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PRESS COVERAGE OF CYBERCRIME ISSUES IN GHANA: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE *DAILY GRAPHIC* AND *DAILY GUIDE*

BY

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THIS DISSERTATION IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF A MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE IN COMMUNICATION STUDIES

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DECLARATION

I declare that, I have personally undertaken this study herein submitted under the supervision of the undersigned. Due acknowledgements have been given to all sources that were used in the study.

I certify that this study has not been submitted for any other degree in another university.

.....	.....
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JUNE, 2013	JUNE, 2013

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DEDICATION

To my dearest wife, Celina and lovely daughter, Anita; you make my world complete. And also to all friends and relatives who made my studies possible, especially my daddy, Clovis Dugle and big brother, Postino Dugle for their investments in my education.

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ABSTRACT

The media is often referred to as the mirror of society, reflecting events and issues that occur in society. This study examined the nature of coverage the press in Ghana gave to cybercrime issues through a content analysis of sampled editions of the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* in 2011. The study set out to examine the view that the structure of ownership of a medium determines the content it turns out. Specifically, it tested the view that a state-owned newspaper such as the *Daily Graphic* was likely to give more coverage to cybercrime issues than a private newspaper such as the *Daily Guide*.

The study employed quantitative content analysis research method in the collection and analysis of data from 144 selected editions of the two newspapers. Five main themes/categories were coded and analysed namely: type, content, placement, source and author/writer of stories on cybercrime.

The findings of the study revealed that cybercrime issues generally received low coverage and prominence from the two Ghanaian newspapers. The results of the study also showed that even though the *Daily Graphic* published more stories on cybercrime issues than the *Daily Guide*, further examination of the five main categories revealed that the two dailies covered cybercrime in a similar fashion. The statistical test results from the findings did not support the view that the content of a medium often tend to reflect the interest of its owners or financiers.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background

"The press may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about" (Cohen, 1963).

The above quote strongly depicts the crucial role newspapers play in exposing all activities in society and bringing them to the attention of their patrons. It also implies that even though newspapers do not necessarily instruct people on what to think of, they set the agenda for society regarding the events and issues that are discussed and these discussions serve as indicators for decision making. Indeed, Dzeble (2006) succinctly captured this by stating that the press has a responsibility of originating opinion on vital issues and the provision of information to people to enable them make vital decisions that affect their lives. Admittedly also, the way newspapers frame issues in their coverage has a strong bearing on the kind of information they provide and how the information is appreciated and understood by the general public.

The press play a significant role in shaping society's perception and opinion on societal issues. They are one of the major avenues through which people depend on for social, political and economic news. As Lipmann (2000), quoted by Eklu (2004) rightly pointed out, it is very difficult to know everything through direct experience but that we largely depend on pictures in our heads, which are conveyed to us by the news media, to get information. Paimre and Harro-Loit (2011) also contend that events, social problems, people or facts

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become significant only as a result of media coverage. It is for this reason that newspapers, since their inception, have been regarded as the mirror of society, reflecting the images of societal happenings. Indeed, much of our knowledge on issues relating to politics, economics and society in general is made possible through newspapers. Consequently, the ways in which newspapers choose to cover social issues can have important ramifications, influencing how individuals in society perceive those issues and their response to them.

1.1 The Press and Social Issues

The press and society are bedfellows; they are inter-related in so many ways. This inter-relation creates a significant interdependence between the two systems; that is the press on one hand depend on society for its production raw materials, whilst society on the other hand heavily depends on the press for its information needs. As a result, the press' role in shaping the knowledge of society particularly on social issues cannot be overemphasised. According to Kellner (1995) cited by Richards *et al*. (2011), the degree to which the media help shape peoples' views of the world is extensive, affecting "what we consider good or bad, positive or negative, moral or evil" (p. 179). Some scholars have even suggested that "the media have the single greatest influence on individuals' attitudes and behaviour, above and beyond all other social forces" (Chermak, 1995; Croteau & Hoynes, 1997 as quoted by Richards *et al*. 2011, p. 179). Hence, the nature of coverage of social issues by the press is not only important but also critical.

However, communication scholars, political scientists, and sociologists have developed rich scholarship on the social construction of news which suggests that newspapers are not neutral channels when it comes to covering social issues. Andrews and Caren (2010) for example

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postulated that "like other institutions, the media are shaped by organizational, economic, political, social, and cultural forces that influence the practices of news-gathering and the content of news" (p.843). These dynamics have numerous consequences for whether or how social issues are covered. They further observed that the news media are not neutral channels just reflecting the events of the day, but that news agencies, editors as well as reporters act as gatekeepers who sort through events and define what is and what is not an important story.

Due to the eminent competing interests, newspapers sometimes consciously or unconsciously overlook or give less attention to important social issues such as drug abuse, armed robbery, sexual abuse cases etc. This ultimately affects the extent to which social ills are appreciated and addressed. With the advent of modern technology, one of such social ills which is eating deep into the fibre of society and requires the attention of newspapers is cybercrime.

1.2 Brief Background of Cybercrime

Different scholars in the field of criminology have described cybercrime in various ways, creating some level of vagueness around the subject. Notwithstanding, the following are some key definitions of the subject. Pinguelo and Muller (2011, p. 118) described cybercrime as "any crime that is facilitated or committed using computer, a network or hardware device". Kowalski (2002, p. 6) also defined cybercrime as "a criminal offence involving a computer as the object of the crime or the tool used to commit a material component of the offence". In addition, Parton *et al*. (2011, p. 5) defined cybercrime as "any economic offence that is committed using the computer or the internet". Therefore, in essence, cybercrime is any unlawful or criminal act which is committed using the computer, internet or any network device or technology.

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According to Pinguelo and Muller (2011), cybercrime caught mainstream attention in the 1970s and 1980s, after the press in the United States published astonishing cases about hacking, viruses and worms. They further stated that public awareness of cybercrime grew exponentially in the late 1990s and early 2000s thanks to the explosive growth in internet usage. Between 2000 and 2003 the nature of cybercrime entailed the sending of spam emails that could infect computer programmes with malware and make them ineffective. Cyber crooks at the time showed off their skills by temporarily taking down popular websites, such as *Cables News Network* (*CNN*), *Yahoo* and *E-bay* with the ultimate aim of causing damage to these organisations (Eichorn, 2010).

However, this changed to include using the computer and internet facilities to fraudulently steal passwords and make money from unsuspecting victims (Eichorn, 2010). For example, a shopper searching online for car insurance might encounter a pop-up displaying an ad for a car insurance company, as an attempt to lure him/her into buying their insurance, but once the shopper accepts and completes the process and makes payment, that ends the matter, the insurance never comes and the supposed provider gets lost.

In quantitative terms, the global cost of cybercrime has been estimated to be about 114 billion U. S. Dollars annually (http://norton.com/cybercrimereport). Cybercrime is the dangerous aspect of the Internet Age that well-meaning individuals, organisations and governments are all concerned about. Despite a global recession, improved security and international crackdown efforts, cybercrime has thrived over the last decade, growing by double digits year after year. To put the growth into perspective, the FBI-backed Internet Crime Complaint Centre reported that cybercrime losses to consumers in the United States of America alone

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doubled from 280 million in 2008 to $560 million in 2009 while consumer complaints grew by more than 22 percent" (Eichorn, 2010).

1.3 Cybercrime in Ghana

Burrell (2008) indicated that internet scamming/cybercrime in Ghana was an extension of a more benign practice: writing to foreign pen pals via the postal system. In a research to gather internet scamming strategies associated with West African countries, Burrell (2008) gathered that, scamming in Ghana initially involved writing to foreign pen pals (boyfriends, girlfriends relationships) via the postal system. Some of the young people who were involved in this practice valued these relationships primarily as strategic affiliations for realising material gain. Hence, the scams that occurred from the pen pal exchanges reflected how scammers drew on established patterns of communication as a resource for modelling their strategies for economic gain. This practice continued until it was replaced with the modern day internet scamming.

Warner (2011) says that cybercrime is a relatively new phenomenon in Ghana that gained prominence in the country between 1999 and 2000. He identified three main forms of cybercrimes prevailing in the country, namely: identity fraud, fake gold dealers and estate fraud. The identity fraud is the situation whereby criminals give fake identities to their victims and dupe them in the process. Most common among the identity fraud cases are the so-called "romance fraud". The fake gold dealers on the other hand are criminals who operate by establishing contacts with some foreign investors as partners in supposed "gold businesses", and end up duping these foreign partners. The third form of cybercrime in Ghana is the estate fraud. Here the criminals purport to be dealing in houses and end up duping

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unsuspecting buyers (Warner, 2011). However, Warner (2011) concedes that the list is not exhaustive given the fact that technology keeps evolving by the day.

Cybercrime, which is popularly called sakawa in Ghana, is believed to have been imported into the country by immigrant Nigerians. The practice which is otherwise known as "4-1-9 schemes" or "advanced-fee fraud" in Nigerian parlance, and increasingly in international circles, emerged in Nigeria in the 1980s and subsequently transferred to Ghana in the 1990s (Warner, 2011). According to the same author, not only has the practice been entrenched in Ghana since then, it has also developed to the extent that it has assumed a religious dimension where perpetrators consult various priests or spiritual leaders for spiritual blessings and protection against being discovered. It is believed that persons who visit these juju priests for blessings and protection are made to undergo all kinds of inhuman exercises including sleeping with mad women, sleeping in coffins at night and even sometimes making human sacrifices to enhance their chances of defrauding people and becoming wealthy (Warner, 2011).

The cost of cybercrime in Ghana is not known but the practice is perceived to be on the ascendancy particularly among the youth who see it as a quick way to success or riches. For example, in 2010, Ghana gained the unsavoury distinction – along with African neighbours Nigeria and Cameroon – as one of the top ten cybercrime generating states worldwide (Warner, 2011). In addition to this, Kwablah (2009) cited by Warner (2011) revealed that Ghana was the second most frequently blocked location by United States of America (USA) online retailers sceptical of fake orders from internet scammers.

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With the recognition that cybercrime is an increasingly real threat to the country, the government of Ghana, specifically the Ministry of Communications, initiated measures to combat it. Prior to 2008, there was no law in Ghana specifically regulating cybercrime and hence the Police treated cyber criminals as if they were simple fraudsters. However, in 2008 Ghana passed the Electronic Transactions Act (Act 772), which both criminalized computer hacking and resultantly gave police officers more latitude to pursue suspected cyber criminals (Warner, 2011). Despite this Law (Act 772), cybercrime still remains a big challenge given the phenomenal expansion in mobile telephony in Ghana, and their use as an alternative to conducting online transactions.

