Africa's Image in the Ghanaian Press:

the influence of international news agencies

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I devined this dedication into three:

Elsie Aseiduwaa Acquaisie
Eliana Tetteh
Kendra Tetteh

For the dreams we share;
The love we confess to each other; and

The tough times we endure.
ABSTRACT

The Africa rising discourse leads to a new wave of optimism about the continent’s image in the Northern press with reported improvements in tone and subjects. One interesting angle missing is how this improved-image is mirrored around the world particularly in Africa itself. Drawing on news values theory, intermedia agenda setting and postcolonial critique, I examine the nature of the continent’s portrayal in the Ghanaian press with a focus on the dominant themes of representation, subject and tone of the coverage. The explanatory analysis unpacked the prevailing conditions actors and practices that have contributed to the coverage of Africa in the Ghanaian press. Using ethnographic content analysis (ECA) and ethnographic interview, with a reconstructive interview technique, the perspectives of the journalists and editors were unveiled. The major findings indicate that Africa’s media image in Ghana is dominated by themes of war, crime, killings, crises, and terrorism. The African story is narrated with a negative tone and with significant reliance on global news organisations from the Northern hemisphere as sources. For the Ghanaian journalists and editors, harsh economic conditions and their cost-cutting rationale in the media business, plus proximity in journalistic ideology and the uneven power encounter in the colonial experience remain the major reasons for the kind of coverage Africa gets. Irrespective of the resistance demonstrated through a reflexive claim of an African perspective and the diversification of sources to include Xinhua news agency, foreign news selection in the Ghanaian press remains rooted in postcolonial trajectories and conventional power arrangements. The BBC World Service alone accounted for over 62% of the entire coverage leaving all other global news organisations with less than 36%. The Ghanaian newspapers and news agencies accounted for less than 2% of the entire coverage. The unconscious association of the Ghanaian journalists with the qualities of BBC largely represents a Fanonian concept of submissive imitation.
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INTRODUCTION

The coverage of Africa in the media has been analysed using different approaches and from different geographical locations. In the late 1970s and 80s, the literature reported negativity and imbalance on the part of developed nations in both the way they write about Africa and how they have controlled international news flow around the world through the influence of hegemonic private press (Nordenstreng, 2012; Sreberny-Mohammadi, 1997; Hawk, 1992; Sreber, 1985; Stevensn and Shaw, 1984; Nordenstreng and Schiller, 1979; Galtung, 1971; Galtung and Ruge, 1965). The current literature seems to suggest that the social construction of the discourse about Africa, which has become known as *Afro-pessimism*, has either improved in the wake of *Africa rising discourse* (Bunce, Franks and Paterson, 2017, Nothias, 2015; Ojo, 2014) or it is a non-existent myth (Scott, 2015). While recent publications argue that the claim of negative representation has no validity beyond suspected Western countries (Scott, 2017; Obijiofor & MacKinnon, 2016), others continue to adduce empirical evidence to the negative coverage of Africa in the USA elite press and how this has spread around the world (Gruley & Duvall, 2012).

In this book, I trace these debates through the examination of the nature of the continent’s image in Ghanaian press with a focus on the dominant themes of representation, subjects and tone of the coverage. I proceeded to offer reasons that have accounted for the coverage, not only from the perspectives of the journalists and editors but also their newsroom and the world beyond these two contexts. Through a comprehensive design of ethnographic content analysis and ethnographic interview, the study covered the foreign news articles; the journalists and editors; international news agencies and the historical antecedents that have contributed to the coverage.
Africa get in the Ghanaian press. This introduction continues with a general background, statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study and overview of chapters.

**Background**

The growing interest in the study of international news flow dates back to history. “The Persian, Greek, Roman and British empires used available communication channels and technologies to accentuate their existence, strength, power, and religion. And through these, they increased their power over time and space” (Thussu, 2000, p.11). However, an early attempt to explain the coverage of one country by another became prominent through the work of Johan Galtung, who introduced the Centre-Periphery Model in which he attempted to explain the inequality within and between nations and why that phenomenon was resistant to change. These inequalities and imbalances in international news flow highlighted by Galtung confirmed the persistent complaints developing nations had been making with regards to their coverage in the Northern press (Galtung, 1971; Galtung & Ruge, 1965).

The attempts to explain how nations cover each other were not adequate to establish the necessary credibility of these imbalances. In fact, not until the publication of UNESCO’s McBride Commission report, the claims of developing nations about imbalances and negative portrayal by the Northern media leading to inaccurate perception and prejudices in the West, remained largely allegations. In addition to the UNESCO publication, several other studies, especially on the portrayal of Africa in other places, have been published (Bunce et al. 2017; Mody, 2010; Chang & Lee, 1992; El Zein & Cooper, 1992). And yet, Scott (2015) contended that although the claim could be accurate, it could not be substantiated with empirical data.
involving non-elite media, diverse events and beyond the US and UK. It is not in
doubt, whether or not exaggerated, that the negative media representation from these
few countries matters because of its rippling effects on perceptions elsewhere in the
world. This is because their coverage is intensified by the fact that the seemingly
many media channels and newspapers around the world have failed to promote
diversity of views but they rather ensured the reproduction of the same stories under
different banners (Williams, 2003).

The Western media have constantly refuted the claim that they represent
Africa and other parts of the world with negative frames mainly because what is
referred to as Western press is usually US and UK press plus dotted cases in Northern
Europe and North America. This debate has been characterised by accusations and
counter-accusations, which have not helped the scientific description of the
phenomenon. The refutations by the Northern hemisphere, led by the United States of
America, according to Graubart (1989) requires a review. Graubart suggested in the
California Law Review that when the USA is evaluating proposals for change in the
negative coverage of developing countries, it should move away from “the pious
sanctity of its private press and pragmatically consider what steps it can take to further
the economic and socio-cultural conditions in the Third world by reversing the
consequences of centuries of negative coverage” (p. 631).

Two crucial arguments are usually ignored regarding the critique of using
USA and UK as the reference point for analysis of Afro-pessimism. First, this is
justified, in some cases, due to the hegemonic control these two countries exert on
foreign news production and distribution across the world (Paterson, 2017; Cohen,
2013). Another interesting angle missing in this debate is the mirroring of the
Northern media coverage around the world particularly in Africa itself. Most often,
the literature simply described these as globalisation. A detailed look at how African journalists portray countries on the continent could provide us with useful insights to assess the gravity of Western domination of the foreign news business and to assist us to understand the ways in which these have promoted dependency and hegemonic influences.

The argument that African journalists are not doing any better than their Northern media counterparts in portraying the continent with negative frames ignores the complexities behind foreign news selection such as agency of sources and hegemony. Existing research efforts, so far, have described how the media in the dominant Northern hemisphere (Western nations) continues to negatively represent Africa, with some little improvements (Bunce, 2017; Nothias, 2015). These studies on the representation of Africa by the Western media in the 21st century have quantitatively measured the amount of space and the quality of news the African continent gets. Some were limited to visual representations while others concentrated on journalistic decisions, biases and the form of storytelling. Specific recent publications have analysed other developed nations other than the regular suspects (USA and UK) and have found the entire claim to be a non-existent myth (Obijiofor and MacKinnon, 2016; Scott, 2015). These studies, however, did not deal with how Africa is covered within the continent itself and the few that did, ignored (Obijiofor and Hanusch, 2003; Pate, 1992) the agency of sources that were employed in the coverage. But deconstructing the agency of news sources could lead modern journalism scholarship to the discovery of how Western perceptions about Africa have been reinforced by the kind of sources African journalists have depended on for their reportage about the continent.
The literature in this area of research has focused on the African media’s reportage of the continent. Hardly, did they considered the sources employed in these narratives. They usually content analysed newspapers without a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of foreign news selection. The unanswered questions in those analyses included whether the images presented about Africa in the continent’s press are self-formulated or borrowed, and who the original creators of these images were? How have these images been either resisted or reinforced? In moving the foreign news reporting to the African continent, the complexity behind the news selection process is well recognised. In this study, the weaknesses of these previous studies would be improved. For example, Sobowale (1987) who arrived at the conclusion that Nigerian newspapers do not have a better balance of foreign news distribution and prominence compared to their Western counterparts in terms of geographical distribution, ignored the agency of sources used by these Nigerian journalists. This conclusion is problematic because the agency of sources and the complex process of foreign news selection are inextricably connected. Pate (1992) equally examined how many times Africa was reported in Nigerian newspapers and concluded that Africa was the most reported region compared to other regions of the world. Even though this finding was contrary to earlier results by Sobowale’s (1987), it had nothing to say about the quality of the coverage in question and the dominant international news agencies relied on. The elimination of these weaknesses requires an in-depth study with both quantitative and qualitative dimensions in order to discover the full details of how the African media are covering the continent and through what sources, as well as the subsequent implications arising from the use of such sources.
Statement of the Problem

The relationship between the portrayal given a subject in a coverage and ideology has been established (Van Djik, 2009; Snow & Benford, 2000). In a similar line of thinking, Ofori-Birikorang (2009) concluded that journalistic routines and sourcing of news from official domain led to a framing pattern that reinforces an elite ideology in Ghana regarding the national health insurance initiative. The media frames that appear in news have their roots in the several influences that shape their production and reproduction (Gruley & Duvall, 2012; Van Djik, 2009; Beharrell, 1980). However, most scholars have only analysed media content and ignored the deep-rooted questions of sources. Ignoring the usefulness and influences of sources to news selection is just like saying that there is no relationship between media portrayals and their root sources.

In Sparkes’ (1978) classical news flow research, he demonstrated a huge imbalance in the news flow between Canada and USA. While Canada devoted 49.5% of their foreign news to the USA, only 2.3% of USA foreign news focused on Canadian stories. Sparkes, based on these findings, concluded that Canadian newspapers’ reliance on American sources for their foreign news accounted for the huge disparity. It is justified to argue that sources play a significant role in news construction especially because the ideology of news hardly permits the receiving journalists to make significant changes to what their sources have communicated to them.

Journalists, either Western or African, are committed to the questions of concise introduction that must answer the questions of who, what, when, where, why and how. The important question that remains unanswered is whether the African journalists writing for their local newspapers are capable of any resistance towards the
influences of the international press? We can only answer this question when we begin to analyse their works. Investigating African media output with a concentration on sources provided a new angle to the debate of both quantitative and qualitative imbalance of news flow to Africa. In any case, Wrong (2017) underscored the need for African media to show their resistance by taking a more responsible role than their Western counterpart. She argued that African newspapers and broadcasting media have virtually refused to occupy the spaces left in the reportage of the continent by cash-strapped Western news agencies. Other scholars have argued that all conditions necessary for reporting on the continent by its own citizens are in place. Akinfemisoye (2013) argued that significant improvements in mobile telephony and Internet access on the continent present a glorious opportunity for circulation and access to counter-narratives and broader stories on Africa.

As noted earlier, several of the studies relating to foreign news selection and imbalances have concentrated on Western media output neglecting how this phenomenon, over the years, has evolved and affected journalists around the world and those in developing countries as well. The few studies that investigated the coverage of the African continent by her own media institutions have equally focused on framing, spaces allocated to specific regions of the world, inability to give third world countries prominence and quality of coverage (positive, negative and neutral). These aspects of the problem were studied mainly using content analysis. The exclusive use of content analysis, in this case, cannot account for the perspective of the African journalists and editors, their source preferences, constraints in the newsroom routine and the factors beyond the journalists and their newsroom that have either prevented or hindered their resistance of the negative images circulating in the Northern media organisations.
The circumstances that precipitated the news values of a particular international news agency to become the guiding principle of an African newspaper could be the result of several factors such as media ownership, training, access, relationship and history (Hachten, 2004; Golding, 1977). Unfortunately, these explanatory elements have not occupied the agenda of researchers enough. My quest to investigate the coverage of Africa within the continent itself does not, like Nyamnjoh’s (2017) argued, mean that African journalists will do better or much worse than what their Northern media counterparts have so far done. Rather, I consider this a commitment to plurality, in a way, that gauges how the issues have evolved over the years and crossed borders.

To this point, it could be argued that the comprehensive understanding of Africa’s media image within the continent itself has not received enough attention. This study filled the vacuum by providing a current description of the continent’s portrayal in the Ghanaian press. The description focused on dominant themes employed, the sources utilised, subjects discussed and the reasoning behind the portrayal. The approach in this study satisfied the demand for a comprehensively designed research that takes into account journalists’ perspectives, newsroom culture and ideological level concerns like colonial relationships and emerging economic influences on journalistic news production and distribution. With these covered, the study tackled news selection decision making beyond the events and the journalists to their social milieus, the newsroom and the Ghanaian society in general.

**Purpose of the Study**

The overarching purpose of this study has been the description of how Ghanaian newspapers portrayed the African continent in their foreign news pages and the
subsequent issues such portrayals have revealed. I deconstructed the themes embedded in the foreign news stories that related to Africa. These themes were compared with what has been established already in the literature relating to Northern media coverage of Africa (Bunce et al, 2017; Hawk, 1992). Closely related to this objective is the weight of influence each international news agency carry as a source in the Ghanaian press and the aggregate influence exerted by all the international media on Ghanaian media’s coverage of the continent. The subsequent reasoning behind the kind of representation Africa gets from the Ghanaian press in terms of actors, conditions and practices were evaluated. These specific objectives of the study offered guidance to its focus:

1) To deconstruct the dominant themes, tone and subjects employed in the representation of Africa in the Ghanaian press and to discuss the deconstructed themes in relation to those employed by the media in the Northern hemisphere regarding the portrayal of Africa (Bunce et al, 2017; Hawk, 1992).

2) To determine the weight of influence that international news agencies carried as a source in the Ghanaian press (Obijiofor and Hanusch, 2003).

3) To evaluate the conditions, actors and practices that shape the foreign news selection beyond news values, by uncovering both conscious and unconscious elements, from the perspective of the journalists, their work environment and the immediate world beyond the newsroom.

4) To investigate the nature of inter-media agenda-setting the relationship between Ghanaian newspapers and transnational news agencies (Segev, 2016; Golan, 2008; Groshek & Clough Groshek, 2013; Roberts & Bantimaroudis, 1997).
Research Questions

The review of past scholarship influenced the comprehensive nature of how this study is designed in terms of data collection and analysis, which both determine how the research questions are posed. The following research questions guided the study:

RQ1: How was Africa portrayed in the Ghanaian press?
   a) What were the dominant themes through which the African story was narrated?
   b) What were the subjects mostly covered on the continent?
   c) How was the quality/tone of coverage (negative or positive or neutral)?
   d) How comparable are RQ1 (a,b,c) between the Ghanaian press and their Western counterparts (Hawk, 1992; Bunce et al., 2017).

RQ 2: What is the weight, quantitative and qualitative, of influence that international news agencies carry as sources in the Ghanaian press?

RQ3: What, from the perspective of the journalists, accounts for the kind of representation Africa gets in the Ghanaian press in terms of actors, condition, and practices?

RQ 4: How have inter-media agenda-setting preferences between the Ghanaian press and their foreign counterparts evolved?

Significance of the Study

Media representation and news selection about the foreign others have been debated well enough with a lot of accusations and counter-accusations. Perhaps, Indira Gandhi knew that real change was nowhere in sight when she stressed the importance of self-reliance in these words:

We want to hear African on events in Africa. You should similarly be able to get an Indian explanation of events in India. It is astonishing that we know so little about leading poets, novelists, historians and editors of various Asian, African and Latin American countries while we are familiar with minor authors and columnists of Europe and America (Gandhi, 1984, p.16)
The reactions of some editors in Europe about the portrayal of Third World countries have been rather defensive (Nordenstreng, 2010). A detailed look at the phenomenon in this study offers a hopeful and comprehensive academic perspective lacking in some of the previous literature.

The approach in this study contributes to the literature on media representation in five unique ways. Firstly, this study contests media representation through the approach of postcolonial theory, which is a more democratic re-reading of media text, questioning, reframing and rethinking representations about the West and Others (Shome & Hegde, 2002). It is essential to note that the use of postcolonial theory in analysing foreign news selection is not to emphasise the West and East divide but to understand and explain how identity is represented in the politics of power. This will help explain how the West and Others are constitutive of one another in ways that are both “complicitous and resistant at the same time” (Shome and Hedge, 2002, p.264).

Secondly, the trends in society are dynamic, therefore, the over-concentration on Western media output, in itself, is just a confrontational approach. Gongo (2007) argued that differences exist between Western journalists and their African counterparts in framing the same news item about the continent. Based on this, one can be sure that an investigation of the African press and the way they cover the continent will provide a better understanding of how the continent’s media image is constituted. This study provides a new angle to the literature by pointing to differences and similarities that exist between the coverage of Africa by Ghanaian journalists and their counterparts from the Northern hemisphere. It explained the pre-existing conditions that have shaped these differences. Where similarities are discovered, they were further discussed to determine if they represented a blend of
identities or subtle domination. I provide a description of how far European influences on the states in Africa today may not be representing cultural globalisation. As Mengara (2001) puts it, “The Africa we know today is European made Africa. It’s a world almost totally manufactured in the image, modelled in postcolonial chaos: dependent, unworkable, and inherently chaotic and despotic” (p.8). A comprehensive analysis of Ghanaian newspapers and the themes they carry demonstrated the magnitude of hegemony that lingers around the foreign news selection and helps us understand in what ways this is inextricably linked to colonial tendencies, which have sought to justify Western colonial interventions by relying hugely on de-humanising the colonised (Mengara, 2001).

Thirdly, international news flow is considered usually as a product of gatekeeping factors (Chang and Lee, 1992) or event-oriented determinants (Eilders, 2006, 2006; Maier and Ruhrmann, 2007). Only a few studies have investigated inter-media agenda setting as a possible factor (Groshek and Clough Groshek, 2013; Golan, 2008). Even the few inter-media agenda-setting studies that have been conducted only investigated Western media houses. The findings of this study contribute to this new area of literature through the provision of an explanatory level analysis of how Western new agency materials (articles) subsequently appear in Ghanaian newspapers as foreign news. I argue that these subsequent appearances of these news items in Ghanaian newspapers represent a new form of domination that is occasioned by previous colonial relationships and severe economic conditions, rather than an element of cultural globalisation. With this thinking, I trace the workings of the framework within which Western news agencies extend their newsrooms around the world through inter-institutional repetitions of their news items and formats. Other
scholars have called this phenomenon *news borrowing or journalistic co-orientation or inter-nation intermedia agenda setting*.

Furthermore, most studies on news selection have been limited to content and frame analysis at the expense of a broader, explicit and multidisciplinary framework (Van Dijk, 2009). The Glasgow Group authors, who published a seminal research on international news imbalances, explored these difficulties with the reasoning that news making is based on cultural routines and professional practices that are usually taken for granted by researchers when they investigate news selection. With these backgrounds, and as per the recommendations of Van Dijk (2009), this study developed a detailed and explicit analysis of foreign news production routines and structure of the foreign news report. All these provided insights into the deeper understanding of ideological reproductions taking place in the Ghanaian press.

In an attempt to capture the inherently ideological structures embedded in the news selection process, this book contributes to the literature on journalism research with a unique blend of ethnographic content analysis (ECA) and ethnographic interview. Although ECA is aimed at seeking a deeper insight into the media text, it still cannot provide the perspective of the journalists and editors. This weakness was addressed with a design of a detailed ethnographic interview. The application of these detailed methodical techniques largely enriched the findings in this book.

**Overview of Chapters**

The details here show how the various chapters of the research have been presented:

The introduction consists of the general background, statement of the problem and the purpose of the research project, and the research questions. It also includes the significance of the study, which espoused the uniqueness and contributions of the
study. The descriptions in this book were approached in a manner that revealed the image of Africa in the Ghanaian press with a specific focus on how the literature described the dominant themes employed by media in its coverage, the sources, actors, conditions, and practices at the heart of the foreign news selection.

Chapter one presents the historical and contextual background of the study. Beginning with a discussion of the UNESCO commissioned McBride and Sreberny-Mohammadi reports, the chapter opens up the debate of that era. The findings of Hawk’s edited book on the *Image of Africa* are outlined. This is followed by the recent replication of Hawk’s (1992) work by Bunce et al. (2017). Ghana’s evolving positionality as a strong Pan-African state is discussed from the pre-independence through the post-independence era to the current Internet and digital age. The chapter further zeroed in on the overview of the Ghanaian media as well as a detailed description for each of the selected newspapers.

Chapter two situates this study in the current literature as a way of benefiting from previous research. It discusses the meaning and usefulness of foreign news in general. This was followed by a conceptualization of terms and a discussion of opportunities that digital and Internet era brought to foreign news decision-making. It continued to evaluate the various determinants of international news coverage. The chapter continued to describe how Africa has been portrayed in the Western media alongside a discussion of the determinants of international news flow. This chapter zeroed in on the framework within which the African press operates and the influences of international news agencies, and Western education and training on this whole process. This is followed by a review of how new media technologies have influenced foreign news reporting in Africa. It further reviewed previous empirical research on how the continent has been covered and the specific framework under
which the African press works.

Chapter three is devoted to the theoretical and conceptual frameworks of the study. The theories of newsworthiness, inter-media agenda setting and postcolonial critique are discussed. The inter-relationships among the three theories are outlined to bring out useful hints to address the objectives of the study. The theoretical framework is then married to the hierarchical influence model of Shoemaker and Reese (2014), which accounts for the rigorous conceptualization of the varied influences on the selection process. The chapter closes with a summary of its core elements.

Chapter four discusses the methodology with a detailed outline of the various methods and procedures that were used to obtain and analyse data for the study. It explains the major methodology and research design utilized. Ethnographic Content Analysis (ECA), a method that integrates qualitative and quantitative approaches to content analysis was explained. The rationale for the use of multiple methods (triangulation) for data collection as it pertains to this study was discussed. The chapter explains, the sampling methods and procedures employed, the units of analysis that were subjected to examination, the period of study, as well as all the steps and procedures that went into the actual data collection in the field. The methods of data analysis were also discussed. The chapter ended with an explanation for validity, reliability, ethical issues as well as coding instruments and the protocol adopted for the study.

Chapter five presents the findings of the ethnographic content analysis that emerged from the examination of news articles on the foreign news pages in the newspapers studied. It discussed how the findings of the ethnographic content analysis (ECA) fit into the purposes outlined for the research. The chapter ends with a
comparison of Africa’s image as portrayed in the Ghanaian press vis-à-vis the current literature. This comparison was not meant to apportion blame but rather to reveal the gravity of the consequences of Western media domination of foreign news around the globe. The quantitative influence exerted by individual international news agencies are examined in addition to the overview of Africa’s portrayal in the Ghanaian newspapers with regards to subject and tone of the coverage. The dominant themes of the portrayal were then discussed.

Chapter six focuses on the description of the findings relating to the ethnographic interview aspect of the data as a follow-up to chapter five. The ethnographic interview revealed the reasoning behind the foreign news selection process in Ghana from the perspective of the journalists and editors regarding the discursive themes that were found earlier in the content analysis. The chapter outlined the qualitative weight of influence and the conditions shaping the foreign news selection and Ghanaian media. The workings of inter-media agenda-setting relationships discovered in the content analysis were traced through the ethnographic interviews. All the findings were reduced to thick descriptions involving little or no discussions at that stage of the analysis.

Chapter seven discusses the findings, outlined in chapters five and six, in line with the objectives of the entire study especially through an evaluation of each of the research question posed in the introduction. The chapter argues that the coverage of foreign news in the Ghanaian press reinforces existing postcolonial trajectories and relationships that have played into the existing imbalance in international news flow around the world. The chapter further found that soft-power success of China’s Xinhua news agency could not only represent south-south cooperation, as it was described but presents a new form of domination due to the fact that the relationship
and engagement between the Chinese and their Ghanaian counterpart is marked with an imbalance of power relation and interaction. Juxtaposing the dependency of the Ghanaian press on international news agencies against their claim of an *African perspective*, one could describe the processes as resistant and subaltern-ambivalence in nature. However, to reach such a conclusion requires an answer to the question of when resistance is considered effective. Is it when it is conceived or when it is practised? This is because having conceived that change is immediately required, the Ghanaian journalists have done less in practice to establish any potent resistance to their negative proxy coverage of the continent.
CHAPTER 1 - HISTORICAL AND CONTEXTUAL ANTECEDENTS

“Indeed, in the Marxist tradition, it is the object of faith that no aspect of society can be understood apart from its social and historical context”
(Shoemaker and Reese, 2014, p.65).

In this chapter, the historical and contextual backgrounds of foreign news about developing nations are generally traced through the ideological path they have threaded especially with a mention of the efforts of UNESCO. The New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) debate is reviewed from the perspective of McBride and Sreberny-Mohammadi reports. The books of Hawk (1992) and Bunce et al. (2017) that touch on the continuities and evolutions of the debate were reviewed.

The historical and contextual position of the Ghanaian media was discussed especially its evolving nature. The pre-independence or colonial era of the Ghanaian media was marked by significant ambivalence with regards to press freedom and these were outlined. The same British colonial regime that has been credited with the enabling environment for the growth of nationalists press in Ghana, equally enacted very draconian laws limiting press freedom at some point. Post-independence Ghanaian press became more repressive than their colonial counterparts. The continuities of the post-independence era were traced to the current system of the press that is in operation in the country. This detailed description of the Ghanaian press was followed by a description each of the selected newspaper.

It is argued in this chapter that Western historical entanglements with Africa, especially Ghana, on the development of modern communication and journalism, have left significant ideological footprints on the Ghanaian journalist’s foreign news selection. The stark imitation of Western journalism education and curricula have
been further fortified by media assistance programmes and training that continues to be dominated by development organisations and media professionals from the global North (Schiffrin, 2010).

UNESCO and Ideological Trajectories of Global Communication Debate

The concept of New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) occupied global media policy debates from the 1970s until the 1990s in the heat of strong ideological battle relating to decolonization and the collapse of Soviet communism (Nordenstreng, 2011). The debates started by 55 Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) members, received attention from professional and academic communities, and by the 2000s had been replaced by concepts of media globalization. The NAM members argued that the existing order was neo-colonial and exhibited cultural imperialism and as such provided developed countries control over media technologies, including the capacity to produce cultural products ranging from movies and music to news. The proponents of NWICO felt there was the need for the reversal of the Western dominance or a balance in the current one-way flow of information that flows from the Northern to the Southern hemisphere. The least developed countries claimed they were covered less and usually ignored by the affluent world, who was only fascinated by disasters, famines and wars (Dakrouy & Hoffmann, 2010).

The aim of the NWICO concept was to provide developing countries with a greater influence over their media, information, economic, cultural, and political systems in order to change the current world communication system. This change was necessary because the system currently in place is an outgrowth of prior colonial patterns and control reflecting commercial and market imperatives (McPhail, 2006).
This debate also covered issues of human rights. There was a call for explicit recognition of a human right to communicate, which was linked to the processes of development and democratization. The proponents argued that this right could only thrive in an enabling environment as against the recognition of only individual freedoms leading to liberal doctrine of a free flow of information (Hoffmann, 2010).

Johan Galtung introduced the Centre-Periphery model as an attempt to explain the inequalities within and between nations and why such structures were resistant to change. The Structural Theory of Imperialism divided the world into two parts with the dominant countries of the Northern Hemisphere as the “Centre” and the dependent countries of the Southern Hemisphere as the “Periphery”. He contended that the vertical interaction between the “Centre” and the “Periphery” is a major factor behind inequality among nations. He added that “the feudal interaction structure is the factor that maintains and reinforces the inequality” and by that serves as a protection for the continued existence of this inequality (Galtung, 1971 p. 89). In a review of Galtung's work, Mowlana (1985, p.21) came up with these four hypotheses regarding the state of the world press system:

i. There is a preponderance of negative news events reported in the world press systems.
ii. There is a much larger discrepancy in the news exchange ratios of "centre" and "periphery" nations than in the exchange ratios of "centre" nations.
iii. “Centre” news occupies a larger proportion of the foreign news content in the media of "periphery" nations than the “periphery” news occupies in the "centre" nations.
iv. There is relatively little or no flow of news among "periphery" nations, especially across colonial-based bloc borders.

Mowlana further reviewed previous studies that analysed the imperfections in the
content of world news with and he identified five shortcomings (Mowlana, 1985, pp. 24-25). The shortcomings identified were:

i. International news is “Western-centric” since the sources of news, even in most of the Third World, are Western news agencies and wire services.

ii. The Third World coverage, which exists, focuses on negative or "bad" news - catastrophes, violence and corruption, rather than on "developmental" news or educational information. Further, the study conducted by Stevenson, and Cole (1984b) revealed that negative news is not only predominant in Western media, but in the Third World media as well: a conclusion also drawn by Ume-Nwagbo in her study of African newspapers (Ume-Nwagbo, 1982).

iii. International news tends to be shallow and oversimplified; in that, it concentrates on the political leanings of governments rather than on accurate and comprehensive coverage of conflicts affecting nations and people.

iv. International news concentrates on the elite rather than on the masses.

v. Research shows that the emphasis of international news is on events rather than on factors leading to and causing the events.

The review of Mowlana (1985) comes at the backdrop of huge historical and ideological battles of influence that characterised this debate at the beginning of 1970 until today. Nordenstreng (2010) contends that the historical moments which gave rise to the MacBride report could be divided into five different stages, which partly overlap, beginning from 1970 to the new millennium. Nordenstreng defined these developments as the “global media debate” and argues that the elements of this debate predated the “pre-war League of Nations” (Nordenstreng, 1993a, p.65). On the basis of such history, one could argue that the New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) was an old idea and principle reorganised under a new umbrella. Nordenstreng (2010) clarifies that even though NWICO was located in mass media, the basic concept underlying it was in international law. Eek (1979) provided an insightful analysis which established that the concept of Order was already included
in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. He subsequently argued that media and its freedoms were governed by an established framework of international law which imposes both freedoms and responsibilities.

Proponents and supporters of NWICO insisted that “the activities of imperialism were not confined solely to the political and economic fields but also cover the cultural and social fields” and as a result required a “concerted action in the fields of mass communication” (Paterson, 2017; Nordenstreng, 2010, p.2; Nordenstreng & Hannikainen, 1984). They offered an analysis of press freedom in a way that problematized and deconstructed the concept's bias for neoliberal ideals. Specifically, the American free flow doctrine as an instrument of cultural domination was highlighted by Herbert Schiller (Schiller, 1984, 1976).

The MacBride Commission was formed in the heat of the banter between imperialism and press freedom. The eventual report was sharply criticised by scholars for its compromising posture (Hamelink, 1981). Nordenstreng (2010) highlighted some differences in opinion on the Commission itself when he quoted a remark of Gabriel Garcia Marques and Juan Somavia, who disagreed with the new offer of United States to develop communication infrastructure in the developing world as a way of dealing with the imbalances and inequalities highlighted:

The insistence on the need to develop communication infrastructures in the third world countries is correct and necessary, but it should not be overstated. It is not possible to solve contemporary communication problems through money and training alone. The idea of a ‘Marshall Plan’ for the development of third world communications is inappropriate and will tend to reproduce Western values and transnational interests in third world societies. Actions in this field if not carefully selected could reinforce minority power structures...
within third world countries or serve as a vehicle for cultural domination (p. 11).

Cees Hamelink offered one of the strongest criticisms regarding the treatment of transnational news agencies in the report:

The Report, although rightly pointing to the crucial role of transnational corporations in the field of international communications, did not sufficiently recognize that the new international information order is indeed likely to be the order of the transnational corporations. The "one world" the report ambitiously refers to in its title may very well be the global marketplace for transnational corporations (Nordenstreng, 2010, p.11).

Aside from the criticisms, the MacBride report asked a few questions which were not answered and have become even worst now and still require answers. The report asked for the establishment of a New World Communication and Information Order (NWICO), the plurality of sources, the elimination of negative effects of monopolies, and the augmentation of national media to circumvent dependence on only external sources. The eighty-two recommendations of the report have hardly been implemented (Hancock & Hamelink,1999). However, the issues identified in the recommendations are still recurring with their emphasis on social impact instead of technology. According to Nordenstreng (2010), the issues should be pursued with an analytical approach to include much of what was proposed by the MacBride Report without necessarily using the phrase new world information and communication order.
The McBride Commission gathered large data on “contents of information, accuracy and balance in facts and images presented, infrastructure for news supply, rights and responsibilities of journalists and organisations engaged in news gathering and distribution as well as technical and economic aspects of their operation” (McBride, 1980, p.xix). Sean McBride knitted the entire report to a single spirit of the Commission’s work. It was his estimation that when goodwill governs the future dialogues on the issues the Commission looked into, the resultant effect will be a new order benefiting all humanity. The report indicated how different types of journalism (business press, sensational press, the opinion press, the crusading press) over the years have mirrored popular cause anytime there is a challenge to the established order. To MacBride and his team, there are running “historical links that can be perceived today both in the content of reporting and the way the newspapermen from those origins of journalism types conceive their socio-political responsibilities in the regions they are (MacBride, 1980, p.7).” According to MacBride (1980), the modern concept of press freedom emerged as a reaction to American and French revolutions and these provided strong contextual background for the application of it until today. Having traced the historical context of written communication from its use by minorities to majorities and its increasing commercial structure and outlook, the report established how much of all these changes have resulted in “harmful disparities both between countries and within them, as well as towards diversity, pluralism and a great variety of communication patterns, both at various development levels and inside countries belonging to different socio-political systems (p.10).” They concluded based on these that an evolution of the communication order represents the roots of the present day communications system and as such requires a thorough
investigation. They also mentioned that information communication may become the sources to create wealth or the system responsible for the existing communication gaps and these might contribute to the widening of the gap between the rich and poor nations. The report argued that even though communication was a weapon of the independence struggle and played a significant role in the quest of developing countries to improve their economic and political future, these benefits might be thwarted because of the continued dominance and the power possessed by some nations over the technical and general resources within the sector. As a result, these endowed nations have imposed their ideas on the developing nations.

The second half of the twentieth century witnessed over two billion people from almost eighty nations being liberated from manifest colonial domination. These liberations instigated feelings of agitations about the prevailing world order full of imbalances. They realised that the world’s political, economic, scientific, technological, military, social, and cultural conditions have rather fostered dependence of a large number of nations on just a few domineering ones. The McBride report found cultural dependence as a serious injustice just as political and economic dependence, which have usually remained at the centre of dependency discussions. They argued that “communication” has rather encouraged these through “exchange between unequal partners, allowing the predominance of the more powerful, the richer and the better equipped” (p.34). The report problematizes discrepancies in power, knowingly or inadvertently, as originally influential on how the structure and flows of communication work.

The report equally set the path of this research by arguing that imbalance in news, in particular, is a complex and varied phenomenon with both quantitative and qualitative manifestation at various levels and different forms between developed and
developing nations and among developing nations themselves. The MacBride report concluded that “doubtlessly, there is no single, universal criterion by which to measure these imbalances and disparities since news values differ from one country to another and from culture to culture and even sometimes within a single country” (p.36).

The major argument against the agitation of imbalance by developing countries emanates from the free flow concept/doctrine, which is an outgrowth of freedom of expression. This doctrine, which has been applied to collective human right, has many flaws and as such has been beneficial to the advantageous nations and detrimental to vulnerable and less endowed nations. The report’s recommendations were meant to eliminate or discourage all unequal encounters and encourage a communication order that is beneficial as well to the developing nations (Nordenstreng, 2010; Vicent et al, 1999; MacBride, 1980).

The McBride report proposed eighty-two recommendations with a conclusion that the world’s communication should be decolonized and democratized in order to propagate the concept of New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) and the subsequent addition of the establishment of the International Programme for the Development of Communication (Kuo & Xiaoge, 2005). The relevance of the McBride report to emerging developments in international communication cannot be over-emphasised. According to Mansell and Nordenstreng (2007), “many of the issues and dilemmas highlighted by the MacBride Report’s authors exist today” (p.15).
Sreberny-Mohammadi report-foreign news in the media.

UNESCO did not renege on its quest to inform the world about the images of foreign places irrespective of the massive drama that ensued after the publication of the McBride report. The organisation (UNESCO) again commissioned the International Association for Mass Communication Research (IAMCR) to study the “image of foreign countries representing different social systems and development stages, as portrayed by the mass-circulated press in the countries concerned” (Sreberny, 1985, p.3). The comparative study of twenty-nine countries covered diverse media systems at varying levels of development, political orientation and pattern of socio-economic organisation.

The study offered a refreshing up-to-date information on the situation at that time with regard to international news flows in many parts of the world. Ume-Nwagbo (1982) described the report as the “most comprehensive set of studies on the new world information order undertaken in 1979-80 by the International Association for Mass Communication Research (IAMCR)” (p.41). The report traced its genealogy from the Brandt report through to McBride and arrived at a single compelling result that has not been properly tackled. This then provided them with the needed locus for another report. According to Sreberny (1985), “one of the major areas of inequality and dependency in the existing information order, lies in the processing and dissemination of news” (p. 7). Even though this point was quite poignant in the previous reports referred to, it was not acted upon. The authors of the Sreberny report refused though that their report is considered as an analytical justification to the New World Information and Communication Order debate. They rather stated their main aims were to “combat ignorance and prejudice on what was seen as a vitally important
issue, to increase awareness, to make it more difficult for conventional rationalizations to be sustained and, to provide a sound base for informed policies and change” (p. 10).

Some of the findings of the Sreberny report are worth revisiting for their continuing instructive attributes. According to the report, “Africa as a region was repeatedly described as providing dominant stories, mostly in relation to Idi Amin and Uganda, and the elections in the then Rhodesia” (Sreberny, 1985, p. 52). However, the continent as a whole in terms of overall quantitative coverage achieved only a middle ranking. The report firmly made an allusion to journalism’s age-old news selection dilemma as the problem of what to omit not what to include. Sreberny established, in line with previous researchers, quantitative imbalance and feudal interaction among developing nations:

“Perhaps more important than the question of whether the West is over-represented in international news is the problem of the several under-representation of certain other parts of the world. There is even a marked shortage of news about other developing regions in the media of any given developing nation, so that it is still true to say that ‘the peripheral nations do not write or read much about each other, especially not across bloc borders” (p. 52).

The study found that Africa and most developing nations were mostly covered during catastrophes and coup d’états, because most media systems conceptualise news to be exceptional events, many of which occurred in Africa, for example. The report also found a great deal of homogeneity in the structure of international news across all twenty-nine media systems and therefore concluded that the free flow doctrine, in that instance could not produce diversity. The two overarching conclusions that remained poignant until today were:
“The narrow determination of what constitutes international news, and the corresponding omission of certain kinds of events, actors and localities. The second has to do with the structure of bias and interpretation through which selected stories are actually presented. The relative weight and impact of each of these on those who receive the news, add the wider implications of this, remains to be assessed by other research.” (p. 53).

**Hawk effort-Africa’s media image.**

For Beverley Hawk, his *Africa’s Media Image* book he edited significantly brought journalism, communication and African studies scholars together with journalists to share scholarly analysis and experiences. The usual phenomenon over the years was that scholars analysed the work of journalists without practical contexts and ended up mostly comparing the journalistic output to idealistic scholarly standards.

The book covered areas of research that remain relevant until today. Some of these included the Cold War, aid, censorship, African-American press, African agency and many others. Hawk (1992) argued that the “repertories of knowledge, symbols, and a priori structuring of Africa are a Western creation” (p.4). He observed that American readers, due to their lack of knowledge about the continent, usually require special contextual information with which to interpret the meaning of reported events coming as part of the African news. Hawk equally showed how the contextual information regarding the reports coming from Africa or media representation of the continent is “limited by commercial and financial considerations of editors, the personal opinions of editors and correspondents, and press restrictions of host governments” (p.4). These were to show that apart from the Western metaphors and colonially-inclined perspectives, there were practical challenges which have all contributed to the continent’s media image.
The book reported that the re-alignment of African events to American contexts for understanding with familiar story frames led to the borrowing of vocabulary from civil right movements and landmark US events. These have resulted in robbing the events of their context and as such provided distorted images of the continent. The increase in technological advancements on the continent coupled with growing African scholars and professionals around the world is commendable but remains only a steady hope. Although most people have argued that significant changes are expected. Beverley Hawk recently argued in the book of Bunce et al. (2017) that changes in recent decades have magnified “African voices, technological advances in communication are transforming information about Africa and consequently the image of Africa around the world. With Africa as the motive force in African news, the continent has the opportunity to claim agency over its image” (Bunce et al, 2017, p. xvii).

Bunce et al. (2017) took a similar approach to Hawk by bringing together scholars and journalists to assess the changes and continuities in the continent’s media image. They have argued that increasing participatory and indigenous information flows have resulted in some form of a continental agency on how the African stories should be written. In the light of these, the Africa rising discourse and reflexive assessment by Western journalists, Bunce et al. argued forcefully that the continent’s image in the Western press has improved a little.

**Positionality of Ghana's Evolving Context**

The literature described so far has been quite concentrated on the evolution of Afro-pessimism or the investigation of Africa’s coverage over time. For instance, Hawk (1992) concentrated on the phenomenon until the 90s, especially from a US
perspective. Bunce et al. (2017) extended this beyond the United States and from that 90s to current situations. What these two studies ignored was the evolution of Africa’s negative image within the continent itself from a critical perspective. In filling this gap, this study argues for depth over width, hence the selection of the case of Ghana for an ethnographic analysis. This is equally different from Obijiofor and Hanusch (2003) who attempted to study Ghana and Nigeria using quantitative content analysis and a survey.

Ghana’s positionality as a rational case to investigate Afro-pessimism could be argued from several perspectives. Ghana is one of the pioneers of Pan-Africanism, provided a fertile ground for liberation thinkers across the continent to fight for self-rule. According to Dzisah (2008), “Ghana is reputed to be the place where the early nationalist press in West Africa took a firm root, from where it extended to other colonies” (p.76). The country attracted civil right leader Martin Luther King Jr. among others, who highly celebrated the nation’s independence. Soon after independence, came several initiatives by Kwame Nkrumah, the first President of Ghana, to promote the continent’s story especially through the introduction of foreign services broadcasting and newspapers. The continuity of Ghana’s leadership, in this regard, suffered a big blow when President Nkrumah’s government was overthrown unconstitutionally on February 24 1966, through a military coup d’état. The country went through several military coup d’états until 1992 when Flt. Lt. Jerry John Rawlings returned the nation to democratic rule. These scenarios have implications for the way the media operates today. However, Ibelema and Bosch (2009) have argued that the dominance of the West Africa press can be traced from the fact that it is hundred years older than their counterparts in East Africa and French-speaking African territories. They argued that it was not therefore accidental that Ghana-
country which led the way- became the first sub-Saharan African country granted independence and continues to present a media that is remarkably unfettered and freest on the continent of Africa” (Ibelema and Bosch, 2009, p.302)

Pre-independence era and continental posture.
Charles Bannerman, recognised as the first African editor of a newspaper, edited the Accra Herald established by his brother Edmund Bannerman and himself. Dzisah (2008) stated that the Bannerman brothers “suffered persistent persecution at the hands of the British colonial authority for publishing stories which were at variance with the dictates of the imperial power” (p.76). Before the effort of the Bannerman brothers, The Royal Gold Coast Gazette and Commercial Intelligencer that began circulation on April 21 1822, by the British colonial Governor, Sir Charles McCarthy, who had started a newspaper in Sierra Leone before arriving in Ghana (Barton, 2014).

Hachten (1971) argued that the “development of mass communications in Africa, both past and present, in its nature and extent are products of European influences” because modern mass communication was not an “indigenous African creation” (p. xv). This, to him, accounts for why differences in media systems are traceable to colonial experiences. Specifically, in Ghana, the role played by newspapers in Anglophone Africa during the struggle for independence is immeasurable and a catalyst for modern nationalism especially in a period where Africans had no hand in the governance of their own countries (Karikari, 1992). The non-religious press in Ghana at this epoch displayed a radical and strong political commitment against colonial rule, a success story that is partly attributable to the British liberal model. The editorial of the maiden edition of The Gold Coast Times published on March 29 1874, summarised the struggle in these words:
…In instances where the rights and interests of the people are disregarded, and attempts are made to tamper with them, and to put them down with a high hand, we shall be found at our post, prepared to perform our duty fearlessly and independently, regardless of the frowns of King or Kaiser…. (Jones-Quartey, 1975:80).

The desire to publish a newspaper for Africans came from the African people themselves (Hachten, 1971). The initiatives did not usually last that long but provided an excellent repertoire of newspapers that followed the closure of the Accra Herald. These are The Gold Coast Times, Gold Coast Independent, Gold Coast Chronicle, Gold Coast People and the Gold Coast Express.

The colonial response to the vibrant Ghanaian press was a resort to sedition laws aimed at both the Ghanaian nationalist press and other nationalist figures across the West African sub-region living in Ghana (the Nigerian Nnamdi Azikiwe and the Sierra Leonean Wallace Johnson). These laws were incessantly applied in the 1950s when public tension for independence became widespread (Reports of the Commission of Enquiry into Disturbances in the Gold Coast cited in Ekwelie & Edoga-Ugwuoju, 1985). The colonial authorities controlled the media development process according to their economic and political interests and this left a bad precedent for newly independent states in Africa. Nyamnjoh (2005) explained that the governments of new states in Africa came to understand, from their colonial masters, the power of media to propagate a particular political perspective and motivate the larger masses to action. For example, even after independence, the colonial powers still had interests in these new sovereign states and ensured that the press kept civil society in check according to Western expectations of a stable geo-region for investment. And this was largely possible because most of the new sovereign states in
Africa depended on Western technological and industrial resources for several aspects of their development process (Nyamnjoh, 2005).

Ghana’s embeddedness in the African liberation struggle dates back to history. Barton (2014) indicated that the first attempt to produce a newspaper for the whole of West Africa came from the Ghanaian leader J. B. Danquah in 1931. The West African Times, even though founded by J.B. Danquah, was supplied by Reuters as a sign of African and Europe’s embeddedness as well. In fact, the heated nationalist press became too loud and the British colonial regime decided to introduce the Mirror Group from the UK. The Group according to Karikari (1992) had swept off almost the entire nationalist press with its superior capital investments but eventually, it was nationalised by Kwame Nkrumah soon after Ghana became independent. To hammer home the idea for self-rule, several other newspapers emerged (Ainslie, 1966). The Asante Times and Kwame Nkrumah’s Accra Evening News were founded in 1947 for similar purposes. According to Ainslie (1966), “with the success of the Accra Evening News, Nkrumah again established the Morning Telegraph in Sekondi and the Cape Coast Daily Mail” (p.58).

**Post-independence era.**

Postcolonial press freedom in Africa was even more repressive than the colonial era. Campbell (1998) quoted the Nigerian publisher, Babatunde Jose, who claimed that the post-colonial press in West Africa had relatively less freedom to publish than during the colonial era. Jones-Quartey's (1974) account of the Ghanaian case was not different. While there were about 40 newspapers between 1931 and 1956, by March 6 1957, when Ghana became an independent state, only 11 newspapers were in production. The irony was that even though the press had the potency to bring
together the nation, this positive attribute was largely ignored. According to Dzisah (2008), this was partly because of the conduct of the opposition to split the country into tribal and regional lines. The post-independence press in Ghana had its benefits quickly eroded by the political polarisation within which it operated. Kwame Nkrumah, who established a few of the nationalist newspapers and edited the *Evening News* as a private newspaper, was cited by Hachten (1971) expressing his disdain for the private press:

> “it is part our revolutionary credo that with the competitive system of capitalism, the press cannot function in accordance with a strict regard for the sacredness of facts and that it, therefore, should not remain in private hands” (p. 168).

Post-independent press in Ghana had elements that were extremely unprofessional and destructive. The opposition newspapers openly supported the secession of the country, an act that was dimmed to have contributed to the drift towards civil and tribal war (Karikari, 1992; Hachten, 1971). While Karikari (1992) felt the opposition newspapers like *The Ashanti Pioneer* had lost their credibility by their extreme tribal posture, Hachten (1971) disagreed saying:

> Undoubtedly, the newspaper had loyal followings and was a quavering but determined voice for freedom of expression in Ghana. The *Ashanti Pioneer* enjoyed an international reputation because it had always fought for its principles and its editors had gone to jail for them (p.177).

In 1963, Nkrumah bought and nationalise the *Daily Graphic* newspaper with a 106,000 daily circulation. The *Daily Graphic* newspaper, however, remained quite independent after it was nationalised. The newspaper and its editors resisted one government after the other until today, forcing some editors into exile and others
forcefully and wrongfully removed from office (Asante, 1996). The initial notion of Kwame Nkrumah to engage the postcolonial press and journalism as an instrument of mobilisation for the nation-state development was dealt a big blow from the opposition press (Awoonor, 1996). Succeeding military governments, having experienced what the press is capable of doing, kept the press’ locus as it was from the colonial powers era to Nkrumah’s era of repressive press posture. This was quite successful in the beginning because both Independence and Republican Constitutions made no provision for press freedom except Article 3 (i) of the 1960 Constitution which stated according to Karikari (1998) stated:

Subject to such restrictions as may be necessary for preserving public order, morality or health, no person should be deprived of freedom of religion or speech, of the rights to move and assembly without hindrance or the right to courts of law (p. 164-165).

According to Karikari (1998), the newspaper licensing law appeared and re-appeared in several forms to limit press freedom especially in 1963 under Kwame Nkrumah. This was repealed by the multi-party parliament in 1970, came back in 1973 and got repealed once more in 1979. The PNDC government resorted to that law again in 1985.

However, from 1962 through to 1992, press freedom became very poignant in the Ghanaian constitution allowing for people to test the laws and their effect on democracy in Ghana. Before independence, Ghana had no electronic media other than Radio ZOY, set up by the colonial government that rebroadcast BBC programmes. Radio ZOY was converted later on to Gold Coast Broadcasting Systems in 1954 and to Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC) in 1956. Ansu-Kyeremeh & Karikari (1998) posited that post-independent Ghana “saw the mass media largely under
government monopoly and control. From 1957 to 1981, one regime after another formulated its set of rules for the media (state newspapers, private newspapers and state electronic media) that proscribed private press activity and kept state-owned media under strict governmental controls” (p.24). Newspapers, however, remained active through these struggles.

When Ghana returned eventually to constitutional rule again in 1992, there were several provisions aimed at a free press and the newspaper sector begun experiencing a considerable boost to effectively perform its watchdog roles. The state monopoly over the broadcasting sector was deregulated to allow private participation in broadcasting after a long legal battle with the government at the time. Effective 1996, the broadcasting sector was liberalised allowing the establishment of several private radio and TV stations in the country. Currently, there are four hundred and eighty-one (481) authorised FM radio stations and ninety-three (93) authorised television stations across Ghana (National Communication Authority [NCA], 4th Quarter/2016). The popular radio and TV stations and newspapers in Accra have an active online presence. Some of the most popular online news websites include: Ghanaweb.com, Myjoyonline.com (Joy FM); Citifmonline.com (Citi FM); Peaceonline.com (Peace FM); Starrfmonline.com (Starr FM); Adomonline.com (Adom FM); Graphic.com.gh (Daily Graphic newspaper); Dailyguideghana.com (Daily Guide newspaper); and Ghananewsagency.org (Ghana News Agency). It is important to indicate that significant number of the articles that appear on online news portals (Ghanaweb.com) and radio stations are the articles on the front-pages of the popular newspapers (FES, 2014; Sikanku, 2011)

Newspapers remain the focus of this research because their influence on media studies worldwide has been enormous. Altheide & Schneider (2013) notes that
detailed analysis of print media data enables us to consider the social context in which stories are produced and to examine the interaction between media representations and normative understandings/attitudes. The findings of Hasty (2005) that newspapers occupy the nexus of the Ghanaian media is not surprising because newspapers have remained crucial to the Ghanaian news discourse for a very long time. The centrality of newspapers to news discourse today remains as strong as it has been even though there has been a massive proliferation of FM radio/TV stations.

FM Radio/TV stations have extended the reach of newspaper discourse with their newspaper review and morning show programmes whose discussions are massively driven by newspaper content. The African Media Barometer Report (2014) confirms this notion when it asserted that radio stations in Ghana often cannibalise or scavenge news from newspapers thereby making accessibility to news found in newspapers greatly enhanced. Few radio stations provide their own news and many of them simply “cannibalise” news from newspaper sources. Some newspapers run just a few copies of their papers and circulate them to radio stations for use. The probability to occupy the central discourse stage in Ghana is high when you appear in the newspaper (FES, 2014), p. 120).

The March 18, 2014 edition editorial of Ghana’s Daily Graphic newspaper titled, Newspaper Reviews Killing Print Media, described how the liberalised electronic media has fed on the content of newspapers as a significant aspect of their morning and late evening discussions. Some radio stations even read their news directly from the newspapers and these, according to the editorial, have resulted in declining newspaper sales.
Overview of Media in Ghana

The media in Ghana has a very firm grounding in the 4th Republican Constitution with an entire article dedicated to its workings. The Friedrich-Egbert Foundation (2013) cited the Constitution as establishing that “All agencies of the mass media shall, at all times, be free to uphold the principles, provisions and objectives of this Constitution, and shall uphold the responsibility and accountability of the Government to the people of Ghana” (p.7). The proliferation of online media is but a compelling response to the exigencies of the moment while the broadcasting industry has been booming since the deregulation of the sector in 1996. Print media and for that matter newspapers, which have remained dominant, continue to set the pace and occupy the nexus of the nation’s political discourse (Hasty, 2005).

In this section, the various forms of the media are described from literature and the current data. The privileging role of newspapers in Ghana is further clarified with a short description of the each of the selected newspapers for the study.

Online media.

The online media is not regulated by any agency at this moment. Almost all traditional newspapers, radio and television stations maintain a website (Friedrich-Egbert Foundation, 2013). The most popular online news portals are mainly maintained by traditional radio stations and others that are exclusively online. Ghanaweb (4th position out of top 10), Yen.com.gh (6th position) and Myjoyonline news (10th position), remain the only locally produced news portal that is frequently visited by Ghanaians (Alexa.com, 2009).
The British colonial government introduced radio broadcasting in Ghana in 1935 for expatriates and later to support colonial policies. Radio broadcasting actually began with a rebroadcast of the BBC World Service entire programming until the formation of Radio ZOY. Post-independence era equally fell into the grip of State control when the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation decree was passed in 1968 making the radio and Television broadcasting a monopoly for the state broadcaster.

According to Friedrich-Egbert Stiftung Africa Media Barometer (2013), “radio is today the most widely accessed and the most popular media format in Ghana, with close to 90 percent of the population of 25.7 million, as at 2012 having regular access to this medium, Ghanaians are able to listen in from their mobile phones, or from radio sets” (p.29). Irrespective of the breath-taking boom in the radio industry, there are several issues that are yet to be fixed. Significant among them is lack of diversity and dependence on newspapers for content. The growing syndication among radio stations located in Accra and their affiliates located in the regional and district capital represents a fine opportunity for access to news in the capital but it also kills diversity.

Aside from amassing affiliations and syndications, the radio sector is witnessing the upsurge of conglomeration with the introduction of Groups. These are companies, who for purposes of advertising and influence are buying out radio stations nationwide or obtaining licences to broadcast in all regions and with different formats and language. This network idea brings economic gains but defeats the very purpose of individual communities having their own voices. The prominent network conglomerates include the Multimedia Group, EIB Group, Despite Group, and other emerging ones.
According to NCA’s report, 354 of the authorised radio stations are in operation while 127 of them are yet to start broadcasting. The dominance of commercial broadcasting in Ghana is forcefully visible as 345 out of the 354 radio stations in operation are commercial broadcasters.

**Television.**

The National Assembly in 1965 inaugurated television broadcast in Ghana. The decree establishing Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC) made the state broadcaster the sole television broadcast station in the country. “The government recognized television as a powerful and potent medium because of its theatrical effects on viewers and the inherent quality to project images that have an effective communicative impact on audiences” (Ofori-Birikorang, 2009, p.65).

According to the National Communication Authority (NCA) 4th quarter report (2016), 93 Television stations have been authorised to broadcast. Out of this number, there are only 51 currently broadcasting, the remaining 42 are yet to start operations. There are different services including Analogue Terrestrial Television, Digital Terrestrial Television, Digital Terrestrial Radio Service on TV Multiplex, Satellite Television Broadcasting, Digital Cable Television and Television over Internet Protocol.

**Newspapers.**

Both the pre and post-independent media history in Ghana was predominantly occupied by newspapers. Earlier on in this chapter, the poignant role of the newspapers and their continuous position at the nexus of political and development discourses to date has been described (Hasty, 2005).
The newspaper actually falls under print media where books and magazines equally play a meaningful role. It is interesting to note that most Magazines carrying hard news, like the AfricaWatch, are described as part of the newspapers. It could be argued that the non-fashion magazines in Ghana are differentiated from newspaper mostly by their layout and style. Table 1 presents newspaper circulation figures.

