MEDIA FRAMING OF SAME-SEX RELATIONSHIPS IN GHANA: A STUDY OF THE DAILY GRAPHIC AND THE DAILY GUIDE NEWSPAPERS

BY

CAROLINE ANIPAH

(10226295)

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DECLARATION

I declare that, aside from references to other people’s works which have been duly acknowledged, this thesis is entirely the product of my own efforts. It was conducted at the Department of Communication Studies under the supervision of Professor Audrey Sitsofe Gadzekpo.

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Caroline Anipah Professor Audrey Sitsofe Gadzekpo

(Student) (Supervisor)

Date:........................................ Date:........................................
ABSTRACT
This study examined framing of same-sex relationships by the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* newspapers from January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2015. The factors that influenced coverage and framing of the practice were also investigated in order to provide a holistic and comprehensive picture of local media construction of the practice. Underpinned by framing theory, a mixed methods approach of content analysis and in-depth interviews was used in data collection and analysis. A total of 135 stories were analysed for tone, prominence, sources of information and frames. Eight transcripts of in-depth interviews conducted with media practitioners, were also analysed to determine the factors that influenced framing of same-sex relationships.

The study found that same-sex relationships were framed more often in terms of morality, although other frames such as conflict, responsibility and human interest were also employed by the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide*. Not surprisingly and confirming findings from previous studies in Ghana and other parts of the world, the media portrayed same-sex relationships negatively and relied predominantly on sources other than homosexuals, the people who were often implicated in stories published, as sources of information. Religious leaders and politicians were mostly used as sources of information by both the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide*. The findings further revealed that factors such as the legal status of same-sex relationships in Ghana and the unwillingness of pro-gay and homosexual sources to grant journalists interviews influenced the coverage and framing of same-sex relationships by the two newspapers.
DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my mother, Comfort Akua Fosua and my siblings Elizabeth, Margaret, Roland and Emmanuel.

It is also dedicated to the memories of my dad, Raphael Kwesi Anipah, and my sister, Vivian Mawusi Anipah.
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We made it!!!
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background to the study

Same-sex relationship, also known as homosexuality or gayism, has existed throughout history world-wide (Quist-Adade, Bates, & Wathanafa, 2014). The practice has over the years received various reactions ranging from indifference to criticism depending on the cultures in which they take place and the perceived origin of the practice (Mabvurira, Motsi, Masuka & Chigondo, 2012; Sheldon, Pfeffer, Jayaratne, Feldbaum & Petty, 2007; Dai-Kosi, Asamani, & Adomako, 2016).

Scientists attribute two origins or causes to same-sex relationship: biological and psychosocial factors (Sheldon et al., 2007). Although there is no general consensus on the validity and generalizability of this claim, the biological school of thought believes that the existence of certain hormones, genes and the anatomical make-up of certain individuals predispose them to becoming attracted to members of the same sex (Sheldon et al., 2007). Thus, same-sex relationships are considered a sexual orientation because like heterosexuality and bisexuality, same-sex relationships are considered ‘immutable’, ‘uncontrollable’ and ‘cannot be helped’ (Sheldon et al., 2007, p. 2). Same-sex relationships have also been attributed to psychosocial factors. This school of thought argues that as a result of societal influences, upbringing and other such factors, individuals consciously, of their own volition, choose to engage in same-sex activities (Sheldon et al., 2007). As such, same-sex relationships are believed to be a sexual preference.

According to scholars such as Mabvurira et al. (2012) and Quist-Adade et al. (2014), same-sex relationships have existed in Africa even before the advent of the first European into the continent. This assertion is in spite of the challenge in obtaining data on the history of same-
sex relationships in Africa and claims by most of the African population that the practice is alien. The explicit drawing of men engaged in sexual acts found by Garlake, an archaeologist, in Zimbabwe Bushman caves is one evidence put forth to support arguments about the 'Africanness' of same-sex relationships (Epprecht, 1998; Epprecht 2008).

Epprecht (2008) however argues that although same-sexual acts existed in Africa, they were not performed for pleasure but for specific purposes. Hence, in some parts of the continent, same-sex relationships served as a birth or fertility control method. They were also used for rituals and to show affection or dominance. Same-sex relationships were said to have been common among young adults in some parts of Africa as a form of preparation for marital roles (Epprecht, 2008). In pre-colonial Cameroon also, it was believed that sexual acts (anal penetration) between two men under the right conditions was a precursor for wealth (Epprecht, 2008). Chiefs and warriors were also said to have resorted to same-sexual acts to fortify their positions over political opposition and to prepare for battle respectively (Epprecht, 2008).

Same-sex relationships were however frowned on in some circumstances in Africa. In pre-colonial Zimbabwe, two adult men who were caught engaging in same-sex relationships for pleasure were either accused of witchcraft or were perceived to have been bewitched (Mabvurira & Matsika, 2013).

Same-sex relationships, for whatever reason it was practiced, over time became unpopular and subsequently resulted in the widespread belief that the practice was alien to Africa (Epprecht, 2005). This notion that same-sex relationships were “un-African” became pronounced as a result of the entry of Europeans into the continent. They believed that the African was very close to nature and therefore could not possibly be exposed to an evil such
as homosexuality. Thus, through Christian missionaries, the Europeans launched stern campaigns to challenge and rid the continent of all “heterosexual immoralities” including same-sex relationships (Epprecht, 2005). Laws with religious undertones were also enacted by colonial administrators to deter people from practicing what was termed ‘unnatural lust’. In some instances, punishment for engaging in the practice included executions and in some cases, convicted homosexuals were prohibited by law from entering other countries (Epprecht, 2005; Mabvurira et al., 2012).

1.0.1 Global context of same-sex relationships

Currently, same-sex relationships are legal in a number of western countries. As at 1930, Denmark had legalised same-sex relationships. The practice was however considered a mental illness until the 1970s (lgbt.dk, 2017). Other countries that have legalised same-sex relationships and same-sex marriage include Argentina, the United States of America, Portugal, Austria, and Iceland (Pettinicchio, 2012). The journey to the legitimisation of the practice in some of these countries has been amidst years of political and public debate. Pettinicchio (2012) argues that, the decline in premium placed on the institution of marriage, the political system of a country and attitudes of the populace are influencing factors to the legalisation of same-sex relationships in some of the countries where the practice is recognised by law.

The practice of same-sex relationships is illegal in a number of Africa countries. According to Vincent (2009), out of 86 member countries of the United Nations that criminalise same-sex relationships, 38 are from Africa. This could be attributed to the fact that unlike some of the countries that have legalised the practice, most African still place premium marriage.
A number of measures have been taken by some African leaders to discourage citizens from engaging in same-sex activities. These include stringent laws which have been criticised by human rights activists and international organisations (Rodenbough, 2014, Carroll, 2016). Uganda’s Anti-Homosexuality Act 2014 popularly known as “Kill the gays bill” and Nigeria’s Same-Sex Marriage Prohibition Bill 2013 also known as “Jail the gays” are among the most criticised homophobic laws in Africa (CNN News, 2014; Carroll, 2016). The Anti-Homosexuality Bill 2014, which was signed into law by Uganda’s President Yoweri Museveni on February 24, 2014, prohibits same-sex relations, its promotion and its recognition. The penalty for disobeying the law is life imprisonment (Laccino, 2015). Similarly, Nigeria’s Same-Sex Marriage Prohibition Bill 2013 imposes an imprisonment term of 14 years on people engaged in gay marriage or civil union. People who publicly display their engagement in same-sex relationships, according to the bill, also face 10 years imprisonment (Laccino, 2015).

South Africa and Cape Verde are however two of the few African countries with ‘homosexuality friendly’ laws. Cape Verde became more tolerant of same-sex relationships when in 2004, the country decriminalised same-sex relations between people over 16 years, considered the age of consent (Epprecht, 2012). In 2007, South Africa became the first country in African to legalise same-sex marriage (Epprecht, 2012).

Attitudes of African publics or citizens have been found to be extremely homophobic (Pew Center, 2013) with some African leaders publicly denouncing and expressing their aversion to the practice. President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe is reported to have said the following when some Western countries declared their intentions to tie aid to recognition of gay rights:

Then we have this American President, born of an African father, who is saying we will not give you aid if you don’t embrace homosexuality. We ask, was he born out of
homosexuality? We need continuity in our race and that comes from a woman not homosexuality. John and John, no; Maria and Maria, no.


In countries such as Nigeria and Uganda, public intolerance for same-sex relationships is high. As indicated in a 2003 Pew Center study, as many as 98 per cent of Nigerians and 96 per cent of Ugandans, who participated in the research, expressed their abhorrence to the practice. Even in South Africa where same-sex marriage is legal, the majority of its citizens find the practice loathsome. As many as 61 per cent of citizens, who participated in a research conducted by Pew Center in 2013, were of the view that same-sex relationships should be rejected by South Africans.

People who are suspected of being gays or lesbians in Africa often face stigmatisation, attacks, and sometimes murder; all aimed at deterring others from indulging in the practice (Rodenbough, 2014; Carroll, 2016). In Uganda, David Kato, a gay rights activist, was tortured and killed in his neighbourhood after several threats on his life for his stance on same-sex relationships (Nytimes, 2011). A journalist and gay rights activist from Cameroon, Eric Lembembe, was also found dead in his home with his neck and feet broken. Other parts of his body, his face and hands were also burnt with iron (BBC, 2013). Lembembe’s murder has been linked to his role in the fight for the recognition of same-sex rights.

1.0.2 Same-sex relationships in Ghana

Contrary to beliefs that same-sex relationships are foreign to Ghanaian culture, Allotey (2015) asserts that the practice has always existed and has been practiced both in public and in private places in the country. The existence of labels such as “Obaa barima” in Akan, which literally means “man woman”, according to Allotey (2015), suggests that Ghanaians recognised the practice. Some scholars also argue that other similar terminologies such as “Kojo Besia” (Akan) and “supi” were used to refer to men who are romantically involved
with other men and women who have erotic relations with other women respectively (Allotey, 2015; Dankwa, 2009; Ajen, 1998 cited in Murray and Roscoe, 1998).

However, researchers such as Asante and Roberts (2014) are of the view that the existence of these labels does not necessarily denote erotic relations or attraction to members of one’s sex. They argue that labels such as ‘obaa Barima’ and “Kojo Besia” were only used to ridicule individuals who do not perform their gender and so does not correlate with the Western ‘homosexual’ construct.

In 2006, the Ghanaian media reported the intention of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community to hold its international conference in Koforidua in the Eastern Region of Ghana. Prior to this, there was very little public discourse on same-sex relationships (Sallar, 2011) in the country. The media report of the LGBT community’s plan generated diverse, mostly negative reactions from citizens, religious leaders as well as the government of the day. Through the then Minister for Information and National Orientation, Kwamena Bartels, the government issued a stern warning prohibiting the organisers from holding the said conference in the country (Ghanaweb, 2006).

Subsequent developments on the local and international fronts on same-sex relationships have dictated media and public discourse on the issue (Tettey, 2016). One of such high points of public and media discussions on same-sex marriage in Ghana was when the then Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, David Cameron threatened to stop aid to homophobic countries including Ghana (GhanaWeb, 2011). This threat resulted in public agitations leading to the then President John Evans Atta Mills, expressing the unwillingness of the Government of Ghana to accept financial assistance with conditions of legalizing same-sex relationships attached. President Mills argued that Ghana’s societal norms, which are
different from those of the United Kingdom, are against same-sex relationships (Myjoyonline, 2011). Other incidents such as attacks on suspected homosexuals, and the arrest, trial and subsequent conviction of Sulley Ali-Gabass, a prominent medical doctor for sodomising a 16 year old boy (Graphiconline.com, 2015) also sparked media and public discourse on the phenomenon.

The legality or otherwise of same-sex relationships in Ghana has also contributed to the discussion of the practice. Both advocates and opponents of same-sex relationships have quoted laws to back their positions. Section 104 of Chapter 6 of the Criminal Law (1960) of Ghana (amended in 2003), the most quoted provision in discussions on same-sex relationships in Ghana, stipulates that:

1. Whoever has unnatural carnal knowledge – (a) of any person of the age of sixteen years or over without his consent shall be guilty of a first degree felony and shall be liable on conviction to imprisonment for a term of not less than five years and not more than twenty-five years; or (b) of any person of sixteen years or over with his consent is guilty of misdemeanour; or (c) of any animal is guilty of a misdemeanour.

2. Unnatural carnal knowledge is sexual intercourse with a person in an unnatural manner or with an animal.

However, according to people like Martin Amidu, former Attorney General and Minister for Justice, this clause does not necessarily criminalise same-sex relationships (GhanaWeb, 2011). According to Amidu, same-sex relationships are not illegal but are punishable only if they involve minors. Amidu further argues that what goes on behind closed doors between two consenting men is not the business of the state (GhanaWeb, 2011). Others also share the view that the law does not mention same-sex relationship between women and therefore lesbianism cannot be illegal (Quist-Adade et al., 2014). There are yet others such as another former Attorney General, Marietta Brew Opong, who believe that the provision makes it clear that same-sex relationships are illegal whether between men or women
Former Minister for Gender, Children and Social Protection, Nana Oye Lithur, however does not contest the legality or otherwise of same-sex relationships. She is of the view that gays and lesbians need to be protected based on their status as citizens of Ghana (GhanaWeb, 2010).

1.0.3 Role of the media

The media are important sources of information for the public on many issues; especially of sensitive and controversial issues such as same-sex relationships (Calzo & Ward, 2009). Calzo and Ward (2009) argue that majority of people may never, in their lifetime, have direct contact with homosexuals because of the closeted lifestyle of homosexuals. As such, many people rely on the media for information on homosexuals (Calzo & Ward, 2009). This view is echoed by media scholar Alwood (1996) when he states that:

The news media have long been one of the public’s few sources of information about homosexuals, given the closeted existence that most have been forced to live to escape social stigma. . . . What people see and hear in the news is what they accept as reality (Alwood, 1996, p. 6).

