the goals of this study, that deals with content analysis with in-depth interviews.

3.1.1 Qualitative research design.

Qualitative approaches concentrate on the subtleties and context of the text and expand the analysis of the text to an interpretation level (Bengtsson, 2016). It is a research technique for establishing reproducible and valid references from texts to the contexts of their use, according to Krippendorff (2004). It enables scholars to deliberately read texts and infer the hidden meanings hidden between the lines. However, a crucial component of qualitative research methodology is the researcher's own self-reflection (Bengtsson, 2016). To reduce the bias of the researcher's personal effect, the pre-existing knowledge the researcher has must be considered during both the planning and analysis phases.

Qualitative research aids understanding the significance that people attach to social issues. It is also beneficial to investigate and comprehend the viewpoints and experiences of different people and groups (Creswell, 2014). The qualitative technique, particularly in-depth interviews, is advised by academics like Chang and Ren (2016), Strand (2012) as a good way of obtaining data on LGBTQ+ issues. In order to answer the second research question which is the type of frames employed by the two-print media in communicating LGBTQ+ issues framing analysis was used to identify metaphors or key words used in framing LGBTQ+ issues in Ghana.

The Daily Graphic and Daily Guide Journalists and editors are among those participated in the in-depth interviews to find out what factors affect how LGBTQ+ issues are covered in the media which was the objective of the third research question. For data gathering this, the method was chosen for two main reasons. First, semi-structured interviews are useful for eliciting respondents' opinions on touchy topics like LGBTQ+ issues. This is due to the fact that it enables respondents to openly recall their experiences and share information without restrictions. Second, the researcher has the freedom to ask questions that were not originally planned, just as respondents are not constrained in their ability to provide information.

Therefore, semi-structured interviews provide the researcher the chance to delve deeper, ask additional questions, and get clarification as needed (Bariball & While, 1994).

3.1.2 Quantitative research design.

The Daily Graphic and Daily Guide, two of Ghana's top newspapers, were the subjects of a quantitative content. The goals and inquiries that this research aimed to address guided the choice to use content analysis in this study. According to Kerlinger (2000), content analysis is a technique used to conduct a scientific examination of communication materials. To answer the first research question which is on the prominence the media give to LGBTQ+ issues, quantitative content analysis was used. With the help of content analysis, we can expand on what is previously known without endangering participants or the researcher (Bengtsson, 2016).

As the literature review demonstrates, content analysis has been employed in several research on LGBTQ+ issues (Kenix, 2008; Alagappar & Kaur, 2009; Quist-Adade et al., 2014). However, some academics have suggested that content analysis is the best method for carrying out investigations like the one at hand. According to Kenix (2008), content analysis aids in revealing the hidden meanings that media texts contain. Martin (2008) further argued that the approach reveals how minorities are portrayed in the media and how much access they have to it.

3.2 Population.

According to Parahoo (1997), population refers to all the components or units that make up a group from which the data can be gathered. Burns and Grove (1993) further added that it is the components that make up a study. The population for the study includes all journalists whose bylines featured in stories and all editions of publications about LGBTQ+ issues as well as editors of the two newspapers.

3.3 Rational for newspaper selection.

The choice to study newspapers over radio or television is based on the idea that newspapers have the power to influence the direction of other media. In addition, despites their declining readership over time, newspapers continue to be a significant source of information for many individuals (Scott, 2009). The Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide are chosen because they are

both well-known, prominent publications in Ghana with substantial readerships and set the agenda for media discussions. The Daily Graphic is owned by the government, whereas the Daily Guide is privately owned. As a result, the orientation of the two newspapers differs. The Daily Guide is seen as a sensationalist and more of tabloid, whilst the Daily Graphic focuses more on official and government topics (MFWA, 2021).

3.3.1 The Daily Guide.

Printed six times every week, from Monday to Saturday, The Daily Guide is a privately owned newspaper. Western Publications Limited owns the publication, which has been around for more than 30 years. According to the African Media Barometer (2020), the newspaper is ranked as the second largest in Ghana. Like the Daily Graphic, it publishes articles on a variety of topics, including sports, business, international news, opinions, features, and letters to the editor. The Daily Guide newspaper also has an online portal at www.dailyguideafrica.com where stories that have been published in print are carried.

As the most widely read private newspaper in Ghana, The Daily Guide was chosen for this study because it was thought that as such, it would provide a forum for the expression of varied viewpoints on LGBTQ+ issues. Also, because the journal was privately held, it was anticipated that it would approach matters differently than state-controlled media.

3.3.2 The Daily Graphic.

State-owned and highly regarded is The Daily Graphic. With a significant circulation, it is the top newspaper in Ghana. 1950 saw the launch of The Daily Graphic by the Daily Mirror Group. Due to its ownership, the Daily Graphic had access to both human and financial capital, which allowed it to weather the financial crisis that forced other newspapers of the time to close their doors. The Nkrumah government then purchased the publication in 1962, and it was then turned over to the state as a property (Asante & Gadzekpo, 2000).

From Monday to Saturday, the newspaper is published six times. It covers societal topics such politics, business and money, foreign affairs, sports, and health. The Daily Graphic also has a website, www.graphiconline.com, where articles from the newspaper are posted. Two factors led to the selection of the newspaper for this investigation. First, since the journal was state-owned, it was believed that it would equitably provide a forum for the expression of opposing

and different viewpoints (Constitution of the Republic of Ghana; Article 163). So, it was anticipated that the publication would offer equal emphasis to both pro- and anti-gay viewpoints. Second, the Daily Graphic was chosen for this study because of its standing as a prestigious publication that is widely read across the nation (Kuehnhenrich, 2012). Due to the newspaper's extensive readership, the discussion on LGBTQ+ issues may include a variety of viewpoints from around the nation.

3.4 Sampling procedure.

A sample, as Wimmer and Dominick (2005) asserted is a representation subset of a population. The sample for the content analysis includes all publications of the Daily Guide and the Daily Graphic on LGBTQ+ issues from June 1, 2021- December 31, 2021. June to December 2021 is chosen for the study because it was the time LGBTQ+ issues started rising in the media leading to the introduction of the bill in August, and a subsequently, the said bill was put on hold in December by the Ghanaian parliament because of opposing views on some elements of the bill. The key objectives of the content analysis were to look at the number of stories in each month, story placement, size of stories, story enhancement, story types as well as the frames used.

Purposive sampling was used to select journalists and editors for the in-depth interview. A list of journalists whose bylines featured on LGBTQ+ related stories was compiled for the qualitative study. 45 journalists in total, including 21 from the Daily Guide and 24 from the Daily Graphic, were listed. As a result, reporters whose names featured in many pieces were categorized. The Daily Guide and Daily Graphic now had 19 and 21 reporters, respectively. Eight of these reporters—four from each newspaper—were then chosen through a simple random sampling procedure. Respect was shown for gender representation. Four men and four women made up the eight reporters from the two media outlets. But, due to difficulty in contacting some of them, two Daily Graphic male reporters had to be replaced. Also, two editors—one from each of the newspapers under investigation—were chosen for interviews. Because the editors of both media organizations were males, it was impossible to ensure gender representation in those positions.

Hence, a total of 10 media professionals took part in the qualitative research. This figure was chosen because qualitative research frequently uses small samples since working with a big sample size may be difficult, labor- and time-intensive, and expensive.

3.5 Unit of Analysis.

According to Wimmer and Dominick (2011), the elements that are evaluated in order to generalize about all similar units and explain the variations among them constitute the unit of analysis. The smallest unit in a sample that is evaluated is hence the unit of analysis. The unit of analysis in a written text, according to Wimmer and Dominick can be a single word, a theme, or a whole article or story.

While two foreign stories on LGBTQ+ issues were located during the content analysis, only local stories were considered for the content analysis. In order to better understand local opinions on LGBTQ+ issues that were reported in the Ghanaian press, local stories that were published in the Ghanaian media were the main focus of the study. As a result, the Daily Graphic and Daily Guide articles from June 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021, that contained editorials, straight news, features, opinions, interviews, and letters to the editor and contained the key words "homosexuality," "same-sex," "gay," and "lesbianism", "queer" transgender, "bi-sexuals", "intersex", "asexual" and others were examined as the units of analysis for the quantitative aspect of the study and the framing analysis.

The qualitative study's analysis was based on the transcripts of in-depth interviews with journalists and editors.

3.6 Data collection instruments.

A coding guide and a semi-structured interview guide were the two tools utilized to collect the data. The coding guide was tested on a few stories prior to starting the actual data gathering, and any necessary adjustments were made before the appropriate coding could begin. The story type (whether a straight news story, editorial, feature, opinion, or letter to the editor), headline of the publication, size of the story, number of stories in each month, story placement, and story enhancement were the variables tested for each unit of analysis in the quantitative part.

3.6.1 Coding Guide.

Operationally, the variables were defined as follows:

1.0 Headline: The title of a newspaper piece is found in the headline. This factor is crucial in news reports since it draws readers to newspaper stories. For the purpose of this study, attention was paid to the headlines or titles of the items that contained the phrases "homosexuality," "homo," "same sex," "gay," and "lesbianism."

2. **Story type:** This helped identify if a story was an editorial, straight news, interview, opinion piece, column, feature, or letter to the editor.

❖ **Editorials:** Editorials are pieces of writing that come from newspapers. These articles convey the editorial position or viewpoint of the publication on particular subjects (Brooks, Kennedy, Moen & Ranley, 2011).