Table 1.0

*Newspaper Circulation in Ghana*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>Circulation (Copies)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily Graphic</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghanaian Times</td>
<td>80,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghanaian Chronicle</td>
<td>45,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Guide</td>
<td>22,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Democrat</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Dispatch</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Crusading Guide</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Post</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Searchlight</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Friedrich Egbert Foundation, African Media Barometer 2013, p.29

*Daily Graphic.*

The *Daily Graphic* newspaper was established on October 2 1950, in Ghana, then called Gold Coast, by the Daily Mirror Group from the United Kingdom. It was established at the height of popular agitation for Ghana’s independence. By 1957, when Ghana attained independence, *Daily Graphic* had wiped out the Africa nationalist newspapers with a strong competition and its name changed from West African Graphic Company to Ghana Graphic Company Limited (Graphic Communication Group Ltd, 2012)and Karikari, 1992).
In 1962, the Government of Ghana acquired the company by an Act of Parliament and turned it into a statutory corporation in 1971 by the Graphic Corporation Instrument, 1971, LI 709, in accordance with the Statutory Corporations Act, 1964 (Act 232). The company, therefore, became known as the Graphic Corporation. In 1999, the company took advantage of the Statutory Corporations (Conversion to Companies) Act, 1993, Act 461, to change from a corporation to an autonomous private limited liability company under the Companies Code, 1963, Act 179. This resulted in the renaming of the company as the Graphic Communications Group Ltd, its current name.

Hasty (2005) argued that public newspapers in Ghana are dominated by official rhetoric especially the Daily Graphic newspaper that has the “sophisticated task of transforming state rhetoric into cosmopolitan and seemingly neutral version of everyday reality” (p. 169). Since its first publication, the Daily Graphic has gradually acquired a reputation as a paper capable of asserting its independence from any form of control from the government, per the several disagreements it had with editors and governments. The paper’s choice of independent and assertive editorial policies led to several instances of government interference. Even though the newspaper has not been involved in any significant revolt or disagreement with governments for the past two decades, it has virtually become the most widely read newspaper in Ghana.

Despite the worldwide reduction in the sale of newspapers, which has affected Ghanaian newspapers as well, Daily Graphic continues to maintain its reputation as the most economically viable newspaper in the country, especially as the star product within the several portfolios ran by Graphic Communications Group. The Daily Graphic is published six days in a week (excluding Sundays), with a current average daily circulation of about 100,000 copies, representing about 37% of the daily
newspaper circulation in Ghana (FES, 2014).

Most of the circulation markets are in the regional capitals and other urban centres. The *Daily Graphic* has news editors and correspondents in all the regional capitals from where news stories from all over the country are sent to the headquarters in Accra for daily news production. The paper sometimes runs 48 pages, 64 pages or even 80 pages. The 80-page layout is as follows: Inside Africa (page 5), editorial (page 7), Global Outlook (page 9), Features (page 10) Gender (page 13), Politics (pages 17), Health (page 20), Regional News (page 23), Metro News (page 29 -31), Business (page 32 and 69), Classified and Funeral Announcements (pages 50-52), Education (page 60) Sports (pages 77-80). The rest of the pages are devoted to advertisements. The newspaper regularly maintains two pages that my research is interested in- Inside Africa and Global Outlook.

*Ghanaian Times.*

The *Ghanaian Times* is the second largest circulating newspaper in Ghana according to the African Media Barometer report (FES, 2013). Dr Kwame Nkrumah, the first president of Ghana, established this newspaper in 1957 as a printing house (Guinea Press Limited) for his political party, the Convention People’s Party. Originally known as the *Guinea Times*, the paper put its first publication on the stand on March 3, 1958. As a paper born out of a political party in power, *The Ghanaian Times* became an ideological organ of the CPP government. Its editorial policy emerged to protect and defend the CPP government and Nkrumah’s leadership (Asante, 1996).

After the overthrow of President Dr Kwame Nkrumah in a military coup in 1966, the Guinea Press was taken over by the State through the National Liberation Council Decree (NLCD) 130 of 1968. In 1971, an Instrument of Incorporation – Act 363, 1971, transformed the Guinea Press into The New Times Corporation. That Act
was given further recognition by the provision of PNDC Law 42 in 1982. The *Ghanaian Times*, since the overthrow of Dr Kwame Nkrumah, has been self-financing, receiving no government-subvention but rather paying a dividend to government whenever the newspaper makes a profit.

The major portion of the paper’s budgetary needs, including the payment of salaries of all its journalists and staff as well as the provision of logistical support, come from the paper’s income-generating activities, especially advertising. However, there exists a common misconception among commentators and some researchers that the newspaper is government subvented (Ofiri-Birikorang, 2010, p.79; Agbese, 2006). The deputy editor refuted the misconception and argued, “we have been off government subvention since time in memorial and we cannot survive without adverts” (Personal communications, Jim McCulley, Deputy Editor, Ghanaian Times).

Since its designation as a state-owned newspaper, *The Ghanaian Times* has not been able to relieve itself from the public perception of functioning as a mouthpiece of the ruling governments. Instead of the usual adversarial relationship that normally exists between the media and the political authorities in the country (Agbese, 2006), the *Ghanaian Times* has continued to forge a healthy working relationship with all the different regimes of the country.

The newspaper has a daily circulation of 80,000 copies, representing about 30% of the daily newspaper market share in the country (African Media Barometer Report, 2013). *The Ghanaian Times* is a 32-page paper. Its layout includes General News (pages 3, 4, 7-10), Education (pages 13-14), Editorial and op-ed (page 4), Africa News (page 5), World News (page 6-7), Feature- pages (8-9), Politics-pages (11-12), Rural and Regional News (pages 21-22), Business (page 26-28) and, Sports (pages 29-32). The paper does not circulate on Sundays. All the other pages are
devoted to advertisements. This study relied on Africa and World news pages (5, 6 and 7).

*The Ghanaian Chronicle.*

The *Ghanaian Chronicle* was established in 1990 as a private newspaper whose sole aim was to challenge the narratives of the state-owned media. The newspaper which began its publication as a weekly newspaper has become a daily newspaper but without weekend editions, after it gradually won readership and audience over the years.

It is a 16-page paper that publishes political themes as the dominant headline stories. Its layout includes, Politics (pages 2-4, 8-9, 12 and 15), Editorial and op-ed (page, 5), Regional News- (page 6), Business (page10), Foreign News (page 11), and Sports (page 14). All the other pages are devoted to advertisements. The current layout has a page devoted to Nigerian news as a unique foreign page.

*The Ghanaian Chronicle* is one of the bestselling private newspapers in the country with offices spread across all the ten regions. According to the Africa Media Barometer Report (2013), the paper currently has a daily circulation of about 45,000 copies. This represents 17% of daily newspaper circulation in Ghana. Circulation figures at 2016 had dropped compared to figures in 2013. There is also a significant cut in regional bureaus.

Even though it runs news stories on other social affairs, its popularity and prominence in the media landscape in Ghana are fixated on political innuendo, breaking scandals involving governments and “captivating headlines that normally appropriate oppositional grievances as the frame for its editorial agenda” (Ofori-Birikorang, 2009: 82).
**Daily Guide.**

The *Daily Guide* was established in the mid-1990s as a private weekly newspaper with a political agenda. Its main stories, like that of *The Chronicle*, centred on articulating the grievances of political oppositional groups especially the New Patriotic Party (NPP). The paper specializes in political headlines, commentaries, and features discussing political scandals, whether in the form of factual reality or speculation (Ofori-Birikorang, 2009).

The African Media Barometer report (FES, 2013) cites the *Daily Guide* as a private daily newspaper with the fourth highest circulating figures in Ghana. The newspaper publishes from Monday to Saturday and has an average daily circulation of about 22,000 representing 8% of the daily newspaper circulation in Ghana.

Readership is nationwide but centred more in the regional capitals and other urban centres like most Ghanaian newspapers. It has offices in all ten administrative regions of Ghana. The paper began as an 8-page weekly publication, however, it is now a 16-page daily that has devoted some of its pages to cover news stories on Business, Entertainment, Sports, Science and Environment, Life & Styles, World News, and Features. With the exception of its editorial and op-ed features that appear regularly on page 4, the paper does not have any defined presentational layout.

The editor argued that factual political stories take about half of the paper simply because the paper is segmented into different areas. However, stories are also placed on pages relevant to the story theme and that has nothing to do with significance to politics. Except for some few instances where stories are continued on other pages.
Summary

This chapter provided the historical and contextual antecedents that render both the subject of foreign news imbalance and Ghana as an effective choice for this in-depth analysis. I traced the debate from the McBride report through to academic works led by Anabelle Sreberny for IAMRC and a collection of articles from Beverley Hawk to the work of Bunce et al. (2017). The McBride report, which was written in response to imbalances that had been reported by developing countries arrived at very excellent conclusions. The Sreberny report sought to fill a gap of ignorance about representations of nations at the time and certain issues in the international news that still required attention. The collaborative works of Hawk (1992) and Bunce et al. (2017) were further academic elaborations of the issue of representation and Western othering.

Ghana’s role in African nationalism is quite unique in many ways. The chapter recounts this history from pre-independence through post-independence to an overview of the state of affairs of the Ghanaian media now. This historical background accounts largely for the current state of the Ghanaian press, which is usually analysed on many occasions without recourse to the history. This chapter established why the Ghanaian case offers rich insights, ambivalence, continuities and hope.
CHAPTER 2 - BENEFITING FROM THE STATE OF THE ART

This chapter summarises the state of the art research that has attempted, over the years, to discuss the phenomenon of foreign news. The chapter begins with a description of foreign news and its usefulness to identity creation and recognition for both the reported nations and the dominant reporting nations. It further provided definitions and conceptualisations that are useful for this study.

The chapter continues with a presentation of how Africa has been represented in the Western media, particularly, with negative images which have become quite normal over the years. The growing literature that the negative coverage of Africa in the Western press could not be empirically supported was equally reviewed (Nothias, 2017; Obijiofor & MacKinnon, 2016; Scott, 2015).

It touches on how hegemony and representation of Others have become basic elements that support this resistance. The effects of centuries of negative reporting and continuing hegemony around foreign news production have contributed significantly to how Africans view themselves. This was illustrated with research that investigated the framework within which the African press was born and the influence of Northern news agencies on how the African press currently works.

The state of foreign news selection in Ghana is discussed with a focus on the history of journalism education in general, the elements of colonial practice and the current liberalised media market. This chapter ends with a discussion of the way forward in improving foreign news coverage in and about Africa and the crucial opportunities and challenges new media technology offer in this regard.
**Foreign News and Its Usefulness**

Even though mostly evaluated negatively as not representing reality, the foreign news remains a dominant way for people of the world to know about each other and re-align happenings around the world to their local conditions in order to achieve the quality of life.

The usefulness of studying foreign news has mostly been grounded in research. Anokwa, Lin, and Salwen (2003) have referred to the increase in interaction among people and nations as a result of technology and to better describe this requires that researchers examine the nature of communication and news among nations so as to enhance international diplomacy and understanding of nations. Johnson (1997) had earlier argued for this notion when she wrote that “news about foreign countries matter because unrepresentative news can have strong effect on media audiences” and “knowledge and conceptions about other nations, but positive exposure to mass media relates to positive images or accurate judgments about foreign countries” (p. 315).

NYE (2004) has hinted at the fact that soft power is also about the *power over opinion* especially in the current information era. Public diplomacy as an element of soft power relies on media communication to inform and influence the public (Guo & Vargo, 2017; Golan & Himelboim, 2016). Ting, (2010) had demonstrated that foreign news reporting has been influenced by a global consciousness, *foreign news going global* or *going transnational*, which re-established the genre’s contemporary appeal. In the next section, I offer insights into a phenomenon/service which has become a very crucial reference point in global knowledge.
Definitions and conceptualisation.

Pierre Bourdieu's (1998) attempt to describe the relationship between journalism and politics, while commenting on television, produced a definition that quite fits what we today call “foreign news”. He described TV:

as series of apparently absurd stories that all end up looking the same, endless parades of poverty-stricken countries, sequences of events that, having appeared with no explanation, will disappear with no solution - Zaire today, Bosnia yesterday, the Congo tomorrow (p.7).

Supporting the illusory nature of foreign news, Mody (2010) borrowed an allusion from Walter Lippman to explain foreign news as our individual construction of a “picture in our heads” of distant places. These two descriptions fed into the reflection of Keane (2004) about his three decades career as a Foreign News Correspondent for the BBC World Service. He asserted that “since the end of colonialism, Western correspondents have stood in front of emaciated Africans or piles of African bodies and used the language of the Old Testament to mediate the horrors to their audiences” (p.9). To him, for a piece to be complete as a foreign news on Africa, there should be a sound bite from “a white angel of mercy consisting of aid agencies, a brave white reporter and a backdrop of wretched African masses” (p. 9). Keane felt that by so doing they (foreign correspondent and aid workers) believed that the folks back home in Europe “related” to the stories they were sending them by accepting that “just as it’s always been and always will be, they think, but for the goodness of our brave reporters and aid workers” (p.9).

The representation of Africa as a failed and passive site in constant need of foreign assistance has occupied other researchers (Nothias, 2012; B’béri & Louw, 2011). It is not just because it isn’t healthy that way but it perpetuates some values
and stereotypes through a kind of register that supports the continuation of oppression by the powerful (Said, 1978). Bach (2013) argued that the news narrative of Africa as the next business destination is also “an invitation to call back the ghosts of explorers, soldiers and sellers who each in their own way once discovered Africa” (p. 11). This is because foreign news is a “major source of gaining knowledge, for most citizens of developed nations, about the foreign others” (Mody, 2010, p.3). These insightful descriptions of foreign news provided an angle within which to locate Africa’s image.

Wolter (2006) continued this line of thinking and explained that the way the West perceives and react to people from different parts of the world depends largely on how these countries have been reported in the Western media. Schorr (2011) argued that negative reportage about Africa has implications for the flow of finance, trade and tourism to the continent and this informs intercultural relations too. Schorr’s arguments were confirmed when an audience research in developed nations suggested that media representations have an impact on how audiences in the Northern hemisphere perceive Africa (Borowski, 2012).

In Fair’s (1993) assessment of race in the construction of Africa’s media image in the USA, she contended that the African continent, its people, and countries, originates in large part from media produced content since no Western school system studies the continent in any significant form. Media coverage then remains a very useful element of education and influence to understand the continent among Western and non-Western societies including African countries themselves. To Fair (1993:1), the problem is not just representation of Africa in the news media “per se, but the social implications and possible consequences for social representation and social reality are intimately entwined.” She then argued that the historic exploitation of Africa was supported through the slave trade, colonial and post-colonial relations
which continue to permeate Western representations of Africa with scope and complexity. Fair (1993:18) further suggested that representing some people as “Others” and with negative images serve to maintain and perpetuate social inequalities and “offer justification for the need to have colonised them”.

Karikari (1992) established that the British colonial governments in Ghana, and other parts of Africa, used the Western press to propagate their agenda. This colonial tactic has not quite ended and as Mengera (2001) mentioned, there is still a predominant racist view among the West about Africa because the Africa we see today is European made. According to De B’Beri and Louw (2011), the continent had no influence and input in this negative and stereotypical representation it has received from the Northern media organisations and could therefore not change it.

With these in mind, it is clear that media text conveys meaning and need to be handled in a manner that minimizes negative portrayal. However, the investigation of international television news agencies by Paterson (2011) drew our attention back to the concept of media imperialism as he contended that the images we all share, and which substantially shape our political, economic and cultural lives, come almost entirely from two similar newsrooms in London. “This process of globalization”, he said, “is also a process of imperialism which has been hugely ignored in the globalization discourse for the past three decades” (p.18). Chris Paterson provided further instances of how one could explore the extent to which contemporary imperialism has evolved to include US and China and how these have been made poignantly visible through the activities of global media (Paterson, 2017).

Bunce at al. (2017) contended that the news construction of Africa as a business destination by the Northern press, as a claim of improvement, still constitutes a postcolonial critique. But for the economic standstill and ageing population in the
Northern hemisphere, Africa would not have enjoyed this tag that it rightfully deserved. The *Africa rising* discourse has other contexts as well. For example, as a new economic giant (China) appear aggressively to compete with the Northern economic influences on the continent; Africa needs to be better presented in the West for the sake of this. Apart from the fact that this isn’t significantly different from the cold war binary discourse, it is also contradictory to contemporary experiences of some journalists on the continent who are still faced with the *Old Testament discourse* like Amin Mohammed recounted in this interview with Chris Paterson in 1995 and cited in Bunce et al. (2017: 2).

There’s a mentality. Nigeria-those elections a few years ago (1993) - and I was talking to my editor, wanting us to put in a crew in Nigeria. And the response was “Is there going to be trouble?” Well, my answer was, “There’s a reasonably good chance there will be trouble, but this is an important country. Should we not be covering the elections? If there is trouble, of course, we cover the trouble as well”. “Well”, they said, “….if there are dead bodies on the streets of Lagos we’ve got to go in there”. Now, you know, I am sick of that sort of an attitude! I wonder if the same editor would think like that if there’s coming elections in Britain or France or America-that you’ve got to wait until there are dead bodies in the street…They think like about Africa

Again, Bunce (2015) claimed that local journalists’ involvement in the field of foreign news production presents a diversity that results in healthy power dynamics about how the African news should look like. But Salim Amin dissented from this claim when he argued, in the same collected edition, that Al-Jazeera’s launch was a perfect beginning with double capability and visibility on the continent compared to other international news media. However, the network was headquartered outside of the continent and “final decisions, on what the news must look, taken by men and women with little knowledge of the continent” (Amin, 2017, pp.96-97).
The growing need to cut cost in reporting foreign countries has also resulted in a situation known in procurement terms as sole-sourcing. News sole-sourcing means buying agency material on specific items from one foreign news agency. This phenomenon significantly affects journalism's cannons of objectivity and impartiality, per the analysis of Paterson (2011) because it contributes to the “reinforcement of the hegemony of the two powerful news agencies in London and that is inherently partial” (p.13).

Hall (1986 :86) similarly argued that the “media's elusive nature of presenting what it called an objective and impartial news, which usually either established a dominant ideological discursive field as a valid or partial explanation as comprehensive, remains contentious.” When news agencies run as businesses and even engage mergers and acquisitions as well as increasing the shareholder's wealth, it becomes a little confusing to accept that the views they express are free of interests and represent the public good. While the McBride and Sreberny report mentioned five dominant news agencies in the 1980s, Paterson (2011) confirmed the dominance of only two agencies from whom not even the mighty British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), with all it foreign correspondents, can do without for a week.

The debate to validate the global media's power to influence foreign policy continues unabated. However, there is ample evidence presented by Robinson (2002, p.123) that the media influence foreign policy and this offers an equivocal support for the claim that “the CNN effect is a factor in influencing policy-makers decision to intervene during humanitarian crises.” In a rather critical approach, Gilboa (2005) contended that even though the CNN effect had been exaggerated, it did not affect the fact that the global news networks, play multiple roles in policy-making, diplomacy,
and international relations that require rigorous theoretical and methodological frameworks to better establish the roles and the effects.

It is quite clear then that the reporting of Africa in the global media needs to be accurate and comprehensive to be able to attract the necessary attention the continent deserves in order to develop. Price & Czilli (1996) equally supported the fact that among the several factors predicting news recall, the intensity of foreign news coverage is a good predictor of an audience's understanding of international affairs. However, other scholars contest the direction of influence between the foreign media and Western foreign policy. Is it the Western media that drives US foreign policy or the Western media is driven by US foreign policy? Fuchs (2010) supports the later, by arguing that the neo-imperialist project is significantly kept alive by the contemporary corporate transnational media, who act in line with US foreign policy. Hall (2013) made the argument even more comprehensive when he said that external participation in Africa have been dodgy and involved the use of international corporations in labour, resources, consumers markets and land. However, Bunce et al. (2017) have cautioned that these “neo-imperialist arguments must be looked at more carefully to see if they support neo-colonial African image and whether they were exploitative or cooperative” (p.7).

The New African magazine editor, Ankomah Baffour, suggested that political ideology, Western government foreign policy, economic interest, and historical baggage are the major reasons why Africa remains negatively reported in the Western media. Ankomah (2011) is by that statement suggesting that the Western press is driven by Western foreign policy. He further highlighted the central role American political ideology plays as the fundamental guide to a Western media report about Africa. To quote a cover story of the New Africa magazine, he notes that:
“if the western government foreign policy favours you, their media will favour you, their media will consider you, but if they are against you, then you cannot escape what Lord Beaverbrook referred to as a ‘flaming sword’ which cuts through political amour” (Ankomah, 2008, p.12).

A classic example of Ankomah’s analogy is the claim by Bookmiller & Bookmiller (1992) that the coverage of the Algerian war of Independence, from 1954 to 1962, labelled supporters of the resistance as communist friendly and as a result of these sensational labels, many Americans were prevented from understanding the real issues of the Algerian war. A strategy that falls within America’s foreign policy towards France. Public perception of Africa in countries where negative news is the order of the day remain negative simply because what the media feeds the population remains, in most cases, their only evidence to understanding Africa.

Franks (2006) suggested that a BBC online survey in 2004 reported a staggering 73 per cent of respondents in the UK with no idea about the Millennium Development Goals. This makes it difficult for the UK public to demand a better coverage from their public broadcaster, therefore, the decades of drift in media coverage from such development goals cannot be surprising. This is because most audiences in the Western countries do not understand the frameworks put in place to tackle poverty and the progress that has been recorded. This falls into a vicious cycle when Northern media practitioners argue that they are gauging the taste of their audiences as if the audiences are capable of evaluating them under these circumstances.

Among the major difficulties about the quality of foreign news is not just the disappearance of regular correspondents and attention on Africa, longer television documentaries with enough context and education are as well in extinction. The Third
World and Environment Broadcasting Project have tracked television coverage of developing countries between 1989 to 2003 and they reported the lowest amount of education programmes on Africa (Dover & Barnett, 2004). Western news media's decision to focus on the Rwandan refugee crisis as opposed to the Rwandan genocide fits into a well-known, conventionalised understanding of Africa as a place where bad happenings occur and where Africans are in constant need of Western intervention and assistance (Girardet, 1996). The homogenous nature of these interventions are bad, not for the sake of homogeneity but that it is dominated by negatives. A phenomenon Rosenblum (1979) referred to as “coups and earthquakes” syndrome. Dahir (2009) summarised the CNN and Reuters reports on some specific programmes in what he said the Nigerian journalist and author Pascal Eze called PIDIC (poverty, instability, disease, illiteracy and corruption) (p.3). To Dahir, it does not matter who hosted the programme, the images are still negative even when people of African descent host programmes on Western networks. There is rarely space for an alternative view of Africans. French (2017) wrote to the New York Times complaining of an extraordinary approach by the network “to render black people of African ancestry voiceless and invisible”. He described their work on Africa as a “scene of misery: people whose thoughts, experiences and actions were treated totally of no interest” (p.38).

The defence of Western journalists and media owners over the years have been a resort to the perceived taste of their immediate audience who require context for everything coming from Africa (Hawk, 1992). Another act of defence is the Declaration of Talloires, a conference held in France, to denounce UNESCO's promotion of NWICO. The conference stated that “Press freedom is a basic human right” (p.16). Nordenstreng (2010) offered two explanations to refute that declaration.
First, the subject under international law from which “the right to freedom of opinion and expression” emanates is the *individual* (everyone) not the media (press). Second, the human right, which is invoked here, “comes with duties and responsibilities and could not be exercised in a manner that is dangerous to the interest of the international community” (p.10) and preservation of peace and security.

The popular vast wasteland speech by Newton Minow in 1961 to the American Federal Communication Commission (FCC) conference brings two elements to the fore that established the responsibility required of reporters in most Western democracies:

First, what you gentlemen broadcast through the people's air affects the people's taste, their knowledge, their opinions, their understanding of themselves and of their world -- and their future. Second, the people on the air. And they own it as much in prime evening time as they do at six o'clock Sunday morning. For every hour that the people give you … you owe them something. And I intend to see that your debt is paid with service (p.14)

Minow is asking for responsibility from the American journalists about the quality of their service to the American people. Nordenstreng (2010) and Eek (197) however, have asked for an extension of these principles to foreign countries or *foreign others*. Nordenstreng (2010) argued that even though “NWICO was attacked as a curb on media freedom but in reality, the concept was designed to widen and deepen the freedom of information by increasing its balance and diversity on a global scale” (p.3).

This section explored some of the arguments regarding NWICO, the MacBride and Sreberny Mohammadi reports. It also highlighted some of the defences Western journalists and institutions raised against the new world order request and how inconsistent their defence was in relation to international law. The next section
describes the opportunities presented by the Internet and digital era as a way of dealing with the foreign otherness.

**Opportunities for the digital and Internet era.**

The digital age came with a lot of promises regarding how foreign coverage both in the Northern press and within the African continent can improve. Many of the arguments relied on the ease of Internet to deal with most foreign news and journalism’s problems. Prominent among these was the issue of financial crisis causing closure of foreign news bureaus. Obijiofor & Hanusch (2011) described the lone person reporter equipped with the necessary digital regalia to cover events around the world as the innovation that will change the foreign news in many ways both good and bad.

The sharp decline in the amount of foreign news around the world has been well established in media studies literature (Altmeppen, 2010; Wolter, 2006; and Franks, 2005). The most disturbing dimension of this phenomenon is that scholars predicted that the digital age offered a lot more opportunities to easily cover one another. However, Cottle (2009) has since been dissatisfied with journalists and media organisation’s capacity to capture diverse issues of global concern. The impact of technology is quite visible in many ways but it has also defied the notional role allocations that occupied researchers at the beginning of this era. Flamenbaum (2017) described how Ghanaians negotiated the social media terrain in a manner that puts Africa rising discourse to positive use and agency. He argued that there was a conscious effort to represent Ghana and Africa positively and with an optimistic interpretation of experiences that have usually been negated for centuries. To Flamenbaum, the New Ghana seems to reject these enduring negativity and massive
economic failures of the continent that pervades post-colonial West Africa both inwardly and outwardly. However, the fact that these social media activism has not become prominent on mainstream media demonstrates the extent to which this positive agency of telling the Africa story has travelled.

**Determinants of International News Coverage**

Several studies have provided the reasons why some countries or regions are more newsworthy than others. These studies relied on news factors as an important predictor of the newsworthiness of a nation or an event. Shoemaker (2006:108) argued that if the “media were actually covering our daily lives in a representative manner, the triumphs of ordinary people will be equally significant in the news” just like that of bad news and news involving celebrities. She asked a very crucial question: “who decides which events become news?” Studies dealing with such questions and preoccupations when it relates to different countries have been categorised as research into determinants of international news coverage (Golan, 2006; Wu, 2000). Shoemaker (2006) contended that the news of the day is not necessarily the most newsworthy events of the day but could only be considered as part of a complex variety of factors that eventually make an event becomes news. Staab (1990) had already sounded a similar caution about the ability of news factors to determine the most newsworthy events of the day by suggesting that “news factors have to be seen as hypotheses used by journalists to guide their perception of reality and thus lead to decisions about which aspects of events are newsworthy and which are not” (p.29).

These discussions got little more complicated when Staab (1990) suggested that news factors are assigned to news stories after the stories have been chosen and it
serves as a form of legitimising the selection the journalists have made. This legitimisation falls squarely within the description Shoemaker (2006) gives to the news when she described it as a “primitive” construct that is so integrated into our lives in a way that we no longer can question its existence (p.105). For us to better understand these, we need to revisit the journalistic motives of news selection in general.

Westerstahl & Johansson (1994) distinguished between two types of motives that guide the journalists or media actors in their selection process. These are “the assumed taste or interest of the audience and the intention to influence the audience” (pp. 71). They associated the former motive to “news value research” and the latter to “ideology”. News values or the concept of news factors traces news selection decisions to specific qualities of events. The theoretical model behind this notion assumes that several news factors determine the news value of an event and the decision of journalists whether or not an event is newsworthy. While news value research remains so far the most dominant approach to answer the question of what is news, several scholars (Lewis, 2006; Eilders, 2006; Shoemaker, 2006; and Staab, 1990) have argued that news factors offer only a partial explanation of the news selection process. Lewis (2006) even though acknowledged that a set of common understanding existed among journalists about what is news, he also argued that the rationale for this understanding has an arbitrary quality because journalism required comparatively little training and no depth of understanding and this makes news values often contradictory and incoherent. Elliott and Golding (1979) made a similar case that “news values exist and are significant, but they are as much the resultant explanation or justification of necessary procedures as their sources” (pp. 114-115).
It is useful to indicate that the determinants of foreign news have had a much-disputed list and from media studies literature, they remain a little complicated to research and define ontologically. News factors, for a long time, remain the most potent explanation for how events become news, except that the very scholars who spearheaded this area of research have recently discounted the potency of the concept (Eilder, 2006; Shoemaker, 2006; Staab, 1990, Elliot and Golding, 1979).

The discussion, however, proceeds with previous studies that have attempted to measure variables (news factor) as possible predictors of international news. Chang, Shoemaker, & Brendlinger (1987) identified normative deviance of an event, relevance to the United States and potential for social change and geographical distance as the key predictors of international news coverage. Chang & Lee (1992) found a threat to the United States and world peace, anticipated reader interest, timeliness, and U.S.A. involvement as major predictors of foreign news. Relevance to the U.S.A. as a useful predictor of international coverage was further established in the work of Golan & Wanta (2003) when they suggested that trade with the United States was a significant predictor of international news coverage of some nations; especially their elections.

Hester (1973) set the terrain for further research when he argued that cultural affinity variables (religion, language, migration and ancestry, and press freedom) were among key predictors of international coverage. However, Golan (2008) argued contrary to the earlier assertion by Hester that “countries with close ancestry with the US received less reporting” (p.36).

In a comparison of systemic determinants of international news flow between developed and developing countries, Wu (2003) found a trade, population, news agencies and geographic proximity as conducive factors for transnational news flow.
He also confirmed that trade volume was the dominant predictor of news flow among the four factors. Golan (2006) opened up a new area when he found inter-media agenda setting as a strong predictor of international news that has gone unnoticed over the years. The results of his study show that there is “highly significant correlations between the international news agenda of the morning edition New York Times and the international news agendas of the ABC, CBS and NBC evening news broadcasts” (p.331).

In another study, Golan (2008:42) made an excellent ironical analogy to show why the US media continues to cover Africa:

The African continent was chosen because of the newsworthy events that took place in the continent during the sample period. These include an AIDS crisis in sub-Saharan Africa (Annan, 2002), famine in western Africa (Tutu, 2005), disputed elections in Zambia (Jeter, 2002) and a terrible ethnic cleansing campaign in the Darfur region of Sudan (Boustany, 2004).

This analogy rather leads to the fact that there are other considerations or specific reasoning behind Africa’s media image apart from the normative research findings so far reviewed. The next section discusses the specific reasoning behind the coverage Africa receives from Western and non-Western media and some previous studies investigating this phenomenon. It also spells out the conceptualisation of Afro-pessimism in this study.

**Coverage of Africa News**

The coverage of Africa has been investigated with varied perspectives and from different geopolitical positions. Feinberg & Solodow (2002) traced the origins of the quotation, *always something new coming out of Africa* to ancient Greece. This quotation revealed how old Africa’s negative image is. They demonstrated that the
phrase was a proverb that originated in Greece no later than the fourth century BC. The fact that Aristotle made an allusion to this, confirmed according to Feinberg and Solodow, that *Africa’s Otherness* dates back to history, with little or no correction at all.

In line with the arguments of this study, the following sections will deal with the reporting of Africa in the Northern press and the African press itself. This dichotomy will reveal how wide the systemic *Afro-pessimism* concept has evolved especially to the African continent itself. This is not to argue that the African journalists are not doing better than their Western counterpart in covering the continent but rather to account for the effects of centuries of domination resulting in an endemic dependence syndrome revealed by the findings of this study.

It is also useful to indicate that a new set of findings have revealed that the coverage of Africa in Western countries was not that negative as previous researchers have argued. Obijiofor and MacKinnon (2016) recently argued that the concept of negative representation of Africa in the Western media could not be empirically supported in the case of Australia. They argued that the Australian press “devoted a modest amount of coverage to African news. All four regions of the continent received coverage” (p41). Scott (2009, 2015) had argued that because studies making claim to *Afro-pessimism* had hardly covered North Africa, Francophone Africa, non-news genres, non-elite media and radio content, it was difficult to suggest generalised conclusions about the nature of media coverage of Africa. He contended that the “assumption that representations are dominated by Afro-pessimism, for example, may be accurate – but it is not currently substantiated by the existing evidence” (p.191).
Reporting Africa in the northern press.

Several aspects of the coverage of Africa in the dominant Northern media have been examined. Significant amongst these include the nature and amount of the coverage and what scholars think accounted for these. In this section, I review the works done on the reasons why the coverage is insignificant in number but significant in negativity and stereotypes, a concept that has become known as Afro-pessimism.

**Afro-pessimism** suggests that Africa has little or no prospect of positive developments (Schmidt & Garrett, 2011, p. 423; Evans, 2011, p. 400). Afro-pessimism can be very difficult to explain because it is a colossus concept. In this study, there are four parameters adopted to evaluate this. First, like Bunce (2017), Chaudhary (2001) and Moeller (1999), stories that focus exclusively on events that naturally are negative such as famine, disease, wars, poverty, and killings. Second, the tone of the reportage, that is, when an event or policy style is negatively evaluated on the whole ignoring positive aspects that are also crucial. Third, the omission or silence on some parts of a complex reality either consciously or inadvertently because of lack of native knowledge or the adoption of simplistic posture in reporting complex issues (Nyamnjoh, 2017; Mody, 2010; hawk, 1992). Fourth, the negation of positive stories with the previous unrelated contextual background. For example, when Nigeria’s new commitment to democratic changes of government is discussed as a positive sign but within the same story, there is a context material saying *Nigeria is that West African country where 200 girls have been abducted by Boko Haram*. Even though this is factual, one wonders what it is doing in a story recounting a positive event.

The Western media coverage of Africa, Africans and African issues have always been problematic because these media reports are informed by Western ideas, ideology and political positions. Hawk (1992:4) explains this broadly:
Africa is special because there is little common understanding between Africans and Americans to provide context for interpretation. Further, unusual historical relations have shaped knowledge regarding Africa. These repertoire of knowledge, symbols and prior structuring of Africa are a Western creation. Where African news is concerned, then, American readers are in special need of contextualised information with which to interpret the meaning of reported events.

Hawk (1992) added that the simplest way to communicate the African story in a comprehensible form, in limited space, is by reductionist colonial metaphors familiar to the reader, especially that of the tribe and collective ‘Africa’. The resulting media image is a ‘crocodile-infested dark continent where jungle life has perpetually eluded civilization’ (p. 9). According to Franks (2005), the stories should fit into the usual frame of famine, disaster and bizarre traditional practice and many others for it to make it in the Western media. Paddy Coulter, former head of communications at Oxfam and now with the Reuters Foundation, called for the need to sustain good reporting of Africa when he admonished journalists:

We need to break out of the cycle where editors complain that there are never any good ideas about Africa and producers claim that editors are never interested anyway. The challenge is to come up with imaginative and challenging ideas so that Africa continues to command serious coverage in years to come (Ibid.)

Coulter's expression is an example of self-reflection and reflexivity; two crucial self-questioning elements that he and most other journalists lack. Mody (2010) raised these concerns when she questioned saying, “whose version does the foreign news “represent”, anytime it is reported, what does it emphasise and what is it silent on?” (p.13). To Mody, journalists have resorted to conditions under which they work,
(deadlines, threats to their life, political hurdles and lack of language capacity) to answer those questions. Apart from the lack of reflexivity, “journalists forget either knowingly or unknowingly how stereotypes and myths which have under-girded colonialism remain unchallenged by both the Western media and the journalists themselves” (Mody, 2010, p.3; Harth, 2012 p. 2).

Slater (2004) argued that the West did not only fail to engage in self-reflection of its dark past but also it virtually had no counter-representation from the developing countries. According to Harth (2012), African countries during the cold-war where there was a representation of ideas and counter-representations based on individual bloc ideologies, they were engaged in liberation movements for the establishment of the right to self-determination. Harth further established that this noble preoccupation of the African people was even misreported as the ensuing conflicts were mostly constructed as proxy wars between U.S.A and U.S.S.R within the cold war paradigm.

Harth (2012) contended that overwhelming success of colonialism continues “to cause the Western media to perpetuate unquestioned ingrained stereotypes and myths that were created in order to justify colonial conquest and racially-based exploitation and these account for the continued under-representation and misrepresentation of Africa in the Western media” (p.3). Nyamnjoh (2017) argues that a call for plurality in the perspectives on Africa is a recognition that the single Northern media perspective with exclusive prerogative is inherently misrepresentative of Africa because, like any other identity, the African identity is a work in progress.

As already introduced, what is omitted or not reported is equally essential. One way to shape stories about Africa, to confirm both to current policy objectives and to the acceptable understandings of most US readers, is simply not to report them. "The single most common form of media misrepresentation" regarding the Third
World "is omission" (Mody, 2010; Parenti, 1993, p.192). Hawk (1992: 6) continues by noting that "Africa is truly" covered "by the Western press in the sense that important stories go unreported". There is also a neglect of the power of global corporations to investigate important issues like food, mass killings and crises (Shiva, 2009; Tunstall, 2008). Keane (2004) requested to see from his colleague journalists in the Western media, stories of resilient African newspapers, broadcast media and civic society working hard to improve the continent's fortunes. The story of Salim Amin, son of the famous cameraman Mohammed Amin of Nairobi, paints a pathetic picture of these omissions. He argued, “We cannot sell anything positive about Africa even though we do plenty of positive stories, on subjects other than war and disaster, but they are mainly for an African audience now, because we cannot move them internationally” (BBC History Seminar, 24 November 2004 cited in Franks, 2005).

Boyd-Barrett (2004) argued that the over-reliance on official sources in foreign news reporting results in the neglect for causes, processes and consequences of events. Mody (2010:16) supported this notion and explained further that “lack of ideas and explanations about root causes obfuscates understanding that could lead to real change.” Mody argued that the coercion from the West, which interrupted the indigenous development of Africa, Asia and the Caribbean, has its impacts on modern-day difficulties of the colonies. Discussing the troubles of the colonies like poverty, only from the perspective of civil war, corruption, incompetent institutions, is to say that colonization, class relations, divide and rule, exploitations, and structured injustices never existed or if they did exist had no impact on the continent’s path to development. Mody (2010) established that “hunger, disease, death and illiteracy are symptoms of more basic structural causes that is historically situated and globally interconnected…” (pp. 16-17).
Lippman (1922) argued that there are images that limit the journalists’ access to facts and these he called:

- artificial censorship,
- the limitations of social contact,
- the comparatively meagre time available in each day for paying attention to public affairs,
- the distortion arising because events have to be compressed into very short messages,
- the difficulty of making a small vocabulary express a complicated world…(p.8).

Lippmann’s assertions explained the shallow manner in which Western journalists tackle the reporting of complicated issues in Africa. However, more too often, the portion of these complications that relates to the contribution of colonialism and the interconnectedness of the world today, they seemed to have a fair idea already. Lippman termed this as the pictures inside that so often mislead men in their dealings with the outside world. Even though Lippmann’s main concern was with the *Self and Other*, these are the issues that have taken a macro shape in today’s geopolitical debate. The American journalism author, James Carey, provided the reason why Lippmann was right in these assertions. He maintained that *explanation* was inconsistent with the profession’s insistence on facts. No matter how useful explanation will be to a text, journalists are not interested because they do not have space and time and someone else must vet their work with very simple objective and mechanistic rules.

Boyd-Barrett (2004) deferred from Carey’s position by arguing that the propagandist and selective nature of US war reporting, could not only be journalism's requirement for facts to be stated but ideology. Harth (2012) and Mody (2010) insisted that the colonial hangover and geopolitical terrain of the 21st Century reporting are contributory elements to this debate. Sharp (1993, p.491) gave a broader
view of this discussion when he argued that the “mass media provide the context within which elite geopolitical text is produced, disseminated and received.” To him, this is crucial because the rippling effects of these press images, and public discourses on them, eventually get established as conversational wisdom. Myers, Klak, & Koehl (1996) investigated Western media coverage of Rwanda and Bosnia wars and demonstrated that through such practices mentioned by Sharp, “many unequal power relationships are articulated, reinforced and perpetuated” (p.22).

Frames with which the Western media cover Africa have not improved because the actors have not changed. News agencies, according to Mody (2010) and Paterson (2011), have rather become hegemonic in nature and on whom most Western news organizations rely like never before. Based on Mody's review, interests, actors, and conditions have not changed much, hence, Western coverage of Africa as a dark continent still lingers. Bunce et al. (2017) noticed a few improvements between two time periods which present a hopeful look at the future - but no consistent picture of change exists among the dominant Northern media organisations.

At this point, I will review some specific studies on the coverage of Africa in the Western media. The claim that Africa is hardly covered in the Western press has been established by scholars (Galtung and Ruge 1965; MacBride, 1980, Sreberny et al, 1985; Hawk, 1992, Fair, 1993; Franks, 2005; Mody, 2010). However, one insightful approach to confirming these studies was a study conducted by Myers et al. (1996) with some kind of comparative research that analysed US newspapers' coverage of civil wars in Bosnia (Europe) and Rwanda (Africa). Rwanda recorded 560 articles and Bosnia 14,114 articles within the same period. Bosnia was covered 25% times more than Rwanda, irrespective of the magnitude of the conflict in Rwanda. The articles on Bosnia were twice more elaborate on strategies and tactics
than the ones on Rwanda. There was virtually less and or almost no use in many cases of “tribal” and “ethnic” terms in the description of the Bosnia war, while the Rwanda reports were filled more than forty times with these terms. Myers et al. (1996:36) contended that the “US press depiction of Bosnia’s war is that it is a logical and considered outcome of historical events while Rwanda's war is simply centuries-old tribal savagery.” These negative frames according to Myers et al. (1996) were constructed by the “US press almost entirely from non-Africa sources who depicted Africa as the timeless and placeless realm of ‘tribal’ conflict, a repository of deep-seated US fears of African ‘Others’” (p.21).

Aside from these, there is also the case of journalistic error. Robins (2003) analysed top US newspapers’ coverage of the Sudanese Lost Boy and found that the stories were presented out of context and many of them contained discrepancies in the details of Sudan’s civil war. Robin’s study indicated that “rather than showing an increased sensitivity to international news, many newspapers just recycled incomplete images of Africa that fit into the American expectations and dominant foreign policy discourse in that country” (p.45).

Erroneous and negative press coverage of Africa is fundamental to the knowledge of the citizens in those Western countries where these publications are made. In a public attitudes survey, Lader (2007, p. 3) reported that “47 per cent of UK citizens use newspapers as a source of information about the lives of poor people in Africa.” The results from Darnton’s Public Perceptions of Poverty (PPP) study showed that while tabloid readers were less likely than average to agree with the statement ‘we need trade justice, not free trade’ (Darnton, 2005a, p. 12), broadsheet readers were more likely than average to be ‘very concerned’ about poverty in poor countries (Darnton, 2005b, p. 6). Although the correlation between press coverage
and audience understandings suggested by these studies does not prove causality, it
does give a strong indication of the influence of Western media portrayal of Africa on
the citizens of their respective countries.

In 2007, the President of Rwanda, Paul Kagame, admitted: “the constant
negative reporting of Africa kills the growth of foreign direct investment. There have
been suggestions that this is meant to keep Africa in the backyard of the global
economy” (Ankomah, 2008:146). In essence, some studies have linked Africa’s
negative media image to the perception of people in the Northern hemisphere hold
about the continent.

El Zein and Cooper (1992) examined the New York Times’ coverage of
Africa for about two decades. They found that Africa constituted 15% to 20% of all
international news coverage and over half of the continent’s countries were never
mentioned at all. For those mentioned 53.8% to 87.7% of it related to the crisis.
Africa received extremely little front-page coverage except in a few cases of bloody
war. Due to the concepts of “pack and parachute journalism” (Fair, 1993:9) and the
growing hegemony in global newsgathering, the situations described here are not
different in most Western nations. The Voluntary Service Overseas’s Live Aid Legacy
studies, cited in Scott (2009), investigated the nature of the negative portrayal of
Africa and found that perceptions of Africa were markedly different from perceptions
of other areas of the developing world. The negative frames found in Africa in that
study consist of poverty and famine and these conditions are understood to be the
result of circumstantial and ‘natural’ factors.

Beer (2010) began a conversation that due to globalisation, news media
content could no longer be pinned to a territory or to previous binary concepts as
national/international, core/periphery. Beer argued for a disruption of this binary
categorisations especially because they do not really exist and the regime that assumes that Africa is predominantly reported as a hopeless continent is even changing especially because of the significant progress that has been reported in the work of Ibelema & Bosch (2009). In line with these thinking, Scott (2015) instigated a debate that the firmly established consensus in research that Africa’s representation in the US and UK press is negative has little empirical evidence to support it. To him, the claim that the coverage is characterised by essentialisation, racialisation, selectivity, ethnocentric ranking and predictions were quite varied with no typology until recently (see the typology of Afro-pessimism in Nothias, 2015). He further referred to the body of literature making the claims as relying on “widespread vagueness surrounding the ontologies of Africa and the ways in which representations of Africa are understood to contribute to the construction of Africa” (p.206). Nothias (2017) provided another empirical support for Scott’s work through a textual analysis of British and French newspapers –complemented by interviews. He found that the claims that the coverage of Africa is systematically tribal and dark, relying predominantly on Western voices and homogenous in portrayal are not empirically supported.

**Reporting Africa in the African press.**

This section provides a review of previous studies that have focused on how the African press reported the continent, as a whole, and some events in particular. The coverage African countries receive from each other reflects their foreign policy. Lent (1976) argued that foreign news reporting in third world countries depended on their ties with the superpowers, colonial background, relationship with neighbouring
countries, economic infrastructure, governmental stability and professional training of journalists (p.181).

Due to those factors, Western Europe and North America countries have become “semi-permanent” option in these countries. Nigerian coverage of foreign news has been linked to the country's foreign policy and socio-cultural ties (Nwuneli & Udoh, 1982; da Costa, 1980). Nwuneli and Dare (1977) found that the recognition of the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) government by Nigerian Federal government led to an increase in the volume of news about Angola in the Nigerian press around that time. Apart from the foreign policy move of the Nigerian government, the Nigerian press also depended heavily on foreign news agencies for their coverage confirming Lent’s (1976) assertion regarding proxy coverage through colonial and superpowers. Alozie (2007) studied the pattern that dominated the coverage and analyses of the 1994 Rwanda crisis in two leading African newspapers: the Daily Nation of Kenya and the Guardian of Nigeria. He found that both papers attempted to explore the background and implication of the crisis more than their Western counterparts. This success was attributed to their “greater understanding of the underlying matters that affect the continent” (p.226). The proximity of Kenya to Rwanda and their national interest in the crisis resulted in a prolonged coverage and a deeper background compared to Nigeria. Bosompra (1989) confirmed that there was indeed a flow bias in international news in favour of the Northern Hemisphere as Lent earlier claimed. He added, “The bias was reflected even in the African newspapers’ dependence on Western news agencies for their news about African countries” (p.58). This leads us to our next section which discusses how technology is affecting the dependence on Western agencies and shaping the foreign news reporting worldwide. By answering some of the rhetorical questions posed by
Obijiofor (2009, p.51-52), we would be better placed to understand the background:

“….how have technological changes such as internet impacted the image of Africa in the western media? “To what extent have African news organisations been able to source their news without relying on multinational news agencies?”

**Framework of the African press.**

In this section, the conceptual explication of how the African press reports itself is introduced. This is followed by a discussion of the influence of transnational global news media on the African press, the goals of Pana-Africa press, the relationship between new media technologies and foreign news and previous research on how selected Africa media reported some countries on the continent.

The colonial domination of the African continent for centuries significantly shaped the way people on the continent and elsewhere formed their identity. To Fanon (2008), this resulted in a situation where the colonised lost their possibility to autonomous cultural identity, and legitimacy is only gained through the taking on of Western ideals. Hall (1997) equally demonstrated that negative representation of a group of people affects the group’s self-identity which becomes shaped by how they are seen by others.

When these are connected with the findings of Galtung and Ruge (1965) that there is a feudal interaction structure that keeps dominated nations in the periphery apart with little or no communication among themselves, then no analysis of the African press should ignore these sublime but powerful past and how it re-enacts itself until today. This lack of news flow among African countries coupled with an
increasing conglomeration within the international news agency sector makes the African news organisations even more vulnerable than their European counterparts in depending on agency materials for much of its work. Nyamnjoh (2017) explained that a call for an African perspective is not a claim that African journalists will escape stereotypes and misrepresentations when reporting the continent, but it is only to recognise that other views exist.

One of the usefulness of investigating foreign news flow among African countries, as in this study, is to show how Africa has been affected by both the psychological mechanism described by Fannon and the hegemonic conglomeration of the foreign news agency sector (Paterson, 2011). Tackling the coverage from these perspectives have been missing as previous studies (Akinfeleye et al, 2010; Pate, 1992 and Sobowale, 1987) have concluded that African media were not doing any better but failed to investigate the predominant sources employed by the African press in these reports, and the roots of journalism education on the continent. Equally crucial is the economic capacity of the African press and the worldwide growing hegemony within the foreign news sector.

One crucial element in knowing about one another is education. Since most African countries do not study the continent well enough within their school systems or through exchange programmes, there exists an obvious knowledge gap across the continent itself that plays into the idea of relying on colonial master's news about the continent. Gongo (2007) in analysing South Africa’s Sunday City Press newspaper in the light the paper’s repositioning as distinctly African concluded that City Press could not uphold the ideals of the African Renaissance and African nationalism in its reporting of Africa since much of what it reported only related to Africans in South Africa. “The huge knowledge gap about the continent among the South African
reporters and editors was a major defect” (p.147). In a speech to the Editor’s Forum of NEPAD, former South African President, Thabo Mbeki, asked African journalists to report Africa well enough because they were first Africans before becoming journalists and should do well in ending the dangerous state of unknowing about the continent (Mbeki, 2003).

**Western education and media assistance.**

Diffusion of modernisation and innovation and its spread around the world can be traced to different forms of dependence by most developing countries on their developed counterparts. Higgins (2014) recounts how the UK and US moved their marshal plan and ideology of media assistance from Eastern Europe to Africa either as part of their public relations efforts or response to the low quality of journalism in these developing countries. The relatedness of journalism training to the lingering Cold war diplomatic strategy of influence and spread of democratic governance has been established in media studies literature (Miller, 2009; Becker, and Tudor, 2005). Hume (2004) argued that the developed nations came to appreciate, based on the experience from Eastern Europe, that “providing assistance to local, independent media is a vital way to promote freedom and democracy” (p. 110) in those countries while maintaining the provider’s influence.

Some scholars have traced this continued support for the media in developing countries to historical antecedents. McPhail (2006) argued that the world communication system we live in today is “an outgrowth of prior colonial patterns reflecting commercial and market imperatives” (p.13). In fact, media culture is “transnational” in that, it operates on a global scale, and is being produced by transnational media-conglomerates who have a good understanding of the linkage between the “logic of media and the logic of transnational capital” (Rønning, 1997,
pp.13-15) and the “satisfaction transnational elites” stand to get. Scotton and Murphy (1987) argued that the adoption of the American model on the African continent was partly due to the choice of sponsors of journalism training on the continent.

Mano (2005) argued that the exercise of a positive influence of “transnational global media forces on diversity, accountability and plurality in the African mass media environment has covered their activities that undermine various democratic processes” on the continent (Barker, 2008, p.4). These arguments represent reinforcements of previous positions held by scholars on Africa’s historical entanglements. Rodney (1981) posited that the aim of British colonial education, which is still prominent in African universities, was to turn the African into a “fair-minded English-man” (p.248). Mazuri (1978) asserted that whether British or French education, the “African might, therefore, be regarded as the reflections of the total cultural orientations of the countries which ruled them” (p.12). The fact that the African westernised artists can be noticed from their colonial background is an evidence of “the phenomenon of cultural dependency in all its ramifications” (p. 13).

Scotton and Murphy (1987) referred to the argument of Mazuri and others to contend that the “African students even at the university level were taught to be critical of all values they have learned previously in the African setting” (p.13), which resulted in the disowning of previous African values and taking on new Western ideals as a sign of being educated. They argued that journalism education programmes in Africa are largely patterned directly on those in Europe and the United States to an extent that these programmes could be moved to the United States, for example, “without changing texts, curriculum, or instructors” (p.12). They argued that the resistance staged by Britain and France to the adoption of a complete American model in the newly independent African states through the offer of a lot of journalism
training in Europe were rather damaging because it became a competition for influence not necessarily for the development of the African press. The lack of change reported by Scotton and Murphy can be traced to the argument of Skjerdal (2012) that the African journalists today “regard themselves as members of a wider professional community beyond the continent while simultaneously maintaining a local identity” (p.649). These provide a hint of the new space, which is partly Western and partly African, but this conceptual hybrid space is characterised by a lopsided relationship. Domatob (1988) argued that the lop-sidedness of this power relation is evident from the heavy dependence of sub-Saharan African media on neo-colonial status quo with regards to “training, policies, technology, news values, language, and advertising” (p.151). Domatob posited that attempts to decolonise the Western model of communication and the “ideology of dependence remains difficult” (p.171). The application of Western media practices in the African context unequivocally represents a reinforcement of neo-colonialism (Banda, 2008a) and undermines and misrepresents local culture (Sesanti, 2009).

Holm (2016) argued that the entire Bologna process to standardise journalism education across Europe has contributed to the formation of best practices, which he argued, always conflicts cultural values. Holm posited that the acceptance of Anglo-American on-camera presentation styles violates deeply held Danish cultural values. He pointed further that cultural values matter and journalism educators need to pay attention to them even in the era of globalisation. According to Berger (2014), there is “the ethos of journalism schools worldwide that relate to media experiences and educational recipes, which are assumed to be applicable worldwide” (p.33). Berger concluded with this underpinning argument that journalism education around the world is not same and as such African institutions teaching journalism, have begun
defining their own specificity, with regards to excellence, in this heterogeneous communication field.

**New media technologies, the Internet and economic rationality.**

Hachten (2004) sets the tone for this sub-section:

If Africa is to develop economically and politically in the coming years, Western news media must do a better job of reporting events there. But even more important, African nations must acquire free and independent news media of their own – news systems that utilize the new information technologies – communication satellites, global television, high-speed computer exchanges – that most of the world now uses (p. 87).

Hachten’s advice is even more important because the “internet and the application of information technologies have caused far-reaching changes within work processes and routines in most industries around the world especially digitalisation of value chains and content have demanded a strategic change in perspectives within the media industry” (Zerdick, Picot, Schrape et al., 2001 cited in Schoeder and Stovall, 2011, p23).

The Internet and its applications have had an influence on organisations, contents and journalists. The Erich-Brost- Institute’s research of the German foreign correspondents in the USA revealed increased use of emails and VoIP phoning, frequent visit to employer’s website, regular monitoring of online fora and access to their field of news by their editors in Germany. These present real changes in the way foreign correspondents have worked over the years (Hahn, Lännendonker, & Schröder, 2008).

Hachten & Scotton (2012) asserted that technology is one of the crucial elements that has caused substantial changes to the gathering of foreign news. “In the nineteen century, the news was collected by reporters who later used telephones, and
then the telegraph to transmit them. For news from abroad, the press relied on journalist’s letters carried by ships and then later by telephones, comsats and now Internet” (p.170-171). They added that foreign newsgathering today requires the journalists to work with and rely on several other non-media professionals. According to Deuze (2008), journalists are either sceptical or supportive of new changes occurring in the newsroom because such “changes in the institutional and organizational arrangements of their work in the past had resulted mostly to downsizing, layoffs, less staff, budget and resources cut” (p.8). However, “early adopters in the newsroom are excited if the changes help them in the way they do their work” (p.9).

McKercher (2002) argues that technological convergence and corporate concentration must be appreciated usually as an opportunity for media owners to acquire new sources for profit, extending their grip on the production and distribution of news. Even though some scholars hold the view that technological changes have influenced the practice of journalism for the better, others disagree and Deuze (2008) sees the end of journalism especially as it gets increasingly in bed with other forms of communication such as public relations and advertising:

The boundaries between journalism and other forms of public communication – ranging from public relations or advertorials to weblogs and podcasts – are vanishing, the internet makes all other types of news media rather obsolete (especially for young adults and teenagers), commercialization and cross-media mergers have gradually eroded the distinct professional identities of newsrooms and their publications (whether in print or broadcast), and by insisting on a traditional orientation towards the nation, journalists are losing touch with a society that is global as well as local…… (p. 4)
Apart from journalists being affected by these changes in many ways, the journalistic news itself faces some credibility and accountability problems but the work of Yau & Al-Hawamdeh (2001) reported that credibility issues usually affect less established media houses while transnational news organisation such as the BBC, CNN, New York Times have migrated their traditional media credibility to the digital front. These influential traditional news media organisations (CNN, CNBC, Bloomberg and BBC) continue to be more influential because they “have made it their business to make sense of the world for readers and viewers via various strategies to manage attention and present information” (p.9).