The media are also avenues for mirroring attitudes and beliefs that already exist in society. They have the power to influence people’s perspectives on societal norms and in the process reinforce or challenge stereotypes that members of a society hold of a group depending on how such groups are framed by the media (Bangwayo-Skeete & Zikhali, 2011). A study by Calzo and Ward (2009) found that, for example, portrayals of homosexuality in the media influenced viewers’ attitudes towards the practice. Similarly, Wusu’s (2013) study in Nigeria established that exposure to media content on sexuality influenced behaviour in one way or the other. Thus, for some, such exposure may lead to proper use or otherwise of information put forth by the media. It is therefore possible that media framing of same-sex relationships in the Ghanaian, may influence perceptions or cause attitudinal change regarding the practice.
1.1 Problem statement

As discussed earlier, the media has a role to play in socialisation and influencing of perspectives on same-sex relationships (Anderson, Fakhfakh, & Kondylis, 1999; Calzo & Ward, 2009). Thus, it is imperative to examine how the media covers and frames an important but controversial issue like same-sex relationships.

Literature on media coverage of same-sex relationships is fast growing as a number of studies have been conducted examining the framing of same-sex relationships by the media (Adams, 2013; Pan, Meng & Zhou, 2010; Landau, 2009; Liebler, Schwartz, & Harper, 2009). However, it appears that most of the scholarship on the subject comes from Western countries where same-sex relationships are either legal or homophobia is less compared with Africa.

Very few of these studies emanate from Africa in general, and Ghana in particular where for the most part, same-sex relationships are considered an anomaly and also where until recently, same-sex relationships were considered a taboo subject in public discourses. The dearth in literature from Africa, according to Mabvurira et al. (2012), could be as a result of the fear African professionals, and by extension scholars, have of being labelled as ‘one of them’ should they write anything that is in any way seen to be a justification of same-sex relationships.

Also, most studies on same-sex relationships in Africa and elsewhere have focused on the framing of media content (Quist-Adade et al., 2014; Tettey, 2016; Alagappar and Kaur, 2009). Such studies have overlooked external (working context of journalists, sources etc.) and internal factors (personal values and beliefs etc.) that influence the production of media content and frames (Li and Liu, 2010).
Therefore, this study sought to fill in the gap in knowledge. It explores how two influential Ghanaian newspapers framed same-sex relationships. The study additionally investigates the factors that influenced media practitioners’ coverage of the practice since findings from research indicate that factors internal and external to journalists can influence news content (Li & Liu, 2010).

1.2 Research Objectives

The main objective of this study was to examine media framing of same-sex relationships in Ghana and the factors that influenced the coverage of the practice. The specific objectives of the study were:

1. To examine the degree of prominence (in terms of story placement and story enhancement) given to same-sex relationships by the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide.

2. To examine the tone of publications on same-sex relationships by the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide.

3. To identify the sources of information used by the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide in reporting on same-sex relationships.

4. To investigate the types of frames employed by the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide in their coverage of same-sex relationships.

5. To determine the factors that influence media practitioners’ coverage of same-sex relationships.

1.3 Research Questions

In order to achieve the objectives of the study, the following research questions were addressed:
RQ1: What degrees of prominence did the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide give to same-sex relationship issues?
RQ2: What was the tone of stories on same-sex relationships?
RQ3: Who were the sources of information used by the two newspapers?
RQ4: What were the frames used by the newspapers in the coverage of same-sex relationships?
RQ5: What factors influenced media practitioners’ coverage of same-sex relationships?

1.4 Significance of the study

This study is significant because it provides a Ghanaian perspective on how media frames same-sex relationships and the factors that influence journalists in their coverage of the practice. By so doing, it contributes to scholarship on same-sex relationships in the country and Africa.

Also, this study is important because it addresses a subject matter that is often ignored by African researchers because of the sensitive nature of the topic. Therefore, by studying media framing of same-sex relationships in a country and a continent where homophobia abounds, this research contributes to existing literature.

Finally, this research will help bodies and institutions involved in media, homosexuality and human rights to understand how the media cover the subject.

1.5 Operational definition of concepts

To facilitate understanding of the study, the following key terms have been operationally defined:
**Same-sex relationships:** The propensity of being romantically attracted to members of one’s sex. The term has been used interchangeably with **homosexuality** and **gayism** in this study (Tabengwa, 2013).

**Gay:** A man who engages in same-sex relationships.

**Lesbian:** A woman who engages in same-sex relationships.

**Homosexual:** A man or woman who engages in same-sex relationships (Tabengwa, 2013).

**Homophobia:** Disrespect or disapproval of homosexuals mostly based on negative stereotypes of homosexuality (Tabengwa, 2013).

**Prominent pages newspapers:** These referred to the front, middle and back pages of the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide*.

### 1.6 Organisation of the Study

This study is organised into seven chapters. Chapter One contextualised the study by providing a background, statement of the problem or reasons that necessitated the study, objectives, research questions and the significance of the study.

The theoretical framework that underpinned the study, framing, was discussed in chapter Two.

In the third chapter, previous studies that informed that current research were reviewed. Objectives, theories, methodologies and findings of studies related to media coverage of same-sex relationships were presented in this chapter.

The methodology for the study was presented in Chapter Four. In the chapter, the research design, population and sampling, data collection and analysis procedure used for the study were discussed.
The findings of the study can be found in Chapter Five. In Chapter Six, the findings are discussed in relation to the theory that underpinned the study and related studies.

Chapter Seven concludes the study by noting the limitations of the study and suggesting recommendations for future studies.

1.7 Chapter summary

This chapter contextualised the study by providing a background to it. It discussed the two schools of thought on the origin of same-sex relationships – the biological and psychosocial schools. The background also gave a brief history of same-sex relationships in Africa. It established that same-sex relationships existed in Africa prior to the coming of Europeans and other foreigners but was different from the current Western construct of same-sex relationships. The current state of the practice globally was also discussed. The research problem, objectives, questions and significance of the study were also stated in this chapter.
CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses framing theory as the theoretical framework that underpins the study. The use of the theory was informed by previous studies on same-sex relationships which used framing. Additionally, the theory was employed because it can help address the objectives of the research.

2.1 Framing theory

Framing is a theory of mass communication that has been used by many communications scholars to make sense of media coverage on a diversity of subjects. The theory belongs to the media effects school (Schaufler, 1999) and was originally proposed by Goffman (1974). It is based on the assumption that an issue can be viewed from various angles (Chong & Druckman, 2007). Framing also posits that individuals’ ability to understand media contents and subsequently participate in discussions is dependent on common frames provided by the media. These frames help in understanding discussions or events by contextualising issues (de Vreese, 2005).

Framing, like many other concepts and theories, has been defined differently by different scholars. Whilst some focus on treatment of media content by journalists, an aspect of interest to this study, others emphasise the effect media content has on individuals or audiences. Entman (1993), De Vreese (2005) and Iyengar (2005) belong to the school of thought which define framing by stressing journalistic treatment of media content. For Entman (1993, p. 52), framing is about selection and salience in order to “promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation for the item described.” This means that through the inclusion and exclusion of certain bits of information
(selection) by journalists or media practitioners, framing takes place. Salience can also be achieved through strategic placement or repetition of aspects of an issue or by associating them with symbols that are culturally familiar to receivers of frames (Entman, 1993). Similarly, De Vreese (2005) defines framing as the presentation and definition of an issue by the media. To Iyengar (2005) also, framing simply means changing perceptions about an issue either by stressing or de-stressing certain aspects of that issue.

On the other hand, Chong and Druckman (2007) and Gamson and Modigliani (1989) in their definitions of the concept of media framing focus on consequences media content have on individuals or audiences. According to Chong and Druckman (2007), framing is the process through which individuals attain a specific view of an issue or adjust their perception about an issue based on how the issues are presented to them. Gamson and Modigliani (1989, p. 3) also define a frame as a “central organizing idea...for making sense of relevant events, suggesting what is at issue.”

Scheufele (1999) identified two concepts of framing: individual and media frames. Individual frames are the individual’s own knowledge and predispositions that serve as a guide in processing information presented to them. Media frames, on which this study is based, are defined by Gitlin (1980, p. 193) as “persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation of selection, emphasis, and exclusion, by which symbol-handlers routinely organize discourse, whether verbal or visual.” Gamson and Modigliani (1987, p. 143) also define a media frame as a “central organising idea” which defines a controversy.

The essence of media frames therefore is to simplify information for audiences by providing them with schemas for the interpretation of such information. Therefore, as individuals often depend on media frames to understand events in the world and to interpret information, it is
important to examine how the media frames issues such as same-sex relationships. Additionally, examining media frames of same-sex relationships would expose one to the kinds of information available to individuals on the subject in the media.

2.1.1 Identification and studying of frames

According to Entman (1993, p. 52), news frames can be identified and examined based on ‘the presence or absence of certain keywords, stock phrases, stereotyped images, sources of information and sentences that provide thematically reinforcing clusters of facts or judgments.’ Gamson and Modigliani (1989, in de Vreese, 2005, p. 54) also suggested the presence of “metaphors, exemplars, catch-phrases, depictions and visual images” as guides in the identification of frames. However, according to de Vreese (2005), Tankard (2001, p. 101) presented the most elaborate list for the identification of frames. They include headlines, photographs and their captions, leads, sources of information and concluding paragraphs or statements. The rest are quotes selection, subheads, pull quotes, logos, statistics and charts.

Media frames can also be identified and examined inductively or deductively (de Vreese, 2005). The inductive approach involves studying media contents without pre-defined frames. Frames are allowed to emerge from media contents in the course of the study. The inductive approach, although useful in discovering new frames, has been criticised for its difficulty in being replicated and for its use of small samples. Studies that use the inductive approach use small samples because studying frames inductively can be time consuming (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000, de Vreese, 2005).

The deductive approach, which is the opposite of the inductive method, was employed in this study because it is appropriate in achieving the result of this study. This approach was used by Kenix (2008) in comparing the United States of America and New Zealand newspapers
coverage of same-sex rights. Here, the researcher goes into the study with pre-determined and operationalized frames. The disadvantage of this method however is that, even though studies using this approach are easy to replicate, some frames may not be discovered in the replication whilst others that were not expected may be revealed in the process (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). This study addressed this problem by being open to record any new frames that may emerge in the coding process.

According to Scheufele (1999) frames can be studied either as dependent or independent variables. As dependent variables, frames can be studied by examining the factors that contribute to their formation. Some of these factors have been identified by Shoemaker and Reese (1996) to include influences at the organisational and individual levels such as personal attitudes, beliefs and values, and professional roles and ethics.

Another way frames have been classified is into issue-specific and generic frames (de Vreese, 2005). Issue-specific frames are frames that are relevant or limited to studying specific issues, topics or events. An analysis of studies published in prominent communication journals that used framing theory revealed that 78 per cent employed issue-specific frames (Vliegenthart, 2012). Rodriguez and Blumell (2014) for instance used the issue-specific frames morality and equality in examining how the media framed marriage equality in the United States of America in 2013. One major disadvantage of employing issue-specific frames in a study is the difficulty to generalise findings to others as a result of the use of small samples. In spite of this limitation, issue-specific frames allow for a high degree of specificity of details relevant to a study.

Generic frames on the other hand are not limited to any specific topic or event. They can be applied to any news coverage regardless of the topic, context and time (Vliegenthart, 2012). The most used generic frames, according to Vliegenthart (2012), are Iyengar’s (1991)
episodic and thematic frames and Semetko and Valkenburg’s (2000) conflict, responsibility, human interest, economic consequence and morality frames. This study utilised four of the five generic frames (conflict, responsibility, human interest, and morality frames) identified by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) to examine same-sex relationships in the Ghanaian press. These frames were used by Kenix (2008) in examining frames that were employed by American and New Zealand newspapers in reporting same-sex rights. Generic frames were adopted for the study also because of their merits. Studies using generic frames are more generalizable. Also, as they can be used regardless of context, studies using these frames are more comparable than those that use issue-specific frames as it allows for comparison of treatment of issues across context and time. Generic frames also help in theory building (Vliegenthart, 2012). Additionally, generic frames were considered more viable for the present study because according to Vliegenthart (2012), such frames are ideal for quantitative studies as they answer standard questions about news items.

In spite of these advantages, very few studies tend to use generic frames. This study responded to the challenge thrown by scholars to consider generic frames with the aim of providing a foundation for future research and making studies more comparable to others in Ghana and elsewhere.

2.1.3 Framing as a process

De Vreese (2005) argues that framing is a process that involves four stages namely the frame-building, frame-setting, level of consequence on individuals and level of consequence on society. The first stage, frame-building, which was borrowed from agenda-setting research, refers to how frames emerge and are, formed (Scheufele, 1999). This area of framing, according to Bru’ggemann (2014), has to some extent been neglected by researchers and therefore needs to be given attention. Frame-building may be as a result of both internal and
external factors such as personal convictions and media ownership respectively. These factors influence journalists in the course of their work (Shoemaker and Reese, 1996). At the frame-building stage, journalists may be involved in frame-sending (serve strictly as conduits for relaying information or interpretations of other sources to the public), frame-setting (rely on their own personal interpretations of issues in the transmission of news) or a blend of the two (present both the frames of others and theirs but provide cues as to which of these frames are more acceptable). The result of these interactions is the texts or news contents that are presented to the public (Bru¨ggemann, 2014). This study sought to add to the scant research in the frame-building stage by also examining the factors that influence media practitioners’ coverage of same-sex relationships.

The frame-setting stage, also similar to agenda-setting and in some instances referred to as second level agenda setting, is an interaction or interplay between the media’s frame and the individual’s own predispositions (Scheufele, 1999). This interaction may shape beliefs and perceptions of an issue. It may also lead to the adoption of certain attitudes on both the individual and societal level in the individual and societal consequences stages respectively. Thus, the consequences at the individual level refer to the outcome of media frames or the effect that media frames have on people’s perceptions and attitudes. However, societal level consequence of media frames, the final stage, may lead to shaping of policies or actions at the societal level.