❖ **Letter to the editor:** Letters to the editor are letters that readers send to publications expressing their ideas or opinions on subjects.

❖ **Opinions:** These are accounts of people's perspectives on a subject.

❖ **Features:** They provide a thorough, factual description of a current issue in a casual, evocative, and engaging manner (Oyero, 2006). Straight news stories: These are current, factual reports that provide the fundamental who, what, when, where, why, and how of each story (Oyero, 2006).

❖ **Columns:** Newspaper columns are specialized sections. They provide recurrent articles written by a single author that reflect the writer's viewpoint on particular subjects.

❖ **Interviews.** Interviews are situations whereby people share their opinions on a particular subject of discussion.

3. **Prominence:** By virtue of their location and enhancement, stories are considered essential since they draw readers in. This study looked at narrative placement and augmentation to investigate the prominence given to stories.

❖ **Story placement:** To draw readers, prominent stories are frequently put on the front, middle, or rear pages of newspapers (Okorie and Oyedepo, 2011). Yet, it is believed that the front page is more important than the others (Shaari, Hua and Raman, 2006). This research looked at where stories about LGBTQ+ issues appeared in the newspapers to determine importance in terms of placement.

❖ **Size of the story.** Size of a story can also determine its prominence. The space given to a story in an article determines how important the story it.

❖ **Article enhancement:** Important headlines typically include text and photos to distinguish them from other stories. In order to determine if a story was reported exclusively in texts, with images, or with images and cartoons, stories were investigated

3.6.2 Types of Frames.

For the study, a few general frameworks that have been tried in other research were used. These are the morality frame, conflict frame, responsibility frame, and frame of human interest. Key words used in LGBTQ+ issues were examined critically in order to identify the frames. As follows is an explanation of these frames:

❖ **Conflict frame:** Disputed or divergent viewpoints on a subject are reported in reports by individuals, groups, or institutions (Kenix, 2008).

❖ **Human-interest frame:** Articles that depict a topic or problem from an emotional standpoint (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). These accounts stir readers' emotions and draw them into the narrative (Kenix, 2008).

❖ **Morality frame:** Articles that provide moral guidance by placing a situation, problem, or issue in a religious context (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000).

❖ **Responsibility frame:** Reports that identify a problem's cause and call for solutions (Kenix, 2008). More research was done in this area to identify the agents cited as being in charge of resolving the same-sex relationship problem. The state or the government, religious institutions, families or homes, educational institutions, and individuals were only a few of the alternatives mentioned.

❖ **Other frames:** this means frames that do not fall within the four proposed frames this research dwelled on.

3.6.3 Interview Guide.

To allow for follow-up questions and to enable the researcher to examine other topical areas that came up during the interviews, a semi-structured interview guide was employed. Some of the questions were on their personal thoughts on LGBTQ+ issues, factors that influences them in the coverage of LGBTQ+ issues, the difficulty they face in covering LGBTQ+ issues, how they get their sources on LGBTQ+ issues and among others. When the respondents gave their consent at the start of each session, the interviews were recorded. Moreover, handwritten notes were gathered to support the audio recordings and to document other observations.

3.7 Data collection.

Newspapers stored at the Ghana Library in Accra were the subject of data collection for the content analysis and the framing analysis. Soft copies of Daily Guide publications were obtained from the IT department of the media outlet for analysis.

In-person interviews were conducted for the qualitative study. The respondents decided on the time and place of the interviews. The interviews took place in a secluded space at the respondents' places of employment to preserve privacy. A confirmation and my student ID card showing that I am a student of NLA University College gave some respondents confidence in discussing LGBTQ+ issues with me.

3.8 Analysis of Data.

Data was collected and entered into the statistical program Statistical Packages for Social Sciences in order to allow this research to analyze the quantitative data (SPSS). A descriptive statistical analysis was then performed on the data.

Framing analysis was employed to look at the frames used by the media in communicating LGBTQ+ issues. On the transcripts of the in-depth interviews, a theme analysis was done. To identify the themes, all transcripts were read numerous times, and audio recordings were played again.

3.9 Ethical consideration.

Obtaining the necessary permissions from the two print media houses, protecting respondents' anonymity, communicating the study's objectives, avoiding dishonest practices, respecting individual differences and the potential power imbalances during data collection, respecting the indigenous organizational culture and keeping sensitive information confidential, and protecting participants' identities were among the ethical issues of interest to the study, as indicated by Curtis and Curtis (2011). NSD's approval was also sought before the commencement of the data collection in Ghana.

3.1.0 Challenges of the study.

The first challenge of this research was getting access to newspaper articles for the content analysis. Money was paid to one of the media houses before the soft copy of the newspaper articles were provided to me. Secondly, most of the articles on LGBTQ+ issues were too detailed that required more reading. Identifying the frames used by the media were also difficult as the newspaper articles had to be read over again for several times. Getting journalists for the in-depth interviews was also challenging as two of the people who were identified as part of the study were replaced. Lastly, some media professionals did not well too comfortable sharing their personal views on LGBTQ+ issues with me after they realized I was studying in Norway, and rather wanted my opinion on the issue. This notwithstanding, the answers they provided were similar to the findings in the content analysis which makes their answers trustworthy.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS OF THE STUDY

4.0 Introduction.

Findings from the study are presented in this chapter. The study sought to analyze the the significance accorded to LGBTQ+ issues by the Daily Guide and Daily Graphic, how the two print media framed LGBTQ+ issues as well as the factors that influenced how media professionals covered the topic.

To present the results of the quantitative content analysis, descriptive statistical tools including, charts, and and tables were used. Framing analysis was also employed. This chapter also contains thematic analysis of in-depth interviews.

4.1 Structure of the data analysis.

The first two research questions as listed in 1.8 in chapter one was analyzed first before the third research question. The reason for doing this was that the content analysis and the framing analysis aided in the questions that were asked during the qualitative interviews which forms part of the third research question. On the other hand, findings from the in-depth interviews were used to enhance or support the findings of the content analysis where necessary before finally dwelling on the third research question which is on factors that influences media professionals in the coverage of LGBTQ+ issues. Participants in the in-depth interviews were assigned codes in order to maintain their identities due to the delicate nature of LGBTQ+ issues in Ghana. The following codes apply to each respondent: R1DGR (respondent 1 from Daily Graphic), R2DGR (respondent 2 from Daily Graphic), R3DGR (respondent 3 from Daily Graphic), R4DGR (respondent 4 from Daily Graphic), R5DGR (respondent 5 from Daily Graphic). Similar codes were again generated for respondents from the Daily Guide. R1DGU (respondent 1 from Daily Guide), R2DGU (respondent 2 from Daily Guide), R3DGU (respondent 3 from Daily Guide), R4DGU (respondent 4 from Daily Guide), R5DGU (respondent 5 from Daily Guide).

4.2 The significance the media give to LGBTQ+ issues.

In looking at the significance the media give to LGBTQ+ issues, the Daily Graphic and Daily Guide were investigated for their coverage of LGBTQ+ issues in the media between June 2021

and December 2021. A total of 45 articles utilizing keywords and phrases including "homosexuality," "same-sex," "gay," "homo," "lesbianism," "transgender," "bisexual'', "queer'', "intersex" and "trumutu" (meaning anal sex in the Akan language) were discovered in the two newspapers during the research period. Figure 1 demonstrate that 24 stories, or 53.3% of the total, were discovered in the Daily Graphic. Moreover, The Daily Guide published 21 pieces, or 46.7% of all stories. (Field data, January 2023).

Figure 1: Number of stories on LGBTQ+ issues.
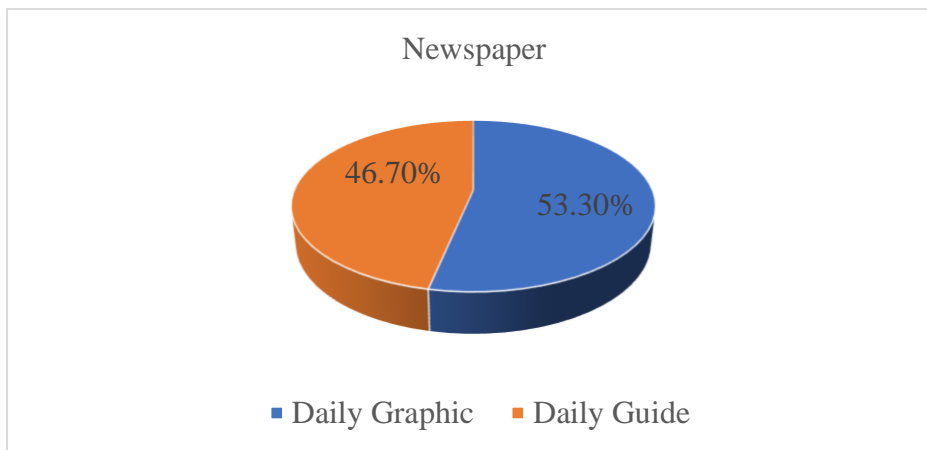
Source: Author's computation of field data (2023).

4.2.1 Number of stories published in each month from June-December 2021.

Most of the stories that were published in the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide throughout the study period were in October 2021. In October, there were 22 stories, accounting for 48.9% of the total stories discovered during the study period. August and November came next, with six stories each accounting for 26.6% per cent of the total stories, followed by July with five stories and June with four stories, each accounting for 11.1 and 8.9% of the total stories respectively. Since there were no stories recorded in September, December had the least stories (two), accounting for 4.4% of the total. There were many stories in October because there were a lot of parliamentary sittings to discuss the introduction of the Anti-LGBTQ+ Bill. This brought a lot of conversations and controversies that drew the attention of the media. December had the least stories due to the fact that the bill was referred to the appropriate headquarters to be reviewed by the speaker of parliament, thereby putting all conversations on LGBTQ+ on hold. (Field data, January 2023).