A study about Nigeria and Singapore reported as low as 28% of journalists stating that new technologies have promoted ethical journalism. Also crucial to this study is the way these technological changes play into the preceding arguments of the coverage of Africa by African journalists. Obijiofor (2001) studied journalists from Singapore and Nigeria with a claim that the Internet has led to the diversification of their sources of news and made them less dependent on Western international news agencies. According to Obijiofor and Green (2001), these avenues of sources available to the African journalists include the official websites of renowned newspapers both in developed and developing countries, television, radio and the web.

The problems presented by these technological opportunities are equally enormous for the journalists in developing countries. Obijiofor and Hanusch (2003) reported that due to lack of training and re-training of journalists in Africa, the know-how to effectively apply these technologies is greatly hindered. Coupled with this is the sheer lack of access to computers and the Internet. Investigating the impact of new technologies on newspaper journalism practice in Nigeria and Ghana, Obijiofor
reported that the technologies have improved rather than harmed the quality of newspapers and this was a view almost 90% of the respondent held. “One major aspect of that improvement is that new technologies help journalists to save time in their work. Other improvements in quality of newspapers include accelerated speed of production, enhancement of newspaper aesthetics through colour photography and ease of crosschecking spelling errors with the aid of the spell check software” (p.54).

Another aspect of Africa’s image that received attention in this study is the influential role of the Western media. Relating this to technology, provided a basis to discuss whether or not new technologies have improved Africa’s image in the Western media. Harding (2003, p.69) argued that the visual images of Africa in the Western media are the way they are because of two factors: “First, the development of technology and subsequent access to it; and second, the ideology and ethos that informed the use of the technology.” Drawing on the media in several countries on the continent of Africa and in the UK, Harding traces the different ways in which the media produces and presents visual images of Africa. She further argued that there are similarities and differences between the distinct technologies; each produces its own images of Africa which are very different. One could argue that African countries have the ability to challenge the war-ridden images using technology.

The decreasing cost of satellite receiving dishes and equipment requirement to broadcasting and broadband have, according to Fiest (2001), led to major changes in broadcasting and print media. On broadcasting, he believes “digitalisation has already begun to dramatically shrink the size of broadcasting equipment. Such a “transmission requires only a few suitcases of gear” (p.710). On the print media, Fiest argued, “a photographer or journalist for that matter can file their stories from anywhere around the globe either through wireless telephone or satellite phone
and those images can be published in a newspaper or magazine, or it can be published immediately on a Website” (p.710).

Closely related to this technological revolution is the cost involved in maintaining a foreign bureau and how the technology renders most journalists redundant by offering better approaches to achieving the same goals. Hachten and Scotton (2012: 176) reported between “$150,000 and $250,000 per annum as the cost of maintaining a foreign news bureau.” They argued that it was not surprising that the further this cost rises, the more the predominant the reliance of both African and international news organisations on wire’s service will become. Fengler & Russ-Mohl (2008) backed this argument when they described “journalists and media owners as rational actors seeking to maximize materialistic and non-materialistic rewards (e.g. attention, reputation, fringe benefits) and these explain why, how and under what kind of restrictions journalists trade information for attention with their sources, calculating risks and benefits” (p. 667). By these arguments, it is vivid that the decision of what to publish and how to get this to publish is no longer a major journalistic decision but one that is poignantly driven by economics.

Obijiofor and Hanusch (2012), Fengler and Mohl (2008) and Fair (1993) have all mentioned “pack journalism” and “parachute journalism” as concepts that have become permanently part of the journalism profession in response to cost-cutting. So in “pack journalism”, due to limited resources to cover events and the pressure to meet deadlines, the journalists resort to cross-checking facts and omissions from other journalists and eventually there is only one account of an event. Franks (2005) and Wolter (2006) believed that flying a journalist to a country to cover an event as it occurs and leaves immediately or a day after has greatly destroyed the quality of foreign news reporting. The movement of the journalist so quickly to the next hotspot means all improvements in the last issues covered are not reported.
In the era of cost-cutting, it has also become much clearer that the harsh economic conditions under which the media constructs its messages have impacted either the messages themselves or the processes. Researching readership taste provides a great tool for participation from readership and an opportunity by the journalists to improve their targeted delivery of messages. According to Mehra (1988) readership surveys or market research are normatively designed to enable a newspaper to:

“identify the profile, needs and desires of its readers...Market research companies routinely compile newspaper readership profiles, including distribution of readers by age, sex, income levels, occupation, education, race, household size, and consumption patterns. Using advanced statistical techniques, like factor analysis and demographic tables, it is now possible to locate and define clusters of customers. It is also possible to develop the psychographic profiles of readers. The information is critical to advertisers making decisions on placing ads for particular products in a newspaper. But the information is also a gold mine for editors as well to identify the interests of their readers.” (pp.2).

Schulz (2008) rather draws a distinction between readership research as media advertising research - where the ultimate purpose is for adverting, while editorial readership research is closely linked with academic reception studies aimed at gaining fundamental insights into readership/audiences. He underscored the far-reaching economic significance of media advertising research as a basis for its dominance. The major reason why such surveys are conducted is the improvement in newspapers sales.

**Influence of transnational Western media on the African press.**

Arguing that there are influences on the African media regarding the way they report themselves is not a far cry. However, in the midst of these challenges, Hunter-Gault
(2008) called for a change in both the way the continent is covered currently and against the distortions of the past with a resolve to write “Africa’s new news” (p.107). Fundamental to this goal is journalism education and newsroom socialisation across the continent. However, these two core-training processes are rooted in Western concepts and supported by Western donors. Eventually, this makes any attempt at a paradigm shift almost impossible.

Scotton and Murphy (1987) argued that religious and social customs and African languages except Swahili were banned or suppressed by Western actions or pressures. The independent African states left behind by colonialism could no longer communicate in the same languages and this resulted in the “African languages themselves largely becoming irrelevant in the areas of government, education and mass media” (p.12). Ghana and Tanzanian nationalised foreign-owned newspapers immediately after they became independent states due to their perception of foreign ownership being incompatible with independent states and the fear of the influence on the African media.

The historical influence of the BBC World Service mentioned by Golding (1979) remains enormous and revealing going forward. According to Scotton and Murphy (1987), there has been remarkable inactivity to change journalism education programmes in Africa which have been largely patterned directly on those in Europe and the United States. The efforts of the African Council on Communication Education (ACCE), the only continental organization of journalism educators, has attempted to make African journalism training relevant to Africa's social and cultural situation with a view that this results in African values playing the dominant role in African mass media.
Within the UNESCO International Standard Classification of Education, most Africans qualify to be called educated since any group of socialisation in schools, homes, family and communities that brings about learning is acceptable as a form of education (Thompson, 1981). But according to Mazuri (1978), even university students under colonial rule at one point became the instrument to promote and control change and therefore the “African students were taught to be critical of all values they have learned previously in the African setting” (p.23). This resulted in disowning previous African values and taking on new European ideals as a sign of being educated.

Journalism education was one of the areas that the European academics could not easily infiltrate from the start because journalism, according to Karikari (1992), was a liberation tool mostly in Ghana where other intellectuals within the sub-region converged to push for self-rule. Nnamdi Azikiwe, the Eastern Nigeria political leader and editor of the West African Pilot and Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana had used the press already as a tool for liberation movement before independence and were favourable to an American vocational style of journalism education. Kwame Nkrumah established the American-style journalism education at the Ghana Institute of Journalism in 1958, but Azikiwe wanted Nigeria's first programme closely linked with a university. The structure, staff and much of the curriculum, including the journalism programme were imported from the American universities almost completely without any changes (Okafur 1971 as cited in Scotton and Murphy, 1987:14). The colonial masters of these newly independent West African states (Britain and France) put up a considerable resistance to the American style of journalism education because they preferred African students to study in Europe (Scotton and Murphy, 1987).
The American model of journalism training at the university level became much popular and even as early as 1935 journalism training had begun at the American University in Cairo and sometimes later, Universities of Cairo and Dakar started their own journalism training programmes that were modelled upon the American system. “It was inevitable that mass communications and journalism would have a Western structure in all its facets across Africa” (Scotton and Murphy, 1987:15).

It was unfortunate that the African approaches to reaching large audiences, such as through the chief’s Speakers in Ghana, was not quite integrated into this new curriculum. According to Golding (1977), the adoption of the America journalism training model itself amounted to an ideological transfer. Golding described several transfers from Western nations to newly independent states, especially professionalization.

Professionalism, to Golding, is a form of “integration into a dominant global culture of media practices and objectives as developed in the media of the advanced societies through three mechanisms: institutional transfer, training and education, and the diffusion of occupational ideologies” (p.294).

Institutional transfer, according to Golding (1977), was more than just organisational replications, such as the case of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) relay service in colonial territories. “It meant the wholesale acquisition of modes of practice, standards and assumptions which came to displace discussions of possible preferences or alternatives that existed in Africa” (p.295).

Education, training and qualifications form the second model in this ideological transposition that was achieved through three different approaches.

Firstly, there was the attachment of experts from the industrialised countries to media
in the Third World. A good example of this practice can be traced to the BBC and
Golding (1977) described the British broadcaster’s work in the Third world countries
as a function that goes far beyond advisory but rather “covers executive, exemplary
and authoritative roles” (p.296). Secondly, courses and attachments in industrialised
countries were meant to boost the foreign policy prestige of the host nations. Inherent
in this system was the “abuse of technical aid programme” which resulted in
“innumerable overseas scholarships, training, attachment and orientations
programmes that syphoned-off African broadcasting personnel” and disrupted their
organisations greatly (p.296). Thirdly, courses and training centres were established in
the Third world countries as a response to the criticism of training and courses abroad.
These centres were set up by expatriates and former international broadcasters and
academics from industrialised nations, who hardly discussed the objectives of the
programmes and therefore ended up making imported assumptions and conventions
standards. Golding argued that the “myth of value-free technology imbibed in
western-run production training had emphasised the non-purposive, non-ideological
role of broadcasting. This meant wholesale transplantation of syllabuses from
American journalism training institutions. Teaching was mostly in English and
sometimes through interpreters” (p.298).

Diffusion of occupational ideologies was another important mechanism
through which the global integration was achieved. The two earlier mechanisms
discussed had implicit values and assumptions that constituted the very ethos of media
professionalisation which was transposed to the Third World countries. Irrespective of
the poor working conditions under which these African broadcasters worked, they
were made to embrace worldwide journalism fraternity that is based on frank public
service, antagonism with leadership in order to hold them accountable and
independent broadcasting, which meant advertising paying for the broadcast as a way of maintaining independence from state influence. Interestingly, the state and private capital in Africa have long been in bed and in most African countries, the private media is owned by politicians.

Golding (1977) contended that “more specific ideologies appear as models of good practice and implicit statements of acceptable and unacceptable standards which are mostly contained in programme materials imported from overseas media” (p.299). As the colonies continue to broadcast these programmes for years, both the audiences and the staff in the Third World, became bound to emulate them in style, philosophy and format. This is what Golding (1977) referred to as “professionalization becoming imitation” (p.299). Two debatable professional ideologies inherent in all the transfers over the years include impartiality and objectivity of broadcasting in its provision of news. Therefore, the so-called public broadcasters on state payroll under Ministries of Information or Communication were made to work under a system where the broadcasting institution was expected to completely separate itself from the state.

According to Scotton and Murphy (1987), the professional values of objectivity and freedom from government restraints appealed to journalists in various social settings. This is perhaps because it provides autonomy at minimum risk, but journalists in most African countries barely recognise that they are enjoying such autonomy because of the general public and not because of themselves. Another interesting ideological position put forward by Daniel Patrick Moynihan requires journalism to be antagonistic by all standards. He argued that:

It is the mark of a democracy that its press is filled with bad news. When one comes to a country where the press is filled with good news, one can be pretty sure that jails are filled with good men (Hachten & Scotton, 2016, p.208)
These assumptions were turned to best practices that Africa press had to imitate as a sign of professionalism, but these were just opinions or one of the numerous approaches available. Kasoma (1996) described it as a “tragedy facing African journalism that the continent’s journalists have closely imitated the professional norms of the North” (p.95). Schiffrin (2010) added that the challenges facing the media in sub-Saharan Africa were enormous and therefore likely to render the journalism training by the plethora of foreign organisations less effective. However, because donor-driven training does not pay attention to the enormity of the challenging context within which the journalists work, they have cared less. Again, Schiffrin’s argument about whether or not the programmes of assistance have any objectives is quite revealing.

The influx of these competing actors, programmes and ideological socialisation on journalism training, coupled with the lack of harmonious African model of journalism training, led Skjerdal (2012) to argue for an unending debate regarding the independence of Africa’s media. The objective of this section was to trace the continuities and evolution of these ideological footprints to the reliance of Ghanaian journalists on Western news organisations for the coverage of Africa. This offers a framework within which to evaluate the weight of influence international news organisations, mostly from the Northern hemisphere, carry.

The growing influence of Chinese engagement on the African continent seems to include the media as well. Wu (2016) confirmed that China’s attempt to promote deep bilateral diplomatic and economic relations have resulted in the provision of their own content and points of view since 2009. Analysing the case of South Africa, Wu described the limits and potential of China’s engagement in public diplomacy. Wasserman (2016) has argued that increased influence of China on the African media
space is not only limited to the spread of Chinese state press (Xinhua news agency, China Daily, China Central Television, and China Radio International) but include flows and contra-flows of private media capital in South Africa. According to Wasserman, China’s initiative to spread soft power through its media in South Africa is highly constrained for several reasons from the perspective of the journalists. He contended that:

Soft power initiatives could potentially be amplified by journalists if they were to use Chinese media as their sources because this would allow local stories to be framed by Chinese perspectives. However, this would not happen if journalists did not consume Chinese media or if the Chinese perspective on news events were rejected (Wasserman, 2016, p.18).

The argument both Wasserman and Wu seem to be engaged in is anchored on the assumption that the consumption of Chinese media by South Africa journalists would amount to a soft power success for China. Wasserman thinks this situation has not yet materialised because most South African journalists do not cite Chinese news agencies beyond news about China itself or news about China-South Africa relations. This study offers empirical evidence that contributes to the debate about China’s soft-power influence. The Ghanaian situation is different from South Africa and requires explication of why the Chinese strategy seems to be succeeding in Ghana.

The inauguration of the Pan-African News Agency (PANA) in the 1980s marked the beginning of the continent’s commitments to sharing a common approach to discuss problems and progress. It also, according to Haule (1984), marked “ideological differences between them and their Western counterparts” (p. 113). This approach, in principle, is not different from the European Union television channels, whose broadcasts are aimed at telling Europe’s stories of hope despite the several financial crises that have hit them in recent times. PANA is equally a response to the
badly needed balance in world information flow and to correct the qualitative and quantitative shortcomings of news circulation within the continent (UNESCO, 1981). However, according to Haule (1984), PANA Press has not achieved the needed influence that was initially predicted of its activities. As a result, the African press still reports Africa from the perspectives of Western news agencies. The Western media influences on the African journalists make it very difficult for them to report independently from these external influences. It is also very difficult for PANA to succeed under these external influences. The very economic tag that news has taken seems to be the major issue PANA could not overcome. The resource-rich countries have devoted to covering Africa, far outweighs PANA’s budget.

**Summary**

This chapter reviewed previous literature touching on the core issues of how both the Western and African press reports the continent. The chapter established the usefulness of foreign news and its historical antecedents and debates on Afro-pessimism. The determinants of foreign news coverage were broadly discussed and linked to why Africa remained largely uncovered. The performance of the African press in covering the continent was also reviewed and related to how the continent was covered by the Western press. The influences of transnational news agencies, technology, colonial history, education and the emerging effects of Chinese soft power or public diplomacy were described as elements so difficult for the African journalists to resist because they have unconsciously internalised these elements of socialisation. The next chapter discussed the theoretical and conceptual frameworks that underpinned the study.
CHAPTER 3 - THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS

This chapter is divided into four main parts: the introduction, the theoretical review, the frameworks of the study (both theoretical and conceptual) and a concluding summary. It basically discussed the linkage of the three theoretical approaches beginning with an overview of the theories and how they have been deployed in previous research with emphasis on strengths, weaknesses, limits and recommendations that will eventually form the basis for this study’s theoretical and conceptual design.

After the broad review, the chapter then describes theoretical and conceptual frameworks on which this study hangs. The superimposition of the postcolonial theory on the theories of newsworthiness and inter-media agenda setting is categorical in nature. That is to say that this approach does not mean that the postcolonial theory is more useful than the two other theories; it only signifies the overarching critical impulse of it. The positioning of these theories in the model only represents the way the study conceives their analytical application. What is new with this approach is that it strengthens the weaknesses of the theory of newsworthiness, for example, to better explicate meso and macro level influences on news selection decisions.

Firstly, it is argued that any model predicting news selection decision must incorporate inter-media influences because they are real, both in intra-nation and inter-nation agenda setting (Du, 2013; Golan, 2006; Vliegenthart & Walgrave, 2008; McCombs, 2005). Guo and Vargo (2017) have further solidified the place of intermedia agenda setting in international news flow debate by theoretical map of (using big data) how news media in different countries influence each other in covering international news. Secondly, arguments in this regard have been that both
news factors and inter-media agenda setting have not been developed to expound macro level ideological influences that disrupt the innocence of Eurocentric knowledge and questions what is broadly described as globalisation, even though it is imperial in nature (Paterson, 2017).

Thirdly, the question of why some countries are more newsworthy than others and the similarities and differences in the scope of international news presented in different languages and cultures have been theoretically tackled using the current situation and Internet and online media (Segev, 2016). Segev (2016) argued that international news affects our perception of the world and in his new book, he explored international news flow on the internet by addressing those key questions in a manner that combined both theories of newsworthiness and international new flow. These broad theoretical debates are followed by a summary of the chapter, which offers a synergy of the ideas.

In this section, I argue that there is a difference between theoretical and conceptual frameworks and how this study applied these two concepts. According to Anfara & Mertz (2006), the role and discussion of the theoretical framework in qualitative research are highly contested. While some scholars in qualitative research equate theoretical framework to methodology, others described the term from paradigms of worldview. The review of Anfara and Mertz (2006) demonstrated that a theoretical framework does not have a clear and consistent definition among qualitative researchers. However, this study adopted the definition of their definition, which states that “theoretical frameworks are any empirical or quasi-empirical theory of social and/or psychological processes, at a variety of levels (e.g., grand, mid-range, and explanatory), that can be applied to the understanding of phenomena” (p. 27). A conceptual framework, on the other hand, is not very different from a theoretical
framework. According to Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), “a conceptual framework explains, either graphically or in narrative form, main things to be studied - the key factors, variables, construct- and the presumed interrelationships among them” (p.20). It could be argued that conceptual frameworks are founded on theory/theories and as such represent the specific direction by which the research will be undertaken by identifying “who, what will, and will not be studied” (Miles et al., 2014, p.21). From this background, the conceptual framework in this study is deduced from the theoretical framework with more focus on the specifics of the study’s arguments.

**Theoretical Overview**

In this section, the theory of newsworthiness, inter-media agenda setting and the postcolonial theory were comprehensively reviewed as theoretical concepts and how their application in this study offers new ways to understand them. The complimentary appreciation of these theories is to demonstrate that theoretical innovation is not to say that previous knowledge or theories do not exist but to strengthen their weaknesses in their new applications especially to areas where they have not been significantly combined.

Guo and Vargo (2017) argued that the practice of measuring a country’s salience in foreign news coverage as a measure of its newsworthiness does not provide a good understanding of how news flows around the world because it lacks the dynamics related to individual news media in different countries. Guo and Vargo (2017) concluded that although cross-border news flow could follow a core-periphery structure when it comes to a country’s newsworthiness, same cannot be said for that country when it comes to its capability to set the agenda for other countries. To
capture both phenomena—being newsworthy and setting the news agenda for other countries—emerging studies must investigate the role of different countries in the international news flow from “different theoretical standpoints, including the intermedia agenda setting theory” (Guo and Vargo, 2017, p.518).

To deal with these interaction dynamics, intermedia agenda setting theory is applied critically, in this study, to unveil how such journalistic co-orientations and re-use practices occur. Beyond this analysis is also a sublime but evident ideological element related particularly to the coverage of Africa: postcolonial relationships, which requires a critique because of the very imbalance nature within which it contributes to the coverage of Africa in Ghana.

**Theory of newsworthiness.**

It is one of the most utilised theories to explain how and why journalists select news. While some scholars rely heavily on psychology and perceptions of journalists on both what makes news and what their audience interests are, others concentrate on the organisational and professional routines rooted within the journalistic practice. But basically, the theory uses the concept of news factors to trace news selection back to the specific qualities of events, which are suspected as the determinant of the news value of an event and hence the decision of journalists, whether or not, that event is newsworthy.

According to Staab (1990: 424), most scholars trace the “rudimentary form of this concept to Walter Lipmann” while few exceptional cases refused to mention Lipmann’s work. To better understand this theory, one needs to understand what “news” means in general terms.
Harrison (2006) defined news using five precepts which cover the several levels of abstraction and myth that surround the concept. She said, “News is what is judged to be newsworthy by journalists, who exercise their news sense within the constraints of the news organisations within which they operate” (p.10). The myth surrounding news which Shoemaker (2006: 105) defined as a “primitive construct whose existence is not questioned”, is also “passed down to a new generation of journalists through a process of socialization” (Harrison, 2006: 118). Palmer (2000) described the workings of news values as “a system of criteria which are used to make decisions about the inclusion and exclusion of materials and transcends individual judgements, although they are, of course, to be found embodied in every news judgement made by a particular journalist” (p.45).

Arguing for the useful place of the theory of newsworthiness even until today, Wilke, Heimprecht, & Cohen (2012) stated that:

Scholars who have studied international news have typically looked to global factors to explain the variability in coverage and much of these research assume that international news coverage reflects the power structure among nations. However, the crafting of media messages, including those focused on international events, is also subject to local influences. Such influences include organisational factors, the local community’s power and corporate characteristics (p.304).

Their statement is equally a call for a comprehensive outlook on research regarding the variability in coverage of international news both at global factors perspective and local levels, which include journalistic news writing routines. Shoemaker & Cohen (2006) have argued that adding theory to a basic rendition of what journalists consider news to be, could mean describing news as a product of the interaction between social
significance and deviance. The intensity of this deviance and the level of social significance if exhibited by an event makes it irresistible for any journalists.

Staab’s (1990) explication of the theory, challenges the assumption that “several news factors determine the news value of an event and therefore the selection decision of journalists” (p.424). These assumptions have their roots in the work of Östgaard (1965), who provided a very useful insight for a theoretical discussion regarding the bias in the international news flow. Based on three factors (simplification, identification and sensationalism), Einar Östgaard argued that even though these factors are very general in nature and not exhaustive, in any case, they provide an overview within which to evaluate the role the mass media shall play in international life.

Galtung and Ruge (1965) further developed Östgaard’s ideas and proposed a systematic list of 12 differentiated factors and five hypotheses regarding the interdependence of these factors. Galtung and Ruge (1965) critiqued the reporting of three major foreign crises in the Norwegian press and proposed some alternative approaches to reporting the conflict. They intuitively identified the 12 factors as being important in the selection of international news (Galtung and Ruge, 1965, p.71):

i. *Frequency:* An event that unfolds within a publication cycle of the news medium is more likely to be selected than a one that takes place over a long period of time.

ii. *Threshold:* Events have to pass a threshold before being recorded at all; the greater the intensity (the more gruesome the murder or the more casualties in an accident), the greater the impact and the more likely it is to be selected.

iii. *Unambiguity:* The more clearly an event can be understood and interpreted without multiple meanings, the more likely it is to be selected.

iv. *Meaningfulness:* The culturally familiar is more likely to be selected.
v. **Consonance:** The news selector may be able to predict (due to experience) events that will be newsworthy, thus forming a “pre-image” of an event, which in turn increases its chances of becoming news.

vi. **Unexpectedness:** Among events meaningful and/or consonant, the unexpected or rare event is more likely to be selected.

vii. **Continuity:** An event already in the news has a good chance of remaining in the news (even if its impact has been reduced) because it has become familiar and easier to interpret.

viii. **Composition:** An event may be included as news just because of its intrinsic news value than because it fits into the overall composition or balance of a newspaper or news broadcast.

ix. **Reference to elite nations:** The actions of elite nations are seen as more consequential than the actions of other nations.

x. **Reference to elite people:** Again, the actions of elite people, likely to be famous, may be seen by news selectors as having more consequence than others, and news audiences may identify with them.

xi. **Reference to persons:** News that can be presented in terms of individual people rather than abstractions is likely to be selected.

xii. **Reference to something negative:** Bad events are generally unambiguous and newsworthy.

Galtung and Ruge (1965) pointed to the limitations of their study when they argued that the “systematic presentation of factors that seem to be particularly important will be followed by a simple theory and the deduction of some hypotheses from them. No claim is made for completeness of the list of factors or ‘deductions’” (p.64). The caveat of no claim to completeness did not stop Rosengren’s (1979) and others from critiquing the methodologies employed by Galtung and Ruge. Rosengren argued that most studies had only examined the coverage of events and not the event themselves.
As a result, they could not provide an adequate framework for understanding the criteria of news selection.

Schulz’s review of this critique as cited by Staab (1990) proposes, “a comparison of reality and media that follows the logic of falsification must fail since only different interpretations of reality could be compared” (p. 426). Eilders (2006); Shoemaker (2006); Staab (1990) and Schulz (1976) have all argued in the sense of these frameworks that the concept of new factors cannot be said to explain the actual process of news selection and “its validity is rather restricted to the questions of how far news factors determine size, placement and layout of news stories” (Staab, 1990:246).

Another major weakness of the Galtung and Ruge’s (1965) theory of newsworthiness was that it only examines the possibilities to predict how an event becomes news and factor of the news selection routine. Harcup and O’Neil (2001) studied published news using the selection criteria of Galtung and Ruge. They argued that their approach was different because it content analysed news that is published compared to Galtung and Ruge (1965) who were looking at the possibility of events becoming news. They, however, acknowledged that even though news values can be used to examine published news, it is unable to explain the complexity of the news-making process. Harcup and O’Neill (2001) suggested a new way to problematize the conceptualisation of news values by Galtung and Ruge (1965). They offered these:

i. **Frequency**: When the stories are not about events, but about trends, speculation or the absence of events.

ii. **Threshold**: This is still open to various interpretations. For example, which is bigger: 20 deaths in ten road accidents or five deaths in a rail crash?

iii. **Unambiguity**: Is this referring to ambiguity in the subject of the story or in terms of the journalist’s interpretation?

iv. **Meaningfulness**: What is meaningful is slippery because it changes over
time and mainly relies on very subjective interpretations.

v. *Unexpectedness*: There is a possibility that we cannot tell if the journalist is taking an unexpected angle on an ordinary event.

vi. *Consonance*: The usefulness of this category is limited because it is only possible to guess if and when it has been applied.

vii. *Continuity*: This category does not reveal why a story has been chosen to become news because it was in the news yesterday.

viii. *Composition*: We have limited knowledge of what was in the selector’s mind when making a particular decision about news composition.

ix. *Elite nations*: The lack of foreign news in UK tabloid newspapers implies that this category is not popular, but does that mean it does not apply?

x. *Elite people*: This category does not enable one to distinguish between the Spice Girls and the President of the USA.

xi. *Reference to persons*: Is this based on the subject or the journalist’s technique?

xii. *Reference to something negative*: Negativity is meant for whom? Bad news for some people might be good news for others (Harcup and O’Neill 2001: 262-263).

The use of causal explication for news selection became even more contested within this area of research. Most studies on news factors have employed the causal models, which argue that news is selected or published because of its particular qualities (news factors) and an existing objectivity consensus about these qualities. Shoemaker (2006), however, cautioned that this causal model is weak because “news is a social construct, a thing, a commodity, whereas newsworthiness is a cognitive construct and a mental judgment. Newsworthiness is not a good predictor of which events get into the newspaper and how they are covered. Newsworthiness is only one of a vast array of factors that influence what becomes the news and how prominently events are covered” (p.105). The causal approach of looking at news selection also implies that a given reality exists ‘out there’ which journalists acting as gatekeepers, will admit or
exclude (MaQuail, 1994: 270). As Hall (1997) has argued, representation does not entail a straightforward presentation of the world and the relationships in it. For Hall, *representation* is a very different notion from that of *reflection*. By selecting news, in the first place, the media represents the world rather reflect it. Ndlela (2005, p. 73) further explained that “media representations reduce, shrink, condense, and select/reject aspects of intricate social relations in order to represent them as fixed, natural, obvious and ready to consume. What the media do therefore is to choose one aspect (selection), inflates it into the defining characteristics (magnification), then establish it as the most easily recognizable image (reduction).” These social processes are difficult to causally predict because they are iterative and unconscious, except that some of those causal predictions make several underlying assumptions that basically defeat its potency to produce an accurate account of the prediction.

The definition of events within the concept of news factors has faced both ontological and epistemological difficulties related to the subject-object relationship. Staab (1990:439) clarified these difficulties when he argued against the exclusive power allotted to events which makes it look like events in themselves are capable of determining news selection:

Events do not exist per se but are the result of subjective perceptions and definitions. However, scholars have assumed, at least implicitly, a congruency of events and corresponding news stories. However, this does not fit the structure of news coverage especially in the political area because most events do not exist in isolation, they are interrelated and annexed to larger sequences. Employing different definitions of an event and placing it in a different context, news stories in different media dealing with the same event are likely to cover different aspects of the event and therefore put emphasis on different news factors (p. 439)
So from these arguments, it has become clearer that news selection cannot be an act of objective choice. But all these have a theoretical dimension. The studies referred to, so far in this chapter, have an object-based approach to news selection by arguing that events have some specific characteristics that are attractive to journalists and the more of these characteristics an event seem to possess, the more likely it is that journalists will select it. The journalists themselves disagree with this notion, however, they accept that some level of standard understanding exists within the profession about what the news should look like. This is usually handed-down through socialisation or education. The effects of these elements of socialisation from one generation to the other are very sublime that some journalists do not even notice they are involved.

The argument that the nature of an event itself is the biggest predictor of newsworthiness to journalists ignores the subject-object relationship (Staab, 1990). Subject-based approach to the debate argues that factors beyond the nature of events are responsible for news selection decisions and they are quite independent of the events in general, (Gans, 2004; Herman & Chomsky, 2008; Van Djik, 2009) but this looks like the other extreme of the object-based approach and therefore one needs the mid-point in this debate. For my study, in particular, I locate how subject-object based relationships blend together to determine news selection in a manner that recognises what comes first and what follows second. Considering that news selection decisions are subjectively based learning process that spans over a long time, what it means then is that journalists learn through the socialisation process, to instinctively imbibe how organisational routines, occupational constraints and ideology within specific contexts lead them to select some events over others.

In this approach, it could be explained that event-oriented newsworthiness knowledge, which fresh journalists bring to the job, are reformed overtime by
organisational culture and conditions. What this means is that the news selection
decision could even be different from one journalist to another, from a news
organisation or type of medium to another. The right approach to the news selection
decision should be to incorporate the various approaches in a model that
comprehensively offer explanations for further discussion. And through this
continuous discussion, there could be a better prediction in the future.

Staab (1990), based on the critique of Rosengren and Schulz, also argued that
the theory of newsworthiness has “limited validity because certain characteristics of
news rather than specific qualities of events have to be considered as independent
variable and the dependent variables are not journalists’ decisions to cover certain
events but size, placement and layout of news stories” (p.439). Based on these views,
Staab (1990) concluded that “the concept of news factors, therefore, is not the so
much a theory that explains news selection but rather a model to describe and analyse
structures and relationships in media reality” (p.439). Staab called the degree of
universality of the theory of newsworthiness into question since it was mostly tested
only in Western elite democracies and with few political conflict scenario. Othman,
Nayan, & and Tiung (2014) have argued in support of Staab’s position that “what
becomes news in one country is different from another and this is connected with the
fact that news construction is a complex process” (p.53). They suggested that country-
specific culture must not be ignored in determining what represented news in non-
Western countries.

Schwarz (2006) in search of validation of these ideas, tested the theory of
newsworthiness by Galtung and Ruge (1965) in Mexico, a non-Western country.
Even though he confirmed all the hypotheses he had tested, as a replication of
Galtung and Ruge study, he cautioned that the “relationship between news factors and
editorial emphasis that have been found do not necessarily prove that news factors are relevant criteria for initial selection of news for publication” (p.59).

O’Neill and Harcup (2009) concluded that news values can help us understand how some phenomenon is marked as “events” which eventually gets them selected as “news”. This theory can also help us explore how some aspects of the selected event get emphasised while other aspects downplayed or excluded. To them, apart from these insights, “news values sometimes blur the distinction between news selection and news treatment” (p.171). Staab (1990) also argued in similar manner that most researchers reject the view of journalists that news selection should be instinctive because “news values cannot be examined without paying attention to occupational routines, budgets, the market, ideology as well as the wider global culture, economic and political considerations” (p.171).

This view is supported by Shoemaker and Reese’s (2014) argument that news selection is also influenced by organisational needs and arrangements. Van Djik (2009) added that news has to some extent ideological functions. These lead us to the meso-level of the theoretical discussion where the attention of the analysis shifts from the journalistic behaviour of instinctive and objective news selection criteria to how organisational needs and culture influence the selection process.

**Intermedia agenda setting.**

News selection decisions are as complex as we have noticed. Apart from events themselves telling us about their selection or external factors influencing their selection, there is also an inter-organisational borrowing which is a lifelong socialisation process within the journalistic industry. Much of the research considering this phenomenon has described it as an aspect of agenda setting theory.
In fact, McCombs (2005) labelled intermedia agenda setting as the fourth phase of the agenda-setting theory, which explores the origins of the media agenda. He further argued that this phase and all other preceding phases of the agenda-setting theory need to “continue together as active sites of inquiry” (p.118). Agenda setting theory explains the influence of the media on the public’s issue of salience. The classical research of McCombs and Shaw (1972) highlighted this with an investigation of the relationship between the media and public agendas. According to McCombs (2005), agenda setting theory progressed a little further than the original focus when researchers began asking: “If the press sets the public agenda, who sets the media agenda?” He further explained that the patterns of news coverage that shape the media agenda “results from the norms and traditions of journalism, the daily interactions among news organisations themselves, and the continuous interactions of news organisations with numerous sources and their agendas” (p.548). He added that journalists routinely seek to validate their sense of news by observing the work of their colleagues from elite media and this practice has ushered us into what he calls “intermedia agenda setting era”, which is “the influences of the news media on each other” (p.549). The application of the concept in communication research was further handed a boast when McCombs (2004) reviewed published agenda-setting studies and found that Intermedia Agenda Setting was a key component of the media agenda and continues to receive increases in the number of research compared to traditional agenda-setting research. Due to the socialisation element in this practice, journalists will always watch over their shoulders by checking on each other’s news output. This occurs in a manner that the elite news media, either nationally or internationally, will get mirrored by the less elite media (McCombs, 2014).
Boyle (2001) studied the 1996 presidential election in the US by analysing political television advertisements in three major newspapers and television network newscasts to determine whether any intermedia agenda-setting influences existed. He concluded that the influence of the traditional party challenger was found on the network news and all three of the major dailies. These findings, to him, were consistent with a similar study focusing on the inter-media agenda-setting influence of advertising on the news agenda. Danielian and Reese (1989) broadened the area when they conducted an extensive study of intermedia agenda setting focusing on the issue of cocaine and they found that “network news programmes followed the lead of the New York Times in their coverage of the issue.

Golan (2006), Wanta, Golan and Lee (2004), and Roberts and Bantimaroudis (1997) have all applied intermedia agenda setting to the selection of foreign news in the USA and other countries. Golan (2006) pointed to “significant correlations between the international news agenda of morning New York Times and the international news agendas of the three evening news on television” (p. 323). He argued that intermedia agenda setting should no longer be ignored as a significant factor that influences the newsworthiness of international events. Roberts and Bantimaroudis (1997) concluded that Greek editors relied most on Greek sources, such as the Athenian Press Agency, more than they relied on foreign sources. They added as well that the influence of European news agencies such as the Time, Newsweek and Le Monde was poignant.

To assess intermedia agenda setting, Golan (2006) and Foote and Steele (1986) compared the similarities in the lead of stories by a different media organisation. Foote and Steel (1986) found that “two of three networks had the same lead 91% of the time, and all three had the same lead 43% of the time” (p.19).
Vliegenthart and Walgrave (2008) offered a comprehensive explanation to intra-nation intermedia agenda setting by arguing that the process of intermedia agenda setting is moderated by five factors, namely, lag length, medium type, language/institutional barriers and election or non-election context. They concluded that “intermedia agenda setting is a short-term process; newspapers have a stronger influence on television than vice versa; language or institutional barriers suppress influence; the size of influence also differs across types of issues and intermedia agenda setting is absent during election times” (p. 860).

Du (2013) explored mass media’s agenda-setting function in a context of increased globalisation to see if the theory of agenda setting works within the global setting. He found that “inter-nation intermedia influences” provided a new approach to move the journalistic co-orientation phenomenon to cross-national intermedia comparisons (p.19). Still, within the global context, Roberts and Bantimaroudis (1997) provided explications, through in-depth interviews, of why global news agencies’ influence on newspapers in Athens was, in some ways, poignant. The discovery that cross-border media agenda setting exists is one thing while providing an explanation for why that exists is another thing.

Describing this same practice, Riffe (1984) introduced the idea of borrowed news. He argued that the literature which suggested that national news agencies in developing countries might serve as internal news gatherers and disseminators problematic. They have a sceptical position about the idea that national journalists will reduce negative coverage of the developing nations by international wire services because “Western news organizations have, in some occasions, found some of the reports by national media inaccurate” (p.142). Xie and Cooper-Chen (2009) argued, in support of Riffe (1984), that in the case of international news, “borrowing or shortcuts
can save enormous amounts of time and money” but that comes with a risk of inaccuracies in national accounts (p. 92).

These studies stood on the original thinking by Rogers, Dearing, & Bregman (1993) that fit very well into the argument that “news people operate in a special kind of environment, without much contact with their audience members. So they take their clues about an issue’s priority from other media” (p.33). An ethnographic interview conducted after the content analysis (in this study), allowed me to trace any relationships that account for the intermedia influences evidenced in the results of the content analysis in a more detailed manner. This provided explanations to test arguments like that of Paterson (2011) who cautioned that transnational news agencies are more imperialist instruments that have been mistakenly cited as examples of globalisation.

Guo and Vargo (2017) have reiterated the argument that which news media’s article gets mirrored in what country is a crucial soft-power battle because it shows how well a country is managing its narrative in different countries. Nye (2010) had argued that the contest of which country’s stories are winning is a big deal in modern global politics. This global nature of news selection leads us to the next theoretical approach in this study which is the application of postcolonial theory to unravel the ideological functions embedded in the selection process of foreign news in Ghana.

**Postcolonial theory.**

According to Sawant (2012, p.120) “postcolonial theory investigates what happens when two cultures clash and one of them with accompanying ideology empowers and deems itself superior to the other.” To Prasad (2003) postcolonial theory is a critique that “investigates the complex and deeply fraught dynamics of modern Western
colonialism and anti-colonialism resistance and the on-going significance of the colonial encounter for people’s lives both in the West and in the non-West (p.5).

These definitions fit into ideas of Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin (1995) who argued that the way to reconsider Eurocentric and Western representation of non-Western worlds is to unsettle and disrupt the canonical text and theories and their implicit binary operations of “us” and “them”.

By its very nature, the West becomes a standard by which “others” are judged. This implicit reference drowns national knowledge and further fixes the attention of the colonised to the Western gaze and the Eurocentrism of all aspects of society. Postcolonial studies problematize all these in addition to current globalisation debate and it argues that processes involved in these phenomena are uneven and they also restructure international relationship significantly around economic and political linkages that appropriate some and leave others. These happen in a very hegemonic superstructure that has little space for resistance, hence the continuous limitation and reduction in the Third world agency (Goldberg & Quayson, 2002; Lopez-Escobar, Llamas, McCombs & Lennon, 1998).

Having said these, the issue to be discussed next is what postcolonial studies researchers do differently. Postcolonial researchers or the use of postcolonial studies is an acceptance that one is operating within the critical theory tradition and the related fields of post-structuralism and postmodernist perspectives. However, the discussion in the postcolonial critique involves understanding the relationship between two broad areas, namely, material socio-economic processes, and text, knowledge, culture and ideology (Loomba, 1998). Even though, dominated by the definition of economic and military strength of nations, Postcolonialism recounts also the cultural representations and politics of identity in a world order that can no longer
be described as West and non-West. This is because the term West is used metonymically to identify most nations in Europe and North America. But the institutions and nations that in reality constitutes the West as used here are very few. It is crucial to state that the West does not usually employ negatives against itself and some of the grave representation offences have mostly been against the binary others (Said, 2003).

Like all paradigms of knowledge, postcolonial theory has its fair share of criticisms and contestations within and outside the milieu. Firstly, the very name postcolonial attracted the attention of some scholars who considered that as a premature celebration of the end of colonialism, a phenomenon the world is centrally imbricated in (Sawant, 2012). Secondly, the diverse, open door approach of postcolonial studies to many fields of inquiry presents a serious challenge to an accurate conceptualisation of the field (Shome and Hegde, 2002). Thirdly, Postcolonialism, also referred to as Postcolonial studies, due to its vastness, runs the risk of unwittingly assuming that all colonial experiences were alike and by so doing fall prey to the binary scheme of colonial and postcolonial.

The growth of further binary conceptualisations within the colonised, for instance, depending on race and gender, are crucial for analysis as well. A binary mode would not improve this area of knowledge, however, the unlimited vastness in its conceptualisation is equally constraining. Examples of discursive practices already in use include slavery, dispossession, settlement, migration, resistance, representation, difference, race, gender, class, otherness, place, diaspora, subaltern, sexuality, hybridity, mimicry, ethnicity and many others have been discussed as part of the area (Goldberg and Quayson, 2002; Ashcroft et al. 2001).
With these contestations come the clarification for communication scholars put forward by Shome and Hegde (2002), who have discussed the integration of postcolonial studies and communication studies. They see postcolonial studies as an interdisciplinary field that theorises the problematics of colonisation and de-colonisation. They, however, cautioned that a mere chronicling of the facts of colonialism would not qualify as a postcolonial study. This is because postcolonial theory within the critical theory tradition is an interventionist and a political approach by nature. They argued, “Postcolonial theory does not only theorise colonial conditions but also why those conditions are what they are, and how they can be undone and redone” (p.250). To Shome and Hegde, a postcolonial study must offer “an emancipatory political stance or interventionist theoretical perspective” in examining issues as a mark of the theory’s critical impulse (p.250). After a review of the writings of Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak, Lata Mani, Dipesh Chakraborty, they suggested that these studies have woken us up to the fact that “institutionalised knowledge is always subject to forces of colonialism, nation, geopolitics and history” (p.251). Shome and Hegde summed up the uniqueness of this milieu of postcolonial theory within the critical scholarship tradition in these words:

“… Postcolonial theory provides a historical and international depth to the understanding of cultural power. It studies issues of race, class, gender, sexuality, and nationality, that are of concern to contemporary critical scholarship by situating these phenomena within geopolitical arrangements, and relations of nations and their inter/national histories.” (p.252).

Foreign news selection between and among nations has been studied over the years from journalistic routine and organisational pragmatic points of view. However, recent scholars are asking for a more creative approach to this area of knowledge in a
way that supports Shome and Hegde’s call. Mody (2010) added that investigations of foreign news should include geopolitical arrangements and relations of nations while Fair (1993) subjected the whole process of foreign news selection in the United States to the question of race. These studies also used very different forms of methodology.

The use of different methodology was recommended by Shome and Hegde (2002) when they asserted that “postcolonial studies do not privilege any one methodology over another and that different philosophical traditions have been deployed to examine various changing contexts of colonialism” (259). They rather stressed the need for postcolonial studies to remain committed to methodological reflexivity, that is, a constant reflection on how as a researcher, one is imbricated in a critique of re-reading texts and knowledge.

Postcolonial theory and communication studies have hardly had any integration, but Shome and Hegde (2002) proposed the integration of the two areas when they asserted that the “politics of postcoloniality is centrally imbricated in the politics of communication studies” (p.249). Shome and Hegde invited scholars to think through the politics of postcoloniality from a communication perspective.

Grossberg (1982) in a philosophical critique of communication studies had offered the foundation for such a thinking when he problematized communication studies itself. Grossberg argued that communication studies have “ignored questions about the ideological and political power of communication itself” (p.84). He conceptualised the philosophy of communication with the argument that to address “the determining and determined relations between communication and other aspects of our lives” is more needed than the search for essential and universal characteristics of communication” (p.84).
Apart from Grossberg, B’beri and Audette-Longo (2009) gave an account of how the work of Arnold Shepperson tackled the study of communication, “by paradoxically adopting and rearticulating at the same time the theoretical linearity of the sender-receiver-model, which was then the widely accepted canonical model for the study of communicative processes” (p. 153). They demonstrated the European embeddedness of communication theory and theoretical linearity of the milieu.

Grossberg ended with a question, which Shome and Hegde (2002) required us to revisit to understand postcoloniality of communication studies: “What are the particular involvements and investments of communication in real historical social formations?” (Grossberg, 1982, p. 84). To understand the ambivalence of our deeply divided global world today requires that one “denaturalises” communication studies and its roles in our lives. Grossberg added that “not rejecting the everyday understanding of communication does not mean we should not question its natural status in our social existence” (p.85). To Shome and Hegde (2002) “these critiques will lead us to eventually produce a more just and equitable knowledge base about Third World, the ‘Other’ and the ‘Rest’ of the world” (p.261).

According to Grossberg (1982), the claim of objective view as it is now held in communication research has failed because it only gives meaning to the object, which is inherently different from the subject, without accounting for role or contribution of the individual to the process of communication. This led Shome and Hegde (2002) to argue that postcolonial theory allows communication scholars, a point of “analytical entry for a more democratic re-reading of the contemporary world from new and more self-reflexive locations” in order to disrupt the long-held objective view about communication (p.264). Like many other scholars have argued (Obijiofor, 2002; Fair, 1993), postcolonial connections remain a poignant way of
looking at how social structures embedded in our daily lives seem to affect almost everything. Shome and Hegde (2002:261) provided more details:

The postcolonial connection is a powerful way of restoring the macro structures and the historical trajectories that frame contemporary social relations within the global/local nexus and it allows us to go beyond the descriptive and account for the ways in which the Western realities have spread across the world as the universal condition.

Their argument squarely established the idea that to describe how Western products of communication travel across the world, one needs to be aware of historical and world order conduits that drive this practices. Wasserman (2006) has pointed to the tension that arises when normative frameworks are applied to the postcolonial context in an attempt to universalise a kind of ideas, in his case, global media ethics.

To investigate the influence of transnational news agencies on foreign news selection in Ghana through a postcolonial theory, as used in this study, is not to stress the “West” and the “East” divide or the “West” and the “Other” demarcations, but rather to establish, as in the words of Shome and Hegde (2002), how “the ‘West and the Other’ are constitutive of one another in ways that are both complicitous and resistant” (p.264). This is covered in the argument of Thomass (2016) when she demonstrated that the media space is generally contested and interlocked with varied power negotiations. In that regard, inter-national media politics offers a useful insight to describe “misrepresentation, deprivation or discrimination of a multitude of cultures and ethnicities” (p. 123). Thomass established a correlation between the normative quest of the national/international media landscape and postcolonial studies in relation to diversity in content, which is representative of a variety of cultural expressions by different actors. Based on these ideas, she argued that postcolonial studies and national/international media politics have similar aims.
Kothari (2008) stressed that any analysis of media coverage that looks at the selection of sources only and biases of journalistic story-telling routines misses the agency of sources and their representation structure that are unwittingly imbibed by the receiving journalists. Shome and Hegde (2002) and Shome (2009) had explained the same issue by arguing that the agency of sources had been ignored in most studies, but to employ postcolonial theory requires that the researcher seeks a better illumination of the sublime complexities behind representations and to deconstruct whether the use of a particular source reinforces imperialist/Western values or it is exclusionary. In this study, I demonstrate whether or not the journalists are aware of the complexities behind the use of sources and how they have either ignored or resisted this phenomenon. Two concepts within the terminologies of postcolonial studies have been crucial for my analysis: internalised oppression and hybridity.

**Fanonian internalised oppression.**

Fanon (2008) argued that in an attempt of the coloured person to escape the association of blackness with evil, he/she dons a white mask, or thinks of himself as a universal subject equally participating in a society that advocates an equality supposedly abstracted from personal appearance. This is done through internalized, or “epidermalised” cultural values into consciousness, which results in a fundamental disconnection between the black man’s consciousness and his body. Under these conditions, the black man is necessarily alienated from himself.

Paul Gilroy argues that the concept of epidermalisation emanates from a complex combination of philosopher-psychologist and their phenomenological ambitions that privileges a certain way of seeing and understanding of sight. Gilroy (2000) explained from his understanding that the concept suggests a perceptual regime in which the racialised body is bounded and protected by its enclosing skin.
He then critiqued it by arguing that the “idea of epidermalisation points towards one intermediate stage in a critical theory of body scales in the making of race. Today skin is no longer privileged as the threshold of either identity or particularity” (p. 47).

Mahendran (2007) refuted this notion of Gilroy by stating that he had confused the lived experience of race for its representation. Mahendran argued,

> It is the representation of blackness and its commodification in popular culture that Gilroy sees as shifting in the history of ‘radiology’ and the lived experience of showing up black which has been durable in the long history of racism in the West” (p.193).

Epidermalisation represented for Fanon, a pathological metaphor to describe colonial conditions which would cover both perceptual and physical anti-black racism and the primacy of sight that the black-skinned man can never escape. In *Black Skin, White Mask*, Fanon said “I am overdetermined from without. I am the slave not of the idea that others have of me but of my own appearance” (p. 87). By this, he puts up a notion of internalised oppression known generally as epidermalisation of inferiority (Fanon, 2008) and this has caused some people of colour to accept their subjected position as being the *natural order of things*. Fanon did not stop articulating this point. In *Wretched of the Earth*, he made a refreshing appeal:

> Come, then, comrades, the European game is finally ended; we must find something different. We today can do everything, so long as we do not imitate Europe, so long as we are not obsessed by the desire to catch up with Europe” (Fanon, 2001, p.251).

Fanon saw imitation as a major hurdle for the newly independent states not because he wanted a complete divorce but he feared that imitation could play into the psychic realm disruption that had already taken place during the colonial encounter.
**Bhabha's hybridity and third space intervention.**

It is clear from the works of Bhabha (1994) and Nandy (1988), how the psychic realm of the colonised operates. The sublime nature of globalisation of speech to the advantage of the Western world and the cravings of the colonised to legitimise their quality through imitation of the coloniser is further exacerbated by the lingering influences of Western education, training and ownership of knowledge. Bhabha (1994) argued that changes in the psychic realm that were inflicted on the colonised during the colonial experience are very active even in postcolonial times. He cited contemporary globalisation as perpetuating liminal subjectivity instituted during colonial eras because, to him, globalisation looks very much like being ruled by a superior culture that suppresses one’s culture. According to Bhabha (1994), in this era, the ruling is predominantly through capital flows rather than through the force of the military.

Bhabha, however, acknowledged:

> The historical connectedness between the subject and object of critique … shows that there can be no simplistic, essentialist opposition between ideological misrecognition and revolutionary truth. The progressive reading is crucially determined by the adversarial or agonistic situation itself; it is effective because it uses the subversive, messy mask of camouflage and does not come like a pure avenging angel speaking the truth of a radical historicity and pure oppositionality (Bhabha, 1994, p.38).

The concept of the psychic realm in the work of Fanon represents a concept of *submissive imitation*, which assumes that the colonised is a passive alienated subject living on the edges of two worlds and constantly seeking legitimisation. But the necessary legitimisation by the coloniser in the postcolonial space—even in the era of globalisation— is still categorised and operated with a binary framework such as
developed and developing; East and West, poor and rich nations. Fanon described this concept fully using the term mimicry. Bhabha, a staunch reader of Fanon, however, digressed from this essentialist conceptualisation of the colonised where he argued that the imitation practised by the colonised is not homogenous but metonymic resemblance, repetition and difference at the same. He coined the description of “almost the same but not quite” (p.86).

Bhabha (1994) then introduced the term *third space* as a place of hybrid identity that emerges from the fact that the colonised had to live on the edges of two worlds after being psychologically persuaded to imitate their ruler in language, attitude and worldviews. These changes, in the way the psychic realm of the colonised work, have been described as permanent than any structural elements that colonisation enforces (Bhabha, 1994 and Fanon, 2008).

Apart from these, Bhabha sees the performative practices of the postcolonial relationship as a subversive imitation, rather than submissive, which is characterised by fragmentations, contradictions, cracks, and inconsistencies rather than binary oppositions. To him, the significant racial and cultural differences that exist between the world of the coloniser and the colonised is beyond binary categorisation and opposition. There are, in Bhabha’s observation, “disabling contradictions within the colonial relationship” that exposes the vulnerability of coloniser’s discourse and allows the emergence of “subversive performative practices” (Ashcroft et al. 2007, p.37).

Bhabha (1994) tackled what shall constitute a hybrid performance as well. However, his very definition of hybridity is very much nuanced. He stated that “hybridity is a camouflage” (p.193); and the way “newness enters the world” (p. 227). He added that the space of postcolonial relationship by his conceptualisation is
“ambivalent where cultural signs and meaning-making have no primordial unity of fixity” (p.28-37). Though these descriptions are difficult to empirically set out, for Bhabha, a small difference, slight alterations and displacements, whether conscious or unconscious is crucial for the agenda of subversion. He further offered a conceptualisation of how this hybrid resistance is performed to allow one to recognise it:

Resistance is not necessarily an oppositional act of political intention, nor is it the simple negation or exclusion of the ‘content’ of another culture, as a difference once perceived. It is the effect of an ambivalence produced within the rules of recognition of dominating discourses as they articulate the signs of cultural difference and reimplicate them within the deferential relations of colonial power-hierarchy, normalization, marginalization and so forth (Bhabha, 1985, p.82).

Sayed (2016) offered an empirical description in Indian by arguing that the hybridity conditions described by Bhabha have led to “in-ward and out-ward looking dialectics, a symptom of the postcolonial identity” which is exhibited by Indian media industry especially actors within the foreign-owned news agencies (p.20).

Kraidy (2002) had brought Bhabha’s debate much closer to communication when he explained that even though the concept of hybridity has been applied severally to describe mixed genres and identity, it is still rare to see the conceptualisation of it at the heart of communication theory. He argued that because hybridity is a widely used concept, “the recent importation of it to areas such as intercultural and international communication, risks using the concept as a merely descriptive device, that is, describing the local reception of global media texts as a site of cultural mixture” (p. 317). Kraidy also argued that the use of hybridity as a descriptive device presents ontological and political quandaries. Ontologically, Kraidy
(2002) sees hybridity not “as a clear product of global and local interactions but as a communicative practice constitutive of, and constituted by, socio-political and economic arrangements” (317). He added that this descriptive treatment which consists merely of observing, cataloguing, and celebrating multicultural mixture, often ignores the inequalities that are embedded in the practice. Such an approach, he notes, drowns the potential political power of the concept or the lack of it. Hybridity will help us explain the “context, process, and representation central to intercultural and international communication” (Kraidy, 2002, p.335).

Kumar (2014) linked the concept of hybridity to the dominant debate in the postcolonial critique in a unique manner when he established the transformations that have taken place:

The hybrid positionalities of the postcolonial subaltern are creative and therefore potentially transformative in that they no longer strictly adhere to more conventional narratives of Third World nationalist histories, First World ideals of international development or the colonialist fantasies about the non-Western ‘Other’ (p.397).

Kumar further argued that in the midst of such changes, the major question of postcolonial theory to international communications can no longer be about “how the Third World writes its own stories” but “how to address the hybrid creativity and transformative potentiality of the heterogeneous, contentious and contingent subaltern positions in the contemporary context of globalisation and culture of the 21st century” (p.379).