2.2 Chapter summary

The media is noted for its ability to influence and change perceptions and attitudes. One of the tools they use in doing this is framing. This is a process whereby through the attachment of salience to specific attributes or issues, the selection of sources and strategic placement of stories among others, cues are sent to audiences on how information should be interpreted. As
this study is interested in examining how the media framed same-sex relationships and the factors that influenced the production of those frames, framing theory was discussed in this chapter as the theoretical framework underpinning the study.
CHAPTER THREE
LITERATURE REVIEW

3.0 Introduction

A number of studies have been undertaken to examine the media’s coverage of same-sex relationships. Some of these, emanating from different parts of the world, have analysed media’s portrayal of the practice by focusing on areas such as same-sex marriage; the rights of homosexuals; legislations and actions directed at people who practice same-sex relationships. Findings from most of these studies indicate that regardless of context, that is country whose media was examined, same-sex relationships were negatively portrayed. However, in some cases, negative portrayals decreased with time. Some positive and neutral views were also found. Sources of information also were found to be people other than homosexuals. Therefore, homosexual sources were often missing or few in stories on same-sex relationships.

This chapter reviews some of these studies with the aim of drawing on them in order to achieve the objectives of the present study. To make the review meaningful, the chapter has been divided into four sections. The first discusses studies on the general portrayal and framing of same-sex relationships. The second section looks at studies that have examined the sources of information that were used by the media in covering same-sex relationships. The third section of the chapter reviews a study on journalists’ perception of same-sex relationships. Finally, two studies which were conducted in Ghana and examined the general portrayal of same-sex relationships, sources of information and tone were also reviewed in the fourth section.
3.1 Media framing or portrayal of same-sex relationships

Meyers (1994) investigated one of the United States of America’s influential newspapers, Washington Post, coverage of the attempt to repeal the ban on homosexuals’ entry into the military during President Clinton’s era. The objective of the study was to examine how media portrayed homosexuals. A critical discourse analysis was undertaken of articles published in the newspaper from December 30, 1992 to February 12, 1993. A total of 24 news stories that were dealt with the repeal were analysed.

Meyers (1994) found that homosexuals were portrayed as deviants, who were prepared to ruin the social and moral order. The findings further showed that the newspaper presented homosexuals as an influential group with the ability to lobby politicians to fight for their interests.

In another research, Kenix (2008) conducted a comparative study of newspapers’ framing of homosexuals’ rights in the United States of America and New Zealand using four generic frames (conflict, human interest, morality and responsibility frames). The study investigated and compared the treatment of same-sex rights by press in the two countries.

Kenix (2008) analysed 277 newspaper articles from 2003-2005. Of this number, 131 articles were found in New Zealand newspapers whereas 146 were discovered in American newspapers. These articles were identified with the keyword “same-sex” in headlines and the lead of news articles.

The findings indicated that, generally, New Zealand newspapers portrayed same-sex rights more favourably than American newspapers with New Zealand newspapers presenting same-sex rights positively whilst US newspapers were neutral in their coverage. This difference, according to Kenix (2008) suggests that the New Zealand press was more supportive of
same-sex rights than the US press; a situation which is not surprising considering the fact that New Zealand had decriminalised homosexuality as far back as 1986.

Kenix (2008) also found that American newspapers relied more on the conflict frame whereas New Zealand papers often used the human-interest frame. The findings indicated however that, American newspapers utilised the responsibility and morality frames more than New Zealand newspapers. Also, American newspapers named government and individuals as responsible for ‘solving’ issues of same-sex rights whereas New Zealand newspapers hardly named a responsible agent for addressing the issue.

The difference in frames used by newspapers from the two countries, according to Kenix (2008), could be explained by cultural variations (such as religion, education and morality) that exist in the two countries. Kenix (2008) therefore contends that cultural factors affect media content. The present research investigated how homosexuality was framed in a context completely different from the US and New Zealand with a view to understanding how the Ghanaian media also framed the practice.

Kenix’s (2008) study is of relevance to this study because aside from informing this study of suitable theoretical frameworks and methodology, its use of generic frames motivated the adoption of same for the study.

Using qualitative framing analysis, Adams (2013) investigated frames used by the *Los Angeles Times* in its coverage of two referenda items which were targeted at homosexuals in California – Proposition 6 of 1978 and Proposition 8 of 2008. Adams (2013) also examined differences in the coverage of the two propositions as well as the ways in which coverage of homosexuals changed over the years. The researcher’s decision to use the *Los Angeles Times*
was because it was the largest circulating daily newspaper, it was reputable and had a comprehensive and accessible archive.

Theoretically underpinned by framing, the researcher analysed newspaper articles from September 1 to November 4 and November 7 for Proposition 6 and 8 respectively. An inductive textual analysis was done on articles that extensively discussed both propositions.

A total of 54 texts were analysed for Proposition 6 and 62 for Proposition 8. The findings indicated that there were differences in the media’s coverage of the two propositions. One such difference, in terms of frames, was the shift from portraying homosexuality as a ‘sexual preference’ in 1978 to homosexuality as a ‘sexual orientation’ in 2008. Thus, the perception that homosexuality was a ‘lifestyle’, deliberately learnt and therefore teachable had changed to one where considered a sexual orientation, same-sex relationship was seen as innate and therefore uncontrollable. Though indicative of progress, Adams (2013) considers this transition from sexual preference to sexual orientation problematic because it continues to reinforce arguments that psychosocial/biological factors are the causes of homosexuality although there is insufficient scientific proof that supports either of these claims.

On support for homosexuality (observed through who endorsed a proposition or not), the researcher found that unlike in 1978 where very few public figures came out to declare their support or otherwise for the practice, in 2008, prominent figures were unafraid to publicly state their support for same-sex relationships. Also, whereas homosexuality was considered immoral and was often stereotyped in 1978, in 2008, the focus was on its legalisation. Thus, framing shifted from morality to legality where it was considered alright to be homosexual so far as there was no agitation for the practice to be recognised or legitimised. Thus, Adams
(2013) shows that coverage of same-sex relationships and media frames can change over time.

In another study, Persson (2015) examined how Russian mainstream media portrayed lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) issues during the promulgation of a bill aimed at banning ‘non-traditional sexual relations’. A qualitative textual analysis of newspapers and television coverage of the bill between January 25 and June 2013 was undertaken. The researcher conducted an intensive study of two newspapers, both widely read but one sensationalist and the other affiliated to government – a methodology that is similar to the current study. News bulletins of a state-controlled television station were also studied. An extensive coverage of other mainstream media was carried out simultaneously in order to achieve a more comprehensive picture of how mainstream media also covered the issue.

The findings revealed that same-sex relationship was portrayed negatively and was constructed as a threat to the survival of the nation because it essentially hinders the reproduction of the nation. This is consistent with the findings of Meyers (1994) and Adams (2013) that homosexuals were portrayed negatively by media and were presented as a threat to society.

Persson (2015) however found that, some news reports from the Russian media challenged the dominant negative representation of same-sex relationships. This was done through reports of homophobic attacks on suspected homosexuals, presentation of a human face to homosexuality and conflicting views on the foreignness of homosexuality.

In a related study, Strand (2012) explored Ugandan press coverage of the popular Anti-Homosexuality Bill (AHB) which brought Uganda into the limelight. The study, like previous research, sought to investigate the media’s ability to fairly report issues of homosexuality in a
homophobic environment; that is the degree to which a discriminatory social environment manifested itself in media texts. The agenda-setting and framing theories underpinned the study.

Strand (2012) undertook a critical discourse and content analyses of online and manual editions of two newspapers over a three-month period. Similar to the current study, Strand (2012) used one government-owned and one privately owned newspaper in order to achieve the set goals.

A total of 115 news items were found with equal coverage from both newspapers at the outset. Decreasing coverage from the government-owned paper was however recorded after the AHB drew international criticisms. Consistent with previous scholarship (Alagappar and Kaur, 2009; Tettey, 2016; Quist-Adade et al., 2014) the findings also revealed that homosexuals and homosexuality were negatively portrayed and ‘othered’ by both newspapers. However, the privately-owned newspaper was more balanced in its coverage than the pro-government newspaper. This it did by providing alternatives to understanding discrimination against homosexuals.

The recommendation by Strand (2012), to include journalists and editors in studies, in order to fully understand contextual constraints and how they are manoeuvred, informed the inclusion of media practitioners in the present study.

Alagappar and Kaur (2009) examined press coverage of same-sex relationships in Malaysia from September 1, 1999 to December 31, 2006 in order to find out how the Malaysian press portrayed issues of same-sex relationships. The study was conducted using a mixed method of qualitative and quantitative content analysis with the unit of analysis being all local news stories (including opinions, editorials and letters to the editor) on same-sex relationships. The
news articles were obtained from the online database of *New Straits Times (NST)*, the oldest and largest newspaper in Malaysia. It was also one of the most widely read newspapers in the country.

A total of 86 articles were analysed, with findings from the quantitative analysis indicating that 64 of the stories portrayed same-sex relationships negatively. This finding was a reflection of the predominantly Islamic Malaysian society where according to the researchers, all religious groupings condemned homosexuality. Only nine articles were positive and 13 were neutral. Stories were also found to be well placed to attract readers thereby indicating that salience was attached to the same-sex relationships.

Findings from the qualitative analysis also showed that homosexuality was portrayed as against religion. It was additionally presented as a social illness which was foreign and therefore was punishable and should be censored in the entertainment industry. These portrayals by the media, according to Alagappar and Kaur (2009), become the reality of homosexuals and readers as they inform them of the acceptability or otherwise of the practice.

Alagappar and Kaur’s (2009) study is important to the current study because parts of its methodology and definition of some key variables such as ‘tone’ were relied on by the current study.

Kuhar (2003) investigated press representation of same-sex relationships in Slovenia for a period of three decades - from 1970 to 2000. A critical discourse analysis of local media reports in daily newspapers and magazines was undertaken to analyse domestic journalistic reports. A total of 644 texts, from more than 30 newspapers and magazines that dealt with the
social, political and economic dimensions of homosexuality published between 1970 and 2000 formed the sample.

In his findings, Kuhar (2003) classified press portrayal of same-sex relationships over the 30 years period into five stages: stereotyping, medicalization, sexualisation, secrecy and normalization. The first stage, stereotyping of homosexuality, established that the media drew on existing perception of gays and lesbians as effeminate and masculine respectively in the portrayal of the practice. These stereotypes were also based on socially constructed views of gender. Also, the press medicalised same-sex relationships by presenting it as a mental disorder as time went on. Same-sex relationships were additionally presented as an issue of sexuality by the press. Kuhar (2003) also found that the media portrayed same-sex-relationships as a disgraceful and shameful practice which needed to be hidden. Therefore, same-sex relationships were shrouded in secrecy. The final stage of press portrayal revealed that same-sex relationships became normalised. The stereotyping, medicalization and sexualisation stages of the practice were surpassed and homosexuality was presented by the press as a normal practice.

Kuhar (2003) concludes, contrary to other studies (Quist-Adade et al., 2014; Alagappar & Kaur, 2009), that in the period 1970 – 2000, media portrayal of same-sex relationships were generally neutral and sympathetic. In spite of this, negativity still persisted in the coverage of practice with media relying on negative stereotypes in its construction of homosexuals.

Through a critical discourse analysis, Chang and Ren (2016) examined how five influential and highly read daily newspapers in Beijing covered same-sex relationships between 2010 and 2015. The study was based on the framing theory and the concept of representation. A
census was conducted of all five newspapers because of the unavailability of stories. A total of 71 news stories were found and analysed.

Chang and Ren (2016) discovered that homosexuals were portrayed by the media as weak people who were often victims of crimes. The study further showed that homosexuals were presented as violent subjects. Again supporting previous studies (Meyers, 1998; Persson 2015), Chang and Ren (2016) found that homosexuals were portrayed by the media as enemies to traditional values and a source of social instability.

3.2 Sources of information on same-sex relationships

The sources of information employed by journalists play a crucial role in media framing (Li & Liu, 2010). Studies have shown that in covering issues of same-sex relationships, the media tends to depend mostly on official and expert sources such as politicians, doctors and lawyers whilst very little voice is given to the point of view of homosexuals.

Meyer’s (1994) study on press coverage of the attempt to repeal the ban on homosexuals’ entry into the United States of America’s military also examined the sources of information used by the press. The study found that homosexuals, who were often implicated in stories, were left out as sources. Rather, senators and members of the public were employed as information sources. Meyers (1994) argued that by ignoring homosexual sources, the media perpetuated homophobia and stereotypes as the sources relied on often held homophobic and stereotypic views on same-sex relationships which were transferred to readers.

Similarly, Kenix (2008) investigated the sources of information used by press in New Zealand and the United States of America in her comparative analysis of press coverage of same-sex rights in the two countries. Kenix (2008) found that differences existed in the types of sources used by the press in the two countries. American newspapers employed elite
sources such as lawyers, judges, government officials and business people whilst New Zealand newspapers used liberal sources such as social change activists and citizens in their stories. The use of liberal sources by the New Zealand newspapers according to Kenix (2008) could be an indication that sources were more sympathetic to gay and lesbian rights than those employed by American newspapers. It could also mean that journalists deliberately sought sources which were more sympathetic to the cause of homosexuals. In essence, the sources used by the media can influence frames in media content.

Alagappar and Kaur (2009) also examined sources represented in stories on same-sex relationships. The researchers found that politicians, religious leaders, individuals and activists were predominantly used whilst homosexuals were often exempted from expressing their views. The researchers contend that the reliance on these expert sources, especially politicians and religious leaders, conferred unto them the moral right to determine the appropriateness or otherwise of issues such as same-sex relationships.

Similarly, in Strand’s (2012) study of Ugandan press coverage of the popular Anti-Homosexuality Bill (AHB), findings indicated that homosexual sources were often ignored by both newspapers as they were given very little space to air their opinions. This is also consistent with other studies (Alagappar and Kaur, 2009; Tettey, 2016) which found that homosexual sources were usually missing in news reports. The findings however showed that, although homosexuals were given little opportunity to be heard, the privately-owned newspaper was more sympathetic to the homosexual cause. Hence, it covered issues affecting homosexuals such as discrimination, religious condemnation and denial of human rights than the pro-government newspaper than the state-owned newspaper.
3.3 Journalists’ views of same-sex relationships

As indicated in the problem statement section of Chapter One of this study, very few studies have interrogated same-sex relationships from the perspective of journalists in order to find out how those perspectives culminate in media content. This section discusses one research that was conducted on journalists’ perspective of same-sex relationships.

