

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Many countries, especially in Africa, abandoned autocracy and opted for democracy in the last decades of the 20th Century (Rakner and van de Walle, 2009; Voltmer, 2008; Lindberg, 2006). Democracy rapidly spread to most autocratic African countries although in most cases it was not fully implemented like the democracy in the West (Rakner and van de Walle, 2009). Lindberg (2006:140) has noted that 44 Sub-Saharan African states had undergone a transition from “long period of authoritarian rule to fledging democratic government” by June 2003 although most of the 44 countries were “not full democracies”. Nonetheless, the transition was, and is, considered a milestone in the attempts by African countries to embrace an accountable and representative kind of governance although “there is skepticism regarding the true value of election for democratization” among some scholars (Lindberg, 2006:139; Rakner and van de Walle, 2009).

Lindberg contends that there is a causal relationship between regular elections and consolidation of democracy in Africa. He asserts that regular elections enable the media as “transmitter for pro-democratic advocacy” to consolidate democracy, even in pseudo democratic regimes where the media are not free. This is because “the procedural and substantive political rights that follow from repeated elections” make it difficult for such regimes to maintain their control over the media (p. 148). Again, Lindberg notes that elections result in the retention of citizens’ awareness of their sovereignty, acknowledgement and appreciation of democratic principles by non-democratic personalities (when elites and majority of citizens uphold these principles), improvements in civil liberties and maintenance of pro-democratic actions by courts and security agencies.

Such pro-democratic values are developed by the citizenry because the media become the platform by which citizens are educated on their sovereignty, democratic principles as well as policies and ideologies of political parties that seek for their mandate during elections. Thus, it is impossible for state institutions to inform and educate the citizenry on their sovereignty and democratic principles without the media. The mass media, therefore, mediate between the citizenry and the state institutions/political parties to ensure a two-way-flow of information between the citizenry and other critical actors in the democratic process.

This emphasises the key role that media play in sustaining a thriving democracy in most African countries like Ghana and Nigeria. However, the media are able to live up to this expectation in any democratic society because they are largely free and independent from interferences that undermine their professional practice.

A free press is ideally independent of the influences of government, business and ownership. Eun-Suk (2013:161) contends that the logic of a free press is based on the fact that “the media must be independent and seek the truth” so as to disseminate the truth and encourage individual sovereignty and democracy within societies. Freedom of the media has been accepted as an instrument for promoting democracy because it is seen as an integral part of democracy and a catalyst for good governance. In fact, a free press is often considered whenever measures are being developed to examine the quality of democracies. For instance, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) considers plural and independent media as a yardstick for effective good governance programmes (UNESCO, 2007a). It can be argued that the vigilance of the free press in the West is partly responsible for the sustenance of democracy in that part of the globe. This is perhaps the reason that provisions that guarantee the freedom of the press are enshrined in constitutions of many democratic countries. Thus by the provisions, the media are empowered to search and disseminate the truth without fear or favour so that citizens can make the informed decisions and intelligent choices necessary for democracy to thrive (Waldalh, 2004).

The First Amendment of the American Constitution specifically stipulates that “congress shall make no law... abridging the freedom of speech...or of the press” (Adebayo and Ojo, 2007: 90). This provision in the American Constitution has marked an epoch in the liberal democratic system in America, therefore, many countries around the globe have borrowed from the American example (Youm, 2003). Most democratic states in Africa (like Ghana and Nigeria) have in their constitutions provisions that guarantee the freedom of the press. Article 162(1) of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana provides for the “freedom and independence of the media” and the Clause Two also notes that “...there shall be no censorship in Ghana”. Clause Four of the Article states that “[e]ditors and publishers of newspapers and other institutions of the mass media shall not be subject to control or interference by government, nor shall they be penalized or harassed for their editorial opinions and views, or the content of their publications”. Chapter Four Section 39(1) of the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria states that “every person shall be entitled to freedom of

expression, including freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart ideas and information without interference” (p. 24).

The reason for these constitutional provisions is to ensure that the media are free to disseminate information needed by citizens to facilitate debate and make intelligent and informed choices. This is because democracy is, among other things, about the empowerment of the citizenry with facts to give them a voice by making intelligent choices and informed decisions about governance. For such an empowerment to be reality, certain legal provisions and regulatory conditions are necessary. Some of the conditions include explicit guarantee of freedom of expression and/or of the press, existence of liberal and plural media, easy access to diverse sources of information, easy establishment and operation of media organisations, independent regulatory commission, among others.

Therefore, provisions that ensure such conditions are enshrined in constitutions of democracies and are enforced by designated institutions to ensure the right to freedom of expression, of the press, of association and security of media personnel, and enabling media environment so as to enable the media to carry out their watchdog duties. Generally, governments in power are entrusted with the duty of protecting the interests of the citizenry but the media in democracies are also empowered by constitutions to independently monitor how governments perform this duty – protection of public interest. The foregoing supports the general explanation that democracy is characterised by a free press.

It must be noted, however, that the notion of a free press in democracies does not imply an absolute but a qualified freedom. This is because some aspects of democratic governance necessitate some form of government’s interference in the operations of the press. One of such aspects is national security. Interference from government on media’s coverage of national security issues is an inhibition to freedom of the press in the traditional libertarian press system which should characterise a democracy. Yet this is reasonably justified in modern democracy because it is in the interest of the citizenry. It is for this reason that “international law recognises national security as a legitimate restriction on freedom of expression and information” (Caparini, 2004:22).

As a result, the press in United States of America which is used as a point of reference in many democracies does not enjoy absolute freedom because of governmental interference in national security issues. For instance, the 2015 press freedom report on America indicated that in 2014, a “number of Freedom of Information Acts requests were either denied or

censored on national security grounds” (Freedom House, 2015:8). Notwithstanding, the press in America has been consistently rated as free and satisfactory from 2011 to 2016 by Freedom House and Reporters Without Borders (though it is not among the first ten positions of the global ratings). This is because the American media have reasonably acceptable freedom to carry out their professional duties. By extension, it is expected that the media in democracies like Ghana and Nigeria should be reasonably free to perform their duties.

Additionally, the dual recognition of the media, especially the privately owned media, as a social institution and as an industry also have implications for press freedom in democracies as a result of commercial interests. Thus, while the media are expected to serve public interest through generation and production of information for educative, entertainment, informative and surveillance roles, they are equally expected to adhere to the economic axiom of the bottom line. The interplay of neoliberalism, economic recessions, technological advancement and the challenges associated with survival of media organisations in modern societies have negated the role of the media as a social institution and led to a situation McChesny (2004: 200) describes as “one dollar one vote”. This is because “nobody pays” for the public service of the privately owned media (Ojebode, 2009:64) but advertisers. It is a well-known fact that most of the time, he who pays the piper dictates the tune. As a result, studies (Bagdikian, 2004; McChesny, 2004; Curran, 2002) have consistently revealed that commercial interests negatively affect public interests and in the context of this study, have repercussions for press freedom in Ghana and Nigeria.

Ghana and Nigeria are democratic countries with similar post-independence political and press histories. Both countries were colonized by the British and inherited colonial administrations and media systems upon independence in 1957 and 1960 respectively. They have a political history of chequered military and democratic regimes. They have witnessed four Republics since independence and have practised similar political systems: the British Westminster model and later the American Presidential model. The post-independence histories of the countries have revealed that the media and citizens experienced repression during the military regimes and relative freedom of expression and of the press during civilian regimes. Transitions into the Fourth Republic were ushered in by military leaders. Presidents who contested and won the first general elections under the Fourth Republics in the countries were men who left the military service to become civilian presidents. The implementation of electoral stipulations of the 1992 and 1999 Constitutions of Ghana and

Nigeria respectively started on shaky grounds. Nonetheless, both countries are making democratic strides: there have been seven successful democratic changes of civilian governments in Ghana and five in Nigeria since 1992 and 1999 respectively.

The Fourth Republic Constitutions of the countries have provisions that guarantee the freedom of the press. Both countries are also signatories to different international pacts that guarantee press freedom. They are members of the United Nations (UN) and are bound by Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1966 and enacted in 1976 which states that:

Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice (UNESCO, 2007b:9).

At the regional African level, both countries are members of African Union (AU) and so are legally bound by the Article 9 of African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR). The continent's 1981 Charter on rights relating to freedom of expression, states that every "individual shall have the right to receive information" and "have the right to express and disseminate his opinions within the law" (UNESCO, 2007b:12). Currently, the countries are considered as success stories of democracy in West Africa (Baba, 2015).

From these similarities, therefore, the press in the two countries must not only be reasonably free but also have comparable levels of freedom. This is because in theory the media are free under democratic political systems. Ojebode (2013:308) agrees to this notion when he asserts that "it is theoretically incongruent" if political transition from a military rule to democracy "is not accompanied by transition from an authoritarian to libertarian press situation". By Ojebode's assertion, it is theoretically congruent that the political transition of the countries to democratic rule is accompanied by transition to libertarian media landscape in such countries.

However, while this theory seems to explain the situation in some democratic societies, it seems not to do so in others. The thrust of this study is to investigate this logical inconsistency by comparing Ghana, where the media are often labelled to be relatively free (Manco, 2013; Garliadone, Stemplau & Nkrumah, 2012; IREX, 2012) and their press

freedom ratings have been consistently high (Freedom House, 2011; 2013; 2014; 2015; Reporters Without Borders, 2011/12; 2013; 2014; 2015) with Nigeria, where the media are often labelled to be not really free (Nwanne, 2014; Ojebode, 2013; Akinwale, 2010) and their press freedom ratings have been consistently low (Freedom House, 2011; 2012; 2013; 2014; 2015; Reporters Without Borders, 2011/12; 2013; 2014; 2015) even though both countries are successful democracies in West Africa (Baba, 2015).

1.2 Statement of the problem

Literature indicates that the media should be free in democratic societies. That also leads to the expectation that the Ghanaian and Nigerian press must be equally free. This is because Ghana and Nigeria have undergone transitions from autocratic to democratic regimes. As a result, both countries are governed by their constitutions. The 1992 Constitution of Ghana and the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria have provisions for free press. By these provisions, the media are empowered and given the needed margin of freedom to go all out to search for the truth so as to be able to hold the government accountable to the citizens of the two countries as demanded by Article 162 Clause 5 and Section 22 of the Ghanaian and Nigerian Constitutions respectively.

However, review of existing literature identifies a logical inconsistency because it seems to consistently indicate a wide margin of unequal levels of press freedom in the countries. The press in Ghana is reasonably free (Manco, 2013; Gagliardone, Stemplau and Nkrumah, 2012) while that of Nigeria is not reasonably free (Nwanne, 2014; Ojebode, 2013; Akinwale, 2010). It is important to note that some studies are not consistent with the assertions by Gargliardone et al (2012) and Manco (2013). For instance, Shardow and Asare (2016) discovered that there were number of factors that impeded effective watchdog role by the media on the Ghanaian government, even though conditions of press freedom legally existed and there was no evidence of physical coercive measures to frighten journalists in their watchdog role on government.

This puzzling situation about the unequal levels of press freedom in the two countries despite their similar political and press histories is again affirmed by statistics from the press freedom reports of Freedom House Organisation and Reporters Without Borders. Review of Freedom House ratings on press freedom in the countries from 2011 to 2016 indicates that the Ghanaian ratings are consistently high while that of Nigeria are consistently low (see

appendix 1a). In fact, the press in Ghana is often described as free while that in Nigeria is described as partially free (Freedom House, 2015; 2014; 2013; 2012; 2011). This situation is not different when the global ratings of the countries in reports by Reporters Without Borders (from 2011 to 2015) are reviewed (see appendix 1b). By their yearly reports, the state of press freedom in Ghana is consistently rated as satisfactory while that of Nigeria is consistently rated as difficult (Reporter Without Borders, 2015; 2014; 2013; 2011/2012). This situation creates a logical inconsistency and seems to contradict the theory that democracy is characterised by a free press.

The foregoing evidence of disparity in the press freedom levels of Ghana and Nigeria is not explained in literature. Therefore, this study investigates if indeed the disparities exist, and if so, examine what explains them. Thus, this study seeks to investigate why the consistently different levels of press freedom in the countries despite the fact that the two countries are considered as successful democratic countries (Baba, 2015), their constitutions make provisions for free press and have many commonalities in their political and press histories. To find explanation for the logical inconsistency, this study examines and compares the prevailing political and media environments in the countries to UNESCO's indicators of press freedom so as to determine how the countries fared against the indicators.

1.3 Research questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent is there a difference in the press freedom levels of Ghana and Nigeria?
2. What explains the differences in the levels of press freedom in Ghana and Nigeria?
3. To what extent is there a difference in the state of security of journalists in the two countries?
4. To what extent are media operations in the countries influenced by political, ownership and commercial interests?

1.4 Objectives of the study

This study examines the factors responsible for the differences in the levels of press freedom in Ghana and Nigeria within the framework of the prevailing democratic political contexts

and the enabling media environments in these countries. Therefore, particular emphasis is laid on the legal and statutory provisions on press freedom and their relationship with the media system in each country, cases of violations of media freedom in the two countries and ultimately their outcome on the level of press freedom. Specifically, the study aims to:

1. Determine the differences in the levels of press freedom in Ghana and Nigeria;
2. Investigate the explanation for the differences in the levels of press freedom in Ghana and Nigeria;
3. Establish the differences in the state of security among journalists in the two countries;
4. Examine if and how media operations in the countries are influenced by political, ownership and commercial interests.

1.5 Scope of the study

The study covers the 2014 and 2015 press freedom environments in both broadcast and print media in Ghana and Nigeria. Studies of media freedom (Akinwale, 2010; Shardow & Asare, 2016) as well as grey literature on the subject (Freedom House & Reporters Without Borders) often focus on these two media types when measuring press freedom in countries.

Ghana and Nigeria are selected because review of literature indicates that they had many common features except the variation in press freedom levels. As a result, Ghana and Nigeria seem to be the most appropriate cases for this kind of inquiry.

Besides, 2014 and 2015 are selected as the period of study because the period marked the end of MDGs and the beginning of Post-2015 Development Agenda. As a result, UNESCO has called for debate from supporters of press freedom to ensure that a full recognition of media's significance will find its way into the final post-2015 Development Agenda (UNESCO, 2014b).

There have been attempts to describe the use of social media (Facebook, Youtube, Vineo, WhatsApp) as journalism in recent times. This is quite unwieldy and for the purpose of this study, therefore, the use of these social media platforms is excluded.

Although press freedom ratings emerge from the aggregation of the overall professional safety ambience of a nation, the study excludes foreign correspondents but combines both government and privately owned newspapers and broadcast outlets.

1.6 Significance of the study

In every democratic society, democracy is sustained when the media freely play the fundamental role of disseminating political information and facilitating debate among the citizens (Enyi, 2014; UNESCO, 2014; Nwanne, 2014; Eun-Suk, 2013). This study is of importance to scholarship in Communication and Media Studies in general and Political Communication in particular because it explains the reasons for the disparities in the levels of press freedom in the two countries. It also adds to efforts made toward testing the theory that democracy leads to a free press in countries. This leads to a critical examination of the influence of prevailing political context on press freedom in young but thriving democracies in Africa.

The study also outlines the interventions needed to improve and sustain the enabling media environments necessary for press freedom in any nation. This is because the existence of a free press in the countries paints a positive image of democratic governance in such nations (UNESCO, 2007a). This results in international good-will and support from donor agencies and the developed nations, as well as enhances the investment climate of the countries (Akinwale, 2010).

Finally, the investigation can also serve as an analytical study to examine the media landscape in the two countries, therefore, it can serve as a lobbying tool for better media reforms (African Media Barometer, 2015; 2013) in Ghana and Nigeria. The study seeks to explain why there are unequal levels of press freedom in Ghana and Nigeria. Therefore, stakeholders in the media can use the outcome of the study to advocate reforms of existing provisions in the media landscape of the countries.

1.7 Limitations of the study

Document Analysis: It was realised that all cases of media violations were not properly documented in the countries. Therefore, the researcher used the available records of media freedom violations in the countries by Media Foundation of West Africa (MFWA). This was because the organisation had been working closely with the Media Rights Agenda of Nigeria to document cases of media freedom violations in the countries.

In-depth Interview: It was also difficult getting most of the interviewees in Ghana, especially media owners/managers, to grant the interviews even after they had confirmed

appointments for the interviews. The researcher had to make countless unproductive trips to Accra during data collection for the in-depth interviews. As a result, two media owners/managers (instead of three) were interviewed in Ghana. There was difficulty in getting a magistrate in Ghana to grant the interview because of the back log of cases to be handled after resumption from strike at the beginning of 2017. This made it impossible to interview a magistrate. These limitations in Ghana determined the number of people to be interviewed in Nigeria. So, data for the in-depth interviews in each country were gathered from 7 interviewees. Again, transcription of interviews from Nigeria posed a little challenge for the researcher due to the background of the researcher. Thus, some of the names mentioned in the interview and mother-tongue interference on some words were difficult to transcribe but the researcher consulted some Nigerian colleagues for help and clarifications when necessary. It must be stated however, that these challenges did not affect the data collection process.