Figure 2: Frequency of stories published from June 2021-December 2021
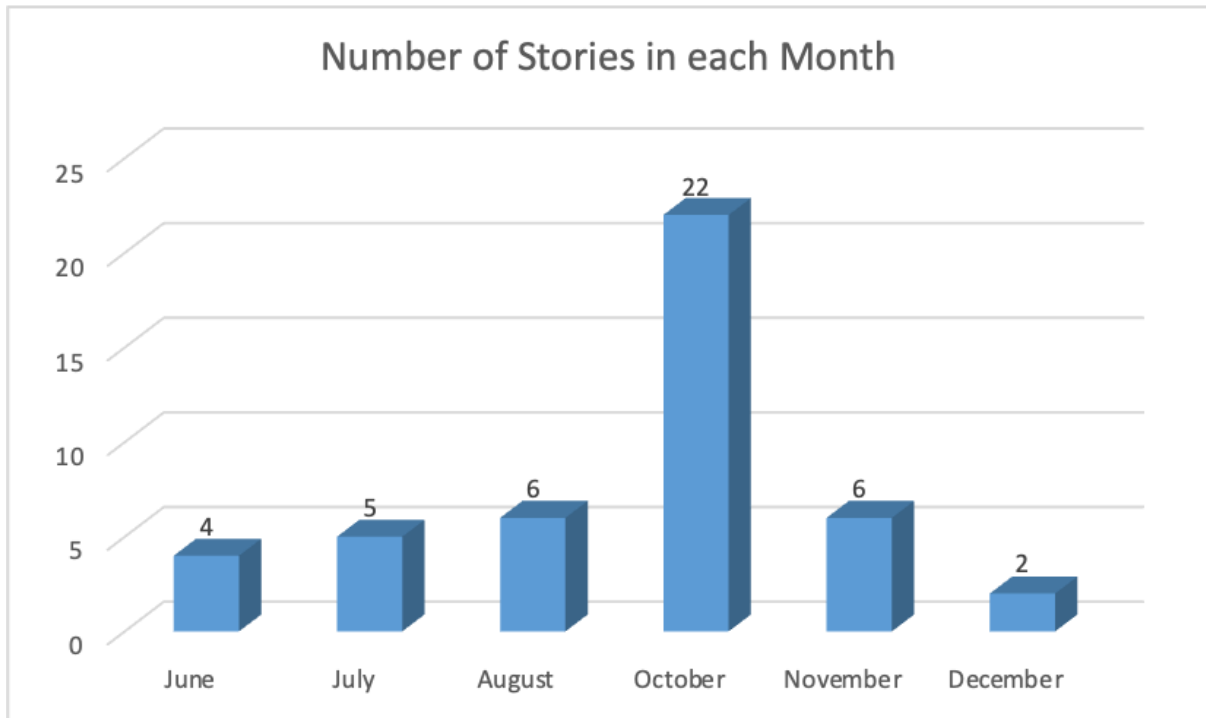
Source: Author's computation of field data (2023).

4.2.2 Type of story published by Daily Graphic and Daily Guide.

The type of story category describes the method used to present a story. The different types of stories included straight news, features, editorials and opinions. Data from the content analysis show that the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide published the majority of the straight news articles, accounting for 62.2% (28) of the stories. 31.1% (14) of stories were in the form of features. Moreover, 4.4% of the stories (2) were found to be opinions. Only one out of the total stories (2.2%) was editorial. It was not surprising to find out that most of the news items were straight news because the media depended much on religious leaders, politicians, and medical experts for news. Unlike opinions and letter to the editor which are uncontrolled and come from the people, straight news are prescribed the standard form of news report allowing journalists to set limits and decide what is newsworthy. (Field data, January 2023).

According to the framing theory, frames help to organize the world for journalists and their audiences by assisting journalists in locating and classifying information to effectively transmit it (Gitlin, 1980). According to Li and Liu (2010), framing provides journalists with the ability to exercise control over contentious matters by enabling them to determine the parameters of the discussion. All these goals can be met by carefully crafting a narrative. It would appear that

the news on the subject is restricted by the media to only include information that journalists are "authorized" to cover, which prevents audience participation through the expression of opinions. Gamson and Modigliani (1989) add that straight news helps to preserve the status quo by making LGBTQ+ issues seem normal and commonplace. Journalists and media outlets can profit from using frames since it enables them to conceal their bias (Tankard, 2003) while also giving the impression that their work is objective. This theory therefore agrees with the framing theory. The next category, features, included further information on LGBTQ+ related matters. Most of the pieces that were published in features were, on average, more in-depth than the news articles.

Editorials which serve as the publication's central voice, demonstrates the dedication of the newspaper to LGBTQ+ concerns. Because LGBTQ+ issues were given less editorial space, this may indicate that LGBTQ+ concerns were not important, or it may indicate that the two media organizations were afraid to engage on the topic. In spite of the fact that framing and reporting are influenced, according to Strand (2012) by the ideology of media houses, this is the case. It appears the two news organizations only played the role of messengers and did not take part in the conversation. Therefore, frames are primarily unspoken and unrecognized, which makes them useful in handling delicate subjects because they determine the rules of the debate while keeping the audience in the dark (Tankard, 2003).

During the in-depth interviews, one of the editors of the two media firms expressed dissatisfaction with the reaction that certain members of the public had to an editorial that discussed LGBTQ+ issues. This could be the reason why the two media outlets did not involve themselves as much in LGBTQ+ issues as far as editorials were concerned. There were two different pieces of writings that discussed opinions. This might be due to the fact that people did not feel comfortable sharing their ideas on LGBT+ issues, or it could be due to the fact that the media did not consider the opinions of the general public to be newsworthy, in contrast to the straight news. The facts regarding the kinds of stories that were published by the two different media outlets are presented in simple and concise form in Table 1.

Table 1: Type of story published by Daily Graphic and Daily Guide.

Types of stories	Number of stories	Daily Graphic	Daily Guide	Per centage

Straight news	28	17	11	62.2%
Editorial	1	0	1	2.2%
Feature	14	8	6	31.1%
Opinion	2	2	0	4.4%

Source: Author's computation of field data (2023).

4.2.3 Story Placement.

Moreover, Entman (1993) states that prominence or salience can be produced through the intentional positioning of narratives in a publication. It is generally agreed that the most important sections of a newspaper are the front, center, and rear pages (Okorie and Oyedepo, 2011; Shaari, Hua and Raman, 2006; Dzeble, 2006). The positioning of stories can also serve as a signal to readers that a problem is significant and deserves the attention that is due to it. The Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide gave very little importance to LGBTQ+ issues, as shown by an assessment of the placement of stories in both publications. Most of the stories were located on pages that were not the most visible ones.

Only three of the discovered 45 stories were featured on the front pages of the two newspapers. Two of the three stories that were located on the front pages came from the Daily Graphic, while the Daily Guide was responsible for the third story that was discovered. According to Alagappar and Kaur (2009), who found that LGBTQ+ issues were given considerable amounts of salience through placement by Malaysian press, this finding is contradictory with their findings. According to the findings of Alagappar and Kaur (2009), the salience supplied in terms of placement enabled accessibility, drew readers, and communicated the significance of LGBTQ+ issues to them.

The fact that the two newspapers, the Daily Graphic, and the Daily Guide, chose to publish articles about LGBTQ+ issues on less prominent pages lends credence to the notion that the media practitioners did not take LGBTQ+ issues to be an issue that merited significant consideration and focus. In fact, some of the media practitioners who took part in the in-depth interview believe the media should not give prominence to LGBTQ+ issues because of some of the negative repercussions that media exposure could have on society. It is possible that the believe that exposure to the media content can have a negative impact on readers and members of the public may have influenced the placement of stories, even though the media

professionals who were interviewed insisted that their opinions and views did not in any way influence their work. Figure 3 below shows the statistics of story placement.

Figure 3: Story placement.
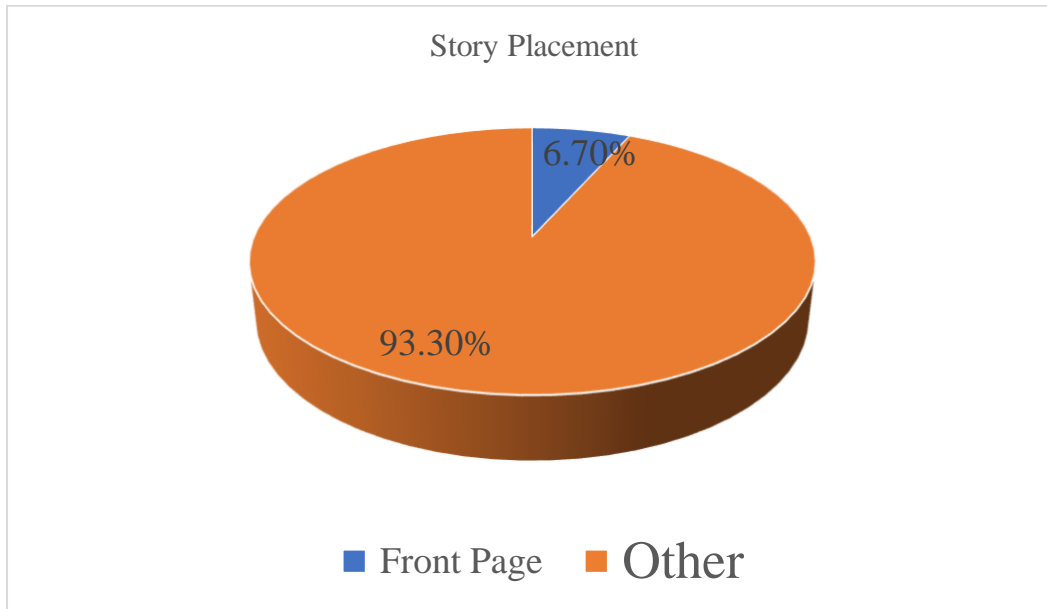
Source: Author's computation of field data (2023).