1.4 Press Coverage of Crime in Ghana

A study by Yeboah (2008) gave a hint about the amount of coverage the press in Ghana had given to crime issues, of which cybercrime was part. The study found that among a list of eight categories of issues namely: politics, economics, science, legal issues, crime issues social issues, health, and celebrity issues covered by the *Daily Graphic* in 2006, crime reports were the fourth highest issue reported by the newspaper recording about 10% of the entire newspaper coverage. Even with this information, it is still difficult to draw a conclusion on the nature of press coverage of cybercrime issues since cybercrime was one aspect of general crime issues.

Available literature on media coverage of cybercrime in Ghana point to the fact that, the media pays little attention to cybercrime issues compared to other issues such as politics. In fact, Oduro-Frimpong (2009) in his study on how sakawa was represented in Ghanaian video films, found that, in spite of the massive circulation of sakawa narratives in Ghanaian video

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films, at least in 2008, such stories did not feature prominently as issues of social concern in the mainstream media, such as newspapers.

Meanwhile, Caren and Andrew (2010) pointed out that, the agenda-setting power of the media in exposing and creating awareness on social issues is directly related to the level of importance journalists attach to those issues. Therefore, adequate press coverage of cybercrime issues can help minimise the practice and its effects on society. Such coverage can provide education to the general public on the subject, and hence help citizens to take precautionary measures to protect themselves against the callous practices of cyber criminals. Conversely, inadequate press coverage of cybercrime issues can deny society of vital information on the subject and thereby hinder efforts to curb the practice.

One factor which could be responsible for the little press coverage of cybercrime issues is the nature of cybercrime and how it is practised. A cursory review of a few headlines on media coverage of cybercrime issues by the Ghanaian press shows that, the media mostly depends on the security agencies for their information. This gives a hint about the fact that the practice requires intelligence to detect. Besides, cyber criminals may perpetrate their crimes in their bedrooms or places far removed from their victims, the media and the general public. This obviously affects the level of coverage the media can give to the practice.

Therefore, effective press coverage of cybercrime issues in Ghana appears to depend on the collaboration of all relevant local and international bodies or organisations. Besides, media coverage of social issues, specifically cybercrime issues is also affected by various competing interests that media managers are confronted with in their work.

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1.5 Problem Statement

Research findings on the profile of cybercrime in Ghana paint a very worrying picture which calls for concern (Warner, 2011). This concern even gets more disturbing when available literature indicates that, Ghana is named among the top ten countries in the world with high cybercrime prevalence. This revelation raises doubts about the press' role in providing information that educates the public and the government to take measures to minimise the growing cybercrime menace in the country.

As already stated above, press coverage of cybercrime can contribute to reducing the growth of the menace and its effects on society. The coverage has a significant bearing on the type of measures that are put in place to curb the menace. As posited by Sotirovic (2001 cited in Dubois 2002), the type of crime stories carried by the media leads citizens to favour either punitive or preventive crime fighting policies. That is, the amount or type of cybercrime stories reported in the press serve as a yardstick to prevent or manage the occurrence of this menace.

Unfortunately, there is little research that has been conducted in the area of the nature of media coverage of cybercrime issues in Ghana. More so, there is little or no research conducted in Ghana on how private media and public media cover cybercrime issues, thereby leaving the issue to perceptions and speculations. The perception exists that public media by their mandate are expected to cover more social issues compared to their private counterparts. But until this is confirmed by a study, this perception will remain a speculation. These are significant deficiencies in existing knowledge on the subject, because citizens and policy makers are denied vital information on the subject, for their decision making purposes.

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This gap in research necessitated this study. The study thus attempted to establish the nature of coverage the press in Ghana gave to cybercrime issues in 2011, by using selected editions of the *Daily Graphic* (public newspaper) and the *Daily Guide* (private newspaper) published in 2011. The selection of the two newspapers, one state-owned and the other private owned, is to help ascertain the view held by some scholars that ownership of a newspaper determines the content of the newspaper.

1.6 Research Objectives

This study broadly sought to find out the nature of coverage the press in Ghana gave to cybercrime issues in the past using selected editions of the *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* in 2011.

The study specifically sought to achieve two key objectives namely:

1. To establish the nature of coverage given to cybercrime issues by the *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* in 2011 and
2. To establish whether the nature of ownership of the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* would have any influence on the nature of coverage they gave to cybercrime issues.

1.7 Significance of the Study

Given the little research in media coverage of cybercrime issues in Ghana, the study adds to the body of knowledge on media coverage of cybercrime issues and serves as a basis for future research. Secondly, the study's significance is found in the fact that it tested the view that newspaper ownership has an influence on the way cybercrime issues are covered.

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The study also finds significance in the sense that the results could serve as reference material for researchers, civil society organisations, government and other agencies in making policy decisions regarding cybercrime in Ghana, since the findings provides empirical evidence on the of nature of cybercrime in the country as reported by the media.

Finally, the study's significance also lies in the fact that, it reveals the amount of coverage the *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* gave to cybercrime issues in Ghana in 2011 and thereby could serve as a guide to editors and managers of the two dailies in the formulation of future editorial policies.

1.8 Newspaper Selection

The newspaper industry in Ghana comprises the state-owned and privately owned. This study was limited to two newspapers: one state-owned and the other privately owned, namely: the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide*.

The two papers were purposively selected because the study was interested in comparing coverage between state-owned and privately owned media which have the highest circulation both in terms of numbers and geographical coverage. The following are profiles of the two newspapers.

1.8.1 The *Daily Graphic*

The *Daily Graphic* is a state-owned newspaper published by the Graphic Communications Group Limited. Though state-owned, the *Daily Graphic* is financially self-sustaining because it depends less on government for its financial obligations. It is published six times in a

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week, from Monday to Saturday and had reporters in all ten regions of the country during the study period. According to a survey conducted by Synovate in 2011, the *Daily Graphic* enjoyed the widest circulation in the country with a market share of about 63% of the newspaper industry. Midttun *et al.* (2011) also reported that the *Daily Graphic* enjoyed the widest circulation of any Ghanaian newspaper. The paper had sections covering almost all aspects of society including politics, business, foreign news, regional news, education, health matters, opinions and other features. The *Daily Graphic* is a 64-page newspaper that was sold for Gh₵ 1.50 in 2011.

1.8.2 The *Daily Guide*

The *Daily Guide* is a privately owned newspaper published by Western Publications Limited. It has been in operation for over two decades and is published six times in a week; Monday to Saturday. According to the Synovate Survey (2011), the *Daily Guide* newspaper was the second largest after *Daily Graphic* and was the most widely circulated private newspaper in Ghana with a market share of about 15% of the newspaper industry at the time. Similarly, Midttun *et al.* (2011) named the paper as the second highest newspaper in circulation in Ghana at the time. The paper was popular with the public because of its sensational headlines and stories. The *Daily Guide* is a 24-page newspaper which sold for at Gh₵ 1.50 in 2011. In a nutshell the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* were selected because they were the largest circulated state-owned and privately owned newspapers respectively.

Year of Study

The year for the study was year 2011. This year was selected because a pre-test of editions of the two dailies in that year, compared to other years, revealed a significant coverage of the

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topic which would allow for effective analysis. Another reason for selecting 2011 was that, it was the immediate past year and therefore data collected was expected to be current and relevant.

1.9 Definition of Terms

To enable an effective interpretation and understanding of the findings of this study, the following key terms/phrases have been operationally defined in the context of the study, which may be limited in scope compared to their everyday usage and meanings:

The Press: This was used to refer to the newspapers that were published in Ghana at that time. Some of these newspapers included: the *Daily Graphic*, the *Daily Guide*, *Ghanaian Times*, and the *Mirror* etc.

Press Coverage: this referred to news reports in the newspapers, especially those in the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* newspapers.

Cybercrime issues: This had to do with any news report in the two newspapers concerning internet fraud/scam. It also included any story or report that dealt with the subject cybercrime such as training programmes/workshops on cybercrime and educational tips on avoiding cyber fraud.

Nature/kind of Coverage: This had to do with the level and type of coverage the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* gave to cybercrime issues. For example, it was concerned with the number of stories published on cybercrime in the two dailies, the sources of the stories, the subject matter of the stories, the authors/writers of the stories and the placement of the stories.

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Official Sources: This referred to government officials or state departments/agencies that provided information for the compilation of stories on cybercrime. That is, government officials or state institutions in whose names stories on cybercrime were attributed to in the two dailies. E.g. ministers of state, public officials such as security personnel and other civil servants.

Unofficial Sources: This had to do with private individuals and Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) in whose names stories written on cybercrime were attributed to in the two dailies.

1.10 Summary

This chapter introduced the study giving a background to the research. It discussed issues relating to the media and cybercrime; giving highlights to press coverage of social issues, description of what cybercrime is and historical antecedents of cybercrime globally and in Ghana. The chapter also defines the problem necessitating the study as well as the objectives and significance of the study. It outlined the scope of the study in terms of newspapers and year selected for the research and gave definitions of certain key terms/phrases that might have limited meanings when compared to their everyday scope of meaning.

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CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses two theories that underpinned the study and reviews available literature concerning the subject of the study. Cybercrime as a phenomenon is a relatively new area in the academic field when compared to other social issues such as armed robbery and drug abuse. Nevertheless, a few studies have been recorded regarding media coverage of cybercrime issues, some of which are worth discussing in this chapter. Some social science researchers and criminologists have addressed different aspects of the subject at different times from various theoretical standpoints, some of these research works have been reviewed in this study. Before that, the following is a discussion of two theories that formed the basis of this study.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

A theory is defined as a set of related propositions that present a systematic view of a phenomenon by specifying relationships among concepts (Wimmer and Dominick, 2011, p. 13). Severin and Tankard (2001, p.11) also define theories as "general statements that summarise our understanding of the way the world works". They outlined four specific goals of mass communication theory as follows:

- To explain the effects of mass communication;
- To explain the uses to which people put mass communication;
- To explain learning from mass media; and

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- To explain the role of mass media in shaping people's values and views (Severin and Tankard, 2001).