1.8 Definition of terms

Press freedom: This study adopted the UNESCO's (2014:15) definition which posits that press freedom is the "freedom from illegitimate restriction as well as...freedom to express oneself publicly without political or commercial interference". Therefore in this study, press freedom means the availability and implementation of provisions in a country, as well as the absence of any form of control in the media that is against public interest. Also, it implies the presence of any form of legitimate control in the media in public interest. The term is used interchangeably with media freedom in the study.

Enabling media environment: It refers to the availability of adequate provisions on press freedom in the legal and statutory books of a country and their implementation.

Press freedom levels: The term refers to the conclusions drawn by empirical studies on the state of press freedom in the countries as well as global press freedom ratings by Freedom House and Reporters Without Borders.

Disparities: It refers to the differences in the state of press freedom from empirical studies and the global ratings of press freedom reports.

Media operations: This term refers to the daily activities/outputs of a media organisation. It usually entails the integration of available resources and development of productions or publication in the light of the policies of an organisation.

Security of journalists: This refers to the physical and financial well-being of journalists.

Self- regulation: It refers to an independent regulatory commission/body that is made up of individuals in the media or with media backgrounds and are entrusted with the regulation of the activities of media to prevent governmental and ownership interests from undermining freedom of expression/of press and or public interest.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews scholarship on political and press histories of Ghana and Nigeria as well as concepts, theories and empirical studies relevant to the issue under investigation. It is also a review of relevant literature on the relationship between the political colouration of regimes and press freedom in post-independence Ghana and Nigeria. The interplay is analysed between the democratic context of Ghana and Nigeria, and the state of freedom of the press in the countries. It, therefore, justifies the consideration of literature on the post-independent political and press histories of the two countries, concepts of democracy and free press, the theories of the press as well as review of comparative media systems and empirical studies on the link between democracy and press freedom.

2.1 Political and press history of post-independence Ghana

2.1.1 The First Republic and First Military Regime

Post-independence Ghana started on the foundation of democracy. The country became independent in March 1957 after Dr Kwame Nkrumah's Convention People's Party (CPP) won the elections that ushered Ghana into the First Republic. At the time of independence, 11 newspapers were in production in the country. The country also inherited Gold Coast Broadcasting System from the colonial administration. Dr Nkrumah changed it to Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC) and shortly after 1957, he established and tasked the Ghana News Agency (GNA) to gather and disseminate information to the citizenry and brand the country abroad. Ghana Institute of Journalism (GIJ) was established in 1959 to provide the needed ideological and professional training of journalists. Dr Nkrumah also established the television component of GBC and it was launched on July 31, 1965. Therefore, the First Republic was "credited with building the most comprehensive national media systems in Africa" (Heath, 2003:253).

After some time in existence, the regime became autocratic in nature and political opponents who criticised the government were arrested and imprisoned (Owusu, 2012). The press was not spared either because the government felt "the press was to be subordinate to the

government, and censorship was to be sanctioned in the name of public order and national stability” (Heath, 2003:253). Thus to the government, the media were tools for political mobilisation, public education and platforms for the total liberation of Africa. Therefore, the Criminal Code Act 29 was passed in 1960 and by the provision in Section 183 Subsection 2 of the Act, the President was empowered to vet documents before publication. The Act was strictly applied and the *Ashanti Pioneer* was shut down by the government after censoring its content (Owusu, 2012).

The Newspaper Licensing Act (Act 189) followed in 1963. It required the application for license and yearly renewal of the license by the press. The government used this Act as a yardstick to deny perceived political opponents the license to operate. The Act also provided the Minister of Information with authority to stop any publication that was not in favour of the government. This authority was used to close down newspapers that were perceived to belong to political opponents. This situation, for instance, justifies arguments forwarded by some media scholars in Nigeria on the need to amend the law that gives only the President the right to issue license because it makes it easy for the President to grant license based on self-interest instead of public interest. Dr Kwame Nkrumah was “known for putting in place legal and extra-legal methods of media control” to suppress public dissent (Heath, 2003:253). Thus, journalists and media organisations that were not sympathetic to the ideologies and interests of his government were intimidated. The methods used by Dr Nkrumah later became models for inhibiting press freedom in subsequent authoritarian regimes.

The First Republic ended in 1966 when Dr Kwame Nkrumah was overthrown by the National Liberation Council’s (NLC) coup d’état. The military regime that took over was led by General J. A. Ankrah. The regime cited centralisation of power by Nkrumah, corruption and shift of international ties from the West (USA and UK) to the East (Soviet Union) as some of the reasons for the take-over. Upon the overthrow of Dr Kwame Nkrumah, the NLC continued to strictly control the press. Journalists and media organisations who were previously sympathetic to Dr Kwame Nkrumah’s government were hounded by the regime. Most importantly, the press was not allowed to perform its watchdog role. The head of the NLC military regime, for instance, justified the regime’s control of the state media at a press conference in 1967 by noting that “He who pays the piper calls the tune” (Karikari as cited by Owusu, 2012:27). The military regime that lasted

till 1969 became unpopular because it performed worse than Dr Nkrumah. Finally, it gave in to the pressure to return to civilian rule.

2.1.2 The Second Republic and the Second Military Regime

Dr K. A. Busia's Progressive Party (PP) won the 1969 multi-party elections in Ghana and started the Second Republic. As a civilian regime, the 1969 Constitution was used to govern the country and the fundamental human rights of the citizens were guaranteed and respected. The press was relatively free under this regime because some of the various laws that were inhibiting press freedom in the previous regimes were repealed.

Under the Republic, the print media were free but the electronic media were still monopolised by the government. Also, there were instances of breach to press freedom. One of such instances was the dismissal of the editor of *Daily Graphic* who criticised the call by the government for African Dialogue with then apartheid government in South Africa. This civilian rule was short-lived because it was destabilised through another coup by the National Redemption Council (NRC) led by General I. K. Acheampong in 1972. The little success chalked by the Second Republic, which granted fundamental rights/freedoms to the citizenry and the media, took a nose dive when General Acheampong reinstated repressive laws to control the press again, and jailed journalists and opposition members. In 1975, General Acheampong replaced the NRC with a seven member Supreme Military Council (SMC I) when the country's economy deteriorated under his rule.

After another three-year military rule, General Acheampong was made to resign through a bloodless palace coup and General F. K. Akuffo took over the control of SMC II in 1978. General Akuffo started on a better note than his predecessor. Upon ousting General Acheampong, he freed the journalists and opposition members previously jailed and reversed some of the repressive media laws his predecessor reinstated. The press had some degree of freedom and this led to the establishment of two newspapers: *The Star* and *The Gong Gong*. He also promised to allow the existence of press and political parties, fix a date for an election and return the country to civilian rule. However when no major changes occurred after the promises, agitation for the return to democracy by the citizens and the existing two newspapers grew.

In May 1979, an attempt by the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), led by Flight Lieutenant J. J. Rawlings, to destabilise SMC II failed but another attempt in June 1979 was successful. The aim of the coup was to end corruption, to set the stage for democratic election and to hold SMC I and II regimes accountable. Under AFRC, former leaders of SMC were executed by firing squad upon recommendations of a military tribunal, and many government officials and businessmen were jailed. The then chief editor of *Daily Graphic* was sacked by Flight Lieutenant J. J. Rawlings for criticising the execution of eight military generals and three military leaders by AFRC. The agitation for civilian rule was finally realised when Flight Lieutenant J. J. Rawlings did set the stage for a multi-party election that returned the country to another civilian rule in 1979.

2.1.3 The Third Republic and the Third Military Regime

People's National Party (PNP), under the leadership of Dr Hilla Limann won the multi-party elections that started the Third Republic in 1979. The Third Republic Constitution, apart from guaranteeing the fundamental human rights also mandated the establishment of a 12 member Press Commission to ensure self-regulation of the press. This was to enhance the freedom of the press by insulating the press, especially the state-owned, from governmental control. Inaugurating the commission, President Limann declared that:

since the functions of the Commission have been clearly spelt out in the Constitution, I can do no more than reassure its members and our journalists that my government will respect, uphold and defend the Constitution and thus, do everything in our power to help the Press Commission discharge its obligation, in the overall interest of the public to which we are all to varying degrees accountable (Owusu, 2012:29).

True to this declaration, the government respected the rights/freedoms of the citizenry and the press. The abuse and intimidation of journalists that characterised the previous military regimes were absent. The presence of a constitutionally mandated independent body to oversee the functioning of the press also reduced the chances of control and interference from government but the electronic media were still monopolised by government.

Unfortunately, history repeated itself when the Third Republic was interrupted after three years of existence. In 1981, the country experienced another coup by Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) under Flight Lieutenant J. J. Rawlings. The military regime dissolved parliament and outlawed all political parties. The fundamental human rights of the people were trampled upon. This was because the Third Republic Constitution and the Press Commission were suspended, and the previous repressive laws were reinstated. Laws that prohibited criticism of the government and its policies were decreed (Owusu, 2012). Attempted coups in 1982, 1983 and 1985 failed.

Press freedom was not in existence during the PNDC era because of repressive laws like the Newspaper Licensing Law and Preventive Custody Law. The 1983 Newspaper Licensing Law (PNDC Law 211) stipulated that a license from the Secretary of Information must be obtained before individuals who wanted to publish a newspaper or a magazine could do so (and the reality was no license was granted). The regime repressed the media such that journalists or media organisations whose content were critical of national issues were punished. The Preventive Custody Law which “allowed for the indefinite detention without trial of journalists” (Owusu, 2012: 29) was used to protect and preserve social order so as to prevent destabilisation of the social order. Journalists or media organisations who covered soft news contents that did not condemn or were not critical of the government experienced no intimidation but publication of hard news content was seen as an attempt to destabilise social order so the repressive laws were strictly applied to offenders.

Therefore, “a number of journalists were held in preventive detention” without trial, “and many more were tried” by tribunals “for publishing criticisms of the regime that were deemed seditious” (Heath: 2003:245). For instance in 1982, Tommy Thompson, John Kugblenu and Mike Adjei (the publisher, editor and columnist, respectively, of *Free Press*) were arrested and detained for a year. Two weeks upon release from detention, Kugblenu died. Tommy Thompson was again arrested with Kwaku Baako Jnr. (research writer for the newspaper) and they were detained in 1984. Also, Kwesi Pratt Jnr., Ralph Kugbey, Kwame Karkari, Tony Akoto Apaw and Kwaku Baako Jnr. were all “detained in April 1986 for exercising their fundamental human rights to speak on national issues” (Owusu, 2012:31). This ensured that the private media, like the citizens, had no voice and a culture of silence (that characterised all the military regimes) prevailed (Temin and Smith, 2002). Only the state media (Ghana Broadcasting Corporation, Radio Ghana, *Daily Graphic*, *The Mirror*,

The Weekly Spectator and *Ghanaian Times*) could operate but they were turned into propaganda tools to further the ideologies and policies of the regime.

After eleven years of military regime under Flight Lieutenant J. J. Rawlings, external and internal pressure for democratic rule started mounting. Consequently, the military regime gave in to the pressure and embraced the need for democracy in 1992. A new constitution was passed, political prisoners were freed, the existence of opposition political parties was allowed and civil organisations for freedom of the press and human rights organisations emerged. According to Temin and Smith (2002:588), “nearly three dozen independent private newspapers opened for business” when the 1985 Newspaper Licensing Law was repealed few months into the 1992 elections. Flight Lieutenant J. J. Rawlings resigned from military after he had contested in the 1992 multi-party elections. He won the general elections and this led to another civilian rule, the Fourth Republic, under J. J. Rawlings.

2.1.4 The Fourth Republic

The Fourth Republic has been in existence since 1992. Although the general election that ushered in the Fourth Republic was not the best, citizens embraced the opportunity for another civilian rule. Democratic institutions and practices gradually started progressing. These have continued since the inception of the Republic. The 1992 Constitution has been rated as the best so far in comparison with previous constitutions because its provisions on rights/freedoms of the citizens and the press are explicit and elaborate (Owusu, 2012). Ghana has since held seven successful multi-party elections. Although power has since rotated between only two political parties, National Democratic Congress (NDC) and New Patriotic Party (NPP), the peaceful transition and transfer of power after every election show the progress the country has made towards consolidation of democracy over the years. This progress has been partly attributed to the media because of provisions for press freedom in the constitution (Temin and Smith, 2002; Electoral Commission, 2001).

The twelve Articles under Chapter 12 of the 1992 Constitution are dedicated to provisions on freedom of the press. Freedom of the press is guaranteed by the constitution and it explicitly forbids censorship, government control and harassment of editors, publishers and journalists. The constitution charges the media to hold the government responsible and accountable to the people of Ghana. It also mandates the formation of an independent regulatory body, the National Media Commission (NMC), to oversee the functioning of the

press and outlines the duties of the commission, and how membership of the commission must be formed. Despite these constitutional provisions for press freedom, private media organisations and their journalists were harassed by the government during the tenures of J. J. Rawlings.

Unlike the print media, privately owned electronic media were not in existence. Based on the provision in Article 162(3) of the constitution, Dr Charles Wereko-Brobey started operating Radio Eye in 1994 without frequency allocation from government. As a result, “his equipment was confiscated and criminal charges were pressed against him” (Owusu, 2012:38). After the Radio Eye incident, the airwaves gradually became liberal in 1995 and some electronic media organisations were given frequencies to operate. Therefore, Heath (2003:245) concluded that the “constitutional rule opened space for civil society and encouraged publication of private newspapers, and establishment of private radio and television stations”. Yet the liberalisation was not enough to insulate the government owned media from governmental control and interference. State subvention continued to give the government an upper hand over the government-owned press.

The government maintained its monopoly of the government-owned press and so enjoyed favourable coverage from them but the private print media criticised the government. There were instances where programmes of the opposition parties were not covered by GBC and the advertisements of opposition parties were rejected (Electoral Commission, 2001). For instance in January 1993, the GBC refused to cover the NPP’s programme (on their reaction to the budget presented by the ruling party) after covering that of the ruling NDC. The opposition NPP, therefore, took the government-owned GBC to court for refusing to cover their programme and for the interpretation of Article 55 clauses 11 and 12 of the 1992 Constitution. Interpreting the Article, Justice Amua Sekyi noted that “the constitutional framers in their wisdom provided ‘equal’, not ‘reasonable’ opportunity to all parties. The interpretation ... put on the word ‘fair’ to mean ‘equal’ seems ... to accord with good sense as well as the true intent of the constitution” (School of Communication, 2000:6). To him, it was also consistent with paragraph 9(i) b and c of NLCD 226 of 1996 which required the GBC to allocate and apportion air-time equitably between political parties when broadcasting their speeches or expressing differing points of views on matters of controversy. NPP’s victory was considered important in the history of the press in Ghana because it was a land mark case and an indication of the effectiveness of the rule of law in the country. Thus, the constitutional provision was supreme than the government.

Though the constitutional provisions in Chapter 12 of the 1992 Constitution gave the press the needed mandate to execute their watchdog role, they were not effective under the tenure of Rawlings to an extent. This was because the Criminal Libel and Seditious Laws, which were maintained in the 1992 Constitution, were used by state officials to control and intimidate the privately owned press that criticised the government. According to Owusu (2012), twenty-one law suits were filed by ministers, Members of Parliament (MP) and key members of the ruling party against the media between November 1995 and March 1996. Eight out of the twenty-one law suits were filed by one MP. Information from the officials of Private Newspaper Publishers Association of Ghana (PRINPAG) also indicated that in June 1999, “there were about 120 court cases against the private press” and most of the cases were “from officials of the government and the ruling party (p. 33). In one of the court cases, a columnist of *Free Press* published a story that revealed that Justice Abban (a Supreme Court judge who became Chief Justice soon after the case was filed in court) falsified a statement in the decision he wrote about a case. Though the columnist’s story was true, he was jailed for a month and his editor was jailed for a day on grounds of contempt of court (Owusu, 2012).

Therefore, the repeal of the Criminal Libel and Seditious Law in 2001 was considered as another success of the Fourth Republic in ensuring that the press was free. This was because it “brought a measure of respite to journalists, particularly those in the private media” (Owusu, 2012:33). True to expectations, the repeal did and has empowered the press to be vigilant in their watchdog role. Anas Aremeyaw Anas (a reporter of *New Crusading Guide*), the 2016 journalist of the year in Ghana, has consistently been performing his watchdog role by exposing corrupt practices in the country through investigative journalism. Recently, Anas implicated and exposed thirty-four High Court and District Court judges with evidence (secretly recorded audio and video evidence) that showed them receiving bribes and agreeing to solicit for sex among others so as to skew judgements. As a result, twenty of the judges and magistrates were sacked after they were found guilty of bribery.