4.2.4 Size of story.

The size of a story can also determine the prominence of the story given by the media. In terms of story size more prominence was given to LGBTQ+ issues. Out of the 45 stories, 44 of them representing 97.8 per cent were above five paragraphs. Only one story was between two to five paragraphs. This data therefore show that the media gave more significance to LGBTQ+ issues as far as the size of stories were concerned. It was not surprising most of the stories were above five paragraphs because majority of the news articles discovered during the content analysis were straight news and features. Straight news from politicians, religious leaders and medical experts were more detailed expressing the need why LGBTQ+ issues should not be condoned in Ghana. The features which were also the second largest articles discovered in the two media houses were also comprehensive. Table 2 below shows the size of stories published by the two media houses. (Field data, January 2023).

Table 2: Size of stories.

Size of Story		
	No: of stories	Per centage

1 paragraph (small)	0	0
2 - 5 paragraphs (medium)	1	2.2%
Above 5 paragraphs (large)	44	97.8%

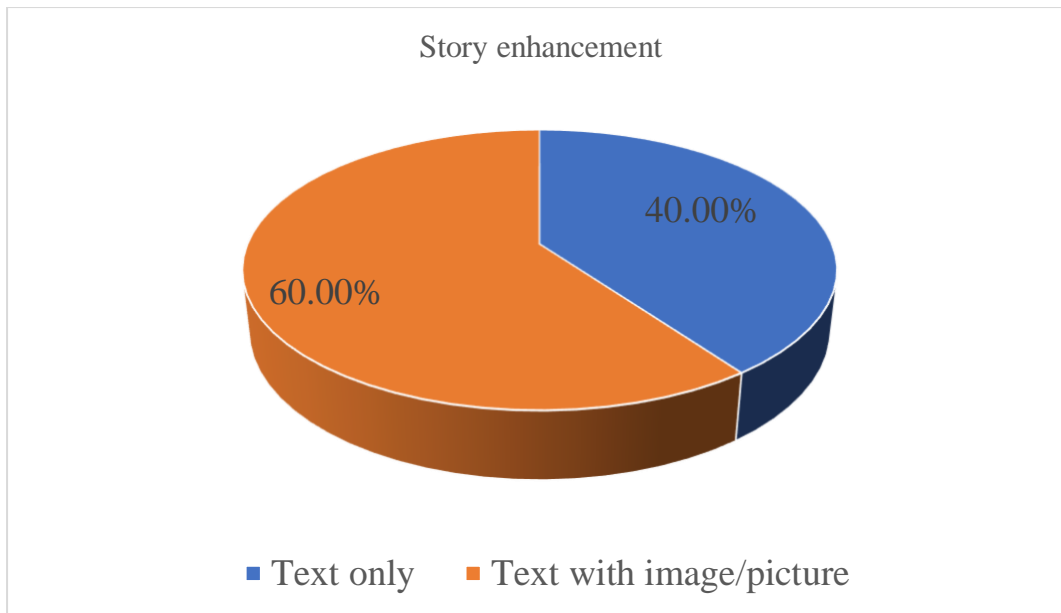**Source: Author's computation of field data (2023)**

4.2.5 Story enhancement.

The use of enhancements can also lead to prominence. This relates to whether there are pictures and infographics to go along with the text in a story. By using enhancements, this category aimed to determine how much significance LGBTQ+ issues were held. The results showed that, in terms of enhancement, the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide gave LGBTQ+ issues some importance. 60% of the stories, or 27 out of the 45 articles included text and images. The remaining 18 stories were text only. According to Tankard (2011), the media has the ability to use photographs as a way to frame stories. It is clear from the findings that both the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide presented LGBTQ+ issues as essential using augmentation (the use of images or photos) in stories that explored the subject matter. This was done by using images or photos in the articles.

The fact that most of the pieces contain photographs, which are a tried-and-true method for drawing in readers, lends credence to the notion that the media did in fact accord the topic some level of priority. On the other hand, the Daily Graphic utilized upgrades in a way that brought LGBTQ+ issues into a more prominent position than the Daily Guide did. The Daily Graphic was the source for 15 of the 27 stories that were supplemented with photographs or pictures, while the Daily Guide was responsible for the remaining 12 of those stories. (Field data, January 2023).

It is important to note that most of the images that were used by the two newspapers were photographs of religious leaders, politicians, and other notable persons who disapproved of LGBTQ+. Because of this, in some instances, the tone of the story and frames were immediately transmitted by the graphics. Figure 4 below shows the per centage of stories with images and without. (Field data, January 2023).

Figure 4: Story enhancement

Story enhancement

- Text only
- Text with image/picture

Source: Author's computation of field data (2023).

4.3 Type of frames employed in communicating LGBTQ+ issues.

The second objective of the study was to examine the frames employed by the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide in communicating LGBTQ+ issues. Table 3 below shows the statistics of frames employed.

Table 3: Type of frames.

Type of frames	No of stories	Daily Graphic	Daily Guide	Per centage
Conflict	18	11	7	27.69%
Responsibility	11	7	4	16.92%
Human interest	7	3	4	10.77%
Morality	29	17	12	44.62%
Total	65	38	27	100

Source: Author's computation of field data (2023).

The second and most important aim of this research was to investigate the different kinds of frames that were employed by both the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide. The purpose of this study was to investigate the different kinds of frames that were utilized by the two newspapers in their coverage of the LGBTQ+ issues to get a better understanding of the nature of the coverage of LGBTQ+ issues. The research included four of the five generic frames proposed by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000). These included the conflict, responsibility, human

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interest, and the morality frame. When stories revealed opposed or contradictory perspectives on LGBTQ+ issues among people, communities, or institutions, the conflict frame was coded. When stories portrayed LGBTQ+ issues in terms of moral guidelines, religion, and culture, the morality frame was likewise coded. Stories were categorized as using the human-interest frame when they included a human face or emotionalized LGBTQ+ issues concern. Finally, where responsibility for addressing or resolving LGBTQ+ issues was indicated, stories were categorized under that obligation. Provisions were also made for frames that did not fall under any of the four frames. Per the framing analysis several stories contained more than a single frame.

More than one frame was discovered in certain stories, which was coded as numerous responses. Out of the 45 stories 15 stories contained the morality and the conflict frame. Five stories were on morality and responsibility frames. Frames on conflict and responsibility were three and six respectively. Stories that contained only morality frame were nine. Human interest frames were identified in seven stories. This means that the total number of frames identified in the 45 stories were 65. The morality frame dominated the news articles with 29 frames followed by the conflict frame in 18 stories. The responsibility frame appeared in 11 articles with human interest frame appearing in seven articles only as shown in the table above.

The data showed that the morality frame was utilized most of the time by both the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide in their publications. This was the case for 29 of newspaper pieces. This frame contextualized same-sex partnerships within Ghanaian society's prevalent religious and cultural values and emphasized how opposed they are to them. Media sources are a major source of frames in news reports. Journalists use this framing through source quotes or conclusions, according to Semetko and Valkenburg (2000). Most of the stories that used this framing mentioned sources who called LGBTQ+ issues "evil," "immoral," "satanic" "illegal," "barbaric" and "and enemies of God." LGBTQ+ issues were equated to Sodom and Gomorrah in the Bible. This finding is also consistent with Tettey's (2016) findings that the media framed LGBTQ+ issues as moral issues and labelled LGBTQ+ advocates as "evil" citizens who wanted to change societal norms. This study also found out that morality was employed as a criterion to assess the morality of LGBTQ+ issues. Therefore, morality based on a religious ethos, was a crucial frame for representing LGBTQ+ issues in Ghana. Given Ghana's religious orientation, morality dominates. According to the 2021 Ghana Population and Housing Census, Christians constitute the largest population. Christians constituted 71.3% and Muslims 19.9% with the

remaining per centage constituting traditionalists and non-believers (Ghana Statistical Service, 2021).

Some respondents in the in-depth interview stressed that even the Traditional African Religion and the non-believers are against LGBTQ+ issues as they view it as immoral or satanic. According to R2DGU, "journalists serve as the mirror of society. Journalists only reflect on what society says so it is not that the journalist writes negative or positive stories, it is the society that is saying LGBTQ+ is immoral, so the journalist is just projecting whatever the society is saying. If it is comment from the clergy, from law makers, from human rights and activists it is their opinion that the journalist is projecting and sometimes the opinions will tend to go against LGBTQ+ issues." It was therefore not surprising when media content reflected these religions' homophobia. (Field data, January 2023).