To this study, the quest isn’t different, but unique in the sense that it has provided an approach with which new debates about how to describe the resistance of the colonised can be discussed. When will an act suffice as resistance and how do we
judge this? Bhabha (1995) answered with a framework to gauge the resistance element in the imitation of the colonised by arguing that the whole postcolonial relationship involves a “process of translating and transvaluing cultural difference” (p.252), thereby establishing, that whether in the world of the colonised or the coloniser, no monolithic or essential cultural features exist. This disruption on both sides, no matter how small, constitutes a resistance of a sort.

**Essentialism versus agency.**

The definition of Essentialism offered by Fuss (1989) introduces the concept from the perspective of its critiques:

Essentialism is typically defined in opposition to difference; the doctrine of essence is viewed as precisely that which seeks to deny or to annul the very radicality of difference. The opposition is a helpful one in that it reminds us that a complex system of cultural, social, psychical, and historical differences, and not a set of pre-existent human essences, position and constitute the subject. However, the binary articulation of essentialism and difference can also be restrictive, even obfuscating, in that it allows us to ignore or deny the differences within essentialism (p. xii).

Homi Bhabha has tried to disclose the contradictions inherent in colonial discourse in order to highlight the colonizer’s ambivalence in respect to his position toward the colonized *other*. The simple presence of the colonized *other* within the textual structure is enough evidence of the ambivalence of the colonial text, an ambivalence that destabilizes its claim for absolute authority or unquestionable authenticity. This is a basic response to Fanon’s perspective where the colonised was robbed of all agency he/she applies in the imitation of the master. Apart from the fact that the role of the colonised in his imitation of the coloniser is completely ignored in the dominant
literature, there exists a place to locate the locus of agency in the postcolonial relationship involving the colonised.

**Hierarchical Influence Model**

Studies analysing media content, have to make explicit the *symbolic environment* within which the content is situated to be able to delimit the two blurring areas of research such as *what shapes* the content and what impact it has (Reese & Lee, 2012). The Hierarchical Influences Model of Shoemaker and Reese becomes significantly useful for organising the theoretical concepts in this study. This hierarchical model has philosophical underpinnings that ought to be clarified early enough to situate its use in this study.

The *media as a mirror* hypothesis, which argues that media reflects social reality with little distortion, is attractive to journalists because of its power to render content neutral. Shoemaker and Reese (2014) argued that “This notion - the repudiation of which has launched countless critiques - now seems rather quaint and self-evidently untrue- although that has not been sufficient to squelch together” (p.3). This has become the case because most media watchdogs have found disconnects between “reality and its mediated counterpart” (Shoemaker & Reese, 2014, p.3). The bias critique argues that the media deviates in a lot of ways in their assessment and presentation of the reality. There is an acceptable notion among some scholars now that media portrayal of people, ideas and events are significantly different, depending on the social realities within which these things occur. Shoemaker and Reese (2014) made a categorical statement about media content that they are “fundamentally a social construction, and as such can never find its analogue in some external benchmark, a mirror or reality” (p.4).
What is crucial for studies of media content is the negotiation of this philosophical premises in an organised manner. Due to the multi-faceted nature of influences shaping media content, it is crucial to organise this study’s theoretical framework with a broadly acceptable hierarchy. Just like Shoemaker and Reese (2014), this study argues that these exercise of the hierarchical organisation “offer more clarifications, definitions, assumptions and empirical indicators and relationships for the theoretical groundings of any research work” (p.5). As such, locating the theoretical framework proposed in Fig 3.1 within the hierarchical model of influences require contextual adjustments and re-modelling that is useful for this research. In the next section, I take a cursory look at the theoretical foundations or layers of the Shoemaker and Reese Hierarchical Influence Model one after the other. The model is made up of five layers of influence, however, the theoretical perspectives that have provided the basis for factors shaping media content were laid bare in (Gitlin, 2003)) and Gans (1979) as follows:

i. **Content is influenced by media workers’ socialization and attitudes.** This is a Communicator-centered approach, emphasizing the psychological factors impinging on an individual’s work: professional, personal, and political.

ii. **Content is influenced by media organizations and routines.** This approach argues that content emerges directly from the nature of how media work is organized. The organizational routines within which an individual operates form a structure, constraining action while also enabling it.

iii. **Content is influenced by other social institutions and forces.** This approach finds the major impact on content lying external to organizations and the communicator: economic, political, and cultural forces. Audience pressures can be found in the “market” explanation of “giving the public what it wants.”

iv. **Content is a function of ideological positions and maintains the status quo.** The so-called hegemony approach locates the major influence on media
content as the pressures to support the status quo, to support the interests of those in power in society. (Shoemaker & Reese, 2014, p.7).

The latest model of Shoemaker and Reese (2014, p.9) has five levels of analysis: individual, routine, organisation, social institutions and social system as shown in Figure 3.0.

![Figure 3.0: The Hierarchy of Influences Model (Shoemaker and Reese, 2014, p.9)](image)

**Individual level.**

The individual level seeks to describe the creators of media content and how individual character traits provide a context within which they appreciate their professional roles. This level recognises the agency of individual journalists or media workers as actors within a larger professional constraint which eventually determines their actions. According to Shoemaker and Reese (2014), the power of media creators includes personal traits and idiosyncrasies that have been exhibited mainly through professional and occupational channels. The intensity of this level requires our attention now than ever before. This is because of the issue of digital communication and its appeal to individualism as an influential determinant of identity.
The significant disruption in previous categorical social institutions to which meaning and classification belonged has altered the significance researchers now accord to individual traits. Located within the ideas of Castells (1996), the emerging networked relationship limit the workings of institutional analysis and rather draws attention to the relationship between the self and the net. As a conceptual guide, the Hierarchical Influence Model considers the individual level as a constituent of personal demographic characteristics, background factors, roles, and experiences of the communicator within his/her domain of profession. Shoemaker and Reese proposed an inter-relation of these factors by arguing that “the communicator’s personal background and experiences are logically prior to their specific attitudes, values, belief” and they also precede “professional roles and ethical norms” (p.209).

One such element according to them is education. Education, particularly journalism education, has influencing roles that were laid out both as a general background factor and as a preparation of communicators for their career (p.214). The interactions of the elements in this level alone require a significant attention by itself so as to determine its composite influence on the entire hierarchical model.

**Routine level.**

“It is clear that routine and organisational levels overlap conceptually” (Shoemaker & Reese, 2014, p.167). At the individual level, the arguments established that foreign news as a media content is influenced by journalist’s socialisation and attitudes. These influences related to psychological factors impinging on their individual professional, personal and political habits. In this section, the argument advances a little wider to the fact that content is also influenced by media organisations and routines. Shoemaker and Reese argued that “content emerges directly from the nature of how
media work is organised (p.7). These routines and organisational arrangements outlook that are recurring in nature over time, tend to form a seemingly visible structure with which content must adhere. This defining structure could either be constraining or enabling or both at the same time. According to Shoemaker and Reese (2014), the routine level represents the immediate constraining or enabling structure of the individual and they distinguished these from organisational level influences, which they argued are just larger patterns of the routine level influences that are a little remote to the individual journalist. They established that in reality, organisational level analysis relates basically to routinized organisational constraining and enabling activities with regards to changing occupational roles, organisational policy, and organisational structure. Shoemaker and Reese consider the routines as rules, mostly unwritten, that guides the media worker. Shoemaker (2006) in an early commentary cited these rules as constructs that journalists are quite conversant with but probably cannot even explain to them because they are done recurrently with acceptance and satisfaction. These routines come from three sources, namely audiences, organisations and suppliers of content. The question of what do the audiences want remains usually unanswered from the journalist’s perspective: whether they know it or not. In fact, most journalists and editors are quite sure about the audiences’ taste but even between them they usually disagree. However, in the case of a researcher talking to them about this, they seem to casually answer this question because it has almost become a construct for most journalists. Even though mostly used by advertisers and marketing staff of the news organisation, journalists have started considering how to shape their content using survey and this is a result of the upbeat competition from online and other news media, who have accurately used this weakness of the traditional media in pitching their content. The routine practices
were fundamentally traced by Shoemaker and Reese (2014) to Wilbur Schramm’s concept of interlocking chain of influences when he argued that the cues, processes, the relationships which are involved in encoding, transmitting and decoding message influence the message (Schramm, 1949)

According to Shoemaker and Reese (2014), “ultimately routines are most important, than organisational influences, because they affect the social reality portrayed in media content” (p.168). Høyer (2005) summarised this level into five routines:

i. Events  
ii. News value  
iii. Interviewing  
iv. The inverted pyramid  
v. Objectivity

Shoemaker and Reese contend that routines are the practical response of journalists to difficulties, considering that they and their organisations continue to have very limited resources.

Organisation level.

Organisational level influences are similar to routines but are a little remote to the individual level. Shoemaker and Reese (2014) under this level, highlighted variables such as “ownership, policies, organisational roles, membership, inter-organisational interactions, bureaucratic structures, economic viability and stability (p. 130). Distinguishing the organisational level of analysis from the routine level is not necessarily indicative of them being independent domains, however, there are “sufficiently unique attributes of each level” (p.134) that could qualify them to be
studied separately. Poignantly highlighted is the phenomenon where modern organisational management has had members ultimately answering to owners and top management. This is where content and staff sharing within convergence platforms have formed interlocks between themselves. Shoemaker and Reese pointed to the primacy of economics since organisations live mostly to make a profit. They argued that producing a quality product or service for professional recognition is secondary goals. But this isn’t new since several scholars and media monitoring organisations have described the influence of economic goals on content as varied and aimed at survival strategies especially among newspapers in the USA and other places (Barthels, 2016; Fengler and Russ-Mohl, 2008; Bagdikian, 2004).

The question that remains unanswered is how the structure of organisations reflect their allocation of resources especially as a response to their environment. The practice that has so far been observed has signalled the danger of diminishing media autonomy especially since the media must co-habit with those who finance it (business) or those who wield influence that they might need and as such the power relations as it exists now at this level relates much to the influences these co-habitations have exerted on content.

**Social institution level.**

The distinguishing features of this level from the three other levels already discussed is the fact that its factors lie outside both individuals and formal organisations themselves. According to Shoemaker and Reese (2014), this level is inactive of media’s existence and operation within an inextricably connected power centre of society, which may either coercively or collectively shape content in many ways. The poignant questions referred to at this level relate to ideology, inter-organisational field
and outcomes of institutional forces. The analysis that researchers have conducted at this level of influence reflects a synergy of experiences where the entire field of journalism is analysed as a homogeneous social practice relating to legitimacy and commercial successes. Institutionalism and Bourdieu’s field theory have, according to Shoemaker and Reese, shaped this level.

Ryfe (2006) provided a pragmatic quote of the key elements that occupy this level. They include how institutions evolve in a path-dependent pattern, which has facilitated historical paths of given institutions. The timing and sequence of key moments of these institutions have shaped the recurring dominance we experience today. There are proposals for considering media as a homogeneous political actor with counter influences of other actors and democracy in general. The field theory perspective speaks of how economic and cultural capital as a form of power, have shaped specialised services into fields with peculiar internal homogeneity resulting from contingent historical path dependency.

Sources as shaping power dynamics within the news selection decision were analysed by Shoemaker and Reese (2014) at this level. They argued that intermedia agenda setting at some level is a social institutional phenomenon. Shoemaker and Reese first discussed the blurring lines between routine levels and social institution level when it comes to sources. They established strongly that “sources of content wield important influence” (p.108) on media content. When sources are routinized, they can be treated at the routinized level. They justified the treatment of sources at social institutions level by the emphasis on the systemic influence they wield. Journalists are largely influenced by their sources in creating messages and this was quite clearly outlined by Gans (1979, p.80) when he defined sources as “actors who journalists observe or interview including interviewees who appear on air or quoted in
stories and those who supply background information or story suggestion.” When these sources become institutionalised then they take on systemic attributes and their influences fall squarely within the institutional level of analysis.

**Social system level.**

The social system level according to Shoemaker and Reese (2014) represents the base upon which the other levels rest because of its focus on the social structure and its cohesive tendencies. Grounded in the Marxist thinking, the analysis at this stage relates strongly to the notion that society is inextricably linked to its social and historical context, which require a comprehensive appreciation for one to be able to establish in whose interest individuals, routines and social institutions eventually work. These are embedded within the question of value, interest and power. Media contents portray how social actors impose their will on other actors in society. However, the symbols created by this power relationships are not neutral forces because news is basically about the powerful, either about their ideas or their interpretation of events.

The debate about globalisation occupies this level of analysis. While some scholars argue that globalisation is just an idea of increased emphasis on the general awareness of other places (Nohrstedt & Ottosen, 2000), others have taken a more critical look at the phenomenon of diffusion and reception of Western ideas from political, economic, and cultural systems broadly under cultural imperialism (Paterson, 2017, 2011). For Elasmer & Bernnett (2003), the major preoccupation about this area of research, so far, is the use of conspiracy theory as the prelude to discovering how “contemporary international intentions and behaviours of states have amounted to various forms of imperialism” (p.2).
The complexities in the description of globalisation were clearly marked out by how different scholars perceived the increasing international social relations. Giddens (2003) described the phenomenon using the term “local transformation” where he explained the process of interaction between foreign media products and ideas from the world’s urban centres with other parts of the world. He argued that these relationships might be causally related, through a complex mechanism of global ties in the world markets. Crane (2002) argued that these diffusions and receptions could be better delimited to “cultural globalisation”, which is the “transmission of various forms of media across national borders without necessarily impacting any homogeneous attributes because the parts” in the first place do not finely fit into the national context (p.1). A more piecemeal approach to this conceptualisation of globalisation argued that the concept is happening but within and among “regional power centres” (Hawkins, 1997, p.178). Therefore, globalisation represents a relationship between regions rather than nations. Crane (2002) further contended that these cultural regions are not necessarily dependent on geographical, linguistic and cultural proximity. Hallin & Mancini (2004) have offered a rather basic rendition of globalisation by describing it as a term which helps scholars to avoid stating the obvious which is the “expanding and imposing of a single social imagery” (p. 27).

Due to these complexities, Shoemaker and Reese (2014) rather discussed this level of analysis using four sub-systems. These are ideology, culture, economics and political. They argued that even though they discussed the social system as affecting all the levels of the analysis of media content, it does not suggest that the other levels of the analysis are automatically dictated by the social systems level.
Towards a Theoretical Synergy: Frameworks of the Study

In this section, the theoretical and conceptual frameworks of the study are presented with diagrams detailing which theoretical lens provides which insights for a particular aspect of the study and how these individual insights could be linked together to provide the necessary answers for the research questions.

According to Miles et al. (2014), the framework could be “simple or elaborate, commonsensical or theory-driven, descriptive or causal” (p.20). This study rather adopted a simple, theory-driven and descriptive framework. That is, the position of a theory within the framework shows which level of approach will be adopted in its analysis: descriptive, predictive or explanatory. The models employed incorporate both the theoretical and conceptual ideas. They specify very important ideas and which relationships are likely to be meaningful and what data is required to deal with such meanings.

Conceptual outlooks of actors and questions.

Like Eilders (2006), Schwarz (2006), Johnson (1997), and Staab (1990), this study proposes that news selection research should be comprehensively approached at the micro, meso and macro levels of analysis. The theory of newsworthiness as explained in the theoretical review has been applied in this study to the behaviour of journalists in selecting news, either by relying on event-oriented factors or individual gatekeeper variables such as their profiles, newsroom socialisation and journalism education. These are represented as micro-level investigations, which corresponds with individual-level analysis in the Shoemaker and Reese (2014) model. It is, however, crucial to note that the assumptions in this study differ in some ways in comparison with the entire argument of Shoemaker and Reese because the theory of
newsworthiness was conceptualised significantly at the routine level. However, Shoemaker and Reese argued that the day’s news is influenced by many factors and therefore “influences from all levels of analysis determine the day’s news; they are not as visible a target” (p.172).

The basic rationalisation in this study is that news factors and values are individual behaviour and attributes that most journalists gained through education either in school or on the job. Even though most news organisation have compelling styles to which all newly employed journalists must adapt, the bottom line is that each journalist learns differently, applies and interprets these values and styles differently. Due to this agency of cultural reception, I argue that news values and newsworthiness are significantly an individual level analysis first. It does not imply that others could not use it at the routine and institutional levels since any individual behaviours routinized or institutionalised become routine and institutional level analysis respectively. The analysis here could be descriptive (percentages, mean and correlations) or predictive (Golan, 2008; Wu, 2000).

It is not the focus of this study to determine how newsworthiness predicts selection of foreign news and as a result, all the micro-level analysis are considered strictly for their descriptive purposes to provide validation and cross-data comparison in general. It is also to recognise the strength of this theory in the debate of news selection and news treatment, which have all contributed to Africa’s media image in the Ghanaian press.

Intermedia agenda setting, as explained earlier in the review, refers to the influence of a media’s agenda has on another with the underlying proposition that mass media organisations can mirror each other’s news agenda (Guo and Vargo, 2017; Golan, 2006; Lopez-Escobar et al., 1998). In this study’s framework, the theory
investigates organisational arrangements of these influences as the basis for news selection in Ghanaian media organisations. Even though in foreign news selection about other countries, one can even at this point propose socio-cultural elements, this study considers these influences at the meso-level. The meso-level in this study corresponds to two levels of analysis in the Shoemaker and Reese Hierarchical Influence Model: routine and organisation levels. Skewes (2007) relying on the accounts of Richard Benedetto of *USA Today* said that journalists especially on campaign press planes:

“don’t think in terms of what the public wants to know, how can I help them know. They think of it in terms of . . . what does my colleague want to know? What can I show my colleagues that I know that they don’t know? (p. 97).

Intermedia agenda setting, therefore, has become a real theoretical consideration for every news selection decision and this is even further determined by a complex economic and ideological reasoning. This whole phenomenon is critically investigated.

Postcolonial theory, as discussed in the review is employed as a macro level analytical tool in this study. It seeks to state that foreign news selection in Ghana has something to do with economic and political relationships; political ideology and social structure as well as several elements in the micro and meso levels which are consciously and inadvertently influenced by these sublime and complex historical relationships. So this ideological function is considered an overarching element in the theoretical framework which actually explains the superstructure of power and its dynamics when it comes to foreign news.
Towards a Theoretical Synergy: Frameworks of the Study

This study, like Shome and Hegde (2002), considers the politics of communication as central to the understanding of our modern globalised society and calls for a more socially responsible problematisations of international communication. Figure 3.1 presents the theoretical framework, which blends the three different theories and levels of analysis.

*Figure 3.1: Theoretical framework*

The three theories represented in the framework are: theory of newsworthiness as a micro-level analysis, which corresponds to individual-level analysis in the Shoemaker and Reese hierarchical model. The theory is used to investigate journalist’s behaviours and understanding of what makes the news. The Intermedia agenda setting theory is used to explain all organisational arrangements that affected the news selection process at the meso level, which is conceptualised to involve both routine and organisational level analysis in Shoemaker and Reese’s hierarchical model. The major questions of business and relationships have caused media organisations to depend on each other and these are interrogated at this level. Finally, postcolonial
theory provides an explication of how the other two levels are influenced by ideological elements at the super-structure level. The superimposition of the postcolonial theory is due to its nature as a critique and its use in this study as an explanatory level theory. The social institution and social system levels of analysis in Shoemaker and Reese model were collapsed together and embedded in the critical impulse of the postcolonial theory.

As discussed earlier, conceptual frameworks are usually founded on theory or could be significantly theory driven. Figure 3.2, which represents the conceptual framework of this study, is basically providing a more cogent approach to tackle the data collection and analysis by showing subjects of interests, processes and the interrelationships between them. According to Miles et al. (2014) and Anfara & Mertz (2006), the conceptual framework changes quite frequently in qualitative research due to the asymmetrical social world. This represents the initial interrelationships envisaged and its subsequent modifications throughout the course of the data collection and analysis would be revisited in the concluding section (see page 282).

The framework proposes that three levels of factors do influence foreign news selection: journalist’s behaviour, organisational arrangements and ideological functions. Even though there is an assumption that the process begins from the micro level to the organisational level upwards, this continuum can be equally iterative and reflexive. This means the process can begin from an ideological or organisational level or one can move up and down along the continuum to seek illumination. In this framework, there is no clear way of measuring the potency of each stage of the process against the others since the path is fluid and construed in human choices. But the fundamental understanding is that no matter where the process begins in the continuum or whichever stage wields more power along the fluid path, the resultant
effects is that foreign news selection decisions are determined by all these interdependent and interrelated mechanisms, which eventually affect Africa’s media image in the Ghanaian press.

The conceptual framework, Figure 3.2, is opened to the assumption that the constituents of influence: individual journalists, organisational and ideological functions, can each independently contribute to the way Africa is covered in the Ghanaian press. As a result, the direction of influence from these three rectangular boxes is indicated in deep black showing maximum influence. However, based on the sociological dimension of the framework, it is suggested that the influence of these three levels could either be measured jointly at the foreign news selection filter domain of the figure (where the influence of each level is dependent on the special circumstances of a particular day) or measured individually.

The individual measurement of these influences, in Figure 3.2, leads us back to subject-oriented and object-oriented debate where some scholars argue that news selection is a practice that ought to be investigated at the level of the journalists and their personal traits because there are sound criteria for objective news selections that journalists know very well (micro level). Others argue that news organisation significantly shape the journalists when they arrive at their premises and as such researchers must rather be concerned with how this socialisation takes place. While the last argument hinges on the ideological elements that societal influences carry and are exerted on the news institutions in general. In this study, all these ideas are incorporated at the beginning in figure 3.2, but with a new possibility where the news selection decision could be comprehensively described as the result of these three elements (influences) meeting at the Foreign News selection filter.
Summary

The chapter provided a comprehensive theoretical review focusing on the theory of newsworthiness, intermedia agenda setting and postcolonial theory. The discussion of these theories highlighted portions of the study each theory could better explicate and how these theories are related. The limits of news factors as determinants of news selection decision were explained. Again, news factors were investigated, in this study, only for their descriptive attributes, that is, the description of favourite news factors among Ghanaian journalists working for foreign news pages. There was a
clear delimitation regarding the predictive value of news factors as determinants of news selection decisions.

Intermedia agenda setting was located within the general agenda-setting theory as the fourth phase which has currently received an increased empirical research attention. The review considered how intermedia agenda setting has been applied to foreign news resulting in what is called *inter-nation inter-media agenda setting*. Located at the meso-level, the intermedia agenda setting theory provides a means to cross check the meaning of such reciprocal news borrowing practices and organisational arrangements behind them. Intermedia agenda setting research focuses on how the media agenda is shaped by sources. In this study, it was the focus of the debate to determine whether one media’s agenda shapes that of another media especially abroad and what accounted for these cross-border agenda mirroring (Lopez Escobar, Llamas, McCombs, & Lennon, 1998; Reese & Danielian, 1989; Wanta & Foote, 1994). According to McCombs (2005), journalists make news by “continuous interaction of news organizations with numerous sources and their agendas” (pp. 548–549). In particular, journalists tend to use the work of the elite press including *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* as well as national television networks as a parameter of news value (McCombs, 2005).

The chapter continued with a discussion of postcolonial theory and its intersection with communication studies. It was however established that the use of postcolonial theory does not concentrate on “East” versus “West” divide but rather to highlight how the “West” and “East” are both constitutive of each other in a more resistant and complicitous way. The theoretical and conceptual frameworks applied in this study were discussed using two different basic models/frameworks, which were modified throughout the course of the study. The structural positioning and
communication within the model represented theoretical conception. The two initial assumptions about the expected outcomes and relationships in the conceptual framework were also explained.
CHAPTER 4 – METHODOLOGY

In the three previous chapters, I established the background and objectives of the study, reviewed the related literature and presented the conceptual and theoretical frameworks. In this chapter, I present the methods and procedures employed to answer the research questions. The chapter is divided into six sections. The first section deals with the research design and rationale for the use of different methods (triangulation) for data collection. The second section discusses the sampling while the third tackles the rationale for the choice of the newspapers and provides a detailed description of the selected newspapers. The fourth section describes the unit of analysis and period of study. The fifth section describes data collection and analysis. The sixth section demonstrates validity, reliability and ethical issues, coding of instruments and the conceptual design for the ethnographic interview.

It is imperative to recall the research questions that were asked in the introduction and to proceed with how I intend to answer these questions through data collection and analysis. The four research questions that were set for the study are:

RQ1: How was Africa depicted in the Ghanaian press?
   a) What were the dominant themes through which the African story was narrated?
   b) What were the topics/story types mostly covered on the continent?
   c) How was the quality of coverage (negative or positive or neutral)?
   d) How comparable are RQ2a,b,c between the Ghanaian press and their Western counterparts (Bunce, Franks & Paterson, 2017)?

RQ 2: What is the weight, quantitative and qualitative, of influence individual international news agencies carry as sources in the Ghanaian press?
RQ3: What, from the perspective of the journalists, accounts for the kind of representation Africa gets from the Ghanaian press in terms of condition, actors and practices?

RQ 4: How did specific inter-media agenda-setting relationships evolve?

I adopted a two-step data collection strategy which started with an ethnographic content analysis of foreign news stories from four major Ghanaian newspapers. The second step involves an ethnographic interview with the foreign news reporters and editors of the four selected newspapers.

The first step in empirical data collection started as the exploratory phase of the research in August-September 2015 for the content analysis. I collected hardcopies of foreign news articles from the University of Cape Coast Library after receiving an official written permission in line with the ethical requirement of the study. The invitation letter has been attached as Appendix I.

The quantitative aspect of the content analysis revealed the weight of influence an individual international news agency carried as source and is meant to count the number of foreign stories sourced from each of them over the period of the study (1st January 2012- 31st December 2013). The news stories that appeared on the foreign news pages of each of the four newspapers were counted. As part of step one, I collected 96 editions of the four major newspapers for the ethnographic content analysis that sought to reveal the dominant themes of the depiction of African countries in the Ghanaian press.

The second step of data collection was conducted in twelve intermittent weeks, from 26th April 2016 to 31st July 2016. I spent two weeks each with the four selected newspapers interviewing the journalists and editors and observing the entire foreign news selection and production processes. The complete description of the
ethnographic interview design is discussed as part of the data collection (see Design as appendix II).

**Research Design**

The research design is a strategy of inquiry that gives procedural direction for the design of a study, whether within qualitative, quantitative or mixed method approaches (Creswell, 2014). The purpose of the design can be explorative, descriptive, explanatory and a combination of the three, plus other purposes. Sequential and typological designs hardly fit qualitative research design because any component of a design in this paradigm requires reconsideration and modification throughout the research process in response to new developments, which are inevitable (Maxwell, 2012). For Robson (2011), the qualitative research design is an inductive process that hardly follows a sequence or strict pre-determined plan, it is flexible and not fixed. In qualitative research, a research design should exhibit a flexible process in almost all the stages of the research including data collection and analysis, development and redesigning of theory and addressing threats to validity. HAMMERSLEY & Atkinson (2007) argued that research design although crucial for the qualitative researcher, “it is a reflexive process that operates throughout every stage of a project” (p.21). Yin (2003) provided another dimension to the qualitative research design with the argument that “every type of empirical research has an implicit, if not explicit, research design” (p.20). Therefore making this design explicit, right from the beginning of the study, is like subjecting its strengths, limitations and implications to self-debate in order to construct and reconstruct it through the entire research process.
In my two-step research approach, all three purposes of a research design were followed. While the ethnographic content analysis of the first step was exploratory and descriptive, the ethnographic interview provided explanatory illuminations to the initial findings. It is important to indicate that the initial design of this study was a multiple case analysis of Ghanaian newspapers through content analysis and a survey for illumination. However, the results of the initial ethnographic content analysis provided no easy answers and insights. To provide a comprehensive explanatory analysis to the results, I reconsidered and modified the initial design to include an ethnographic interview where the news articles, the journalists and the world beyond the news organisation are evaluated with depth. In the next sub-section, I juxtapose ethnography as a research design with a case study and why the fluid slip from case study to the ethnographic analysis of the foreign news selection process in Ghana.

**Ethnography.**

According to Creswell (2004), ethnography is a design of inquiry in which the researcher studies the shared patterns of behaviours, language and actions of intact groups in a more natural setting over a period of time mainly using observations and interviews for data collection. Guba and Lincoln (2005) provided a broader clarification of ethnography as a design located across critical theory, constructivism and participatory paradigms. They even argued that case studies are closely related to ethnography except for the positivist influence which contends that a case study design is “part of the scientific methodology and must, therefore, adhere to the triangulation, validity, reliability and objectivity” (Guba Lincoln, 2005, p.460; Taft, 1997). Creswell (2012) argued that “a case study is an important type of ethnography, although it differs from an ethnography in several important ways” (p.460). While a
case study researcher is concerned with describing the activities of the group, the
ethnographer is focused on identifying shared patterns of behaviour exhibited by the
group through a detailed description of cultural themes (Creswell, 2012).

In this study, I adopted an ethnography design that applies two methods:
ethnographic content analysis and ethnographic interview. Ethnographic content
analysis (ECA) is a hybrid method that draws from both quantitative and qualitative
approaches to capture narratives and numeric descriptions of a text in order to
deconstruct meaning from it (Altheide, 1987; Altheide & Schneider, 2013).
Ethnographic interview, on the other hand, represents the application of different
interview genres punctuated by observations (Bernard, 2002; Spradley, 1979). The
use of these methods of inquiry provides a stronger case for the validity of the study
as a whole. Considering, for instance, the purpose to determine the relative weight of
influence carried by individual international news agencies as sources in the Ghanaian
press, I employed, in the beginning, purely quantitative content analysis (QCA) to
count the frequency of each transnational news agency as a source. This approach
matched the definition of Berelson (1952) when he described content analysis as a
research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the
manifest content of the communication. Altheide’s (1987) point of departure added
that content analysis is also ethnographic, that is, reflexive and circular in approach,
right from data collection through to analysis to interpretation. The ethnographic
content analysis is “systematic and analytic, but not rigid” (p.68). As with
conventional content analysis, information is organized by categories and sub-
categories, but with an ethnographic approach, other categories are “allowed and
expected to emerge throughout the study.” This thinking has been earlier confirmed
by Krippendorff (1980) when he described content analysis as a useful tool when it
comes to the examination of recorded communication texts, especially when the meaning of the message is embedded in the text itself.

While ethnography is usually filled with analytical descriptions of a group or culture and reconstructions of intact cultural scenes and groups from an inward-looking perspective aimed at uncovering the tacit knowledge of culture participants, case studies are rather outward delineation of nature of phenomena seeking to provide details about individual cases and their contexts (LeCompte, Preissle, Tesch, & Goetz, 2008; Fetterman, 1984). Stake (1995) defined a case as that:

Custom has it that not everything is a case. A child may be a case. A teacher may be a case. Nevertheless, her teaching lacks the specificity, the boundedness, to be called a case. An innovative program may be a case. All the schools in Sweden can be a case. However, a relationship among schools, the reasons for innovative teaching or the policies of school reform are less commonly considered a case. These topics are generalities, rather than specifics. The case is a specific, a complex, functioning thing (p.2).

The distinction between case study and ethnography is quite blurring especially in qualitative research because case studies can be very quantitative as well depending on their intention (The Free Library, 2014).

The express use of methods grounded in ethnography (ECA and Ethnographic interview) is a basic compelling rationalisation for use of ethnography design to investigate news selection culture among Ghanaian newspapers. The very theoretical and conceptual arguments of this study are based on the notion that news production is the result of several forces exerting influences from varied levels. Jacobs, Pander Maat, and van Hout (2008) placed these influences and processes into the concept of news management, which they argued revolves around a “triumvirate of news access (source-media interaction), news selection (editorial decision making) and news
production (entextualisation)” (p.2). Catenaccio et al. (2011) have proposed that emerging research in media must consider the concept of news management from a threefold perspective of text, professional practice and interaction. They established that “ethnographic, field-based, and interaction-orientated news production research is needed with researchers sitting in on the story meeting, looking over the journalists’ shoulders at the computer screen, out on assignment, and listening to the water cooler or coffee break chat” (p.1845-46).

**Operational definitions.**

*Afro-pessimism:* Africa negative media image and general perceptions people have about the continent have been discussed broadly under the concept of Afro-pessimism, which Nothias (2012) defined casually as the inability of Africa to overcome pressing challenges related to poverty, health, development or governance. Relying on previous literature, Nothias argued that the uniqueness of the Afro-pessimism discourse, when applied to news media, leads to the delineation of five analytical components: “essentialisation, racialisation, selectivity, ethnocentric ranking and prediction” (Nothias, 2012, p.1). In this study, the definition of a negative media images of Africa was deconstructed through a normative and critical perspective. Normative perspectives relied basically on previous research while critical perspective offered latent meaning based on what exists or is expected to be in the news articles that were not there. The issue of homogenisation of the continent, for example, is a normative idea that has existed for a long time now. Again, in this study, there was a search for the reasoning and conditions behind the reoccurrence of these images, especially their spread on to the African continent itself. As a conceptual guide, Afro-pessimism represented all news stories focusing *fully negative natural*
event on the continent (Bunce et al. 2017, Miller, 1999), wholly negative evaluation of policies and events (not natural), omission or silence on some parts of complex reality (Nyamnjoh, 2017; Mody, 2010), and positive stories negated with unrelated contextual and historical background (Hawk, 1992). These parameters were comprehensively discussed on pages 34 and 35 of this thesis.

**International/ Transnational news agencies**: The use of international news agencies bring to the fore the traditional international news wire services such as Reuters, AP, and AFP among others. However, in this study, all foreign news organisation cited as sources of international news articles in the Ghanaian press are categorised as international news agencies and these include foreign wire services, transnational global media, and other foreign news organisations.

**Sampling and Procedures**

The major aim of sampling in research is to obtain a representative sample that satisfies the scientific approach to studying media content. According to (Riffe, Lacy, & Fico, 2014) (2014), the need for content analysis studies to sample units of content and time can create confusion as to which population inferences are applicable. They recommended that the researcher should make clear whether inferences concerns content, time or both; because the appropriate dimension of inference (content or time) is based on which was selected with a probability sample.

Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014:31) argued that sampling strategies in qualitative research should be theoretically, conceptually, and purposively driven rather than the search for “randomness” and “representativeness.” Altheide and Schneider (2013) supported this assertion when they made an observation that in
some cases, simple random sample or stratified sample could systematically distort an understanding of news coverage of an event.

Both sides to this argument are insightful for my research because while the newspaper organisations were purposively selected, the content selection was randomly done using a constructed week approach that took care of each day of the week. The four selected Ghanaian newspapers represented two ownership structures (state and private) and with highest circulation figures (FES, 2014). These newspapers are well recognised, reliable and they had regular foreign news pages. However, specific editions to be included in the study were determined by the particular analysis of the stage of the research. While stage one adopted a census of all editions (content analysis), stage two (ethnographic content analysis) employed constructed week approach to unearthing the dominant themes Africa was depicted with. In the two constructed week approaches, I randomly selected two editions (issues) of each of the newspapers for each day of the week to represent a year. I repeated the process for the second year.

The ethnographic interview is the core element of the second phase of the data collection and analysis. At this stage, I sampled journalists and editors who worked directly on the foreign news pages of the selected newspapers. In all, there were eight of such interviews punctuated with newsroom observations. The design and interpretation of the ethnographic interview data benefited from the illumination from phase one, which involved content analysis. The approach of using different sampling procedures for different stages of a research process is called multi-stage sampling, a practice where one or more sampling decision and techniques are chosen at the different stages of the research (Rife at al. 2014, p.83).

To discover how Africa was depicted, the study employed the two-constructed
week sampling approach so as to cater for any underlying ideologies relating to the
days of the week and what is covered. Using the two-constructed week approach
meant selecting 12 editions of each of the four newspapers to represent a year and this
is repeated for the second year making 24 editions of each newspaper over the two-
year period. That gave me a total of 96 editions in total. With an average of 4 stories
per newspaper, I analysed about 250 articles that related to the coverage of Africa
over the period under review. There were three different screening exercises to
eliminate duplication of articles. After the screening exercise, 180 articles were
considered distinct and unique for analysis.

Selection of newspapers.
According to the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) report (2013), there are many
newspapers in Ghana but for purposes of consistency of printing and circulation, they
listed the top ten. Within the limits imposed on this study regarding time and
resources, I selected the top four of these newspapers: Daily Graphic, The Ghanaian
Times, Ghanaian Chronicle and Daily Guide. The Ghanaian Times and Daily Graphic
are state-owned newspapers with the largest circulation. The Ghanaian Chronicle and
Daily Guide are the largest circulating private-owned newspapers.

With a “daily circulation of 100,000” copies, the Daily Graphic remains the
first followed by the Ghanaian Times with “80,000 copies”. The Ghanaian Chronicle
and Daily Guide, two private-owned newspapers, followed in the ranking with a daily
circulation of “45,000 and 22,000” copies respectively (Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung,
2013, p.29). These four newspapers constituted about 92% of daily newspaper
circulation in Ghana as shown in Table 4.0.
Table 4.0

Parameters of Newspaper Selection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>Daily Circulation (DC)</th>
<th>Ownership Type</th>
<th>Position in National Circulation</th>
<th>Cumulative % of DC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily Graphic</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Ghanaian Times</td>
<td>80,000</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronicle</td>
<td>45,000</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Guide</td>
<td>22,000</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Deduced from the African Media report 2013.

The total Daily Circulation (DC) of 286,500 represents the 100%, out of which the individual newspaper circulation percentages and positions were calculated.

Apart from the circulation angle, newspapers can also be selected on the basis that they possess an international newsgathering ability and extensive foreign affairs coverage (Wells & King, 1994, p. 654). According to Ofori-Birikorang (2009), newspaper selection decisions could also consider the longstanding popularity of a newspaper in the publishing history of a country. Asante (1996) and Yankah (1994) have both pointed to the continued relevance of these four selected newspapers over time for research and longitudinal analyses. The foreign news articles published in these newspapers were analysed and described independently. Copies of these newspapers were readily available because of the popularity of the papers and concentration of the study on current periods.

**Units of analysis.**

The unit of analysis for the content analyses was the entire foreign news article. A foreign news article is defined to include any news story that relates to any country other than Ghana. For the purposes of this study, all those articles that appeared on foreign news pages were analysed. This study did not analyse foreign sports news
because it did not have the characteristics that met the objective of this study.

To determine the weight of influence individual transnational news agencies carried as sources, the unit of analysis was the byline of all articles published within the study period. Where the bylines had no indication of a visible source, the “Lead” of the story was “google searched” to discover the media organisation that packaged the story. And when the source of the article is still not traceable, it is counted as “Unsourced”. Generally, the units of analyses included the headlines, lead, paragraphs and bylines.

**Period of study.**

The foreign news articles taken from the four newspapers were sampled from 1st January 2012 to 31st December 2013. First, the year 2012 and 2013 were chosen as the study periods because as at the time of finalizing the proposal for the research in 2014, those were the most currently completed two years. The time frame of the last two current years completed (January 2012- December 2013) was chosen because, like other pages (politics, sports, crime, entertainment, and education) foreign news stories appear daily in all the newspapers involved. That meant there were enough articles to analyze for the study. It was also a practically effective decision to choose current years so as to get access to the newspapers with ease.

**Data Collection**

Data collection was divided into two steps. The first step was a content analysis during the exploratory research. The second step involved the ethnographic interview. The first step was designed to provide information for the conduct of the ethnographic interview through reconstructive discussion of the findings of the initial ethnographic
content analysis where the journalists offered illumination and reasoning to their daily work. Voltmer & Kraetzschmar (2015) argued that showing interviewees their own work in a reconstructive interview provides “a bridge for the interviewee to reflect on the process that led to that piece, including outside pressures, editorial routines and own beliefs at the time of writing” (p.32). These elements work together to produce rich data which otherwise would not have been possible.

I conducted a purely quantitative count of sources to show the weight of influence carried by each transnational news agency as a source in the Ghanaian press. Kracauer (1952) saw quantitative media content studies as supplements to qualitative analyses because of the inadequacy of quantitative analyses to see the media content as a meaningful whole and hence necessary to involve an act of interpretation. Rooted in the knowledge interests of the Frankfurt School, the act of deciphering of latent meanings through content analysis implies a deconstruction of ideology and a critique of its social origins with a political action. These complexities are not achievable only through the counting of individual words in media content. Hence, there is a new appeal for the combination of both quantitative and qualitative methods of content analysis in the field of communication.

On the basis of the foregoing arguments, I employed Altheide’s ethnographic content analysis technique to capture both narratives and numeric description of the foreign news articles. To achieve this, I allowed categories/codes to emerge from the data (Kondracki, Wellman, & Amundson, 2002; Mayring, 2014). Due to this, pre-existing codes used for initial ideas were eventually modified and new codes added to demonstrate the specific characteristics of the data. This meant I had to rely on the careful reading of the data text over and over again to achieve immersion in order to capture the text and its meaning as well as the contextual meaning. I engaged the text
by doing multiple readings of every news story sampled to gain a general understanding of the contents. Descriptive notes were taken at every stage and further explored using the MAXQDA search string tool, which allows you to search a combination of words together.

A second close reading of the text was conducted to identify the “discursive strategies” that lay within the text (Bertrand & Hughes, 2005). During this stage, I identified the recurrent issues or topics that come up in the coverage and noted the various themes emerged. I later categorized these notes on the thematic basis by assigning names and labels (codes) to them. These categories were then quantified into frequency distribution tables which supported the analysis (code frequency table).

To understand media content and representations, a researcher needs to engage in active interpretations of the text (Sanders, 2000; Kracauer, 1952). I went over the stories taking cognizance of the thematic categories and further engaged the texts to gain a deeper interpretation of the themes (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002) by “looking for how they were related..., [and the] finer distinctions and/or broader connections between them” (Gavrilos, 2002, p. 434). This led to the deeper interpretation of each of the selected news stories to determine latent meanings and significance embodied in the text. Through this process, I took the analysis of the news stories beyond its manifest meaning. The analysis was in-depth, more culturally situated, and profoundly contextual.

Latent analysis of a text demonstrates that meanings of symbols embodied in the communicative text remain open to interpretation because such interpretation depends on the individual researcher’s definition given to the text (Riffe et al., 2014). However, in this study, I was very reflexive regularly of my role in the research process. All readings, interpretations, and findings were noted in an analysis sheet for
purposes of reference. I analysed the stories with a conscious view of how the analyses related to research questions and the conceptual framework.

Content analysis relates only to a text under review. Although some inferences are applicable in content analysis, the design can neither test causal relationships between variables nor guarantee that the sender or the receiver shares the same attributed meaning. To minimize this weakness, per Lal Das (2008), I collected significant data through ethnographic interviews with the four selected newspapers to complement the findings of the initial content analysis. This allowed for deeper reasoning, symbols and roles that the content analysis could not reveal. For instance, to ensure the findings of the content analysis fit the entire research objective, it was aligned with an ethnographic interview to provide further illuminations.

**Ethnographic content analysis (ECA).**

Content analysis is useful in this study because I sought both manifest and latent meaning from the news articles. The aim is to get the latent meaning of the media text, in addition to other manifest content elements. The descriptions given here in this study about content analysis fall within the overarching description of Weber (1990) that content analysis is a research method that utilizes a set of procedures to make valid inferences from the text. These inferences could be about the sender(s) of the message, the message itself, or the audience of the message. Krippendorff (2004) explained the distinction between quantitative and qualitative methods of content analysis using the model described by Weber. He argued that “the reading of all texts is qualitative even if those findings are later reduced to numbers” (p.16). Therefore, using exclusively quantitative content analysis of media text can lead to a misconception about what the numbers say and what the content actually says. Simply
counting the number of recurrences, does not take into account the relationship between the message, the sender and the receiver. To achieve this holistic view of media text analysis, Lal Das (2008) recommended that content analysis should seek latent meaning as well as be triangulated with other mainstream research designs such as survey research and qualitative interviews. In this regard, I employed an ethnographic interview for the explanatory element left unanswered by the initial ethnographic content analysis that concentrates strictly on the message.

The appropriateness of content analysis to the study of representations and portrayals has long been established in the works of Deacon, Pickering, Golding, & Murdock, (1999); Neuendorf (2002) and Krippendorf (2004), who have confirmed the applicability of the method not only to media text but also to all the social sciences. The approach adopted in this study is more relevant since it draws on content analysis as one of the major preliminary instruments for the inquiry and subsequently supported with enough interviews and observation data.

The use of Altheide’s ethnographic content analysis approach meant that the processes of the analysis were reflexive and interactive with the researcher (not protocol), occupying the central position of the investigation, although protocols were later developed as a guide (Altheide, 1987; Altheide & Schneider, 2013).

Foreign news stories appeared on specific pages in the selected newspapers during the period under study and these stories were first coded for the source(s) of the foreign news articles (byline). Trained coders with little or no supervision coded the manifest issues of the source(s).

The second part of the first phase of the content analysis related to how Africa was depicted in the selected newspapers. After a close reading of at least a half of the stories was achieved, I developed content categories and frames, some of which were
predetermined with theoretical perspective and existing literature, while other codes were allowed to emerge from the data. Coding categories and themes were not mutually exclusive due to the flexibility with their determination. The design of the coding categories was done in a manner that provided for both narrative and numeric descriptions to be captured. The preliminary approach in this study was to seek certain words and examine their association and proximity in various parts of the news article including headlines. The news articles had several thematic spaces (operationally defined as foreign news article parts which included a headline, sentence, lead, and paragraph.

I first conducted a Boolean search for words such as “crime, killings, development, and human rights.” This was followed by searches for “war, famine and poverty” and these represented theoretical sampling from the postcolonial perspective of how the ideological structures contained in media text define the foreign other. The search for ten words before or after these words: “war, famine and poverty” was conducted in line with Altheide's (2000) design for tracking discourse.

To determine the direction of the story as to whether they were positive, negative or neutral, I adopted the definition used by Chaudhary (2001, pp.33-34) in his analysis of negative news in Western and Third world newspapers. Negative reportage included negative stories about diseases, accidents and natural disasters. It includes unforeseen events that have caused personal injuries or destruction to life and property. The responsiveness to disaster relief is equally included. These categories were covered with articles such as “oil spills, famines, floods, earthquakes, droughts, fires, pestilence and diseases” (p. 33). These issues were subjectively and contextually defined and determined because the discourse before, during and after an earthquake can be positive too depending on how it is depicted. Positive news, according to
Chaudhary, is defined as “information about the cure of diseases, relief efforts for families experiencing earthquakes, droughts, fires, pestilence and diseases. Others include a drop in fire accidents and improved air safety records” (pp.33-34). The neutral foreign news was defined as stories that “involved both positive and negative in an equal measure or neither positive nor negative” (p. 34). Beyond Chaudhary (2001), three other conceptualisations of negative stories or Afro-pessimism were adopted for the content analysis. These included the tone of the analysis, omissions or silence on improvements, the negation of positive stories with negative contextual background information (refer to page 36 of this thesis for details).

The definitions informed the construction of a protocol to obtain data on topic, categories, emphasis and grammatical use of these words (war, famine and poverty) as nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs. The protocol included narrative descriptions as well as numerical or letter codes. It had space for notes and comments where necessary. The following is the detailed definitions used by coders:

i. Newspapers: defined as the four newspapers to be analysed. The following labels were used “Daily Graphic=1; Ghanaian Times =2; Daily Guide= 3 and The Ghanaian Chronicle =4.

ii. Ownership: defined in terms of who was financing the newspaper or owned the highest financial interest and influence in the paper’s activity. Per this research, the following labels were used. Public newspaper (Daily Graphic and The Ghanaian Times) =1 and Private newspaper (Daily Guide and The Ghanaian Chronicle) =2.

iii. Date of article: ----/----/------: Date of publication.
iv. Subject/topic: defined in terms of the following broad categories but related to the kind of events or situation the news article is mainly about (Stevenson, 1984):

a. Economic: news relating to international loans, economic aid, economic negotiations, banking, economic recovery programmes, monetary matters, investments, export and import. Counted as E-series

b. Political: news that relates to internal conflict or crisis, campaigns, appointments, governments and their agents, coup d’états, the visit of state or government ministries, travelling governments, security matters, border disputes, diplomacy and elections. Counted as P-series.

c. Social: defined as news about urban development, health, housing, illiteracy, transportation, crime, education, labour industrial actions, mass media, drugs, aids and population matters. Counted S-series.

d. Cultural: news about cultural festivals, language development and indigenous practices. Counted as C-series.

e. Disaster: news regarding a natural event that destroys property and nature, leaves diseases that cannot be controlled. Counted as the D-series.

f. Personality: news regarding the personality of African leaders, businessmen, celebrity and ownership of property. Counted as the PS-series

g. Open for emergent categories e.g. (History). Counted as En-series.

v. Quality/tone of coverage: defined in terms of positive, negative and Neutral using the previous definitions offered by Bunce (2017), Obijiofor and Hunsch (2003) and Chaudhary (2001).
a. Positive news: information about the cure of diseases, relief efforts for families during earthquakes, drought, pestilence and diseases, drop in fires and accidents, improved air safety records, stories that reported harmony within and between nations and nationals, co-operation, development, economic growth, easing of tensions. Counted in the form of +1, +2, +3 in that order.

b. Negative news: stories about diseases, accidents, natural disasters, acts of God and unforeseen events, destruction of life, suggesting conflict unending, misunderstanding, crisis, border disputes, poverty, dumping of toxic waste, scandals. Others include the description on page 36 as to the determination of Afro-pessimism. Counted as -1, -2, and 3 …in that order.

c. Neutral news: Stories that did not fall into any of the two categories above (5a or 5b). Or stories that had an equal amount of 5a and 5b. Counted as N1, N2, N3 in that order.

vi. Source: defined as the byline (s) of the story. That is the international news agency sourced by the story. BBC=1, Reuters =2, AP=3, AFP=4, Xinhua =5, Own Reporter=6 and CNN=7, Others=8 and Unsourced= 9.

vii. Themes and references: This relates to news-angles or conceptual framework present in the news articles that cannot be manifestly coded as topics/subjects because they cut across topic categories (Stevenson, 1984). However, apart from war, killing, crises and terrorism, most of the themes were emergent codes which were left to be determined from the data. This was to satisfy the critical impulse this aspect of the study ought to concentrate on (See Appendix III and IV for a detailed coding instrument).
Conceptual design of the ethnographic interview.

Usually, ethnography is associated with the immersion of the researcher in the field setting for an extended period of time. But it has also been argued that ethnographers work in settings that complete immersion is unnecessary (Whitehead, 2005). Whitehead’s assertion does not prevent any researcher from spending considerable time with the subjects of the study as much as timelines can allow. After all, fieldwork in ethnography is inescapable as Agar (1980) argues that “the very name for ‘doing ethnography’ is fieldwork”. The field could be conceptualised as a community or an organisation or a text that displays a multi-faceted cultural system. In an application, Whitehead (2005:6) delineated four types of culture: “real culture, ideal culture, explicit culture and tacit culture”. To ensure that I do not miss any of the cultures at play in the newsrooms, which I see as mini-societies, the ethnographic approach offered more promises. It assisted me to obtain emic validity, which is the avoidance of a situation where responses to interview outside of natural contexts (newsroom and editorial meetings) may represent ideal culture instead of real or explicit culture. This could occur as a result of other factors such as social desirability or tacit reality. Due to this, Spradley (1979:9) advised, that if the “reality is tacit, the researcher through ethnographic fieldwork supported by repetitive, iterative and situational observations and interviews could unlock the meaning involved”.

I adopted such an iterative view of continual observation, questioning, making inferences and repeating this process until most questions were answered with the greatest emic validity. Whitehead (2005) advised researchers to adopt flexibility and creativity in the deployment of a range of methodologies such as daily and continuous
recording of field notes that will help in understanding the subjects and study topic with the greatest emic validity possible.

Spradley (1979) argued that the difference between the ethnographic analysis and most Social Science analysis is the defiance of the concrete sequence mostly followed from problem selection through to writing up the results. Rather, the ethnographic analysis encourages a constant feedback from one stage and to another iteratively and reflexively. This is because the analysis of the ethnographer represents the search for parts of culture and their relationships as conceptualised by informants.

Bernard (2002) mentioned four types of ethnographic interviews based on the structure and/or control that the researcher provides in the interview process. They are informal (lack of structure), unstructured, semi-structured and structured interviews.

Based on the procedures of Bernard (2002), I started the ethnographic encounter with the informal interview with no conscious structure. For the first two days, there was a total lack of structure and control and I simply recorded some conversations I remembered after the day’s work. I then started to influence the direction of the conversations based on the research objectives from the fourth day going. This continued with sit down semi-structured interviews and later structured interviews. The process was repeated among the four selected newspapers (movement from less to more structured interviewing). To synthesise the various experiences expressed by the journalists in the individual interviews and observations, I developed some structured interviews with all the journalists working for the foreign pages of the four newspapers.

The conceptual outlook of this process as presented in Figure 4.0, represents a pictorial view of the process adopted from Whitehead (2005), Bernard (2002) and Spradley (1979):
The focus of both the interview and observation get more shape and structure as the researcher moves through the interview genres from lack of structure and eventually achieves a structure by the end of the fieldwork. It is important to note that the iterative continuum along which the study flows is fluid, flexible and reflexive. This movement along the continuum is fundamental for such a reflexive model in order to generate ideas, re-question the process and make changes for the betterment of the insights of the study (see Appendix II).

**Data Analysis**

According to Bernard (2006) “analysis is the search for patterns in data and ideas to help explain why the patterns are there in the first place” (p. 452). He added that no matter the research paradigm, whether quantitative or qualitative, analyses ultimately are all qualitative” (p.452-456). This is because, after all the factor, cluster, regression analysis and many others, the researcher will have to link the findings to other findings in literature through the interpretation of the figures. This aspect of even the quantitative research is a pretty qualitative exercise.

The most difficult moment of the qualitative research journey could be the analyses stage (Jennings, 2007). The large volumes of narrative materials mostly
collected separately from data collection pose the challenge to the researcher grasping the real thing(s), discovering the explanatory meanings beyond the facts and discourse and restating them for people to follow (Jennings, 2007; Miles, Huberman and Saldana, 2014).

Miles et al. (2014) proposed a concurrent data collection and analysis either completely or partly by diving the research into stages where each stage collects and analyses some form of data before the final stage so that the researcher returns to field well aware of what more is needed or what might have been left that requires illumination. To avoid these challenges to the research process, I divided data collection and analysis into a two-step process. Step-one provided better information for me to seek illumination from the respondents on new ideas in the second step. Step two, the ethnographic interview, was designed in a way to allow some casual analysis while collecting data.

The analysis gave enough room for the appreciation of the interview transcripts. I listened to each interview before conducting the next one, especially on the same interviewee. I read the interview transcript and thick description of the field note of the entire study twice. What this meant to me is the unique appreciation of the conversation in a more intimate manner. The pre-data preparation approach adopted meant I could avoid coding words or line by line. Rather, I concentrated on coding meaningful bits of the data, which makes sense together to preserve the story’s contextual richness (Ayres, Kavanaugh, & Knafl, 2003).

The use of postcolonial critique, predominantly, in understanding the data, means using some preconceived codes (deductively) in the register of this tradition but it equally meant I needed to give attention to inductive codes in order to capture new insights of my data which could account for the nuances of resistance discussed
by Bhabha (1994). It was clear to me that exclusive deductive coding, produces a premature exclusion and closure to innovative analytical approaches and insights inherent in my data, so I voided it.

**Qualitative analysis guide of Leuven (QUAGOL).**

The ethnographic interview was conducted with insights from step-one (content analysis of newspaper articles) and it also represented significantly an explanatory level analysis. I relied, to a great extent, on the Qualitative Analysis Guide of Leuven (QUAGOL) for guidance (Dierckx de Casterlé, Gastmans, Bryon, & Denier, 2012). QUAGOL divided the analysis process into two major parts: (1) thorough preparation of the data and coding process and (2) actual coding process using qualitative data analysis software. These two parts combined becomes what is referred to as the first cycle coding (initial coding) and second cycle coding which refers to pattern formation and linking codes (Miles et al, 2014).

But the overarching task of my approach was the discovery of cultural themes. A theme, in the first place, is a postulate declared or implied and usually controlling behaviour or stimulating activity, which is “tacitly approved or openly prompted in a society” (Opler, 1945, p.198). Spradley (1979) moved further to define “cultural theme as any cognitive principle, tacit or explicit, recurrent in a number of domains and serving as a relationship among subsystems of cultural meaning” (p. 186).