Currently, the press in the country is considered free (Gargliardone et al 2012; Manco, 2013; Freedom House, 2015; Reporter Without Borders, 2015) but the state has not done enough in some instances to protect journalists. In an attack on Yahaya Kwamoah (a journalist with GBC), Stan Dogbge (a Senior Presidential Staffer) seized and destroyed the digital recorder of the journalist in the process. A hundred and fifty-five journalists and Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA) sought a disciplinary action against Dogbge through a petition to

the President in October 2015. The President responded to the petition in November 2015 and promised to consider the petition but four months after the promise, nothing had been done (and this prompted MFWA to publish a reminder to the President about his promise in January, 2016). However, his administration did nothing about the impunity.

It is equally important to note that the repeal also seems to have given some journalists the power to abuse their freedoms. In February 2016, Valentina Agyeiwaa of Okay FM (who started to address the issue of politics of insults in the country) ended up hurling insults and damaging allegations against the Member of Parliament (MP) for Assin North Constituency, Kennedy Agyapong, for reported attacks on the President's family. She questioned the MP's source of money and alleged that he was into narcotics business. The MP did not take this lightly and also insulted the journalist and threatened to circulate her nude pictures on social media. Few days after this issue (February 16, 2016), Ato Kwamena Dadzie, a journalist at Joy FM also wrote a comment similar to Valentina Agyeiwa's allegation of the MP's involvement with narcotics on his Facebook wall (even though the name of the MP was not explicitly mentioned in the post). The MP accosted him in front of his office and threatened to deal with him. Another instance is the incident regarded as the Montie trio in Ghana. A radio presenter and two panellists on pro NDC station, Montie FM, threatened the lives of Supreme Court judges while discussing a pending court case between the Electoral Commission and Abu Ramadan in the build up to the 2016 elections. They threaten that the judges must be careful with how they handle the case if they do not want to suffer the fate of three former colleagues who were shot to death and burnt in 1982. They were dragged before the court for their offences and were jailed for four months but after a month in prison, they received presidential pardon and were released.

Such abuses of the freedoms and violations of the rights/freedoms of expression and of the press need to be addressed by stakeholders because they are threats to the freedoms the media enjoy and affect the country's global picture of press freedom. For instance, the press freedom ratings of Ghana retrogressed in the 2016 press freedom reports because cases of impunity, violations of freedom of expression and of press and the killing of a journalist (Freedom House, 2016; MFWA, 2016). This implies that safeguarding the rights/freedoms of expression and of press as well as the security of journalists protect the image of press freedom of a country and further boost its global press freedom ratings.

2.2.0 Political and press history of post-colonial Nigeria

2.2.1 The First Republic and the First Military Regimes

Nigeria, upon independence in 1960, adopted a democratic political system like Ghana. Just before independence, three major political parties (which represented the then three Regions in Nigeria) contested the first general election that ushered in the First Republic of Nigeria. The outcome of the result, with some form of ethnic sentiments and underpinnings, indicated that the Action Group (AG) won in the Western Region, the National Council for Nigeria and the Cameroun (NCNC) won with the majority in the Eastern Region and Northern People Congress (NPC) in the Northern Region. The First Republic that started from October 1960 was led by Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, upon a NCNC-NPC alliance. The country practised the parliamentary system of government (Brown, 2013).

According to Ayeni (2003), “the nationalistic fervour evident in pre-independence editorials and news coverage” soon disappeared and reportage of news “was skewed toward parochialism and regional sentiments” (p.354). The regime imposed a state of emergency in the Western Region when inter/intra party rivalries between Chief Obafemi Awolowo and Chief S. L. Akintola resulted in election crisis in 1962 (Harriman, 2006). Chief Awolowo and other leaders of AG were tried later for treason in 1963. In describing the regime, Oyedemi (2014:87) states that it “was plagued by antagonistic regionalism, ethnicity, declined revenues and bitter power struggle”.

According to Ismail (2011:8), the Nigerian press, upon independence, was “so developed to the extent that so many newspaper and magazines were established and electronic media such as” Western Nigeria Television (WNTV), Western Nigeria Broadcasting Corporation (WNBC) and Nigeria Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) among others were merged into Nigeria Television Authority (NTA). Also, radio stations were merged to Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN). A law that prohibited the production and circulation of ethnic newspapers was put in place. Ismail also noted that the “attainment of independence status in 1960 coincident with the reshaping of the Nigeria press” because “most of the proprietors of the then available newspapers were politicians” who saw the press as instruments for “acquiring their different aspired office to the extent that those who did not have any print media were motivated to establish their own” to serve their political interest (p. 9). To Ismail (2011), this was one of the factors that encouraged the military intervention in 1966.

The First Republic ended as a result of a coup by Major Kaduna Nzeogwu in January 1966 (Nwanne, 2014). With the exception of the president, key political figures in the Northern and Western Regions were assassinated. However, the coup failed and this paved the way for General Aguiyi-Ironsi to take over governance (Oyedemi, 2014). The coup “changed the course of Nigeria’s political history beyond imagination” (Ayeni, 2003:354) and compounded the existing ethnicity problem in Nigeria. Of important relevance here was that the military regime abolished a law which had prohibited the production and circulation of some ethnic newspapers, thus, unleashing these newspapers who then went on to fuel ethnic rivalries and undermine national interest (Ayeni, 2003). Again, politicians used the press to condemn the ruling government and successfully whipped up negative sentiments against the regime. Part of this was labelling the coup as an Igbo coup because Nzeogwu and Aguiyi-Ironsi were from the Igbo ethnic group. Thus, the policies and agenda of the government were examined with an ethnic lens (Oyedemi, 2014). This situation of politicians using the press for their self-interest than public interests still exist in Nigeria and has negative implications for the state of press freedom in the country. The behaviour of the press corrupted the political environment through biased reportage because of the ethnic tensions in the country. Ayeni (2003:354) concluded that this situation might have “emboldened soldiers to seize power” in a counter coup in 1966.

In July 1966, a planned and executed counter coup made Colonel Gowon the head of Supreme Military Council (SMC). Unfortunately, problems of ethnicity (arising from the counter coup) and the Biafra secession plunged the country into a civil war which ended in 1970. General Gowon’s regime continued after the civil war until 1975. The media were not free under this regime. The promulgation of the Emergency Decree of 1966 allowed and made the “arrest and detention of citizens without warrant lawful, and empowered the Inspector General Police (IGP) and other top officers of the same or higher rank to search any newspapers premises in Nigeria” (Ismail, 2011: 11). The *Daily Times* office was searched in 1967 due to this decree.

The regime also passed another decree, Newspaper Prohibition of Circulation Decree of 1967 which empowered the regime to restrict any newspaper whose content was deemed detrimental to the interest of the state from circulation. Six months prison term or a fine of ₦500 was the prescribed punishment for offenders. Trade Disputes (Emergency Provision) Amendment Decree No. 53 of 1969 also prevented the press from publishing any content deemed to cause public alarm or industrial unrest. Therefore, when Minere Amakiri (Chief

Correspondent of the *Nigerian Observer*) published a story from a press conference on the grievances of teachers by the Nigerian Union of Teachers at Port Harcourt in July 28, 1973, (which coincided with the 31st birthday of Alfred Deite-Spiff, the Governor of the State), the publication was seen as an act that was contrary to the decree. He was punished by military officers under the supervision of the Assistant Superintendent of Police (Ralph Micheal Iwowari, an Aide-de-camp of the Governor). As his punishment, Amakari's hair was shaved with an old rusty blade, he was stripped naked in public and he was given twenty-four strokes of cane on his back (Ismail, 2011).

In 1975, General Murtala Muhammed took over the governance of the country from General Gowon through a bloodless coup. Seven months later, General Murtala Muhammed was assassinated in a violent attempted coup that failed so General Olusegun Obasanjo, the next in command, took over and ruled for four years during which agitation for civilian rule mounted to its peak. General Obasanjo continued with plans initiated by General Murtala Muhammed to return the country to civilian rule. He, therefore, dissolved the SMC and started the transition of the country to another civilian rule. The 1979 Constitution which provided a change from the parliamentary system to an executive president like the American model was drafted and the ban on political parties was lifted for the next civilian rule.

The state of press freedom under the first military regime was worse (Nwanne, 2014). In July, 1978, the *New Breed Magazine* suffered from the existing Newspaper Prohibition from Circulation Decree when it was barred from circulating its magazines. Apart from maintaining the earlier decrees, a new one was passed. The Newspaper Public Official Report Decree promulgated in April 1979 provided that the publication or reproduction of any statement, rumour or allegation that a public officer was engaged in a corrupt practice or has enriched himself or another person was an offence (Ismail, 2011). Punishment for offenders was two or more years of imprisonment without an option of a fine. This decree successfully intimidated the media from performing their watchdog functions.

2.2.2 The Second Republic and the Second Regime

The country returned to a civilian rule through multi-party general elections in 1979 after thirteen years of military rule. It was a close contest between Alhaji Shehu Shagari's National Party of Nigeria (NPN) and Chief Awolowo's Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN). Chief

Awolowo petitioned the credibility of the electoral victory of Alhaji Shagari (Brown, 2013) but the Supreme Court ruled in favour of Alhaji Shagari. The Second Republic was ushered in with a 1979 Constitution and a departure from the British-styled parliamentary system to an American model of executive president. The Second Republic failed to live to expectation because of corruption, “ruined economy, inter/intra party rivalries and the 1983 electoral fraud which returned Alhaji Shagari for a second term” (Brown, 2013:176).

In December 1983, another coup by General Muhammadu Buhari ended the Second Republic. The rights of citizens and the press were trampled upon. Alhaji Shagari was placed under house arrest and his cabinet ministers were exiled or jailed. General Buhari revised the Public Officers Decree in 1976 to include a restrictive clause against the broadcast media. Journalists were to be convicted, sentenced or heavily fined if found guilty. The regime again promulgated the Public Officers (Protection Against False Accusation) Decree in 1984. This decree did empower not only the government to revoke the license given the media but also provided that upon the publication of media content deemed detrimental to government, every individual present within the premises of the organisation at the time of the publication was guilty until proven innocent. According to Ismail (2011), *The Guardian Newspaper* went contrary to this decree so the newspaper was fined ₦50,000 and two of its journalists, Tunde Thompson and Nduka Irabor, were jailed. General Buhari ruled for two years and he was overthrown by another coup.

General Buhari’s regime was overthrown through a palace coup by General Ibrahim Babangida - who became “the self-styled military president in Nigeria’s political history” (Brown, 2013:176). The beginning of General Babangida’s regime was not repressive. He made attempts to restore freedom of the citizenry and the press. He released people who were jailed without charge by his predecessor. He encouraged public participation in national debate on economic recovery plans. However, things changed with time. According to Falola (2001), the policies of the regime of General Babangida resulted not only in poor economy and fall of middle class in Nigeria, but also in a prolonged political crisis. Many political associations were formed in 1986 to end General Babangida’s regime. They sought to mount pressure to end the regime and return to proper civilian rule. Unfortunately, they lacked a uniformed front because while majority of the political associations proposed 1990 as the year to end General Babangida’s regime, another group which was in the minority proposed 1992.

With regards to press freedom, the regime departed from the norm of repression of the press associated with military regimes and started on the note of being media friendly. The 1984 decree by the previous regime was repealed, and citizens and journalists in detention were released. However, the situation quickly changed to the norm. Within a year in power, the regime allowed censorship. The regime did proscribe the *News Watch Magazine* for 46 months in 1985 and it was alleged to be responsible for the assassination of Dele Giwa, the editor-in-chief of the magazine, in October 1986 (Media Right Agenda as cited in Ismail, 2011). In 1992, the government again promulgated the Nigerian Press Council Decree. By the decree, Nigerian Press Council was established to see to public complaints against unprofessional conducts of journalists. In April the same year, *Concord* suffered from the Concord Group of Newspapers Publication (Proscription and Prohibition from Circulation) Decree. Though another decree repealed the previous one, the regime restricted intervention from the court. Repression of the press worsened in 1993 when “the regime proscribed and prohibited the circulation of the following newspapers: *Africa Concord Magazine, Weekend Concord, Sunday Concord, National Concord, The Punch, Saturday Punch, Sunday Punch, Daily Sketch* and *Nigeria Observer* (Ismail, 2011:13).

2.2.3 The Third Republic and Third Military Regime

The Constitution for the Third Republic was drafted in 1989 under General Babangida with the hope of a return to civilian rule. Elections at the Gubernatorial and State legislative levels were conducted in 1991 but the presidential election was postponed till June 1993. General Babangida reduced the five political parties that were in existence in the Second Republic to two government-funded parties: Social Democratic Party (SDP) and National Republican Convention (NRC) (Brown, 2013). General Babangida ruled till 1993 when general elections were held to usher in the much desired civilian rule. M. K. O. Abiola won the elections on the ticket of SDP. However, the Third Republic was killed in the bud before it had the chance to come into existence. General Babangida annulled the polls and repealed Decrees 13 and 15 (the basis for the elections). He did this on grounds that there was the need to

save the judiciary from further ridicule and erosion of confidence and that a delay of seven days by NEC, in order to comply with

court injunction of June 10, 1993 before conducting the election could have saved the nation all the subsequent crisis and upheaval (Ayodele as cited in Brown, 2013:177).

General Babangida's regime collapsed in the midst of the political crisis that arose from the aftermath of the June 1993 elections and its annulment. Upon pressure from the citizenry and inner circle, he resigned in August 1993. He allowed an interim government, led by Chief Ernest Shonekan, to take over governance of the country but this was short-lived when eighty two days later, there was another military take-over by General Sani Abacha (in November 1993). In 1994, Abiola declared himself president and went into hiding but General Abacha hounded and arrested him for treason. Abiola died in prison in 1998 after being detained by Abacha.

General Abacha ruled with an iron fist and the rights/freedoms of the citizenry and the press were not spared. His regime was labelled as "the darkest hour for the press history in Nigeria" (Ayeni, 2003:357). Abacha, according to Ismail (2011), did not depend much on promulgation of decrees to repress the press. Rather, he used allegations of conspiracy to the execution of coup to jail journalists, attack owners of newspapers, seize newsprint in port, harass newspaper vendors, and proscribe newspaper organisations. He further noted that the regime implicated and secretly tried some journalists along with General Obasanjo, the Late General Shehu Yar Adua and some serving and retired military officers for conspiracy in the plotting of a phantom coup in 1995. George Mbah (Senior Assistant editor of *TELL Magazine*), Kunle Ajibade (then editor of *The News Magazine*), Ben Charles Obi (former editor of defunct *Classique Magazine*) and Niran Malaolu (former editor of *The Diet Magazine*) were some of the journalists who were tried secretly. They were sentenced to life imprisonment (but the sentence was commuted to 15 years imprisonment when General Abdulsalam Abubakar took over governance). General Abacha continued to be in power till his sudden death in June 1998.

General Abdulsalami took over the affairs of the country after General Abacha's death. He planned and implemented a transition programme for the next civilian rule. Political detainees were freed, the 1999 Constitution was drafted, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) was formed and political parties were registered in preparation for the Fourth Republic. Olusegun Obasanjo, who had then retired from the military contested and

won the general elections on the ticket of People's Democratic Party (PDP). In May 29 1999, he was sworn in to commence the Fourth Republic of Nigeria.

2.2.4 The Fourth Republic

Nigeria has been under the Fourth Republic from 1999 to date and has witnessed five successive elections according to the terms in the 1999 Constitution. Though INEC's performance (especially in the 2003 and 2007 elections) has not been perfect, democracy in the country is making progress. A constitutional lawyer, Itse Sagay, is of the view that the Fourth Republic is a failed democracy because it lacks free and fair elections (Adingupu 2012), but Brown (2013) contends that transfer of power from one civilian to another civilian government without a resort to military intervention is an indication of progress. Again, though petition hearings abound after every general elections, the fact that aggrieved parties can seek redress at the law courts as mandated by the constitution, and the press can cover the court proceedings prove that freedom of expression and of the press is not only guaranteed by the constitution but it has been working.

Under the Fourth Republic, the 1999 Constitution has made provisions for press freedom. Section 39 (1) expresses that every "person shall be entitled to freedom of expression, including the freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart ideas and information without interference" (1999 Constitution of Nigeria, p. 24). Section 39 (2) also provides for easy establishment and operation of media organisations. Section 22 of the constitution states that the "press, radio, television and other agencies of the mass media shall at all times be free to uphold the fundamental objectives.... the responsibility and accountability of the Government to the people" (1999 Constitution of Nigeria, p. 16). Apart from the constitutional provisions, the National Broadcasting Act and Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) Law that was passed in 2011 have also expanded press freedom in the country.