The critical paradigm provides a useful approach to the problem of figuring out where different news frames come from. According to this point of view, the frameworks that journalists use to express the ideals of political and economic elites to their audiences are derived from the actions that journalists engage in on a daily basis (Gitlin, 1980; Entman & Rojecki, 1993). In addition to the routines that journalists followed on a daily basis, Scheufele (2000) found that frames were the result of organizational pressure and restrictions, reportorial and editing routines, ideological leanings, and pressure from interest groups. As a result, one might argue that the political, social, and economic structures of society influence the development of frames. (Martin & Oshagen, 1997; Hertog & McLeod, 2003). One of the main principles of this paradigm is that, when there is a disagreement, the elite frames prevail in the news coverage of events and issues as in the case of Ghana which is the morality frame. This is one of the fundamental tenets of this paradigm. Looking at the Ghanaian society where about 91.2 percent of the population are Christians and Muslims it was again not surprising when morality emerged as the elite frame whilst silencing homosexual voices.

The constructionist paradigm adds that journalistic reporting reflects culture and offers "interpretative packages" of the opinions of political actors, such as sources (Gamson & Modigiliani, 1989). Given Ghana's religious demographics, culture, law on LGBTQ+, the current bill before parliament, and hostile attitude against LGBTQ+ issues, this suggests that the media are most likely to be biased in its reporting of matters relating to LGBTQ+ as discovered in the framing analysis. Additionally, it is very possible that the news will reflect

the opinions of people who support the dominant position, which is against LGBTQ+ issues. Politicians, religious leaders, and laypersons are examples of these sources. D'Angelo (2002) adds that journalists are "information processors," which means they don't only decide what material to include or remove but also how to present it so that it accurately reflects the context in which they work.

Religious leaders and politicians were also providers of LGBTQ+ knowledge, which contributed to the morality framing. LGBTQ+ issues were always called "evil," "immoral," and "ungodly" by these authors. This supports Quist-Adade et al. (2014)'s claim that religious leaders' anti-LGBTQ+ rhetoric is harmful. This finding again sides with Alagappar and Kaur (2009)'s claim that Malaysian media portrayed LGBTQ+ issues negatively due to religiosity. Media practitioners' negative attitudes and beliefs about LGBTQ+ issues, which were largely based on religious and cultural norms, may have contributed to the morality frame. Journalists generally set and send frames during frame building, according to Bruggemann (2014). That is, journalists may just repeat facts or actively chose sources to express their opinions on an issue. Hence, journalists' religious and cultural values may have prompted them to deliberately choose sources with moral ideas. In covering LGBTQ+ issues, journalists may have set and sent frames.

Ghana's law on LGBTQ+ is disputed as stated in 1.3 in chapter one of this study. With sources disagreeing on same-sex relationships, the Daily Graphic and Daily Guide used a conflict frame to reflect these disagreements. Some respondents believed LGBTQ+ issues in Ghana were "as old as Adam," while others disagreed. There were 5 stories on sodomy from June 2021 to December 2021, and those who were involved in the act were all Ghanaians as discovered in the content analysis. The study also found debate over LGBTQ+ origin, like Persson (2014). Some Ghanaian journalists also hold the same opinion that LGBTQ+ is un-African. Sources mostly assigned LGBTQ+ issues to religious leaders and government, according to the study. Several respondents in the in-depth interview suggested LGBTQ+ issues are strange, but others indicated they have always occurred in Africa. According to Murray and Roscoe (1998) as indicated in chapter one of this study, the Horn of Africa has evidence of boy-wives, female-husbands as early as the 13th century of which some journalists admitted. The stories on sodomy in some way show that gayism is practiced in Ghana even though it is not accepted legally.

Allotey (2015) also agrees with Murray and Roscoe that contrary to popular opinion, same-sex relationships have always existed in Ghana and have been practiced there in both public and private settings as some journalists stressed. According to Allotey (2015), it is possible that Ghanaians were aware of the practice given the availability of labels like "Obaa barima," which literally translates as "man woman" in Akan. Additionally, some academics contend that terms like "Kojo Besia" (Akan) and "supi" were used to refer to males who are emotionally associated with other men and women who engage in sensual relationships with other women, respectively.

However, as stressed by some other journalists during the in-depth interview just like Matsika (2013), even though the practice exist several African countries like Ghana frowns upon LGBTQ+ issues. According to R4DGR, "there are few people who in the past showed those tendencies, but it has never been accepted as an integral part of our culture, but individually we have people who have engaged in lesbianism or gayism, but I don't think it has been part of our culture because Ghanaians haven't gone to the level where they accept it." According to Algappar and Kaur (2009), in order to determine how the Malaysian news perceived concerns around LGBTQ+ issues it was portrayed as a societal illness that was foreign, punishable, and that needed to be regulated which the study agrees with.

The third most used frame was the responsibility frame, which investigated stories that attributed responsibility for LGBTQ+ issues. This paradigm commonly allocated blame for causing, resolving, or solving LGBTQ+ issues. Nonetheless, few stories blamed the West for LGBTQ+ issues but most of the journalists that took part in the in-depth interviews blamed the western community especially the United State for trying to force Africans to accept LGBTQ+ issues. According to some of these respondents in the in depth interviews the international community is trying to influence African politicians to accept LGBTQ+ issues through aid. The government was urged to take a stand on same-sex relationships and pass laws to outlaw them. Other sources, such as the public, encouraged religious leaders to preach sermons that would put a stop to LGBTQ+ issues. Kenix (2008) discovered that the American newspapers named both the government and specific individuals as responsible for "fixing" concerns of LGBTQ+ rights which confirms the findings in this study.

The least-used frame was human-interest. These stories, most of which were features, also emotionalized same-sex relationships. The newspapers' overreliance on straight news items,

which are primarily concerned with facts and sometimes exclude descriptive language, may explain why this frame was used less often. Features, on the other hand, are more relaxed, descriptive, and emotive. Respondents also said that gays were unwilling to talk to journalists. To humanize a topic, journalists need the perspective of those involved. This finding therefore agrees with Tettey (2016). Tettey discovered in Ghana that anti-gay sources and authorities, including medical, religious and legal professionals were given the chance to voice their opinions. The overreliance on sources other than homosexuals, according to Tettey frequently results in a problematization of LGBTQ+ issues because these experts' sources have a propensity to moralize or medicalize LGBTQ+ issues which the study agrees with. In terms of human interest, medical experts, religious leaders and politicians presented LGBTQ+ issues in way that was emotional in terms of health implications.

4.4 Results from in-depth interviews.

After assigning codes to respondents as listed in 4.1 in chapter four of this study, participant responses were divided into six themes. The themes that emerged included: the frequency of story coverage, the significance of covering LGBTQ+ issues, the selection of sources, challenges in covering LGBTQ+ issues, personal views on LGBTQ+, factors that influence journalists in coverage of LGBTQ+ issues, and' news editorial policy on LGBTQ+.

4.4.1 Frequency of story coverage.

The Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide respondents both admitted that their publications did not commonly publish stories on LGBTQ+ issues. This was attributed to the lack of stories and the difficulty of getting lesbians, gays or LGBTQ+ advocates due to the country's position on LGBTQ+ related issues. The Daily Graphic's first respondent (R1DGR) stated: "We cover stories on LGBTQ+ only when they are trending. If any news item about it happens, we do cover. We haven't out of our own gone out there to do stories about it. The reason being that LGBTQ+ is a sensitive issue that needs to be treated carefully. In fact, the LGBTQ+ community for a long time was not coming out, because they dont want to disclose their identities or their sexual orientations, and all that so even finding somebody to talk to has been very difficult so unless LGBTQ+ issues arise." (Field interview, January 2023).

Respondent 5 (R5DGR) added, "as of when an issue comes up. We don't say as a rule that we are publishing "X" number of stories a year so we have reached our limit so we won't go

beyond that, if there is any issue about LGBTQ+ today and its of news value, something that must be heard we will publish." This means that LGBTQ+ issues are not covered frequently because of lack of stories. (Field interview, January 2023).

4.4.2 The significance of covering LGBTQ+ issues.

Most journalists acknowledged that it was crucial to cover issues pertaining to LGBTQ+. Journalists who believed it was important to cover issues pertaining to LGBTQ+ held the view that journalists do not take a stance with any group in society. Journalists have an open mind, and that open mind should shape attitudes towards covering events that concern all groups of people in society or all stakeholders. Several journalists went on to emphasise that covering issues related to LGBTQ+ will help people have a better understanding of LGBTQ+ issues. On the other hand, there were some journalists who believe that it is not important to cover LGBTQ+ issues because of Ghana's religious foundation and position on the issue.

According to R1DGU, "in Ghana right now the perception people have about the LGBTQ+ community is not a positive thing. Most people see it as negative. Because of religion and culture, they think that the LGBTQ+ Community is the devil's advocate but people engaged in it are humans so just because we do not accept it does not mean those engaged in it are bad people so the media should help change those narratives. I do think it is important to cover LGBTQ+ issues so that we can change the negative narratives people have against the LGBTQ+ community." (Field interview, January 2023).

R5DGU added, "it is not important to cover stories on LGBTQ+. I think when we cover LGBTQ+ issues in our setting it is more like promoting their activities. The media is a powerful tool, and there are people who are adventurous and will like to try anything negative in the media like LGBTQ+, so it will do us more harm than good when we try covering issues around it in Ghana. Growing up as a Ghanaian we had only two sex and we must sustain that conversation not the others. We shouldn't promote it or have conferences on it at all, because it will entice people to engage in the practice." (Field interview, January 2023).