In line with the above goals, this study used two theories; the media ownership theory and the framing perspective to examine: (1) how media ownership could influence / affect media coverage of social issues such as cybercrime and (2) how framing could affect the construction (here we would be looking at page placement of story/article) of newspaper content, specifically on cybercrime issues.

The two theories helped the study to draw a conclusion on the nature of newspaper coverage of cybercrime issues in Ghana and also helped explain the relationship between the ownership of the two newspapers and their news content on cybercrime.

2.1.1 Media Ownership Theory

The media ownership theory was developed by Altschull in 1984. He posits that the content of the press is directly correlated with the interests of those who finance the press. This theory basically contends that the content of any newspaper is directly influenced by the interests of its owners; that is, the content of a medium reflects the interests and ideologies of those who own it. In the light of this, where a media outlet is commercially owned, the content will reflect the commercial interest of the news organisation's owners.

Shoemaker and Reese (1991 cited by Nartey *et al*. 2011) refined the theory to propose that media owners have the ultimate power over news content. They argued that if owners are

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commercially oriented, news content is built based on the economic objective of the company. On this basis, the nature of issues reported and the general news content of a state-owned media house is envisaged to be different from that of a privately owned media enterprise. Specifically, the theory expects that news content of privately owned media would be more commercially inclined, with little space for other social issues such as cybercrime, compared to that of the state-owned media because private media are often primarily set up to make profit. Due to this, the study expected that given the different ownership of the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide*, their nature of coverage of cybercrime issues would be different.

Similarly, Djankov *et al*. (2001) argued that state-owned media are more interested in social concerns compared to private media. In fact, the researchers stated that the true benefits of state ownership of the press accrue to the disadvantaged members of the society since they operate freely from the influence of capitalists. They added that state controlled media can serve the social needs of the poor and the disadvantaged and thereby improve social outcomes. Cybercrime being a social concern, the researcher expected that the *Daily Graphic* would pay more attention to it than the *Daily Guide*.

Okech (2004) also supported the view that media ownership does influence how journalists cover stories; this happens in various ways including direct censorship and coercion of editorial staff. He observed that commercially oriented media organisations pay more attention to commercial issues than social issues in their content. Going by this view, the study envisaged that, the prominence given to cybercrime issues by the two dailies was going

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to be different; the *Daily Graphic* was expected to give more prominence to cybercrime issues than the *Daily Guide.*

Furthermore, Curran *et al.* (1982) contended that, the contents of the media and the meanings carried by their messages are primarily determined by the economic base of the organisations in which they are produced. Consequently, commercial media organisations must cater to the needs of advertisers and produce audience-maximizing products (hence the heavy doses of sex-and-violence content). On the other hand, those media institutions whose revenues are controlled by the dominant political institutions or by the state gravitate towards a middle ground, or towards the heartland of the prevailing consensus. This proposition is typical of the classical Marxist media theorists who see the economic base of media houses as determining everything else in the superstructure including social, political and intellectual consciousness. This study therefore expected that the *Daily Graphic* would devote more space to cybercrime issues compared to the *Daily Guide.*

2.1.1.1 Critique of Media Ownership Theory

The media ownership theory, however, has recorded some criticisms as far as its propositions are concerned. Critics of this theory regard it as a reductionist approach which fails to account for diversity. They argue that there is a relative autonomy of the superstructure with respect to the base and vice versa. According to this view, ideological practices of the mass media are relatively autonomous from content determination (Stevenson, 1995). These critics therefore, debunk the view that media ownership determines media content arguing that media content is determined by the prevailing aspirations of society and not the economic orientation of the media organization. By this argument, the study sought to find out whether

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the different ownership of the *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* had any influence on their coverage of cybercrime issues over the study period.

Despite the above criticisms of the media ownership theory, the researcher is convinced that there is strength in the arguments proposed by the authors of the theory. For instance, from the economic point of view alone, it is pertinent for a private newspaper to pay more attention to commercial interests compared to social issues. This is because, the survival of many private newspapers largely depend on their economic viability. Besides, critics (such as Stevenson, 1995) seem to confuse ideological practices with economic interests that newspapers have, since the two are not necessarily the same.

Therefore, the media ownership theory formed the basis for the development of the main research hypothesis for this study. Using the media ownership theory, this research hypothesised a likelihood of a relationship between newspaper ownership and how cybercrime issues were covered in Ghana.

It was envisaged that the *Daily Guide* will be commercially oriented being a private newspaper, hence its content will be commercially skewed leaving little room for social issues such as cybercrime. Consequently, it was expected that the *Daily Guide* would cover less stories on cybercrime, since it is largely a public service/social issue. On the other hand, by the nature of its ownership (state-owned), the *Daily Graphic's* news content was expected to contain more of social and developmental issues. For this reason, it was anticipated that the *Daily Graphic* would cover more stories on cybercrime.

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Similarly, due to difference in ownership, it was expected that the nature of coverage of cybercrime by the two newspapers would be different. For example, *Daily Graphic* was more likely to resort to government or official sources for its stories on cybercrime while the *Daily Guide* was expected to use unofficial leads to get its stories.

However, taking into cognisance the criticisms of the media ownership theory; that newspaper ownership does determine content, as well as the intense competition among newspapers for public space and trust, the study sought to establish whether the empirical evidence supported the arguments proposed by the media ownership theory or not.

2.1.2 The Framing Perspective

The framing perspective is the second theory that informed this study. Goffman (1974) cited by Midttun *et al*. (2011, p.6) contends that frames are "schemata of interpretation" that allow individuals "to locate, perceive, identify, and label" issues and topics within their own personal context. Chong and Druckman (2007, p. 104) also say that the major premise for framing theory is that an issue can be viewed from a variety of perspectives and can be construed as having implications for multiple values or consideration. Midttun *et al*. (2011, p.6), therefore, concluded that framing is "a process whereby communicators, consciously or unconsciously, construct a point of view that encourages the facts of a given situation to be interpreted by others in a particular manner".

Similarly, de Vreese (2005, p.51) posited that "one influential way that the media may shape public opinion is by framing events and issues in particular ways. Framing involves a communication source presenting and defining an issue". In essence, framing plays a pivotal

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role in news-construction (for example, the tone and prominence given to the story) and this goes a long way to determine the nature of coverage given to any issue in the content of any media organisation.

2.1.2.1 Critique of the Framing Perspective

Critics of the framing perspective, however, see the theory as being too ambiguous. According to Williams and Benford (1996: 3), the ambiguity of the framing concept stems in part from the fact that a "frame" has two different implications as a metaphor. On the one hand, it is used as grammar -"a structure in which meaning is contained in and conveyed by the relationships among the elements" (p. 3). On the other hand, frame metaphors are used in a contextual or indexical sense. Here "the frame acts as a boundary that keeps some elements in view and others out of view" (p. 3). Thus a frame conveys "what is or is not important by grouping certain symbolic elements together and keeping others out" (p. 3). Both the structural (frame as grammar) and indexical (frame as contextually generated content) uses of frames have been underscored by various scholars.

Williams and Benford (1996) suggest that clarifying the grammar versus content distinction would serve to reduce ambiguities in part by alerting researchers to methodological implications (E.g. unit of analysis) of conceptualizing frames in one way or the other. Even where there have been precision and clarity concerning specific framing concepts, there have been essentially no operational definitions developed that could be used by positively inclined researchers who wish to generate and test framing hypotheses. Critics of the framing perspective therefore see this ambiguity of the concept as a big minus in its usage for effective analysis.

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Notwithstanding the alleged ambiguities of the framing perspective, the theory is still relevant to the study because, page placement of a news story (which falls under framing) gives indications about the importance of the story. Therefore, the alleged ambiguities cannot invalidate the relevance of the theory to this study.

Furthermore, given the powerful role of the press to frame issues to create certain effects as postulated by de Vreese (2005) and others, and the fact that cybercrime is an emerging global phenomenon which practice is underpinned by technology, the framing approach was chosen to help investigate how newspapers in Ghana framed news stories on cybercrime. Through content analysis of selected editions of the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide*, this study sought to find out page placement cybercrime stories by the two newspapers. This approach facilitated an empirical examination of the nature of coverage given to cybercrime issues in the news content of the Ghanaian press using the contents of the *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* as a guide.

2.2 Review of Related Studies

Available literature indicate that a myriad of studies on press coverage of social issues have been carried out in many countries. Some of these studies featured press coverage of general crime issues. However, there is little research on press coverage of cybercrime issues globally, and particularly in Ghana. Due to this, some of the literature reviewed in this study included the nature of press coverage of crime related issues. This was intended to broaden the scope of the discussion and to create a broader understanding of the problem the study sought to address.

2.2.1 Press Coverage of Crime related Issues

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The central role the press play when it comes to covering crime related issues remains a subject of investigation by numerous scholars. Some of the studies in this area include the following:

A study by Collins *et al*. (2011) sought to investigate the effects of media ideology on the coverage of international issues / crime by some news magazines in the United States and the United Kingdom. The study classified the US media as being market oriented, whilst that of the UK was classified as public service inclined.

Using the media ownership theory and framing approach, they content analysed two news magazines (with wide circulation and coverage) each from the United States (US) and the United Kingdom (UK) (i.e. *Time, Newsweek*, the *Economist*, and *Prospect).* The results of the study showed that indeed, the UK news magazines (i.e. *Time, Newsweek)* covered overwhelming percentage of international issues (79%) compared to the US news magazines (The *Economist*, and *Prospect)* coverage of international issues (21%). However, the study found that, US news magazines covered more stories (12%) on international crime than the UK newsmagazines (4%).

The study realised that the UK press were more competitive and aggressive in covering international issues compared to the press in the US which covered more issues on crime and less on international issues. The study supported the view that a public service media will be inclined to covering social and developmental issues compared to profit driven media enterprises. Therefore, Collins *et al*. (2011) concluded that the type of media ideology/orientation has an effect on the type of issues covered or reported in its content.

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Another study that examined the newspaper coverage of crime issues was conducted by Bracy and Kupchik (2009). They examined the use of framing approach by the *New York Times* and the *USA Today* in their coverage of school crime from 1990 to 2006. The difference between their study and the preceding study is that Bracy and Kupchik looked at how the print media report on the problem of school crime and violence and the effects of the coverage on shaping public perception of school crime/violence.