The FOIL, which was first presented by Media Rights Agenda and sponsored by Honourable Nduka Irabor and Honourable Tony Anyanwu at the National Assembly in 2000 was not passed by the end of the term of the National Assembly in 2003 (Ojebode, 2011). However, it was passed in 2004 by the House of Representatives when it convened for another term in the later part of 2003 and the bill was presented to the Assembly again. Senate also passed the bill in 2006 but the President, Olusegun Obasanjo "refused to sign the bill into law" on grounds that it "provided too little space for" him "to refuse information"

(p.269). Obasanjo also raised other issues that he wanted to be addressed in the bill yet he did not return the bill to the National Assembly till his tenure ended.

By this assertion, it can be argued that the President did not act in the interest of the citizens who gave him the mandate because the bill was to serve the interest of Nigerians but not that of the President alone. This amounts to an abuse of power against public interests. When the bill was presented for the third time to the Assembly in 2007, the bill suffered one setback or the other till President Yar A'dua's regime gave way to Goodluck Jonathan. Finally in 2011, the bill was passed by the House of Representative and the Senate, and it was signed by the President. It was expected that the passage of the law would give more elbowroom to press freedom in Nigeria. Yet, Ojebode has noted that "judging from the events following the FOI Act", journalists were "not at the forefront of the application of the Act but non-governmental organisations [were] rather "deploying the Act" (Ojebode, 2011:279).

The state of press freedom in Nigeria under the Republic has been better than the previous post-independence regimes yet there are instances that point to the fact that the Nigerian press is not free. This is because some occurrences under the regime contradict press freedom. The invasion of African Independent Television (AIT) by security agents during the tenure of President Obasanjo after their publication of a story on the purchase of an old aircraft as presidential plane is seen as governmental interference. Apart from this direct interference, the fact that AIT received huge sums of money from the Goodluck's government as payments for publicity, during the campaign period for the 2015 general elections (Ibekwe, 2015), is an indication of indirect governmental interference through advertisement.

Besides, there have also been instances where attempts to undermine press freedom under this republic had been carried out though not successful. For example, the attempt to introduce the Frivolous Petition Bill before Senate by the Senator for Kebbi South, Bala Ibn Na'Allah, would have repressed the press if it had been passed. Thus among other things, the bill stated that any journalist or media organisation who made "any allegation and or publish any statement, petition in any paper, radio, or any medium of whatever description, with malicious intent, to discredit or set the public against any person or group of persons, institutions of government," should be guilty of an offence and upon conviction should "be liable to an imprisonment term of two years or a fine of N4,000,000:00 (about US\$20,000) (MFWA, 2015).

Like the Public Officers (Protection Against False Accusation) Decree in 1984, this Act would have repressed freedom of the press if it had been passed as it would threaten the security of journalists in their profession. Thus fear of being an offender, when journalists were unknowingly given wrong information by a source, would have intimidated the press from carrying out its watchdog role and that will deny the citizens their right to information – which will also affect the quality of informed decisions and intelligent choices to be made in the course of any democratic process in Nigeria. Fortunately, this bill was not passed into law (Oladapo & Ojebuyi, 2017).

It can be argued, upon a critical look at the post-independence political histories of Ghana and Nigeria, that the countries have basically experienced two types of regimes: autocratic under military rule, and democratic under civilian rule. Again, the histories of press freedom in the countries are as chequered as their political histories. It is observed that rights/freedoms of civilians are usually trampled upon and freedom of expression/freedom of the press does not exist under the military regimes. This is because the regimes always abandon the existing constitutions and rule with decrees.

However, this situation is different under the civilian regimes. The civilian regimes are hinged on constitutions so the rights/freedoms of citizens are guaranteed and upheld (to some degree). Thus the print media, to some extent, are often free from interferences from governments but the broadcast media used to be monopolised by the state until developments led to liberalisation of the airwaves. Again, some repressive laws that inhibit the freedom of the press continue to be in the constitutions and are used by the state to control the press whenever deemed necessary. One key feature that characterises the democratic regimes in the countries is that though constitutional provisions for press freedom are guaranteed, the states often violate the freedom when the press publishes contents that criticize their policies or interests and in some instances when the press is irresponsible.

It can be concluded, therefore, that the countries have similar post-independence political and press histories. It is important to note, however, that though the media in the two countries consistently unite to fight against authoritarian rule whenever there is military take-over, the media in Ghana use their freedoms to strengthen the principles of democracy upon return to civilian rule (Manco, 2013) while the Nigerian media quickly divide into sectorial/tribal lines to set an unfavourable agenda for the party that won the elections

because of ownership influence, therefore an unfavourable agenda for the party that lost the election or vice versa (Ismail, 2011).

2.3.0 Conceptual framework

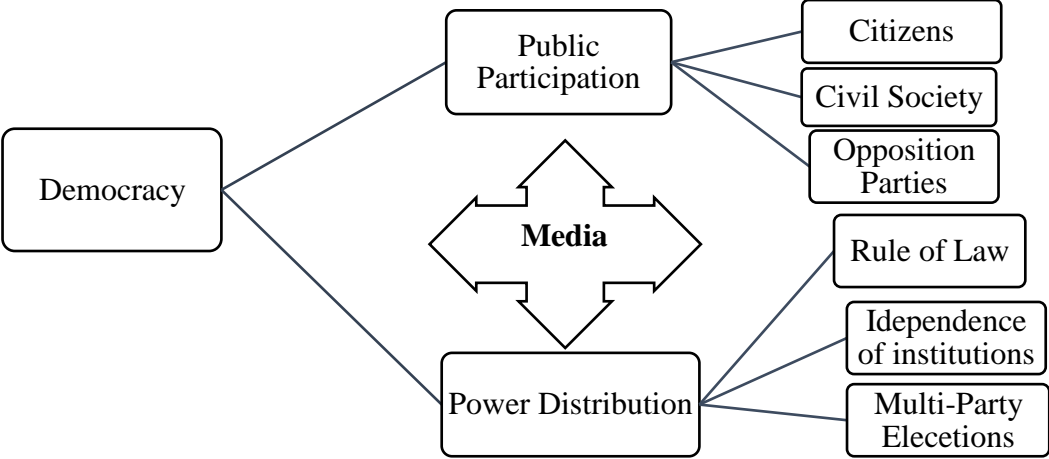
2.3.1 Democracy

Democracy has varied definitions but it can be simply understood as citizens' participation in the decision making process and governance of their country. It is considered as the best political system because it "allows for the dispersal of power and public access" to the distributed power through choices and decisions on governments during elections (O'Neil as cited in Eun-Suk, 2013:165). Citing Duh, Enyi (2014:32) outlines "high level of civil liberties, political pluralism (extensive competition by contestant including individuals, groups or parties for government) and political participation that provides the choice of the electorate to select candidates in free and fair elections" as essential ingredients for democracy. He further notes that democracies must exhibit the following characteristics: citizen-centered political authority, power distribution and rule of law, legitimate governance, freedom of choice and transparency in governance (Elaigwu as cited in Enyi, 2014).

It can be argued, upon a critical consideration of these characteristics, that two key dimensions that underpin democracy are public participation and power distribution. This is because firstly, a public-centered authority implies that political authority originates from citizens. Ghana and Nigeria practise multi-party systems and in such systems, a government becomes legitimate only when it is chosen by the majority of citizens and the choice can be changed or retained when the term of office is up. The fact that the tenure of a government can be retained or changed at the end of every four years is an indication of rule of law in the democracies. Secondly, every democracy is governed by a constitution because there is the need to share power and stipulate how all the actors in a democratic system can correctly exercise their powers. This outlines clear boundaries that separate the powers of the various actors in a democratic context such that the governors and the governed co-exist harmoniously. The purpose of rule of law is to safeguard the welfare of the citizens from possible abuse of the power distributed through the dictates of a constitution by the governors over the governed or vice versa. These characteristics of democracy are contained in the 1992 and 1999 Constitutions of Ghana and Nigeria respectively

Democracy is hinged on norms of a number of institutions like a judiciary, the executive, the legislature, Electoral Commission, a multi-party/opposition system, civil societies and the press. These institutions sustain and develop democracy because they ensure public participation and rule of law. Most importantly, it is worth noting that the existence of such institutions in democracies are not enough to ensure a thriving democracy except these institutions are independent and are given enough elbow room that is democratically reasonable to operate . The needed elbowroom can only become possible when there is adherence to the rule of law. This is because it is the grounds on which these institutions can effectively function to sustain democracy (Ninson, 2006).

Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework of democracy



Source: self-elaboration.

The two key dimensions of democracy (public participation and rule of law) afford citizens power and freedom to decide or make choices. The right/freedom to express or make any choice requires the availability of information to facilitate the making of informed decisions and intelligent choices. Waldhal (2004) confirms this assertion when he notes that it is impossible for citizens to form opinion on issues of interests as well as make intelligent and informed choices without access to accurate and objective information from the media. So it can be argued that democracy thrives on the media as the platform for dissemination of information and facilitation of debate, as well as the ability of citizens to make informed decisions and intelligent choices based on the disseminated information.

2.3.2 Press freedom

Freedom of the press originates from the idea of freedom of speech or freedom of expression. It is considered as the first condition of liberty necessary for democracy. To Patanjali (2007), the deserved opportunity to freely express the convictions and opinions by words of mouth, writing, printing, pictures or any other mode is an indication of freedom of expression/of press in democracies. All over the world, the constitution of democratic countries explicitly guarantee freedom of expression/speech and this freedom is considered to imply freedom of the press as well in some democratic countries (UNESCO, 2014; 2007b). So in the Nigerian Constitution, Section 39(1) provides for freedom of expression and that is considered as freedom of the press as well. However, some democracies explicitly guarantee both – freedom of expression and of press. In the 1992 Constitution of Ghana for instance, Article 165 explicitly stipulates that freedom of the press as guaranteed in Article 162 is an addition to freedom of expression guaranteed in Article 21(a).

Although the perception of press freedom varies from country to country (Ayodele, 2002; Youm, 2003), it is often interchanged with the freedom of speech because it basically denotes a fundamental human right “to gather, hold, publish or disseminate information and opinions through the news media”(Ayodele, 2002:16). As cited in Nwanne (2014), Sambe and Ikoni note that ‘press freedom focuses its attention on the unrestrained liberty to write or publish information for the consumption of the public’ (p.11). Eun-Suk (2013:161) explains freedom of the press as a “journalism that is undertaken with independence from internal or external factors and all other elements, which make journalists hesitant in carrying out their media work”.

The recurring idea in these and most explanations of the concept is absence of control or of interference in the work of the media. This is in line with the libertarian theory that democracy leads to a free press. Thus, the libertarian theorists believe that everybody who has anything to say must be given the freedom to do so and there should be no interference. Therefore, the right to freedom of expression is one of the major characteristics of a democratic society. It is one of the means through which public participation is attained due to adherence to rule of law. The right to freedom of expression is best applied when it is from well informed citizens and one key role of the media is to disseminate information to keep the citizens informed.

Press freedom as a concept is one of the key components of the libertarian political system because the system (unlike authoritarianism) is of the view that “the press is not an instrument of government, but rather a device for presenting evidence and arguments on the basis of which” many people “can check on government and make up their minds as to a policy” (Seibert et al, 1956:3; Trumber & Pretoulis, 2003). This implies that the press in any democratic society is “entrusted with the responsibility of the surveillance of the [political] environment through presentation and analysis of the happenings in society” (Nwanne, 2014:11). One of the commonest definitions of democracy is government of the people by the people for the people. For a government to be for the people among other things implies being accountable to the citizens. Citizens can hold their democratic government accountable when they know of the wrongs committed by the government, when they have the needed information to assess the government on strategies or projects carried out to achieve its policies and when they can attest that the government is working for or against their interest. Unfortunately, all the citizens cannot be at every part of the country at every time to know how the government in power is using or abusing the mandate given to it as trustees of public interest so as to hold it accountable. Therefore, the media is entrusted to disseminate information needed by the citizens to hold their government accountable.

For proper accountability to the citizenry to be possible as expected in any democracy, the media need to be free to be able to critically scrutinise activities of government. This is because controlled media hinder the crosschecking of governments actions that must be held accountable to the citizenry (Patanjali, 2007). Lippmann (1922) has noted that the public does not respond to issues and events in the environments but to pseudo-environments (reportage of events) because the “real environment is too big, too complex and too fleeting for direct acquaintance” (Littlejohn and Foss, 2011:341; Baran & Davis, 2012). As a result, the press has to be free in the course of modelling the complex democratic environment of the public into a simpler one (Littlejohn and Foss, 2011; Baran & Davis, 2012). Thus, to be well informed implies knowing everything that happens in the democratic society but an individual cannot be everywhere at the same time to know everything that is happening. This makes the democratic environment complex for the individual. Therefore, the media models this complex democratic environment into a simpler one by covering and reporting events happening everywhere and disseminating them to the public to keep them informed and educated about issues of interest. These enable the citizens monitor governance by

holding them accountable. It also underscores the need for the media to be free because interference will lead to misinformation and/or disinformation of the citizenry.

This may justify the reason that constitutions of democratic countries mandate provisions necessary for a free press. Thus, experience has shown that governments are willing to go to any extent to prevent the media from exposing their wrong doings: from modelling complex issues like inflation, economy, politics and corruption among others into a simpler one. This is unconstitutional because it implies unreasonable interference (which may be considered as a form of censorship or political influence over content) that is not in the interest of the public and contradicts the common recurring idea of absence or presence of control or interference from the government in the interest of the public. However, the reason for this interference may be due to the fact that governments know that what the citizens know about, think about and believe about in the world outside of personal first-hand experience, is shaped (and some would say orchestrated) by how these events are covered by the media (Baran & Davis, 2012; Littlejohn and Foss, 2011; Kwansah-Aidoo, 2005).

The concept of press freedom stands for multiple voices on public issues at all times (Seibert et al, 1956). This assertion implies that there must be diversity in the media landscape to ensure that multiple subjects and sources are covered. In democracies, coverage of views of all the democratic actors must be disseminated. In the discharge of their duties, the media are expected to create the platform for debate on issues of interest because the libertarian press system posits that anyone who has anything to lawfully say (on an issue) must be allowed. This is because firstly, the assertion affords the opposition, citizens and civil society the platform to learn about policies of the government and about the views of other citizens on the policies. This then allows them to critique and make inputs on the policies (public participation). Secondly, the government also gets the feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of the policies being put in place. Such interactions result in sustaining democracies as well as protection and promotion of freedom of expression/of the press. It is important to note that the press can only carry out this function when provisions on the freedoms of the press are enough and are enforced such that there are no interferences to undermine public interest.

To Berlin (2003:155), freedom of the press “refers to the capacity of journalists and editors to work, media outlets to operate, without facing interference to publication or reprisals afterward”. Berlin (2003) also notes that press freedom is often understood from the

perspective of governmental interference but it entails ownership or self-interference as well. Thus among other things, press freedom is not just about constitutional/legal provisions that encourage and facilitate easy establishment and operation of media organisations, for such grounds are not enough to guarantee a free press. This is because other factors like effective implementation of the constitutional/legal provisions, security of journalists and clash of economic and political interest of private ownership with public interest also inhibit press freedom.

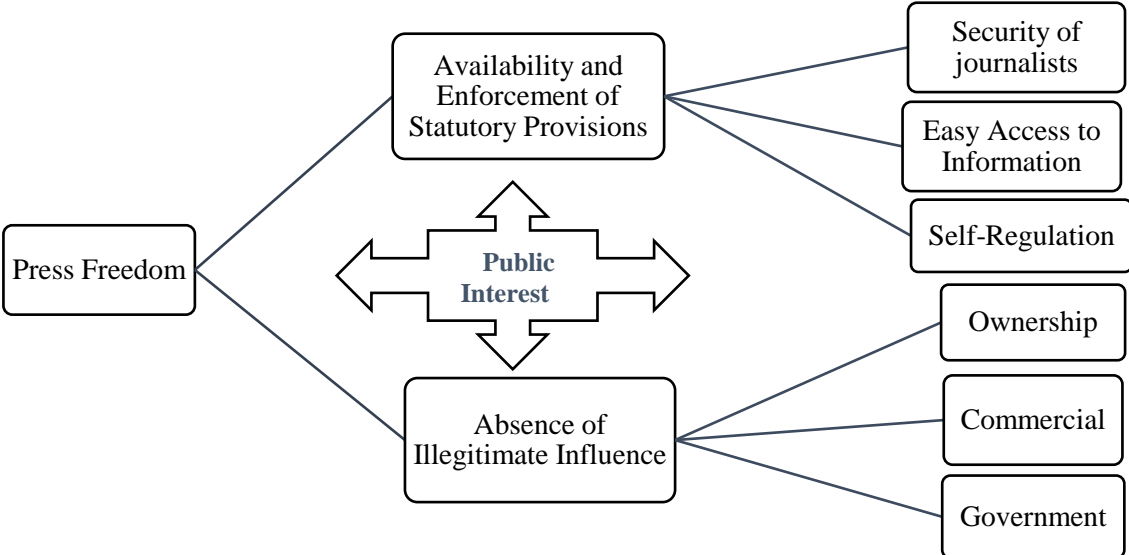
As a result of self, commercial and ownership influences, the press may not be free even when legal and statutory provisions ensure insulation from governmental control and media friendly environments. Journalists may censor media content for physical or financial security. Citing other studies (Lodamo & Skjerdal, 2009; Soola, 2008; Nyamnjoh, 2001), Ojebode (2013:298) notes that “unethical practices such as bribe taking” and close involvements of journalists with politicians “as media consultants and speech writers” limit the freedom needed by the press to disseminate information in the interest of the citizenry. Also, the brown envelope menace (known in the Ghanaian setting as ‘soli’ or solidarity), the demand for money “in order to kill a negative story or write a positive one” and some editors being “on the payroll of governors” (Ojebode, 2013:302) inhibit press freedom because these journalists are censoring media content in their personal than public interest.