Those who do not support the idea were of the view that people in Ghana believe that culturally it is not part of their culture, and all the religious institutions like Christianity, Traditional Religion, and even Islam forbid it, so it is not a very popular issue that is on the front burner.

Journalists stressed that they mimic the conscience of the people, so it is not important to cover issues on LGBTQ+ when the public do not support it. Therefore, media coverage of LGBTQ+ issues will lead to the promotion of LGBTQ+ activities which will corrupt society as more people would be engaged in the practice.

This finding confirms with Borlase (2001) where journalists expressed mixed reactions on the significance of covering LGBTQ+ issues. Some journalists in Borlase study were of the view that media coverage may persuade or draw people into engaging in gay or lesbian behavour. However, some of the respondent felt that it was important for the media to cover homosexuality issues since it would inform and encourage homosexuals to stop.

4.4.3 Selection of sources on LGBTQ+ issues.

It was again important looking at how journalists select sources on LGBTQ+ issues. According to most respondents' religious leaders, politicians and medical experts are their sources of news on LGBTQ+ issues. Journalists were of the view that these are the people that constantly speak on LGBTQ+ issues, and so they have to rely on them for information. According to R4DGR, "mostly of the sources of my stories are what happens in the plenary, in the chamber or in the floor of parliament, but besides that I am able to get in touch with Members of Parliament for one-on-one interviews. I also get in touch with the office of the speaker, the table office, leadership of parliament, chairmen, ranking members of various committees of parliament. It can be the majority or minority leaders. All these are potential sources for news". R3DGU added, "it depends on where the story is coming from. If it a news item on arrest we get it from the police, if it is a statement on LGBTQ+ issues we get it from the state or religious leaders, if it is a demonstration or a conference, we get it from the organizers of those events." (Field interview, January 2023).

Some journalists added that it is difficult getting news on LGBTQ+ issues because the LGBTQ+ Community is very silent in Ghana because of the law and Ghana's position on LGBTQ+ issues. According to R1DGU, "getting gays, lesbians, or LGBTQ+ activists to speak to has been very difficult because of stigmatization. The difficulty of getting gays or lesbians could be because of Ghana's position on LGBTQ+ issues and the stigmatization against LGBTQ+ advocate. Because of this a lot of people do not want to be seen in the media." According to one of the editors that was interviewed some individuals are trying to "cash on"

or take advantage of LGBTQ+ issues so one must be careful when selecting sources. The editor stated, "three people approached me last two years (2021) with huge sums of money for a publication that they are gays and are being harassed in Ghana so that they can seek asylum in European countries or get support from the international community of which I refused." (Field interview, January 2023).

4.4.4 Challenges in covering LGBTQ+ issues.

Almost all the journalists admitted of no challenges as far as the coverage of LGBTQ+ issues were concerned even though some others did mention of some challenges. The reasons for lack of challenges could be because journalists are only projecting the dominant views that is anti-LGBTQ+. It was discovered during the framing analysis that most of the stories we negative stories that projected the views of the Ghanaian society. The situation would have been different if Journalists dwelled on positive stories. Some Journalists were of the view that even though they are guided by ethical principles they would not write any positive story on LGBTQ+ issues because of the law, stigmatization, and their religious values. One of the respondents stressed how an editorial on LGBTQ+ issues by the media house received a public backlash. "I remember we did an editorial where we said look this is a private affair and if people decide to do it at the comfort of their homes let it be, don't bother them. There were people from the Christian community saying, "but you people why are you supporting or promoting the issue." Because of this we have decided to track back and observe what is happening. R3DGR stated that due to Ghana's position on LGBTQ+ issues and the introduction of the current bill, it is somewhat difficult to obtain information from gays, lesbians, or LGBTQ+ advocates, so the majority of storylines focus on public officials who are at the forefront of introducing legislation, and those who preach against it like religious leaders." (Field interview, January 2023).

4.4.5 Personal views on LGBTQ+.

Most of the respondents did not feel comfortable sharing their views on LGBTQ+ issues with me maybe because I am a student from country (Norway) that is liberal to LGBTQ+ issues. Others on the other hand they rather wanted my opinion on the issue and why I have decided to conduct research on such a sensitive issue. There were some few reactions from those who shared their views on the topic. According to some of them religion speaks against LGBTQ+ issues and therefore, their religious beliefs supercedes their profession. They were of the view

that even though some LGBTQ+ issues are hormonal they can be corrected by medical experts rather than allowing them to do what is un-Godly. According to R4DGU, "interesting, for me I think that we should not tolerate it or condone people with that sexual preference. Biblically, as a Christian I don't believe in that. Once you are born as a gay or a lesbian it can be corrected so you do not decide after birth what you want your sex to be. Sex is biological. If there is a deformity of your sex after birth it must be corrected and not tolerated. We don't choose our sex." (Field interview, January 2023).

Some respondents also stated that Jesus Christ came for the perished ones therefore, even though LGBTQ+ issues are the work of the anti-Christ they should be accepted into society and given proper education to depart from their ways rather than harassing them in society. According to R3DGR, "I tend to sympathise with those who think that LGBTQ+ is not good, but I frown on harming people who are into it or practice it. I don't think people should be criminalized or beaten but they should be helped to come out of the situation. There should be reorientation and medical help. It's like Christianity, God frowns on sin but accepts the sinner, so we should accept them and preach to them the gospel to enable them to depart from their sinful ways." (Field interview, January 2023).

R1DGU added, "I am a Christian who adheres to the Christian principles, and I am also a law-abiding citizen. As we speak, the constitution discusses having a natural canal knowledge of someone; if you have an unnatural canal knowledge of someone, it is against the law and it becomes a crime. But I also believe, as Pope Francis stated, that people who engage in such behaviour should not be condemned, but we must find a means to bring them to a full understanding of what they are doing. While I am not here to condemn them, I disagree with their sexual orientation. LGBTQ+ is un-African; therefore, Ghanaian society prohibits it. The Ghanaian culture permits polygamous marriage but not LGBTQ+ relationships". (Field interview, January 2023)

4.4.6 Factors that influence journalists in coverage of LGBTQ+ issues.
Majority of the respondents stressed that they were bounded by ethical principles and therefore, other factors like culture, religion and personal views did not influence their coverage of LGBTQ+ issues. Most of them stated that their personal values, religious principles, and cultural norms were left out when it comes to media coverage. Nevertheless, some of them stated that these factors influence them then they are not on the field as journalists. "I am a

Christian, but it doesn't mean I don't publish Muslim stuffs. So, me not being a gay doesn't mean I will not publish stuffs that the public should know about gays or lesbians. At the end of the day, I am a professional and when you are a professional ideally, you keep your personal views to yourself, you don't allow it to influence what you do," R4DGU stated. (Field interview, January 2023).

On the other hand, some journalists stressed that religion and cultural values influenced their work as journalists. According to some of them they will not do a positive story on LGBTQ+ because of their religious values and stigmatization from the public. R2DGR stated, "yes, so I would not expect society to recognize my writing or advocacy for LGBTQ+ issues. Biblically, I do not believe such a thing exists, so why would I advocate it? Again, society has value systems, so as Ghanaians, we believe that male and female are the only two sexes. Nothing less or more exists. Consequently, I would not want a society to see me writing a story in which I am attempting to depict alternative sexual preferences." (Field interview, January 2023).

The 1992 Constitution of Ghana was another factor that influenced journalists' coverage of LGBTQ+ issues. Most respondents said that it was the responsibility of journalists to ensure that their reports did not violate any local laws. According to R1DGR, "I believe everyone has rights and freedom to operate, but you cannot do anything you want since you are not living isolation. If you lived in a jungle with no laws or norms, you could do whatever you wanted because no one else was there. However, if you live among people, you must follow society's codified and unwritten laws. LGBTQ+ concerns are prohibited by the 1992 Constitution." Journalists also emphasized the fact that the legal environment is a barrier, which creates an issue when LGBTQ+ activists or groups are asked to provide a balanced perspective for stories. Even in circumstances in which people who identified themselves as LGBTQ+ proponents were found, those individuals declined to engage with journalists out of the worry that they would be stigmatized. This factor, in some degree or another, accounted for the absence of homosexual contributors to the study as well as the absence of such authors in earlier analyses.

The findings also revealed that the public's demand for negative information surrounding LGBTQ+ issues had effects on how issues were portrayed in the media. One of the primary concerns of newspapers is the interest of 'consumers.' In essence, audience satisfaction was what drove the production of narratives. Consequently, the findings of this study provided support for the findings of Borlase (2012), which said that audiences or readers are only

interested in LGBTQ+ issues when the topic is framed in anti-LGBTQ+ terms. This finding was verified by the findings of this study. As a direct consequence of this, journalists are frequently put in a position where they have no other option but to comply with the demands of their employers to maintain healthy sales of their newspapers. It's conceivable that this was the cause of many negative portrayals often basing on morality in the stories that were published in the newspapers.

4.4.7 Editorial policy on LGBTQ+.

It was revealed that none of the two media houses have editorial policy on LGBTQ+ issues. The editors of the two media houses stressed that they publish anything that they find value in it and will serve the interest of their readers and the nation. Looking at the position of Ghana on LGBTQ+ issues the editors think that it will not be of any need to develop a "black and white" policy guideline again to deal with LGBTQ+ issues. (Field interview, January 2023).

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction.