To begin the analysis process, I conducted a mock analysis. Firstly, a thorough re-reading of the individual interviews because each respondent was interviewed several times. At this stage, I corrected the mistakes on the transcripts, underlined phrases and made note of thought-provoking statements and ideas. Secondly, I developed a narrative interview report of one page on each interviewee vis-à-vis the
research topic (see appendix V for narrative reports). By this, I answered the essence of the interviewee’s story to the foreign news selection. I also condensed the stories to an abstract form through paraphrase and summary. Thirdly, I converted the narrative interview report into a conceptual interview scheme by determining that which appears relevant at this stage (see Appendix VI for conceptual interview scheme). I achieved this through the clustering of data into concepts. At this stage, I replaced concrete experiences with concepts. I avoided all-embracing concepts by describing each concept with the necessary indication of its content. Dierckx de Carterlé et al. (2012) contended that this stage supports the trustworthiness of the process of analysis. Fourthly, I conduct a test of the appropriateness of my conceptual interview scheme by looking iteratively again into the interview data to see if I had casually ignored a concept or over-emphasised the other. This resulted in the reformulation and completion of the conceptual interview schemes. Fifthly, I resorted to further test the appropriateness of the conceptual interview scheme with the strategy of constant comparison across different newspapers and different roles of the journalists. Sixthly, I drew up a list of concepts to start coding with and it was my objective to have both deductive and inductive concepts to begin coding with. Seventh, I began the coding process itself after describing this process in detail with the research team at the doctoral school. Using the MAXQDA software, I rendered these preliminary concepts into codes. I provided no hierarchical organisation of the codes and no linkages. All that mattered at this stage was coding meaningful concepts and providing enough comments and memos of the reasoning behind each code. (see Appendix IX for a non-hierarchical list of codes).
The second cycle of coding for the development of patterns, data interpretation and reporting followed with mainly three strategies: keywords-in-context, constant comparison, and thematic analysis.

**Keywords-in-context strategy.**
Keywords-in-context is a qualitative data analysis strategy that can increase the understanding of the researcher (Fielding & Lee, 1998). This is where I looked for specific words in the register of concepts and how they are utilised by the interviewee in the descriptions especially as part of the words before and after its appearance. This string of words analysis provided space for context, an initial concept description and how concepts evolve in the body of the conversation (Altheide, 1994).

**Constant comparison strategy.**
Constant comparison is rather a more popular qualitative analysis technique developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967, 2006). According to Miles et al. (2014), even though developed for grounded theory, a constant comparison can be used to categorise actors, states, events and actions into an abstractly defined class of concepts that could either be predefined or emerge from coding and memos. To Miles et al., subsuming particulars into the general class of concepts is a “conceptual and theoretical activity in which you shuttle back and forth between first-level data and more general categories that evolve and develop through iterations until the category is saturated” (p.286). They argued that the success of this process of abstraction is dependent significantly on how the researcher clearly links the study’s conceptual framework and research question, as I have done in Fig. 3.2 on page 122. This is the case because, in that figure, one can clearly identify which category of data sets
should provide answers for which research questions? The constant comparison across the newspapers (Daily Graphic, Times, Daily Guide and Chronicle) and roles (reporter/page editor and editor) used both “enumerative induction” (instances going in the same direction) and “eliminative inductions” - testing the appropriateness of hypothesis against alternatives as a way of seeking rationalisation of the conclusions (Miles at al., 2014, p.292).

**Theme Analysis strategy.**

Theme analysis, according to Spradley (1979) is a cultural analysis with a less developed technique for conducting it. So from Spradley’s definition, themes can be tacit or explicit, they could have a relationship with each other in the broader cultural system and they could appear and re-appear in several domains. The first strategy proposed by Spradley (1979) for analysing themes is immersion. This is a complete surrender of one’s mental life to a new culture. This does not necessarily mean spending years on the field. In its simplified form, Spradley argued that multiple interview sessions could be intercepted with pauses that are entirely dedicated to the appreciation of a piece of data collected before proceeding to the next interview and observation. The study adopted this approach as explained in the two-step research design. Making cultural inventory is another way of improving immersion but represents the second procedure in itself. To avoid losing the easy familiarity with the data, the interviews were transcribed throughout the night before the next interview session. Cultural contradictions, social conflicts, informal techniques of social control, acquiring and maintaining status and solving problems (Spradley, 1979) are some of the suggestive frameworks for identifying themes, representing the third approach. Right from transcription, correction of transcription to coding, these
indicators remained a target for the analysis. These strategies and approaches fall within the general approach of this study described as *iteration and reflexivity*. During the main analysis, there were still several phone calls and emails sent to interviewees on gaps that needed to be clarified.

**Validity and Reliability**

Even though the study is predominately qualitative in nature, the researcher employed some quantitative content analysis as well. It is a general view that quantitative and qualitative content analyses are not mutually exclusive but rather strong when used together. Weber (1990) pointed to this by saying that the finest content analytic studies use both qualitative and quantitative operations. SMITH (1957, p. 218) added to the debate by stating the distinctive elements between the two approaches when he asserted: “qualitative analysis deals with the forms and antecedent-consequent patterns of forms, while quantitative analysis deals with duration and frequency of form”. From these assertions, it is clear that some basic differences exist with these approaches to content analysis that will not allow any researcher to apply the same validity test.

The issue of validity or trustworthiness of the qualitative research has become renowned in recent time because quantitative researchers require to see their equivalence of validity being demonstrated in the qualitative paradigm as well (Creswell & Miller, 2000b). Mauthner & Doucet (2003) have argued that reflexivity, which is one way to demonstrate quality, can be operationalised from “personal, interpersonal, institutional, pragmatic, emotional, theoretical, epistemological and ontological influences on our research and data analysis” (p.413). They debunked the neutrality of data analysis methods and techniques and rather called for researchers to
put in reflexivity into practice by moving it from its current abstract position to a pragmatic and hands-on research activity. LeCompte (2000) added to their call by suggesting that researchers should provide a detailed articulation of their reflexive strategies in practices.

**Content analysis.**

It is crucial also to point out that validity cannot be assumed, and the way research reports are presented must welcome the opportunity for critical reflection by readers. According to Altheide & Johnson (1994), showing “how we claim to know what we know” (p.496) is as useful as the very claim to what we know”. The quantitative content analysis relied on face validity of its categories, bylines, which were coded verbatim from the articles. Hansen, Cottle, Negrine, and Newbold, (1998, p.120) discussed reliability as keeping consistency in the coding of media text and suggested that inter-coder reliability can be achieved by coding data consistently to ensure that coding schemes and definitions are clear and replicable. The pre-test of the coding schemes for the “byline” was conducted three times using the same newspapers and their layout (but with a different period) before using them on the complete set of foreign news articles gathered for this research.

The *Daily Graphic* newspaper had a peculiar situation due to layout and outlook changes. Although there were some attributions to international news agencies, full stories usually were not sourced within the bylines. The researcher devised a solution for this by typing out the “lead” of the story in a “google web search”. This approach revealed which international news agency actually packaged that story. After this was clarified, the test of reliability recommended with arithmetic formulae did not really offer solutions because pool newspaper articles were manually gathered through stages. The quantitative elements being coded were manifest,
meaning they required only to be counted and recorded on the worksheet by three different group of coders (two in each group). We were in all six coders and we changed groupings each day. In the determination of these manifest elements of the weight of transnational news agency as a source a few coding discrepancies occurred, which were mostly arithmetic errors that were eventually resolved through the exchange of code sheet for summation after the close of every working day during the coding process. That is, coders, cross-check code sheet of other coders. We resolved very crucial counting errors through this strategy, which was revealed during the pilot test.

Krippendorff (2004, p.13) has argued that even multiple interpretations of textual matter needed to be reliable in the sense of being replicable by other researchers or described the same or similar by independent analysts of the same continuum. He explained that addressing reliability questions are essential to improve the credibility of qualitative research. The novelty in this research was that I did not know beforehand the volume of news articles to be coded for the entire census and therefore all strategies were aimed resolving errors that might occur during coding than inter-coder reliability test.

Whether quantitative or qualitative operations, I adopted the necessary steps to deal with reliability, validity and ethical issues in this study. Neuendorf (2002) advocates that content analysts should aim at more than one coder and test inter-coder reliability for each variable on two levels: agreement and covariance.

The use of postcolonial theory means deconstructing latent meanings in addition to “manifest” ones. This approach is qualitative in nature and is derived from different epistemological and ontological paradigms. Mcnamara and Mong (2005) and Neuendorf (2002) agreed that validity of qualitative content analysis could be
achieved through thoroughly understanding the research objectives, a preliminary reading of a subset of relevant content (immersion in the message pool) and careful selection of a sample of media content to be analysed. These were the premises upon which the qualitative content analysis of this study was conducted (Creswell & Miller, 2000a)

The approaches of Lincoln and Guba (1985) in providing for the extra trustworthiness of qualitative research have served as the foundation of several other researchers. The concept of reflexivity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p.327; Crewell, 2014, p.251) is very crucial for this study. I reflected constantly about how my biases, values and personal background shapes the interpretation formed throughout the study. My resort to using “I” represents the freedom for me as a qualitative researcher and the fact that I am announcing my normative deposition as having conceived the entire research process myself.

Field research in Ghana meant I was going back home and it was useful because I felt at home and received favours from people in the media industry that I have known through my practice as a broadcast journalist and a journalism teacher. My familiarity with Ghana helped with access issues. I have not worked for the mainstream print media before so it was as well new in some ways. I knew how to approach my interviewees as we had lunch together, spoke broadly about non-research subjects. Even though I spent only three weeks at each newsroom, some of the interviewees started addressing me as one of them and poured out their hearts in sincere conversations. I succeeded in eliminating the initial fear of social desirability reported about Ghanaian journalists in research interviews (Hasty, 2005). While analysing, I reflect on my involvements in order to minimise any biases that might influence my interpretation. One advantage that my involvement brings is rather the
emic view that I possess of the research field and the data, which is unique.

Another validity check adopted in this study is prolonged engagement (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p.301-304; Creswell, 2014, p.250; Yin, 2011, p.79). I spent prolonged time on the field and through this approach, I developed an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study and succeeded in conveying details about the site and the people that lend credibility to the narrative account.

The use of thick description throughout the method chapter in describing scenes, actors and situation is a form of validity check in qualitative research (Creswell, 2014:251).

Triangulation of data sources through extensive content analysis, newsroom observations and interviews gave me several opportunities to ask and validate the crucial questions of how the foreign news selection in Ghana is shaped in terms of actors, conditions and practices. According to Creswell (2014), to collect data through multiple sources is a form of internal validity check.

Another important internal validity check in this study was member check. In line with this, I shared the initial case analysis with participants to seek further illumination where necessary. This does not represent approval from the interviewees or their validation. Where no new ideas emerged the suggestions of the interviewees were abandoned. As part of my status report presentations and discussion groups at the doctoral school, I have achieved this quality. Testing data collection and analysis protocols provided assurances that the protocols met the specific purposes of the investigation and they were good enough to elicit the necessary information required to answer the questions of the research.
Ethical issues.

Study participants are very valuable to every study. Miles et al. (2014) posited that the researchers and their research participant need some explicit agreement on what their expectations look like very early in a research process. During the exploratory research in August 2015, I managed to get an invitation from the editors of the four newspapers I explained the purpose of research, my expectations and I required them to make explicit what rules they do have regarding the conduct of such research. These engagements underlined a good relationship between us at the beginning of sound ethical considerations. They jointly signed an agreement letter attached as Appendix VII after I presented an introductory letter from my graduate school outlining my interests in this research project (see Appendix VIII). Miles et al. (2014) cautioned that ethical issues involve heightened awareness, negotiation and making trade-offs among ethical dilemmas rather than the application of foolproof rules. To be sure that the study enjoyed the flexibility required in qualitative research, I remained open to regularly check ethical agreements and negotiating them where necessary, especially on issues of anonymising some of the participants when they requested it.

Summary

This chapter outlined the various procedures and methods adopted in data collection and analyses. The chapter also discussed paradigms and approaches to scientific research and followed a sequence where after introduction, the general research design was elaborated with its fluid and flexible attributes. The other sections included operational definitions, sampling procedures, selection of newspapers, with a detailed description of each newspaper; units of analysis; the rationale for a period of
study; data collection, and analysis. The three main data analysis strategies of keywords-in-context, constant comparison and theme analysis were discussed. The rationalisation for each approach undertaken was located in literature throughout the entire chapter, making it look more like a method review. The chapter ended with a discussion of validity, reliability and ethical issues.

In the next chapter, the first set of findings of the study are presented. These findings are basically based on the step-one that involved the ethnographic content analysis of newspaper articles as these results either partly or wholly answered some of the research questions.
CHAPTER 5- PORTRAYAL OF AFRICA: RESULTS OF ETHNOGRAPHIC CONTENT ANALYSIS

The findings of the study are reported in two tranches; just like the approach to data collection and analysis. The first set of findings in this chapter presents the results of the Ethnographic Content Analysis (ECA) in which the weight of influence, dominant themes of portrayal and subject and tone of coverage were determined. These were based strictly on the content of the four selected newspapers.

The quantitative weight of influence individual transnational news agency carried as a source in the Ghanaian press was analysed, one newspaper after the other, before moving the analysis to the aggregate level where the influence of international news agencies on the Ghanaian press as a whole was discussed. The analysis continued with an aggregate overview of the individual analysis. These illustrations utilised percentages as an indicator of the quantitative influence of the international news agencies.

The aspect with the tone of the coverage of Africa had to do with whether the news articles were negative, positive or neutral. This was followed by the determination of subjects that were dominant in the coverage: politics, economy, social, cultural, disaster, personality and history. I deconstructed the ten dominant themes through which the stories about Africa were narrated in the Ghanaian press. The chapter ended with a comparison of these findings to what exists, in a thread of literature that has been revisited recently by Bunce et al. (2017).

As a result, the chapter provided some answers for the research questions: (1) how was Africa portrayed in Ghanaian press and (1a) how comparable are the themes of portrayal to what existed in Western media? (2) what is the quantitative weight of
influence international news agencies carry as sources in the Ghanaian press and (3) how comparable are the themes of portrayal to what exists in the media from the Northern hemisphere? The next findings chapter, which follows this, presents results of the ethnographic interview, while the discussion chapter following the two findings chapters, synthesizes the results in line with the research questions at the broader level. The motivation to combine the results of both the content analysis and the ethnographic interview is to strengthen each approach’s weakness as earlier discussed in the design of the study. After all, the ethnographic interview aspect was developed with results and insights from the initial ethnographic content analysis to comprehensively uncover the reasoning behind the coverage of Africa from the journalists’ perspective and newsroom setup. This allows the findings and conclusions of the study to fit together as a whole.

Quantitative Influence of International News Agencies

RQ#2: What is the weight of influence (quantitative) international news agencies carry as a source in the Ghanaian press individually and collectively?

In this section, the performances of the international news agencies are presented for individual newspapers first before the aggregate view. The Daily Graphic newspaper dedicated the highest number of pages to foreign news. It is usually between two to three pages on daily basis except when the newspaper was oversubscribed with advertising and on Sunday when no edition is produced. For a period of two years, the paper published 4,287 foreign news articles in total. Table 5.0 provides details of the international news agencies these articles were sourced to:
Table 5.0

Sources of Foreign News in the Daily Graphic Newspaper

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>Articles</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BBC World Service</td>
<td>2,517</td>
<td>58.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP</td>
<td>636</td>
<td>14.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFP</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>7.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xinhua</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>5.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reuters</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>5.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>2.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own Reporters</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>2.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsourced</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>2.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNN</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,287</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field data (2015)

The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC World Service) remains the most cited source over the two-year period. The Daily Graphic newspaper gave the BBC an exponential rise because it produced the highest amount of the foreign news articles among the selected newspapers, with over 58% sourced to the BBC. This newspaper’s manner of selection of foreign news, which was positively skewed towards the BBC, demonstrated also a low level of diversity in their choices. The inadequate diversity is visible in the number of articles sourced to the category of Others, which involved many other international news agencies apart from the ones that made it to the code sheet. The elite ideology of this newspaper is magnified once more by its reliance on just a few well known international news agencies such as the BBC, AP, Reuters, AFP and more recently Xinhua news agency.

Apart from the BBC and AP that convincingly beat Xinhua news agency, the likes of Reuters, CNN and Al-Jazeera did not compete well with the Chinese news agency in the Daily Graphic newspaper. The Chinese Xinhua news agency joined the race for the quantitative influence not long ago but produced a performance below AP
and AFP but slightly above Reuters, CNN and Al-Jazeera. CNN performed very poorly in this newspaper as a source.

The category of own reporter/correspondent includes stories sourced to Daily Graphic reporters or correspondents both home and abroad, which were indicated in the byline as such. This category was dominated by stories mostly written by Ebo Godwin in Togo about that country’s democratic struggles. The second influential set of stories related to the coverage of press conferences on the North China Sea crisis between China and Japan.

Another important category noticed in most previous foreign news studies was Unsourced news. This included stories that had no author indications, no source quoted and no attributions cited. Considering the professional pedigree within which Daily Graphic as a quality newspaper operates, 106 unsourced news compared with the other smaller circulating newspapers is on the high side. It is useful, although, to state that the phenomenon started in the mid-2013. Beginning from this period, the newspaper had a major change in design and outlook that turned bylines into names of cities where events took place.

The Ghanaian Times newspaper dedicated two pages on daily basis to foreign news coverage and recorded a total of 3,761 articles over the course of the period. Table 5.1 provides details on how these articles were sourced:
Table 5.1

Sources of Foreign News in the Ghanaian Times Newspaper

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>Articles</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BBC World Service</td>
<td>2,535</td>
<td>67.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xinhua</td>
<td>486</td>
<td>12.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reuters</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>8.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>3.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>1.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own Reporter</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>1.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFP</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>1.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNN</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>1.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsourced</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,761</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field data, 2015

The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC- World Service) remains the most cited source over the period also in the Ghanaian Times newspaper with a 67.40 % of all foreign news. The Ghanaian Times newspaper had a better diversity in the way it sourced foreign news considering how individual constituents performed in Table 5.1. It could be described as better, in comparative terms, than what exists in Daily Graphic. The Others category was fourth position in the ranking with over 3%, which indicate a slight improvement over the case of a Daily Graphic newspaper, although the performance of the BBC alone was over the roof with over 67%.

The Ghanaian Times newspaper uses Xinhua news agency item as twice as Daily Graphic even though both newspapers have a similar agreement with the Chinese news agency. Linked to its historical formation, the Ghanaian Times
regularly recognises its reliance on the Northern media organisation as a failure to its very existence. They are always seeking avenues for the diversity of sourcing their foreign news. But until now the establishment of the *Ghanaian Times* as a Pan-African newspaper does not add up considering their current reliance on foreign news agencies. The Chinese Xinhua news agency is the second most influential with a performance above AP, Reuters and AFP. The category of *own reporter/correspondent* includes stories sourced to Ghanaian Times reporters or correspondent both home and abroad. This category of the source was, equally as in Daily Graphic, dominated by press conference coverage of the North China Sea crisis between China and Japan. The newspaper looked like the platform where the media battle between China and Japan regarding the North China sea was fought in Ghana. The *Ghanaian Times* newspaper also recorded the lowest number of *Unsourced news* stories. Even these few cases counted as *Unsourced news* were clearly issues relating to unavailability of space on the bottom print margin and these cases were usually indicative of a normal printing error.

Reuters became the third most cited foreign news source, performing better than AP, AFP and CNN. The *Ghanaian Times* newspaper held Reuters in a similar level of respect comparable to the BBC World Service. That is why it was even surprising to see Xinhua beyond Reuters. CNN for the second time performed poorly as a source of the foreign news, which makes it clear that the two public newspapers in Ghana do not rely on the work of the American broadcaster. The CNN effects, which is explained as the American international broadcaster’s dominance on foreign policy discourse among States and media in other countries cannot be upheld. The category of *Own reporters* in the Ghanaian Times is as well less than 2% of the
newspaper’s total news article over two years. This shows a high level of dependency on others international media organisations.

The Chronicle newspaper had a page and occasionally two pages for the type of foreign news that fell within the scope of this study. The paper recorded 2,317 articles for the two-year period making their coverage the fourth among the selected newspapers. Table 5.2 provides details on which transnational news agency sources constituted the coverage.

Table 5.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>Articles</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BBC World Service</td>
<td>1,314</td>
<td>56.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>636</td>
<td>27.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNN</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>10.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsourced</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>1.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFP</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own Reporter</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reuters</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xinhua</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,317</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field data, 2015.

The Chronicle newspaper is a little unique in their reliance on foreign news organisations as a source. Although like the other newspapers, the Own reporter category is as abysmally low as less than 2%, they demonstrated a higher level of diversity in their sourcing of foreign news. The source category of Others represents all other foreign news organisations other than the ones listed on the code sheet. In essence, the most frequently used other major news organisations (Other category) than any other newspaper in the sample for this study. However, about 50% of this figure (636) came from Al-Jazeera alone. Just like the Ghanaian Times, the Chronicle
newspaper cited the source of most of their stories except in cases where there was not enough space at the bottom of the newspaper for citing sources. However, there was no single story sourced to Xinhua news agency and yet the other category was the second highest. This shows that their diversity was very widespread. CNN recorded 10.79% as the source of the coverage at a third position. This meant that apart from the BBC, CNN was the next single most cited foreign news agency in this newspaper. This is sharply different from what was recorded in the two public newspapers. Although the BBC was the most cited in this newspaper, just like the two previous ones, the percentage lead dropped a little below the two others for the first time. This further strengthens this diversity in the newspaper’s foreign news selection.

The BBC was the most cited followed by Others category. CNN came third while Reuters performed poorly with just seven articles at the seventh position.

The Daily Guide newspaper recorded 2,863 foreign news articles published within the two-year period making this newspaper the third largest publisher of foreign news articles in this study. Unfortunately, this newspaper recorded the highest percentage of Unsourced news stories of 13.97%. Table 5.3 presents further details:

Table 5.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>Articles</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BBC World Service</td>
<td>1,354</td>
<td>47.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>523</td>
<td>18.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsourced</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>13.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>8.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNN</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>7.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own Reporter</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>1.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reuters</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFP</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>1.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xinhua</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,863</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field data, 2015
The BBC World Service stayed on top with a 47.9% of the foreign news carried in *Daily Guide* with the lowest percentage lead among the four newspapers.

Again, the Chinese Xinhua news agency scored zero in the second private newspaper. The dazzling performance witnessed so far from the Xinhua news agency as a source of foreign news in Ghana cannot be extended to the private press. *Daily Guide* newspaper is also the second most diversified newspaper when it comes to sources. The source category of *Others* recorded 18% of the total news articles for the period under review. AP and CNN recorded modest percentages of 8 and 7 compared to the less than 2% recorded by Reuters, AFP and *Own reporters*.

Having shown the peculiar situations of each newspaper, I proceed now to present the aggregate quantitative view of how the international news agencies competed among themselves as sources for Ghanaian newspapers. The aggregate overview looks a little different from the peculiar trends in the single newspaper analysis. Table 5.4 presents these further details:

**Table 5.4**

*Overview of Sources of Foreign News in Ghanaian Press*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>Articles</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BBC World Service</td>
<td>7,720</td>
<td>58.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>1404</td>
<td>10.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP</td>
<td>954</td>
<td>7.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xinhua</td>
<td>717</td>
<td>5.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reuters</td>
<td>591</td>
<td>4.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsourced</td>
<td>587</td>
<td>4.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNN</td>
<td>531</td>
<td>4.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFP</td>
<td>471</td>
<td>3.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own Reporter</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>1.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>13,228</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field data, 2015
The BBC World Service remains the single most cited source for foreign news in Ghana. Associated Press (AP) comes second as the single most cited foreign news source. Followed by Xinhua news agency as the third single most cited for foreign news in Ghana, the Chinese news agency which about a decade ago did not have that much influence, emerges as a strong contender. It is important to note that Xinhua’s aggregate performance is slightly above Reuter, AFP and CNN and this influence is in the two most circulating newspapers in Ghana that are as well public newspapers. The use of Own reporters/Correspondents in covering foreign news in Ghana is less than 2% of the total foreign news articles over the period under study, which signals a sweeping dependence on foreign news organisations. This Own reporter category also includes Ghana news agency articles.

It is crucial to note that Unsourced foreign news in the Ghanaian press is not widespread because it largely related to either issue with design or one single newspaper contributing more than 68% of the total error. Table 5.5 shows the composition of Unsourced foreign news among the four newspapers.

Table 5.5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspapers</th>
<th>Unsourced news</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily Guide</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>68.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Graphic</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>18.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghanaian Times</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>6.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Chronicle</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>6.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>587</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field data, 2015

But for the new design of Daily Graphic and printing errors of Ghanaian Times and Chronicle, the Unsourced news would have been completely a Daily Guide affair and
would have not even warranted a mention in this research. But as it is now, unsourced news, which signals poor professionalism, seem to be an issue in the Ghanaian press that warrants a discussion. It is difficult to believe that writing the African story can be such speculative enterprise with no real sources cited.

To determine the influence each international news agency carried as a source in the Ghanaian newspaper means determining how these foreign news agencies competed among themselves. In this analysis, news cited to *Own reporters* and *Unsourced* foreign news will be taken out of the equation. Figure 5.0 demonstrates the weight of influence carried by each international news agency as a source.

![Figure 5.0: Weight of influence](image)

Comparing the performance of international news agencies among themselves meant eliminating *Unsourced news* and *Own reporters* before recalculating the percentages. In such an analysis, the influence of the BBC rises sharply to 62.32%. All the other international news agencies recorded marginal increases in their percentage figure but the BBC, in particular, recorded higher increment due to its already high proportional influence among all the four newspapers.
Overview of the Coverage of Africa

Having established through which international news agency’s influence the Ghanaian press reported the continent, this section moves further to examine the nature of Africa’s portrayal in the Ghanaian press with a focus on the subjects and tone of coverage and the dominant themes of representation. The overarching research question of how Africa was portrayed in the Ghanaian press was answered using sub-questions of through what dominant themes, subjects and tone were the African stories narrated? The second and third parts of this chapter present the analysis relating strictly to stories that covered Africa. These articles were selected from the four newspapers and analysed for the subject of coverage and dominant themes.

Subject of the coverage.

The first issue under the coverage of Africa in the Ghanaian press related to the topic/story types/subjects that were mostly covered. It could be argued that the concentration on political reports as shown in Table 5.6 has rendered a bigger part of the coverage negative since political reports focus on figures of causalities of political conflicts, disagreement of parties, corruption and war. The slant against history, economy and cultural stories equally indicated the less depth that was given to what was covered. Mostly, reports were shallow and often written in comparison with European democracies. Table 5.6 shows the statistics of the subjects covered:
Table 5.6

*Composition of Subject in the Ghanaian Press*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Articles</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Politics</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economy</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personality</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disaster</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>180</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field data, 2015

The two stories relating to history over the two-year period were about Egypt. Personality-related stories did not mention a single African celebrity except for political leaders. The eight stories categorised under culture were also not entirely positive. The *Africa rising* discourse, which has been very much discussed in the current literature requires contextualisation. First, this discourse reached its crescendo when developed economies were hit by the financial crisis. As a result, investors needed new markets for their resources. Second, describing Africa as the next business destination does not necessarily deal with it negative media image that has been embossed on people’s mind for years. Economic and social issues in Africa did not just get reported enough in the Ghanaian press, not even the few that were reported in the Northern media organisations were repeated. In the next sub-section, I categorise which of the news reports were positive, negative and neutral based on the study’s framework for such determinations.
Tone/ Quality of the coverage.

The coverage of African countries in the Ghanaian press was not different from the negative portrayals that existed in the literature about the continent from their Western counterparts. Table 5.7 presents the overview of the coverage of Africa in terms of the tone as per the definitions of Chaudhary (2001, pp. 33-34) and the frameworks set out in this study to identify the tone.

Table 5.7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Direction of Stories</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>180</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field data, 2015

About 80% of stories relating to Africa were negative in nature or fell in the Afro-pessimism label. They reported crisis, war, famine and regional political disputes but ignored improvements in these conditions. While considering angles that were excluded or never mentioned, for example, the reconciliation of Uhuru Kenyatta and William Ruto, this was never covered in a positive light within the period. The stories that related to them mostly concentrated on their trial at the International Criminal Court (ICC) and its implications for their victory as president and vice. The positive news articles discussed related to Nelson Mandela in hospital, and Kenya’s unity and independence celebrations. Others included appointments of Africans to some eminent United Nations positions.
**Dominant themes.**

In this sub-section, I deconstructed the dominant themes used by the Ghanaian press in the coverage of Africa through a close engagement and interpretation of the news articles in relation to the research question of what dominant themes were employed in the coverage. Themes are broader than subjects and contain two to three subjects that communicate some ideas beyond individual subjects (see Stevenson, 1984).

The foreign news articles were extensively coded using both inductive and deductive approaches. That is to say that the 180 foreign news articles selected from the four newspapers were coded altogether 359 times. These codes were linked and grouped to reduce the data to a manageable size. In all, ten dominant themes were deconstructed with their corresponding frequency and percentages. The total amount of the coded segment of the articles was as well calculated to provide some descriptive view of the intensity of coding as shown in Table 5.8.

Table 5.8

*Frequency of Dominant Themes - January 2011 to December 2013*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dominant Themes</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>War, Crime and Killing</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>31.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crises</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>26.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrorism</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>12.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonial Memory</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>6.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy and Lack of Press Freedom</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irresponsibility</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development and Progress</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diseases and Disaster</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Rights, Women and Children abuse</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unrelated Negative Context</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>359</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field data, 2015

These themes were discussed in line with the research objective:
The theme of war, crime and killing.

This theme included reports of war and fighting, war crimes trials and discourse, abduction and ransom cases, issues relating to drugs and religious intolerance and its consequent crimes. Where the crimes resulted in killings, the deaths were initially coded as “killing” and later combined with the “War” and “Crime” due to the blurring nature of these three categories. The theme of war, crime and killing represent the most dominant theme Africa was portrayed. It is also the easiest and consistent theme throughout the coding process. That is, much of its attributes were manifest. The rampant use of words such as civil war, killed, death, fierce fighting, fleeing from war crimes was visible in all the four newspapers. Examples of some coded segments:

Thirteen South African soldiers were killed in the Central African Republic as rebels seized the capital over the weekend, President Jacob Zuma has said”.

“MORE THAN 100 people are confirmed dead in fierce fighting on Thursday in the capital of the Central African Republic (CAR), Bangui, UN officials say (Code # W1).

The population of a town in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo hustling between government rebel forces, residents say. BBC's Ignatius Bahizi, who is on the Ugandan side of the town, says Missiles are being fired, killing people. Many people have left their homes since the conflict began in March 2012 (Code # W2).

The International Criminal Court (ICC) has ruled that Kenyan Deputy President William Ruto only needs to be "physically present" at key sessions of his trial, due to start in September. Mr Ruto, accused of crimes against humanity, had requested to participate in the trial via video link. (Code # WC3).

Two young men armed with pistols shot Rahma Abdelkadir, who worked as a
correspondent for a radio station, several times before fleeing, witnesses said (Code# K4).

Two schools were attacked at the weekend, with at least 16 students and two teachers killed. Military spokesman Lt Col Sagir Musa said the militants behind those attacks had used satellite phones to militants following recent attacks (Code# K5).

Libyan Army Chief of Staff, Youssef al-Mangoush, has reportedly resigned after 30 people died in clashes between protesters and a militia in Benghazi (Code # K6).

FOUR PEOPLE have been killed in Kenya's port of Mombasa during clashes between police and those angered at the killing of a Muslim cleric, the Red Cross says (Code # K7).

Officials in Nigeria say the Minister of Finance Minister Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala’s mother has been kidnapped, Ojemene Okonjo, a professor, was from her home in Delta State (Code # C8).

Apart from these examples which covered war, war crimes and killings generally, there were other stories that related to the crimes of piracy along the West African coast and issues of hard drugs.

Using the postcolonial theory demands that the study is designed to question and reframe the portrayal by these news articles not only by what was written but also what was ignored. Significant in this category of omission is the fact that in all these articles coded which related to the theme of war, crimes and killings, no article assessed the improvements of any of these wars on the continent. The picture, therefore, looked as if no such improvements existed regarding these situations. The lack of articles discussing improvements on the continent with regards to this theme
remains problematic not only because such stories were ignored but also due to the fact that the prominence given to fighting when it erupts is not replicated when improvements occur. What was common was that war, fighting and killings rather became contextual elements for future positive stories about these countries. This phenomenon will be further discussed under the theme of negative context. This contextual background that countries on the continent get tagged with mean that they cannot ever be free from their past. The preponderance of the contextual background makes the coverage about the continent look like an evolving story even though the negative bit had happened decades ago.

**The theme of crises.**
This is the second most widely used theme in telling the African story. Sub categories coded under this theme included: economic crisis, political crisis, regional crisis, refugee crisis, migration crises, controversies, corruption and power drunk leadership. Significant within this theme is the political crisis on the continent especially in Egypt, Zimbabwe and a few dotted cases in Central Africa. This is because much of the fighting going on in Central Africa was constructed as regional crisis and coded as such in this study. Other important regional crises in this category included Kenya-Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan conflicts. The flow of refugees within Central and Eastern Africa were covered especially that of Kenya and Ethiopia hosting Somali refugees. Corruption was described as an unending crisis in some of the articles.

It is factual that the crises in Central Africa have gone on for decades with substantial causality figures. The news reports highlighted much of the escalation and possible talks to end the crises. However, the prominence received by the escalations was not equal to attempts at reporting possible negotiations. Also, due to the frequent failure of negotiations and deals, new attempts at peace negotiations were trivialised
by the journalists. This act of trivializing attempts at peacemaking paints a picture of an unending crisis. These are examples of coded segments regarding this theme:

THOUSANDS OF supporters of Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi clashed with anti-government protesters outside the presidential palace Wednesday, driving them from the grounds where they had set up camp…. (Code# Cr1).

The signing of an agreement to end the crisis in Mali is likely to delay due to the absence of the rival parties to talks in Ouagadougou, the capital of Burkina Faso, according to officials close to the negotiations (Code # Cr2).

The Rwandan President Paul Kagame said the UN peacekeeping force in the Democratic Republic of Congo has "in some cases" made the crises worse. (Code #Cr 3).

Seventy generals in the Egyptian armed forces are to be retired, the government has announced. The move comes weeks after President Mohammed Mursi replaced the defence minister and the chief of staff (Code #Cr4).

Rwanda has accused government forces in the Democratic Republic of Congo of deliberately shelling its territory, killing a woman and wounding her baby (Code # Cr 5).

Malian Interim President Diouncounda Traore has appointed a new PM, less than 24 hours after his predecessor was forced to resign by the military. Mali’s Prime Minister Cheick Modibo Diarra resigns on state television. Mali PM Cheick Modibo Diarra resigns after army arrest. Cheick Modibo Diarra was detained on Monday at his home in the capital Bamako, reportedly on the orders of the coup leader, Capt Amadou Sanogo. He had been due to travel to France (Code # Cr6).

Reporting crisis falls quite squarely within the journalistic ideology of how news should be viewed. It has such a rudimentary structure that must be followed in a
manner that journalists cannot dissent from. Even though journalists could dig deeper into the root causes of crises, they rarely do it. This leaves most crisis reports hanging on the day or week the event occurred. Apart from the fixed mechanical structure of these news articles, they last only when it’s bleeding as the English adage goes. As such improvements get removed from the agenda not by the volition of the journalist but due to their attachment to the profession’s ideology.

The theme of development and progress.

This theme was consciously created to make room for positive reporting because I assumed there would be some good amount of development and progress especially in this era of Africa rising discourse. Sub categories coded under this theme included discoveries, positive African heroes, growth and development, balanced stories with development agenda. There was one discovery story and one balanced story. The majority of the stories here related to Nelson Mandela of South Africa. There was also three development and growth-oriented stories. Significant among these was the $64.3million loan facility from Botswana to Zimbabwe that was reported on the website of NewZimbabwe.com and printed in the Chronicle newspaper in Ghana. The other positive story was reported by the Xinhua News Agency and it was related to the Chinese President’s commitment to support Tanzania in her development agenda due to that country’s recent progress. Reuters reported the last progress oriented story which announced the increase in oil production by Libya as a result of some stability in the country. However, that story ended with a negative context of the Benghazi attack on the US Embassy that killed four people. The following include examples of coded segments:

Zimbabwe's Finance Minister Tendai Biti, on Monday, said more than $20 billion was needed for infrastructural projects such as road and rail networks and to fully kick-start the re-emerging mining industry. ‘The thirst for capital
in our country is huge and high,’ Biti said at a ceremony to unveil a 500-million pula (64.3 million US dollars) credit facility from Botswana (Code # DP1).

Prayers have been said in churches across South Africa for former President Nelson Mandela, who is spending a second day in hospital for treatment for a lung infection (Code # DP2).

Nigerian Agriculture Minister Akinwumi Adesina has been named Forbes African of the Year for his reforms to the country's farming sector. ‘He is a man on a mission to help Africa feed itself,’ said Forbes Africa editor Chris Bishop (Code # DP3).

Libya aims to raise its oil production to 1.8 million barrels per day (bpd) next year, overtaking the output before last year's war, as it banks on the return of foreign companies (Code # DP4).

Ethiopia has become the second country after Japan to take delivery of the Boeing 787 Dreamliner. Ethiopian Airlines has bought 10 of Boeing's flagship aircraft, which are built from a lightweight material, rather than aluminium, to save fuel (Code # DP5).

A huge water source has been discovered in the arid Turkana region of northern Kenya, which could supply the country for a long time, the government says. The discovery of two aquifers brings hope to the drought-hit region, tweeted Environment Minister Judi Wakhungu. They were found in the Turkana Basin and Lotikipi Basin using satellites and rada (Code # DP6)

The subcategories captured under this theme did not necessarily paint a very positive picture but carried some optimism that crises and challenges would end or would be handled properly. Generally, these stories were non-existent or were too little to paint a holistically positive picture of the continent. For example this extract:
Government efforts and preparedness will be further enhanced to ensure the security of lives and property of all Nigerians, irrespective of their locations within the country. "On the issue of intelligence gathering, the presidential aide said: "The government has acquired and deployed highly sophisticated security equipment," adding that members of the security agencies have received and continued to receive adequate training "such that our intelligence gathering capacity have witnessed a monumental increase in capacity to gather information (Code# DP7).

Throughout the entire period of the study, this was the only message of reassurance and hope carried in the Ghanaian press regarding the efforts of Goodluck Jonathan’s government to fight back the Boko Haram insurgency. All the efforts at fighting the insurgency were not reported as such. They were mostly questioned and trivialised making it look as if Nigeria just could not deal with the Islamist insurgency.

**The theme of human rights, women and children abuses.**

The subcategories of this theme include human right abuse, in general, and women and children abuse in particular. These were some of the deductive subcategories that I started coding with. However, not many of the news articles on Africa were narrated using these themes. The stories coded here involved executions, a court judgement that promoted abuse of people’s rights in authoritarian states and abuse of women and children particularly. Abuses that resulted in “killings” were coded twice. These are some of the illustrations of coded segments:

- The Gambia has defended the execution of nine death-row prisoners amid a chorus of condemnation led by the United Nations (Code # HWCa1).

- The children killed are mostly Aids orphans living in the Malerato Centre for Hope in Mamelodi Township outside Pretoria (Code# HWCa2).

- Campaigners in Egypt say the problem of sexual harassment is reaching
epidemic proportions on, with a rise in such incidents over the past three months. For many Egyptian women, sexual harassment — which sometimes turns into a violent mob-style attack — is a daily fact of life. Last winter, an Egyptian woman was assaulted by a crowd of men in the city of Alexandria (Code # HWCa3).

The Islamists have also recruited hundreds of children as young as 12 in an effort to boost their ranks after fighting in northern Mali forced nearly half a million people to flee earlier this year (Code # HWCa4).

Mozambicans have been outraged at the government's failure to end kidnappings for ransom after a child was murdered by his abductors. A rights group has called for the interior minister to resign after about 10 abductions in the past eight days (Code# HWCa5).

The picture painted by the news articles of the entire period ignored any positive things either done by women and children or done to them. It does not give the sense of any normal growing children on the continent or and women doing any extraordinary stuff. They were all made to look like victims.

**The theme of democracy.**

This theme contained both positive and negative coverage of the continent. It dealt with issues such as peaceful and non-peaceful elections on the continent, an assessment of the reasons why most sitting African presidents die. Others included lack of general freedom, lack of press freedom, military take-overs, leadership challenges and sanctions against countries like Zimbabwe. One particular story read under this theme discussed four countries and it was evident that an attempt to discuss these countries together would always be a recipe for the error of generalisation or homogenisation. In Ghana, the death of President John Evans Atta Mills and the constitutional succession did not record any violence or dispute. It was also the case
in Nigeria for Umaru Musa Yar'Adua. The analysis in question ignored these two successes and put them together with other countries only because they all lost a ruling president:

In Zambia, in Malawi and Ghana and in Nigeria, the death of the presidents was followed by a constitutional succession with a minimum of violence and dispute, and I think this is a very encouraging sign for Africa's development (Code # D1).

This is supposed to be a positive assessment but it isn’t quite since there is a significant difference between minimum violence and complete absence of violence as was in the cases of Ghana and Nigeria. Several other issues discussed here pointed to press freedom as a sign of good democracy. The following are illustrations of some coded segments:

The anti-pornography bill, which also outlaws overtly sexual material (including music videos, was voted (through after a short debate). When Simon Lokodo, Uganda's (ethics and integrity minister, proposed the legislation earlier this year he said that women who wore 'anything above the knee" should be arrested (Code# Dpf2).

Kenya's Media has expressed outrage after parliament approved a bill imposing regulation on, Journalists. In a late-night sitting on Thursday, MPs voted to set lip a communications tribunal with the power to impose fines for breaching a code of conduct (Code # Dpf3).

In both quotations here, the stories doubted the capacity of Members of Parliament to discuss a law that limits press freedom either in a late-night sitting or with a very short debate. But in real life situation, there are usually several reasons why parliamentary debates run into the night. These include overloaded agenda, late commencement of sessions and many others. But the two stories on Kenya and Uganda made no room
for such possibilities or mentioned them even in passing. Other extracts include:

Egyptian SECURITY forces have arrested three Al Jazeera journalists, with the government saying at least one of them met with members of the banned Muslim Brotherhood. Correspondent Peter Greste, Bureau Chief Mohamed Fahmy and cameraman Mohamed Fawzy were taken into custody Sunday evening in Cairo, the network said (Code #Dpf4)

The Togolese civil rights group, known as Sauvons le Togo or "Let Us Save Togo", on Saturday went beyond its call for electoral reforms to demand the resignation of President Faure Gnassingbe, with its women's wing having decided to embark on a one-week sex strike to support the new call. Madam Isabelle Ameganvi, leader of the Women's Wing of Sauvons le Togo, says the one-week sex strike would start from today to Sunday (Code# Dfe5)

The European Union has suspended sanctions against 81 officials and eight firms in Zimbabwe. The decision followed a "peaceful, successful and credible" referendum on a new constitution earlier this month, the EU said in a statement. However, sanctions will remain in force against Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe and 10 of his top aides, EU sources said (Code # D6)

None of the articles provided an explanation for why press freedom is quite problematic in some African states, most of whom are either in transition, transformation or crises. That background information would have been useful because most of the stabilised countries on the continent, have decent press freedom records. The idea which needed explication was whether that press freedom was an ideal element to measure countries in crises? Explanation or answers to such questions and puzzles were rarely given in the stories.

*The theme of colonial memory.*

Stories coded under this theme invoked colonial memories in more a negative way.
The issues covered in such stories included the horrible history of the continent and stereotypical depictions of the continent as the haven of wild animals and deposit of natural resources. Some other articles portrayed the continent as donor dependent usually waiting on the saviours from the Northern Hemisphere.

A replay of colonial history, its accompanying discourses and sentiments do not necessarily make the colonisers guilty, it rather accords it a space of superiority. Offers of reparation so late after real beneficiaries have all died is a good example. It looked much like instilling in the new generation how the coloniser changed the destinies of their forefathers and as a result, they needed reparation to live decently many years after the war and colonial struggle. The peculiar case of Mau-Mau fighters in Kenya was reported with the announcement of reparation by the British foreign secretary at the time.

Colonial demarcations of natural resources and boundaries have remained a real worry for most Africa nations. The specific cases reported was Ethiopia, Egypt, Sudan and the Nile. These are some coded segments that portrayed Africa as a natural resources deposit or regularly seeking help from donor agencies in the Northern Hemisphere:

In June, UK Foreign Secretary William Hague said Kenya's Mau Mau fighters would receive payouts totalling $32m (£20m) as compensation for being tortured during colonial rule. Mr Kenyatta said it was important for foreign powers to realise that Africa had come of age and needed respect and fairness in trade, not reparation (Code# CM1).

The Namibian Press Agency has reported the discovery of large deposits of iron ore that are the first found in the mineral-rich southwest African country (CM2).

First reinforcements to French force in the Central Africa Republic (CAR) are
in a bid to restore peace after a rebel takeover. Mainly 200 troops have deployed, with another 500 imminently following former rebel forces who have reportedly been leaving the capital, Bangui, as the troops arrived (Code# CM3).

The United States, which has partially frozen aid to Egypt, on Monday expressed concern over the new law and said it agreed with Jin a man, who was on stratfons groups. Cairo responded by saying it was unacceptable for any country to interfere in its internal affairs (Code# CM4).

The Central African Republic's President Francois Bozize has appealed to the US and France to help block a rebel advance on the capital, Bangui (Code# CM5).

The anti-homosexual bill in Uganda has been condemned by Western donors, who have suggested that aid could be cut if Uganda’s parliament passes the Law (Code# CM6).

The threat to freeze aid to countries that have anti-homosexual laws does represent the fact that those countries are practically unable to run without aid and would be forced to repeal those laws.

_The theme of terrorism._

This theme is an extension of the theme of “War, Crime and Killings”. It is defined as all deaths resulting from terrorism and terrorist activities in general. It is the third most dominant theme because of activities of Boko Haram in Nigeria and Al-Shabab in Somalia and Kenya. Killings resulting from these extremist Islamist groups were coded 45 times under this theme. Terrorism activities in Southern Libya and Mali were also reported. The most outrageous notion depicted under this theme was that the involvement of Boko Haram in Cameroun and Chad meant the continent was
seriously threatened by activities of Islamists. There are about 54 countries on the African continent spread across a vast space of land and it is difficult to agree with the notion that an activity in Nigeria which has been successfully confronted in two neighbouring countries of Chad and Cameroun threatens the entire continent. These are some extracts of the coded segments:

It has been reported that scores of gunmen suspected to be members of the Islamic extremist group, Boko Haram, set fire to three churches and border posts in Gamboru Ngala, a border town 140 kilometres from Maiduguri, the Borno State capital (Code# T1).

At least six people have been killed in an attack by Somali militants on police posts at the Kenyan border, the Kenyan police have said (Code# T2).

Radical Islamists in control of northern Mali are becoming "increasingly repressive," Amputating limbs, whipping people in the streets and stoning to death a couple accused of adultery, a human rights group says (Code# T3).

AT LEAST 16 people have been killed alter al-Shabab attacked a police station in the town of Baladweyne in central Somalia, blowing out the gates of the compound with a car bomb (Code# T4).

Mali has been in disarray for much of the year. Islamist and Tuareg separatists seized control of the north of the country and discontented soldiers staged a coup after the civilian administration was unable to regain control of all of the country (Code# T6).

Boko Haram militia has been blamed for a series of deadly attacks in recent years. The US has designated Nigeria's Boko Haram and Ansaru militant groups as foreign terrorist organisations. The state department described the move as ‘an important’ step to help Nigeria ‘root out violent extremism’. It means US regulatory agencies are instructed to block business and financial transactions with the groups (Code# T8).
Terrorism has taken a global character with examples of its activities all over the world. The global nature of the phenomenon was not discussed. The articles rather related terrorism on the continent to poverty failed governments and corruption. It took the United States of America, for instance, a lot of time to consider Boko Haram as a terrorist group. Until this happened some of the articles constructed the insurgency as a fight for a better living.

*The theme of poverty, disease and disaster.*

This is one of the deductive themes with which I started coding. Items coded here included natural disasters, poverty and diseases such as HIV/AIDS and the six killer diseases in Africa. The data revealed that these were not popular themes of representation under which the African story was narrated. It is however imperative to state that diseases and disasters are opportunistic issues—they are reported as and when they happen. Assuming that a major disaster or disease outbreak had happened around period under review, the study would have recorded a significant amount of these stories. In the case of poverty, newspaper articles do not carry much of it compared to TV and online. However, poverty in Africa was not significantly reported in these newspapers. The omission of articles dealing with either millennium development goals or sustainable development goals in Africa was not surprising either because these type of news do not make it even in the international news agencies themselves. And when the items are not in the international press, then it is likely they will not be in the Ghanaian press that depends largely on the Northern media organisations for the coverage of the continent. The following are some of the coded segments:

Somalia's Government has declared the north-eastern region of Puntland hit by a tropical cyclone at the weekend a disaster area (Code# PDD1).
Rescue operations became more difficult after night fell, South Africa mall roof collapse traps dozens. TWO PEOPLE have died and about 40 are feared trapped after a roof collapsed at the construction site of a South African shopping mall, paramedics (Code# PDD2).

Senegal's President Macky Sall’s called for the country's Senate to be abolished, with the money saved going for flood relief. Although the low-lying suburbs of the capital, Dakar, flood during most rainy seasons, this year has seen exceptionally high rainfall across West Africa. It is estimated that thousands of people have been left homeless (Code# PDD3).

THE GOVERNOR of Nigeria's Kaduna state and a former national security adviser are among six people killed in a helicopter crash in Nigeria's oil-producing Baycisa suite, officials said (Code # PDD4).

Accidents that were as a result of the unforeseen natural disaster were coded under this theme. Findings from government investigation regarding disaster were never cited throughout the coding. This could not be because there were no such reports and space to publish findings, they were used mainly as a context element to show how bad the situation seems. Evolving stories attracted attention only when bloodshed or causalities continued.

Theme irresponsibility and negative context.

These two themes revealed by the data were inductively coded and they were instances when actions and decisions of African authorities were described as irresponsible governance, indiscipline, lavish spending, destruction and misuse of state properties without any context. Some protests were constructed as the failure of the African government to improve the living standards of their people. Other stories also imputed lack of responsible behaviour in ensuring the security of citizens of
African nations. Kenyan authorities were accused of ignoring security information offered them before the Westgate Mall attack by Al-Shabab. Therefore in the heat of the attack, where news reports needed to show solidarity to the people of Kenya, they were heavily engrossed in a blame game. Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan was severally cited for failure to protect Nigerians from Boko Haram attacks.

The second part of this theme concentrated on the use of past negative events as context to almost every new news article. For example, the Nigerian government managed to seize gunmen who had abducted a French man. In providing a context for this story, more negatives were recounted than the progress of the Nigerian government. This runs through other positive stories within other themes. The following are some of the coded segments:

King Zwelithini, as leader of South Africa's largest ethnic group, is an extremely influential traditional leader in the country. Royal household department chief financial officer, Mduduzi Mthembu, told the parliamentary committee that a further 15700,000 was needed to build Queen Mafu's palace. The department also wanted $1.4m to upgrade Queen MaMchiza's palace, he said (Code# INc1)

Monday's court appearance by the four defendants only created new questions. Authorities said they weren't even sure of two of the 'defendants' names. All four are believed to be from Somalia, but authorities said two of them had Kenyan identification cards and citizenship papers. The hearing was delayed two hours to find a translator when the defendants claimed to be unable to speak Swahili or English. They were charged with committing a terrorist act. Some face related charges of aiding attackers before, during or after the attack. They were denied bail. Their trial is expected to begin next week (Code# INc2).
Comparing the Coverage of the Ghanaian Press to their Western Counterparts

Afro-pessimism in the Western media has been severally researched. Two such research that has attracted my attention include the work of Beverly Hawk in 1992 titled *Africa’s Media Image* and a near replication of Hawk’s work recently published by Bunce et al. (2017) under the title, *Africa’s Media Image in the 21st Century*. These two publications had two compelling strengths. First, they provided a longitudinal view of Africa’s coverage in the Western media which span around 1992 to 2017. Second, the collaboration between journalism scholars and practitioners gave a good balance of theory and practice within this area of research.

In this section, I attempt to compare the coverage of Africa in the Western press, as per longitudinal comparison in Bunce et al. (2017), to what exists in the Ghanaian press. My study is not a replication of either Hawk (1992) or Bunce et al. (2017) and therefore I proceed to the comparison with a clear statement of what is comparable and what is not. By these rationalisations, I established the basis for my comparison.

A clear limitation to statistical comparison exists because of differences in study design, structure and periods. Sample sizes and conceptualisation of international news agencies are equally different. In my study, international news agencies referred all traditional international news agencies (AP, Reuters and AFP etc.) plus international broadcasting media organisations (BBC, CNN, etc.) and their online platforms, and any non-Ghanaian media organisation that was provided as the source for foreign news in the selected Ghanaian newspaper.

Apart from the statistical comparison, there are other forms of qualitative comparisons that could be made from the conclusion of those two studies in relation to the research topic under investigation. Bunce et al. (2017) selected Ghana as one of
its country samples. The international news agencies used in Bunce at al. are covered in my research as well. Both publications used content analysis to determine the subject and tone of the coverage. The overreaching objective of their research and mine relates to the evolution Afro-pessimism in the Western press either over time or its geographical spread.

This comparison is useful for two reasons. First, it shows how the Western press coverage of Africa looks in its evolving nature as reported by Bunce et al. (2017). It provides a crucial extension to the debate of Afro-pessimism and the recent claims of improvements. It also opens up the area for further specific research aimed at replicating these studies using African media as cases. In this case, how the press in Ghana represented other countries on the continent.

Comparison of the subjects of coverage.

Much of the previous research including Bunce et al. (2017) and Hawk (1992) have mentioned humanitarian/disaster stories as the most prominent subject of Afro-pessimism. While Bunce et al. (2017) reported a general reduction in this subject in comparison to Hawk (1992) and other studies that followed; my study revealed that Disaster coverage in the Ghanaian press was the least covered subject (see Table 5.6 pp. 163). The fact that the coverage of Africa in the Ghanaian press significantly mirrors what exists in the Western press, was not surprising because of the high dependency already established. No subject will be prominently covered in the Ghanaian press if it does not abound in the Northern media organisation, the pool from which the journalists in Ghana select.

The subject of Economy in my study included stories dealing with economic issues, business and financial activities involving the continent. This subject recorded
only 12 stories within the period of 24 months as compared to 130 stories recorded under Politics. This represents a contrast to Bunce et al. (2017) where a significant portion of the claim of improvement in Afro-pessimism was attributed to the increase in the subject Business, which was considered generally positive. Bunce et al. cautioned that the overall increase in Business reporting was not uniform across the news wires but proportionally led by the output of Reuters news agency.

The subject of Politics, in this study, included political violence, causalities of politically motivated fighting, political turmoil and disagreements, corruption involving political leaders and war. Out of a total of 180 news articles coded, 130 of them, representing 72%, belonged to this subject. The African continent’s newness to Western democratic practice presented an amorphous challenge for the improvement of the continent’s media image. Comparing this to Bunce et al. (2017), which coded this subject as Crime and Conflict, it could be realised that there was no difference since Crime and Conflict recorded an increase in their research as well.

Social stories in this study were concerned with extensions to news stories that provided analysis of social implications, social impact, participation and general sociological foundations of policies and programmes. Usually, Sports stories are included in this category but it was delimited in my study because the coverage needed to be hard news first. Many of the stories analysed did not include hard-news on sports. Even though the subject of Social issues was coded as the second highest (13 times), it was still insignificant compared to Politics. One of the reasons for this was the fact that social implications of policies are usually analysed in peculiar journalistic genres other than hardstraight news reports. In Bunce et al. (2017) the subject of Sport saw an increase in its coverage for the continent in the Western press.

The subject of Personality was coded 9 times and involved stories about
celebrities and popular people who were not acting in the role of politics. The lack of concentration of this subject on African celebrities clearly showed the low level of visibility the African celebrities receive in the press both from Africa and the Northern Hemisphere. Within 24 months, African celebrity or hero was mentioned 9 times and most often it related to Nelson Mandela of South Africa. It is also interesting to note that not all of these 9 mentions were positive. There were stories concentrating on the feud within Mandela’s family regarding his estate. This subject could not be easily comparable with Bunce et al. (2017) because there was no such unique conceptualisation of that study.

The subject Culture was coded only eight times. This was quite astonishing because there are several stories coded in other subjects that have cultural implications. The cultural context of most subjects already discussed were ignored. The reason why this is predominant is that there is a very little coverage of this theme in the Western media where the Ghanaian press picks their stories. This plays into the globalisation discourse which preaches cultural universality. In fact, no such subjects were specifically investigated in Bunce et al. (2017) and as such no comparison can be made.

Africa, as a continent of unique individual countries, has rich historical contexts that must be included in its coverage. It is rather surprising that the subject of History was coded only twice in the entire study of 180 articles. Actually, those two instances related to the analysis of Egyptian archival materials. The lack of historical antecedents of most of the subjects that discussed the continent made the coverage look unfair as if Africa’s harsh colonial encounters and contributions to world history were non-existent.
Comparison of tone/quality of coverage.