In some instances, ownership (who do not have any political leanings) focus more on the making of profit than serving the interest of the public and this situation, according to scholarship (Curran, 2002; Bagdikian, 2004; Mchesney, 2004) negatively affect media content. This situation is confirmed by Ojebode (2013:302) when his study revealed that ownership of newspapers enter into an unwritten agreement with politicians so as to exchange positive coverage with advertisement packages. These instances in the media landscape of democratic societies are threats to not only the freedoms granted by constitutions to the media but to the entrenchment of democracy as well.

Also by virtue of ownership, some politicians who are private business owners of media organisations succeed in turning the watchdog into a lap dog. This is because “subtly or otherwise...owners are able to influence how much margin of freedom the journalist has” (Ojebode, 2013:298). This is in sync with the claims by Ismail (2011) that upon independence, Nigerian politicians used their privileges as media owners to further their political ambition and interest than to protect public interest. It implies that like just after

independence era, politicians of today continue to influence media content by virtue of ownership, to serve their political interest. These findings by Ojebbode (2013) and Ismail (2011) are in consonance with the claim by Curran (2002) that ownership and the control of the media cannot be ignored. This is because the ownership’s interest and control over content projected by the media at the expense of the public interest results in fundamental deceptions which damage the ability of the citizens to maintain a rational view of society (Bagdikian, 2004). These are all forms of censorship that inhibit press freedom although not from the government in power but from ownership, commercial interests against public interest.

Figure 2.2: Conceptual framework of press freedom



Source: self-elaboration

Experience has shown that usually in democracies, the issue of press freedom is complex because the right of the governed to know the truth must not undermine the right of the governors to govern. For instance, the era of yellow journalism necessitate the need to regulate press freedom because sensationalism and commercialisation were placed above public interest and not everybody who had something to say could do so. In today’s modern democracies, the right of the governed to know of the activities of the governors may sometimes threaten the safety of the governed when debates on some issues, like national

security, are transcended to the public. Therefore, “international law recognises national security as a legitimate restriction on freedom of expression and information” (Caparini, 2004:22) because such restrictions are in the interest of the governed. The need to safeguard the interest of citizenry from selfish interest of people in government and in the media is the fulcrum of the concept of press freedom. This implies that absolute press freedom is impossible in democratic governance because disclosure and non-disclosure of information on some issues to the governed are all in the interest of the citizenry. The most important thing is the disclosure or non-disclosure must always be in the interest of the public.

2.4 Indicators of press freedom

There are varieties of indicators of press freedom that different organisations employ in their assessment of press freedom in countries. One of such indicators, that this study employs, is the indicators by UNESCO (2014) in its report on world trends in freedom of expression and media development. In the report, the organisation used the “four angles of analysis” from the 1991 Windhoek Declaration namely, freedom, pluralism, independence and safety of journalists “to review emerging trends” in the past six years (UNESCO, 2014:5). Under each of these angles, different indicators that are used to assess press freedom and media development are outlined.

Indicators of freedom, according to UNESCO (2014: 27) are “legal guarantee of press freedom, ratification of international treaties of freedom of expression, decriminalisation of defamation, freedom of information laws, unrestricted access to media platforms” and “protection of journalists’ sources”. Key to the assessment of the above indicators is “legal status of freedom of expression and of press as well as how it is translated or not in practice” (UNESCO, 2014: 28). Thus, the organisation examines the presence of explicit and adequate statutory provisions of press freedom and how these provisions are implemented to determine the level of freedom of the media in countries.

In assessing press freedom from the angle of pluralism, UNESCO considers “access to variety of different types of media, plurality of ownership structure, sustainability of business models, diversity viewpoints and sources, broad scope of coverage” and “gender equality” (UNESCO, 2014: 43). Basically, the organisation looks at “ownership and control,

as well as the diversity of journalistic content and is considered for all media platforms” (UNESCO, 2014:42).

Indicators under the angle of independence are “absence from political and commercial interference, autonomy of professional journalists and regulatory bodies, professional standard of code of ethics, advocacy and training from professional associations, quality information” and “independent public broadcast service” (UNESCO, 2014:65).

To UNESCO (2014:82), “safety issues are central to press freedom”, therefore, press freedom assessment should be carried out under the following safety indicators: “absence of killing and physical threat, absence of incarceration and arbitrary arrests, absence of impunity in crimes against journalists, exiling to escape repression, absence of harassment (both legal and economic) self-censorship in media platforms and the internet” and “destruction or confiscation of equipment and premises” (UNESCO, 2014: 83).

It is important to note that UNESCO’s (2014) indicators are adopted and adapted according to the scope and the objectives of this study. Thus, the indicators that are pertinent to the focus of the study are employed in this work.

2.5.0 Theoretical framework

The libertarian and social responsibility theories of the press are adapted to guide and inform the study. However, this section reviews literature on the origin of the theories of the press, authoritarian theory of the press and justification for the use of theories of the press (but not comparative media systems models by Hallin and Mancini (2004; 2012)). This is because they offer insights that address the cases under investigation. The post-independence political and press histories of Ghana and Nigeria show that the countries experienced autocratic and democratic regimes and explain how the press behaved under these regimes. Therefore, the theories provide the context to make better comparisons of the cases although the thrust of the study is about press freedom under democratic regimes of the two countries.

2.5.1 The Origin of the Theories of the press

Theories of the press originated from the two conflicting schools of thought on the role of the media at the beginning of the twentieth century in America: radical libertarian/First-

Amendment absolutist and technocratic control. The radical libertarian/First-Amendment absolutist was of the view that the operations of the media should not be governed by regulations (Baran & Davis, 2003). The core principle underlying this school of thought was the stipulation of the First Amendment that “congress shall make no laws... abridging the freedom of speech or of the press” (Youm, 2003:72). Thus, it was in agreement with Justice Hugo Black of the U.S. Supreme Court that “no law means no law” (Baran & Davis, 2003:95). Technocratic control, in contrast to no regulation, also contended that the press must be regulated because of its propaganda effects. Thus, it advocated for control on the gathering and disseminating of information on grounds of the propaganda effects of the media to society (Baran & Davis, 2003). Although the schools of thoughts are conflicting, their arguments are sound - sometimes, it is in the interest of the public for the media to be free but in some instances too, it is also in their interest that the press is regulated.

Therefore, social responsibility became the compromise between the two contrasting schools of thought when they failed to address issues regarding the political and social relationship between the state and the society at that point in time. It had its roots in the 1947 findings of The Hutchins Commission of Freedom of the Press in the United States (Baran & Davis, 2003) - which basically considered how to make the libertarian theory better. This was necessitated by the fact that the core concept of the libertarian theory, a free press in a free market place of ideas, became vulnerable to economic outcome of sensational and fictitious news in 1920s and 1930s (Baran & Davis, 2012; 2003). This trend is re-emerging in the media industry today due to the problem of fake news and technological innovations and it has negative implications for ethics and practice in journalism.

As a result of yellow journalism, concerns were raised about the vulnerability of the libertarian theory. Though the libertarian theory had shortfalls, turning over control of the media to government (going back to authoritarian theory) was not a welcomed option as well. The need for a compromised solution led to the establishment of The Hutchins Commission on Freedom of the Press in 1942 which released its findings in 1947 after re-examining the concept of press freedom under the prevailing system. The findings and recommendations from the Hutchins Commission formed the nucleus of the Social Responsibility Theory of the Press (Seibert et al as cited by Baran & Davis, 2012). The social responsibility theory provided an option that favoured both sides. It opined that the

media must be free but the media must be regulated by independent commission to make it responsible and accountable to society.

Experience has shown that the two schools of thought that underpin the origin of the theories of the press, to some extent, currently do exist in Ghana and Nigeria. This is because while some journalists understand the provisions on press freedom in their constitutions to mean qualified, others seem to misunderstand them (the provisions) to mean absolute. Thus, they tend to understand press freedom only from the perspectives of Article 162 of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana and Section 39 of the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria without trying to understand the legitimate inhibitions to the provisions in the same constitutions. Therefore, anything less than the radical libertarian – even if it is in the interest of the public – is seen as negative influence to inhibit press freedom.

Seibert et al (1956) provide the grounds for understanding the press within the political context of a country when they postulate the four theories of the press. Their postulations are based on the general assumption that the press is influenced by the social and political systems, therefore, the nature of freedoms and constraints granted by the system in a country determines the level of freedom the press enjoys. Thus, the theories explain the relationship between the government and the press. Based on what the press should be and do in their countries, they postulate the Authoritarian, Soviet-Communist, Libertarian and Social Responsibility theories of the press. Some scholars, however, posit that there are two theories of the press - authoritarian and libertarian – and the other models (communist and social responsibility) are variants of the two (Folarin, 1998).

With time, scholars felt the four theories were unable to explain varying complex political systems emerging (Firdaus, 2012). Thus, though the four theories of the press provided normative guidance, they had restrictive explanatory abilities in some context. Therefore to address this gap, other theorists modified the existing models to better explain different political contexts (Firdaus, 2012). For instance, Huchten (1981) identified authoritarian, western, revolution and developmental theories of the press and McQuail (1987) also propounded democratic participant and development theories of the press in addition to four other theories which were similar to the theories propounded by Seibert et al (Firdaus, 2012).

A critical examination of the modifications indicates that they are underpinned by assumptions of the two main theories of the press propounded by Seibert et al. Thus, they

are variants of the authoritarian and libertarian theories of the press. For instance, Hachten's western model of the press describes what the press must be and do under colonial or existing government – must be subversive and overthrow the autocratic government to be free and responsible to that society or its citizens. This theory has some features of libertarian and social responsibility - being free and being responsible to the needs of the society. However, it differs in its unlawful aspect of overthrowing a government in power (Firdaus, 2012).

Borrowing from Firdaus (2012), the implication is that there is the possibility that the libertarian theory that informs the study may have some 'restrictive' explanations in the countries under study. This claim by Firdaus is affirmed in Ojebode's (2013) study of ethical dilemma in politician-businessperson-owned (PBO) newspapers and margin of press freedom for journalists. He posits that the libertarian theory of the press

...does not anticipate individual wealthy politicians who, in pseudo-democracy like Nigeria, can become authority on their own to the point of stifling the freedom of those who work in their establishment. Therefore ...political transition in Nigeria seems to have given rise to a new species of authoritarian press system (p. 308).

As a result, the review of other theories provides the insights that may address such restrictive explanations.

2.5.2 Authoritarian theory of the press

The authoritarian theory of the press is based on the principle of the technocratic control (Baran & Davis, 2003). The thrust of this principle is the need for regulation because of the power of media effects – thus the press is successful in influencing or orchestrating how the public think as well as how they think about an issue (Baran & Davis, 2012; Littlejohn and Foss, 2011; Kwansah-Aidoo, 2005; Griffin, 2003). The theory is borne out of the principle of a political system that its government has absolute power over the country and so it is superordinate to the press (Folarin, 1998; Baran & Davis, 2012). The assumption of this theory is that the ability to discern the truth about governance lies with the few wise men (at the top of governance) and only they are able to guide and direct the public (at the bottom of

governance) to the truth (Baran & Davis, 2012; Eko, 2003). So, all forms of public communication are placed under the control of the government and the governing elite (Siebert et al, 1956).

This logic is based on the fact that the best people to inform the citizens about governmental policies are the people who form and implement the policies. Thus, the likelihood of people in government misinforming or disinforming the citizens about their policies is slimmer than people who are not part of the processes of formulation and implementation of governmental policies. In this light, the press is not part of the processes of formulation of the regime's policies so the regime cannot risk the likelihood of misinformation or disinformation by the press in the implementation process if all forms of public communication are placed in the hands of the media. Thus, government is in a better position to discern the truth about its policies so it can direct the citizens to their policies when they dictate and direct the operations of the press. So for instance from the perspective of the authoritative theory, political interference in government owned media organisations in democratic Ghana or Nigeria may be justified with the argument that the government in power understands its policies better, therefore, the reason for control over media content. Yet this argument is flawed, especially in illegitimate control of the media in democratic societies, in the sense that if the citizenry are not wise enough to understand the policies of the government by themselves, then they will not be wise enough to understand explanations even from the government.

Under this theory, the government-owned and private press exist to support and further the policies and aims of the government (Folarin, 1998; Severin & Tankard, 2001; Ayodele, 2002; Eko, 2003). Thus, the theory is based on the assumption that powers and interests of government must not be undermined so the press is expected to play a subordinate role to the superordinate government even when the government undermine public interest. Therefore, the press is expected to act according to the political values in existence. This indicates that the freedom of the press is a right of government but not citizens or press. The president and key personalities in government have the right to say or do whatever they want or need to say because they are superordinate (involved in the policy formulation process and cannot undermine their own policies) but the press and citizens have no rights to do the same as subordinates to government (because they are not involved in the policy formulation process and can undermine government policies).

Though ownership can be public or private, the media are totally controlled by the government and must be guided and directed into disseminating the truth to the public. Under the theory, the media are tools of the government. However private ownership, though not formed by the government, are allowed on grounds that they avoid dissemination of information or avoid facilitation of debates deemed to be a contravention to the policies and ideologies of the government. In a situation where the press contravene the political values (editorial coverage deemed to be an attack on or violation of policies or people in government), it is considered a criminal offence and so attracts punishment (jail sentence, revoke of license, heavy fine or any punishment deemed to be right). For instance, when Minere Amakiri (Chief Correspondent of the *Nigerian Observer*) published a story on the grievances of the Nigerian Union of Teachers at Port Harcourt State on the 31st birthday of the Governor of the state, it was seen as an attack on the governor (because his coverage implied that the governor preferred organising his birthday party to attending to the grievances of the teachers), therefore, Amakari had to be punished.

The central idea of this theory is a top-down communication process because media content must align to the official or government side in all events and issues (Eko, 2003). This form of communication is the theory behind the use of decrees (than the constitution) in such regimes. The authoritarian theory promotes acquiescence to the governing elite than creation of a homogeneous culture (Baran & Davis, 2003; Folarin, 1998). The justification of government's control over the media is to preserve and protect social order (Baran & Davis, 2010). The social order is total acceptance of the policies/ ideologies and conformity to the dictates of the few wise men as they guide the citizens to the truth. Therefore, social order is best preserved through the top-down communication process because it is characterised by a one way form of communication. Conflicting views of the press or citizens about policies or issues of interest are not welcomed because the communication process must be one way but not a two way process. The various decrees used by various military regimes in the countries were examples of one way communication because they prevented the press from questioning the logic behind the decrees through intimidation.

Negative constraints such as censorship, direct or indirect hiring and firing of staff, heavy fines, proscription and license are used by the government to exercise absolute control over the press. It is the method the autocratic political system adopts to ensure that erring or radical views that try to destabilise the preservation and protection of social order are

stabilised. Thus, if the government perceives that media content is a threat to its administration (an attempt to destabilise social order), media personnel responsible is either jailed or the operating license of the media outlet is revoked (stabilisation of social order). So, censorship of all types and different repressive tools are applied by the government to control the press (Baran & Davis, 2010).

In the context of the post-independence political and press histories of Ghana and Nigeria, the relationship between the military regimes (and some civilian regimes) and the press can be understood from the perspectives of this theory. These regimes controlled the press through licensing, censorship, intimidation and persecution and sometimes loss of lives in the course of duty. Ghana's Flight Lieutenant J. J. Rawlings used the Newspaper Licensing Law (PNDC Law 211) to control the press under the PNDC military regime. In democratic Nigeria, license for electronic media is granted by only the President. This affords him the right to deny any applicant whose ideology or political leanings may be considered detrimental to the interest of his government. The renewal of license after a period in operation also encourages political interference to an extent. The body that sees to the renewal (National Broadcasting Commission) is not independent from the government so it makes it easier for the body to refuse to renew or even revoke the license of an organisation if it is seen to be critical of the government.