Following the introduction of the anti-LGBTQ+ bill, "Promotion of Proper Human Sexual Rights and Ghanaian Family Values," in 2021, the objectives of this study were motivated by the necessity to investigate the media representation of LGBTQ+ issues in Ghana. This thesis investigated the prominence that is given to LGBTQ+ issues, as well as the different types of media frames, including morality, responsibility, conflict, and human interest and finally look the factors that influence media coverage.

Thus, the purpose of the thesis was to provide responses to the following three research questions:

1. What kind of prominence do the media give to LGBTQ+ issues?

2. What type of frames are used by the media in communicating LGBTQ+ issues?

3. What factors influence media professionals on the coverage of LGBTQ+ issues?

There are a total of five chapters in the thesis, the first two of which are the introductory chapter and this one (chapter 5). The literature review and the methodology are separated into the second and third chapters of the paper. The background in which LGBTQ+ issues are discussed in Ghana and elsewhere in the world, particularly Africa, is provided in these chapters. The theory of framing, which was used as a basis for this research, was investigated, in particular with regard to LGBTQ+ issues and other contentious issues as part of chapter two. What was discovered was that while it is unavoidable for framing to produce bias, systematic bias that is observed over extended periods of time is cause for concern among media scholars as well as media audiences. It was also brought to light that even while coverage of LGBTQ+ issues has been more positive in some regions, the rest of the world, where negative framing is reported less frequently, LGBTQ+ issues are nevertheless framed in a negative light by depending on morality by both the press and the society in Ghana. This contrasts with the rest of the world.

The third chapter is where the methodology is discussed in detail. This chapter provides a comprehensive analysis of the research methods. After then comes the discussion and presentation of the results of the analysis of the data in the fourth chapter. In this section, the

findings of a content analysis performed on two daily newspapers, namely Daily Graphic and Daily Guide, are presented and discussed in relation to previous research as well as existing literature, the theory of framing and the qualitative in-depth interviews where necessary.

5.1 Summary of findings.

According to the findings of this study, some prominence was given to LGBTQ+ issues in terms of enhancement, which is the presence or absence of visuals in stories, but this cannot be said for prominence in terms of placement. There was also significance in terms of the size of the stories. 44 out of the 45 stories were more than 5 paragraphs.

Furthermore, the study revealed that LGBTQ+ sources were absent in the number of the articles, with religious leaders, politicians and medical experts being the most cited sources.

This also confirms previous studies that show that this tendency occurs and is harmful since the activities and perspectives of religious and political sources reinforce negative sentiments about LGBTQ+ issues and proponents.

The study also discovered that LGBTQ+ issues were more frequently framed in terms of morality. Different frames, such as morality, conflict, responsibility, and human interest, were employed to frame same-sex relationships. The government was tasked with either passing laws or declaring its position on the practice, while religious leaders were tasked with preaching against it.

The studies further revealed that factors such as LGBTQ+ legality and source availability influenced coverage and framing of same-sex partnerships. For example, the legal status of LGBTQ+, as well as the relationship with readers or consumers, made it difficult to balance stories with LGBTQ+ advocates.

The study again discovered that some individuals who were not gays were willing to pay huge sums of money to editors for publications on harassment as gays in order for them to seek asylum in European countries.

Factors such as religion, culture and the 1992 constitution of Ghana influenced media professionals as far as the coverage of LGBTQ+ issues were concerned.

5.2 Implications derived from the findings.

Chong and Druckman (2002) contend that one of the most important tenets of the theory of framing is that there is no one viewpoint that adequately describes an issue. As a result, each viewpoint has consequences for a diverse set of values and factors to consider. In addition, framing is a purposeful process that incorporates selection and the importance of highlighting certain aspects (Entman, 1993). When reporting on a topic, the media have access to a variety of frames from which to choose; however, they choose which one to use and, more likely than not, which ideas to highlight and bring to the forefront of the discussion. According to the findings of this study, the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide have decided to present LGBTQ+ issues in terms of morality by depending on individuals like religious leaders, legislators, and medical experts who are opposed to LGBTQ+. This choice was made since these individuals are anti-LGBTQ issues. They present the conversation as a national or elite matter, far distant from the peripheral, and informed largely by the media, particularly religious leaders and politicians who are all known to oppose LGBTQ+ issues. In addition, they ignore the voices of gays, lesbians, transgenders, and those who support LGBTQ+ issues.

The framing that was discussed earlier provides insight into the kind of journalism practiced by these two different media outlets. The coverage reflects both the public's and the socio-political players' dominating position on the issue. Because of this perspective, some parties take the stance that they are against LGBTQ+ issues. It is difficult for gays, lesbians and LGBTQ+ advocates to express themselves in these two media houses in much the same way as those who are opposed to them because the journalism here appears to place the media houses in a supporting role of the negative perceptions of LGBTQ+. This is because the journalism in Ghana only reflects one side of the story, which places the media houses in a supporting role of the negative perceptions of LGBTQ+. Given that the media reflects society, this is not something that should come as a surprise. The messages that are being projected or constructed by the media in Ghana are tailored to the preferences and worldviews of the majority of the country's population.

On the other hand, in comparison to the Daily Graphic, which is controlled by the government and is therefore expected to toe the government line, the Daily Guide is privately owned and therefore has the potential to present a more objective image which was not the case in anyway. At the moment, the two media houses are a part of the larger segment of Ghanaian society that is opposed to LGBTQ+ issues and which is comfortable demonstrating it. This is the case with both media houses. Or maybe not.

The patterns of framing and reporting that are identified in chapter four have ramifications not just for the media and journalists and their viewers, but also for academics who study media and students who study media. When it comes to a contentious subject such as LGBTQ+ issues, frames make it easier for journalists to arrange material and simplify difficult issues in a way that is compatible with their journalistic routines and ideals (Gans, 1979). This is especially true when it comes to simplifying complex issues related to LGBTQ+. According to the findings of this study, journalists and the media houses they work for have chosen to organize information about LGBTQ+ issues in a way that portrays it in terms of morality with negative tones. This decision was most likely made because it is the easiest way to simplify this issue, given that this kind of framing is already consistent with the perceptions of the public or audience. Because of this, media outlets and journalists in Ghana find themselves playing a part in the upholding of the status quo with regard to how the general population regards LGBTQ+ concerns and issues.

Due to the sensitive nature of the topic, as well as the nature of the reporting that has been observed over an extended period of seven months beginning on June 1, 2021 and ending on December 31, 2021, it is likely that the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide will not prioritize the dissemination of information that is objective and balanced regarding LGBTQ+ issues in Ghana. Because of this, it is unlikely that the two newspapers will assist the readers of respective audiences in making informed decisions regarding whether or not they will support LGBTQ+ issues. This view is supported primarily by the fact that the current socio-political environment is hostile towards LGBTQ+ issues. Despite this, the two media houses must meet the interests of both the government and religious leaders (to some extent) as well as their audiences in order to remain relevant sources of information. This view is supported by the fact that the current socio-political environment is hostile towards LGBTQ+ issues.

This suggests that the audiences of the two media houses receive biased information, which only supports their views, and does little to expose them to information that helps them make up their minds about which side of the discussion to belong to. This is implied by the preceding, which states that the audiences of the two media houses receive biased information. This is not to suggest that the persons who make up the audience of these two publications are not active consumers of media messages and can, as a result, recognize bias when they are presented with it. However, this leads to the examination of the idea that when the media accord one frame more salience than another, that salient frame becomes more accessible and is therefore more likely to be recalled from memory by an individual than a frame that is not as salient as the one that was accorded the higher level of importance by the media. According to Tversky and Kahneman (1973), this is the case as a result of the fact that the accessibility of frames makes them more appropriate than those that are not easily available. In addition, the two media institutions do very little to encourage the active consumption of the content of their newspapers. This is despite the fact that, to borrow an idea from a particular researcher, our understanding of the nature of the social world is heavily dependent on how we frame and interpret the information we obtain about the social world (Edelman, 1993).

As a result, the media, in addition to playing an informational role, also shape both the content of what we know about the world and the manner in which we know it. After all, frames are beneficial for making sense of the world, as well as for assisting people in constructing expectations, organizing their memories, mapping out their activities, and interpreting feedback (Goffman, 1974). The way in which we know about LGBTQ+ issues and what we know about them is determined by the framework that has formed here. Based on the findings that were discussed in the chapter devoted to data analysis, we are aware that LGBTQ+ issues are covered in the media in Ghana; nevertheless, it is almost always portrayed as a national issue that merits attention but is not covered to the extent that it would be considered front-page news. We are also led to consider that it is a negative phenomenon, that it goes against our laws, cultural values, and norms, and that religious leaders, politicians, and medical experts have a say on this very contentious issue, while gays, lesbians, trangenders, the LGBTQ+ community, and their supporters do not.

Scholars of the media can learn a few things from these results, particularly concerning the importance of maintaining impartiality and a balanced perspective while reporting on current events from a journalistic perspective. According to Nassanga (2008), when reporting on a

difficult topic, the media are tasked with adhering to the journalistic ideals of balance and objectivity by providing coverage of many perspectives on the topic under discussion. However, the manner in which communications are constructed, presented, or organized will result in certain information being emphasized more than other information, which, in turn, tends to legitimize and consequently discount particular perspectives (Tuchman, 1978; Scheufele, 2000). This fact has been shown in a variety of different ways according to the findings of this study. For instance, it was discovered that all the four frames that were being researched were present; nevertheless, the morality frame came out as the one that was most prevalent. The morality frame was continually in rivalry with another frame in order to maintain a sense of equilibrium; nonetheless, the morality frame stood out as the more prominent.