This section presents the comparison of the tone/quality of the coverage which was categorised into positive, negative and neutral/mixed. Following from the themes and subjects already discussed, it is reasonable to state that Afro-pessimism dominated the coverage. About 80 per cent of articles were negative which is contrary to the significant decrease recorded in the Bunce et al. (2017). The idea that the coverage of Africa has improved in the Western press, as reported in Bunce et al., has not reached the continent yet. The evidence in the case of Ghana proved this because Afro-pessimism still dominated the coverage of the continent.

Positive tone represented 15 per cent of the coverage and this is just 27 articles out of 180. Articles that had the equal or good amount of both positive and negative were coded as Neutral. These included only 9 article representing 5% of the total coverage. The imbalance in the coverage cannot represent a reflection of daily activities of the continent because more of the positive events happening have been ignored. For example, the “Africa rising” discourse did not only represent growing economies and foreign investments but also meant a scramble for Africa’s resources. However, it is usually the Chinese investments in Africa that were constructed as a scramble for Africa’s resource. In this study, the coverage of Africa is not positive and representative of the daily tragedies and triumphs of its citizens.

Summary

In this chapter, I established the enormous quantitative weight of influence international news agencies carried as a source in the Ghanaian press from an individual point of view to an aggregate picture. The issue of Unsourced news was briefly discussed because of its implications in the journalistic editorial decision
making and professionalism. I proceeded to deconstruct themes with which Africa was portrayed.

The subject and tone of the coverage were outlined. The coverage centred on political subjects with 72% of the total selected articles. The neglect of African celebrities and personalities was resounding. History, cultural and disaster were among the least covered subjects. These were followed by subjects relating to social and economic issues. The outlook of the subjects covered was linked to the tone/quality of the entire coverage. It was established that the excessive slant towards politics meant the coverage had the likelihood of being negative because most African countries are new to the Western democracy they have come to be measured with.

In this final part, the findings of research questions 2 (a,b,c) were compared with Bunce at al. (2017). While Bunce et al. argued for an improvement in Africa’s image mostly in the Northern press in recent times, this study revealed that such positive evolutions have not yet reached the Ghana mainstream press.

In the next chapter, I present the findings of the ethnographic interview which represents the second phase of the research, but closely related to the first phase upon which it was built.
CHAPTER 6 - POSTCOLONIAL TRAJECTORIES OF THE GHANAIAN PRESS: EXPLAINING THE PRIVILEGES OF THE BBC WORLD SERVICE AND ECONOMIC POWER

In chapter five, the results of the ethnographic content analysis (ECA) were presented to establish the quantitative weight of influence, the dominant themes of portrayal, subjects and tone of the coverage of Africa in the Ghanaian press. The results in that chapter were limited to content analysis of the four newspapers and compared to the work of Bunce et al. (2017).

In this chapter, I present the findings of the ethnographic interview which involved repeated in-depth interviews and newsroom observations. The ethnographic interview was designed with significant input from the ECA in order to provide explanatory level meaning to the findings of the initial ECA. During the interview sessions, the journalists and editors were shown the results of the ECA. This reconstructive strategy provided the study with a comprehensive framework to consider the findings of what the journalists have already written and their subsequent reasoning for what accounted for their choices. The reconstructive strategy led the journalists to appreciate their previous work, an exercise that is rarely undertaken in their daily routine. This chapter deals with three research questions that were mentioned in chapter four, which included:

RQ 2: What is the weight of influence (qualitative) individual international news agencies carry as sources in the Ghanaian press?

RQ3: What, from the perspective of the journalists, accounts for the kind of representation Africa gets in the Ghanaian press in terms of condition, actors and practices?
RQ 4: How did inter-media agenda-setting preferences between the Ghanaian press and their foreign counterparts evolve?

The findings were presented beginning with how the Ghanaian journalists constructed the qualitative influence of international news agencies on their work. It continued with the conditions that shape the foreign news selection on daily basis. The chapter proceeded to offer the meaning of intermedia agenda setting preferences of these four Ghanaian newspapers. The presentation continued with the reasons that have accounted for the negative reportage recorded in the Ghanaian press regarding Africa’s image. The arguments in this chapter were summarised to offer a composite view of the qualitative influence on the actors and the journalists’ perspectives on the conditions and practices.

Qualitative Weight of Influence of International News Agencies

In the last chapter, the quantitative weight of influence of the international news agencies was presented from individual and aggregate perspectives. In this section, I argue that the weight of influence on journalists’ editorial decision-making habit cannot be exclusively determined by just what was written in the newspapers and counted through content analysis. This is because the written news is an ideological construct that can be better understood when investigated beyond its manifest presentation to ideological influences on the journalists who created the news articles and how these influences affected the entire news making process.

All the four newspapers had reporter/editor roles which meant that the foreign pages were part of the special desks headed by page editors who took full responsibility for whatever appeared on their pages. By this arrangement, the journalists served as reporters as well as editors for their foreign news pages. They
made the daily news selection decisions. They would receive recommendations from their colleague editors in the editorial conference but generally, the bus stops at their desk and some of them had no editorial conferences at all. The following themes were unpacked from the interviews and observations:

**Conceptual substitution theme.**

This theme, as it is termed in the analysis, represents a cognitive processing feature displayed by the journalists where they made reference to the specific international news agency that had the most influence on them. The journalists cited the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC-World Service) whenever they needed to make reference to an international news agency in answering questions that had even nothing to do with the BBC. For example: “If you take the BBC, for instance, they make sure they are covering almost everywhere” (Tms p1-check interview definitions attached as appendix X). Another said: “When BBC or other international news agencies are reporting these stuff, I can’t complain” (Gde p2). Actually, these responses to questions that had nothing to do with the BBC World Service.

The cognitive fixation of citing the BBC as the usual example also became metonymic, that is, while referring to all the international news agencies, the journalists used the BBC, which is just one of them to represent the whole. Explaining his daily routines as the page editor, the journalist said, “With technology, most nights I go on my phone to BBC and the next morning because I have read them, I just go ahead and follow how things are breaking on from each of these networks” (Crs p3). The use of the plural form (networks) later in the sentence displayed this metonymy. This conceptual substitution was not limited to citing of example; there were occasions where the journalists described their preferences by measuring other
international news agencies with their perceived qualities of the BBC. By so doing, they argued, for example, that to better appreciate the availability of resources to an international media organisation one needed to see how it is done in the case of the BBC:

There is football in Italy and the BBC’s team is there even during the campaign and everything because it’s money. And someone needs to mobilize these resources and this is something common to the Western press that we do not have (Gph p5).

The act of using the BBC World Service’s qualities as a measure of other international news media was common and coded across all the interviews. One journalist said, “I diversify my news sources a lot. I go to the likes of CNN, Al-Jazeera based on where the news is happening but all in all, I go to the BBC first and see how others fall in line” (Crs p3). These cognitive conceptual substitutions, apart from being unconscious, reveal a high level of consistency with the quantitative content analysis data presented in the last chapter. The presence of the BBC’s qualities to the subconscious minds of these journalists remain largely influential and confirms the British broadcaster’s qualitative influence in addition to the enormous quantitative weight that was already established in this study with regards to the research question one (RQ1). A comparable case is Xinhua news agency that gets well cited as a source of foreign news but hardly mentioned in any discussion regarding qualitative influence either as language learning platform or association with their qualities.
Cultural defeat and domination theme.

The theme of cultural defeat and domination was widely revealed by the data. This was the most coded theme under different sub-themes during the preliminary coding. Even though there were several admissions of bias by the Ghanaian journalists relating to slant and negativity on the part of the international news media against the continent, they ended up suggesting that they still had no alternatives or they measure their alternatives with their perceived qualities of the BBC and other media from the Northern hemisphere.

For a start, there is a firm appreciation of negative portrayal and bias towards Africa in the international media among these Ghanaian journalists. For instance, in answering the question of whether there was any evidence of Afro-pessimism of any kind in the news reports towards Africa that were printed in their newspapers, two journalists answered:

Oh I know because, maybe, I am a senior journalist. I know that slanting, they have to continue keeping Africa’s negative perception. It was a worrying thing that is why we had to try and do some editing, edit out those that connote extreme negativity (Gph p5).

There is an old myth that nothing good comes from Africa and so they have to reinforce that. I know this because when they come to Ghana and visit the porch areas of East Legon, they won’t take a picture of that, they will take negative ones like the slump of Agblogbloshie (Gph p4).

Another one even asked me to join him watch a YouTube video, he said:

I watched an interesting introduction of the BBC’s Andrew Neil on his show called ‘This Week’ a day after the Paris attack. He recited the might of France as a world power. Compare that to the news a day after there is bombing by ‘Boko Haram’ in Nigeria and you will notice the slant of how two different terrorist acts are described by the same media organisation (Crs p3).
After these splendid admissions of bias by most of the journalists regarding the international news agencies, they then highlighted their inability to do something about the situation by saying, we do not have the resources to act contrary so we replicate these biases:

Because we are picking stories from what the BBCs of this world have published, this is mainly what you will get. Sometimes we are not happy to be using all these negatives but that’s what they have and the thing that you aren’t there where they covered the event. We do not have the opportunity or the resources to go and cover. Sometimes I wonder if that is all they can cover (Gph p4).

One of them argued that the Ghanaian journalist’s incapacity to have alternatives dates back to history. He said, “Even before the advent of the Internet we did not have any other choice, it was difficult to get foreign news except to listen to the BBC radio or VOA. We couldn’t afford to send people around Africa” (Crs p3). Other journalists described the BBC as the most prominent and credible media they knew growing up and as a result, they have kept learning from the BBC until now. Considering the BBC as the leader of the press in the Northern hemisphere, these significant praises also came with an admission of lack of capacity in such a circumstance to be critical of the British broadcaster’s coverage. In describing his preferences for any international news agencies, the interviewee said:

I think besides knowing that other media houses exist, I have been used to the BBC from my infancy. My father in those days had this shortwave radio at one point in time and I switched between the BBC Hausa and English services all day. One is always learning and improving his English language by listening to them (Gde p2).
This description, apart from being a genuine preference for the BBC, also represents a cultural domination emanating from the fact that the BBC was the only alternative available at the time. In fact, his next assertion was rather wild. While discussing how he felt about the negative coverage of Africa that has been replicated in his newspaper, he defended the images and added that he did not even believe in the self-rule of the African:

I don’t think I have any course to dispute any of the reports I hear on BBC because I still have this idea that we are not doing as well as Africans and due to this sometimes KK and I, joke over this Kwame Nkrumah’s position that the black man is capable of managing his own affairs, I think I don’t share in those positions because by and large they have messed up governance, the typical African leader tries to go beyond the constitution so that he will stay beyond what the standard tenure he is entitled to and it is like that in most countries in Africa (Gde p2)

However, responding to the lack of diversity for his sources of foreign news as per earlier content analysis, the journalist made an outstanding admission that showed he is no longer capable of being critical of his childhood preference, the BBC:

I don’t think it is good this way. The graph is quite lopsided. One has to spread one’s net to other places maybe because we have put the BBC in that category, it has even become very difficult to critique their presentations which aren’t good enough (Gde p2).

Even though the journalists observed the practical examples of the negativity towards the continent from the press in the Northern hemisphere and argued that they possess an African perspective; they also depended highly on the Northern press for the coverage of the continent.
Ambivalence: African perspective and dependency on northern media.

The dependence on international news media in covering Africa could easily be described from a simple essentialist point of view as some scholars have done using globalisation. However, equally fascinating is the claim by the journalists that an African perspective exists and which they possess.

Well, as in the case of the journalists in Ghana, to edit out some negative ideas in the news articles they borrowed was neither detailed nor a requirement of the in-house style guide. The Ghanaian journalists’ level of wholesale adoption of “Britishness” because of colonial history is laid out by their comments. While explaining how much responsibility he could assume for the negative images they reproduced from the international media on Africa, one journalist accepted that his weakness is even magnified by his British surname and the boss who knew this, usually told her jokingly she was British. “I am may be biased because I am ‘.....’, so am ‘British’. We do sometimes deal with this when the deputy editor calls me ‘British’ for using more BBC than others. Maybe I am really British” (withheld).

Another journalist, while responding to a lack of diversity in his sourcing of foreign news, explained that he shared the views the BBC carried on most issues because he and his readers are British-inclined:

It looks like a country like Ghana is British. Don’t you think so; you know we worked with the British for many years as a colony. Because of that, we are British-inclined, we prefer the write-ups and views of the BBC to the rest (Tms p1).

After all these endorsements for the BBC throughout the interactions, the journalists decided to associate themselves to the credibility of the British broadcaster not only by saying that they are British by worldview, but also talking of the central role the
BBC occupies in their daily selections as one journalist said: “I use BBC a lot. Occasionally I used AP” (Gde p2). Another one said, “I give priority to all international news agencies closest to the place of an event but all in all, I go for BBC first” (Crs p3). Another journalist also said, “When I am beaten by time and I am quickly looking for news, I first go to the BBC because it’s timely and reliable” (Gph p4). One of them said, “I like the BBC because they are current and reliable. We look forward to their qualities becoming our values too” (Tms p1). These weren’t all, another journalist had a stronger opinion as this:

You will go there because you don’t have a choice, they are timely, you pick a story from BBC compare it with others, at least, the facts won’t change. You look generally, globally at what is happening because we share a worldview with them (Gph p5).

The ambivalence comes from the fact that soon after these admissions came the notion of African perspective, which they equally possessed as an element of resistance. It is crucial to state that the form of cultural domination recounted here looks like an essentialist perspective that does not embrace new forms of appreciating this reality. However, the Ghanaian journalists and editors did not only acknowledge noticing slants against the continent in the news that come from the global North, they also established that an African perspective exists which they constructed as different from what is communicated by the media from the Northern hemisphere. An editor claimed that when Ghana News Agency (GNA) had bureaus around the world, there were different views reported in Ghanaian press:

Because the journalists are based in those countries not only to cover war and catastrophe, they did cover the continent better relating their observations to the Ghanaian context. Apart from the understanding the context in which these
things happen, they are able to relate them better to our local context (Gde ed p7).

Another editor related the African perspective to freedom. That is, the GNA represented freedom from the dominant view and projected an African side of the story. The editor of Daily Graphic grew up as a young journalist in that era and he remembered the Ghanaian-ness in the reports of Ghana news agency when it had bureaus across the continent in selected strategic cities in the world. One of the page editors gave an example relating to children not wearing shirts. She established clearly that children walking around without wearing a shirt could not exclusively mean poverty, it could be an issue of temperature as well. Therefore when she was writing about such a scenario, she would not be distracted like an American from New York visiting Ghana for the first time.

In this section, I have established the qualitative weight of influence on the Ghanaian journalists by describing holistically how this internalised oppression and psychological processes outlined, work to promote dependency syndrome of the Ghanaian press on foreign media especially the BBC. I have equally established the sublime resistance, with the claim of an African perspective, which remains only as an idea because performative options for the practice of resistance available have not been deployed yet. I will later establish whether this reliance on foreign media is a form of globalisation or a new form of domination.

**Conditions Shaping Foreign News**

In this section, I describe the circumstances or factors within which the foreign news selection processes work. Like the working order of a group, these conditions shape the whole foreign news selection process by providing a framework of operation.
These include profitability, economic rationality coupled with advertising bias, routine technological challenges and proximity of journalistic ideology.

**Profitability.**

All the four newspapers argued that their commitment to the foreign news had a positive relationship with profitability (the amount of money they make in excess of expenses, variable material cost and other overhead costs). However, their arguments were unique individually. Daily Graphic, Ghanaian Times and Ghanaian Chronicle newspapers argued that even though they would generally increase the support for the foreign news should their profit margins improve, they also suggested that the cost involved in covering the continent comprehensively cannot be accommodated within their current circumstances which were marked by cost-cutting as a means to either ensure good returns on investments or break-even. They suggested that with technological advancements, they do not see how they would defend the high expenditures involved in foreign news coverage when expenses have become the only option left to positively increase profit and shareholders’ worth.

According to them, foreign pages have been made *premium pages* for advertising due to the results of market research, which indicate they are among the top read pages. However, the income earned on these advertising cannot be spent only on foreign news desk when relying on international news agencies is an option that costs nothing. They argued that dwindling national sales as a result of general national economic slowdown does not in itself allow for discussion on foreign engagements. By their nature and purpose, these newspapers seem to be arguing that they are first national dailies before anything else and as a result, they consider foreign news as
service to their readers. An editor responded to the question of how foreign news contributed to profitability in this manner:

Not precisely but this is a local paper so our focus basically is about what we do as a people in Ghana but we don’t also live in an island unto ourselves particularly in the globalized world where you want to know what is happening to others so that it does not affect you (Gph ed p6).

When confronted again about his worries regarding the dwindling pages for foreign news, the editor repeats his notion of localisation in which he then rendered foreign news as a service for the readers:

Not precisely that I am worried but it could be better. I’m saying that basically, this is a local newspaper and therefore your focus is on what we do as a nation to be able to provide the news that people require to contribute their quota to nation building. As I said in the globalized world you want your readers to also have a feel of what is happening around them (Gph ed p6).

It is clear he and other editors who have spoken in a similar sense are constructing globalisation as the reason that has underscored their continued commitments to foreign news. Others have cited migratory flow of Ghanaian across the globe as the major reason why they must maintain foreign news. In answering the question of colonial influences in the selection process, the journalist said this:

In the past I would have said yes …but with technology and communication these days, you don’t know who is going where because in the past we used to get most of our imports from especially the businessmen and women who go and bring goods, go to England basically and it expanded to France, Germany and USA. Now people go to China and they go as far as Dubai so there is a lot more exposure now and so you can’t say that is a direct influence. Our world has become so globalised that I also pick Asian news regularly because I know we have got Ghanaians going to Asia to do business.
The kind of globalisation described here by the journalist is a one-way traffic phenomenon of excess importation over export. This imbalance could be equally seen in journalism as the Ghanaian press only receives from abroad. There is a lack of active two-way interactions in this notion of globalisation. But through this globalisation, migratory flows and other international interactions, different dimensions of proximity mappings and reconstructions have evolved. These proximity issues have forced the Ghanaian newspapers to remain committed to foreign news. In the height of the economic hardships and cost-cutting strategies that are currently implemented by these newspapers, they are but left with only one option: depend on international news agencies, they argued.

The Ghanaian Times newspapers provided an argument to support their claim of a positive relationship between commitment to foreign news and profitability. They argued that due to their origin as Pan-African newspaper, any improvement in profit and economic situation could trigger a reduction in their reliance on international news agencies even though they consider the foreign pages purely as service to their readership. But for finances, a better coverage of the African continent from the perspective of local reporters with Pan-Africa perspective was crucial for their newspaper.

Some page editors disagreed with the top management argument on institutional commitments. The journalists felt their organisations had not created appropriate environments for the development of originality. They explained that the organisational level failures had exacerbated the situation of dependency on international news organisations. Management members of the selected newspapers have relied on the argument of cost-cutting as a measure of improving profit in an era
where newspaper sales are fast dwindling. In such a scenario, no commitment is made
towards the journalist’s comfort to report from abroad. Talking about their
experiences in reporting on elections in neighbouring Togo, Cote d’Ivoire and
Nigeria, the journalists recounted these:

I covered elections in Nigeria and Cote d’Ivoire. The resources that the big
international news agencies released and what our own have is very
intimidating. Ours was limited. To go and speak to someone and language
limitation and lack of resources. I cannot afford dinner or go to the Café with
my sources. I even had to return quickly because my money was finished (Gph
p5).

It’s all resources and policies. If you have the kind of management or
leadership that thinks that we should also have somebody out there, why not,
we could make it. But they are reluctant and fixated on cost-cutting theories.
We should have somebody here and there, let’s have somebody in the major
areas that are a no-go area (Gph p4).

I think it is a problem, it’s difficult, the resources are not available, even if
they are available they are not released because those who are supposed to
release them don’t find it necessary going to another Africa country. But they
are happy when we break some crucial original stories from Nigeria through
my contacts because I used to work there (Gde p2).

It is evident from these foregoing arguments that journalists working for Daily
Graphic and Daily Guide newspapers believe their newspapers could do better in
providing support for their coverage of at least neighbouring countries. This opinion
is different from the uniform view held by both management and journalists of the
two other newspapers, who attributed their reliance on international news
organisations to lack of resources. In the case of Ghanaian Times and Chronicle
newspapers, both management and journalists agree that they are resource trapped.
Economic rationality and advertising bias.

The decision of making foreign news pages premium advertising pages emanates from an economic rationality that favours advertising. It is clear audience research results have varied uses. While the management of the newspaper finds the readership as a bait for advertising, some journalists felt their choice was wrong. Daily Graphic newspaper, for instance, used to dedicate two to three pages to foreign news. Now the newspaper dedicates only two half pages. While the page editor finds this unhelpful, the managing editor argued that the newspaper needed the money and he explained that the dwindling pages for editorial content is due to cuts on a number of pages the newspapers print as a form of cost-cutting strategy. It became difficult for the journalists to maintain the balance of daily tragedies and triumphs on two half pages compared to three full pages they had. This advertising bias means that most stories on the foreign pages needed to be shortened to the extent that they even lost the original context information they came with. The situation at Ghanaian Times is even worse because the advertising department could keep coming for space until the two pages dedicated for the foreign news are exhausted. This unplanned and spontaneous disruption of editorial content occurs because advertisers want that foreign news page. The editorial committee at Ghanaian Times has had to fight sometimes for half a page for the foreign news. The Daily Guide newspaper has an interesting layout where most leads are squeezed on to well-read pages with a continuation on other pages. The editor explained an experiment he conducted to check the foreign page readership significance:

We attached a very big importance. Because a lot of people like me I started my journalism or newspaper reading from there, it from reading foreign stories so I also believe that a lot of people read it. The reason why we got to know
that people read the foreign stories is that there was a time we place some ads there and I think it was very disgusting, several people called that they don’t want to see the ads there (Dde ed p7).

The advertising bias is a condition that cannot contribute to the improvement in the balance of the tone of coverage because the editorial content has to be rejected for advertising. This is closely linked to limited space in journalistic and persuasive writing where the author is expected to put useful information right within the lead with the intention to win readers to read further. This concept, when married to cuts in printable pages, result in severe limitations to context information to each foreign news story published in the Ghanaian press.

**Routine technology challenge.**

There are a plethora of technological difficulties confronting the newsrooms which include congested networks, slow Internet speed, malfunctioning computers and lack of multimedia workstations. These challenges are visible to any observer who enters these newsrooms. But it has been normalised in a manner that renders it of no effect. However, a closer look at this phenomenon provides a very interesting framework for the workings of foreign news editorial decision-making (news selection). First, congestion on the network at the Daily Graphic and Ghanaian Times begins somewhere around 13:00 GMT. The page editors of these newspapers are also responsible for other domestic pages which preoccupies them in the morning especially because foreign news stories on international news agencies are not usually matured enough to be followed in the morning. By the time they are ready to search for foreign news, most reporters would have returned to the Office from assignments to work on their reports because they must be ready for the news editor to take to an
editorial conference at 14:00GMT. This congestion largely limits the diversity of the searches the foreign page editors make because they are equally responsible for other local pages as well. In these cases, the foreign page editors turn to their trusted international news networks and this provides an environment where some specific agencies become most often cited. One editor said:

You go through all those hustles sometimes and because of the challenges the end result can be affected. Assuming that the machines or computers work faster and we don’t have all these IT problems, you could go to certain sources to get news items that are faultless, sometimes others might not even know where this thing is and so there is some challenge (Ghp4).

The second issue is Internet speed. Depending on the services, the journalists are forced to leave the premises of the organisation to search for a good internet in the city centre. Pick their stories on a flash drive and bring them to the newsroom for editing. In this scenario as well diversity is highly affected. It was noticed that the page editors know that the Internet challenges are a frequent issue and such they save some news items in the morning when they arrive and where the Internet refuses to work well later in the day, they resort to this news. These issues are even complicated by the lack of multimedia workstation in the newsroom that make it impossible for them to record rolling 24 hour international TV stations or monitor radio with the view of writing their own news from the broadcast news reports.

**Intermedia Agenda Setting Preference**

The press in Ghana has demonstrated peculiar individual preferences for different international news agencies except for the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) World Service that was popular across the four selected newspapers. CNN performed very badly in the public press while Xinhua news agency was the second single most
cited international news agency. Contrary to the public press, Xinhua news agency scored zero in both private newspapers. Daily Guide and Chronicle never cited the Chinese news agency for any of their items over a period of two years. Rather, they used CNN significantly at the 3rd position in the ranking. These differences in followings between the Ghanaian press and their international counterparts require a better explication. In this section, I provide these through four themes: Chinese soft power constructed as South-South cooperation; historical background built on the colonial relationship; informal individual influence built on previous staff contact.

**Chinese soft-power constructed as south-south cooperation.**

China has emerged in the past five decades as a competing economic force in the world. But the entry of China into international news distribution competition with the Northern media organisations was less expected. In fact, one-page editor alluded to this surprise in these words while interrogating the amount of influence Xinhua news agency carried as a source:

Xinhua because of where they report from like I was telling you. When you want to go to Asia they have something good but BBC is an entity in itself, due to years of experience and the influence of the English language has throughout the world. Xinhua for instance, I didn’t know this; I’m surprised (Crs p3).

While explaining Xinhua’s influence, the same page editor linked the agency’s influence on the Chinese emerging power in the world:

So it depends on where the news is coming from and over here in Ghana most people are not really interested, excuse me to say, in the eastern bloc like China, Japan and others. I pick the Chinese stories especially when they have a problem with the Islands with Japan and others. I’m trying to bring people’s attention to it and the fact that China is growing. At a point, I will think of it
because I want detailed news from China. Maybe I might go to Xinhua in the future (Crs p3).

However, the journalists working for the newspapers where Xinhua news agency was most cited constructed the Chinese soft power influence to be an act of south-south cooperation. The framework of this cooperation is the desire of the periphery nation to disrupt the feudal system of interaction nursed at the Centre by communicating among themselves more. The argument is that cooperation among the developing nations within the global south is long overdue. One editor explained their reason for signing the reuse agreement with Chinese Embassy on behalf of Xinhua news agency:

We have some kind of collaboration with Xinhua, which is Chinese news agency, except that it not very regular but it can be better that’s the only way, as I said, we don’t have the resources to go to Asia. Even covering some neighbouring countries is difficult, to talk about far away in Asia. So the only way is to have some collaboration. I know that there are other countries in Asia who have very strong news agencies that we can collaborate with. And I’m sure in the spirit of South-South cooperation it will be useful to do what we have done (Gph ed p6).

Another editor doubted the concept of South-South cooperation but he argued it is far better than the Northern media domination currently reigning.

We need to even have collaboration among ourselves but rather we’re having to collaborate with Xinhua, a Chinese news agency. They have approached us for collaboration so that they would be sending us their items and we also send them items. But so far we have only been receiving. That isn’t too good but because of their focus on development news, they look far charitable than their Northern media organisations (Tms ed p8).

The response from the Ghanaian newspapers so far has been mixed but highly favourable to the Chinese news agency that got sourced significantly within the period
of the study. The journalists refused to describe Chinese influence as another form of domination or diversity in their sourcing of foreign news. They rather insisted on the concept of South-South cooperation as the major reason for their choice. This cooperation is inherently imperial because the Chinese news agency sells their material around the world but in this case, they offered it for free in the name of cooperation where the Ghanaian newspapers are expected to file news items to them as well. For three years since the agreement started, the Ghanaian newspapers are yet to receive a demand to file a news item for their Chinese counterpart.

The Chinese also offer juicy training programmes for staff of these two newspapers to spend time in China improving their journalistic skills. The Ghanaian side of this South-South cooperation has so far been on the receiving side. The unequal power arrangement demonstrated by the cooperation is not different from the existing feudal interaction instituted by Northern media. Considering that the Chinese soft power activity of offering news items for free is only operational with two newspapers, one could argue the activity has been successful. Assuming the agreement is extended to the top ten newspapers in Ghana, we could witness another case of domination which would be rationalised with the concept of south-south cooperation. This exotic anti-Western tag reveals some form of resistance that would be later interrogated in the discussion chapter and related Bhabha’s view of the third space of the colonised.

**Historical background built on colonial relationship.**

Colonial and historical past left scars that have never left the colonised states. Examples include language and education. These two elements have rippling effects on others like trade cooperation and worldview. Some journalists located this
inextricably complex past as the underlining reason why intermedia agenda setting relationships and preferences seemed the way they look today:

It looks like a country like Ghana is British…. you know we worked with the British and we have a very strong historical background that has become inseparable. Because we are British inclined we prefer the write up of the BBC to the rest (Tms p1).

Yes, it does we have a large population of Ghanaians in Britain and they are there because of the colonial time. Between us, at a certain point, you didn’t even need a visa to go so anything about Britain in your paper will attract readership and the same cannot go for news items about Ireland, Finland or Denmark. (Gde ed p7).

One of the journalists questioned if it was possible for them to claim independence where their media institutions were directly built on the historical past for a very long time even after independence:

I think it’s a British influence. Britain colonised this part of the world and the broadcasting system itself was started by the British. I know of a radio station called radio ZOY, that is, the pioneer radio station in the country and I think the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) signature tune was what they were using in those days when they were rebroadcasting so we have grown up to getting used to BBC. We consider anything which emanates from BBC as the truth sacrosanct. Even the Graphic newspaper was a British newspaper that was nationalised with no ideological changes (Gde p2).

The journalists seem to argue that the historical past did not allow any reflections afterwards. Therefore British institutions and ideas continued even after independence because the educational system itself was built on the British model and most Ghanaians had studied and lived in the UK than anywhere else. This well-established
relationship and institutional culture have become quite compelling to resist by struggling Ghanaian newspapers.

Some of the journalists suggested that the trust in the BBC among the population is really high and any association with that brand’s values is highly ranked. The British broadcaster does not have any agreement with newspapers but their massive rebroadcast radio agreements throughout the country are quite evident of their effort to maintain a hold on this historical advantage via influential institutions. They have led very porch journalism training either through the British Council or by themselves. Most of these journalists had their childhood experiences dominated by British institutions and practices even before their journalism education. This engrossment with the BBC’s style of reporting remains influential:

They were my preferences because of their language and style of writing. So that I was also using part of their articles to do my write-ups when I was writing general news. It has helped a lot. So coming to the foreign desk was not so much of a challenge. I was reading these agencies even before I went into journalism. There have been news organisations like the BBC and VOA who broadcast in Ghana but I like to compare and contrast because of the language and content of news coverage (Tms p1).

An editor traces his experiences from the Ghana Army to the current inextricable historical bond that exist between Ghana and Britain. He argued that the historical relationships are more potent than agreements. To him, these remain relevant and evident because most institutions of the state are yet to free themselves from this practice. Consider the Ghana Army for example:

The origin of the officer class of military in Britain: it was limited to a particular class in society and you have to buy the rank. That is why you have, till date, when you have men’s diner in the military in Ghana you have to dress like a typical aristocrat with the cummerbund. With the cummerbund and then
the bolt-tie, you will go into the men’s and have your men’s dinner and there are some traditions: you don’t go with your cup, you live them. There is a particular place for them. You start it like that from your officer cadet days so by the time you come out, they will tell you an officer is a gentleman…These British aristocracies are still visible in our society not only in the army (Gde p2).

Another journalist added that in addition to these relationships, comes the compelling continuous presence of international news agencies on the continent. The Western international news agencies seem to be the one covering the continent largely even though their coverage has been described as insignificant:

Yes, there has been some postcolonial domination, especially with the BBC and Reuters still dominating the Africa scene for newsgathering…you always find them current and prominent, still on the continent… Their presence and prominence still on the continent has some sort of enhanced the type of stories that will shape or reshape society and history whether in the positive or negative way (Tms p1).

The evolution of intermedia agenda setting relationship between the Ghanaian press and their international counterparts seemed to be highly built on historical past and its subsequent entanglement that are visible today include migration and institutional training that have also come to be dominated by institutions from the Northern hemisphere.

**An informal relationship built on personal contact.**

Personal contacts that journalists made through conferences, meetings and by working together on assignments, remain a major determinant of intermedia relationships. I label this set of relationships as an informal relationship because there are no formal agreements involved. This happens to be a major source of news about Nigeria in the
Ghanaian press. The editor and news editor of Daily Guide both started their journalism careers in Nigeria and they maintain a very solid relationship with former colleagues who have become the major source of news about Nigeria. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Chronicle newspaper worked in Nigeria and maintains contacts that his newspaper falls on for news items. An informal relationship built on contacts of the employee as a determinant of intermedia agenda setting relationship represented a more effective way of telling the African story for two reasons: First, the journalists claim that the stories received were contextually more appropriate and are factually and culturally accurate because they were written with Ghana in mind. The Daily Guide editors illustrated this with the following examples:

When the ECOWAS Human right court in Abuja, Nigeria, ruled on the case involving the death of a Nigerian student that occurred in Ghana. We got the story the very second the ruling was made. We beat even the BBCs of this world to it (Gde ed p7).

When we attend maybe foreign trade conferences to meet people, there was a group of Journalists put together by AU. I attended two of their meetings in Dakar. The AU communication team was putting together a group of journalists then will divide into sub-regional groups- that thing didn’t work so the only thing you do is that maybe sometimes… I have friends in Nigeria I can easily ask them to cross-check for me. I have this story, can you do a little check for me. (Gde p2).

Second, the relationship is basically built on *give and take* and that afforded their Nigerian friends the opportunity to also source news from Ghana through them. This reciprocal relationship is useful for reporting the continent: One news editor explained this in more detail:
No, there is no special relationship but individually, there is. As I speak to you, last night, BBC Hausa called me and asked me to tell them what really transpired when Dr Chambers hosted a press conference in Accra. They called me because their Hausa BBC correspondent in Accra knows me so he called me and told me he was giving my number to them, their bureau in Abuja. So they called me from Abuja. I told them what transpired and that is not the first time there was a time he’s called Idi Ali, he called me again on the subject of social media shut down in Hausa and so on and so forth (Gde p2).

The Chronicle newspaper, for example, is trying to convert the Chief Executive Officer’s influence in Nigeria into standing agreement with Vanguard and This Day newspapers. They have even launched a Nigerian page as part of their foreign news. This page is exclusively dedicated to news from Nigerian because they feel the size of the Nigerian community in Ghana deserved more attention. This is what the page editor said:

- We have a Nigerian page the stories are basically from Nigerian newspapers like Vanguard, THISDAY and others. We pick the stories for the Nigerian page from Nigerian newspapers and then we have also the world page (Crs p3).

This is how marketing and business decisions could influence the entire continent to be limited to just Nigeria. In this case, newsworthiness in neighbouring countries means next to nothing. This lopsided view of where to cover in Africa is entirely based on the economic reasoning of free news and converting available readership in Ghana into the market.

In this section, I traced how the various intermedia agenda setting relationships discovered in the Ghanaian press, during the content analysis, evolved from the perspective of journalists and editors. I illustrated these relationships basically under three broad umbrellas: Chinese soft power constructed as the concept
of South-South cooperation; historical background built on colonial relationship and an informal relationship built on existing personal contact. The historical and colonial relationship could be described as the most potent especially as it involved the use of colonial institutions and various international diplomacy activities for decades. The so-called Chinese south-south cooperation fell quite squarely within this thinking and it has produced splendid results. The Ghanaian Times newspaper constructed themselves as Pan-African newspaper and therefore staged a mild resistance against international news agencies from the Northern Hemisphere. This led to a high score of Xinhua news agency in the Ghanaian Times. But also, this received further illumination as the newspaper seems to be the luckier beneficiary of the Chinese diplomacy programmes between the two newspapers currently implementing the agreement. An informal relationship built on personal contact has illuminated the situation where individual international news agencies scored zero in some newspapers and placed second in others. These differences have become much clearer than they were in the first findings chapter, which reported the results of the content analysis. The American education of the CEO of Chronicle newspaper, who has been heavily involved in the daily running of the newspaper, accounted for the decent performance of the American international broadcaster, CNN. The same thing happened in the cases of the editors of Daily Guide newspaper, whose Nigerian work experience became rather a potent determinant of their news selection.

Journalists' Perspectives on Africa's Media Image in the Ghanaian Press

I reconstruct in this section, from the perspective of the journalists, why Africa’s media image remains negative in the Ghanaian press. I recount the reasoning behind the entire African media image construction in Ghana through three themes:
economic hardships and the cost-cutting rationale, proximity of journalistic ideology and uneven encounter with the global North that lingers. In the first theme, I will discuss economic hardship and its consequent cost-cutting rationale as a major reason, from the perspective of the journalists, that continues to influence the coverage of Africa in the Ghanaian press.

**Economic hardship and cost-cutting rationales.**

The editors and journalists interviewed are very much aware of the economic hardship the newspaper industry is faced with in the 21st Century around the world. This notion can even be traced in some of the quotations in the section dealing with conditions of coverage. However, there is the need to explain how this is linked to the coverage the continent gets in the media. The Ghanaian journalists claim that economic hardships have triggered low newspapers sales and dwindling advertising income as a result of general corporate austerity in all industries. An editor explained while responding to the question of whether resources matter in the coverage of Africa:

> Of course yes! Resources matter a lot and we know. Yet, unfortunately for us in this part of the world newspaper business has become a very difficult one because of resources. First, patronage has gone down, currently because of the economic hardship people can no longer afford to buy newspapers (Crs ed p9).

This widely held view of the journalists implies that there is declining income capacity to deal with the proper running of even domestic pages. One editor explained that the hardships were so severe that they had to close down several district offices.

In my newspaper’s perspective, resources are our problem because at the moment we have to cut down on our regional correspondents because of lack of resources. We used to have two reporters in the city of Tema, some of them we have to even close down their offices because of resources. So the major
problem why we at Chronicle cannot extend our reports to other parts of the 
African continent is because of resources (Crs p9).

They equally placed this economic hardship theme within a complex scheme of 
affairs that made it complicated to deal with. To them, technology and competition 
within the newspaper industry itself are so fierce and unrealistic to cope with because 
the readership purchasing power cannot match the price tags of newspapers. He 
answered to whether the Ghanaian newspapers can ever be free reliance from the 
Northern press organisations in gathering their own news about the continent under 
these circumstances:

No, I don’t think so because we don’t have the resources. In the first place, the 
government doesn’t give us a subsidy to subsidize the media. Number two, 
people don’t even buy newspapers anymore because of economic hardships 
which are denying free market support for newspapers. Today we are selling 
newspaper GHe2.50p per day and when you look at it, people are earning a 
minimum of GHe9.00. Assuming somebody decides to buy four newspapers, 
that will GHe 10.00, which is more than the minimum wage. So it’s affecting 
their purchasing power when it comes to newspaper and then again because 
people will listen to the radio news reviews, they are not motivated to buy. I 
think that is the fact, a combination of lack of resources and introduction or 
the influx of technology (Crs ed p9).

One significant cost-cutting strategy introduced by all the four newspapers in 
response to the economic hardship is cutting down on a number of pages to be 
printed. This resulted in limited space for editorial material. One editor described the 
issue of limited space as an economic strategy because the cost of printing has 
become burdensome and new technologies have made alternatives to newspapers 
more common:
Again it about cost and in all over the world everybody is cutting down cost. People don’t want to add on to the cost because fortunes are dwindling, the economic situation is not as buoyant as it used to be many years ago and the Internet is also competing, so you have to look at what you can cut so that you can make some savings, so those are the challenges. We have been looking at it and severally ourselves we are challenged generally with pages so it becomes very difficult to isolate foreign news. We are looking at it holistically what can we do to give value to our readers and if we have to do anything we will include the foreign page (Gph ed p6).

Some of the page editors recounted how economic hardships affected the way they reported Africa. However, they disagreed with the idea that improvements in economic fortunes of their newspapers might lead to better institutional commitment to foreign news. They argued lack of institutional support for editorial activities including foreign newsgathering is a management choice to some level. They pointed to management fixation with an increase in profit through cost-cutting measures. A page editor answered the question of whether improvements in economic hardship will mean more resources for foreign news:

I don’t know whether we have a good management. Whether we have enough resources or not they don’t care. It is a one-way style of support. Small travelling allowance which can’t assist us to compete with international well-resourced news agencies. That is all. You go and do the little you can (omitted).

Another page editor expressed the feeling that most of them expressed to me widely in my daily discussions. Journalists working for newspapers like Daily Guide and Daily Graphic felt management commitment to releasing resources for editorial activity is weak:

I think it is a problem, it’s difficult. The resources are not available and even if they are available, they are not released because those who are supposed to
release them don’t find it necessary to send reporters abroad especially Ghana and Nigeria vice versa, elections in Ghana sometimes the Nigerians send people. I think the last elections I met some Nigerian journalists. So the commitment is not there from our side. I don’t remember the time when Daily Guide sends somebody to Nigeria to undertake an investigation with the view to writing a news story, no (Gph p5).

The claim of journalists that they mirror society implies they cover both the triumphs and tragedies of each day in equal proportions. This ideal notion of mirroring society becomes very difficult in the face of limited editorial space. The page editors lamented about the phenomenon of limited space and how it renders their coverage lopsided:

We have a limited space of one page and we must divide it between Africa and the world. You can’t just put Africa news alone when there is also a crisis in Asia. If we have had more space or even if we had one full page for African news and one full page for world news, we can carry a lot of stories and even this one page dedicated to both Africa and world news we still have to take part of it for advertising, how do we capture triumphs and tragedies in this situation? (Gde p2).

Lack of space no matter what we might say we have a small economy and in terms of numbers compared to most African countries we are a small country and the papers lack space. And with newspapers or with media most times scandals are the stories everybody goes for, so definitely the negative stories. (Crs p3).

Limited editorial space, which has been caused by economic hardship, is largely a reason for the negative coverage of the continent because the balance between triumphs and tragedies cannot be achieved within such space limitations. This situation gets even worse when the journalists attempt to place three to four stories on
a page. Based on the space available, this leads to unnatural cuts in the length of the story. Sometimes, this is even left for the page designers, with no journalistic training to do. These sporadic cuts of stories result in the situation where the context of the story is significantly altered. A few experiments witnessed during the newsroom observation showed clearly that the original journalistic piece being relied on mostly by the Ghanaian journalists is written with a particular structure in mind. For example, bare facts relating to causalities are usually stated in the Lead, where the questions of who, what, where, when and how are answered. This is followed with more details on the event before the background is given to provide context for the entire narrative. From my observation, the cuts in the story length do not respect original structural thinking behind the story and this renders the stories more negative. One editor recognises this as a major disadvantage. She said to keep the original structural outlook requires a technical reconstruction, which is difficult but in some of the circumstances, it is unavoidable. She spoke about this while responding to why there was unsourced news in their quality newspaper:

Sometimes I take a story from BBC and a similar story from Reuters and while cutting I would have to re-write the whole story myself for it to make sense and in that case, the story does not belong to either of them (Gph p4).

This same limited editorial space prevents the page editors from using features. The genre of features provides details and ideas about a phenomenon and even how it can be resolved but such genres are sparingly used because the journalists need to rework the whole feature. One editor admits using features sparingly:

We use them occasionally but we will have to cut because of the space so when they are long then we have to use them on the features pages but when we can cut we use the one on the page but because of the limited space I am
not able to use a lot of feature articles at once because we are constrained. (Gph p4).

Sometimes when I see features and documentary on the Internet, I try to make stories out of them and I put it in the newspaper but in the form of a new story. Sometimes I use my discretion. If a disaster breaks out after 4:30 and I’m supposed to use it, I might save it and still maintain the feature article that is in the news items out of feature article or a feature that somebody has written I can use half of the page to give a right time but it will not be frequent because there is no space (Tms p1).

It is evident that the practice of cutting stories to fit limited editorial space renders some of the stories negative. Taking four of such stories during the newsroom observations for analysis, I discovered the elimination of contextual background, as had been done, affected the outlook of the story largely. A typical rewrite of the story also presents several shortcomings since this reconstruction does not occur within a framework where the Ghanaian journalists can call the original authors for clarification. Much of what a re-write does is to speculate the meaning of the original text as it is.

Apart from the contextual difficulties explained, there is also the challenge of medium mismatch. The page editors usually access the online version of their favourite international news agencies. The parameters and requirements of these stories as per the online medium is different. Usually, I realised the BBC World Service online uses animations, drawings, pictures, artistic impressions and reading and understanding aids such as fact-box, things to know and many others. The original authors have the liberty of developing the African story in a very creative manner because they have space and reading aids to keep readers’ interest online. This is the opposite for a Ghanaian press bedevilled with limited space and lack of similar
reading aids in printed sheet. This affects the medium requirements and advantages. What is eventually published is a deconstructed re-use of foreign news articles. Even though this remained an isolated case because the experiments were not widely conducted, a senior page editor with a ten-year experience at the foreign news desk accepted the challenge of medium re-alignment can be tedious and eventually that affects the selection of stories that are rendered complicated online with animations and artistic impressions:

Oh you know, the online stories are well developed with enough detail because they have the luxury of space and animation to keep them going but this tend to pose problems for our re-write exercise. This morning as I was reading the Oscar Pistorius story in our newspaper, I noticed some contextual inconsistencies because I have been following the story closely from the BBC website with all the fine complicated animation it comes with (Gph p5).

In the next sub-section, I locate the perspective of the journalists in a broader theme of the proximity of journalistic ideology.

**Proximity of journalistic ideology.**

The concept of what journalistic news should look like is usually known among journalists practising in domestic nations. Due to this common knowledge, journalists borrowing news from each other seems to be reluctant in making changes to the original frames communicated. When the page editors were confronted with the results of the content analysis regarding Africa’s negative coverage, they recounted how their professional routines do cannot allow them to make significant changes in the stories they borrowed:

I always countercheck with the other sources. I pick a BBC news and I always read from Reuters, I want to check with the AP. I want to check, so I go to Yahoo, a source we do not even subscribe to, just to find out whether they are a true reflection. You have been to the editorial conference and you saw the
heat there. If you change a story significantly and other editors discover...you will have to produce evidence or fact for the changes and where you got them (Gph p4).

Journalistic stories are structured according to some rules that have not really changed enough over the years. Basically, these rules have become constructs and to be seen as a professional, one must respect these rules. What is required of a journalist to change a theme that is already communicated to him/her by another journalist is evidence from his own journalists commissioned to the same event especially when they come with conflicting reports. Sending their own reporters, across the continent rarely happens. On the issue of repetition of a negative slant, one editor said:

When we choose news that is slanted, we just do a little editing but mostly they too they know the slant. They have perfected that act; you Third world journalists cannot go against it and rewrite the whole story. We don’t do enough rewriting of their story. We just pick them most often. We know that there is a slant but where is the evidence before the Editorial Board? (Gph p5).

The fact that journalistic news is an account of someone who has witnessed an event, it becomes difficult for another journalist, who possess a canonical proximity to this ideological construct, to attempt a change. One page editor provided a very clearer picture of this:

Because we are picking stories from what they have produced this is mainly what you will get. Sometimes we are not happy to be using all the negatives but that is what they have and the thing is that you are not there. We do not have the opportunity or the resources to go and cover and those who cover and put them in their whatever, this is what they are giving us. Sometimes you wonder if that all that they can cover but our profession demands evidence if you attempt a change or it amounts to some propaganda (Gph p4).
This *proximity in journalistic ideology* coupled with *limited resources* represents a major blockade to any form of resistance to the negative images communicated by the dominant press from the Northern hemisphere. Because the major way to resist negative frames communicated by foreign news agencies is to commission own reporters at least in major cities in Africa. One editor explained how relieved he felt when a reporter of their newspaper lived a short while in abroad and reported for the page from wherever he is based:

Sometimes when I attribute the story to BBC, Aljazeera, Xinhua, I don’t feel comfortable so once a while as I’ve told you earlier on I have a correspondent, our Cape Coast correspondent he is in China for a programme for about 8 months, Yarboi, so he sends me stories almost every week. So when the stories come I use it on my page and I feel good about his angels (Tms p1).

Some of the editors appealed to some of the journalistic ideological constructs to defend their coverage of Africa. They argued that news must be negative to attract readership:

In journalism, we have something we called the bad news sells. Now as a continent we’re supposed to project the positive side of our continent to Africans and to the rest of the world to know the good things that we do but unfortunately, we keep doing it the same way the foreign news do to us. We have always been criticizing them that they don’t project the positive side of Africa yet those of us here too do the same thing because of the basic fact that we believe that bad news sells (Crs p3).

The reason is that we pick it from a wire service. We don’t have reporters we pick it from wire service, we don’t have reporters directly reporting the events because sometimes the main reason is buried or they highlight the negative aspect, and you know as news, negative stories sell and these multinational media entities, they have their own agenda (Gde ed p7).
The British-embeddedness and dominance in the Ghanaian education, language and journalism training as earlier established have led to a comparative proximity of views carried in media from the Northern Hemisphere. This sacrosanct reception of news from the Northern press means that the editors share some proximity in the understanding of the news they borrowed.

One major journalistic construct that has hardly received any critical interrogation is the perception of journalists about readership taste. The editors seem to argue that readership taste of news about Africa is an element that drives them in their selection. The appeal to readership taste as the reason for publishing seemingly negative and sensational news is largely a construct. It has never been critically questioned by the journalists because they do not cite any scientific study for it. They are usually appealing to common sense understanding within the professional ideology that the news must reflect the readership taste which they are sure is a negative and sensational taste. In answering the question of why Africa’s image remained negative one-page editor answered:

Personally, I think it readership because there are certain instances where I didn’t use certain negative stories but use the human-interest aspect, for example, and readers didn’t like it. If I have only one page or quarter page or half a page and I used the human-interest story the following day my editor can ask me there was this breaking news about an attempt at the Pope’s life for example, why didn’t you use it? Meanwhile, I have used lady writing love stories to a former Pope (Tms p1).

I think we choose stories not because we intend effecting changes in our societies but we choose them based on what we think will attract people to them. And by and large, we are looking at negative stories. I mean you come up with a story and your publishers will not be in tune with it because it will
not attract readers, readers will not buy the paper. There will be a reduction in the sales. Why? Because it isn’t negative (Gde p2).

Senior editors who participated in editorial meetings, where stories were selected, justified their selection based on their years of experience and the claim that they know too well about the taste of readership. They have argued that the taste of newspaper readership community is bad news and sensationalism. One page editor made reference to such claims:

You might have an idea, you might have a perception but your bosses look at the sales, they don’t look at what will educate the public. They usually say ‘this is my understanding of what the readers want to read’ and it is usually negative, but they don’t look at the positive aspect of the story, for example, somebody has invented something on the continent and it could be a Cameroonian; then you can have another story involving a bomb blast and it could be another African country say, Guinea. The bomb blast is always preferred by that editorial committee of ours. (Tms p1).

Another page editor recounted his frustrations about how some readers call his boss to complain about the lack of sensational and bad news. He argued that a story involving human nature of an ex-Pope, was referred to an attack in Rwanda only for their choice to be subjected to scrutiny in the next morning meeting because the readers have raised such a query:

Personally, I feel bad about the coverage in terms of the negativity but when you look at the readership. That is what they want to read. Some people want to read about the negative aspect of the continent to know what is happening even Africans themselves, even the reading public in Ghana. Sometimes when there is some breaking story and we don’t cover it people call the editor to find out why we didn’t get this Rwanda story or this Burundi story, this Nigeria or this Boko Haram story or this migration story. So the editor sometimes will raise a query in the next editorial discussion (Gph p5).
The publishers and editors have been cited as people who monitored the taste of readers enough to determine what it was that the readers wanted. In answering the question of lop-sidedness of the balance between triumphs and tragedy of the daily news report, a page editor revealed the publisher’s might in the interpretation of readership taste:

> I mean you come up with a story and your publishers (Owner/Chief editor) will not be in tune because it will not attract readers, readers will not buy the paper, there will be a reduction in the sales. These are their claim and they are usually right with this interpretation (Gde p2).

Apart from the fact that there are some isolated cases when the readers have asked for an explanation of why certain disaster was not covered, there seems to be an established idea among the editors that the readers want to read something sensational and negative. This notion is an *ideological construct* that permeates the practice of normative journalism as per the responses so far extracted. It is described as such in the study because, throughout the ethnographic interview, the journalists and their editors have supported this argument by appealing to this *common-sense notion* about the news. In all occasions where I asked for evidence of readership taste, they have rejected providing proofs. They argued that they do not need to do any research to show this. One editor responding to the lack of balance between negative and positive stories on the continent captured the notion more vividly like this:

> In journalism, we have something we called the bad news sells. Now as a continent we’re supposed to project the positive side of our continent to Africans and to the rest of the world to know the good things that we do but unfortunately, we keep doing it the same way the foreign news do to us. We have always been criticizing them that they don’t project the positive side of
Africa yet those of us here too do the same thing because of the basic fact that they believe that bad news sells (Crs ed p9).

The readership taste is hardly investigated carefully because some aspects of it are usually known. The idea that negative is preferred to positive is not debatable according to the journalists. This is a universal journalistic ideology that they seem to have accepted without questioning. Sometimes they argued that progress isn’t visible around the sub-region and the readers know this through experience and that is why they are usually pro-negative in their taste.

**Uneven encounter.**

The journalists recounted the instances in history where they reported from the perspective of their own reporters, the ones from the bureaus of Ghana news agency across the African continent and in selected European and North American cities. They laid a strong claim on an African perspective produced by the agency. The editor said, “It is difficult now for us. In the past, the Ghana news agency had bureaus in Kenya, London and New York and we were able to write from an African perspective” (Gph p5). Another suggested this same difference and the need to put out their own reporters.

If we could send our own journalists out; that will be a great thing then. We don’t have to depend on some people because when we source it from outside media outlets we are more or less putting out how and what they see not our view. Our view could be different especially from our experiences with our Nigerian colleagues when they write for us to use. You can see the difference in appreciation of the Nigerian context than the items we get from the European press (Crs p3).
The page editor recounted the experience of reporting an election in Togo alongside the international media from the Northern hemisphere and questions why she wrote so different from them. And she asked where the journalists working for the Northern press saw the things they wrote the next day. It looked to her that those journalists were following a template. She recounted:

Africa should be covered by Africans to every large extent, not completely though. We should be able to attend if there are resources for major events. We should try and get or be represented. I was in Lome to cover Togo elections, we didn’t see many of the foreign media houses there and in fact, they hardly covered the elections. We covered the elections and then at sometimes I want to compare what I have with them... you don’t even see it there. They will say that a small country in West Africa, they don’t even know where it is. If they are lucky they will say, West Africa, they even say that it’s in East Africa, sometimes (Gph p3).

Another page editor extends the claim of an African perspective by calling for action to make this a reality because dependence on the media from the Northern hemisphere cannot produce the same result is describing the continent’s uniqueness. This is how he puts it:

In communicating the African foreign news, it about Africans themselves taking the initiatives of writing their own stories instead of relying on other networks because if we continue to depend on other networks, we will disseminate only a third party information. So how can this happen? Unless we have our own unique news agency that is befitting Africa, we will not have to rely on other networks but I see it as a challenge on my continent. (Tms p1).

The journalists seem to support an affirmative action, of a sort, in reporting Africa. That is a conscious effort to be positive and respectful when writing the African story:

I am an African if I am writing something about Mali or Somalia or sometime about a child I will not go there, look at the dirty clothes of the child and pitch
my story there. I will not do that. That feeling will be there first one as an African whether I like it or not. I want to use something else. Why would I want to show an African child in that or maybe excuse me to say tattered dress? I understand that kids in tattered clothes aren’t the only kids around (Gph p4).

The feudal system that prevented South-South interaction is still active and limits African journalists in reporting the continent largely. The NWICO report and Galtung and Ruge (1965) have both mentioned this as an element that aggravates dependence. In fact, the world information order according to the journalists is strongly linked to the economic order. As such the never improving economic situation of the continent coupled with conflicts of all kinds have resulted in the closure of national initiatives developed to deal with this. They mentioned especially the Ghana news agency and PanaPress.

The journalists, on the whole, seem to come across to me as saying their dependence largely accounts for the negative images they reproduced because they would have done better. But at the root of this dependence is economic resources needed to cover the whole continent. One page editor said:

Because we are picking stories from what they have produced this is mainly what you will get. Sometimes we are not happy to be using all the negatives but that is what they have and the thing is that you are not there. We do not have the opportunity or the resources to go and cover and those who cover portray the stories differently. This is what they are giving us. Sometimes you wonder if that is all that they can cover. (Gph p4).

Summary

In this chapter, the results of the ethnographic interview were analysed. The ethnographic interview was basically designed as a follow up to the ethnographic
content analysis results. It included different genres of interviews with newsroom observations for four months involving four newspapers and 9-page editors and chief editors of the top four newspapers in Ghana. This second stage of data collection and analysis provided the reasoning behind the result of the content analysis. As it has been shown in the method chapter, content analysis lacks the capacity to reveal journalists’ perspective on their own work since it usually analysed only as a completed work.