Borlase (2001) investigated Ugandan journalists’ views and experiences in covering same-sex relationships. Face-to-face in-depth interviews were conducted with journalists who had covered some issues of homosexuality in the past using a semi-structured interview guide. The convenience and snowball sampling approaches were used. A total of 11 journalists, including three editors, were interviewed. Transcripts of interviews were analysed thematically.

Borlase (2001) found that with regards to personal views of homosexuality, some respondents believed in sexual freedom while others were indifferent to it. Also, whilst some journalists believed that people were born homosexual, others thought it was a chosen lifestyle and therefore condemned it. Acceptance or rejection of the practice was linked to both religious and cultural values. However, African cultural values more than religious reasons often determined respondents’ attitudes towards homosexuality.

Additionally, the study found that some journalists deliberately avoided publishing stories on same-sex relationships in order avoid media exposure to the practice. This, according to the journalists, was because media exposure may entice or lure individuals into practicing homosexuality. Some respondents however thought media coverage of the practice was necessary because it would educate and help homosexuals to give up the act. Borlase (2001) also found that, the attitude of media consumers and society in general, influenced
journalists’ coverage of the practice. For instance, some respondents revealed that the lack of stories on same-sex relationships was because they felt their audiences were simply uninterested in issues of homosexuality. The predominance of negative stories when homosexuality was covered, according to respondents, was because that was the preference of media consumers. Fear of being branded homosexual or pro-gay, journalists revealed, also prevented some journalists from balancing their stories with pro-gay views. Other journalists who tried to balance their stories said they could not find sources that were willing to express pro-gay views.

The findings additionally revealed government officials and media owners all subtly interfered with coverage of homosexual issues. Borlase’s (2001) study is relevant to the current study because the current study also seeks to find out journalists’ views of same-sex relationships and the factors that influenced coverage of the practice.

3.4 Coverage of same-sex relationships in Ghana

This section discusses two key studies conducted on the media’s coverage of same-sex relationships in Ghana. These studies provide an indication of the general portrayal of same-sex relationships, sources of information and frames employed by the media in Ghana in covering same-sex relationships.

Quist-Adade, Bates and Wathanafa (2014) examined Ghanaian media’s portrayal of same-sex relationships. A content analysis of 42 newspaper articles from GhanaWeb spanning 2008 to 2011 was conducted.

The study found that remarkably, views were divided on same-sex relationships. Just a little over half (52%) of views were negative whilst a significant 40 per cent were positive. Seven per cent of views were neutral. This finding could be because as the researchers stated, they
were interested in the attitudes of Ghanaians as presented in the media. It is possible people felt comfortable expressing their views through the internet. Additionally, Quist-Adade et al. (2014) found that negative views gradually reduced over the study period. Thus, there were less negative views in 2011 (four negative views) compared with 2008 (eight negative views). There was however no significant change in positive views that were published over the years – which meant that neutral views were introduced where previously, views were either strictly negative or positive.

The persistence of negativity of views on the issue of same-sex relationships, according to Quist-Adade et al. (2014), was as a result of the activities of religious leaders who held and propagated negative views.

Similarly, Tettey (2016) examined how Ghanaian media framed same-sex relationships from 2010 to 2014. A total of 492 news stories were purposively selected from radio and print online media, and portals to represent state-owned, pro-government, opposition, and neutral ownerships. Reports with key words such as “homosexuals”, “gay”, “bisexual”, “gayism”, and “lesbian”, “lesbianism” were identified and were content analysed qualitatively.

Tettey (2016) found that homosexuals were portrayed as ‘evil citizens’ whose mission was to destroy the standards of society. The researcher also found that morality was used as a yardstick for determining the rightness or otherwise of same-sex relationships. Morality, based on religious ethos, was therefore a key frame used to depict same-sex relationships in Ghana.

Additionally, the findings indicated that the media, regardless of ownership, tended to ‘other’, that is, identify homosexuals as different from others, through their reports. In terms of sources, Tettey (2016) found that consistent with other findings (Alagappar and Kaur, 2009)
pro-gay voices were hardly used. Opportunity was often given to anti-gay and expert sources such as health and legal experts to express their views. The researcher contended that although the views represented in the media could be a reflection of public opinion, anti-gay sources were given a lot more attention by the media. Tettey (2016) also argued that the over reliance on sources other than homosexuals often lead to a problematization of homosexuality as these expert sources tended to medicalise same-sex relationships.

3.5 Chapter summary

This chapter discussed previous studies that have been conducted on issues of same-sex relationships. It dwelt on the general portrayal or framing of the practice, tone and sources of information used by media. The studies reviewed showed that same-sex relationships were portrayed negatively with homosexuals often presented as threats to society. Homosexual sources of information were also found to be absent in majority of stories analysed by the studies reviewed.
CHAPTER FOUR
METHODOLOGY

4.0 Introduction
This study sought to examine framing of same-sex relationships by the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide*. It also aimed to investigate the factors that influenced framing of the practice by seeking the perspective of media practitioners.

This chapter focuses on the methodology used by the study. Therefore, it describes and explains the study’s design, population, and sampling, unit of analysis, data collection and data analysis method.

4.1 Research design (Mixed methods)
This study employed a mixed method of quantitative content analysis and in-depth interviews for the collection of data and analysis. This approach has been referred to by researchers by diverse names including blended research, and mixed research. Johnson, Onwuegbuzie and Turner (2007) defined mixed methods research as research that integrates both qualitative and quantitative elements in data collection and analysis with the purposes of providing breadth and depth to the study.

Denzin (1978) identified four types of triangulation: data triangulation, investigator triangulation, theory triangulation, and methodological triangulation. Denzin (1978) further differentiated between *within-method* and *between-method* triangulation. *Within-method* triangulation involves the use of multiple methods from one of the two approaches of research (qualitative or quantitative) in a study whereas *between-methods* triangulation is the use of one or more methods from both the quantitative and qualitative approaches to research. The *between-methods approach*, which was used for this study, has the advantage of being
able to reveal and overcome biases that may be inherent in one method, source or data while this may not be so with within-methods triangulation which basically uses multiple methods within one approach.

The use of mixed methods has been on the rise (Johnson et al., 2007) and has been recommended by researchers because it leads to comprehensive, richer and thicker data (Jick, 1979). A mixed method of content analysis and in-depth interviews was used because it is the most appropriate method for achieving the objectives of this study. By so doing, a comprehensive picture of the media’s coverage of the practice will be presented.

4.1.1 Quantitative research design

A quantitative content analysis of stories published in two leading Ghanaian newspapers, the Daily Graphic and Daily Guide, was undertaken. The decision to employ content analysis in this study was informed by the objectives and questions the researcher sought to answer. Kerlinger (2000) defined content analysis as a method used to analyse communication materials in a scientific way.

As demonstrated in the literature review, content analysis has been used in a number of studies on same-sex issues (Quist-Adade et al., 2014; Kenix, 2008; Alagappar & Kaur, 2009). Some scholars have also argued that content analysis is ideal in conducting studies such as the present one. Kenix (2008) argued that content analysis helps in uncovering embedded meanings behind media texts. Martin (2008) also asserted that the method helps to uncover how minority groups are presented in media and how much access such groups have to the media.
4.1.2 Qualitative research design

Qualitative research helps to understand the meaning people attribute to issues affecting society (Creswell, 2014). It also helps to explore and understand the perspectives and experiences of individuals and groups (Creswell, 2014). Scholars such as Chang and Ren (2016) and Strand (2012) recommend that the qualitative approach, specifically in-depth interviews, be used to complement findings of quantitative studies on same-sex relationships. The approach was used by Borlase (2001) to explore journalists’ views of same-sex relationships.

Face-to-face in-depth interviews with media practitioners, including journalists and editors from the Daily Graphic and Daily Guide, were conducted to determine the factors that influenced coverage of same-sex relationships within the period stipulated. The interviews were conducted using a semi-structured question guide. This approach was used for data collection for two main reasons. First, semi-structured interviews are helpful in exploring the views of respondents on sensitive issues such as same-sex relationships. This is because it gives room for respondents to freely recount and provide information without limitations. Second, just as respondents are not limited in the provision of information, the researcher also has the opportunity to ask questions outside those originally drafted. Semi-structured interviews therefore give the researcher opportunity to probe, ask follow-up questions and seek clarifications when the need arises (Bariball & While, 1994).

4.2 Population

Population is defined by Parahoo (1997) as the total number of elements or units in a group from which data can be collected. Burns and Grove (2003) also define it as all the elements that qualify to be included in a study. For the quantitative aspect of the study, the population
consisted of all editions of the *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* from January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2015, the chosen time period for the study.

All reporters (journalists) whose by-lines appeared in stories on same-sex relationships in the two newspapers and editors of the two newspapers formed the population for the qualitative study.

**4.3 Rationale for Newspaper Selection**

The decision to study newspapers, rather than radio or television, is based on the fact that newspapers have the ability to set the agenda for other media types. Also, newspapers still remain an important source of information for many people despite decline in circulation over the years (Scott, 2009).

The selection of the two newspapers, the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide*, is informed by their status as leading and influential newspapers in Ghana with high circulation. Previous studies, as discussed in the literature review section (Chapter three), used these same yardsticks in selecting the type of media to study (Adams, 2013; Alagappar & Kaur 2009; Meyers, 1998).

Also, the two newspapers are different in terms of ownership; whilst the *Daily Graphic* is state-owned, the *Daily Guide* is a privately-owned newspaper. Therefore, the two newspapers vary in orientation. Whilst the *Daily Graphic* focuses more on official and governance issues, the *Daily Guide* is considered sensationalist and a more tabloid newspaper.

**4.3.1 The *Daily Graphic***

The *Daily Graphic* is a state-owned and influential newspaper. It is the leading newspaper in Ghana with a high circulation rate. The *Daily Graphic* was established by the Daily Mirror Group in 1950. The newspaper had access to both financial and human capital as a result of
its ownership and therefore was able to survive the economic hardship that led other newspapers of the era to fold up. The paper was subsequently bought by the Nkrumah government in 1962 after which it became a state asset (Asante & Gadzekpo, 2000).

The newspaper is published six times a week - from Monday to Saturday. The *Daily Graphic* is widely read with 100,000 copies circulated daily nationwide (Kuehnhenrich, 2012). It covers aspects of society such as foreign affairs, politics, opinions, business and finance, and health. The *Daily Graphic* also has an online portal, [www.graphiconline.com](http://www.graphiconline.com), on which stories published in the newspaper are carried.

The newspaper was chosen for this study for two reasons. First, being state-owned, the newspaper was expected to fairly provide a platform for the expression of diverse and dissenting views (Constitution of the Republic of Ghana; Article 163). It was thus expected that both pro-gay and anti-gay voices would be given attention by the newspaper. Secondly, the reputation of the *Daily Graphic* as a prominent newspaper which is widely circulated with a lot of readership in the country (Kuehnhenrich, 2012) made it a newspaper of choice for this study. The wide reach of the newspaper could mean that various voices from all parts of the country would be represented in the discussion of same-sex relationships.

### 4.3.2 The Daily Guide

The *Daily Guide* is a privately-owned newspaper that is published six times a week, from Monday to Saturday. The newspaper, which has been in existence for over 20 years, is owned by Western Publications Limited. Considered the second largest newspaper in Ghana (African Media Barometer, 2013), the newspaper, like the *Daily Graphic* covers politics, business, international news, opinions, features, letters to the editor, sports and other social
issues among others. The Daily Guide newspaper also has an online portal, www.dailyguideafrica.com, on which stories published in newspaper are carried.

The Daily Guide was selected for this study because being the most widely circulated private newspaper in Ghana; it was assumed that it would offer a platform for the expression of various views on same-sex relationships. Also, being privately owned, it was expected that the newspaper would treat issues differently compared with state-owned media which tends to focus more on officialdom.

4.4 Sampling procedure

Wimmer and Dominick (2005) defined a sample as a representative subset of a population. The sampling method used for the quantitative part of this research was the census. A census is conducted when every element in a universe is tested or measured (Wimmer & Domnick, 2011). The sample for the quantitative study comprised all editions or publications of Daily Graphic and Daily Guide from January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2015.

January 1, 2011 was chosen as the starting point for the study because of the intense media and public discourse that took place after some Western countries declared their intension to tie aid to the acceptance of same-sex relationships in Ghana and Africa generally. Subsequent issues, including the stance of then President John Evans Atta Mills and reported attacks on homosexuals, also informed the selection of the study period.

December 31, 2015 was chosen as the end of the study period because of reports on the sodomy case against Dr Ali-Gabass, a prominent medical doctor who was accused of sodomising a 16 year old boy, which culminated in media and public discussions of same-sex relationships in 2015.
For the qualitative study, a list of reporters whose by-lines appeared on stories of same-sex relationships was generated. A total of 73 reporters, 40 from the *Daily Guide* and 33 from the *Daily Graphic* were on the list. From this, reporters whose names appeared in more than one of the stories were grouped together. This brought the number to 22 reporters from the *Daily Guide* and 11 from the *Daily Graphic*. Simple random sampling was then conducted to select six of these reporters, three from each of the newspapers. Some selected reporters however had to be replaced because of difficulties in reaching them. Two editors, one from each of the newspapers studied, who have experience working on stories relating to same-sex relationships, were also identified for interviews.

In the end, six reporters were interviewed. Of this number, three were female and the rest males. Two editors, a male and a female, were also interviewed. Thus, a total of eight media practitioners participated in the qualitative study. This number was settled on because qualitative research often works with small samples as dealing with a large sample size can be cumbersome, labour-intensive and time-consuming. Again, as this study did not aim at generalising its findings, it was adequate to interview eight media practitioners.

### 4.5 Unit of analysis

Wimmer and Dominick (2011) define the unit of analysis as the elements that are examined in order to make a generalisation of all such units and to explain the differences between them. The unit of analysis thus is the smallest unit in a sample that is tested. According to Wimmer and Dominick (2011), the unit of analysis in a written text can be a single word, a theme or an entire article or story.