Press freedom is inverse under this theory because it upholds an absolute power of the state/government against subservience of citizens and the press. It also explains how the autocratic system relates with its media – the rights of the state are the ultimate and freedom of expression belongs to government and not the press or citizens. Conclusions drawn from its assumptions indicate the contrast between an absolute control over the media by the government and an absence of any form of control and presence of restraints on the media in the interest of the citizenry.

However, it justifies restrictions or censorship on grounds of national security or protection of a citizen from defamation. For the study, this helps the researcher to better understand and appreciate some inhibitions in the legal and statutory books of Ghana and Nigeria as well as the processes of examination and selection of cases of violations of freedom of expression that are likely to be impediments to press freedom or otherwise in the countries. Such insights are valuable to the researcher during the data collection process – especially the

document analysis to refute or affirm findings of the survey – because they address selection bias and enhance objectivity in the process.

2.5.3 Libertarian Theory of the Press

This theory of the press conforms to the radical libertarian/First Amendment absolutist school of thought and it explains the government-press relationship in a democratic political system. It is a sharp contrast to the authoritarian theory because it condemns regulation from government (Baran & Davis, 2003). It contends that “the press is free only if it achieves total autonomy from any state control” (Trumber & Prentoulis, 2003:199). This is because the libertarian school of thought believes that freedom of speech/expression is crucial in advancing democracy for it is one of the natural rights every individual needs to enjoy (freely express his/her views). So, it is undemocratic and unacceptable for a democratic government to deny any individual such right. This implies that physical attacks on journalists by security agencies in an attempt to prevent the media from reporting an event is undemocratic and must be avoided. However, this situation can also be examined from the perspective of journalists denying citizens their right to know about an issue so as to express their views on that issue because of self-interest.

The logic by the libertarian theorists that freedom of expression is crucial to entrenching democracy lies in the fact that a democratic government (as a trustee of public interest) understands and appreciates the need to be accountable to the governed - inform the citizenry on how and why its policies are implemented to benefit them. This can be achieved only when the press is free to disseminate information on the policies and activities of the government to the citizens. This is because the feedbacks of the citizenry validate the success or failure of its mandate so it is in its own interest to ensure a free press.

According to Blanchard (2003), the theory posits that the public is rational and capable of discovering the truth from falsehood, therefore, no need for censorship or any form of restraints. This theory argues that if the media are freed from the control or communication limitations by government, individuals can rationally “follow the dictates of their conscience, seek the truth, engage in public debate” and make right choices based on the

variety of information disseminated by the media (McQuail and Seibert et al as cited in Baran & Davis, 2003:96).

Democracy is basically about the choice of the majority as a result of individual choices on issues of interest in a society. Scholarship has also indicated that such choices are effective only when they are made from an informed view (Waldhal, 2004). Censorship will, therefore, results in a deficient decision making because it tempers with the objectivity of information being disseminated, and the choices made will not be intelligent. This informs the reason that there must be no censorship but a free press in democracies.

So, when the Ghana Independent Broadcasters Association (GIBA) went to the Supreme Court of Ghana in 2015 seek for the interpretation of Article 162 Clause 2 in relation with L.I. 2224, the court agreed with the need to strike out regulations 3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12 and 22 of the Regulations 2015 (L.I. 2224) by the National Media Commission (NMC) because they were seen as a form of direct censorship on the part of the Commission. Thus, the regulations demanded that approval of media content must be sought by the electronic media from the Commission before broadcast. The seven member panel at the Supreme Court unanimously held that the regulations should be struck out as unconstitutional, null and void because they contradicted Article 162 Clause 2 which provided that there should be no censorship in Ghana (Banaseh, 2015; Hawkson, 2016) and Article 173 which prevent direct control of the commission from directing “the professional functions of a person engaged in the production of newspaper or other means of communication” (1992 Constitution of Ghana, p. 89).

Libertarian theorists believe that free flow of public debate and discussion have a greater power of creating more natural ways of structuring and improving the society (Baran & Davis, 2010), than controlling public debate to preserve and protect social order. Milton’s self-righting principle informs this assertion. John Milton asserts in his work, *Aeropagetica*, that a fair, good and truthful debate “will always win over lies and deceit” (Baran & Davis, 2003:97). This is because free flow of information, even in the midst of false information, creates the needed information rich environment for public debate on different perspectives of issues. The citizenry, upon availability of information on the various perspectives of an issue, can “follow the dictates of their conscience, seek the truth, engage in public debate” and make right choice (Baran & Davis, 2003:96). Therefore, citizens are able to make intelligent choices to better their society. This justifies why the theory posits that an

individual can publish any information without constraints because the rationalism and natural rights components of this theory provide the check needed to know the truth in cases of defamation, violation of privacy, sedition or indulgence in obscenity (Folarin, 1998).

The chief role of the press under this theory is to help discover the truth and check the government. Eko (2003:98) affirms this assertion by stating that the role of the press, under this theory, “is to denounce government, corporate and individual excesses” by serving as the fourth estate or watchdog that holds the three main arms of government (executive, judiciary and legislature) accountable. The libertarian theory affords the press the liberty to disseminate any information and freely express opinions on actions that contradict the expected roles of government in democratic regimes. The watchdog role of the press is accomplished through investigative journalism - a crucial component in the performance of the watchdog function of the press - that is always undertaken on behalf of the citizens (Stiglitz, 2017; Dagbanja, 2014). The press must identify, investigate and report serious consequences of government’s policies on the citizenry for they have the right to know how their trusteeship is put to use.

The complex nature of the political environment of citizenry makes it impossible for them to be at different places at the same time (Littlejohn and Foss, 2011). So, the press (as the fourth estate with mandatory powers from the constitution to hold the government accountable and responsible) monitor and draw public attention (a watchdog that barks) when the government misuse the trusteeship of the citizenry or goes beyond the powers given it. It is against this back drop that the press in democracies is given the right by the constitution to be free. However in the context of Ghana and Nigeria, literature seems to indicate that the media are unable to perform their watchdog role better because they cannot denunciate political, ownership and commercial interests (Shardow & Asare, 2015; Nwanne, 2014; Ojebode, 2013; Akinwale, 2010). This situation undermines democracy and free press in the countries.

The idea of a free market-place of ideas can be linked to the self- righting principle of the theory. In libertarian theory, dissemination of ideas is likened to the concept of trade. Thus, the media must be allowed in a laissez fair environment to freely disseminate information because media content, like a commodity in the market, have values (credibility and truthfulness) so the degree of their values will determine their life span. A credible and truthful content will stand the test of time but falsity cannot survive because citizens are

wise consumers of media content. This assertion is used to justify why media content that wrongly attack governments or parties must not attract criminal punishment. As rational and wise consumers of media content, citizens can discern the truth from content of media reportage from diverse media outlets.

Again, the concept of free market place of ideas has economic implications as well. Credible and truthful press will survive because they will become the citizen's preferred and dependable choice and more patronage will yield more economic benefits. Advertisers are always interested in media outlet with large audience because it is the desired platform to market. Therefore, more credible and truthful platform ensures more patronage by citizens and attracts advertisers. However, false media content will attract low patronage and the outlet will not be economically sound to survive in the media business.

In libertarian theory, press ownership is not restricted and anybody (the public/state or individuals) can own a media outlet as far as he/she can afford because anyone with significant information to share can do so without restraints (Trumber & Pretoulis, 2003; Blanchard, 2003; Youm, 2003; Ayodele, 2002; Severin & Tankard, 2001; Folarin, 1998). Therefore, one common characteristic in democracies is the enabling environment for the establishment of the press. Constitutions that govern democracies contain stipulations that foster media friendly environment. Article 162 (3) and Section 39 (2) of the 1992 and 1999 Constitutions of Ghana and Nigeria respectively, provide for the easy establishments and operations of media organisations in the countries. Such stipulations prevent impediments to the establishment and operations of press and enhance media pluralism and diversity. The logic is democracy is participatory governance and only the press have the platform that facilitates public participation in governance. This is because they mediate between the governors and the governed and give them voice.

However, this attribute of the libertarian press that aimed at creating an avenue for media diversity has been exploited in modern democracies. The problem of concentration of ownership has rather stifled media diversity. Large corporations in America control all the major networks or newspapers in the country and this result in more media organisations but almost the same media content (Bagdikan, 2004; McChesney, 2004). In democratic Ghana and Nigeria, experience has shown that concentration of the electronic media is emerging in their industries. For instance in Ghana, Osei Kwame Despite owns a chain of electronic media organisations in the major cities and they are conveniently used to promote products

from his manufacturing companies or that of his associates. Again in Nigeria, Chief Aleogho Raymond Dokpesi owns a chain of electronic media in key states and contents of his organisations favour his associates so in the build up to the 2015 elections in Nigeria, the PDP enjoyed favourable coverage from AIT than APC. Therefore, easy establishments of media organisations have rather led to variety of kinds of media organisations but monopolised media content and public access.

The libertarian theory failed to provide the much desired outcome from a free press to meet the needed expectations in the American society at that time. To Folarin (1998:27),

...the commercial development of the press and unforeseen developments in media technology had tended to limit access to media for individuals and group, and to concentrate media power in the hands of a few businessmen and media professionals who had the means to set empires.

This situation is not different when the media landscapes of the two countries are considered. Their democracies focussed on freeing the press from government control without considering freedom from private ownership monopoly and other interferences from journalists. Thus, the current provisions of free press in the legal and statutory books of the two countries did not anticipate how private ownerships or PBOs can influence press freedom. According to Ojebode (2013), media ownership, with “cross political and economic” interests are able to influence how much margin of freedom the journalist has” and this “is not lost on politicians” (p. 298). He notes that “journalist working in PBO media outlets have little elbowroom to operate professionally” (Ojebode, 2013:306). This situation paves the way for politicians (and to an extent governments, under the guise of private businesses) and private ownership to control the freedom of the press.

The libertarian theory basically affirms how the press should be under democratic governments. This affirmation gives insights on understanding of the indicators of press freedom and show how the press in Ghana and Nigeria should be evaluated. Based on the assumptions of the theory, its strengths and weaknesses are outlined. Thus, it is not enough to consider press freedom only from the perspective of government interference but from ownership and commercial interferences as well. This provides some insights on the

indicators used by the researcher in the questionnaire to examine the state of press freedom in Ghana and Nigeria and the reasons for the different levels of press freedom.

2.5.4 Social Responsibility Theory

The social responsibility theory is a modification of the libertarian theory. It affirms the independence of the media from political or partisan influences but condemns the abuse of the independence of the media for ownership or commercial interests. Thus, it supports the operation of the media in capitalist environment as well as the need for the media to project the interest of all the people in the society and not just that of the elites. Therefore, the theory is on the premise that the freedom of the press must come with obligations of responsibility to society and the need for the media to meet the obligations. The theory posits that the press is “responsible to the society” and “not to commercial interests” or partisan interests, therefore, the “media [are] controlled by a few nonpartisan government entities” (Eko, 2003:98; Trumber & Pretoulis, 2003; Folarin, 1998) to ensure they (media) are responsible to the needs of the society. Being responsible to the needs of the society implies that the media must play an important role of protecting public interest and democratic principles in democracies because to Bagdikian (2004) and McChesney (2004), commercial and partisan interests do not have room for public interest most of the time.

The theory is informed by the fact that the “press is not free if those who operate it behave as though their position conferred on them the privilege of being deaf to ideas which the processes of free speech have brought to public attention” (Baran & Davis, 2003:109-110). Thus, the media are expected to be responsible for progression of democratic values and principles in any democratic society. Since commercial or political interest causes the media to be unable to protect public interest, it means that they (media) are not free to perform their expected role because they have been enslaved by these interests. However, the privileges and freedoms they enjoy as the fourth estate/watchdog are conferred on them with the expectation that they will be the voice of the people when the government by the people refuses to be for the people.

This may be the reason that constitutions of democracies afford freedoms to the press to provide a surety that the public interest is constantly upheld by the watchdog in all situations should the government in power, who is the trustee of public interest, fail to perform this

duty. The public interest is safeguarded when the media accept and perform their obligations to the society by being a watchdog to monitor and prevent possible abuse by the government. However, since there is the possibility of the watchdog being compromised by commercial interest, the theory further addresses such a situation through the existence of an independent nonpartisan regulatory organisation to monitor and prevent the watchdog from being a lapdog. Thus, the existence of media/press commissions in democracies is to ensure that the public interest is safeguarded by ensuring that the media meet the accepted standards in democratic societies. For instance, the National Media Commission (NMC) of Ghana and the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) of Nigeria are recognised bodies that regulate and ensure that the media in the countries are responsible to the needs of the Ghanaian and Nigerian societies.

The thrust of the theory is the need for the “media to be responsible for fostering productive and creative” society “by prioritizing cultural pluralism - becoming the voice of all the people - not just elite groups or groups that had dominated national, regional or local culture in the past” (Baran & Davis, 2010:115). The authors further note that the theory “appeals to the idealism of individual media practitioners and tries to unite them in service of cultural pluralism- even when this might reduce their profits or antagonize existing elite”(p.116). The wisdom in this assertion lies in the fact that the press is able to survive as a business entity because of patronage by the citizenry from varied culture in a same country/geographical area. Therefore despite the fact that some cultures are in the minority, it is fair that they are given representation as well because their patronage also help the media as business organisation to survive. Besides, the media cannot be the true voice of the people without cultural pluralism.

Unfortunately, experience has shown that instead of ensuring cultural pluralism, it appears the media, through their content, are being taken over by foreign culture. Thus, some individual media practitioners, especially in the privately owned media organisations, seem indifferent to the appeal for cultural pluralism and are ready to sacrifice service of cultural pluralism for their commercial interests. For instance, many television stations in Ghana and Nigeria broadcast foreign telenovelas that are eroding the morals and cultural values of citizens because it is cheaper to buy and broadcast than local productions.

This situation is worsened by the fact that and advertisers spend heavily on such programmes so most of the television stations have joined the bandwagon¹.

The forgoing necessitates the need for the regulatory bodies in the countries to ensure some form of content regulations in the operations of the media but this must not lead to censorship. Using the NMC versus GIBA case in Ghana as an instance, it can be argued that sections of the 2015 Regulations law were declared null and void because the dictates of those regulations were very similar to that of Section 183 subsection 2 of the Criminal Code Act that was passed in Ghana in 1960. Rather, if the commission had set up an effective monitoring team to monitor and record harmful content from organisations so that those who were found guilty were made to appear before a panel to defend their action and/or face necessary punishments, it would have been a better option.

To Folarin (1998:27), the press (under this theory) “must raise conflict to the plane of discussion” and anyone who has something to say can use the media. However in saying whatever is to be expressed, individuals “are forbidden to invade private rights or disrupt vital social structures or interest” (Folarin, 1998: 27). The theory does not support the inability of the press to exhibit socially acceptable behaviours. Unfortunately, it can be argued that the opposite appears to be the reality in Ghana and Nigeria. Some of the media in the countries, through their fake news content have invaded the privacy of other individuals.

Under this theory, the media have the freedom to raise issues of public interest to their platforms for discussion and citizens can share their opinions on them. However, there is the need for the media to ensure that discussions or contributions from their audience members do not wrongly intrude the privacy of other individuals. Therefore, the right of the media to exercise their constitutionally guaranteed freedoms must not conflict with the right of the governors to provide security for the governed at all times or the right of an individual to live peacefully. Thus, exercising the right to freedom of expression/press without adherence to the rule of law is unconstitutional. So, there is the need to freely report or cover an issue but there is also the need to ensure that the reportage is done within the confines of the law. However, this situation (freedom to report but within the confines of the law) often results in controversial clashes between the media and the security agencies in Ghana and Nigeria.

1. In an interview with Afia Pokua, the editor of Adom FM at the premises of the station on 17th January, 2017 at 2:15 GMT in Ghana.

The constitutions of the countries provide that the freedoms the media enjoy are subjected to limitations on grounds of national security. Though some ingredients for national security are outlined in the constitutions, there are no clearly defined boundaries, therefore, much is left to the discretion of designated authorities. Experiences from the countries indicate that authorities tend to abuse such discretionary powers by using it as grounds to bully journalists and deny the media access to information. It is for this reason that boundaries of such provisions that give room to ambiguity are to be clearly defined.