The interview and observation data were subjected to a rigorous process of analysis detailed in the method chapter. In this chapter specifically, the qualitative weight of influence was outlined using conceptual substitution and cultural and domination themes. Regarding the conditions that shape foreign news selection, four dominant factors were described, which included profitability, economic rationality & advertising bias, and routine technology challenge. Inter-nation inter-media agenda-setting preferences discovered during the ethnographic content analysis were explained as constituted in Chinese soft power constructed by the Ghanaian journalists as South-South cooperation. Others included historical background built on a colonial relationship with the British and informal relationship built on personal contact of journalists. The chapter provided the perspective of the journalists on the negative media image of the African continent in Ghana. They mentioned economic hardship and its consequent cost-cutting rationale as a major contributory factor. They also constructed their imitation as a display of their proximity to Western journalistic ideology.

In the next chapter, the findings of chapters five and six will be discussed in line with the objectives of the research. The findings will be located in the literature
and the conclusions drawn from them. The study’s contributions will be outlined and future research suggestions discussed.
CHAPTER 7 - DISCUSSING AFRICA’S MEDIA IMAGE IN GHANA: A SYNERGY OF ACTORS, CONDITIONS AND REPRESENTATION

In the two previous chapters (five and six), I outlined the findings of the study in line with the research questions that guided them. In this chapter, however, I discuss these findings by stating their implications and significance for the entire study as a unit. I related them to previous research in order to establish the study’s contribution to the literature and future research. The creative use of theoretical framework and methods are discussed in the light of their application to the findings of the study. The chapter ended with conclusions where the conceptual and theoretical frameworks were revisited. I laid out my effort to negotiate the limitations of this study. This was followed by key contributions to theoretical and methodological advances regarding what makes the news. The general contributions to the state of the art (literature) were outlined. I finally discussed five approaches future research should take.

The findings suggest Africa’s media image in the Ghanaian press is largely negative in tone, dominated by the subject of politics and largely portrayed through the themes of war, crime, killings, crises and terrorism. However, this was done with a heavy reliance on international news organisation from the Northern hemisphere, which is strongly led by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) World Service. The emergence of Chinese Xinhua news agency as the third single most influential source of foreign news in Ghana is revealing of a growing domination, described by the Ghanaian newspaper journalists as a south-south cooperation, which at the moment does so little to disrupt the sweeping influential position of international news agencies from the Northern hemisphere (BBC and Associated Press). To delimit and provide illumination for the reasoning behind the portrayal issues discovered in
the content analysis of the Ghanaian press, I relied on the findings of the ethnographic interview. It was largely revealed that the BBC’s influential role as the single most dominant international news organisation is supported by complex colonial and postcolonial trajectories that have lingered and contributed to set apart the British foreign broadcaster as the ultimate reference in Ghana. The ambivalence of China’s Xinhua News Agency positionality in the south-south cooperation is the uneven power relations that characterise its workings at the moment. In the next sections, I discuss these major findings in details, beginning with an overview of the coverage of Africa in the Ghanaian press.

**Overview of the Coverage**

The historical and contextual backgrounds of the Ghanaian media as laid out in chapter one represents a unique example in the independence struggle of sub-Saharan Africa. In the light of these, I argue that Ghana’s coverage of Africa amounts to self-representation. The conceptualisation by the Ghanaian journalists that news about Africa is internal news and their wide acceptance of an African perspective, which they claim they possess, all substantiate this argument forcefully. Ghana’s portrayal of Africa was largely concentrated on the related subjects of politics, economy and social issues, which represents over 86% of the entire coverage over the two-year period. The picture painted with these subjects look very much like a stagnant continent, whose successes and failures with politics, economy and social cohesion ought to be measured and validated against advanced democracies-whose voices receive more agency in the news articles- through either their development agents, monitoring units or humanitarian officers. The sheer focus on these subjects would not necessarily invoke negative images except when they have to be evaluated against
already existing standards and ideologies from wherever the original stories were written for. The lack of alternative evaluation for issues such as social progress and human development means that the reasoning and the root causes of all sorts of practices emanating from the continent are evaluated against dominant perspectives from the Northern hemisphere.

Stories relating to history, culture and personality/celebrities were limited to 10% of the entire review. Even these stories concentrated on Nelson Mandela, ancient Egyptian archaeological excavations and presidential visits to cities in Europe and North America. It is difficult to imagine whether or not celebrities exist on the African continent apart from politicians and a few iconic figures like Mandela. When the amount of negatively pitched stories in entire coverage is juxtaposed with the omission of activities of African celebrities and their charity works, it reveals a trend where one could differentiate between elite celebrities (European celebrities and African politicians) and other celebrities that are involved in decent charity work on the continent.

Bunce (2017) recorded a rise and a sharp decline in the Africa rising discourse simultaneously. Although the results sounded confounding, the economic stories in that coverage provided some ideas to discuss the issue of Africa as the next business destination. In their attempt to generally discuss ideas about the stagnant economies in the Northern hemisphere, the Western press portrayed Africa as an alternative destination where the world’s capital will grow. As the Northern economies started recovering, the Africa rising discourse seemed to be dying down. The Africa rising discourse was not a dominant subject or theme in the mainstream Ghanaian press coverage of Africa because the concept did last enough to reach the continent.
In another attempt to reconceptualise the *Africa rising* discourse, Flamenbaum (2017) argued that the discourse did not emanate in the Western world because of its merit. He rather perceived the re-appropriation of the *Africa rising discourse* by social media users in Ghana as an avenue for active positive interpretation of West Africa’s post-colonial experience, which rather offered the concept a useful African agency. Obijiofor and Hanusch (2002, 2011) seemed to suggest that the emergence of social media provided a good opportunity for deconstructing Africa’s image, the changes recounted by Flamenbaum about Ghana remain just within the remit of the social media and not extended to mainstream media. The fact that Ghanaian press coverage is lopsided and unable to engage in this positive interpretation, as discovered in this study, is rather a confirmation of their incapacity to act contrary to their ideological understanding of news discourse handed down to them as a professional institution over centuries. This *mid-point position ambivalence* of belonging to a globalised journalism profession and being the custodian of a national/regional discourse as indicated the work (Skjerdal, 2012) strongly accounts for the differences in the findings of Flamenbaum and this study.

Like the subjects of the coverage, dominant themes of portrayal included war, crime and killing, crises and terrorism. These can generally be referred to as a mixture of the subjects of politics, economy and social issues. These themes were reported as news events and therefore represented actual happenings on the continent. However, it did not appear that other things were happening on the continent except these. It was equally difficult to get a detailed analysis of any of these issues except the running idea of war and crises unending.

Terrorism, for example, has long been described as a global threat, but this was hardly evident in the stories. Rather the terrorist acts of groups like Boko Haram
and Al-Shabab were mostly linked to general humanitarian concerns raised by these attacks for which African countries and leaders are not able to address. These are further discussed in details under the theme of *Irresponsibility on the part of African leadership*. The claim of journalists that they present an objective picture of socio-political events and catastrophes leads to the expectation that after every reportage of outbreak of fights, an equal/good number of reports would follow when calm is restored. The lack of stories reporting improvements in already reported fighting and catastrophes virtually leaves the imprints of war and fighting as the dominant events taking place on the continent.

The dominant themes of portrayal relating to war, killing, crises and terrorism are eventually used as context for new stories even though positive changes have occurred afterwards. It is interesting to note that irrespective of the subject or issues under discussion, an entire news story starting from the lead of the story to the last paragraph, were usually filled with the most poignant calamities. Rare and occasional positive stories reporting progress got often negated with these themes in the end. Hawk (1992) indicated that someway and somehow the journalists feel that the African stories require a context for the audience in the Northern hemisphere to understand and these usual themes have been re-used over and over again for this context reasoning in the Ghanaian press.

It is systematically established in the literature that these themes have not really changed. The works of Stevenson and Shaw (1984), Sreberny (1985), Hawk (1992), and Bunce et al. (2017) have confirmed that crises, war and terrorism have not seen any significant reductions and remain the major themes through which the African story is narrated in the Northern press. Actually, it is clear that Ghana’s reportage of the continent falls within these same categories.
To make room for balanced analysis of the stories, the theme of development and progress was predetermined and searched for throughout the analysis. Quite apart from the few stories relating to this theme, further analysis showed that the stories were coming from non-mainstream international news organisations. The single-story attributed to Reuters regarding Libya had a rather negative context information in the third paragraph. It looked like nothing good ever happens on the continent of Africa. A younger Ghanaians kid who relies on just these newspapers as sources of their news about the continent would be filled with a lot of negatives.

Based on the subjects and themes of the coverage of Africa in the Ghanaian press, it would have been rather surprising to get anything other than the fact that 80% of the stories were in a negative tone. Coming from the premise that the coverage of Africa is a self-representation in the Ghanaian press, this largely negative overview about the continent can be explained from two perspectives. First, Hall (1997) demonstrated that a negative representation of a group of people over a long time affects the group’s self-identity which progressively becomes shaped by how they are seen by others. This normative postulation from Hall holds true for many cultures including the Ghanaian press, who have fed on foreign news coming from the Northern hemisphere with virtually no alternatives for many years. But the second intervention by Fanon (2008) provided a rather critical perspective of this when he argued that the disruption in self-perception of the colonised rendered them susceptible to perpetual disruption of their psychic realm and as such, they regularly seek their coloniser’s acceptance even after the colonial encounter as a form of endorsement. Unfortunately, this endorsement never comes and therefore, it becomes a standard and a virtue to think and act like the coloniser. The Ghanaian press coverage of Africa has largely supported Fanon’s perspective. Based on the empirical
evidence of this study, I argue that the Ghanaian coverage of Africa, notwithstanding technological and economic transformations underway in the press, has been rendered severely negative as a result of these imitations witnessed.

The argument of improvement in the continent’s media image in the Northern press over time, which has been reported severally (Bunce et al., 2017; Nothias, 2017; Obijiofor and MacKinnon, 2016; Scott, 2015; Ojo, 2014 and Scott, 2009) is yet to be witnessed in the Ghanaian press. It can be argued, based on these, that Afro-pessimism over space (among African countries) is still largely negative. Then comes the question of why was the improved image thesis for Africa not supported in this study. Ofori-Birikorang (2009, p.106) argued that although the Ghanaian newspapers are “thorough-bred of modern postcolonial institutions, they are yet to divest themselves of their recognition as the products of the colonial state with significant influence of these on their functional dynamics. Karikari (1992) and Terrell (1989, pp. 136-137) have argued that newspapers and other organs of the Western press were “an integral part of white domination”. It will amount to omission if, in analysing Ghanaian newspapers, the real issue of the source of the coverage was not explored. I make recourse to cultural and historical antecedents that continue to shape Africa’s media image in the Ghanaian press earlier on. I now concentrate on the weight of influence of international news agencies on the portrayal of Africa in the Ghanaian press. I agree that the sources relied on by the Ghanaian newspapers wield some influence that requires explications.

**Dominant Actors**

The fact that only 1.9% of the entire coverage of Africa was sourced to Ghanaian news organisations is revealing of the influence and role of the international news
agencies in the logic of reporting Africa even among countries of the continent. The largely dominant role of the Northern media organisations in Ghana, led by the BBC World Service, does not only represent their quality but also an indication of a domination that has hardly ended. The acceptance and re-use of these images by the Ghanaian press fit the Fanonian concept of *internalised oppression*, where the subject of a domination is fully aware of the elements of oppression exerted by the Oppressor but yet accepts it as a *natural order of things*. Fanon referred to this as *epidermalisation of inferiority*, which is unlikely to end as long as the colonised continues to imitate or catch up with the coloniser in the postcolonial state. The idea that Africans have themselves to blame for remaining poor and consequently incapable of telling their own stories (agency) runs across the interviews but only one journalist linked this to its root cause: the fact that the uneven encounters Africa lived and continues to live have not ended. In any case, an editor even doubted whether Africa really deserves a self-rule. I, therefore, argue that depicting their imitations as cultural mix and globalisation is erroneous and covers up this manifest psychic realm disruption that is empirically evident in this study as well as the hegemony that continues to characterise global news production and distribution.

In the midst of this high dependence on international news agencies for the coverage of Africa, the Ghanaian journalists and editors claim they possess an African perspective. This ambivalence has been explained by Bhabha’s (1994) revision of Fanonian submissive imitation. Although Bhabha thinks that psychic realm disruptions are active even in the postcolonial era and re-enacted through contemporary globalisation, he suggested that the concept of the psychic realm disruption is no longer *submissive imitation*. The imitation which assumes that the colonised is a passive alienated subject living on the edges of two worlds and
constantly seeking legitimisation. Bhabha forcefully argued that the imitation
practised by the colonised is not homogenous but metonymic resemblance, repetition
and difference at the same. It is a *subversive imitation*. He then introduced the *third
space* as a place of hybrid identity that emerges from the fact that the colonised had to
live on the edges of two worlds after being psychologically persuaded to imitate their
ruler in language, attitude and worldviews. He argued that at the *third space*, the
coloniser’s superior role at the centre the postcolonial relationship is disrupted. The
appropriation of an African perspective, the call for a change and the constructions of
China’s influence as south-south cooperation by these Ghanaian journalists are clearly
indicative of this third space. The unending tale of this argument is whether resistance
or subversive imitation is an assumed idea or manifest practice? Even though the
journalists recognise the domination under which they write the African story, they
are yet to initiate their own response to destabilising the dominant position of the
BBC World Service. Kraidy (2002) argued in support of Bhabha that the fluidity of
the postcolonial subaltern is marked by a set of inescapable continuities and
interactions that disrupts the essentialist view, that denies agency of the colonised,
with the argument that while repeating after the coloniser, the colonised then practices
a form of *mimicry* which is a contradictory utterance and ambivalently unsettles both
sides and questions the basis of the colonisers’ authority. Ghana remains a very
excellent case to empirically test these ideas, especially because of her historical
background. But Skjerdal (2012) hinted that the appropriation of an African
perspective and the heavy reliance on liberal global media concepts reflect the African
journalist’s appropriation of local identity while at the same time accepting inclusion
into a global professional journalism culture. This provides the basis to argue for
some kind of hybrid self of the Ghanaian journalists. It is, however, clear that this
hybrid-self has not been amply demonstrated in practice. The Ghanaian newspapers envisage their agency but have not put into practice a definite effort indicative of Kraidy’s argument.

The rising influence of China’s Xinhua news agency was mostly constructed as south-south cooperation aimed at disrupting the position of the Northern media. However, the uneven power dynamics of this relationship are not indicative of a cooperation. While the editors argued that they are expected to supply Xinhua news agency with news about Ghana and other neighbouring countries, this is yet to materialise. The cooperation has taken the character of a superior giver, who always gives and a receiver, who usually receive without questioning the source, intents and interests of the giver. The re-use of Xinhua news agency material in the Ghanaian press, with stories covering issues beyond China, is a real success for China’s soft power activity across the African continent. While Wasserman (2016) argued that China’s soft power activities focusing on editorial decisions of South African media although vigorously pursued, was massively constrained because the South African journalists did not use news articles beyond China-South Africa relations and BRICS activities. In the case of Ghana, the increasing use of Xinhua news agency material is the result of “soft power” activities. This is because out of the four newspapers studied, only the two public newspapers (Daily Graphic and Ghanaian Times) who signed the agreement with Chinese officials used Xinhua news agency materials. The remaining two newspapers, which are privately owned, did not use Xinhua news agency at all. Based on these, Xinhua news agency’s rise can be attributed to their soft-power activities and considered a subtle domination waiting to grow bigger if the power dynamics do not improve to be indicative of a cooperation. Actually, in
describing the new form of media imperialism both Paterson (2017) and McPhail (2014) envisaged a growing Chinese dominance of the media landscape in Africa.

Ignoring the useful influence of sources on news selection decision is just like saying there is no relationship between media frames and their root sources. This is also contrary to Beverley Hawk’s thesis that poor news coverage of Africa is not a victimless crime (Bunce et al., 2017, p. xvi) and as such those committing the crime recognise in what forms they have perpetuated their offences. According to Sparkes (1978), sources play a significant role in news construction because the ideology of news hardly permits the receiving journalists to change significantly what their sources say and especially when the source is another journalist. The argument that African journalists are not doing any better than their Northern media counterparts (Obijiofor and Hanusch, 2003; Pate, 1992; Sobowale, 1987) ignores from whose perspective these African journalists covered the continent. In this analysis, I have discovered direct reliance on the media from the Northern hemisphere, which is both indicative of their lingering influential role on the African media and the growing hegemony that the entire journalistic space has experienced when it comes to foreign news production and distribution. These two elements have largely modified the agency of African journalists into submissiveness although it was widely predicted in Bunce et al. (2017) by several authors that with increased participation from local reporters in Africa as the motive force for African news, the continent now has the chance to claim agency over its image. In the light of the requirements from the Western editors and their presumed taste of what their readership want, such a notion is quickly dissipated.
Overarching Conditions

After a thorough description of the coverage of Africa in the Ghanaian press and the weight of influence exerted by international news agencies, as dominant actors, it is useful that the overarching conditions and practices that have provided either an enabling or constraining framework are equally explained. This was the rationale for the application of three theories to the foreign news selection process in Ghana.

Aligned with the arguments and framework of Shoemaker and Reese (2014), the foreign news eventually selected, on daily basis, is a product of several conditions, actors and practices beyond the colonial and international power relations. Depending on each unique context, these conditions and practices could either have an enabling or constraining framework for the message (news article) the journalists select.

Significant for discussion include profitability, the economic rationality of knowing audiences’ taste (advertising bias) and routine technological challenge.

The four selected newspapers seem to be working with a similar economic logic even though two are privately owned and the other two publicly owned. This is because both the public and private selected newspapers rely completely on advertising and circulation income. The government of Ghana who is the majority shareholder in the two public newspapers requires a return on her initial investments as an owner. No public funding of any sort exists for any newspapers in Ghana especially the four selected for this study. The cost associated with keeping own reporters or buying news items from stringers is unbearable in the face of dwindling advertising and circulation incomes. The plausible logic has been argued by these newspapers is the reduction in the cost of operations. Apart from the Ghanaian Times newspaper that was open to committing more resources to foreign news as a way to give meaning to its original historic mandate as Pan-African newspaper, the others
have argued that no relationship exists between an increase in profitability and commitment of resources to foreign news. They have by this argument given the news a purely economic tag (economic good). The fact that a free version of news exists about Africa does not warrant any economic spending on the coverage of Africa. They supported this with an existing economic struggle within which the newspaper industry operates. For them, any other definition of news about Africa as a social responsibility to correct the continent’s media image will not fly in board meetings, which have become a place where profitability rather than news (in its social context) occupies a central position in much of the debate.

Closely related to the issue of profitability is the economic rationality that knowing the audiences’ taste carry. The foreign news pages in the four newspapers are premium pages meaning that they are among the most read pages. The ambivalence in this is that becoming a well-read page in these newspapers meant losing editorial space for advertising. After a foreign news page is made premium, less news go there and as such, there is a reduction in diversity of what can be carried. This is quite institutionalised in a manner that the marketing departments have upper hand in planning the entire newspaper on daily basis. They allocate all advertising first before presenting to the editorial team what exist for news. These have accounted for the arguments put forward by Schulz (2008) that one needs to know that readership survey is different from reception research, normally conducted by academics, because even though with a similar purpose, they are put to very different uses. The paradox that eventually becomes the guiding rule for the journalists is that their knowledge of the taste of audience cannot be used for any improvements in editorial content because if the page is well-read, then the editorial material will have to give way for advertising. Interestingly, less-read pages also risk being turned into a
complete advertising page. This advertising bias, in both cases, affects foreign news selection in a way that only one or two extremely poignant news articles on calamities are usually selected due to lack of space. The guiding house rule in these matters is no longer self-representation as Africans but the normative ideology of news, which means the most negative of all the items make it to the page. Within such a condition, one wonders how a balance of both triumphs and tragedy of a normal day can be mirrored when useful context must be eliminated and the most dramatic ideas placed in the lead and headlines.

Daily journalistic foreign news selection in Ghana operates within one condition, which seems to be easily ignored because to such a condition no journalistic influence and effect are readily visible. Routine technological challenges have become either an enabling or constraining environment within which the foreign news desk work. Willingness to diversify the sources of international news agencies to be monitored in a day is dependent largely on the level of congestion on the local Intranet and Internet speed. When the service is bad, the journalists are not willing to search wide for their news especially because there is no alternative infrastructure for scooping their own news from rolling international news broadcasters. They rely solely on what exists in the online version and this makes the whole process Internet-dependent. The BBC World Service seems to have largely benefited from this because of its multi-platform distribution of the same news through an application that causes their website to open even with the least Internet speed on different gadgets and platforms.

According to Shoemaker and Reese (2014), there are several influences on the media message that is usually not accounted for in the literature because these systemic conditions have mostly been rendered normal on initial look. Examples of
organisational and routine influences were severe among the selected Ghanaian newspapers. This provides a context within which to look at the journalists’ work and whether they have the ability to appreciate their work as a self-representation. The crucial pre-occupations for these journalists in such circumstances relate largely to what is practically available.

In this section, there is no claim of influence or relationship, rather I argue that the entire news selection decision process occurs within some relevant conditions that are ignored by researchers because the literature does not give enough prominence to these conditions. Nevertheless, they became evident and formed part of the description in this study because of the ethnographic technique and conscious attempt to investigate the coverage of Africa beyond the news articles and the journalists themselves to the organisational space within which they work. In the next section, I will discuss the journalists’ perspective of what accounted for the coverage Africa got in the Ghanaian press.

**Perspectives of the Journalists**

The foreign news selection process and its eventual representation of Africa remain the subject of this study. After outlining the overview of the coverage, I described the dominant actors and the overarching conditions within which the entire field operates. In this section, I discuss the perspective of the journalists on what accounted for the kind of coverage the African continent got in their newspapers. I thematised the discussion under three broad headings: Economic hardship and cost-cutting rationales; proximity of journalistic ideology about the news; and the lingering uneven encounter between global North and South.
Economic hardship and cost-cutting rationale.

The journalists highlighted this theme as very crucial for their coverage with the argument that in the face of sharply decreasing disposable income of the Ghanaian population and reduction in advertising budget of most firms, the only sure way of increasing their profit is by cutting cost. This threat of declining ability of advertising and circulation income to fully pay for the cost involved in producing an edition of the newspaper is further complicated by the suffocating competition in the newspaper industry.

Relating the disposable income to the intense competition means readership would have to select among the newspapers. With an average cost 2.5Gh cedis per edition (0.50 euros), one requires far above the minimum wage per day in Ghana to read even half of the top 10 newspapers. The journalists believe the reality of harsh economic conditions within which even educated people have had to live in Ghana has repercussions for the press. Away from the readership, they pointed to management policies to cut number pages for editorial material to save the newspapers from collapsing. All the four newspapers have cut number pages as well as space for editorial material. They have argued that the ambition of the libertarian press system as an objective reflection of the daily triumphs and tragedy become unachievable with limited editorial space, which instigated a myriad of difficulties such as an unnatural cut in original stories and the lack of the use of longer genres of news like features articles. Other difficulties that result in rendering the stories negative are the elimination of contextual background and mismatch of the medium. The act of re-writing original stories without further information means relying only on the original story and the eventual reconstruction is hardly better than the original.
The medium mismatch occurs when a story using videos, graphics, artistic and forensic impressions, and drawings are reduced to only text and very less of it.

The challenges presented by economic hardship and its eventual cost-cutting strategies have contributed to the way journalists write about the continent in the Ghanaian press. I argue that the Ghanaian press coverage of Africa is susceptible to more negativity than there is in its original source because of the confounding structural challenges that the entire foreign news selection and production process face. This argument is confirmed in the meta-analysis of Fengler and Mohl (2008) who concluded that these rational economic behaviours of media professionals remain a valid context to discuss the failures of journalism and blind spots of media coverage.

**Proximity of journalistic ideology.**

The concept of *news* and its structure are rooted in the dominant Western libertarian journalism perspective. Apart from this dominance, Shoemaker (2006) pointed to journalistic news as a *construct*, which prevents most journalists from questioning its logic and canonical claims. Again, due to the rule-based nature of journalism, it becomes difficult for journalists to change themes communicated to them. In cases where stories must pass the editorial conference test, any visible changes in the nature of the original story will be noticed by members of the conference. As such to ensure that such changes are accepted, one must allude to evidence. Boyd-Barrett (2004) argued that journalism's fixation with facts leaves no room for an explanation but equally this entire fixation has become ideological. The fact that journalistic accounts are a reconstruction of events either witnessed or briefed about, a receiving journalist is limited in their assessment of stories in a manner that can bring about significant
changes in the original story except when there exists a conscious oppositional re-write.

Ideological proximity between Ghanaian journalists and their international counterparts remains quite visible in the trend of their re-use of news coming from the North. This is due to replication of Western journalism curriculum, and dominance of Western media assistance in the media landscape of Ghana. They seem to reiterate the notion put forward some years ago by Daniel Patrick Moynihan that democratic media is a space for bad news and anything short of that could not be representative of the true sense of democracy (see Hachten & Scotton, 2016, p.208).

Uneven encounters and African perspective.
Some of the journalists have argued forcefully that an African perspective clearly existed during the era when the Ghana News Agency had bureaus at strategic places around the globe including the African continent. Under this theme, the journalists argued that the current order of international news flow marks an uneven encounter where the powerful dominates and the vulnerable is reduced to common receivers, for whom all sorts of monolithic strategies have been applied. They argued that few attempts at challenging this order failed because of the massive economic undertone involved in reporting the continent. Although there is a rapid spread of economic conditions from the North to the South, the economic resource made available to journalists covering some significant African events for the Northern press are intimidating to local journalists. To them, one of the reasons why the continent’s media image remains negative is due to this uneven encounter because their reportage is just different from their Northern media counterparts or their surrogate stringers. Their argument runs contrary to Bunce et al. (2017) who have argued that the
deployment of African/local journalists in covering the continent has in a way accounted for the improved image they noticed in the Northern press. Although in the same edited volume, Amin (2017) confirmed the flaw in that claim because there is a difference between what they independently produce for the local African audience and what their foreign editors commission. The positive issues coming from the continent are just not the news the editors in the North want but due to the uneven power encounter, it is difficult for Third World journalists to succeed in the battle for the deconstruction of the continent’s image. In the next section, I discuss why certain international news agencies are mirrored poignantly by particular newspapers in Ghana and how such inter-media agenda-setting preferences evolved.

**Evolving Intermedia Agenda Setting Preferences**

Journalistic co-orientation has been vastly described but usually with the aim to determine whether such a relationship existed rather than accounting for what factors underpin the relationships (Sikanku, 2014; Lim, 2006). Vonbun et al. (2015) attempted an explanation but from a theoretical perspective. In this section, I discuss three empirical findings that have not been cited as a major reason for journalistic inter-media preferences. Apart from the wide reliance on the BBC World Service across the four selected newspapers, there was a unique trend of how the four selected Ghanaian newspaper re-used individual international news media in their coverage of Africa. The discussion was themed on the following: construction of China’s “soft power” as a south-south cooperation; the appreciation of historical and colonial background as a defining factor for a lingering relationship (postcolonial complexities); and the use informal individual contact across the continent.
China's soft power and public diplomacy.

The arrival of Chinese government media organisations in the Africa media market has started to attract the attention of researchers. They have investigated this phenomenon with different ideas and in different contexts. In discussing the role of international news agencies in the coverage of Africa, I mentioned the signing of an agreement with newspapers by the Chinese Foreign Office as the major reason accounting for Xinhua news agency’s elevated performance as a source of foreign news in Ghana. Two different reasoning emerged in the light of the data. Daily Guide and Ghanaian Chronicle, both private newspapers in this study, constructed the Xinhua news agency performance as an element linked with emerging Chinese *soft power* penetration on the continent. Even though the Xinhua news agency figures surprised them, they argued that Chinese economic activity remains the major determinant of their influence because ignoring the Chinese version of the world discourse now amounts to missing their progress. Interestingly, these newspapers never for once cited Xinhua news agency because to them Xinhua is not their reference for the African continent. Wasserman (2016) noticed in his work a similar trend in the case of some South African journalists, who refused to cite Chinese news agencies beyond China-South Africa relations.

The second reasoning comes from the two public newspapers (Daily Graphic and Ghanaian Times) who have signed the cooperation agreement with Xinhua news agency and they seemed to be arguing that their resort to Chinese news agency material represents a south-south cooperation. They recognised themselves that the modus operandi was to share news between China and Ghana but until now they are yet to receive a single request on any issue in Ghana from their Chinese counterparts. This uneven encounter, according to the journalists, is still better than relying on BBC
World Service in the magnitude in which it was done. Wu (2016) and Wasserman (2016) have both argued the re-use of Xinhua news agency item is a success for the vigorous Chinese “soft power” activities on the continent. Extending this agreement to the state-funded Ghana news agency in recent time defeats Ghana’s historical role in the quest to tell the African story largely recognised in the literature (see Ibelema & Bosch, 2009). But interestingly this seemed to be justified using the notion of south-south cooperation.

Galtung (1971) argued that a feudal structural system of interaction seems to exist in the communication order promoted by Western democracies that eventually denies periphery nations from communicating among themselves. The journalist squarely located their argument on this premise. However, the world systems theory, which envisages mostly Centre-Periphery relationship requires serious adjustments because of the incident of semi-peripheries described by Mowlana (1997). And even beyond Mowlana’s analysis, the semi-periphery nations have become emerging giants seeking to occupy their appropriate place in the communication order. In the case of the Ghanaian press, China’s “soft-power” success is exclusively linked to public diplomacy activities with two newspapers. Shrouded in an uneven power dynamics, the relationship between Ghanaian public newspapers and Xinhua news agency looks like a new form of Centre-Periphery relationship because no exchange is currently taking place. It is difficult to argue that a relationship that is dominated by one party represents a south-south cooperation. It is fair to argue that the dominant nations within the South are yet to appreciate the fact that being a semi-periphery or a centre is not a static or given status that cannot change. As soon as a rising periphery nation ignores the underpinning problem of imbalance, a new form of relationship emerges that is similar to the original concept in the structural imperialism referred to by
Galtung. The dynamic nature of the core-periphery news flows has taken a

deterritorialised nature (see Beer, 2010) where certain semi-periphery nations have
become more impactful than some traditional Core nations.

The postcolonial complexities.
The colonial encounter in Ghana, like most countries, left two indelible scars through
which the coloniser’s presence is maintained until today: language and education.
Pragmatically, trade and worldview operate within these two scars that were
ideologically instituted as duplicates of the original. Mazuri (1979) established that
the contemporary African is traceable to its colonial original easily. The journalists in
Ghana provided enough evidence within the data that the country’s history is
inextricably linked to its colonial past. Using the BBC World Service dominance as a
basis of their argument, the journalists normalised the dependency phenomenon and
appropriated British institutions as the only examples they have known. Even though
this dominance did not allow for reflections on how to relate to each other on the
continent, it is clear that it has formed the foundation upon which everything else is
built. They traced the country’s media history to the British liberal model and social
institutions from military to media assistance as elements that have become so
established that it is actually a waste of time to oppose them.

What they argue for was a second look at how they can appropriate, for
themselves, these established norms as Ghanaian alternative to the British original.
These narratives are the original goals of British education in Africa which Rodney
(1981) referred to as the act of turning the African elite into a fair-minded English-
man. Quite apart from these historical entanglements that might sometimes sound like
an excuse for their inability to cause a change in the course of practising journalism,
they equally established visible migratory linkages of both Ghana and Britain that is so severe to ignore.

Schiffrin (2010) confirmed a real scramble for the post-colonial African journalism practice through media assistance and all sort of influences. Continuous investment in Ghanaian journalism by international media in different training programmes remain a measure of their quest to keep the status quo. Ahead in this game is the BBC World Service, which had a peculiar privileged role since the colonial era that was described by Golding (1979) as an authoritative way of mirroring their professional ideologies wherever they went. It was not surprising for the Ghanaian journalists that the BBC World Service occupied a largely dominant role as a source of foreign news about the entire African continent. The literature dealing with journalistic co-orientation considers these lingering historical and contemporary relationship as cultural affinity, or a form of proximity. What this study has offered is the argument that within the bundle of cultural affinity or proximity, there are unique situations like lingering power imbalance between the colonised and the coloniser that operates along the colonial thinking pattern. This seemed to largely characterise journalistic co-orientation across the international press actors. When this happens, it becomes difficult to question how Ghanaian journalism practice can operate independently from external influences that have become normalised or described together with others as cultural affinity or proximity.

**Informal relationships and personal contacts.**

Inter-media agenda setting between Ghanaian newspapers and their few Nigerian counterparts evolved from informal relationships that have been built on the personal contacts of the journalists. Three of the editors lived and worked in Nigeria as
journalists. Through their work experiences, they have built an informal working relationship that has allowed for the sharing of the news with their Nigerian newspapers colleagues. Apart from these, it became a dominant argument in almost all the four newspapers that they are largely susceptible to building on their personal contacts in conferences and assignments in order to maintain them as sources. These relationships got a little nuanced as it extended to the country where the editors had their education. CNN was widely used by American trained editors, while the British trained prefered Reuters except for the BBC World Service, which got widely sourced by all the four newspapers as a representative British legacy and influential global media. This particular reason for journalistic co-orientation has evolved quite informally but was revealed as a potent means to drive which news agency is selected as the source of foreign news in the Ghanaian press. In the next section, I tackle the conclusions of the study.

Conclusions

This concluding section begins with a recapitulation of purpose and findings; and a look back at how the conceptual and theoretical frameworks assisted in interrogating the purpose of the study. This is followed by limitations encountered and how they were negotiated. The study’s contribution to theoretical and methodological debates in international news is presented as a way to continue the never ending debate that requires reconceptualization because of the fast evolving field of journalism and the growing interest in the critical analysis of the journalistic news. The direction for future research in this area of study is also suggested.
Recapitulation of purpose and findings.

The overarching purpose first, was to describe how the Ghanaian newspapers depicted the African continent in their coverage of foreign news with an emphasis on subjects, dominant themes and the tone. The second purpose was to provide an explanatory level analysis to Africa’s media portrayal in the Ghanaian press with a focus on conditions, practices and the influence international news organisations carry as dominant actors involved in these complex processes, which have been analysed frequently from a simplistic approach of globalisation.

The coverage of Africa in the Ghanaian press falls predominantly into the concept of Afro-pessimism. The poignant concentration on the subjects of politics and to some extent on the economy and social vices resulted in dominant themes like war, crime, killings, crises and terrorism. The eventual tone/quality of the coverage was largely (80%) negative. Even though the findings were not compared with what the coverage looked like some decades ago, these results clearly show that Africa’s media image in the Ghanaian press is as negative as it is around the world. But it is crucial to note that Africa’s portrayal in the Ghanaian media is predominantly constructed from the perspective of the Northern press led by the sweeping influence of the BBC World Service. The BBC’s singular influence, for instance, is enabled by the complex colonial and postcolonial trajectories that have lingered and promoted the British foreign broadcaster as the ultimate reference for most professional journalists in Ghana. Although the BBC is generally an influential international broadcaster, the massive reliance on it for news about Africa, in this Ghanaian case, is not an example of globalisation but the element of domination that never ended. The rise of Xinhua news agency from China as an eminent actor, even though constructed as south-south cooperation, rather reflect the success China’s “soft-power” has achieved. This so-
called south-south cooperation signals a looming domination as a result of the unequal power relations that characterises its workings so far. The inter-nation inter-media agenda setting preferences identified here have largely evolved through three approaches: the lingering historical and colonial relationship, Chinese “soft power” activities and other informal relationships built around personal contacts of staff of these newspapers.

Considering the entire foreign news selection decision in Ghana as a social subject shaped by myriads of influences, the journalists argued that Africa’s negative media image is also, in practice, shaped by organisational level elements such as economic hardships and its cost cutting rationales; their proximity to the dominant normative journalistic ideology; and the uneven encounters between Ghanaian and their Northern press counterparts that have not really changed over the years.

The entire foreign news selection process in Ghana operates in three prevailing conditions that individual, organisational and ideological levels of influence have no control over. They only can manage the effects of these conditions. Whenever they succeed, the conditions become an enabling framework otherwise they remain constraints for the field. Three dominant conditions of this nature were deconstructed for the purposes of improving the continent’s image in the near future: profitability; advertising bias underpinned by economic rationality; and routine technological challenges.

**Conceptual and theoretical framework revisited.**

It has been argued already in this study that conceptual and theoretical frameworks provide a cogent approach in tackling data collection and analysis with emphasis on the subjects of interests, processes and the interrelationships between them. Relating
these to the arguments of Miles et al. (2014) and Anfara & Mertz (2006), it is fair to say that the frameworks do change quite frequently in qualitative research, due to the asymmetrical social world, and as such it is prudent to point out which role the frameworks played regarding the determination of the findings in order to provide further justifications for them. The conceptual framework, which is the focus of this argument, is based on a practical implementation plan of the theoretical framework in Fig. 3.1 pg.138).

Figure 7.0 Conceptual explications

Figure 7.0 illustrates how the conceptual assumption described in Figure 3.2 (see page 141) has evolved throughout the study to its findings. The three vertical rectangular boxes represent journalists, the newspapers and the Ghanaian society. Movement
along this continuum is both reflexive and iterative. The influences of these boxes are unique but cannot be delimited as completely individual because of the interdependent and inter-related symbiotic social framework within which they operate to determine the news content.

The argument that print media journalists as individuals possessed a good appreciation of newsworthiness before joining the newspapers was upheld since most of the interviewees had prior journalism education that was quite effective from their description. However, the assumption that the knowledge they have brought along could be a sole determinant of what news items they select about Africa was not valid because they described some ideological and organisational conditions that they are required to entirely submit to. In the process, their individual knowledge is subdued under these conditions. And therefore the arrow connecting the behaviour of individual journalists directly to the eventual message (Image of Africa) is now indicated with dotted lines (showing very little or no influence) instead of full influence indicated in the initial assumption in Figure 3.2. The two other boxes representing organisational needs and ideological functions did not also directly affect the eventual message. Even though there was evidence of leaning towards colonial master’s style as a form of measuring quality, it was difficult to establish that the entire final foreign news is a product of these ideological influences because there were conditions at the organisational level that these arguments had to equally submit to: profitability, peculiar technological challenges and advertising bias underpinned by economic rationality. Based on these, I argue that foreign news selection decisions process in Ghana is predominantly a product the three levels envisaged and there is a mid-point where they converge before exerting their influences (foreign news selection filter). Their individual influences are difficult to delimit entirely. However,
the two upper rectangles (organisational level needs and ideological functions) seemed more dominant. Relying on a similar argument by Ofori-Birikorang (2009), I contend that the local newspapers, as modern institutions, have demonstrated in what ways they would like to challenge the ruling order of the postcolonial state. The Ghanaian journalists also mentioned that the ideological influence of single alternative, which explains the fact that the BBC World Service shaped their childhood before they joined journalism schools not because they wanted that but it was the only alternative available at the time. The analogies being put forward here together can be considered as the superior role the ideological functions exert on the two other levels, especially on the individual journalist level.

**Negotiating the limitations of the study.**

I should stress that this study would have revealed very broad dynamics if it had studied more countries not necessarily as a quantitative research but as a broader yardstick for developing future research on how the African self-identity and speech agency is evolving. This is because individual countries on the continent have a unique context within which to describe their contemporary agency. As such these findings provide only an in-depth analysis of the Ghanaian case. What could have been useful was to zone the entire continent into colonial experiences and press freedom and then select based on differences and similarities between countries that could provide insightful data. But this will need more time and resources which this particular doctoral research could not support.

The use of ethnographic content analysis (ECA) as a method of qualitative content analysis is an attempt to eliminate major weaknesses of the conventional content analysis by advocating for the collection of numeric and narrative data while
conceptualising the text as a fieldwork. However, the centrality of the researcher, rather than the code sheet (see Atheide, 1987), present a real challenge to replications as *a priori coding* is discouraged. Based on the recommendations of Mayring (2000), this weakness was envisaged and worked on by adopting a *step by step analysis* largely based on theory-driven initial codes in the coding process. It is also useful to indicate that because the study was not entirely conducted using ethnographic content analysis, these weaknesses were further resolved through the interview sessions were some findings were discouraged and eliminated using the insights and arguments of the interviewees.

The use of multiple theories requires that I conceptualise for which level of the entire study a specific theoretical insight applies. To do this, I had to make assumptions based on my explorative knowledge about which variables and people would provide useful insights as was shown in the conceptual framework. For example, to apply the theory of newsworthiness to journalist’s behaviour was completely an assumption based on my explorative knowledge and the literature. These assumptions pooled useful insights that would have otherwise been ignored.

Due to lack of newspaper database in Ghana for the selected newspapers, keyword searches were not used for news article mining. This would have eliminated all the complexities surrounding sampling of newspaper and editions. Rather a multi-stage sampling approach recommended by Rife et al. (2014) was applied where the newspapers were selected based on their circulation numbers using the Afro-barometer media report as the yardstick. Newspaper circulation figures in Ghana have been contested because some researchers have discovered that the figures, due to advertising, do not reflect reality. But the selections of these newspapers were justified also by the fact that most previous researchers have also relied on these same
newspapers due to the consistency they have demonstrated over time. In discovering manifest content like sources, a census was conducted on all editions of the four newspapers over the 24-month period. The two constructed week approach was applied to the selection of news articles that related to Africa for a further qualitative analysis. In place of the keyword search approach, the methodical multi-stage sampling of newspapers, editions and units of analysis have offered the study diversity in the data that was analysed.

The process involved in getting the articles from the selected newspapers into a machine readable form for the analysis was enormous. The newspapers were found in the University of Cape Coast library periodical archives in Ghana. However, they were bound in a monthly series that was impossible to scan based on the available scanners. I had to turn to Valco Hall library in the same University of Cape Coast, where loosed-sheet of the newspapers were kept. After borrowing these newspapers, it became evident that there was no optical character recognition (OCR) scans in the entire city. The eventual decision to use an A4 sheet size OCR scanner at the University of Cape Coast library was timely but also limiting since dateline and newspaper identification was lost and this meant that quotations from ethnographic content analysis had to be identified using a special alfa-numeric code to identify where they are located in the entire newspaper articles data under analysis. Under normal circumstances, these should have been cited as newspaper articles.

The application of two ethnographic techniques to a postcolonial study provided very useful insights but it also presented real challenges in the analysis because of my emersion in the entire research process. Like other critical interpretive genres (feminist, postmodern and poststructural methodologies), this postcolonial study adopted a creative way of collecting and understanding the data which is
explicitly critical and not very much tied to established forms of objectivity. It is crucial to mention that the use of “I” frequently is indicative of this embeddedness, which Sayed (2016) described as a common impulse of the critical interpretive inquiry. It is factual that I am Ghanaian and African. My interviewees know this and that closeness to the Ghanaian culture of thinking and doing things offered some limiting perspectives especially when applying critical theory and interpretive methodology. Therefore recognising this limitation becomes a bigger step in dealing with it. My closeness to the field, being a Ghanaian and having written a term paper on aspects of the subject of this study, while in graduate school, were rather turned to benefits that neutralised the limitation of my closeness. Access to the natural environment of the journalists and the application of very rudimentary processes of analysis are forms of research reflexivity aimed at ensuring that opinionated interpretations of the data were eliminated. One useful strategy that neutralised the limitation of my “I” in this study was peer-review suggested by Creswell (2014). The quarterly reviews of the School of International and Intercultural Communication (SIIC) offered opportunities to three ‘professor, guest researchers and nine other cohort members of the year group to evaluate the entire study from the beginning to the end.

To end this section, it is crucial to mention that the use of several theories in a single study presents a challenge of limiting what each theory is applicable to. It can be argued that such limitations do not allow for comprehensive exploration of a theory in a way that allows for discoveries that add to the theory. The response to this challenge is the development of theoretical and conceptual frameworks which define for us the elements of interest for different aspects of the study. It also allowed for the rationalisation of the theories and how they merge together. Applying critical theory
(postcolonial theory) to the practice of journalism in a strict manner is ignoring that journalism as a practice profession is designed around normative ideas. But the use of only dominant normative theories denied the critical impulse of several previous studies. This is why the combination of both critical and normative theories allowed for application of each theory’s investigative attributes and contributions to the overarching purpose of the study.

**Key contributions.**

In this final section, I enumerate and discuss the contributions of this dissertation to the theoretical debates, advances made in the use of the hybrid methodology in the areas of journalism research, sociology and critical theory. The general contributions to the state of the art in international communication and direction for future research were equally outlined.

*New theoretical insight into what makes "news".*

At the beginning of this dissertation, I laid out the argument that news selection research has been occupied with the age-old question of how events become news. The positivist, object-based proponents to this debate, have argued that the nature of news events is a significant determinant of newsworthiness criteria and when an event possesses more of such criteria it tends to have a news value that appeals to journalists (Galtung and Ruge, 1965; Staab, 1990; Harcup and O’Neil, 2001; Eilders, 2006; Schwarz, 2006; Shoemaker, 2006). It is crucial to state that within this object-based approach, several reconsiderations have occurred. Shoemaker (2006) in a commentary argued, “We should no longer use the prominence with which events are covered as a measure of the event’s newsworthiness, and our theories should not use newsworthiness as the sole (or even an important) predictor of what becomes news”
Staab, Eilder and Schwarz have all made similar comments that news factors are not the only relevant predictor of news selection decisions because they are just one of the several elements. The opposite of this object-based proponents is the subject-based argument that news is very much determined by the nature of the selection process, which relies on the political, economic and ideological goals of the news industry (Gans, 2004; Herman and Chomsky, 2008; Van Djik, 2009; Othman et al. 2014). The discord between these two traditions is that they hardly recognise that news selection could be the result of both object and subject based factors and that depending on the context, one tradition loses its potency to another and vice versa. I contribute to this debate by bridging the gap between the two theoretical paradigms by tracing the entire news selection from the individual journalist’s appreciation of how the nature of events contributes to the news selection decision. I later weakened the objectivist view of the journalists by showing them the results of their work to seek a more critical reasoning that had accounted for the coverage. In this approach, the journalists have revealed the symbiotic nature of these two approaches that have not been properly defined so far. From these findings, I argue forcefully that the decision of what makes the news about Africa in the Ghanaian press on daily basis is a product of events oriented factors, organisational needs, conditions and the subconscious ideological elements rooted in the postcolonial mind set. These descriptions go far beyond the news and the journalists to their social milieu, which is very well accounted for in this dissertation.

It became also more evident that pre-journalism education, journalism education and on-the-job journalism training in Ghana are largely influenced by the press and ideology from the Northern hemisphere contrary to the resistance demonstrated by Ghana before independence and shortly after independence (see
chapter one-Historical and Contextual Antecedents). The claim by the journalists that they had enough ideas about what was news even before going to journalism school meant that their pre-journalism education was even ideologically influenced by a liberal model. They cited the BBC severally as the only option available to them at that time. With these, I contend that individual appreciation of event nature or news criteria which is usually described as a micro individual level element in most research, could itself be borne out of an ideological immersion. To solidify the bridge between the object and subject arguments, I posit in this study that event-oriented objectivist appreciation of what makes news exists but it is quite easily blurred by the practical organisational dynamics and overarching ideology within which the entire news selection process operates.

Journalism and communication studies have had but little interaction with postcolonial studies, even though they have similar agenda (Thomass, 2016; Shome, 2009; Shome and Hegde, 2002 and Grossberg, 1982). Like the recent attempts of Wasserman (2006) and Nothias (2015), this dissertation contributes to a greater dialogue between postcolonial theory and journalism studies. It also offers interesting and new insights into the foreign news as produced in the Ghanaian media and the role of international news organisations on this whole process. Overall, it makes for an original and important empirical contribution to the field of journalism and postcolonial studies by arguing, based on its findings, that the kind of dependency syndrome currently experienced by the Ghanaian press were the very elements the nationalist's press resisted close to independence but failed. Unfortunately, the re-enactment of these sublime colonial complexities has been rather described as globalisation. Even though some of the Ghanaian newspapers recognise these dominations and have envisaged subversive re-use, I argue that the Ghanaian foreign
news *third space* is marked by dormant execution of resistance that dares to dislocate the centrality of the dominant international news organisations. The application of south-south cooperation to the influence of China’s Xinhua news agency is itself underpinned by another uneven power relation, which is largely similar to previous approaches from the Northern hemisphere. The biggest take-home point here is that the Centre-Periphery model, which described the relationship between developed and developing nations cannot be pinned to those binary positionalities. As peripheries become semi-peripheries, they tend to re-enact the imbalances that characterised the Core-Periphery relationship and from there a new model emerges with new positionalities, which are based on power relational capacities, and not on a developed or developing binary.

The theory of agenda setting has moved to its fourth phase where researchers are more prone to questioning how the media’s agenda is set in the first place especially in an era where harsh economic conditions have resulted in massive journalistic co-orientations involving dependence of non-elite media on their elite counterparts. What one sees in both national and cross border investigations of this phenomenon is a strict attachment to the application of statistical analysis to demonstrate whether or not such journalistic co-orientations exist in the correlations of news items among cross border news organisations. This dissertation in its open and critical approach to the search for the reasoning behind these journalistic co-orientations discovered that the phenomenon is currently determined by factors that have hardly occupied inter-nation intermedia agenda setting researchers. Offering an explanatory level analysis, I posit that inter-nation intermedia agenda setting relationships in Ghana are largely shaped by China’s *soft power* activities, lingering historical and colonial relations and informal relationships built on past work contacts.
of journalists, editors and owners. This means a researcher in this area needs to have second look before replicating just the old reasons in their surveys instruments.

*Methodological advances.*

The application of Altheide’s (1987) ethnographic content analysis (ECA) and Spradley’s (1979) ethnographic interview to both media text, journalists and practicing space (newsroom) is an innovation that opens up journalism research to more critical inquiry where the context and symbolic social environment are treated with similar value as the text and the journalists. First, the use of ECA meant that I had to conceptualise the news articles not just as text but a field within which I could trace various kinds of discourses using both numerical and narrative details. This active interpretation of news articles relying on several strategies of analysis and twelve rules outlined by Altheide offered a very unique insight into the discourse that is not achievable when applying an already designed codesheet, which is the approach that has dominated this area of research. The second bit of the innovation is when the ethnographic interview was designed based on the result of the ECA and it is conducted using a reconstructive interview strategy, which meant leading the journalists in a moment of reflexivity. Through this approach, I further established the symbolic and symbiotic space within which the content and its producer navigate. Just like Voltmer and Kraetzschmar (2015), I argue that this comprehensive approach is responsible for the frantic reflections of the journalists who have even questioned themselves about their inability to react to the postcolonial forces that continue to prevent them from owning their agency. This has cemented the dialogue between journalism theory, which claims an objective standpoint, and postcolonial theory, which insists on a reclaim of all forms of agency for the colonised in the post-colony through a critique.
**The general state of the art.**

I provide three general insights into the on-going debate about Afro-pessimism. First, the new wave of literature on Africa’s media image has pointed strongly to improvements in the representation of the continent in the Northern press (Bunce et al., 2017; Bunce 2015; Nothias, 2015; Ojo, 2014), while other described Africa’s negative image as non-existent (Nothias, 2017; Obijiofor and MacKinnon, 2016; Scott, 2015). I contribute to this debate with a disruption of their argument that Ghana’s representation of the continent, to which she belongs, is largely negative and determined mostly by the influence of the Northern press. Second, I argue that China’s soft power programmes are eminent in the Ghanaian newspaper industry through the reuse of Xinhua news agency materials. This Chinese success has not encountered any impediments as was recounted by Wasserman (2016) in the South African case. However, the uneven power dynamic within which this success has been achieved in Ghana is not different from the lingering colonial encounter. This effectively provides empirical evidence to support Paterson’s (2017) inclusion of China as an imperialist actor on the African media landscape. Third, I contribute to the intermedia agenda setting research by arguing that Ghanaian journalistic co-orientations are determined largely by China’s soft power influences, historical and lingering colonial association with the United Kingdom and personal contacts of the newspaper journalists around the continent. The evolution of this area of research requires empirical evidence (Du, 2013), which was largely provided in this study. This then means *inter-nation intermedia agenda setting* researchers would have to extend their list of the reasons for the existence of such relationships or recognise that testing only previously established Western reasoning for this effects is not the only option because of the evolving nature of the practice.
Future research.

This study had to be delimited to fit within the scope of time available for the entire PhD fellowship. As such there are gaps future researchers can improve. I outline five of these ideas for researchers seeking to work in this area. First, the use of visuals in Africa representation in the Ghanaian press was not included in this study but it could offer another interpretation and validation to the findings I have outlined here. As Nothias (2015) suggested, the visuals infuse a unique corroboration from the semiotic tradition and this has been usually part of the typology of Afro-pessimism.

Second, the theoretical battle of between the Fanonian *submissive resemblance* (Fanon, 2008) and the *subversive resemblance/hybridity* of Bhabha (Bhabha, 1994; and Kraidy, 2002) requires further investigations which is supported by wide empirical data and typology of what really amounts to resistance. The African agency has become a way of humanising the discrimination and negative representation the people of the continent have been subjected to. Neither Fanon nor Bhabha provided any clear boundaries for either their *submissive* or *subversive* imitation with which empirical tests could be applied.

The third issue to be tackled is aimed at resolving the imbalance in the volume of news between private and public newspapers in Ghana that largely disrupts the sampling equity. Ofori-Birikorang (2009) pointed to the same issue with health news. I realised equally that the volume of international news produced by the two public newspapers far outweighs their two private counterparts and to achieve balance in the volume of news for the content analysis one will probably require 2:1 ratio of private – public newspapers. It is crucial to think about this because the performance of Xinhua news agency was only in the influential public press. This means I could have
found other influential outliers (Al-Jazeera and CNN) in the private press if I had an equal volume of news articles from the private press.

The fourth consideration will be to consider studying the electronic press either separately or together with the newspapers. This might help in describing the resistance issue since there is a discussion of an emerging African narrative style in local language radio and TV broadcasting that is oppositional to Western journalistic standards and ethics. The difficulty presented in this direction is access to reliable audio and video archives which can be resolved by studying current period over a shorter time.

Future researchers could look into the geographical composition of the foreign news coverage in the Ghanaian press and include more countries with similar and dissimilar press freedom and colonial orientations and language. These could add further colour to the empirical discoveries in this study.
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Appendices

Appendix I

13th March, 2015

Michael Yao Wodui Serwornoo
School of International and Intercultural Communication (SIIC)
Ruhr University of Bochum
Germany

Dear Mr. Serwornoo,

Invitation/Permission to Use Our Newspaper Archive (UCC Main Library)
As per our previous discussions, I am glad to invite you to use the Newspaper Archive of our Library between August and September 2015. The University of Cape Coast Library has for the past fifty years stored hard copies of major national newspapers in Ghana for the purposes of reference ad research.

I would like to assure you of our willingness to assist you with copies of relevant editions of the newspapers for your research.

Thank you very much and I wish a safe trip.