What was lacking in this study, however, was its failure to indicate the nature of coverage (type of story and placement of story) the two newspapers gave to school crime/violence over the study period, doing so would have added important details to the coverage. But the key lesson the study sought to portray is the fact that, framing of news content has a strong effect on public perception on issues.

The results of the quantitative and qualitative content analysis they conducted showed that the two newspapers covered few stories or articles on school crime but that these articles framed the issue of school crime/violence in a way that created fear in the minds of readers.

Richards *et al*. (2011) also conducted a study that went a step further to examine press use of direct or indirect victim-blaming language and the sources cited in reporting femicide (defined as the murder of female intimate partners) in North Carolina. The study conducted a content analysis of newspaper data bank, *Access World News* which has about thirty (30) newspapers of North Carolina. They used the *Atlas.ti V5.0* ((Muhr, 2004), a qualitative data management package for their analysis.

The results showed that articles quoted multiple sources such as friends and family, police officers and judges blaming the victims for not taking action or not taking serious enough

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action against their abusers. The results further indicated that reporters used more of public sources, such as law enforcement and criminal justice system actors, than private sources, such as friends or family members, to provide information on femicide cases.

In a similar study in Ghana, Gadzekpo (2009) examined the nature of press coverage of domestic violence, with specific reference to femicide in Ghanaian newspapers in 2002. Using the media framing theory, the study conducted a qualitative textual analysis of discursive frames the *Mirror* and the *Daily Graphic* used in reporting intimate femicide. The study found out that, the discursive berth provided in almost all the press accounts reviewed gave little space and opportunity for mounting credible challenges to the myths, assumptions and attitudes inscribed in media narratives on gender-based violence.

2.2.2 Press Coverage of Cybercrime

Due to the agenda-setting and surveillance functions of the press, it is expected that its lenses cover all shades of issues in society. One of those issues that the press is expected to cover and report on is cybercrime, a phenomenon that has exponentially grown with the advent of modern technology. Given the magnitude of the cybercrime phenomenon in modern day society, it is ideally expected that the media pay similar attention to the coverage of the subject. However, this ideal situation is not given; hence various scholars have conducted different inquiries into the matter to find out the nature of coverage the press gives to cybercrime issues.

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However, the studies in the area of press coverage of cybercrime are few and have not addressed all the important aspects of the subject, hence the need for this study. The following are the few studies obtained after an extensive search:

A study by Roberts and Douai (2012) sought to examine how the Canadian media constructed internet child luring cases during the first decade of the 21st century. They content analysed two newspapers: *The Globe and Mail* and *The Toronto Star* to find out how the media framed internet child luring and the effects of the coverage on moral panics. The two newspapers were widely circulated and considered to be among the most influential newspapers in Canada. Using both quantitative and qualitative research methods, Roberts and Douai analysed the tone and language of the news coverage, the geographic spread of the coverage and the possible solutions prescribed for internet child luring. This was all in a bid to answer the main research question which was: how did the print media in Canada cover Internet-related sex crimes against children, particularly child luring during the study period?

The researchers found in majority of the articles they analysed that, the Canadian newspapers generally constructed internet-related child luring cases using a serious tone that incited some panic around internet use by adolescents and the vulnerability of children themselves. The study also found that *The Toronto Star* was more inclined to offer solutions than *The Globe & Mail.* The study underscored the impact of framing on newspaper content and how that affected public perception and behaviour.

Also Onyebadi and Park (2012), conducted a study to examine the framing of advance fee cyber fraud (4-1-9) email communications as they appeared on the online media and also to content analyse their lexical features. Using the *Diction 5.0* content analysis software

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(dictionary-based computerized content analysis software designed to analyze text) they content analysed a total of 248 4-1-9 email messages sent out to individuals around the world from 1st December, 1998 to March 31, 2006.The messages were obtained from four scam websites namely:

1) *http://www.419eater.com/index.php*
2) *http://www.popsubculture.com/pop/bio_project/nigeria-fraud.html*
3) *http://www.lpconline.com/Nigerian_fraud_sample_index.html*
4) *http://www.quatloos.com/cm-niger/nigerian_scam_letter_museum.htm*

The study found that the online media used realism as the main persuasive lexical characteristics in their messages, that is, language that suggested meeting tangible needs in people's everyday lives. The main purpose of the study was to find out how the online media framed advanced-fee fraud/cybercrime messages. Unfortunately, the study was limited in analysing all the details of the online media coverage of cybercrime issues such as prominence given by the online media to cyber fraud issues.

In Ghana, one study that got close to addressing the problem of the nature of press coverage of cybercrime issues was conducted by Oduro-Frimpong (2011). The main concern of the study was to examine the representation of cybercrime (popularly called Sakawa in Ghana) in popular Ghanaian sakawa video film series and political elite discourses on the subject in the Ghanaian print media.

The study analysed two Ghanaian video films: The *Dons in Sakawa* and *Mallam Issa Kawa* to expose the hidden lessons contained in them. The study also content analysed selected editions of Ghanaian newspapers (namely: *Christian Messenger*, the *Daily Graphic* and the

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Ghanaian Chronicle) in 2009 to elicit political elite discourses bordering on cybercrime/sakawa.

The results of this study revealed that both the films and the political elite discourses condemned the practice of cybercrime/sakawa. In addition, the films provided a nuanced understanding of some of the pressing underlying factors that engendered sakawa practice in Ghana and indirectly hinted at how these causes were to be addressed. On the side of political elite discourses, the study found that discourses in the selected newspapers showed that political leaders framed the issue of cybercrime/sakawa as an alien practice that had somehow managed to sneak into the country and attributed its causes to greed and decay in moral uprightness.

Comparing the results from the video films and the political elite discourse, the study concluded that the two video films on sakawa on one hand pointed to increase in social hardships as the cause of sakawa and indirectly called for the redress of problems such as graduate unemployment as a measure to curb the practice. The political leaders on the other hand pointed to greed and selfishness as the cause of the practice, consequently these leaders tended to request for prayers for the perpetrators of sakawa to help them reform.

Clearly, from all the studies above, it is apparent that there is a yawning gap in research regarding the nature of press coverage of cybercrime issues, specifically with respect to the amount of coverage the media devote to cybercrime issues and a critical comparative analysis

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of the nature of coverage given to the subject by the state-owned and privately owned newspapers. It is this gap the study sought to fill.

2.3 Hypothesis

Due to the existing gap in research regarding how different newspapers (state-owned and private) cover cybercrime issues, this study formulated and tested the following main hypothesis based on the media ownership theory and the framing perspective:

H_1: There is likely to be a relationship between newspaper ownership and the coverage of cybercrime issues in Ghana.

It was envisaged that the ownership and orientation of the two newspapers would affect the nature of coverage each newspaper would give to cybercrime issues. For example, by its nature of ownership as a state-owned newspaper, it was expected that the *Daily Graphic* would use more official sources for its stories and give more prominence and space to social issues such as cybercrime than the *Daily Guide,* a private entity primarily driven by profit. Regarding sourcing, *Daily Guide* was expected to use unofficial sources for its stories on cybercrime and was more likely to pay attention to commercially related issues than cybercrime issues; hence the *Daily Graphic* was likely to publish more stories on cybercrime compared to the *Daily Guide*.

2.4 Summary

This chapter discussed the theories underpinning the study. It also reviewed related studies that had been conducted in the area of press coverage of crime issues, and specific reference made to cybercrime related studies. The studies reviewed indicated that, issues relating to

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cybercrime received little coverage from the press. Another important revelation from the review was that, there existed a big gap in research relating to the exact nature of coverage the press gave to cybercrime issues. Lastly, hypothesis for the study was presented in this chapter based on the literature reviewed and informed by the media ownership theory and a justification offered for it.

CHAPTER THREE

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METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The study employed the quantitative research approach in the collection and analysis of the data. Specifically, content analysis technique was used to examine the contents of two newspapers: the *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide*, to determine the nature of coverage each of them gave to cybercrime issues in 2011. The study covered the period January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2011. All the editions of the two newspapers within this period had an equal probability of being sampled.

3.1 Content Analysis

Content analysis is a method that is generally accepted and widely applied to texts by linguists, journalists, communication scholars, as well professionals in psychology and sociology. The method is popular with mass media research because it is an efficient way to investigate the content of a medium, such as the number and types of commercials or advertisements in broadcasting or the print media (Wimmer and Dominick, 2011).

Content analysis has been defined in various ways. Walizer and Wienir (1978) cited by Wimmer and Dominick (2011) defined it as any systematic procedure devised to examine the content of recorded information. Krippendorf (2004) cited by Wimmer and Dominick (2011) defines it as a research technique for making replicable and valid references from data to their context.

A typical definition of content analysis which fairly captures the essence of this study is the one provided by Kerlinger (2000) cited by Wimmer and Dominick (2011). He defines content

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analysis as a method of studying and analyzing communication in a systematic, objective, and quantitative manner for the purpose of measuring variables. Kerlinger (2000) definition involves three concepts which perfectly fit into this study:

- First, content analysis is systematic in the sense that the content to be analyzed is selected according to explicit and consistently applied rules: Sample selection must follow proper procedures, each item must have an equal chance of being included in the analysis and the evaluation process must be systematic.
- Second, content analysis is objective; that is, the researcher's personal idiosyncrasies and biases should not enter into the findings.
- Third, content analysis is quantitative; that is, the goal of content analysis is an accurate representation of a body of messages in a precise manner and this requires quantification.

In a nutshell, unlike qualitative studies which are sometimes opened to the researcher's biases, content analysis as a quantitative approach is systematic and objective.

The study analysed the news contents of two newspapers in Ghana: the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide*. The selection of the two newspapers was based on two main reasons. First, they were both published daily, are national in circulation and have fairly large circulation figures. Secondly, the different type of ownership of the two papers was a reason for their selection, since this was appropriate for purposes of comparison: the *Daily Graphic* is a state-owned newspaper while the *Daily Guide* is privately owned.

3.2 Population and Sample Size

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The universe for this study comprised of all the editions of the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* in year 2011; that is all issues of the two newspapers from January 1, to December 31, 2011. This gave a total of about six hundred and twenty-six (626) editions. Each of these editions of the two newspapers had an equal probability of being selected. A sample size of 144 editions of the two newspapers was selected for the study.