For the content analysis, even though foreign stories were found, only local stories were considered. The rationale behind focusing on local reports was to help gain insight into local
perspectives of same-sex relationships that were published in the Ghanaian press. Therefore, all local news stories including editorials, features, opinions, and letters to the editor, that were identified through manual physical reading with key words such as ‘homosexuality,’ ‘same-sex,’ ‘gay,’ and ‘lesbianism’ and were published in the Daily Graphic and Daily Guide from January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2015, were examined as the units of analysis for the quantitative aspect of the study.

Transcripts of in-depth interviews with journalists and editors formed the unit of analysis for the qualitative study.

4.6 Data collection instruments

Two instruments were used for data collection: a coding guide and a semi-structured interview guide. Before commencing the actual data collection, the coding guide was tested on some stories after which the necessary changes were made and proper coding started (see appendix for coding guide). Variables tested for each unit of analysis for the quantitative part were story type (whether straight news story, editorial, feature, opinion, letter to the editor), sources, frames, tone and prominence (story placement and story enhancement).

4.6.1 Coding Guide

The variables were operationally defined as follows:

1. **Headline:** The headline is the title of a story in a newspaper. This variable is important in news reports because it attracts readers to stories in a newspaper. For this study, focus was on headlines or titles of the stories that contained words such as ‘homosexuality,’ ‘homo,’ ‘same-sex,’ ‘gay,’ and ‘lesbianism.’

2. **Story type:** This was to help determine if a story was a straight news piece, an editorial, opinion, column, feature or letter to the editor.
• **Editorials**: These are stories originating from the newspapers. These stories indicate the stance or opinion of the newspaper on specific issues (Brooks, Kennedy, Moen and Ranley, 2011).

• **Letter to the editor**: These are letters written by readers to newspapers stating the views or opinions readers on specific issues.

• **Opinions**: These are stories that indicate the views of individuals on an issue.

• **Features**: These are in-depth, factual and comprehensive account of a topical issue in a relaxed, descriptive and interesting way (Oyero, 2006).

• **Straight news stories**: These are factual and timely stories which state the basic who, what, when, where, why and how (Oyero, 2006).

• **Columns**: Columns are dedicated spaces in newspapers. They carry recurring articles emanating from one writer that express the opinion of the writer on specific issues.

3. **Prominence**: Stories are deemed important by merit of their placement and enhancement as these easily attract readers. This study investigated prominence given to stories by examining story placement and enhancement.

• **Story placement**: Prominent stories are often placed in front, middle or back pages of newspaper in order to attract readers (Okorie and Oyedepo, 2011; Shaari, Hua and Raman, 2006; Dzeble, 2006). The front page however, is deemed more prominent than the others (Okorie and Oyedepo, 2011; Shaari, Hua and Raman, 2006). To measure prominence in terms of placement, stories were examined to find out where stories on same-sex relationships appeared in the newspapers.

• **Story enhancement**: Prominent headlines stories often consist of text and pictures or images that set them apart. Thus stories were examined to ascertain whether they were reported only in texts, or with images or solely images or cartoons.
4. **Sources of information**: The sources of information used by the media are the individuals or people that are cited as the providers of information. Sources are important to analyse because they are an indication of the different perspectives that exist within society on a given issue. Sources of information are also capable of influencing readers’ perception of issues by framing those issues to reflect their own (the sources) stance or viewpoint. Sources that were examined included the following:

- Politicians including the president
- Public officials
- Legal experts
- Medical experts
- Religious leaders
- Members of the public
- Self-identified homosexuals
- Human rights activists
- Other (Sources other than the above)

5. **Tone**: The tone of a story indicates the writer’s feelings or attitudes towards the subject. Tone examined how stories portrayed same-sex relationships by relying on three categories, that is, whether stories were negative, neutral or positive (Alagappar and Kaur, 2010).

- **Negative**: Stories that contained phrases or words that condemned or portrayed same-sex relationships negatively.
- **Positive**: Stories that contained words or phrases that were supportive of, or portrayed same-sex relationships positively.
- **Neutral**: Stories that neither supported nor opposed same-sex relationships.
6. Types of Frame

Some generic frames that have been tested in previous studies were adopted for the study. They are the conflict frame, the responsibility frame, human interest frame and morality frame. These frames are explained as follows:

- **Conflict frame**: Reports that indicate opposing or conflicting views between individuals, groups or institutions on an issue (Kenix, 2008).
- **Human-interest frame**: Reports that bring an emotional angle to the representation of an issue or problem (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). Such reports appeal to the emotions of people and connect readers to the story (Kenix, 2008).
- **Morality frame**: Reports that put an issue, problem or event in a religious context and proffer moral prescriptions (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000).
- **Responsibility frame**: Reports that assign responsibility for a problem and demand solutions to them (Kenix, 2008). Here, the study further looked out for the agents mentioned as responsible for solving the issue of same-sex relationships. Some of the options provided included government or the state, religious institutions, the family or homes, educational institutions, and individuals.
- **Other frames**: Frames other than the four generic frames discussed above.

4.6.2 Interview guide

A semi-structured interview guide was used to allow follow-up questions and also to enable the researcher pursue other topical areas that emerged in course of the interviews.

The interviews were recorded after permission was granted by respondents at the beginning of each interview. Hand-written notes were also taken to back up audio recordings and also to record other observations.
4.7 Data collection

For the quantitative study, data was collected on newspapers that were kept at the Department of Communication Studies Library, School of Performing Arts Library, Balme Library, and the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide head offices.

For the qualitative study, apart from one interview which was conducted via phone as the respondent lived outside Accra, all the others were face-to-face. The interviews took place at a location and time chosen by respondents. To ensure privacy, the interviews were conducted at a private setting in the workplaces of respondents.

4.8 Data Analysis

To enable the researcher analyse the quantitative data, data collected was inputted into the software, Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS). The data was then analysed using descriptive statistics.

A thematic analysis was conducted on transcripts of in-depth interviews conducted. All transcripts were read over several times and audio recordings also played repeatedly to determine the themes.

4.9 Inter-coder reliability

Cohen’s Kappa inter-coder reliability test was conducted using SPSS in order to ensure reliability of data collected for the quantitative aspect of the study. The process involved the researcher and another MPhil student independently coding stories that were found on same-sex relationships. This was after the other coder was trained on the meanings of the variables that were being tested. The test yielded a result of 0.81 (results greater than 0.67 are adequate), suggesting a high level of agreement between the two coders.
According to Tanveer (2008), the credibility of a qualitative research is dependent mostly on the abilities and efforts of the researcher. One way of increasing the credibility of the study was through the adoption of a random sampling technique. Thus, respondents for the in-depth interview, as discussed earlier in the sampling section of this chapter, were chosen using the simple random technique. This was to ensure that all elements in the population, in this case reporters, had equal opportunity to be selected. Other strategies proposed by McMillan and Schumacher (2006) and cited in Tanveer (2008) such as recording of interviews, verbatim transcription of recorded interviews and objectively analysing and presenting findings even when they are discrepant were observed to ensure credibility of the study.

4.10 Chapter summary

This chapter discussed the steps that were taken in data collection and the rationale behind those steps. A mixed methods of content analysis and in-depth interview, which was employed for data collection and analysis, was chosen because the approach provides a holistic picture of same-sex relationships. Sampling procedure, the units of analysis, data collection instruments (coding and interview guides), and data analysis techniques and intercoder reliability processes were all presented and discussed in this chapter. Every decision made in this chapter was based on previous studies, some of which were discussed in the literature review chapter.
CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study. The study aimed at examining the framing of same-sex relationships by the *Daily Guide* and *Daily Graphic* and the factors that influenced coverage of the practice by media practitioners.

Descriptive statistical tools such as graphs, charts and tables were used in presenting findings of the quantitative content analysis. Thematic analyses of in-depth interviews are also presented in this chapter.

5.1. Number of stories on same-sex relationships

Table 1: Frequency distribution of stories on same-sex relationships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of newspaper</th>
<th>Number of stories</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Daily Graphic</em></td>
<td>56</td>
<td>41.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Daily Guide</em></td>
<td>79</td>
<td>58.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The study examined framing of same-sex relationships by the *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* from January 2011 to December 2015. A total of 135 stories were found in the two newspapers using key words and phrases such as ‘homosexuality,’ ‘same-sex,’ ‘gay,’ ‘homo,’ and ‘lesbianism’ during the period of study. As shown in Table 1, the majority of stories (79), representing 58.5 per cent, were found in the *Daily Guide*. The *Daily Graphic* also published 56 stories constituting 41.5 per cent of stories.
As summarised in Figure 1, the majority of stories found in the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* during the study period were published in 2011. Almost 60 per cent of the stories found during the study period (77 stories), were published in 2011 while the lowest number of stories, 5 (3.7%) were recorded in 2014.

### 5.1.2 Type of story

This category, the type of story, indicates how a story was presented. Stories were classified into straight news stories, features, opinions, columns, letters to the editor and editorials. The results, presented in Table 2, indicated that straight news stories, representing 65.9 per cent (89) of stories, constituted the majority of stories published by the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide*. Features accounted for 8.1 per cent of stories (11 stories). Letters to the editor and columns also together constituted 14.8 per cent of stories (7.4% each). Only 4 of the stories published (3%) were editorials.
Table 2: Type of stories on same-sex relationships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story type</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Straight news</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>65.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editorial</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columns</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opinions</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.1.3. Placement of stories

The placement or location of a story in a newspaper reflects the importance attached to it. Placement is also a signal to readers that an issue is of significance and therefore should be treated as such. Stories that are deemed important by newspapers are generally placed in the front page followed by centre, back and other inside pages. However, front pages are considered to be more important than all others (Okorie and Oyedepo, 2011; Shaari, Hua and Raman, 2006). This study examined prominence accorded same-sex relationships by investigating the placement of stories on the subject.

The findings, as shown in Figure 2, revealed that stories on same-sex relationships were given very little prominence in terms of placement by the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide. Out of 135 stories, an overwhelming majority (108), representing 80 per cent, were found in pages other than the front, centre, editorial and back pages of both newspapers. Front page stories on same-sex relationships were 20 (14.8%). Only three stories, accounting for 2.2 per cent, were found on centre pages of the newspapers.
5.1.4 Story enhancement

Prominence can also be achieved through the use of enhancements. This refers to presence or absence of images and info graphics accompanying texts in stories. This category sought to find out the degree of importance attached to same-sex relationships through the use of enhancements.

The findings revealed that, in terms of enhancement, the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* newspapers gave some amount of prominence to same-sex relationships. More than 60 per cent of stories, 60.7 per cent, (82 stories) were texts accompanied by images. A total of 55 stories (39.3%) were texts only. These findings are presented in Figure 3.
5.1.5 Tone of publication

Tone is a reflection of the attitude of the writer of a story towards the subject. For this study, tone of stories was classified into three: positive, negative and neutral. The tone of a story was classified as being positive when it contained words or phrases that were supportive of same-sex relationships. Stories with negative tones on the other hand used words or phrases that condemned and opposed the practice. Neutral stories where neither supportive of, nor condemned same-sex relationships.

As illustrated in Figure 4, out of the stories that were published, 106 (78.5%), portrayed same-sex relationships negatively, 26 (19.3%) were neutral whilst only three (2.2%) were positive.
5.1.6 Sources of information

The sources of information used by the media, as discussed and demonstrated in Chapters One and Three of this study, are capable of influencing perspectives of readers. Sources also influence the formation of frames. This study therefore sought to investigate the sources of information that the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* employed in reporting issues of same-sex relationships. This was to help determine the viewpoints that are often presented in discussions of the practice.

The findings showed that the most used sources of information by the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* were religious leaders (33.8%) and politicians (25%). Medical and legal experts together also constituted 11.2 per cent of sources. Only 8.8 per cent of the sources that were cited in news stories were self-identified or suspected homosexuals.
Table 3: Sources of information used by the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources of information</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Per cent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politicians</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public officials</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal experts</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical experts</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious leaders</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>33.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of the public</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-identified/suspected homosexuals</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human rights activists</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.1.7 Types of Frames

The study examined four generic frames: conflict, human-interest, morality and responsibility frames. The conflict frame was coded when stories indicated opposing or conflicting views between individuals, groups or institutions on same-sex relationships. When stories presented a human face or emotionalised issues of same-sex relationships, they were coded as using the human interest frame. The morality frame was also coded when stories portrayed same-sex relationships in terms of moral prescriptions, religion and culture. Finally, stories were classified under the responsibility when responsibility for addressing or solving same-sex relationships was mentioned. In some stories more than a frame was found and so was coded as multiple responses. Therefore, a total of 191 frames were analysed.

The findings, as shown in Figure 5, indicate that the most used frame by the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* was the morality frame which constituted 97 stories, representing 50.5 per cent out of the total number of stories published. This constituted more than half the responses. The conflict frame, constituted 19.3 per cent of stories (37 stories). A total of 30
stories, accounting for 15.6 per cent, used the responsibility frame. The human interest frame, the least used, constituted 14.1 per cent of stories analysed.

**Figure 5: Frequency of frames used**

The study also looked at the agents identified or mentioned by sources of information in the stories as responsible for addressing or solving the issue of same-sex relationships. As shown in Table 4, government, representing 30.8 per cent, and religious bodies who also accounted for 32.7 per cent, were mostly charged with the responsibility of tackling same-sex relationships. Homes/ families (9.6%) and educational institutions (9.6%) together constituted 19.2 per cent of agents identified as responsible for solving homosexuality whilst individuals, the least mentioned, constituted 5.8 per cent of responsible agents mentioned.

**Table 4: Agents responsible for addressing same-sex relationships**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsible agent</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government/ the state</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>30.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious bodies</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>32.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homes/ families</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational institutions</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individuals</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.2 COMPARING COVERAGE BY NEWSPAPERS

This study generally sought to examine framing of same-sex relationships by two influential Ghanaian newspapers, the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide*. Cross tabulations and chi-square statistical tests were conducted to determine if there were differences or similarities in the coverage of same-sex relationships by the two newspapers. This decision to compare the newspapers is informed by findings from previous research which have shown that external (working context, media ideologies etc.) and internal factors (background of journalists, ethics etc.) influence media content (Shoemaker and Reese, 1996). Therefore, as the newspapers selected for this study have different orientations, differences were expected to exist in their coverage of same-sex relationships.