The existence of Freedom of Information (FOI) Laws in democracies often addresses conflicts/controversies on grounds of national security. This is because FOIs usually define the grounds for denial of access to information. The theory also supports self-regulation because through self-regulation, certain social checks are put in place to see to the compliance of the recognised social standards by the media (Folarin, 1998). Self-regulation is when a media commission (made of majority of members from the media fraternity or with media backgrounds) or a journalist association monitors and regulates media practices such that the media comply with the recognised social standards or ethics of the profession.

Upon the existence of non-partisan media commissions in African countries like Ghana and Nigeria, Folarin (1998:29) notes that “the task of enforcing social and ethical responsibilities in media performance and ensuring press freedom” in countries are far from becoming a reality because many unresolved ethical and social responsibilities continue exist. Nonetheless, the existence of these organisations in the countries justify Folarin’s claim that the “Social Responsibility Theory is not a theory for the Western press alone but for the press in all responsible societies” (Folarin, 1998: 29) even though it is interpreted and implemented differently in different countries (Seibert et al as cited by Folarin, 1998).

This theory outlines the abuse/excesses of the libertarian theory and so it is of relevance to the study. This is because it provides some insights on how to examine press freedom and controversial issues or policies in the countries. Thus, in selecting and examining controversial cases of media freedom violations in data collection process, this theory offers insights on how the researcher must go about such cases. The right/freedom of speech and of the press must be exercised with responsibility to the public interest when it comes to coverage of issues of human interest because the “press is not free if those who operate it behave as though their position conferred on the privilege of being deaf to ideas which the processes of free speech have brought to public attention” (Baran & Davis, 2003:109-110).

2.6 Justification for the theories of the press

It is important to note that there have been criticisms against the theories of the press. Notable among such critics is Hallin and Mancini (2004). The authors criticise the fact that Seibert et al (1956) use a universal approach in their comparative media analysis (therefore do not address peculiarities of different countries), adding that the approach yields shallow analyses that are not based on detailed research on a specific media system. They also note that analysis from such an approach is flawed with assumptions that are ethnocentric. As a result of their criticism, they carried a seminal study on comparative media systems that was anchored on this assertion – “media systems are shaped by their wider context of political, history, structure and culture” (Hallin & Mancini, 2004:46). By studying and comparing 18 western countries, Hallin and Mancini (2004) develop a conceptual framework for analysing comparative media systems research. Their framework provides a systematic approach of similarities and differences in the study of the relationship between politics and media. The authors also develop dimensions for analysing political systems in countries and outline three models of politics and media: polarized pluralist, democratic corporatist and liberal models. Their study uses their five political and four media dimensions to outline the characteristics of their models. These contributions by Hallin and Mancini (2004) are seen as the pivot of comparative media systems research, however, critical examination of the three models give an indication that they are variants of the four theories of the press.

The polarized pluralist model is characterised by a political context of a state dominated markets, “periods of authoritarianism, strong welfare of state”, “strong role of political parties” with low legal legitimacy of the ruling regime (Hallin & Mancini, 2004: 68). As a result, the media system in such a political context is elite oriented, has weak professionalism due to strong state intervention in media operations. Such a system also has attributes of censorship and harsh deregulation. It can be argued that Hallin and Mancini’s polarized pluralist model is very similar to the authoritarian theory by Seibert et al, (1956) upon critical examination of these characteristics. This is because under the authoritarian theory, the state/regime is superior and therefore, dictates its policy and ideologies to the citizenry through commentary oriented journalism by government officials therefore, leaves no room for professionalism. The regime uses censorship, intimidation, proscription and licensing (harsh deregulation) to prevent the citizens and the press from questioning the

logic behind the actions and inactions of the ruling elitists. Therefore, this model is a variant of the authoritarian theory.

Like their first model, the second model by Hallin and Mancini (2004), democratic corporatist, has similarities of social responsibility theory by Seibert et al (1956). This is because the democratic corporatist model exist in a political environment that technocrat control and libertarianism complements each other in the form of strong public service. Thus to Hallin and Mancini (2004: 53), there is ‘formal integration of social groups into the political process’ (the media is integrated into governance when independent regulatory bodies ensure that the media is free but responsible). Therefore, the media system is such that it frowns on yellow journalism because it is shifted toward “neutral commercial press” (p.67). Based on the characteristics of this model, it can be argued that it is a variant of the social responsibility theory by Seibert et al, (1956).

The political context of Hallin and Mancini’s liberal model has attributes of multi-party system and the decision by the majority of the citizens is given priority. Such a political system is liberal so it is more of privatised / free market and this leads to weak role of the state. The media system in such political environment is autonomous, self-regulated, market dominated broadcasting, has a “strong professional model of broadcast governance” and “neutral commercial press” (Hallin & Mancini, 2004:67). The foregoing is in sync with the libertarian theory propounded by Seibert et al, (1956) because such a media system allows a laissez faire environment that does not restrict media ownership but encourages pluralism and diversity.

The three models by Hallin and Mancin (2004) were and (to an extent) are still seen as the point of reference in comparative media systems research (Aalberg & Curran, 2012; Stromback, Orsten & Aalberg, 2008). However with time, scholars started criticising Hallin and Mancini’s models. The models have been criticised for using only large and rich countries as cases (Norris, 2009), therefore, a reflection asymmetrical western dominance in global academia. This implies that the models do not address the peculiarities of poor countries, therefore, this make the models unsuitable for developing countries like Ghana and Nigeria. Also, Hallin and Mancini (2004) focused on theory building than theory testing and their study lacked standardization of measurement and precise operationalization (Norris, 2011). Bruggerman, Engesser, Buchel and Humprecht (2014) also argue that the selection of cases for their study was unsystematically done. It is important to note that these

flaws have been admitted by the authors in *Introduction* of their study that modified their seminal work to include a wide range of representation of countries. Other scholars have focussed on using one of the models (Curran, Iyengar, Lund & Salovaara-Moing, 2009) in their studies while some departed from the models in their analysis of comparative media systems research (Hardy, 2008).

The authors realised, based on these criticisms, that “instead of putting the four theories of the press to rest”, they should rather modify their models to “become the new four theories of the press” (Hallin & Mancini, 2012: 2). So, they expanded the cases to include countries that represented Africa, Asia, Middle East, Latin America, Eastern Europe and Soviet Union. The authors argue in their modified study that “their four dimensions of comparing media systems can be applied to media systems everywhere” therefore “their models are not difficult to transfer to media systems outside their context” (Hallin & Mancini, 2012:5). However, Bruggerman et al, (2014) discovered that out of their four dimensions of the media, one (role of the state) does not have internal consistency.

Hallin and Mancini (2012:23) acknowledge that there is the need for their models “to be tested by empirical research” because they admit that their modified study “do not cover countries beyond the western world”, as a result, the models “neglect certain categories of comparison that might be decisive in media systems beyond Europe such as media freedom” (Norris as cited by Bruggerman et al, 2014: 1038). Besides, Hallin and Mancini (2004) criticised the inability of the theories of the press to address the peculiarities of different countries yet their modified study also failed to address the peculiarities of non-western countries. This is of importance to this study because it justifies why the theories of the press (rather than the models) should guide this study. Bruggerman et al also note that “limits on news contents (libel, commercial, political and ownership influences) and press freedom as well as their levels of disparities among countries are probably the most important dimensions to distinguish media systems” yet Hallin and Mancini tries to aggregate these attributes into one standardized media dimension: role of the state. This questions the standardization of the dimension because these attributes play out differently in different countries. The foregoing justifies the reason that this study uses theories of the press by Seibert et al (1956) than Hallin and Mancini’s (2012) model of comparative media systems.

2.7 Studies on democracy and press freedom

This section reviews literature on democracy and press freedom. This is because Borden and Abbott (2008) contend that familiarity with literature in a discipline enables a researcher to determine the existing theoretical controversies as well as identify the methodologies employed to gather, analyse and explain data in an investigation. This assertion justifies the need to review literature on the link between democracy and press freedom in Ghana and Nigeria so as to be familiar with the modern trends in democracy and press freedom research. However upon review of literature, findings seem to indicate that studies on democracy and press freedom in Ghana was scant and not easily available. Therefore to obtain enough relevant and appropriate literature for review in this study, available studies on democracy and press freedom in Ghana and Nigeria, as well as similar studies around the globe are used.

In his article, *The Effect of Democracy and Free Press on Corruption: An Empirical Test*, Chowdhury (2004) investigates the link between democracy, press freedom and corruption. Chowdhury tries to establish if democratic societies were less corrupt than non-democratic societies. With the assumption that a thriving democracy and free press can complement and reinforce each other in fight against corruption, the author uses both cross-section and time series data set on corruption, press freedom and democracy from Transparency International, Freedom House and Vanhanen's Democratization Index respectively, to establish whether free press exposes corrupt politicians to voters.

Employing regression analysis, OLS regression, instrumental variable regression and dynamic panel analysis to analyse the data set from 97 countries from the geographical regions of East Asia Pacific; Europe and Central Asia; Latin America and the Caribbean; Middle East and North Africa and the Sub Sahara Africa, Chourdury (2004) establishes that in a strong democracy, a free press was able to fight corruption. His findings show a "powerful and close association between democracy and corruption" (p. 12). Thus he finds that South Asia, the most corrupt region in 2002 has the lowest level of press freedom among the regions while North America, the least corrupt region in that year, has the highest level of press freedom ratings. Again, an outcome of his analysis reveals that Middle East and North Africa had a higher democratic index than Sub Sahara Africa, therefore, its level of corruption was lower than Sub Sahara Africa. The author concludes that "political competition in democratic society and a free press play an important role in reducing

corruption” (p. 27). It is important to note that Choudhury (2004) stresses that since entrenchment of democracy and existence of free press take a while to be realised, the fight against corruption is unlikely to result in dramatic but gradual change.

In a study of repression of press freedom in democratic Nigeria, Akinwale (2010) investigates “the dangers of repression of press freedom” (p. 50). Akinwale anchored his study on the libertarian, social responsibility and development theories. Using survey and in-depth interview, he gathered data from 440 journalists in 16 selected print and electronic media organisations in Lagos and Oyo States of Nigeria to examine the extent public interest is considered in operations of the media and how that contributed to the development of democracy. Analysis of data gathered by Akinwale (2010:56) in his study reveals that “striking a balance between competing concerns (the public right to know and the necessity of political stability/national security) is a major challenge to press organisations in Nigeria. Data gathered also indicate a confirmation by “over 91 per cent of the respondents...that press freedom [is] not fully achieved under any of the democratic dispensations” (p. 65). Also, 68.2 per cent of the respondents are aware of policies that created obstacles to press freedom. The responses from the journalists reveal that “intimidation, harassment and arrest” are used as “tactics of hindrance” by Nigerian government and police (Akinwale, 2010: 65) to inhibit press freedom. Based on his findings, he concludes that “the repression of press freedom has remained widespread even in democratic dispensations and may adversely affect the investment climate in Nigeria” (p. 66). Therefore, he suggests that the “Nigerian political class must accommodate public opinion and press reports on the necessity of responsible governance before taking any decision that may be of public interest” (Akinwale, 2010: 67).

In another study, Imoh (2013) investigates the connection between democracy and press freedom by looking at the problems, challenges and prospects of mass media and entrenchment of democracy in Africa. The author hinges the study on the normative theories of the press and reviews scholarship on democracy in Africa; objectives of mass media in democracies; and mass media and democratic consolidation in Africa. His findings, among others, identify pattern of ownership and control, poor socioeconomic situation, un conducive legal environments and parochial loyalties as the problems facing democracy and press freedom in Africa. As the way forward, he suggests the need for enabling environments that will make the media in Africa “not be merely a mirror of society” that “passively report events (Imoh, 2013: 50). Therefore, he recommends the need for the media

in Africa to be independent and free within the ethics of the profession even when the media are owned by government, private and non-government parties. Also, Imoh (2013:50) stresses the need for the media to “act as the watchdog of society and instigators of positive change”.

Ali (2015) also examines how media ownership interferes with the standard of professional journalism from 2011 to 2012 in some selected countries in Africa. Anchoring the study on the libertarian and social responsibility theories of the press, he compared the role of ownership in media coverage in the African countries with what pertained in the United Kingdom and the United States of America. This is because “a close look at the relationship between democracy and media in countries known to uphold freedom of expression for decades” gives insights on how democracy and press freedom can be entrenched in Africa (Ali, 2015: 4). Findings from the study show that both the government and privately owned media in Africa are used to serve the interest of government and private ownership. He again discovers that regulatory mechanisms to ensure freedom of expression in Africa are not independent from interferences. Therefore, Ali (2015) recommends that dominance of ownership over media coverage in Africa must be avoided.

In another study, Sadrettin, Brayam and Emeagwali (2016) compare the media systems, politics and press freedom in contemporary Russia and Nigeria. According to the authors, the countries are selected because they have practised “autocratic and repressive communist and military regimes” but are currently practising democratic models of governance (Sadrettin et al, 2016: 511). The authors seek to establish if the political systems in the country influence the media directly or indirectly; examine whether interference from the governments, political groups and religious groups in the countries employ legislative tactics and brutal force to repress the media; and to determine if journalists in the countries are forced to self-censor media content as a result of physical insecurity. To be able to carry out the investigation, Sadrettin et al (2016) summarize and analyse a decade (2003 to 2013) of secondary data from the annual press freedom reports from Freedom House and Reporters Without Borders.

Findings from the analysis of Freedom House reports indicate a sharp decline from the ratings of Nigeria from the 49th position in 2003 to 103rd position in 2004. From 2005 to 2011, Nigeria’s ratings gradually declined to 106th position. Though the passage of the FOI law in 2011 reflected in the 2012 gains in the reports (104th position), the gains were lost in

2013 when the country was rated 106th again. Current ratings still places Nigeria at the same position (Freedom House, 2016). As a result, the media in Nigeria have been consistently described by the organisation as partially free for 10 years. The Russian situation seems worse than Nigeria. From 2003 to 2010, the ratings of Russia were poor. Though the country made some gains in 2011, it has continued to decline to 148th position in 2013. Unlike Nigeria, Russia has declined from a partially free state of press freedom to being not free at the end of the decade. Similar findings on the state of press freedom in the countries are realised by the authors from the reports of Reporters Without Borders.

The authors conclude in their study that the past and present histories of the “social political situation in the countries are the main factors that shape the media systems in the countries” (p. 515). Again, they note that governments in the countries have contributed to the development of the media by putting in place policies that ensure numerical increase in in media organisations. However, this has not transitioned into easy accessibility and diversity of content because of the “commercialised nature of the Russian and Nigerian media (Sadrettin et al, 2016:515). From their analysis, the authors also conclude that the countries have serious challenges with the implementation of the provisions on press freedom. To Sadrettin et al (2016), the “laws which protect the press only remain on the pages of the constitution” but “never implemented” (p. 515).

In an attempt to investigate the implications of media ownership and independence for democratic governance in the Fourth Republic of Ghana, Shardow and Asare (2016) examine the interplay between the media and their performance of the watchdog role in Ghana. The authors employ qualitative case study approach to establish the “extent to which journalists and media organisations [are] independent from ownership structure” (p. 179). Focusing on two critical periods in the Fourth Republic (2004 -2008 and 2008-2012), Shardow and Asare used multiple methods (content analysis, interviews and document analysis) to compare the performance of the government-owned and privately owned newspapers in carrying out their watchdog role. The National Media Policy of Ghana, the 1992 Constitution, the Inter-Ministerial Report on Ghana Telecom-Vodafone sale, courts documents on Mabey and Johnson bribery allegations are reviewed as well as newspaper articles on coverage of the controversies in two government-owned and two privately owned dailies to establish ownership influence over coverage of the controversies. Again, eight journalists (senior political reporters and editors of the four newspapers) are interviewed by

the authors to “ascertain the conditions under which they performed their watchdog roles (Shardow & Asare, 2016: 184).

Their findings from the document analysis reveal that “the legal and regulatory framework of media freedom in Ghana is in line with the best international practices” (Shardow & Asare, 2016: 184). This is because the provisions on press freedom and the regulatory function of National Media Commission “serve as a buffer to prevent government and other political forces from interfering in the work of particularly the state-owned (government-owned) media (p. 184). Another discovery is that since ownership of the private newspapers are aligned to the two main opposition parties in Ghana (NDC and NPP), the organisations face “some institutional challenges which impede the journalists from embarking on the watchdog role” (p. 185). As a result, data reveals that ownership of the newspapers has strong influence over the content of the four newspapers in the coverage of the controversies.

Again, Shardow and Asare (2016:187) discover that all the newspapers do not “cover the controversies objectively because there [are] no scores of factuality in the two publicly owned newspapers”, and “low percentages” of factuality in the privately owned newspapers. Therefore, the authors conclude that the government-owned newspapers “appear not to have served the interest of the public in the issues under investigation” and this situation weakens “the claim that the media is a public trust which must serve the public interest” (p. 193). They sum up their findings by noting that “legally, conditions of press freedom exist” in Ghana “and there was no evidence of physical coercive measures to frighten journalists in their watchdog role over government” (p. 194). However, there are factors “both tangible and intangible which impede the media from exercising their watchdog role over government effectively” (Shardow & Asare (2016:194).