3.3 Sampling Procedure

The composite week sampling method was used to select the sample for this study. Being a probability method, it is highly regarded in selecting samples in content analysis of newspaper content. It involved selecting each day of the week that the two newspapers published using simple random sampling, so as to obtain a sample of six editions for each of the twelve months.

In this study, a composite week was constructed for each month and the samples selected accordingly. For example, all the dates of Mondays in the month of January were written on pieces of paper and placed in a box and one selected randomly. This procedure was repeated for Tuesday through to Saturday for the *Daily Graphic* in all the twelve months of the year. The same process was repeated for the *Daily Guide* to obtain the sample. This sampling method was used because it gave equal chance to all the items in the population for being selected, which avoided the situation of a systematic bias. Please see Appendix 2 for days selected.

At the end of the process, seventy-two (72) editions each of the two newspapers were selected. Thus, a total of one hundred and forty-four (144) editions for the two newspapers

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became the sample size for the study representing about 23% of the universe. This sample size was appropriate and fairly representative of the entire population and satisfies the minimum sample to population ratio of 10% required in social science research.

3.4 Unit of Analysis

The study's unit of analysis comprised of all news stories that appeared in the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* in 2011 with focus on cybercrime. For each unit, information collected covered specific story type, placement of story, sources used, and content of story.

In order to provide a clearer understanding of the categories used for the study, the following key terms/phrases were defined as follows:

Source: This refers to an individual, a group or an organisation that is quoted /paraphrased in a story as the original provider of the information serving as the basis of the story. This is for the purposes of determining the sources used by the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* in their coverage of cybercrime issues.

Straight News Story: This is a story which contains basic issues about the subject, usually written with information obtained through avenues such as press releases and news conferences.

Feature Story: This is a story that is originally conceived of by the journalist/writer or the media institution and the information in it provides details, background and other educational information that informs and educates readers on the subject.

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3.5 Data Collection

Being a prime requirement for content analysis research, a coding sheet was designed by the researcher and used to facilitate the data collection process. Specifically, distinct categories were defined based on a pre-test of a few of the sampled editions and also based on some theoretical or conceptual rationale of the topic area. The categories are mutually exclusive and exhaustive. (Appendix 1).

Themes/topics were categorised mainly into **type**, **source**, **content, author/writer**, and **placement** of the story (Appendix 1). The categories were operationally defined as follows:

Type of "Articles": This had to do with whether the story was a straight news story, a feature, editorial, letter, opinion, a rejoinder/retraction etc. The story type category was coded to help determine which types of stories the two newspapers published on cybercrime during the period under review.

Content of Story: This had to do with the main subject matter of the story being reported in the newspaper. The categories coded here include: arrest of criminals, victims ordeal, educational tips on cybercrime, training programme/workshop etc. This was coded to help identify the main issues that engaged the media's attention regarding their coverage of cybercrime.

Source of story: This entailed the person or organisation to which information making up the story was attributed. The persons/organisations coded included: security personnel or agencies, government officials, civil society organisations, no by-line or other for stories that didn't fall under any of the above. The story source was coded in order to help investigate the

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sources the two newspapers used for their stories and to test the assertion that the *Daily Graphic* was likely to use more official sources than the *Daily Guide.*

Placement of story: This had to do with the page on which the story appeared, which signifies the prominence (in terms of page placement) given to the story. For instance, front page, middle page, back page or other, where the most prominent pages are the front, middle, and back page in that order - Dzeble (2006) gathered this from an interview with editors of the two newspapers. This category was to help determine which of the two newspapers gave more prominence to cybercrime.

Author/Writer of the Story: This had to do with the individual(s) who authored the story. These have been coded as: internal staff of the newspaper and external writers such as individuals outside the news media organisation or experts in cybercrime or news agency reports (E.g. GNA). The main purpose of this category was to help establish the personalities who led the cybercrime debate during the study period.

3.6 Method of Data Analysis

The data collected was analysed using the quantitative research approach. That is, data was analysed and presented using descriptive statistical tools such as frequency distribution tables, cross-tabulations, and charts. In this regard, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software was a big resource. The statistical tools that were used to represent the data helped to simplify the analysis and understanding of the data.

3.7 Summary

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This chapter examined the overall research design for the study. It explained the processes that were followed in carrying out the research; the selection of the newspapers, the research method and sampling procedure used for the research. It also described how the coding sheet was constructed and operationally defined, as well as a justification for the inclusion of categories. The chapter also described how the data was analysed and presented.

CHAPTER FOUR

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FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents findings from the study as well as detailed analysis of the data collected. The study sought to investigate the nature of press coverage of cybercrime issues in Ghana using the *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* as a measure. It was also interested in finding out whether newspaper ownership had any influence on the nature of coverage of cybercrime issues in Ghana by comparing coverage between the state-owned *Daily Graphic* and the privately owned *Daily Guide*.

In order to achieve the objectives of the study set out in Chapter One, the researcher used descriptive statistical tools such as tables, charts, and cross-tabulations of thematic areas set out in Chapter Three, in presenting and analysing the findings. Again, applying inferential statistical tools to the data collected in the content analysis, the researcher tested the main hypothesis of a likelihood relationship between newspaper ownership and the coverage of cybercrime issues in Ghana using three sub-hypothesis.

4.1 Number of Stories Published by the Two Newspapers.

A total of 6,873 stories were published by the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* in the 144 editions that were sampled between January and December 2011. The *Daily Graphic* published 52.5% out of the figure while the *Daily Guide* published 47.5%. It means that in ratio terms, the publications by the two newspapers was almost 1:1 despite the fact that the *Daily Graphic* had more news space than the *Daily Guide* (64 pages and 24 pages respectively). This revelation provoked further enquiries into the contents of the two dailies.

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The researcher examined the number of full-page commercial ads published by the two newspapers. This exercise was meant to investigate the view that, all things being equal, the *Daily Guide* being a private newspaper was more likely to be commercially inclined compared to the *Daily Graphic*. The study found that the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* published a total of 2,445 full-page commercial ads. Out of this number, the *Daily Graphic* published 2,025 (82.8%) while the *Daily Guide* published the remaining 420 (17.2%).

Clearly, the *Daily Graphic* covered more full-page commercial ads compared to the *Daily Guide*. That is, the *Daily Graphic* published almost five times the number of commercial ads the *Daily Guide* published. Even though the difference in newspaper space (ratio of 3:1) between the two dailies could partly account for this outcome, the commercial ads published by the *Daily Graphic* far exceed the expected ratio it should have with the *Daily Guide*. This finding somehow did not support the view that the privately owned *Daily Guide* was likely to be more commercially inclined as compared to the State-owned *Daily Graphic*.

4.2 Coverage of Cybercrime by the *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide*

On the aspect of coverage of cybercrime stories by the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide*, the study found that a total of 29 stories were published by the two newspapers in the period under review. This number represents less than one percent (0.42%) of the total number of stories published by the two dailies during the study period.

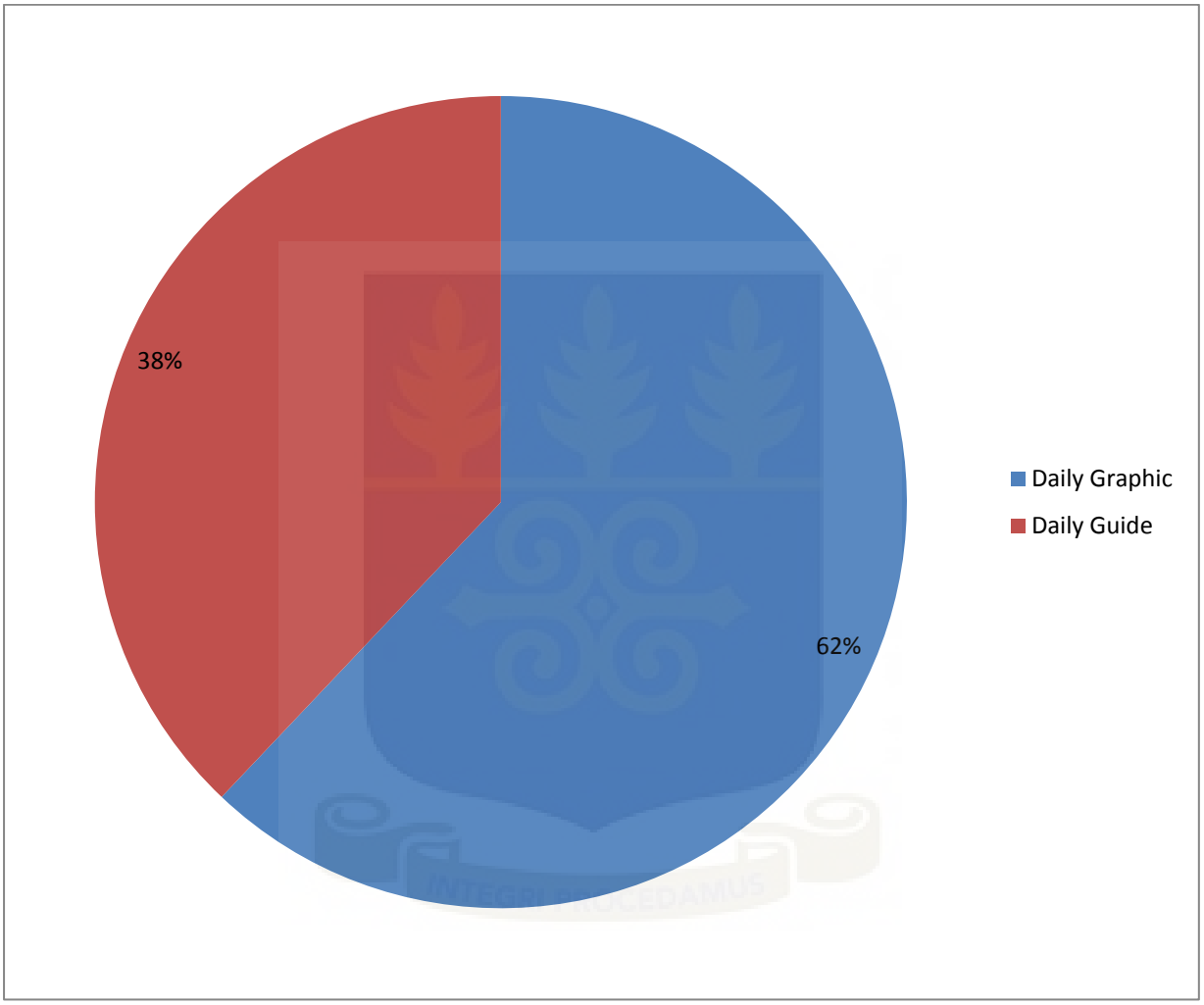
Of the 29 stories, the *Daily Graphic* published 62.1% of the stories while the *Daily Guide* published 37.9%. Compared to the total number of stories each newspaper published, the *Daily Graphic's* stories represented 0.5 % of the total number of stories it published while

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that of the *Daily Guide* was 0.3%. This means that for every story published by the *Daily Guide* on cybercrime, the *Daily Graphic* published close to two stories.