Yours faithfully,

C. Entsu-Mensah
Librarian
Appendix II

Ethnographic Interview Design

<table>
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<th>Week</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Notes/comments/Questions</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>“”</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>Introduction to key staff and lunch</td>
<td>Observation</td>
<td>The participant and I</td>
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<td>“”</td>
<td>“”</td>
<td>Explaining the research objective</td>
<td>Conversational/Observation</td>
<td>Participant and I:</td>
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<td>“”</td>
<td>Two</td>
<td>Explaining the research objectives in details</td>
<td>Conversational/Observation</td>
<td>Participant and I:</td>
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<td>“”</td>
<td>Three</td>
<td>Start serious conversation</td>
<td>Conversation and/Observation</td>
<td>Could you describe</td>
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<td>“”</td>
<td></td>
<td>Identify interests of journalist</td>
<td>Conversational/Observation</td>
<td>what you envisaged</td>
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<td>“”</td>
<td>Four</td>
<td>Determine the influences of the work of the participants</td>
<td>Conversational/Observation</td>
<td>doing as a journalist</td>
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<td>“”</td>
<td>Five</td>
<td>Identify what the interviewee might want to discuss</td>
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<td>Determine the influences of the work of the participants</td>
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<td>One</td>
<td>Determine the weight of influence of TNAs</td>
<td>Observation/Reconstructive interview</td>
<td>Could you explain why this graphics showing the influence TNAs looks like this? Could explain which TNA is your personal favourite and why that is the case? What do you think your own correspondents covering foreign news will look like? Any Kweku Anase stories that represent our discussion today?</td>
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<td>Two</td>
<td>&quot; &quot;</td>
<td>Intermedia preference</td>
<td>Conversational interview</td>
<td>Is there any special relationship with a foreign news agency you might want to mention? Would you say you follow specific TNAs than others and do you share their views?</td>
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<td>&quot; &quot;</td>
<td>Two</td>
<td>Discover conditions that shape foreign news selection</td>
<td>Conversational interview</td>
<td>Could you tell me what factors in experience on daily basis that determine selection of the foreign news? Is there control you exercise over these factors? How do you do it?</td>
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<td>Economics</td>
<td>Conversational interview</td>
<td>Will your paper’s profitability determine how much dedicate to foreign? How do you this? Are there other factors I cannot see through my observation but you think influences you? Could you describe to me how you know to this? Tell me anything about this paper’s economic rationality and how it’s influences your content?</td>
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<td>The colonial influence</td>
<td>Conversational interview</td>
<td>Could you please tell me about how you overcame colonial influences if there are any? Language, education, worldviews, access etc.</td>
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<td>Four</td>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>Conversational and reconstructive interview</td>
<td>Check this graph for a minutes Ask me for explanation for anything you don’t understand. Could you tell me how you feel about the coverage of Africa in your newspaper? Could you tell me, your view, what accounted for this? Tell me a story that represents your feelings about Africa at the moment?</td>
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<td>Five</td>
<td>Way forward</td>
<td>Conversational interview</td>
<td>What are your experiences in reporting Africa? Who is responsible for these images? How do you think Africa can be better covered? What is the way forward?</td>
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<td>Winding down</td>
<td>Observations and reconnection of thoughts</td>
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**Semi structured Interviews**

1) How much influence do you have on what appears on the foreign page every day?

2) What is your position on the issue that African stories are perceived as a reproduction of foreign news agencies?

3) How do you think your foreign news affect the view of Ghanaians carry about Africa?
4) What level of importance do you think your newspaper attach to foreign news?

5) How often are foreign news discussed at the final editorial meeting?

6) Could recount concerns and issues you forsee as the major challenges in reporting Africa?

7) What recommendations will you give as a better way of communicating African foreign news?

8) Would you say the negative images carried in the Ghanaian press are yours or that foreign journalists you have borrowed?

9) Does these findings invoke any feelings of postcolonial domination in you?

10) Do you think you will one day be free of relying on foreign news agency?

11) What shall account for this (if yes) and if No, what is impeding this process

**General Manager/ Editor**

12) Would you say the size of your newspaper influences how much attention you give to foreign news?

13) Do you see any link between foreign news and profitability?

14) What would say is the biggest challenge of reporting foreign news especially about Africa?

15) What is the way forward?
Appendix III

Code Sheet for Sources

Month/Year:……Newspaper:……Ownership:……Location……BBC=1, Reuters =2, AP=3, AFP=4, Xinhua =5, Own Reporter=6, CNN=7, Others=8 and Unsourced=9.

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Appendix IV

CODING PROTOCOL

Instructions
Please, find the following explanations for expressions and symbols used for the different items on the coding sheet. Please, read each item section carefully. Beside each item is a dotted-line space which is an answer space. Please, indicate your answer in that space provided by indicating the corresponding digit/number beside the item. In cases where digit are already labelled please indicate the numerical values of count that corresponds:

Newspaper: Choose the number beside the name of the newspaper that is being coded. If you are coding for Daily Graphic indicate “1”, The Ghanaian Times indicate the number “2”, Daily Guide indicate “3”; and for The Ghanaian Chronicle indicate “4”.

Ownership: Choose the number beside the category of the newspaper ownership as per the groups. If you are coding Daily Graphic or Ghanaian Times indicate “1” and Daily Guide or The Chronicle indicate “2”.

Date of article: This indicates the date the newspaper article was published. The date should be designated as Day followed by Month and followed by Year as in this sample: Date of article: 01/12/12.

Location of article: Indicate where the article is located in the newspaper. You have two options. Please, indicate the number “1” for articles at the Africa page and “2” for articles that appeared World/Global page. Due to this, coders for a particular newspaper must use separate code sheets for location “1” and location “2”.

Sources cited: This part indicates whose is quoted or referred to as the source of the news story or article. The article might attribute some statement to other news agencies but here we are interested in the final transnational news agency that packaged this article. All the newspapers show this vividly. However, Daily Graphic format change ignored this within the chosen period of this study therefore where the source is not vividly indicated. For this reason, input the lead
into “Google.com” and compare the content and select the source as such. There are eight options for sources cited. Indicate in the blank space the number that corresponds to the source cited. For BBC as sources indicate “1”, for Reuters indicate “2”, for AP indicate “3”, for AFP indicate “4”, for Xinhua indicate “5”, for Own Reporter of that newspaper indicate “6”. Own reporter means a journalist commissioned by the Ghanaian newspaper for the coverage of an international event. For CNN indicate “7”, for all other international news agencies apart from the one used so far indicate “8” and for articles which source could not be traced, indicated “9” for Unsourced.

Part I

Part II

Direction of the article: This is defined in terms of positive, negative and Neutral. Positive news are stories that reported harmony within and between nations and nationals, co-operations, development, economic growth, easing of tensions: indicate “1”. Negative news are stories suggesting conflict unending, misunderstanding, crisis, border disputes, human and natural disaster, poverty, disease, dumping of toxic waste, scandals: indicate “2”. All other news stories that did not fall into any of the two categories mentioned here, indicate “3” which represents “Neutral”.

Thematic categories: The thematic categories the study begun with included economic, political, social and disaster and personality news. Other categories are expected to emerge from the data.

Frames: Refer to the MAXQDA code system developed for the qualitative coding of the entire text.
Appendix V

*Times* _Ji_ _edt_:  
*Narrative Interview Report*

He occupies management position and provides deeper insights into the organisation level workings of the newspaper. These insights lie at the meso-level of the analysis that seeks to question how useful size and profitability means for the newspaper as a whole as they set out to independently report Africa. This is based on the assumption that economic resources significantly affect these decisions made in the newspaper business. He also deals with work routines and constraints beyond the journalists that need clarification. For example Internet use decisions are managerial and the editor and other management level colleagues deal with this. He also works as a journalists by reading every news item and editing them. He has a good balance of experience at micro and meso levels.

He firmly established that the newspaper’s commitment to foreign news is defined by its very creation as Pana-African-oriented organisation. This meant presenting the African continent to the Ghanaian people from an African perspective, which is opposed to the Western perspective. The claim invokes the history of a newspaper that was established as an ideological instrument for the liberation and promotion of the African continent. The invocation of this history meant that even if all newspapers were not covering Africa well, the Ghanaian Times had a special obligation to do otherwise. He stressed this by considering the foreign news as purely a service to society with no real profitability goals, however Times is especially committed to it.

The size of the newspaper and its sales revenues are not encouraging. Profitability is escaping the newspaper because it depends significantly on only advertising revenue. This means cost cutting and economic prudence at every instance. He linked the economic constraints in the country to the lack of sales and hence the dwindling profit levels. He added that the newspaper would have definitely committed more economic resources to foreign news had profit margins improve. He added areas of concerns in economic decisions to include improvement in salary structure and work logistics.
The bad economic conditions have delivered us into the hands of the very people we sought to be free from: Western media. We are trapped because our individual economic conditions cannot support independent reporting of Africa. The ineffectiveness of Pana-Press and the closure of Ghana News Agency foreign bureaus have made the situations more difficult to escape. We now fully rely on Western news agency. With the advent of China’s rise, we now have signed an agreement to use their agency materials as well.

He mentioned self-help as the way to deal with the impasse. The self-help must include member states involvement because of the economic commitment. He argued that the images of Africa could only improve if there is a vivid concerted effort to improve them. It must also include collaboration among journalists and associations of the continent willing to share authentic content.

He stated that in all these his newspaper had staged a resistance by significantly editing out negative context from the stories they borrowed from the Western press. Employee attrition rate is high and therefore we always need to remind new staff at that desk to stick to the company’s resistance plan.
Narrative Interview Report
The interviewee is a reporter/editor of the foreign news page and sometimes the political page. He has been working for barely a year now for the foreign news page. But he has about 20 years of experience in the same newspaper.

Usefulness and weight of influence on selection
To him the BBC and Reuters were like a learning platform for him to constantly improve his journalistic writings. This also emanates from the fact that these journalists did most on the job trainings. The BBC to him is deep and comprehensive on their coverage of Africa.

Processes
The interviewee reports listening to BBC and VOA on radio from home before coming to the Office. He reads his own newspaper’s foreign page and that of others to check if he missed something due to the competition between them. He continues to monitor the cues until 1pm when he starts working on them. This reduction exercise continues until 4pm when he passes the page for planning. He is not involved in planning. The work on the page is dictated by the advertising unit because they always require that page for advertisement because people its high readership. Page design and proofreading parts of the process continues elsewhere. Local stories of international events through foreign Embassies are rarely done but once a while they get done.

Themes of Depiction
He accepts that Western media coverage of Africa is in-depth but with several negatives and it is also because African countries have given them the opportunity, through the things they do, to satisfy their fixation. The reason for the negative depiction for him is competition for resource and attention. The West will lose a lot of resources and if attention was evenly shared around the world.
Inter-media agenda setting
In the spirit of South-South cooperation anytime Chinese news agency Xinhua has current material of East Africa or Asia …that was his choice. He would choose them over BBC because they have an agreement.

Selection factor preferences
The style of news reporting by an international news agency meant a lot to him. Breaking news was the second consideration for his choices. To him the news must be current as well and this meant the BBC. It also meant choosing politics, which is easy to connect with positive lessons for local readers. Even though human interest was his personal favourite other editors did not like that so much so he had to argue each day for such items. He gave an example, of how a woman writes a love letter to the Pope and the editor disagreed and wanted hard news. Issues relating to Britain’s perspective were considered in terms of proximity to the interest of Ghana. To him, because Ghana is British-oriented, BBC stories are preferred most by the readers and the stories are written in a manner that no significant corrections are required.

Conditions promoting negativity
To him, one of the conditions for negativity is competition as to who published the most recent news and there is no consideration as to whether the news is negative of positive. Another condition is that, as journalist, it was difficult for him to change significantly what other journalists have reported when he was not there. Here we replicate these negative depictions mostly because we are also fixated with political themes. The editors think that is what the readers want. Readership likes hard news with strange headlines because they do not have time to read volumes.

Resistance
The growing influence of Xinhua and Al-Jazeera in our Ghanaian newspapers is a form of resistance. To him a newspapers like his should restructure their editorial policy to ensure that it captures both the good and the bad on the continent. It can only be achieved consciously.
Guide_Alm_edt:

Narrative Interview Report

The interviewee is an editor with more editorial experience even though he participates in management meetings. He finds management meetings only as complementary role. He traces his journalism career to foreign news, as a result the genre is very crucial for him. He recognises that other senior colleagues have the same experience of starting with foreign news. This therefore makes the foreign news very useful for their previous interest.

He recounts the reaction of the readers anytime something went wrong with that foreign news page as phenomenal and very visible than other sections of the newspaper. The newspaper also gets big exclusive scoops that readers and management both appreciate relating to the genre of foreign news.

He however noted that economic hardships have forced his newspaper to limit number of pages of the entire newspaper and foreign news was eventually affected by that crucial reduction in number pages to get the newspaper going. He added that though limited by economic resources sometimes the organisation is able to send reporters in border cities to enter neighbouring countries for reports when there is a big issue because all neighbouring countries are generally French speaking and difficult to follow on Internet.

He admits Western media items have become the only option since self-help efforts both national and continental have failed. The news items in his paper are very negative because of where they are coming from: Western news agencies are architects of negative slants. We cannot change these when we do not have reporters there as well. Sometimes, I ask some friends from Nigeria for their items on some tragedies and they are always better contextualised.

For us, as a private newspaper, the news item must lead to increase in sales. It must be selected because it can sell us the next morning…it could mean sensationalism too. We need if it sells. Development oriented stories do not sell from our experience. Our foreign news items must mirror local difficulties in neighbouring countries. The readers appreciate this.
Until we develop a national news agency like Ghana News Agency or continental group that can deal with our readers taste and spin, we cannot do much than depend on Western news agencies. As a private newspaper, we would love to have a unique selling point of producing African exclusives but we do not have resources to support this. We recently signed up for a German picture news agency for African figure who go to Europe but we cannot contain this after the free trial. We have no official relationships with international news agencies. We credit stories that are aligned to our goal when we pick them. That is all.
Guide_Ali_ed_rpt:

Narrative Interview Report

The interviewee is the supervising editor for foreign news page and general news editor. He has been a practising journalist for the past 37 years. He started his careers as a foreign news reporter in Nigeria. The interviewee’s childhood was shaped through listening to news on foreign news services.

Usefulness and weight of influence on selection

Foreign news is highly considered by most of his colleague editors and they consider it as a good place to tell the African progress story but that needed to be matched with the perceived reader interest. Based on his childhood experience of listening to the broadcast of BBC in English and Hausa, he became highly influenced by the BBC in his early career practice of working on foreign news. He recounts the quality of storytelling, avenue to improve English language, in-depth analysis and highly professional as characteristics of the BBC that have instigated this influence on him.

Processes

He is a fun of foreign news and starts listening from home and his car while on his way to work. He hardly listens to local radio. He listens mostly to the BBC. He arrives in the Office with good knowledge of events of the day. He follows the cues. Selects news items for further work and editing later in the day when the stories have fully developed. Foreign news assignments in Ghana can disrupt this usual flow but normally it follows this pattern. Technical difficulties with network and Internet could also alter the workflow with excessive delays.

Themes of Depiction

He recognises negative depiction in the writings of foreign news agencies but argues that they are quite justified because the continent’s leaders have messed up everything. As a result, he even doubts self-rule of the African.

Inter-media agenda setting

The interviewee argues that the international news agencies mirror the happenings on the continent and that is why his newspaper takes up items published by them. Apart
from the fact that he has some contacts of his in Nigeria for news scoops, any news media aimed at exposing root in Africa sets his agenda.

**Selection factor preferences**

He explains his affection for development-oriented events, documentary series on nature and many others as stuff he would love to write about and pick and they are not negative and are available as well but his publishers and colleagues have different opinion about the readership. The Ghanaian readership has been cited as loving personality oriented stories, scandals, wars and all the sensationalism. Each item must tell some wild story to represent potential sale item. Selection is based on commodification of news items gauged from a perceived reader interest. He is personally attracted to any news item that exposes the root in the African society. Publisher pressure to look at the business and sales figures drives story selection unconsciously and eventually the negatives.

**Conditions promoting negativity**

To him, a strong colonial tie permeates the entire Ghanaian society, which results in the full acceptance of the British or BBC rhetoric. He argues that most Ghanaians have ignored Africa. They know much more about the UK than they know about Africa. Foreign news agencies have come to occupy this gap of lack of knowledge. He recounts that until recently Ghana Broadcasting Corporation was a relay broadcast station of the BBC World Service known as Radio Zoy. After independence Ghanaians were very reluctant to even change the signature tune. That showed how embedded we have become and why people consider anything sourced to the BBC a sacrosanct truth. This acceptance of the BBC has colonial roots. Another issue promoting the negativity is the habit of the Ghanaian newspaper reader to watch the headlines before buying the newspaper. No negatives no sale. Negativity about Africa, for instance to him, is reader-induced. He also argued that resources remain the major challenge for most African newspapers to report even their neighbours but this will not change just because there are resources available. When even there are resources, management must be committed to releasing them for this cause. Private owners in Ghana lack this understanding.
**Resistance**

The interviewee claims resistance can be discussed only when we have mobilised journalists on the continent into a regional body aimed telling a unique story that is realistic as well and with resources to do this.
Graphic Ras edit

Narrative Interview Report

The interviewee describes foreign news as an inevitable section of the newspaper because of globalisation. Even though realistically, significant resources are required to own ideas published on this page, which the newspaper does not have, but it must still find a creative way of satisfying this inevitable readership. The foreign news has a further relevance based on the fact that it has higher readership: local and foreign people in Ghana alike read this page. This even led to the page’s premium tag, destination for advertising. It is almost always oversubscribed.

Graphic is a very successful newspaper, and a member of several other communication related businesses, and therefore an editor is expected to be managerially as sound as editorially. He reads almost all editorial materials the paper publishes every day. He is also involved in a several strategic management decision making.

He seems to suggest that profitability is very crucial and underpins all editorial decisions. He recognises challenges with Internet speed because he is with the journalists everyday however, he airs on behalf of management by saying they are doing all they can to solve the problem. Regarding decreasing pages for foreign news, he mentions that business and advertising is swallowing the whole paper with less and less editorial space. He knows this and they are working at reversing it. The paradox is that the newspaper business needs the advertising money to survive.

Regarding the over reliance on Western news agencies, he explained that: First, they do not have the presence in Africa due to lack of resources. Second, Pan-African news agencies have failed to fill the gap of individual newspapers on the continent and therefore he is forced to rely on the western news agencies even though he knows their items are slanted. Third, his newspaper sometimes is able to stage a resistance by editing out some negative contexts that are explicit. Or they rely on very factual stories regarding accidents widely reported where death tolls are easily verifiable through comparison several times.
To him, the fact that there is fierce debate about stories that appear in the paper among the journalists in editorial meeting and yet negative stories appear in the newspaper significantly as shown by my content analysis clearly indicates that there is a limit to alter already done stories without any factual evidence. Second hand (borrowed) news item is very difficult to debate because the author is not our staff. But we ask the foreign page editors to compare similar stories and determine authenticity and also go for very factual news items coups, accidents etc. and all these are negative but we cannot be contested on any of these because the issues are quite straightforward.

In the light of the economic hardship the newspapers in Africa are facing including his newspaper, only self-help mechanism supported by continental news agency and member states can help bring a change moving forward. At our own level, we have signed an agreement with China within the spirit of South–South cooperation. He argued that this would relieve them a little from their colonial bug, which is so intense.
**Graphic Fii_ed_rpt**

**Narrative Interview Report**

The interviewee served in the role of reporter/editor of the foreign news page for 6 years before his promotion to the sub-editor desk. He isn’t a management member and speaks clearly from editorial perspective as a journalist of editor.

**Usefulness and weight of influence on selection**

He underscored the usefulness of the foreign news page due to its relation to local context. He relates this usefulness to the idea of where one picks the foreign news report. He argued that picking the stories from the BBC World Service is excellent because they were current and their writing was good as well. He occasionally uses AP.

**Processes**

Basically he scans his newspapers and other newspapers to determine what he had missed overnight. That gives him a fair idea of how the day will go. He begins the trace the evolution of important stories he had missed and continues reading on evolving stories he had already published. This process could be described as a routine since he usually looks for specific websites and newspapers to do this. After 18:00 GMT when the subeditors are reading the whole newspaper for onwards submission to production, he is monitoring breaking news. This continues until he signs off at 22:00GMT. He hands over the page to the Night Editor who continues the monitoring breaking news until the newspaper goes to print.

**Themes of Depiction**

He argues in agreement to the preliminary content analysis that the negative portrayals exist visibly. He knows it. The reason for the negative depiction is that it plays into an old myth that there is nothing good in Africa. His newspaper cannot change these depictions easily because journalism requires them to follow some procedures in coming to alternative conclusions but they have no reporters around the continent because they cannot afford it. Due to this, our unique perspective is missing in the debate. Sometimes, they see the justification for these negatives in their society and neighbouring countries. To him, western journalists or Ghanaian journalists
working for western media are used to stuff that are very different from the happenings in Africa. They select the negatives mostly because it’s new to them but when they do not add the context to these novelty experiences then it becomes negative portrayal because they bear different connotation in our minds. Journalists working for them who come from Africa know these but they cannot always explain these things so they play by the rules.

**Inter-media agenda setting**

To him, inter-media agenda setting is a journalistic routine not a management decision that why he picks more items from the BBC than Xinhua with which they have agreement and a full bouquet access. The South-South cooperation with China is an excellent idea but the language of publication needs to be improved by the Chinese as well as currency…the Xinhua is not current.

**Selection factor preferences**

Stories needed to contribute to societal development, be sensational a little and match some local context. These are very crucial for the selection process.

**Conditions why promoting negativity**

Resource situations have worsened leaving the newspaper with the decision to cut down number of pages and to increase the slots for advertising. This means less and less space is available for editorial materials. With little space, comes summaries that take away context. The experience of colonialism is another situation they battle with because it has shaped them in many ways. Our education, language and worldviews.

**Resistance**

He argued that he usually minimises the negative as a form of resistance but that only relates to context background. The factual negative cannot be changed because there is no other account or account of they own. They are limited in this regard.
Graphic_Bas_ed_rpt

Narrative Interview Report

The interviewee is a reporter/editor of the foreign news page and another page for regional reports. She was born in Harbour city and had so much affection for maritime issues and environment reporting. She has spent 3 years so far on the foreign news desk. She is very proud of working for the popular newspaper in Ghana.

Usefulness and weight of influence on selection

She describes the BBC as the necessary evil because she sets up a very wide search with open alternatives available for selection but eventually around the evening when she is finalising stories she ends up arriving at the most recent version of most stories on the BBC website. She explains the BBC’s dominance to be their reliability and timeliness compared to most of their competitors who can only be trusted with current event in Asia and Middle East. She feels that the BBC reliability relates to the facts of their stories not changing within the shortest possible time and the fact that she introduces this with an experiment to show that she has tested this severally. To her, you have no choice but to go there. Why wonder around when you can go straight?

Processes

The interviewee reports of a diversified approach to monitoring foreign news which ranges from Radio, TV, iPad, BBC Apps, CNN apps and many other alerts. Usually at home, she will be on multiples of devices for foreign news to read. She arrives in the office quite primed. She reads her own newspaper’s foreign page and that of other newspapers both local and foreign to check if she missed something. She continues to monitor the cues of the morning checks until and after midday when she starts selecting and scaling down. From 2pm she starts working on them and to report them to Conference (editors). This reduction exercise continues until 5pm when page planning starts. In house stories are written in the morning. She passes the page to the night editor 9pm. Internet challenges are enormous at her newspaper and these challenges can alter enormously the procedure described here above. When the Internet is bad the scenario described above becomes ideal. In that case, she takes any story available to her for the fear that the Internet might never work until production is over. Page design and proofreading are part of the processes that she does not
control but supervises for her page. It is expected that page should be proofread and designed before she finally passes for production and hand the page over to the night editor.

**Themes of Depiction**

She recognises that negativity towards Africa exist but cannot be factually proven because there isn’t own reporters on the field and they do not have alternative sources as well. She sees domination of the BBC based on economic power and skills and vision to lead the world in news especially about Africa not as a postcolonial bug.

**Inter-media agenda setting**

She argues for the most current news and accurate language as the basis for inter-media agenda setting and not official relationships signed especially with Chinese. She picks one of two stories just to support management aim of South-South cooperation with Xinhua. But that is limited to some part of Asia because she will not use Xinhua item about Japan, Europe or Africa.

**Selection factor preferences**

She is very satisfied the next day if she realises that she did not missed any significant current news. Currency is very crucial for her. The second most useful criterion, for her, is the international impact of the story. How many nationalities are involved? That is necessary for wide readership and that was always the favourite story. The third is personality involved in the news coupled with the conditions under which an event occurs. She gave an example of President of Nigeria (Buhari) meeting one of the Chibok Abductees that was freed. Nothing can change that from being the top news. Senior colleagues in the editorial conference influence items as well with their suggestions and these enrich the page material and context for the whole newspaper.

**Conditions promoting negativity**

To her, one of the conditions for negativity is lack of resources. She established from her experience on covering international assignments that an African perspective exists but resources cannot allow us to demonstrate it. Even though educational of our newspaper is crucial it must be based on reality not speculations, they cannot say
otherwise when they do not have reporters. Advertising is swallowing the newspaper and leaving smaller and smaller pages for editorial matter and she said due to this not enough can be done to balance the day’s event. She thinks management is only for the profit benefits. Many issues in Africa are cultural shock to most western journalists. Another such condition was that they were imbedded into the British culture even her surname gave her up and the British thinking matched their knowledge base from both school and home. Lastly, Daily newspaper means limited time every day to fill up the newspaper and that means they cannot do much about what they are receiving.

**Resistance**

As a form of resistance, she consciously seeks to promote the good side of Africa and progressive gender issues. She appropriates Africa as “local” and other countries as external or global world. The way forward to her is the mobilization of all on the continent to ensure better coverage of each other. One form of resistance is that the whole page cannot be surrendered at least one or two stories would be our perspective or they made significant changes. To her checking the same story from different sources is a form of resistance. What I described as Unsourced news are news items she can no longer source to the BBC or others because she has significantly altered the negatives and removed bad context. Resources and management policies can one day liberate Africa.
As a management member, the interviewee brings his rich perspective on both individual journalistic activities and meso-level activities of the newspaper. He is involved the restructuring of the business aspect of the newspaper as well as being the news editor. In private newspaper, one can take two important but different roles due to lack of resources to engage more staff. In that case, they bring very insightful holistic experiences to discussions as we have here.

He argued that because of globalisation, the foreign news section of the newspaper has become more necessary than it was even before. It has become inseparable from a complete newspaper and also it is a usual item on the menu of readers because of the way we relate the stories to our situation here in Ghana and migratory flows in general.

Economic hardships on readers at large have affected the profit margins of newspapers. The dwindling profit margins also mean closing down local bureaus that would provide comprehensive views and coverage native events. It also means reducing the volume of newspaper (number of pages) and as a result the tragedies and triumphs are not equally carried. We carry a lot of negatives because they sell. But when we lose sight of balance because we have greatly summarised, then we lose the affected groups whose stories were not properly captured and as result our economic situation continuously worsens because our market shrinks. His paper is currently experiencing some of the worst moments since its creation and has no option but to rely on foreign news agencies.

He argued: “they say journalism thrives on negativity, concept we have become very used to.” Our training, education, perspectives and economic hardships can never allow us to free ourselves. We are perpetually trapped.
**Narrative Interview Report**

The interviewee is a reporter/editor of the foreign news page. He doubles-up also as the Planning Officer of the entire newspaper. He decides where adverts go and where editorial materials must go too. Usually marketers do this planning and tell editors how much space they have to work with. He has spent 9 years so far on the foreign news desk. He has been working within the print media business for the past 20 years. He looks forward to becoming an editor one day.

**Usefulness and weight of influence on selection**

Foreign media shaped his childhood significantly. He reports reading and listening to specific foreign media: BBC and VOA. Even though he places weight on regional proximity of a particular international news agency, overall he uses the BBC most because of their focus on Africa.

**Processes**

After close of work he gets on his Mobile apps of the International news agencies monitoring developments overnight. He acquires the day’s ideas before arriving at the office. He goes back to check on these ideas after 2pm and start picking stories at 6pm and the paper goes to print at 8pm. Proofreading and design and everything on the page is exclusively done by him.

**Themes of Depiction**

He recognises negative depiction but claims they could change it with technology and a common front. He believes change is coming in the future.

**Inter-media agenda setting**

Yes, it is the view of the international media they appropriate but they cannot deny its authenticity when they have not sent reporters. They mirror after them but especially after the BBC to ensure in the end you are, at least, factually right. No agreement exists with the big TNAs. But they have agreement with some Nigerian based newspapers because the CEO worked in Nigeria for a while and still has contacts there.
**Selection factor preferences**

One of the issues that have strangely become a selection determinant is lack of space. Due to lack of space, he needed to share the little space among topics and continents in a representative manner. It also meant looking for further permutation to make the choice easier. Local context relatedness becomes quite useful for him in stories. To him, other influences from watching films and documentary provide context for his future decisions. These are the unconscious effect on his selection process. Apart from that he makes conscious effort to balance negative depictions with diversification away from political stories that carry much of the negatives in Africa. He assesses language as a fundamental factor and due to the dominance of the English language, it was clear the BBC was his best choice for selection. Impact of the story on the wider society of Ghana is the most important impact instrument.

**Conditions why promoting negativity**

To him, one of the conditions for negativity is lack of space because he does not get enough space to capture both the triumphs and tragedies. He has only one page. This is because he must summarise and as a result he loses context. Lack of own reporters promotes this as well. They are unable to send their own reporters because of resources. Competition among the private press he recounts drives sensationalism and negativity as well as newspapers seek to be different.

**Resistance**

He regards the international news agencies, as big players one cannot live without because of their resource capacity therefore they can only be mirrored. Any resistance effort must aim at language and making resources available.
Appendix VI

Alji_ed_rpt_CIS

Conceptual Interview Scheme

**Central Question:**

How is the process of foreign news selection in the Ghanaian press shaped in terms of actors, conditions and practices?

- Why the weight of influence (actors), Afro-pessimism in depiction (conditions), the practice of news borrowing.

**Central issues:**

This reporter/editor considers the central issues to include:

- **Perceived readership taste:** what the readers want to read by the journalists’ estimations. They want to read about war, sensationalism, scandal and personalities.
- **Ideological proximity** as an influencing element of actors:
  - Quality of storytelling, Avenue to improve English, Highly professional conduct and in depth analysis, exposing root in Africa.
- **Routine-based process**- process is so routinized that it does not allow room for diversity. Listen to the same radio station on the way to work every day. This is a condition that explains why the same depictions are usually present.
- **Afro-pessimism exists:** negative news about Africa is the order of the day but it is justified.
- **Cultural defeat:** self-rule is a mistake…they are right….we have messed up our countries.
- Sales figures depend on **negativity.** Negativity is Reader-induced.
- **British root** embedded historical relations that have been built superior – inferior binary categories.
- **Lack of resources and rational economic choices:** not much is gained in resources and the little obtained must be owners apply cost cutting.

This means:

Foreign news is **essential** to our paper but we must rely on **Western news agencies** especially when we rarely sends people across the borders.

- We are forced by **readership taste** to maintain foreign news with negative depictions.
- **Cost cutting** reducing numbers pages, refusal of management to spend and relying exclusively on Western news agencies
- **Perpetually trapped** with Western press because **real-time** news service on Africa comes from them.
- **Resistance:** Mobilisation of journalists on the continent with economic resources to tell Africa’s story.
Amen_ed_rpt_CIS

Conceptual Interview Scheme

**Central Question:**

How is the process of foreign news selection in the Ghanaian press shaped in terms of actors, conditions and practices?

- Why the weight of influence (actors), Afro-pessimism in depiction (conditions), the practice of news borrowing.

**Central issues:**

This reporter/editor considers the central issues to include:

- **Ideological proximity:** BBC and VOA were learning platforms because he was an avid listener
  Why weight of influence?
  - **Local context:** relatedness to a domestic event is crucial for selection
  - **Impact:** how the story affects society
  - **Focus on Africa:** the BBC has a comprehensive coverage of the African continent.
  - **Regional balance:** selection was sometimes based regional distribution of the TNA

- **Routine-based process:** Very diversified searches in the morning on the TV, Radio and Tablet before arriving in the office. – Starts reading again after 5pm. Around 6-7 he completes the page.

- **Afro-pessimism exists:** negative news about Africa is exists even in in-depth coverage:
  - **Economic hardships** mean reducing number of pages of the newspaper and inability to send out even local reporters how much more foreign reporters.
  - **Limited space** means we have to summarise the day’s event in a manner that we cannot include context and this promotes negativity.
  - Competition means a little sensationalism to look and sound different.

This means:
Foreign news is useful for the edification of domestic readership on the growing nature of our globalised world:

- The news must be current, in-depth and international.
- **Cost cutting** reducing numbers pages, less space for news and this results strict summaries that loses context.
- We are inseparably linked/embedded to the British view and way of seeing things
- **Resistance:** He makes conscious effort not to choose from one place but the TNAs in general are inevitable.
Alim_edt_CIS

Conceptual Interview Scheme

**Central Question:**

How is the process of foreign news selection in the Ghanaian press shaped in terms of actors, conditions, practices and inter-media agenda setting relationship?

**Central issues:**

This editor considers the central issues to include:

- Well-read page meant we give a lot of attention to what we put there
- **Economic hardships** means cost cutting- reducing the number of pages to print and not able to frequently send reporters across borders. This also means relying on Western news agencies exclusively.
- Negatives Western media reportage is a philosophy and difficult to fight when you have no reporters on the ground. In Nigeria I rely on friends and not them…..I wish we were successful at regional effort we started some time ago.
- News selection here is exclusively dependent on how it leads to increase in sales.
- Development oriented stories do not sell

This means:

Foreign news is inevitable to our paper. Therefore reliance on Western news agencies is also inevitable especially when we rarely sends people across the borders.

- We are forced by readership to maintain a good foreign news
- Cost cutting reducing numbers pages, looking for sensationally saleable items and relying exclusively on Western news agencies
- Perpetually trapped with Western press because of regional and national efforts have failed.
Central Question:

How is the process of foreign news selection in the Ghanaian press shaped in terms of actors, conditions and practices?
- Why the weight of influence (actors), Afro-pessimism in depiction (conditions), the practice of news borrowing.

Central issues:

This reporter/editor considers the central issues to include:

- **Ideological proximity** of some *actors* like the BBC becomes so *dominant* because they are *irresistible*:
  - Reliability (factually sound for long-time), timeliness, comprehensive world coverage, Trustworthiness (when they promise an update…they will work to bring it).
  - The quest to lead the world in news supported by vision, economic power and skills.
  - Accuracy and international impact.
  - Personality involved

- **Diversity ends up on routine-based process**- several accesses in the morning but eventually only a few produce reliable updates. Very diversified searches in the morning can be rendered routine-based by technical challenges like Internet, network or computer failures.

- **Afro-pessimism exists**: negative news about Africa is obvious but cannot be contested because no alternative sources exits…. original producer is usually the same.
  - African perspective: we have very different ways of seeing events…
  - Lack of resources ensures that negativity persists.
  - Limited editorial space means we are unable to balance the day’s event accurately.
  - British imbeddedness makes domestic ways of doing things negative.
  - Newsroom pressure to produce on daily basis means less time to verify and think through.

- **Management fixation with profit** makes change impossible.

- **British root** not separable …I am Hudson…I am Ghanaian but British as well.

This means:

Foreign news is **big** to our paper but we must rely on **Western news agencies** because they are:

- They are timely, reliable, and comprehensive. We are *inseparably linked/embedded* to some.
- Cost cutting reducing numbers pages, management fixation with profit means no alternatives exist.
- Perpetually trapped with BBC because real-time news service on Africa comes from them.
- Resistance: re-write some context issues not facts.
Fii_ed_rpt_CIS

Conceptual Interview Scheme

Central Question:

How is the process of foreign news selection in the Ghanaian press shaped in terms of actors, conditions and practices?
- Why the weight of influence (actors), Afro-pessimism in depiction (conditions), the practice of news borrowing.

This reporter/editor considers the central issues to include:

Central issues:

Comparative proximity to local context: we must re-align the news to our needs that makes foreign news very useful to readership.
- Why weight of influence?
  - Current: very timely
  - Accuracy in language and facts.
  - Routine-based process: Reading the competitor newspapers to see what was missed and how that develops in the day as an equalisation strategy. The process ends when the page is filled but then monitoring starts on breaking news till the newspaper goes to production.
  - Afro-pessimism exists: negative news about Africa is recognizably dominant because:
    - Old myth: it satisfies the view that nothing good comes from Africa.
    - Journalistic ideology ensures that negativity persists because it is a fact-based profession and if you have not sent any one, then it is difficult to contest. Unique appreciation of issues, African perspective, is missing.
    - Economic hardships means less space for editorial material more space for advertising, it is dangerous but the only available surviving strategy.
    - The experience of colonisation shapes crucial elements of our being education, language and worldview. These make it difficult to notice the new domination effects
    - Western-reader induced: they want to read something strange and new to their culture especially negatives that satisfies their ego.
  - South-South cooperation means is only useful if it matches our selections criteria (timeliness, language, relatedness to Ghana). Until that, it remains a management decision, which does not significantly influence daily selection.
  - British root not separable it is everything we aspire to.

This means:

Foreign news is useful for further description of local context through comparative reading (how does it relate to our case):
  - The news must be current, reliable and accurate both in language and facts. We are inseparably linked/embedded to the British culture and way of seeing things.
• **Cost cutting** reducing numbers pages, less editorial content more advertising means no alternatives exist.
• **Perpetually trapped** with BBC because **real-time** news service on Africa comes from them.
• **Resistance:** re-write some context issues not **facts.** In this regard, we are **limited** because we don’t have reporters there to curl an alternative angle which we know exist.
Times_JM_edt
Conceptual Interview Scheme

Central Question:
How is the process of foreign news selection in the Ghanaian press shaped in terms of actors, conditions, practices and inter-media agenda setting relationship?

Central issues:

This editor considers the central issues to include:

- The task of reporting Africa from Pana-African perspective meant not relying on Western news agencies
- Economic hardship forcing Times, national and regional news agencies to fall in line with a hegemonic world order

This means:

Economic conditions and business model nature of the media are parallel to world economic order that have made international news agencies very powerful and hegemonic.

- It is our very mission to be Pana-African: writing the new African stories that targets that positives as a response of Afro-pessimism
- It is a very necessary service with little profit potentiality
- Dwindling profit levels means further cuts in space and commitments to services
- Perpetually trapped in the single story discourse of Western press because of the failure of national and regional news agencies to survive
- The rise of China presents an opportunity for South-South cooperation, which we have signed agreement to accomplish.
- The newspaper has a resistance plan to edit out negative context and Afro-pessimism as much as possible
- Concerted regional effort required for success.
Central Question:

How is the process of foreign news selection in the Ghanaian press shaped in terms of actors, conditions, practices and inter-media agenda setting relationship?

Central issues:

This editor considers the central issues to include:

- Globalisation makes foreign news inevitable to all local newspapers
- Over subscribed for advertising because of its increasing readership
- Economic considerations have similar weighting with editorial decisions
- Reliance on Western news agencies is inevitable but there is resistance growing …editing out negative context and entering South-South co-operations of emerging developing countries

This means:

The globalised world requires that Ghanaians know about all other nations on daily basis. Even though foreign news pages are oversubscribed with advertising, that income is not enough to have presence in all of Africa. Pan-African news agencies represented excellent substitutes until they all folded up. Therefore reliance on Western news agencies is inevitable but this is done with resistance such as South-South Co-operations and negative context edit.

- We are forced by globalisation to maintain a good foreign news
- Cost cutting means further cuts in editorial space and advertising coupled with limited expense on foreign news production. All of these contribute to increased profit.
- Perpetually trapped in the single story discourse of Western press because of the failure of national and regional news agencies to survive
- As a form of resistance we have embraced Chinese news agency Xinhua as a form of South-South cooperation.
- The newspaper has a resistance plan to edit out negative context and Afro-pessimism as much as possible
- Concerted regional effort supported member states is required.
Conceptual Interview Scheme

Central Question:

How is the process of foreign news selection in the Ghanaian press shaped in terms of actors, conditions, practices and inter-media agenda setting relationship?

Central Issues:

This editor considers the central issues to include:

- **Globalisation** and continuous **migratory flows** have made the genre inevitable.
- **Economic hardships** are so severe that local offices are being closed down and therefore foreign bureaus aren’t in mind at all.
- **Cost cutting** also means cutting down number of pages to print and **relying on Western news agencies exclusively**
- Negatives sell…that is their journalistic philosophy and this to him falls within the Western media reportage.

This means:

Globalisation and migratory flows within the continent have made foreign news inevitable at a time where we can barely pay even local bills, how much more keeping a foreign bureau. Therefore reliance on **Western news agencies is inevitable** especially when their reports fall within our idea that **negatives sell**

- We are forced by **globalisation** to maintain a good foreign news
- **Cost cutting** means closing down bureaus and relying exclusively on Western news agencies
- **Perpetually trapped** with Western press because of the coincidence of interests: **negatives or Afro-pessimism sell**
- We are **perpetually trapped**
Wins_ed_rpt_CIS
Conceptual Interview Scheme

**Central Question:**
How is the process of foreign news selection in the Ghanaian press shaped in terms of actors, conditions and practices?
- Why the weight of influence (actors), Afro-pessimism in depiction (conditions), the practice of news borrowing.

**Central issues:**
This reporter/editor considers the central issues to include:

- **Ideological proximity:** BBC and Reuters were a learning platform for journalistic writing
  - Why weight of influence?
    - **Current:** very timely
    - **Comprehensive:** in-depth analysis covering all continents.
    - **Breaking news syndrome:** how detailed is the breaking news report
    - **Accuracy:** in language and facts of the BBC.

- **Routine-based process- equalisation strategy**-reading competitors for missed news. The process is **advertising dependent.** Someday there is only one page and that must be dedicated to **breaking news** till the newspaper goes to production where they continue to monitor **breaking news.**

- **Afro-pessimism exists:** negative news about Africa is **exists even in in-depth coverage:**
  - **Competition for investment:** the world competes for resource attention and therefore improvement in Africa’s situation in not in the interest of some people.
  - **Economic hardships** mean less space for editorial material more space for advertising. The whole work on the foreign page is dependent on advertising...leaving a very **limited space** where we cannot **balance the day’s events.**
  - Editorial team’s fixation with **political news** and **current news** means disaster for Africa. Political news on the continent is usually negative and because the news must be current no one cares about implications of it content.
  - **British-oriented:** British imbededness in worldview.

- **South-South cooperation:** when Xinhua is **timely,** it must be selected. This means: Foreign news is useful for further for **learning how to write journalistically** because they are different
  - The news must be current, in-depth and international.
  - **Cost cutting** reducing numbers pages, less editorial content more advertising means no alternatives exist.
  - **Perpetually trapped** with BBC because **real-time** news service on Africa comes from them.
  - We are **inseparably linked/embedded** to the British view and way of seeing things

- **Resistance:** The rise of Xinhua is a form of resistance. In this regard, we need **conscious effort** to achieve this.
Appendix VII

18\textsuperscript{th} August 2015
The Research School
Ruhr University of Bochum
Germany

The School of International and Intercultural Communication
C/o Erich-Brost Institute for International Journalism
Otto-Hahn str. 2, 44227 Dortmund

Dear Sir,

\textbf{Acceptance letter for field research: Michael Serwornoo}

We, the undersigned, have agreed to grant Mr. Serwornoo series of interviews regarding his research. We are by this letter confirming our willingness to participate in the study around January 2016- April 2016.

Sincerely,

\begin{tabular}{lll}
\textbf{Signature} & \textbf{Name} & \textbf{Organisation} \\
\hline
& & Daily Graphic \\
& & Ghanaian Times \\
& & Ghanaian Chronicle \\
& & Daily Guide \\
\end{tabular}
Appendix VIII

30.07.2015

To Whom It May Concern:

Letter of Introduction

Dear Sir or Madam,

Mr. Michael Serwornoo is a PhD Fellow at the School of International and Intercultural Communication | SIIC, Erich Brost Institute, Germany. He is conducting a study on the image of Africa in the Ghanaian press: the influence of transnational news agencies. The study explores international news selection from a postcolonial perspective and normative news value research.

Your help is very important, and we are asking you to grant Mr. Serwornoo your kindest courtesies as he begins his field research. Be assured that your responses will be strictly confidential and used with others for analysis. A summary of this study will be available as a service to you upon completion of the project.

Please do not hesitate to contact us for further explanation beyond the candidate. Either call us at +49 231 - 755-6976 or send an email to dirk-claas.ulrich@tu-dortmund.de.

Sincerely,

Prof. Dr. Susanne Fengler
(Academic Director EBI)
Dirk-Class Ulrich
(Managing Director, SIIC)

Distribution:
  Daily Graphic
  Ghanaian Times
  The Ghanaian Chronicles
  Daily Guide
Appendix IX

Non-hierarchical list of concepts

Globalisation                      Language
Economic hardship                  Worldview
Reader-induced                     Binary categorisation
Afro-pessimism                     Impact
Sales decision                      Local context
Dependence                          Focus on Africa
Perpetually trapped                Regional balance
Readership’s taste                  Sensationalism
South-South cooperation             Equalisation strategy
Profitability                       Routine-based
Single-story discourse              Ideological proximity
Regional effort                     Adverts dependent
              Unjust postcolonial bug       Limited space
Conceptual substitution             British-imbeddedness
Cultural defeat                     Learning standard
Cost-cutting                        Conscious effort
Philosophy                          Dominant
Development-oriented                Irresistible
Pana-African                        Diversified
Economic rationality                Technical challenges
Current/Timeliness                  African perspective
Comprehensive/In-depth              Real-time news
Breaking news                       Reconstruction
Accuracy                            Comparative proximity
Comparative reading                 Journalistic ideology
                                      Education
Appendix X

Due to anonymity agreements accepted during the field research, I identify the journalists by alphanumeric codes that indicate clues to their newspapers. There were six interviews used in this analysis:

Tms p1-Interview person 1 works for the Ghanaian Times newspaper.
Gde p2-Interview person 2 works for the Daily Guide newspaper.
Crs p3-Interview person 3 works for the Chronicle newspaper.
Gph p4-Interview person 4 works for the Daily Graphic newspaper.
Gph p5-Interview person 5 works for the Daily Graphic newspaper.
Gph ed p6-The interview person is the editor of Daily Graphic newspaper.
Gde ed p7- The interview person is the editor of Daily Guide newspaper.
Tms ed p8- The interview person is the deputy editor of Ghanaian Times.
Crs ed p9- The interview person is the news editor of the Chronicle newspaper.
**PERSONAL PROFILE**

I am an ambitious, loyal and enthusiastic communications expert with about 15 years of experience in broadcasting, print media and communication research. Since my bachelor’s graduation in June 2006, I have worked mainly in management roles where my knowledge as a business major student and a teacher have been excellently beneficial. I have many other interests especially in the area of international tax planning and human rights for open societies for which I have recently taken online courses. My enhanced written and verbal communication and analytical competencies have assisted me to publish over three refereed academic journals during my PhD. I have cultivated strong team spirit and leadership qualities. I have gained a great deal of international teaching experience at the Ruhr University Bochum in addition to my teaching experiences in Ghana.

**EDUCATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014-2018</td>
<td>Ruhr-University Bochum (RUB), Bochum, Germany</td>
<td>PhD in International Communication (Media Studies)</td>
<td>summa cum laude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2012</td>
<td>University of Education Winneba, Winneba, Ghana</td>
<td>MPhil in Communication and Media Studies (Journalism)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-2010</td>
<td>University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana</td>
<td>Postgraduate Diploma in Education (Teaching Business)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002-2006</td>
<td>University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana</td>
<td>Bachelor of Commerce (Accounting, Management and Economics)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**WORK EXPERIENCE (NON-TEACHING)**

**November 2017 – to date**  
**Educom GmbH, Germany**  
Intercultural Communication Consultant/Coach
- English language trainer (for all levels- A1-C2);
- Intercultural Communication Coach for English speaking countries;
- Currently handling the training needs of these accounts: thyssenkrupp Hohenlimburg and thyssenkrupp Ferdern (Hagen); thyssenkrupp Industrial Solutions and thyssenkrupp Schulte, BVB Football Club (Dortmund); Infineon (Warstein).

**May 2008 – Dec. 2013**  
**ATL FM 100.5, University of Cape Coast, Ghana**  
Deputy Station Manager and Affiliates Liaison Officer
- Increased station synergy through departmental supervision news, marketing and broadcast;
- Improved efficiency of the management board as the executive secretary (Member/secretary role);
- Increased income generation by 70% via acquisition of Mediacom, ADS Limited and Scan ad;
- Reduced expenditure by 10% through monitoring of “suspected volatile” cost activities;
• Acquired strategic affiliations: Joy FM, BBC, Radio France International and Voice of America;
• Brokered the BBC World Service live broadcast event from the University of Cape Coast;
• Delivered three to four strategy-oriented training each quarter of the year;
• Increased university visibility as a special correspondent, Office of Vice-Chancellor;
• Improved quality of documentaries and features via training and weekly commissioning reviews;
• Increased by 70% outdoor broadcast events of the station.
• Discovered four broadcast talents in top journalism roles in Ghana today as the station’s scout.
• Hosted and supervised English-talk programmes.
• Served as consultant for the 5 year ATL FM Strategic Plan development and implementation.

Presenter/Producer (Staff Exchange Agreement)
• Produced stories for Focus on Africa programme relating to West Africa;
• Participated in the production of a documentary by the “Witness Team”; 
• Produced briefs for broadcast by the “World Today programme” for four Weeks; and
• Researched stories commissioned by the editors for editorial prep.
• Provided expert analysis of stories relating to academic research findings.

Jan. 2009- Aug. 2010  Coastal Television, Cape Coast, Ghana
Presenter of News Panorama programme (Part-time job)
• Led the production of the weekly news analysis programme;
• Presented the programme on weekly basis;
• Chaired post-programme reviews; and
• Managed the advertising income for the programme.

Jul. 2007- April 2008  University of Cape Coast, PR Section
Senior Administrative Assistant (Media Relations Officer)
• Managed the University press corps relations;
• Conducted research among the University’s publics on the positioning of its brand;
• Liaised with campus media on the University coverage;
• Served as the secretary of the university-wide “Campus Radio Monitoring Committee”; and
• Provided consultancy services to University Management that resulted in a reduction of the acquisition cost of ATL FM from $58,000 to $5,000.

Sept 2006-Jun 2007  Radio Valco 95.3FM, University of Cape Coast, Ghana
Station Manager/Presenter
• Reduced the station’s expenditure by 40% and increased income by almost 80%;
• Commissioned all programmes as the executive producer;
• Managed 35 broadcast journalists;
• Chaired talk programme reviews;
• Produced and read business news;
• Managed the advertising income for the programme;
• Reported to management Board on progress;
• Managed all station affiliation relations and correspondences;
• Managed the petty cash transactions of the station;
• Led engineering designing and re-engineering; and
• Won French Embassy funding twice to train Francophone music broadcasters.

Sept 2006-Jun 2007  Campus Exclusive Newspaper, University of Cape Coast, Ghana
Editor-in-Chief
• Commissioned all stories in the newspaper as the executive editor;
• Edited the current affairs page in a reporter/editor role;
• Acquired student reporters;
• Led training programmes for students reporters;
• Reported to management Board on the progress of the newspaper; and
• Supervised the marketing strategy of the newspaper.

Special Assistant to CEO (Accounting and Finance)
• Eliminated leakages in stock management through monthly stock analysis;
• Improved profit through the reduction of tax expenses;
• Ameliorated customer satisfaction to French-speaking client by receiving them in French;
• Supervised internal control systems and reported to CEO on improvements quarterly.

WORK EXPERIENCE (TEACHING)

April 2015 – July 2018   Ruhr-University Bochum, Institute for Media Studies
Lehrauftraege (Journalism ethics; International New flow)
• Designed the full semester course entirely by myself for review;
• Won the “Lehrkommission” approval twice for independently designed courses;
• Delivered the entire course independently under the mentorship of my Chair;
• Managed all administrative requirement regarding assessment
• 2 out of 10 students selected the course for final oral examination;
• Led course review discussions; and
• Administered the course management platform efficiently with (BlackBoard/Moodle software).

Feb 2014 – July 2014   University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana Lecturer
(Community media and communication skills)
• Taught fours courses (community media, communication and society and broadcasting,
Communicative Skills);
• Conducted academic research in my area of study;
• Delivered journalism training for local sports journalists;
• Provided counselling services to students on academic issues; and
• Coached master students in research report writing.
• Recorded highest performing cohort of undergraduate students in 2014 (15 out 24 scored “A”)

Feb 2013 – Jun. 2014   Central University, Accra, Ghana Adjunct
Lecturer (Broadcast journalism)
• Taught three broadcast related courses at the introductory and advanced levels;
• Conducted academic research in my area of study;
• Delivered practical newsroom cultural training for students preparing for the internship;
• Provided counselling services to students on academic issues; and
• Supervised the technical specification of the building of Central Radio and TV station.

Jan 2013 – June 2014   College of Distance Educations (CoDE), University of Cape Coast Senior
Course Tutor (Entrepreneurship & Business Communication)
• Led face-face discussion of course models with distance education students;
• Assessed their performance through the administration of Quizzes;
• Provided counselling for students on academic issues;
• Participated in conference-marking exercises; and
• Invigilated final examination as an external supervisor.

Jun 2009 – Dec 2009   St. Augustines Senior High School, Cape Coast, Ghana Tutor
(Financial Accounting and Business management)
Taught Accounting and Business Management to second-year students;
Assessed their performance through the administration of Quizzes;
Provided counselling services to students on academic issues; and
Organised two excursions to the Accounts section of ATL FM.

**Team Work & Leadership**
I have managed and coached more than 20 management level staff since started working in broadcasting and communications.

**Effective Communication**
I deliver quality service to my portfolio of clients and staff through strong interpersonal communication and admirable writing style.

**I.T Skills**
I am proficient in Microsoft® Offices Suite and Adobe Audition and Premiere, MAXQDA qualitative analysis software, SPSS Statistical tool, BBC radioman software, AP ENPS software, BBC Desktop software, CPS for online journalism, Wix.com web designing.

**Initiative & Adaptability**
I have initiated and managed several new projects with Embassies, Civil society organisations and the University of Cape Coast (all in Ghana).

**Multi-tasking**
In my professional career so far I am always been made to handle several portfolios at the same time because of my diversity in education and knowledge areas.

**SKILLS**

**SOFT-SKILLS, TRAINING AND EMERGING INTERESTS**

- **British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC):** annual flagship “Value of Airtime” strategy coaching for media professionals (6-time-attendee).
- **Soft skills training** on presentation and writing at Ruhr University Bochum, Research School programme
  - Taking your presentations to the next level: advanced intensive workshop in a small group
  - Scientific presentation and individual performance: make a lasting impression in science
  - Intercultural communication: Being successful in working together with people from different cultural background
  - How to review research proposals and write professional reviews
  - How to publish successfully in peer-reviewed journals

- **International Tax planning:** I took an online course for 8 weeks on “Rethinking International Tax Planning” from Leiden University, Nederland (Completed in January 2017).
- **Human Rights for Open Societies:** I took an online course for 8 weeks on “Human Rights for Open Societies” from Utrecht University, Nederland (Completed in Sep. 2016).

**ACHIEVEMENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 2017</td>
<td>Esser-Stipendium Winner (Ruhr University Bochum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer/Winter sem. 2017</td>
<td>Teaching Assistantship Award-Lehrauftraege (3,200 euros)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April-Aug. 2016</td>
<td>Field research and research stay, Ruhr University of Bochum Germany’s Excellence Initiative DFG GSC 98/3. (5,700 euros)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Semester 2015</td>
<td>Teaching Assistantship Award-Lehrauftraege (1,600 euros)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Aug.- Sept. 2015  Field research fund, (3,010 euros)
Ruhr University of Bochum Germany’s Excellence Initiative DFG GSC 98/3.

Jul. 2014- June 2017  3year PhD Fellowship from Mecur Research Foundation
School of International and Intercultural Communication.
(36,000 euros).

May 2008- Dec. 2013  I recruited five talented students’ broadcasters that are today top
broadcasters in Ghana:
a.  Samuel Kojo Brace, Skyy Power FM, Breakfast Show Host
b.  Elwood Akwaku, Pluzz Fm, News Editor
c.  Amos Kwofie, TV Africa News Anchor and Fanti Talk Host
d.  Godfred Mensah, Multi TV, Multimedia Producer
e.  Alloh Jean Gervais, Head of Technical Department, ATL FM

**PUBLICATIONS AND CONFERENCES**

Ghanaian press: the BBC remains the ultimate reference”, *Journalism Studies*, https://
doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2018.1519637

Serwornoo, M.Y.W. “Exploring China’s emerging global media visibility in Africa: the case of
effective public diplomacy”, International Communication Association (ICA) 68th Annual
Conference, Public diplomacy section, Prague, Czech Republic, 24-28 May 2018 (Full paper
to be presented).

Serwornoo, M.Y.W. “Africa’s Image in the Ghanaian Press: The still Western voice in the
continent’s self-representation”, International Association for Media and Communication
Research (IAMCR) Annual Conference, International Communication section, Oregon, United
States, 19-24 June 2018 (Full paper to be presented).

Footprint of Western Journalism Education and Media Assistance” In *Journalism and
Journalism Education in Developing Countries*, edited by Beatrice. Dernbach and E. Illg, pp--,
India: Manipal University Press. (in print).

Serwornoo, M.Y.W. “Postcolonial trajectories of foreign news selection in the
Ghanaian press: the BBC remains the ultimate reference”, International Communication
Association (ICA) 67th Annual Conference, Journalism Studies session, San Diego, California,
25-29 May 2017 (Full paper presented).

assistance in Ghana: the case of foreign news selection in the print media”, Symposium on
Foreign Aid and Journalism in Latin America and Africa: Developing a Research Agenda,
School of Media and Communication, University of Leeds, Leeds-UK, 20 April, 2017. (Full
paper presented)


REFERENCES

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Technische Universität Dortmund, D-44221 Dortmund
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Telefax: ++49/231/755-4131
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