The application of the different frames in a more consistent manner in order to modify the sequence in which the information is presented to the audiences is one way to attain balance and impartiality. When it comes to covering LGBTQ+ matters, the media encounter several sociopolitical challenges, which are taken into consideration in this study. However, the research is also aware of the constructionist paradigm's assertion that journalists are "information processors" (D'Angelo, 2002: 877). This means that journalists not only choose what information to include or exclude, but they also package that information in such a way that it reflects the environment in which they operate. Therefore, in the absence of a revolution in the newsroom to accommodate editors and reporters sympathetic to the issues of LGBTQ+, as was the case in the United States, or the establishment of a viable gay press, the only thing that will transform the situation is a shift in public attitude towards LGBTQ+ issues. Studies from the United States and other nations reveal that when this shift does occur, it typically takes place over a period of time spanning a significant amount of time; nevertheless, when it happens, the media will almost certainly begin reflecting the new status quo. As a result, it is just a question of time.

5.3 Personal thoughts and reflections on LGBTQ+ issues.

Coming from a culture in which having a large family is viewed as a sign of prosperity and marriage between the opposite is highly regarded, one develops a preponderance of animosity and negative attitudes towards LGBTQ+ issues. My upbringing, cultural values, and religious values provided me with a negative impression of the LGBTQ+ community (Agyemang, 2023)

Prior to relocating to Norway as an international student, I viewed LGBTQ+ issues as the work of the antichrist, as depicted by Ghanaian society. I viewed homosexuals, lesbians, gays, and transgenders as enemies who seek to subvert God's will. After interacting with a few gays and lesbians in Norway, I have realized that they are not different from me in terms of their humanity. Not that I support the LGBTQ+ community neither am I opposed to it. I am unaffected by their private actions. I believe that everyone has the right to do whatever they please, so long as their actions do not violate the rights of others. In light of this, I believe that religious and moral perspectives should be removed from LGBTQ+ discussions. This is due to the contextual nature of morality and immorality. What is considered moral could be immoral in the eyes of another. Similarly, not all individuals are religious believers. If there are negative consequences associated with LGBTQ+ issues, they should be supported by scientific evidence. This will make it easier for those who do not believe in the Bible or the Quran to understand LGBTQ+ issues better (Agyemang, 2023)

Even though I have an open mind regarding LGBTQ+ issues because of my exposure, I do not support that societies should be compelled to embrace them. The culture of people comprises a society's morals, standards, and values. Even though culture is not static, it is challenging to alter cultural values within a short time. Societies are constructed differently and adhere to various moral standards. So be it if, at some moment in time, members of a society choose to abandon their cultural values and adopt new ones. Therefore, conflict arises when one society attempts to impose its values and cultural norms on another. This is not to imply that LGBTQ+ issues have never existed in Ghana or Africa. LGBTQ+ or homosexuality has always existed in Ghana, but it has never been recognized or tolerated. In the future, I envisage Ghana legalizing LGBTQ+ rights, but I believe it will take some time. Rather than being pushed by the international community, this will be a gradual process that the people must decide upon (Agyemang, 2023).

5.4 Limitations of the study.

As radio, television, and print media all differ in their audience size, structure, and the nature of the reporting they produce, as well as the subjects they cover, limiting the research to just two national dailies may have skewed the results. The first limitation of the study is that it was only able to examine two of Ghana's many newspapers due to resource and time limitations.

Because of this, the results cannot be generalized to other print publications or other forms of media, such as television or the internet.

Finding appropriate material on LGBTQ+ issues in African countries was a second big obstacle to the research. Although numerous studies on media coverage of LGBTQ+ issues in other regions of the world were discovered, academic literature originating from Africa and focusing on how media in Africa portrayed LGBTQ+ issues proved more elusive. This limited the researcher's ability to draw from and compare results from studies conducted on the same continent as the current one.

5.5 Suggestions for future research.

Given the study's caveats, further research into and updating of scholarly literature on LGBTQ+ issues is warranted, with a particular emphasis on academics from Africa, despite the inherent stigma associated with tackling such a delicate topic. This is because expanding the body of knowledge in this area will allow for a more nuanced analysis of how media portray same-sex relationships in Africa.

In addition, future research should broaden its focus to include additional media types, such as television, radio, and the online media. This will shed light on how various other media in Ghana portray LGBTQ+ issues.

Lastly, surveys of media consumers and other bodies, such as self-identified gays, should be considered in future studies to ascertain their perspectives on media portrayal of LGBTQ+ issues.

5.6 Conclusion.

The purpose of this study was to apply the framing theory to an analysis of LGBTQ+ issues coverage in the Daily Graphic and Daily Guide from June 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021. The study also analyzed the elements that played a role in how the topic was covered and framed in the media. The goals of the study were accomplished using content analysis and in-depth interviews.

The results indicated that LGBTQ+ issues were given special attention in the visuals that accompanied the narratives of media stories. This also implies that the Daily Graphic and Daily Guide considered LGBTQ+ issues to be of considerable significance. The large size of media articles were also discovered as part of the prominence accorded to LGBTQ+ issues.

According to the research, the media focused on religious, politicians and medical experts whiles ignoring gays, lesbians, and LGBTQ+ advocates for news. This statistic suggests that these three demographics carry considerable clout in the debate over LGBTQ+ issues. Hence, religious leaders, government officials and medical experts may be the ones to influence a shift in media coverage of LGBTQ+ issues.

The data showed that morality was used to frame same-sex relationships more often than any other frame. The widespread use of this framing shows that the majority of the Ghanaian people, including journalists, looked to customary morality to address issues of LGBTQ+. This further means that unless these beliefs shift, media portrayals and public perceptions will continue to be focused on morality.

The qualitative portion of this research demonstrated that media practitioners' personal religious and cultural values influenced their reporting on LGBTQ+ issues. This was reflected in how media professionals prioritized stories on LGBTQ+ issues and the kinds of sources they used. Aside from these religious and cultural beliefs, the legal status of LGBTQ+ issues in Ghana and the hesitation of homosexuals, self-identified or suspected, to grant journalists interviews had some impact on framing the issue.

The results of this study may not be applicable to all countries, but they do provide light on the stigmatization of LGBTQ+ issues in Ghana. It also clarifies some of the factors that influenced media professionals in the coverage of LGBTQ+ issues.

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APPENDIX A

CODING GUIDE

Q1. Newspaper

1. Daily Graphic
2. Daily Guide

Q2. Date of publication

Q3. Headline of publication

Q4. Number of stories in each month.

1. June
2. July
3. August
4. September
5. October
6. November
7. December

Q5. Type of story

1. Straight news story
2. Feature
3. Editorial
4. Letter to the editor
5. Columns
6. Opinions
7. Interviews

Q6. Story placement

1. Front page

2. Back

3. page

4. Centre spread.

5. Editorial page

6. Other

Q7. Size of Story/article:

1. One paragraph (small

2. 2-5 paragraphs (medium)

3. Above 5 paragraphs (large)

Q8. Story enhancement

1. Text only

2. Text with image/picture

3. Image or picture only

4. Cartoons

Q9. Type of news frame

1. Conflict frame

2. Morality frame

3. Human-interest frame

4. Responsibility frame

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDE (For Reporters).

I am Moses Agyemang, a master's student at NLA University College in Kristiansand, Norway. I am conducting a study on media representation of LGBTQ+ issues in Ghana and some of the factors that affects how media professionals portray LGBTQ+ issues. I would appreciate it if you can take part in this study by providing the best response you can to the following questions. Your answers will be held in strict confidence and used only for academic purposes.

Section A

1. How often do you cover stories on LGBTQ+ issues? (Is it a beat you cover?)

2. What makes it important or not to cover LGBTQ+ issues?

3. How do you select sources for your stories on LGBTQ+ issues?

4. What are some of the challenges you encounter in your coverage of stories on LGBTQ?

5. What are your personal views on LGBTQ+?

6. How do these views affect your work when it comes to your presentation of LGBTQ+ issues?

7. How do your religious beliefs and upbringing affect your coverage of LGBTQ+ issues?

8. Aside from religious beliefs and your upbringing, what other factors affect your of LGBTQ+ issues?

9. Do you have anything to add? Questions?

10. Section

B (Personal Information)

1. Male

2. Female

3. Age

4. Level of education?

5. Number of years spent in journalism

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW GUIDE (For Editors).

I am Moses Agyemang, a master's student at NLA University College in Kristiansand-Norway. I am conducting a study on media representation of LGBTQ+ issues in Ghana and some of the factors that affects how media professionals portray LGBTQ+ issues. I would appreciate it if you can take part in this study by providing the best response you can to the following questions. Your answers will be held in strict confidence and used only for academic purposes.

Section A

1. Do you have a news editorial policy?

2. If yes, what does it say about LGBTQ+ issues?

3. If no, why not?

4. How often does your paper cover issues on LGBTQ+? Is there a beat for it?

5. Do you think it is important to publish stories on LGBTQ+ issues? Why?

6. What are some of the factors you consider in selecting stories on LGBTQ+ issues?

7. What challenges do you encounter in publishing stories on LGBTQ+ issues?

8. What are your personal views on LGBTQ+?

9. Do you think these views affect your work when it comes to your presentation of LGBTQ+ issues? If yes, how?

10. Do you have anything to add? Questions?

Section B (Personal Information)

1. Male

2. Female

3. Age

4. Level of education?

5. Number of years spent in journalism