This is represented in the pie chart below:

FIGURE 1: Comparison of total number of stories on Cybercrime by the two Newspapers



Even though the two newspapers published unequal number of stories on cybercrime, the difference in the number of stories was not very significant, given the two extreme differences in nature of ownership of the two dailies. Given the fact that the *Daily Graphic* (state-owned) publishes 64 pages while the *Daily Guide* (private newspaper) publishes 24 pages, the study expected that the *Daily Graphic* would have published a higher number of stories on cybercrime than it did.

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These findings did not support the proposition by Altschull (1984) and others that, the content turned out by a media organisation often tends to reflect the interests of the owner(s). It rather gave credence to the view of critics of the media ownership theory who say that media content is independent of ownership. In other words, these findings did not support the researcher's expectation that the *Daily Graphic* was likely to publish more stories on cybercrime than the *Daily Guide* in 2011.

4.3 Source of Stories

The source of story category helped identify the person(s) or organisation(s) to which information making up the story was attributed. This category was an important element in the study because it helped establish the sources the two newspapers used for their stories, and thereby assisted in verifying the assertion that the *Daily Graphic*, being a state-owned newspaper, was likely to use more official government sources than the privately owned *Daily Guide.*

Table 1: Source of Story

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Source of story	Name of Newspaper		Total
	Daily Graphic	Daily Guide	
Security agencies	5 27.8%	7 63.6%	12 41.4%
Government officials	6 33.3%	0 0.0%	6 20.7%
Civil society Organ.	4 22.2%	2 18.2%	6 20.7%
Other	3 16.7%	2 18.2%	5 17.2%
Total	**18** **100%**	**11** **100%**	**29** **100%**

The findings as depicted in **Table 1** show that the two newspapers depended on the security personnel or agencies for most of their stories on cybercrime (41.4%) compared to the other sources, namely: Government officials, civil society organisations and other sources not named. However, it was striking to discover that whereas the *Daily Graphic* got about 33% of its stories on cybercrime issues from government officials, the *Daily Guide*, on the other hand, did not use government officials as a source for any of the eleven stories on cybercrime it published.

The above finding confirms the assertion made in Chapter Two that, the *Daily Graphic* as a state-owned newspaper was more likely to resort to government officials as key sources for publishing stories on cybercrime than the privately owned *Daily Guide*. This result means that there was disparity between the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* when it came to the type of sources they used in the stories published on cybercrime.

4.4 Placement of Story

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Placement of story as defined in Chapter Three had to do with the page on which the story was placed, which characterised the prominence (in terms of page placement: front middle and back pages) attached to the story. This was an important element in this study because it helped determine the prominence the two newspapers gave to cybercrime issues during the study period. According to Dzeble (2006), editors of the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* both said that, the front page, middle page, and the back page are the most prominent pages in their newspapers, in that order. Therefore, the selection of stories for these pages was based on the importance they attached to them.

Table 2: Placement of Story

Placement of Stories	**Name of Newspaper**		**Total**
	Daily Graphic	**Daily Guide**	
Front page	2 11.1%	2 18.2%	4 13.8%
Centre page	1 5.6%	0 0.0%	1 3.4%
Back page	1 5.6%	0 0.0%	1 3.4%
Other	14 77.7%	9 81.8%	23 79.4%
Total	**18** **100%**	**11** **100%**	**29** **100%**

Table 2 gives a distribution of stories and their placement as found in the two newspapers during the study period. The study revealed that few stories on cybercrime appeared on the prominent pages (front, middle and back pages) of the two newspapers. The cumulative percentage of the stories that appeared on the prominent pages of the two newspapers is 18.6% which is about a quarter of the volume of stories that were placed in other pages (79.4%) which are less prominent. Even though the subject matter of the story is not the sole

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consideration for page placement/prominence, it is possible from the above results that the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* did not give much prominence to cybercrime issues because they classified the subject unimportant.

However, the *Daily Graphic* gave more prominence to cybercrime than the *Daily Guide* since it had one story each placed on the middle and back pages besides those on the front page while *Daily Guide* had no stories placed on these pages. Even though the difference is negligible, the slight difference supports the researcher's expectation that, the state-owned *Daily Graphic* would give more prominence to cybercrime issues than the *Daily Guide* which is privately owned with the primary objective of making profit.

4.5 Type of Article

The type of Article category as described in Chapter Three had to do with whether the article was a straight news story, a feature, editorial, letter/opinion or a rejoinder. This category was to help put into perspective the types of articles the two newspapers published on cybercrime during the period under review, and thereby helped establish the kind of coverage the two dailies gave to cybercrime issues during the study period.

Table 3: Type of Article

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Type of Article	Name of Newspaper		Total
	Daily Graphic	Daily Guide	
Straight news story	16 88.8%	11 100%	27 93.2%
Feature	1 5.6%	0 0.0%	1 3.4%
Editorial	1 5.6%	0 0.0%	1 3.4%
Letter/Opinion/Rejoinder/Other	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
Total	**18** **100%**	**11** **100%**	**29** **100%**

Table 3 describes the various types of stories that were published on cybercrime issues by the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* and the frequency of their publication in the study period. It shows that the two newspapers devoted space to straight news stories more than all the other types of stories put together. Straight news stories are newspaper reports of events that occur in society which are devoid of detailed analysis or interpretation. Out of the total of 29 news stories that were coded on cybercrime, straight news stories accounted for 93.2% or 27 stories. The remaining percentage was shared equally between a feature story and an editorial (3.4% apiece). The fact that most of the stories in the two newspapers on cybercrime issues were treated as straight news indicates that the two newspapers were mostly reporting events, as they happened with little attempt at contextualizing or problematising cybercrime for public attention and action. Also, the fact that there was no publication in the form of a letter, suggested an apparent lack of public /readers interest in cybercrime issues.

The findings on story type category (Table 3) clearly indicate that, aside from straight news stories, the *Daily Guide* had no stories as a feature nor an editorial compared to the *Daily Graphic* which published one feature story and one editorial. This perhaps suggests that the *Daily Graphic* went an extra step to contextualize cybercrime issues for public attention and

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action compared to the *Daily Guide*. However, the state-owned *Daily Graphic* and the private owned *Daily Guide* did not vary much in the type of stories they published on cybercrime during the study period, since majority of the stories the two dailies published were straight news stories.

4.6 Author/Writer of Story

This category sought to indicate the individual(s) who authored the stories reviewed; whether these individuals were internal staff of the newspapers or they were external writers. The purpose of this category was to help establish the personalities, whether internal or external writers, who led the cybercrime debate during the study period. This helped determine the dominant writers who championed the cybercrime debate in the two dailies and thereby helped to find out which of the two newspapers carried more discerning public views on the subject. This category was therefore meant to help identify which of the two newspapers carried views of external writers as key partners in championing the cybercrime debate.

Table 4: Author/Writer of Story

Author/Writer	Name of Newspaper		Total
	Daily Graphic	Daily Guide	
Internal Staff	15 83.3%	10 90.9%	25 86.2%
External Writer	1 5.6%	0 0.0%	1 3.4%
Other	2 11.1%	1 9.1%	3 10.4%
Total	18 100%	11 100%	29 100%

The Ghanaian public's lack of interest in writing on cybercrime was established through the findings which showed that 86% (25 stories) of all the articles in the two newspapers were

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authored by internal staff of the two media organizations. Only four percent (one story) were written by external authors and the remaining ten percent (3 stories) had authors not specified.

From Table 4, a comparative analysis of the writer/author category showed that, the *Daily Graphic* had over 80% percent of its stories on cybercrime (15 out of 18 stories) authored by internal staff with one story written by an external author. Similarly, over 90% of the *Daily Guide's* stories (10 out of 11 stories) were authored by internal staff, with no story from the external public and the remaining story had no author. These results show that, in both the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide*, whatever was reported on cybercrime debate was by internal staff of the two dailies with little contribution from the external public.

4.7 Content of Story Category

The content of story category focused on the subject matter of the stories reviewed. This category sought to identify the main themes that characterized cybercrime reportage in the two dailies. This category was important because it helped determine the main issues that engaged the attention of the two dailies regarding their coverage of cybercrime. It further facilitated a comparison of the main issues that were discussed in the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* regarding cybercrime and thereby helped in answering questions regarding the kind of coverage the two newspapers provided to the subject.

Table 5: Content of Story published by Newspaper

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Content of Story	Name of Newspaper		Total
	Daily Graphic	Daily Guide	
Arrests of Criminals	3 16.7%	7 63.6%	10 34.5%
Victims Ordeal	2 11.1%	1 9.1%	3 10.3%
Educational tips on Cybercrime	4 22.2%	1 9.1%	5 17.2%
Workshop/Training	8 44.4%	2 18.2%	10 34.5%
Other	1 5.6%	0 0.0%	1 3.5%
Total	**18** **100%**	**11** **100%**	**29** **100%**

Table 5 shows a comparison of the content of stories published by the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* during the study period.

As shown above, the contents of majority of the stories published on cybercrime by the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* were on arrests of criminals (34.5%) and workshop/training (34.5%). The *Daily Guide* published the highest number of stories on arrests (63.6%) while the *Daily Graphic* published the highest number of stories on workshop or training programmes (44.4%). This finding supported the assertion that the *Daily Graphic* as a state-owned newspaper was expected to focus more on social/development stories compared to the privately owned *Daily Guide*. This is because educational tips and workshops or training programmes are programmes that help contextualize the problem of cybercrime for public attention and action compared to just reporting on arrests.