5.2.1 Number of stories published by the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide

As indicated earlier, a total of 135 stories discussing same-sex relationships were published by the two newspapers. Of this number, the highest, 79 (58.5%), was found in the *Daily Guide* whilst the *Daily Graphic* published 56 stories (41.5%). The findings further revealed that although the number of stories published by both newspapers reduced significantly over the years under study, the number of stories published by *Daily Graphic*, which in 2011 published more stories than the *Daily Guide*, declined drastically. These findings are presented in Figure 6.
5.2.2 Type of stories published by the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide

The results showed that slight differences existed in the types of stories published by the two newspapers. Table 5 shows that, although both newspapers predominantly used straight news stories in their coverage of same-sex relationships, the Daily Guide relied more on such stories than the Daily Graphic. Out of the stories that were found in the Daily Guide, 78.5 per cent were straight news stories. On the other hand, 48.2 per cent of stories published by the Daily Graphic on same-sex relationships were straight news stories.

The Daily Graphic however showed some diversity in story types compared with the Daily Guide. Aside from editorials, the Daily Graphic published more of the other story types than the Daily Guide. Features accounted for 16.1 per cent of stories on same-sex relationships found in the Daily Graphic. This was followed by letters to the editor and columns which were 14.3 per cent each. Columns published by the Daily Graphic also were 5.4 per cent whereas editorials formed only 1.8 per cent of stories found in the Daily Graphic newspaper.
The *Daily Guide* however published 8.9 per cent columns, 3.8 per cent opinions and editorials, and 2.5 per cent of features and editorials.

**Table 5: Comparing type of stories published by *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF NEWSPAPER</th>
<th>TYPE OF STORY</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Straight news</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DAILY GRAPHIC</strong></td>
<td>27</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>48.2%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Features</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Editorials</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Letters to the editor</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Columns</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opinions</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>89</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>65.9%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**5.2.3 Placement of Story by the newspapers**

With regards to story placement, the findings revealed that both newspapers published more stories on ‘other pages’ than prominent pages such as front, editorial, centre and back pages. The *Daily Guide* and the *Daily Graphic* published 82.3 per cent and 76.8 per cent of stories on same-sex relationships on ‘other pages’ respectively. Front, centre, back and editorial pages were treated the same by the newspapers with the only slight differences being that whilst the *Daily Guide* carried two stories on its back pages, the *Daily Graphic* published none there. The chi-square test ($\chi^2=2.983$, df=4, $p=0.561$) also revealed that no significant
difference existed in the placement of stories by the newspapers since the chi-square probability (0.561) is greater than the significance level (0.05). This result is shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Comparing placement of stories by the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF NEWSPAPER</th>
<th>STORY PLACEMENT</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Front page</td>
<td>Back page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAILY GRAPHIC</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17.9%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAILY GUIDE</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12.7%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14.8%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\( \chi^2 = 2.983 \) \hspace{1cm} df=4 \hspace{1cm} p=0.561

5.2.4 Story enhancement

As shown in Table 7, the newspapers differed significantly in prominence given to stories on same-sex relationships in terms of enhancement. The Daily Guide, through the use of text with images, gave prominence to same-sex relationships with 75.9 per cent of stories being texts accompanied by images and 24.1 per cent being text only. The Daily Graphic on the other hand published 39.3% of stories with images. The rest, representing 60.7 per cent of all stories published by the newspaper were without images. The results of the chi-square test also showed this significant difference in the use of enhancement by the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide.
Table 7: Comparing story enhancement by the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of newspaper</th>
<th>Story enhancement</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Text only</td>
<td>Text with image/ graph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAILY GRAPHIC</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60.7%</td>
<td>39.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAILY GUIDE</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24.1%</td>
<td>75.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>39.3%</td>
<td>60.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$\chi^2=18.473$ \hspace{1cm} df=1 \hspace{1cm} p=0.000

5.2.5 Comparing tone of stories

Tone of stories in both newspapers was negative. As many as 71.4 per cent and 73.4 per cent of stories published by the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* respectively, portrayed same-sex relationships negatively. *Daily Graphic* published 26.8 per cent neutral stories whereas the *Daily Graphic* published 24.1 per cent. Only 2.5 per cent of positive tones were found in the *Daily Guide*. The *Daily Graphic* recorded 1.8 per cent positive tone. This similarity in tone is supported by the result of the chi-square statistical test ($\chi^2=0.197$, df=2, p=0.906) as shown in Table 8.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF NEWSPAPER</th>
<th>TONE OF STORY</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAILY GRAPHIC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>71.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAILY GUIDE</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>73.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>72.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$\chi^2=0.197$  \hspace{1cm} df=2  \hspace{1cm} p=0.906

### 5.2.6 Comparing frames of same-sex relationships

The comparative analysis showed that both newspapers tended to frame same-sex relationships almost in the same way. Thus the morality frame was used predominantly by both newspapers. A total of 48.1 per cent of stories published by the *Daily Graphic* used morality frames whilst the *Daily Guide* used 53.2 per cent. The findings as shown in Figure 7 also revealed that the *Daily Graphic* relied more on the conflict frame (24.7%) after the morality frame. The *Daily Guide* however used the responsibility frame (16.2%) most after the morality frame. The human interest frame constituted 12.3 per cent and 15.3 per cent of frames used by the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* respectively.
5.2.7 Sources of information used by the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide

The study found that both the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide relied more on religious sources than others such as homosexuals and experts. As shown in Table 8, 28.6 per cent of sources of information employed by the Daily Graphic were religious leaders. They (religious leaders) also constituted 36.5 per cent sources employed by the Daily Guide. Politicians, the second most employed source, constituted 25 per cent of sources used by each of the newspapers. The Daily Graphic used more expert sources than the Daily Guide. Cumulatively, expert sources (legal and medical sources) constituted 23.3 per cent of sources used by the Daily Graphic whereas Daily Guide cumulatively used 4.8 per cent expert sources. Conversely, the Daily Guide employed more self-identified or suspected homosexual (10.6%) than the Daily Graphic (5.4%).
Table 9: Comparing sources used by the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCES OF INFORMATION</th>
<th>TYPE OF NEWSPAPER</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DAILY GRAPHIC</td>
<td>DAILY GUIDE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politicians</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public officials</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal experts</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical experts</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17.9%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious leaders</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>36.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of the public</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-identified/</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suspected homosexuals</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human rights activists</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3 RESULTS OF IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

For the purpose of anonymity due to the sensitive nature of same-sex relationships in Ghana, codes were used to label participants of in-depth interviews. The following are codes for each respondent: R1DGU (Respondent 1, *Daily Guide*), R2DGU (Respondent 2, *Daily Guide*), R3DGU (Respondent 3, *Daily Guide*), R4DGU (Respondent 4, *Daily Guide*); R1DG (Respondent 1, *Daily Graphic*), R2DG (Respondent 2, *Daily Graphic*), R3DG (Respondent 3, *Daily Graphic*) and R4DG (Respondent 4, *Daily Graphic*).
Responses of participants were categorised into six themes after repeated readings of transcripts of interviews. The themes that emerged were: frequency of coverage, importance of coverage, beliefs or attitudes towards same-sex relationships, personal knowledge of homosexuals, selection of sources of information and selection of stories for publication.

5.3.1 Frequency of coverage

Respondents from both the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide disclosed that stories on same-sex relationships were not covered frequently by their newspapers. Reasons accounting for this included the unavailability of newsworthy stories. Respondent one from the Daily Guide (R1DGU) stated:

It depends on the availability of stories. It’s not very often (R1DGU, March 14, 2016).

Another factor that accounted for the number of stories published by the newspapers was the reliance on calendar events such as press conferences for stories on the subject. Apart from respondent three from the Daily Graphic (R3DG) who said stories published on the subject matter were sometimes as a result of his own initiative, all others revealed that they waited until ‘something happens’ in order to get such stories to cover. This was because as respondent two from the Daily Guide (R2DGU) put it,

We are not in the US or Europe where homosexuality is a big deal…big deal in the sense that it is part of their daily lives. Here, it is not (R2DGU, March 9, 2017).

According to R3DG, two main reasons accounted for the low number of stories on same-sex relationships. The first was the lack of organisational and public interest. Second to this was the desire for negative stories on same-sex relationships. He said:

If you see that the public is not interested, you the person doing it also become disinterested. After all, the people are not interested. My organisation is not interested; so who am I doing it for (R3DG, March 9, 2017).
Homosexuality will sell if it is bad news. If you say ‘two homosexuals caught in the act,’ [Name of newspaper] will put it on the front page and thousands of people will buy copies. Apart from that, if there is no bad news about homosexuals, they don’t care. It doesn’t sell. So it’s purely what will sell (R3DG, March 9, 2017).

5.3.2 Importance of Covering Same-Sex Relationships

Respondents expressed varying views on the importance of covering and publishing issues of same-sex relationships. Whilst many of the respondents said it was important for the media to inform the public about same-sex relationships through coverage, they were also worried about the potential implications doing so would have on society.

Reasons why it is important to cover same-sex relationships

Respondents considered same-sex relationships “social issues” which needed to be given publicity like any other topic. Giving issues of same-sex relationships publicity, according to R3DG, also helps to keep record of, and to create awareness of the existence of homosexuals.

For two of the respondents, R2DG and R4DG, covering same-sex relationships were important because it would ‘expose’ the subject to the public as same-sex issues were shrouded in secrecy and therefore needed media exposure. It would also ‘bring it to the table’ (R2DG) and lead to discussions on how to handle the issue – whether to legalise it or not.

R1DGU stated that:

Giving publicity to these things will give us the adequate education in our communities with a view to making up our minds on that subject which really doesn’t belong here (R1DGU, March 14, 2017).

Giving issues of same-sex relationships coverage, according to R1DGU, was also important because it would expose the true state of the LGBT community to the international community and make known the falsehood that asylum seekers spread about ‘supposed attacks’ on the LGBT community in order to gain entry into some foreign countries.
For R1DG, the importance of the subject to the media was based on the bottom-line – it was important only if it would help newspapers to sell.

We want stories to sell our paper. So if there is a story on homosexuality and it’s from a credible source and it meets our standard and it will help us sell our paper, why not? We will use it (R1DG, March 9, 2017).

Potential consequences of coverage of same-sex relationships

Some respondents said it was not important for the media to cover issues of same-sex relationships because of the potential damage media exposure could have on society. Three of the respondents said publishing stories on the subject may do more harm than good eventually. This was because instead of educating people to desist from such acts, exposure to media content on the subject may rather awaken feelings that may otherwise not have existed and therefore lure media consumers into practicing same-sex relationships. R3DGU said:

I don’t think it is necessary. Because you may think you are sensitizing the public about it but someone will also be picking some aspect of it – especially the children. So even though with time we have to let people know that this is going on, I don’t think we should give that much importance to it (R3DGU, March 14, 2017).

R2DGU also explained:

I think we don’t even have to give prominence to homosexuality issues. The more you give prominence to such issues, it dominates and it may have positive and negative effects. For example you may want to picture the whole thing from a negative perspective. Somebody too will look at it from the legal perspective and say that ‘no, you have no right to attack someone who engages in homosexuality because the person has a right.’ By the time you realise they will say they have support. Then they start agitating. That’s one of the things that can happen (R2DGU, March 9, 2017).

Others however disagree with this position because according to them, whether the media reports issues of same-sex relationships or not is insignificant. Therefore, these respondents were of the view that as journalists with the responsibility of informing the public, information should be provided to the public regardless of the fear of potential damage. They
further argued that members of the public were already aware of issues of homosexuality. As such, the silence of media on the practice may not make much difference. As R3DG said,

You are just trying to hide what is already in existence. So it is immaterial whether they are silent or not. The thing is already in existence (R3DG, March 9, 2017).

5.3.3 Beliefs or attitudes towards same-sex relationships

Respondents expressed different beliefs and therefore had different attitudes towards same-sex relationships. Out of the eight respondents that were interviewed, seven held negative views about same-sex relationships. Only one respondent was of the view that homosexuality is ‘normal’:

Initially I thought it was sickness…some kind of madness. But I’ve come to know that it is something people willingly do… I’ve come to see it some kind of life that people live; so I’ve come to see it as something normal (R3DG, March 9, 2017).

The seven respondents who held negative views about same-sex relationships all condemned the practice outright. Some described it as an ‘absurdity’ which they ‘won’t tolerate’ because it is ‘not a good practice.’ In the words of R4DG:

It is something that should not be accorded any respect. We should fight against it…we should fight against it (R4DG, March 9, 2017).

The views of respondents on same-sex relationships were predominantly based on religious and cultural ethos – although religion played a greater part than culture. In fact, almost all respondents (six out of eight) stated the stance of their various religions on the subject before going ahead to explain their beliefs. The following quote exemplifies the position of some respondents:

I’m a Christian; the bible frowns on homosexuality so my stand is the stand of the scripture. What the bible says about homosexuality is what I believe. So if the bible is against it, I’m a Christian – I follow what the bible says (R2DGU, March 9, 2017).

Only one respondent, the same reporter who saw the practice as ‘normal’, did not ascribe religious and cultural reasons for his stance. Therefore, it appears that acceptance or rejection of same-sex relationships was based largely on religious acceptance of the practice.
Whilst almost all respondents said they were not influenced by their personal views in the coverage on homosexuality, R1DGU disclosed otherwise. He revealed that he used to be influenced by his personal views and this led to him writing and editing stories in biased ways. In explaining how this reflected in his writings, he said:

> Naturally, when you are editing or writing, if you have a certain inclination towards the other side, when you are writing there is a way you do it. It’s inexplicable – you can’t explain it. The way you write it will tilt towards the other side. It’s natural (R1DGU, March 14, 2017).

All other respondents said professionalism, ethics and the tenets/principles of journalism (fairness, accuracy, balance, objectivity, truth, being factual) guided their work so that their coverage of the subject was without ‘emotion’ and ‘bias’. As R2DG said:

> If you pick the four cardinal principles of journalism; fairness, accuracy, balance and the truth – those ones are always guiding you. I don’t know why you should allow your personal views and opinion in (R2DG, March 9, 2017).

### 5.3.4 Personal knowledge of Homosexuals

Only one respondent said he knew and is friends with some homosexuals. However, when asked how his friendship affected his coverage of homosexuality related issues, he said it did not. All other respondents said even though they may have met some suspected and self-identified homosexuals in the course of their work, they did not have any personal relationship with them. Knowledge or otherwise of homosexuals, they said, did not affect their work as they approached stories on same-sex relationships the same way they did others.

### 5.3.5 Selection of Sources of information

In selecting sources for stories, respondents said they looked for diverse sources representing diversity of opinions or views on the subject. R4DG however said he relied on sources that were available and may have already commented on the subject. He explained:
Whoever will be handy and offer you what you want to write about is what you tap on…. If a religious or traditional leader comments on it and maybe I want to write about it, I have to talk about them (R4DG, March 9, 2017).

It is worth noting that, although most of the respondents said they also spoke to the ‘people directly involved’ in the story and went on to mention sources such as religious and traditional leaders, experts (health and legal), activists and the police, none of them mentioned members of the LGBT community. Even in instances where journalists reported about attacks on suspected homosexuals who were in police custody, respondents said they did not talk to the suspected homosexuals nor use them as sources.

R3DGU, who usually reported from police stations and therefore often covered stories on arrest of suspected homosexuals who had been attacked disclosed that, aside from being disallowed by the police to interview these suspected homosexuals because what the suspects tell journalists may contradict that of the police, they (the journalists) sometimes ‘advice’ suspects to keep whatever information they had to themselves till they got to court.

Other respondents also attributed the absence of homosexuals in stories to difficulties in identifying them. This is exemplified in the following quote:

Because of the stigma that is attached to it…we don’t have any legal backing to do it… So people are really shy in opening up to you. They don’t want you to know they are that. They are not open, they don’t come out and even when you are looking for them to talk to, it is very difficult (R4DGU, March 14, 2017).

One respondent was emphatic in saying that the media must not be blamed for the absence of homosexual views or voices in stories. He revealed that even in cases where homosexuals were identified, they were reluctant to talk to journalists. This unwillingness of homosexuals to talk to journalists, according to respondents, was because of the legal status of the act, the stigma attached to the practice by society and the fact that some homosexuals saw journalists as threats. This was because they fear the media would expose them and therefore invite
attacks on their lives. R3DG recalled how he had to drop a story because the homosexual he interviewed did not want it published:

I remember I interviewed a homosexual. I interviewed him but he begged me not to write about him. He was crying...because of that I dropped the story (R3DG, March 9, 2017).

Respondents considered the absence of homosexuals in their stories a great challenge to their work because not having such sources could imply that the media made up stories. The absence of homosexual sources according to R4DGU also led to an absence of human faces in stories.

5.3.6 Selection of stories for publication

Respondents said that stories on same-sex relationships are selected based on how ‘startling’ they were. Such stories had to meet professional standards. Thus, hearsay was not entertained. However, according to R1DG, positions of stories must not contradict the laws of the land and journalistic standards. As R1DG said,

Even when we are using opinions and letters, we have to be careful not to go contrary to the law. All the stories that we use, they have to follow the professional standard (R1DG, March 9, 2017).

Respondents also disclosed that editorial policies existed which guided how journalists did their work. However, these editorial policies were silent on homosexuality. This was because according to the two editors who were interviewed, homosexuality was not an important issue in the country. R1DGU explained that:

Well, because it isn’t anything…it is not an issue in our society. It’s not there. It is something we just started identifying even though there have been persons, as a result of the hormonal balance who exhibit certain traits which presents them as belonging more to the other sex instead of the sex they present to society. So that is the reason. (R1DGU, March 14, 2017)
5.4 Chapter summary

Findings of the study were presented in this chapter using descriptive statistics and thematic analysis for the quantitative and qualitative aspects respectively. The quantitative studies, among other things, revealed that same-sex relationships were predominantly framed in morality terms. When the responsibility frame was used, government and religious leaders were assigned the task of addressing and tackling same-sex relationships. Tone of the majority of stories was also found to be negative. Findings from the qualitative aspect also showed that the unwillingness of homosexuals and pro-homosexual sources to speak to the media, accounted for their absence in stories. Also, some journalists felt it was unnecessary to publish stories on the subject because of the likelihood of such stories luring others into the practice.
CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

6.0. Introduction

The goal of this study was to examine media framing of same-sex relationships and the factors that influenced media coverage of the practice by the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide newspapers. This chapter presents a discussion of findings of the research based on the objectives of the study. The findings are discussed in relation to previous literature and the theoretical framework which underpinned the study. This was done in order to make the findings meaningful.

6.1 Degrees of prominence

The first objective of the study was to find out the degree of prominence attached to same-sex relationships by the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide. The study therefore measured prominence given to same-sex relationships by examining story placement and enhancement. As observed by Tankard (2011) photos can be used by the media to frame stories. It is evident from the findings that the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide framed same-sex relationships as important through the use of enhancement (the presence of images or photos) in stories that discussed the subject matter. More than half of stories (60.7%) that were published were texts with images or photos. The presence of images in the majority of stories, which can easily attract readers, implies that the media placed some importance on the subject. However, the Daily Guide gave more prominence to same-sex relationships through the use of enhancements than the Daily Graphic. More than three-fourth (75.9 %) of stories published by the Daily Guide were enhanced with images whereas 39.3 per cent of Daily Graphic’s stories were accompanied with images.
It is worth noting that most of the images that were used by the two newspapers which were studied were photos of religious leaders, politicians and prominent people who condemned same-sex relationships. These images therefore in some cases automatically conveyed the tone of stories.

Entman (1993) also argued that through the strategic placement of stories, salience or prominence can be achieved. The front, centre and back pages of newspapers are considered the most prominent pages (Okorie and Oyedepo, 2011; Shaari, Hua and Raman, 2006; Dzeble, 2006). Placement of stories is also a signal to readers that an issue is of importance and should be accorded such. An examination of placement of stories about same-sex relationships by the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide showed that very little prominence was given to the subject. An overwhelming majority of stories were found on pages other than the prominent pages. Stories on prominent pages (front, centre, back) constituted less than a fifth of stories published. This finding is inconsistent with Alagappar and Kaur (2009) who found that stories on same-sex relationships were given significant amount of salience through of placement by Malaysian press. Alagappar and Kaur (2009) therefore concluded that salience given in terms of placement ensured accessibility, attracted and communicated the importance of same-sex relationships to readers.

The placement of stories on same-sex relationships on less prominent pages by the two newspapers suggests that the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide did not consider same-sex relationships important and worthy of attention. In fact, some of the media practitioners who participated in the in-depth interview were of the view that the media must not give prominence to same-sex relationships because of some of the negative implications media exposure could have on society. Although the media practitioners who were interviewed insisted that their opinions and views did not in any way influence their work, it is possible
that the belief that media exposure can negatively impact readers and members of the public may have influenced the placement of stories.

6.2 Tone of stories

Iyengar (1999) argued that framing of news stories can be done by emphasising or de-emphasising some aspects of an issue. By so doing, stories on those issues may be presented in particular ways – negatively, positively or neutrally. Entman’s (1993) argument that framing is about selection to promote particular ideas is also indicative of how the media works in producing the tone of stories.

To address the second objective of the study, which was to examine how the newspapers presented and therefore defined same-sex relationships, tone was classified into positive, neutral and positive. Consistent with previous studies (Quist-Adade et al., 2014; Tettey, 2016, Alagappar and Kaur, 2009; Strand, 2012), findings revealed that same-sex relationships were portrayed negatively. The findings however differed significantly from results of Quist-Adade et al. (2014)’s study which found that views on same-sex relationships were remarkably divided with just a little over 50 per cent being negative whilst more than 40 per cent of views were positive.

This study found that more than three-fourth (78.5%) of stories published within the period by the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* portrayed same-sex relationships negatively. This means that in deciding on aspects of same-sex relationships to present or project, the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* chose the negative ones. Most of the media practitioners who participated in the qualitative part of the study held deep-seated religious beliefs that homosexuality is bad. They believed that society disapproved of the practice and therefore was only interested in media reports on the practice if such reports negatively portrayed
same-sex relationships. As such, supporting findings from Borlase (2012), some journalists said they had to give the public what they wanted with regards to homosexuality if newspapers wanted to sell.

The dependence on religious leaders and politicians, who for the most part were against same-sex relationships as sources of information, also contributed to the negative portrayal of same-sex relationship. These sources perpetually condemned the practice and presented it as an ‘evil’ which must be shunned. This also confirms Quist-Adade et al. (2014)’s position that activities of religious leaders, which include preaching against same-sex relationships, perpetuate negativity in the media and in society. The negative views held by journalists and editors could also have reflected in stories on same-sex relationships. As one journalist admitted, it is often difficult to completely detach oneself from as story. Hence, the views held by journalists may have found their way into some of the stories.

The negative portrayal of same-sex relationships by the newspapers also could be a mirror of attitudes of Ghanaians towards the practice as the media is an avenue for reflecting societal norms and attitudes. As discussed in Chapter One of this study and from findings of research conducted by Pew Center (2013), most Ghanaians abhor same-sex relationships. As it is these same people who work for and write to the two newspapers studied, it is very likely that their negative attitudes were reflected in the stories. However, as argued by Tettey (2016), the negativity in the media may not only be a reflection of society but a conscious construction of the practice.

The persistence of negativity of stories is an indication that the frame of reference or the major idea that people get from reading the stories would be the abnormality of same-sex
relationships which may result in negative attitudes towards homosexuals. As noted by Tettey (2016), this may endanger the lives of homosexuals.

However some positive and neutral portrayals were found. Positive and neutral portrayals, no matter how small, also suggest that the newspapers tried to present other angles or the multiplicity of views on the issue of same-sex relationships that existed in the country.

6.3 Sources of information

Sources of information used, according to some previous studies (Kenix, 2008; Reese & Shoemaker, 1996; Li & Liu, 2010), influence media content. The third objective of this study therefore was to examine the sources of information used by the two newspapers in discussing same-sex relationships. The findings revealed that both the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide used religious leaders and government officials predominantly as sources. These sources were usually against same-sex relationships. Their position on same-sex relationships supports Tettey (2016)’s findings that such sources often ‘problematicized’ the practice by treating homosexuality as a disease and a sin. This finding also corresponds to the conclusions of Alagappar and Kaur (2009) who argued that the media’s over-reliance on these two categories of people as sources of information was an indication that the viewpoints of these sources would eventually influence readers’ perception and attitudes towards same-sex relationships.

Those most implicated in the stories, homosexuals, were surprisingly not given the opportunity to give their perspectives - even in stories which demanded their views. Homosexual sources (self-identified or suspected) represented only 8.8 per cent of sources used by the two newspapers sampled. This again is consistent with previous studies (Alagappar and Kaur, 2009; Strand, 2012; Tettey’s, 2016) which found that the viewpoints of
homosexuals, who were the subject of the discussion, were usually ignored by the media. Tettey (2016) also argued that the tendency of overly relying on sources other than homosexuals themselves often leads to a problematization of homosexuality as these expert sources tend to medicalise same-sex relationships.

Journalists and editors who participated in in-depth interviews however disclosed that the media must not be blamed for the absence of homosexual or pro-gay voices in stories. This, according to them, was because of the difficulty that journalists encountered in trying to identify such people to talk to. Even in cases where homosexuals are identified, they were unwilling to talk to journalists. The legal, religious and cultural environment and public hostility were blamed for the difficulty media practitioners faced in trying to get pro-gay sources to balance their stories. Media practitioners, who insisted that they chose sources in an objective way to reflect various angles of stories, were therefore forced to rely on sources such as religious leader, government officials and government officials. These sources were usually readily available and were willing to grant interviews.

6.4 Frames of same-sex relationships

The fourth and central objective of this study was to investigate the types of frames used by the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide. Here, the goal was to examine the nature of reports on same-sex relationships by investigating the types of frames that were used by the two newspapers in covering the practice. The study adopted four of Semetko and Valkenburg’s (2000) five generic frames: conflict, responsibility, human interest, and morality frames.

The findings revealed that the morality frame was mostly used by both newspapers sampled - the Daily Graphic and the Daily Guide. More than half the stories (50.5%) published by the newspapers were framed in this manner. The prevalence of this frame means that stories
published on the subject contextualised same-sex relationships within the dominant religious and cultural mores of the Ghanaian society and emphasised how contrary same-sex relationships are to these mores. One of the main ways frames enter news stories is through the sources of information used by media practitioners. According to Semetko and Valkenburg (2000), journalists, through quotes by sources or inferences, use this frame. This was confirmed by the findings as most of the stories which used this frame quoted sources who often referred to same-sex relationships to as ‘evil’, ‘immoral,’ ‘illegal,’ and ‘against God.’ This finding is also consistent with Tettey’s (2016) findings that the media tended to frame same-sex relationship as a moral issue and pronounce homosexuals as ‘evil’ citizens whose quest it was to topple the standards of society.

The predominance of the morality frame is not surprising considering the religious outlook of Ghana. According to the 2010 Population and Housing Census conducted by the Ghana statistical Service, the majority of Ghanaians described themselves as Christians (71.2%) and Muslims (17.6%). As both of these religions abhor and condemn homosexuality, the likelihood of such positions creeping into media content was not unexpected. This point confirms Alagappar and Kaur (2009)’s argument that religiosity of Malaysians accounted for negative portrayals of same-sex relationships by media in that country. It is also possible that the negative views and beliefs that media practitioners held towards the practice, which was mostly based on religious and cultural values, led to the production of the morality frame.

Bru¨ gemann (2014) argues that journalists are usually engaged in frame-setting and frame-sending at the frame building stage of the framing process. Meaning that, journalists may serve only as conduits for relaying information or may deliberately choose sources to voice their (journalists’) views on the practice. It is therefore likely that religious and cultural beliefs held by journalists may also have led to a deliberate selection of sources whose views
fell into the morality frame. Therefore, journalists may have been engaged in both in frame-setting and frame-sending in covering same-sex relationships.