The *Daily Graphic* published more stories on educational tips on cybercrime (4 stories) compared to the *Daily Guide* (one story). Hence in terms of content of story, the coverage of

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cybercrime issues by the two dailies was different, with the *Daily Graphic* publishing more educational stories on cybercrime than the *Daily Guide*.

4.8 Testing of Hypothesis

Stemple and Westley (1989) posited that it is typical in mass communication research to go beyond the provision and generalization of descriptive statistics of sample variables to look at the strength of relationships between various sample variables and to estimate how likely it is that such relationships exist in the universe of the study. Besides, testing of hypothesis is necessary because the theory reviewed suggested that the nature of ownership of a medium determines the content of that medium. It is in this context that the researcher set out to test the following main hypothesis using three sub-hypotheses:

Main Hypothesis

To establish a relationship between newspaper ownership and coverage of cybercrime issues by the two newspapers, the following main hypothesis was developed:

H_1: There is likely to be a relationship between newspaper ownership and the coverage of cybercrime issues in Ghana.

It was envisaged that the nature of ownership and orientation of the two newspapers would affect the nature of coverage each newspaper would give to cybercrime issues. For example, as a state-owned newspaper, it was expected that the *Daily Graphic* would use more official sources for its stories and give more prominence and attention to social issues such as cybercrime than the *Daily Guide*, a private newspaper primarily driven by profit. Regarding sourcing, *Daily Guide* was expected to use unofficial sources for its stories on cybercrime. It was also expected that the *Daily Guide* would pay more attention to commercially related

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issues than cybercrime issues; hence it was more likely to publish less stories on cybercrime compared to the *Daily Graphic*.

Sub-hypotheses

The three sub-hypotheses indicating various dimensions of the main hypothesis had to do with possible relationships between ownership and number of stories, ownership and story sources, and story prominence as determined by ownership. They were formulated as follows:

H_1: The state-owned *Daily Graphic* was likely to publish more stories on cybercrime than the privately owned *Daily Guide.*

H_2: The state-owned *Daily Graphic* was likely to use more official sources for its stories on cybercrime than the privately owned *Daily Guide.*

H_3: The state-owned *Daily Graphic* was likely to give more prominence (in terms of page placement) to cybercrime issues than the privately owned *Daily Guide*.

4.8.1 Newspaper type and number of stories published on cybercrime

The *Daily Guide* being a profit oriented private newspaper was expected to cover more commercially related issues compared to social issues which are development oriented; hence the *Daily Guide* will cover less of cybercrime stories compared to the *Daily Graphic*. The *Daily Graphic*, on the other hand, being a state-owned newspaper was expected to report on all manner of issues including cybercrime issues.

The media ownership theory and the relevant literature reviewed in Chapter Two showed that state-owned media tended to give more attention to social/developmental issues than

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privately owned media. For instance, Djankov *et al*. (2001) posited that state-owned media are more interested in social issues than private media. The reviewed literature also supported the view that private media are usually inclined to covering commercial issues compared to public media which are expected to focus more on developmental issues; Curran *et al*. (1982) championed this argument. Therefore, this informed the researcher's expectation that, the *Daily Graphic* was more likely to cover more stories on cybercrime than the privately owned *Daily Guide.*

Sub-hypothesis was, thus formulated for testing of possible ownership and frequency of stories relationship:

H_1: The state-owned *Daily Graphic* was likely to publish more stories on cybercrime than the privately owned *Daily Guide.*

Table 6: Type of newspaper and number of stories on cybercrime

Type of Newspaper	Number of Stories published on Cybercrime		Total
	1 story	2 stories	
Daily Graphic	8 44.4%	5 55.6%	18 100%
	27.6%	34.5%	62.1%
Daily Guide	11 100%	0 0%	11 100%
	37.9%	0%	37.9%
Total	**19**	**10**	**29** **100%**

$X^2 = 0.138$ df = 3 p = 0.059

Table 6 represents the chi-square test performed to examine a possible relationship between ownership and story frequency.

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The *Daily Graphic* being a public newspaper is expected to pay more attention to social/developmental issues such as cybercrime compared to a private newspaper such as the *Daily Guide*. The *Daily Guide*, being a private newspaper, will be more interested in commercially related stories (since their primary motive is to make profit); hence will devoted less space to social issues such as cybercrime. The reviewed literature also supports this notion. The null hypothesis tested was:

H_0: The state-owned *Daily Graphic* and the privately owned *Daily Guide* were likely to publish the similar number of stories on cybercrime stories.

Table 6 shows that 62.1% of cybercrime stories were published by the *Daily Guide* whilst the remaining 37.9% came from the *Daily Guide,* suggesting a possible relationship between ownership of newspaper and number of stories covered on cybercrime. Statistically, the probability accompanying the chi-square value of 0.138 at three degrees of freedom is 0.059. That level of significance is more than the 0.05 social science benchmark adopted for the study.

The null hypothesis accordingly gets accepted suggesting that the data does not support the research hypothesis that the state-owned *Daily Graphic* was likely to publish more stories on cybercrime than the privately owned *Daily Guide*. This implies that there is no statistical relationship between newspaper ownership and the number of stories published on cybercrime. Therefore, the possibility is that the difference in the number of stories published by the two newspapers might have been due to extraneous variables (such as the difference in newspaper space) and not due to the nature of the newspaper ownership. As underscored earlier, the *Daily Graphic* is a 64-page newspaper while the *Daily Guide* is 24-page.

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Therefore, the sub-null hypothesis **H_0** which states that the state-owned *Daily Graphic* and the privately owned *Daily Guide* were likely to publish similar number of stories on cybercrime stories was upheld. As a result, the sub-hypothesis **H_1** which states that the state-owned *Daily Graphic* was likely to publish more stories on cybercrime than the privately owned *Daily Guide* was rejected. The logical conclusion is that, per the above study results, the difference in ownership of the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* had no influence on their nature of coverage of cybercrime stories.

4.8.2 Newspaper type and source of story on cybercrime

The *Daily Graphic*, being a state-owned newspaper, was expected to use more official government sources for its stories on cybercrime issues than the *Daily Guide* which was privately owned. Midttun *et al*. (2011) also recorded that the *Daily Graphic* was the only newspaper in Ghana noted for disseminating official government information. Based on the above reasons, the researcher's expectation was that the state-owned *Daily Graphic* was likely to use more official sources for its stories than the privately owned *Daily Guide.*

To test the relationship between newspaper ownership and story sources, the following sub-hypothesis was formulated and used:

H_2: The *Daily Graphic* was likely to use more official sources for its stories on cybercrime than the *Daily Guide*.

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Table 7: Type of newspaper and source of stories on cybercrime

Type of Newspaper	Type of Stories published on Cybercrime (security agencies)		Total
	1 one story	2 stories	
Daily Graphic	3 60%	1 40%	5 100%
	25%	16.7%	41.7%
Daily Guide	7 100%	0 0%	7 100%
	58.3%	0%	58.3%
Total	10	2	12

$X^2 = 0.165$ df = 1 p = 0.138

Table 7 shows the number of stories published on cybercrime by the two newspapers using security agencies as source.

This is because, the *Daily Graphic* being a public newspaper (government's mouthpiece) is more likely to report using government/official sources compared to the *Daily Guide* which is a private newspaper with no obligation to cover government activities. Therefore, the *Daily Guide* was likely to use other sources for its stories on cybercrime other than official sources.

H_0: There was likely to be no relationship between newspaper ownership and the use of official sources for cybercrime stories.

The results from Table 7 show that the *Daily Graphic* published fewer stories (41.7%) on cybercrime using the security agencies compared to the *Daily Guide* (58.3%). These results did not support the expectation of the researcher that the *Daily Graphic* was likely to use more official sources for its stories on cybercrime than the *Daily Guide*. Statistically, the probability accompanying the chi-square value of 0.165 at one degree of freedom is 0.138.

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That level of significance is more than the 0.05 social science benchmark adopted for the study, implying that the study is not significant.

The null hypothesis accordingly gets accepted suggesting that the data obtained from the study does not support the research hypothesis that the *Daily Graphic* was likely to use more official sources for its stories on cybercrime than the *Daily Guide***.** This means that **H_2** which states that the *Daily Graphic* was more likely to use more official sources for its stories on cybercrime than the *Daily Guide* was rejected. This implies that the null hypothesis **H_0** which states that there will be no relationship between newspaper ownership and the use of official sources for cybercrime stories was upheld.

4.8.3 Newspaper type and the placement of stories on cybercrime

Okech (2004) stated that privately owned media often tend to pay more attention to commercial issues compared to publicly owned media; as a result private media tend to give less attention to issues such as social/development issues. Therefore, the researcher expected the *Daily Graphic* (being a state-owned newspaper) to give more prominence to cybercrime issues than the *Daily Guide*. That is the *Daily Graphic* was expected to publish more of its stories on cybercrime on the prominent pages (front, middle and back pages) than the *Daily Guide.*

To test the view that the *Daily Graphic* was likely to give more prominence to cybercrime issues than the *Daily Guide*, the following sub-hypothesis involving newspaper ownership and prominence (placement of story on centre page) given to cybercrime stories was formulated and used.

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H_3: The state-owned *Daily Graphic* was likely to give more prominence (in terms of page placement) to cybercrime issues than the privately owned *Daily Guide.*

Table 8: Type of newspaper and Placement of stories on cybercrime

Type of Newspaper	Placement of stories on Cybercrime (Centre Page)		Total
	1 one story	2 stories	
Daily Graphic	1 100%	0 0%	1 100%
	100%	0%	100%
Daily Guide	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%
	0%	0%	0%
Total	1	0	1

$X^2 = 0.089$ df = 1 p = 0.045

Table 8 shows the number of stories published on the centre pages of the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide*.

This is because, it is the mandate of the *Daily Graphic* (being a public newspaper) to give the necessary prominence to developmental issues such as cybercrime, whereas the *Daily Guide* is not required to do same. It was therefore expected that the *Daily Graphic* would give more prominence to cybercrime issues than the *Daily Guide*.

H_0: The *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* were likely to give similar prominence to cybercrime issues.

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The table shows that, out of the 29 stories that the two newspapers published on cybercrime, the *Daily Graphic* published one (1) story on its centre page whilst the *Daily Guide* published none in the same page. Even though, the difference is insignificant to count, it somehow gives credence to the researcher's hypothesis that *Daily Graphic* was likely to give more prominence to cybercrime issues than the *Daily Guide*.