As discussed in Chapter One, there are conflicting views regarding the legality or otherwise of same-sex relationships in Ghana. These disagreements were reflected in the use of conflict frame by the *Daily Graphic* and *the Daily Guide* newspapers with sources expressing opposing views on the status of same-sex relationships. Conflict was also observed in varying views held about the origin of same-sex relationships with some people arguing that the practice is ‘as old as Adam’ whilst others held contrary views. Additionally, like Persson (2014), the study revealed that there was conflict on the origin of the practice. Whilst some sources argued that same-sex relationships are a foreign import, other said it has always existed in Africa.

Stories sometimes attribute responsibility for causing and addressing issues to specific agents. The responsibility frame, which examined stories that assigned responsibility for addressing issues relating to same-sex relationships, was the third most used frame. Stories which used this frame often attributed responsibility for causing or addressing or solving same-sex relationships and not on responsibility for causing same-sex relationships. Few of the stories however blamed the West for introducing same-sex relationships into the country. The study also showed that religious leaders and government were mostly assigned the responsibility for addressing the issue of same-sex relationships by sources. The government was asked to urgently take a position on same-sex relationships and to make laws that would prohibit people from participating in practice. Religious leaders on the other hand were asked by other sources such as members of the public to preach sermons that would convict homosexuals to give up the practice. This finding is quite close to Kenix’s (2008) which found that American press, aside from utilising the morality frame predominantly, also attributed responsibility for
addressing issues relating to same-sex rights to government and individuals. Assigning responsibility for addressing same-sex relationships to government and religious leaders is quite surprising considering the fact that the home, it is said, is the individual’s first agent of socialisation. Therefore, responsibility for tackling or rooting out the ‘canker’ would have been expected to lie with the individual or the home.

The human-interest frame was the least used frame. Stories which used this frame provided a ‘human face’ or angle by presenting ‘confessions’ by self-identified homosexuals and also stressed how people were or could be affected by same-sex relationships. Some of these stories, most of which were features, also contained vivid descriptions and explanations which emotionalised same-sex relationships. The fact that this frame was used less frequently could be as a result of the overreliance of the newspapers on straight news stories, which are primarily concerned with facts and therefore often omit descriptive words, as against features which are more relaxed, are more descriptive and therefore are capable of emotionalising stories. Also, the unwillingness of homosexuals to talk to journalists, as revealed by respondents could have accounted for this. This is because for journalists to write good stories that humanise an issue, they need the perspective of those that are implicated in the story.

6.5 Factors that influence coverage and framing

Findings of the qualititative study were categorised into six themes. These are: frequency of coverage, importance of coverage, beliefs and attitudes towards same-sex relationships, knowledge of homosexuals, selection of sources of information and selection of stories for publication. Embedded in these themes are specific factors, such as personal views, legal status, relationship with readers or consumers and availability of sources, which influenced coverage and framing of same-sex relationships.
On personal views that media practitioners hold concerning same-sex relationships, although only one respondent admitted that his personal opinions used to influence his coverage of the subject, respondents constantly made comments which suggested that their views could not have been completely left out in stories on same-sex relationships. For instance, some respondents thought it was unimportant for the media to project or give prominence to same-sex relationships. They spoke of the potential dire consequences the practice can have on society. This stance, informed by personal, religious and cultural views of same-sex relationships, could have resulted in the low coverage the practice received over the study period.

The legal status of same-sex relationships in Ghana also influenced coverage of the practice. Even though most respondents said this had no direct influence on their work, one editor said that journalists had to ensure that their stories did not contradict the position of the supreme laws of the land – this was after strongly emphasising the illegality of the practice in the country. Journalists also stressed how the legal environment becomes an obstacle when homosexual sources were needed to balance stories. These sources were difficult to identify because they were ‘underground’ and were unwilling to talk to journalists because of the hostile legal climate. Even in instances where self-identified homosexuals were located, they refused to speak to journalists for fear of being stigmatised. This factor in one way or the other accounted for the absence of homosexual sources in the study and in previous studies.

The findings also revealed that the demand or quest for bad news on same-sex relationships by the public influenced how the practice was framed by the newspapers. When media practitioners produced contents, one of their primary concerns was the interest of ‘consumers’; in essence, audience satisfaction was what drove stories that are produced. Hence, this study confirmed Borlase (2012)’s finding that because audiences or readers are
only interested in same-sex relationships when it is framed in anti-gay terms, journalists are often left with no option but to give them what they want to enable their newspapers sell. This could explain the predominance of negative portrayals in the stories that were published by the newspapers.

6.6 Chapter summary

The findings of the study were discussed in this chapter together with the objectives of the study, theories and related studies. Generally, same-sex relationships were framed in terms of morality. One reason for this was the over-reliance on sources who believed same-sex relationships were contrary to their religions and cultural beliefs. The attitudes and beliefs of these sources also reflected in the tone of stories. As majority of sources used were anti-homosexuality, the tone of most of the stories was negative. However, a few stories challenged the dominant negativity in the media. In addition, most stories on same-sex relationships were placed in pages other than front and back pages, suggesting that the issues were not considered important. However, some amount of prominence was given the practice in terms of enhancement of stories.
CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.0 Introduction
This study examined media framing of same-sex relationships and the factors that influenced coverage and framing of the practice. The findings revealed that same-sex relationships were portrayed negatively, in terms of morality and that newspapers did not balance their stories with homosexual or pro-gay sources. Additionally, the study found that the legal status of same-sex relationships, personal views of journalists and relationships to readers influenced coverage and framing of same-sex relationships.

This chapter presents limitations encountered, recommendations for future research and conclusions based on the findings of the current research.

7.1 Summary of findings
Results from this study showed that some amount of prominence was given same-sex relationships with regards to enhancement, which is the presence or absence of images in stories, although the same cannot be said for prominence in terms of placement.

Same-sex relationships were framed negatively by the newspapers; a finding that supports previous studies regardless of context. However some positive and neutral views were found by the study, suggesting that the newspapers reflected the multiplicity of views on the practice that exist in the country.

Additionally, the study found that homosexual sources were absent in most of the stories; religious leaders and politicians were mostly cited as sources. This finding also confirms previous studies which argue that this tendency does exist and is problematic as the activities
and positions of religious and political sources leads to the perpetuation of negativity towards same-sex relationships.

Also, the study found that same-sex relationships were framed more often in terms of morality. However, other frames such as the conflict, responsibility and human interest were also employed to frame same-sex relationships. Government was tasked either to promulgate laws or to declare its stance on the practice whilst religious leaders were asked to preach against the practice.

The findings further revealed that factors such as the legal status of same-sex relationships, and availability of sources, also influenced coverage and framing of same-sex relationships. For instance, the legal status of the practice and relationship with readers or consumers made it difficult to balance stories with homosexual sources and also contributed to the negativity of portrayals in the newspapers respectively.

Finally, the findings indicated some similarities existed in how the two newspapers covered same-sex relationships. For instance with regards to frames, both newspapers tended to rely on the morality frame. There were also differences in how the *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* covered and framed same-sex relationships. The findings showed that although the number of stories published by both newspapers decreased over the study period, the *Daily Graphic’s* reduced more significantly compared with the *Daily Guide*. Also, the *Daily Graphic* used more diverse story types than the *Daily Guide*. Prominence, in terms of enhancement was given same-sex relationships by the *Daily Graphic* more than was given by the *Daily Guide*. 
7.2. Limitations of the study

The first limitation of the study is that, as a result of budget and time constraints, it focused on only two newspapers out of the many newspapers in Ghana. This makes it impossible to generalise the findings to other newspapers and media types such as broadcast and new media.

A second major limitation of the study was the challenge in obtaining relevant literature on African countries’ coverage of same-sex relationships. Although a number of studies were found on media coverage of same-sex relationships in other parts of the world, it was relatively difficult to find scholarly literature originating from Africa and focusing on how media in Africa framed same-sex relationships. This made it difficult for the researcher to draw on, and relate findings of the current study to others from the same continent.

7.3 Recommendations for further studies

Based on the limitations of this study, it is recommended that researchers, especially Africans, despite the stigma that comes with venturing into such a sensitive area, must take up the task of investigating and updating scholarship on same-sex relationships. This is because adding to literature in the field will help deepen understanding of media representation and portrayal of same-sex relationships on the Africa continent.

Also, future studies should also widen the scope to include other forms of media such as television and radio. This will offer some insight into how these other media types frame same-sex relationships in Ghana.

Finally, future studies should consider conducting surveys to solicit the views of media consumers and interact with other bodies, including self-identified homosexuals, to find out what they think of media coverage of same-sex relationships.
7.4 Conclusion

This study examined the *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide’s* coverage of same-sex relationships from January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2015 using the framing theory. It also looked at the factors that influenced coverage and framing of the practice. A quantitative content analysis and in-depth interviews were undertaken to achieve the aims of the study.

The findings showed that some degree of prominence was attached to same-sex relationships in terms of images that accompanied texts in stories. This also suggests that the *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* placed some importance on the practice.

The tone of stories was also found to be predominantly negative. The predominance of this tone is a reflection of the homophobia in Ghana. However, the two newspapers studied published some stories which were either positive or neutral suggesting that views divergent views exist on the subject of same-sex relationships.

The study also found that the media relied more on religious leaders and government officials in their coverage whilst ignoring the subjects of the discussion, homosexuals. An implication of this finding is that these two groups of people are very powerful in the discussion of same-sex relationships. Therefore, for there to be either a change or otherwise in framing of the practice, religious leaders and government officials may be the people to effect the change.

The findings revealed that same-sex relationships were found to be framed in terms of morality than any other frame. The prevalence of this frame is an indication that most of the Ghanaian population, including journalists, relied on religious and cultural values in dealing with same-sex relationships. This further implies that, until these values change, media framing of the practice and public attitudes will continue to be based on morality.
The qualitative aspect of this study showed that the religious and cultural beliefs held by media practitioners sometimes influenced coverage of same-sex relationships. This was reflected in the selection of sources information and the importance attached to same-sex relationships by media practitioners. Aside from these religious and beliefs, the legal status of same-sex relationships in Ghana and the unwillingness of homosexuals, whether self-identified or suspected, to grant journalists interviews, had some impact on framing of the practice.

Though this study may not be generalizable, it provides some insight into how same-sex relationships are framed in Ghana. It also sheds light on some of the factors that influenced the framing of the practice.

7.5 Chapter summary

In this final chapter, a summary of the main findings, limitation of the study and recommendations for future studies were presented. The focus on only two newspapers out of many in the country as a result of time and budget constraints was the main limitation of the study. It is therefore recommended that future studies consider more newspapers and other media types.
REFERENCES


Center, P. R. (2013). The global divide on homosexuality: Greater acceptance in more secular and affluent countries.


APPENDIX A

CODING GUIDE

1) Newspaper
   1. Daily Graphic
   2. Daily Guide

1b) By-line

2) Date of publication

3) Headline of publication

4) Type of story
   1. Straight news story
   2. Feature
   3. Editorial
   4. Letter to the editor
   5. Columns
   6. Opinions

5) Tone of publication
   1. Positive
   2. Negative
   3. Neutral

6) Sources of information
   1. Politicians
   2. Public officials
   3. Legal experts
4. Medical experts
5. Religious leaders
6. Members of the public
7. Homosexuals (self-identified/suspected)
8. Human rights activists
9. Other (specify)

7) Type of news frame
   1. Conflict frame
   2. Human-interest frame
   3. Morality frame
   4. Responsibility frame

7a. ‘Did the report make any mention of a responsible agent for ‘solving’ the issue of same-sex relationships?’ If yes, who are these agents?

   1. Government/the state institutions
   2. Religious bodies
   3. Homes/families
   4. Educational institutions
   5. Individuals
   6. Other
   7. None
   8. State institutions

8) Story placement
   1. Front page
   2. Back page
3. Centre spread

4. Editorial page

5. Other

9) Story enhancement

   1. Text only

   2. Text with image/picture

   3. Image or picture only
**APPENDIX B**

**CODING SHEET**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q1</th>
<th>Q1b</th>
<th>Q2</th>
<th>Q3</th>
<th>Q4</th>
<th>Q5</th>
<th>Q6</th>
<th>Q7</th>
<th>Q7a</th>
<th>Q8</th>
<th>Q9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW GUIDE (For reporters)

I am Caroline Anipah, a Masters student from the Department of Communication Studies of the University of Ghana. I am conducting research on media framing of same-sex relationships and some of the factors that influence journalistic framing of the practice in Ghana. I will be very grateful if you will participate in this research by answering these questions to the best of your ability. Your responses will be treated with confidentiality and will be used only for academic purposes.

Section A

1. How often do you cover stories on same-sex relationships? (Is it a beat you cover?)
2. Do you think it is important to cover same-sex relationships? Why?
3. What are your personal views on same-sex relationships?
4. How do these views affect your work when it comes to your presentation of same-sex relationships?
5. How do your religious beliefs and upbringing affect your coverage of same-sex relationships?
6. Do you personally know people in same-sex relationships?
7. Aside from religious beliefs and your upbringing, what other factors affect your coverage of issues of same-sex relationships?
8. How do you select sources for your stories (on same-sex relationships)?
9. What are some of the challenges you encounter in your coverage of stories on same-sex relationships?
10. Do you have anything to add? Questions?
Section B (Personal Information)

   2. Female

7. Age

8. Level of education?

9. Number of years spent in journalism
APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW GUIDE (For editors)

I am Caroline Anipah, a Masters student from the Department of Communication Studies of the University of Ghana. I am conducting research on media framing of same-sex relationships and some of the factors that influence journalistic framing of the phenomenon in Ghana. I will be very grateful if you will participate in this research by answering these questions to the best of your ability. Your responses will be treated with confidentiality and will be used only for academic purposes.

1. What are your personal views on same-sex relationships?
2. Do you think these views affect your work when it comes to your presentation of same-sex relationships? If yes, how?
3. Do you have a news editorial policy?
4. If yes, what does it say about same-sex relationships?
5. If no, why not?
6. How often does your paper cover same-sex relationships? Is there a beat for it?
7. Do you think it is important to publish stories on same-sex relationships? Why?
8. What are some of the factors you consider in selecting stories on same-sex relationships?
9. What challenges do you encounter in publishing stories on same-sex relationships?
10. Do you have anything to add? Questions?

Section B (Personal Information)

   2. Female

7. Age
8. Level of education?

9. Number of years spent in journalism