However, statistically the probability accompanying the chi-square value 0.089 at one degree of freedom is 0.045. Meaning that the sub-null hypothesis $\mathbf{H_{0:}}$ which states that the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* were likely to give similar prominence to cybercrime issues was upheld. Consequently, the hypothesis $\mathbf{H_3}$ which states that the *Daily Graphic* was likely to give more prominence to cybercrime issues than the *Daily Guide* was rejected.

4.9 Summary

This chapter presented the various findings obtained from the study and the analysis thereof. The study results show that the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* gave low coverage to cybercrime issues. The findings also indicated that, the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* did not differ much in their of coverage of cybercrime issues in the year 2011. However, it emerged that the *Daily Graphic* published more stories on cybercrime than the *Daily Guide*. The chapter also analysed the findings and statistically established that no relationships existed between the variables outlined in the hypotheses.

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CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.0 Introduction

Through content analyses of sampled editions of the *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* newspapers this study examined the nature of coverage the two newspapers gave to cybercrime issues from January to December 2011. The main variables that were coded included the number of stories, type, placement, sources, and content of stories published on cybercrime issues in the two dailies. This chapter discusses the findings of the research and relates them to the theories used and the reviewed literature. It also proffers recommendations to guide future research in the area.

The study was guided by two theories: the media ownership theory and the framing perspective. The media ownership theory was selected because of its proposition that ownership of media determines the nature of content. The study wanted to test the practical application of this theory to the coverage of cybercrime issues by the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide*, since they are differently owned. The framing perspective was also chosen to help establish how differently the two newspapers framed their coverage of cybercrime issues.

Relevant literature which was reviewed in the study area indicated that media ownership plays a role in the kind of content turned out by a media organisation. Specifically, results from previous studies such as Djankov *et al*. (2001) have it that, state-owned media are more interested in social or developmental issues compared to privately owned media which are

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interested in commercial issues. It is also recorded in the literature that, ownership of media influences the framing of stories which ultimately affects the nature of coverage such as placement and type of story (Okech, 2004).

Before situating the findings of the research in context with theories used, it is important to indicate that the study somehow filled a gap that existed in the literature regarding the newspaper coverage of cybercrime issues. Even though other studies looked at various aspects of press coverage of cybercrime issues, this study further moved knowledge forward in this area by conducting a comparative analysis of the nature and level of coverage given to cybercrime issues by the state-owned and private newspapers in Ghana.

5.1 Number of stories published and implication for Media Ownership theory

The findings from the content analysis show that cybercrime stories featured less in the two newspapers in comparison to the total number of stories published. The findings established that the state-owned *Daily Graphic* published more stories on cybercrime than the *Daily Guide.* Out of a total of 29 stories coded on cybercrime, 18 (62.1%) were published by the *Daily Graphic* whilst the *Daily Guide* published the remaining 11 (37.9%). This gives a ratio of almost 1:2 meaning that for every story published by the *Daily Guide* on cybercrime, the *Daily Graphic* published close to two stories. However, the statistical test produced 0.138 chi-square value at 5% level of significance necessitated a rejection of the hypothesis that the *Daily Graphic* was likely to cover more stories on cybercrime than the *Daily Guide*. This means that the difference in the number of stories (7 stories) the two newspapers published might have been due to other extraneous variables other than their structure of ownership.

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The findings also revealed that the state-owned *Daily Graphic* published more full-page commercial ads than the privately owned *Daily Guide*, even after accounting for the difference in newspaper space between them. This perhaps debunks the assertion championed by media ownership theorists that, privately owned media such as the *Daily Guide* are likely to be commercially inclined compared to public/state-owned media such as the *Daily Graphic*. However, it must be noted that in the case of the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide*, advertisers' preference might have influenced the number of commercials they published.

Therefore, these findings do not entirely lean towards the thinking of media ownership theorists who argue that privately owned newspapers are inclined to covering more commercially related issues than state-owned newspapers. In this case, there was little evidence in the study which showed that the private owned *Daily Guide* was more commercially driven than the state-owned *Daily Graphic.*

The findings were also at variance with the reviewed literature which stated that state-owned media such as the *Daily Graphic* would be more interested in social issues compared to privately owned media such as the *Daily Guide*. As the results show, the difference in the number of stories reported on cybercrime did not differ much given the difference in the number of pages the two newspapers published (64 pages and 24 pages respectively for the *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide*). This was subsequently confirmed by the statistical test results.

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5.2 Nature of Coverage and implication for the Framing theory

The variables that were analysed under the nature of coverage included the type and placement of stories by the *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* as well as the sources they used to obtain their stories on cybercrime. The findings from the study indicated that the nature of coverage of cybercrime issues by the two newspapers was similar. For instance, the results revealed that the two newspapers published two stories each on their front pages, meaning that they gave similar prominence (in terms of page placement) to cybercrime. Also, 88.8% and 100% of the stories published on cybercrime by the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* respectively were straight news stories, which implies that the type of stories they published were similar. The chi-square value 0.165 at 5% significance level which was obtained from the cross-tabulation of type of newspaper and the use of security agencies as source by the two newspapers further supported the view that the coverage of cybercrime by the two newspapers was similar. In a similar vein, the chi-square value 0.145 at 5% significance level that was obtained from the cross-tabulation of type of newspaper and the placement (centre page) of story on cybercrime reflected the view that the coverage was similar between the two dailies.

However, when it came to the use of government officials as source, the study revealed an inconsistency between the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide*. For example, whereas the *Daily Graphic* got 33.3% of its stories from government officials, the *Daily Guide*, on the other hand, did not use any government official as a source in the 11 stories it published on cybercrime. This finding affirms the assertion made by the researcher in Chapter Three that

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the state-owned *Daily Graphic* was likely to use more government sources for its stories than the privately owned *Daily Guide*.

The results of the study also indicate that majority of the articles published on cybercrime by the two newspapers were written by internal staff, that is 15 stories (83.3%) and 10 stories (90.9%) for the *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide*, respectively. Again, this points to the fact that the nature of coverage of cybercrime issues by the two dailies during the study period was similar.

Therefore, the study found that in majority of the instances newspaper ownership did not have any relationship with the nature of coverage of cybercrime issues in Ghana in 2011. The findings rather indicated that *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* covered cybercrime issues in a similar fashion during the period under review. Hence, the main hypothesis that there was likely to be a relationship between newspaper ownership and the coverage of cybercrime issues in Ghana was not supported by the results of the study.

5.3 Limitations of the Study

A key limitation of this study was the fact that, the data (number of stories published on cybercrime) obtained from the content analysis of the sampled editions of the two newspapers were few. Hence they were not enough to enable an analysis of the issues to draw stronger conclusions on the findings and how they can be generalised to the universe of the study.

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The second limitation of the study was the fact that only the manifest contents of the sampled editions were analysed leaving out possible qualitative information contained in articles that would have perhaps shed more light on the nature of coverage of cybercrime issues by the two dailies. The study did not also consider views of editors of the two newspapers regarding the nature of coverage they gave to cybercrime issues in their news content.

Thirdly, the vast difference in newspaper space between the *Daily Graphic* (64 pages) and the *Daily Guide* (24 pages) did not allow for effective comparisons that would engender strong conclusions. For instance, the difference in the number of stories published on cybercrime by the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* might have been due to the difference in newspaper space.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the limitations and findings of the study, the following recommendations are made for future research in the subject:

- Future research should consider expanding the study universe and the sampled editions. This would ensure that enough data is obtained to allow for effective analysis.
- In order to provide detailed information on the nature of coverage on cybercrime issues, future studies should consider analysing the qualitative aspects of the coverage to triangulate the findings from the content analysis and in addition conduct in-depth interviews with editors of the selected newspapers to enrich the results.

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- Future studies on this topic should also consider newspapers which have almost the same number of pages since this would facilitate the process of comparison and analysis.

5.5 Conclusion

The main objective of the study was to establish the nature of coverage of cybercrime issues by the state-owned *Daily Graphic* and the privately owned *Daily Guide* in 2011 and also to determine if there were any differences in their coverage of cybercrime. The results of the study revealed that cybercrime issues received little coverage from the two newspapers during the study period. It also became clear from the results that, on the whole, the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* gave similar coverage to cybercrime issues in their news contents, although there were few differences.

The findings from the study show that the state-owned *Daily Graphic* published more stories on cybercrime issues than the privately owned *Daily Guide*. However, the statistical tests result did not support the proposition of media ownership theorists such as Altschull (1984) that media content often tend to reflect the interests and ideology of its owners or financiers.

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APPENDIX 1

CODING SHEET

P1. Name of Newspaper

1. Daily Graphic
2. Daily Guide

P2. Day/ Date of Publication

1. Monday.....
2. Tuesday.....
3. Wednesday.....
4. Thursday.....
5. Friday.....
6. Saturday.....

P3. Total number of stories.....

P4. Total number of stories on Cybercrime.....

P5. Total number of Commercial Ads (Full-Page).....

P6. Type of story

1. Straight News Story
2. Feature
3. Editorial
4. Letter/Opinion
5. Rejoinder
6. Other (specify).....

P7. Source of the Story

1. Security personnel or agencies
2. Government officials
3. Civil Society Organisations
4. Other (Specify).....

P8. Author/Writer

1. Internal staff
2. External writer(s)
3. Not Clear

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4. Other (specify).....

P9. Placement of Story

1. Front page
2. Middle page
3. Back page
4. Other (Specify).....

P10. Content of Story

1. Arrest of criminals
2. Victims ordeal
3. Educational tips on Cybercrime
4. Training programme or workshop
5. Other (Specify).....

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APPENDIX 2

EDITIONS OF THE TWO PAPERS THAT WERE USED FOR THE STUDY

Month	Days
January	13, 17, 18, 22, 26, 28
February	2, 5, 7, 8, 10, 25
March	12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 30
April	1, 11, 14, 16, 19, 20,
May	4, 13, 19, 23, 24, 28
June	3, 6, 14, 15, 18, 30
July	5, 8, 11, 16, 21, 27
August	1, 20, 24, 25, 26, 30
September	7, 9, 10, 16, 19, 20
October	1, 4, 5, 14, 27, 31
November	2, 19, 21, 24, 25, 29,
December	3, 6, 9, 19, 22, 28

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