A critical look at the reviewed articles reveals that some of the authors did not explicitly anchor their studies on theories. However, authors who hinged their studies on theories dominantly employed the normative theories of the press (especially libertarian and social responsibility theories). It is important that researchers anchor their studies on theories because they are considered to be the “established knowledge of the discipline that has been arrived at through empirical research” (Mbaka and Soola, 2015:197), therefore, a theory is a necessity in any research. This is because theories present a systematic way of understanding issues under investigation.

Findings from the review also reveal document analysis as a principal method of research in the study of the link between democracy and press freedom. This is because most the studies employ this method. However, few authors use document analysis with other methods in multi-methods approach to examine democracy and press freedom in their studies. None of the reviewed studies employed the mixed method approach. This approach is highly recommended because triangulation of research methods ensures validity of the data collected on the same topic.

Again, it is discovered that most of the studies used secondary data in their investigations. Only few number of studies reviewed use primary data or both primary and secondary data. When studying a complex concept like press freedom (Nwanne, 2014), data from secondary sources may not be enough to enable researcher to investigate a phenomenon multi-dimensionally. As a result, data from both sources offer better insights.

Descriptive method of analysis is dominantly used in the review but inferential analysis is also used. Each of the methods of analysis has its own strength and weaknesses. While inferential analysis enables researchers to generalise from quantified data, it is unable to outline the motives behind the numbers. In the same vein, descriptive analysis outlines the motives behind phenomena but it is unable to allow researcher generalise. Therefore, triangulation of data analysis addresses the pitfalls in the two methods of analysis.

The review of studies on press freedom in this section also indicates that most authors considered the state of press freedom in a country or two/more countries. The studies seemed not to have questioned or explained the disparities in press freedom levels in democratic societies. This necessitates the need to explore explanations behind disparities in press freedom in democratic societies. In conclusion, the use of mixed-method in research seems to be the best alternative in the traditions of research methodology. This is because it caters for the strength and weaknesses in quantitative and qualitative studies. Thus, such an approach enables a researcher to gather not only elaborate data on an issue under investigation but it also affords researchers the opportunity to subject data gathered to robust analysis.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The chapter focuses on the methods and techniques used to carry out the study. The research design, methods used in the different phases of the study, population, sample sizes and sampling techniques employed in the study are also discussed in the chapter.

3.1 Research design

The study was a small-N comparative case study. This design was adopted because it afforded the researcher the opportunity to observe the cases multi-dimensionally. Specifically, it was a cross-case spatial comparison design. According to Gerring (2007), cross-case spatial comparison is a design that is adopted when a phenomenon is being studied across two or more cases/locations that share in common every material feature except the variation in that phenomenon. Borrowing from pure experimental language, Gerring (2007) explains that the process of selecting those two or more cases is a way of holding constant the features that matter to the phenomenon of interest. Levy (2008) affirms Gerring's assertion by noting that instead of experimental manipulation or partial correlation, comparative case study ensures that potential confounding variables are controlled through careful selecting and matching of cases. He further noted that the logic of inference in comparable case study is similar to statistical method in spite of the difference in research designs.

The thrust of the research was to investigate factors leading to the disparities in the press freedom levels in democratic Ghana and Nigeria despite the similar political and press histories of the countries. This was because the theory that democracy led to free press seemed to explain the situation in Ghana while it was unable to explain the situation in Nigeria. In the context of this study, the two cases (Ghana and Nigeria) shared in common every material feature: similar political and press histories, successful democracies, legal and statutory provisions that guarantee press freedom, unions of journalists among others. Yet, there was disparity in the phenomenon of interest - which was their unequal levels of press freedom. Therefore, the thrust of the study informed the choice of the design.

3.2 Research method

The study employed mixed-method sequential explanatory approach (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Creswell and Plano Clark as cited in Doyle, Brady & Bryne, 2009) in order “to achieve a more comprehensive, elaborated and nuanced view” (Stoller, Webster, McCormick, Hund, Perzynski, Kanuch, Thomas, Kercher & Dawson, 2009:66) on the causes of the differences in the levels of press freedom in Ghana and Nigeria. Mixed-method sequential explanatory approach implies that two or more research methods are logically or sequentially used to investigate a phenomenon. In the study, three research methods (survey, document analysis and in-depth interview) were used in different phases to examine patterns of press freedom in the countries.

Mixed-method sequential explanatory approach enabled the researcher to employ triangulation in the study. Triangulation is “the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon” (Dezin as cited in Johnson, Onwuegbuzie & Turner, 2007: 114) to validate data from two or more methods through cross verification. Thus, findings of one method are used to confirm or refute the findings of another method when different methods are used to study the same phenomenon. In the context of this study, this method enabled the researcher to first employ methodological triangulation (specifically sequential methodological triangulation) then data triangulation. To Morse (1991), sequential methodological triangulation is “utilised when the results of one approach are necessary for planning the next approach” (as cited in Johnson et al, 2007: 115). In this study, the outcome of the survey informed the selecting of the type of documents analysed at the second phase of the study, and the outcome of the findings from the survey and document analysis also informed the designing of the in-depth interview guide at the final phase of the study. Data triangulation, according to Johnson et al (2007) is the use of variety of data sources in a study to validate claims from the various sources. Data triangulation was employed in this study to ensure that converged and corroborated findings on the state of press freedom in Ghana and Nigeria and reasons for the state of press freedom in each country were established.

3.2.1 The four phases of the research method

At the preliminary phase of the study, document analysis on the trends in freedom of expression and of media and the defining indicators of media development (UNESCO,

2014) were carried out. Also, the methodologies employed by Freedom House, Reporters Without Borders and African Media Barometer when assessing press freedom in the countries were also analysed (Freedom House, 2016; Reporters Without Borders, 2016; African Media Barometer, 2015; 2013) . Together with literature reviewed, this enabled the researcher to be abreast of the existing trends and indicators of press freedom and the media landscape in the countries as well as to be informed on how to design a questionnaire to assess press freedom in the countries.

3.2.2 Phase one: Survey

An analytical survey was conducted at the first phase of the study. To Wimmer and Dominick (2011:185) “analytical survey attempts to describe and explain why situations exists”. They further note that the outcomes from analytical survey “allow researchers to examine the interrelationships among variables and to develop explanatory inferences” (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011: 185). Therefore, the survey was carried out to enable the researcher to generate data on the perception of journalists about the state of press freedom in their countries, as well as the factors responsible for that state of press freedom. Thus, the generated data enabled the researcher to establish the prevailing political and media landscapes in Ghana and Nigeria so as to understand reasons for the consistently different levels of press freedom.

3.2.3 Phase two: Document analysis

At the second phase, a document analysis was undertaken to specifically generate supplementary data to affirm or refute findings of the survey. Bowen (2009: 28) has noted that “document analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents...in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding and develop empirical knowledge”. Thus, through an examination of gathered data from different approaches, “the researcher can corroborate findings across data sets and thus reduce the impact of potential biases that can exist in a single study” (p. 28). Bowen is of the view that the method is “used in combination with other qualitative research methods as a means of triangulation” (p. 28). In this study, however, the method was used in combination with a quantitative research method (survey) for triangulation purpose.

3.2.4 Phase three: Triangulation of Survey and Document Analysis

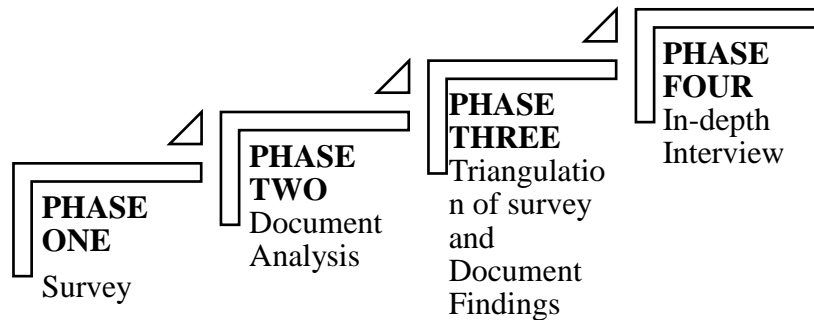
At the third phase, the outcomes from the survey and the document analysis were triangulated to establish the similarities and the differences in the factors responsible for the state of press freedom in each country. This ensured that only genuinely established factors were identified for the next phase of the study. Again, it gave better explanation on the state of press freedom in the countries and the factors responsible for the differences in the levels of press freedom in the countries.

The outcome of the triangulation informed the designing of the in-depth interview guide for the final phase of the study to probe for more data to confirm and clarify the state of press freedom in the countries and the reasons for that state of press freedom. It also ensured that converged and corroborated data on the state of press freedom in the two countries and the explanation for that state of press freedom were gathered from the different research methods.

3.2.5 Phase four: In-depth Interview

The outcome of the integration of findings from the survey and document analysis was then used to prepare the in-depth interview guide for the final phase of the study. An in-depth interview, according to Wimmer and Dominick (2011:139), provides a “detailed background about the reasons respondents give specific answers” so that researchers are able to gather “elaborate data concerning respondents’ opinions, values, motivations, recollections, experiences and feelings”. Thus, the method affords a researcher the opportunity to probe for detailed information that further explains an issue under investigation. As a result, an in-depth interview was conducted to probe for information from experts on the state of press freedom in the countries, factors responsible for that state of press freedom and how the factors identified affected or improved press freedom in the countries.

Figure 3.1: Mixed-Method Sequential Explanatory Approach



By this design, the researcher was able to seek elaboration and clarification of the results from the three methods.

3.3 Population(s)

The population for the survey was all the journalists in the print and electronic media organisations in Accra Metropolitan Area of Greater Accra Region of Ghana, as well as the Lagos – Ibadan axis in Nigeria. The population for the document analysis was the legal and statutory document of the countries and available records of violations of media freedom in the countries under the Fourth Republic. For the in-depth interview, the population was editors, media owners or people in management positions in the print and electronic media organisations in the countries as well as executives of professional associations of journalists and lecturers in Communication and Media Studies Departments of tertiary institutions in the two countries.

3.4 Sample sizes

From the perspective of case study, two cases were selected: Ghana and Nigeria. This number was adjudged to be adequate because comparative case study as a design worked “effectively with a small number of comparable cases” (Lijphart as cited by Levy, 2008:10). Besides review of literature seem to indicate that Ghana and Nigeria were the most appropriate cases for this kind of inquiry. This was because they had many common features except the variation in press freedom levels.

For the survey, a sample size of 400 (200 respondents from each country) was employed and the choice of the sample size was informed by Wimmer and Dominick (2011). The authors opined that “no single sample size formular or method [was] available for every research method or statistical procedure” (p. 102). However, they outlined “few general principles in determining an acceptable sample size” (p. 103) and one of the principles outlined, that this study adapted, was to use “available information in published research” (p. 104). They contended that if a sample size used in “a similar research [indicated] that a representative sample of” a certain figure “[had] been used with reliable results” (p.104), then a larger sample than that figure was needless. Therefore, this sample size was used for the study because Akinwale (2010) used similar sample size to establish the state of press freedom in Nigeria.

For the document analysis, the sample size was 20 legal and statutory provisions on press freedom and 66 cases of media freedom violations. Thus, it comprised Articles 21 (a) and (b), and 12 Articles from chapter 12 of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana (14 provisions), Sections 22, 39 and 40 of the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria, Section one of the FOI law of Nigeria (4 provisions), the National Media Policy of Ghana, the National Broadcasting Commission Act of Nigeria, and 26 and 40 records of violations of media freedom in the countries in 2014 and 2015 respectively by MFWA.

For the in-depth interview (IDI), 14 people were interviewed: 7 from each country. Thus, a total of 6 editors, 4 media owners/people in management positions, 2 executives of the main professional associations and 2 lecturers from departments of communication and media studies in tertiary institutions constituted the sample size for the IDI.

3.5.0 Sampling techniques

The study employed stratified, simple random, purposive and available sampling techniques. Purposive sampling was used for case selection, period of study and in-depth interview, purposive and available techniques were employed for the document analysis while stratified, purposive and random sampling techniques were used for the survey. A summary of how the sampling techniques were used in the study were as follows:

3.5.1 Sampling Technique for Case Selection, Period of Study and In-depth Interview.

Ghana and Nigeria were purposively selected as cases for the study. Seawright and Gerring (2008) have claimed that the justification for purposive selection in comparative case study seems strong despite the fact that lack of randomization and pragmatic selection of cases seem insufficient. Thus, purposive selection and small-N samples cannot result in generalisation of findings but they enable “researchers to choose the most appropriate cases for a given research strategy which may be quantitative or qualitative (Seawright & Gerring, 2008: 296). Citing other studies (King, Keohaane & Verba, 1994:124-128; Collier et al., 2004; Gering, 2007:87-88), Levy (2008) notes that “there is a consensus that random selection...generate serious biases in small-N research, and that the analysis of a small number of cases requires the careful, theory-guided selection of non-random cases” (p. 8). Therefore, Ghana and Nigeria were purposively considered to be the most appropriate cases for the research design because they had similar post-independence political and press histories but different levels of press freedom.

The year 2014 and 2015 were also selected purposively as the period of study for the document analysis because the period marked the end of MDGs and the beginning of Post-2015 Development Agenda. As a result, UNESCO called for debate from supporters of press freedom to ensure that a “full recognition of media’s significance will find its way into the final post-2015 Development Agenda (UNESCO, 2014b).

Finally, purposive sampling technique was employed in the in-depth interview to select interviewees for the interview. In each country, three most experienced editors and two media owners/managers of the selected print and electronic media organisations in the countries were interviewed, as well as, a senior officer from the main recognised journalist association and a lecturer from a Department of Communication and Media Studies in a tertiary institution. The sampling technique was employed because it enabled the researcher to select interviewees with expertise on the issue under investigations. This afforded the researcher the opportunity to probe for appropriate data from experts on the phenomenon under investigation in the countries.

3.5.2 Sampling Technique for the Document Analysis

Purposive and available sampling techniques were used to select the documents for the document analysis. This was because firstly, findings from the survey informed the selection of documents analysed as it was carried out to affirm or refute the survey findings. Secondly, available provisions on press freedom in the purposively selected documents were used for the analysis.

3.5.3 Sampling Techniques for the Survey

The survey employed purposive, stratified and random sampling techniques. The geographical locations for the survey and the kind of respondents in each selected organisation were purposively. The Accra Metropolitan Area in Ghana and the Lagos – Ibadan axis in Nigeria were selected as geographical locations for the survey. These locations were selected due to the high concentration of media organisations in these areas as well as their cosmopolitan nature - with a mixed array journalists from cross sections of the Ghanaian and Nigerian societies. Therefore, they presented an appropriate population to obtain a true representation of the sample from. Again, this sampling technique was used to select the kind of respondents that the questionnaires would be administered to: journalists with close to five or more years of experience. This was because Akinwale (2010:58) has noted that such journalists “were considered as having sufficient experience and understanding of the intricacies of press freedom [in] democratic dispensations”.

Stratified and random sampling techniques were also used to select the types of media organisations to ensure that the various strata in the leading media organisations (under the scope of study) were selected. Types of media organisations were selected first, based on stratification of the media in the scope of this study, namely radio, television and newspapers. Then six leading organisations in each stratum were selected. Finally, random sampling without replacement was used to select 11 willing respondents from each organisation. The number six and 11 were randomly selected, through balloting, to represent the number of media organisation in each stratum and the number of respondents in each organisation respectively. So, six organisations from each stratum (of the media in the scope of study) and 11 respondents in each organisation (from a stratum) were selected. Therefore, a total of 18 leading newspapers, radio and television organisations and 198 willing respondents with five or more years of experience from the 18 organisations in each location

were selected. In all, 396 respondents from 38 media organisations in Ghana and Nigeria were selected for the survey.

Thus in Ghana, the six leading newspapers (Afro-Barometer Ghana, 2013), six leading television stations (Adoi-Elaigwu, 2016) and six radio outlets (Baiku, 2015) were selected (see appendix 3a). In the same vein, the six leading newspapers (Nigeria Finder, 2016), six leading television stations (Adoi-Elaigwu, 2016) and six leading radio organisations (Onyango, 2015) were selected in Nigeria (see appendix 3b). In each organisation, 11 willing journalists with close to five or more years of experience were randomly selected without placement. The list of employed journalists with five or more years of experience in each organisation was used as the sample frame.

3.6 Research instruments

The study employed questionnaire, document analysis and in-depth interview guides as research instruments. A questionnaire was designed and administered to gather data on the perception of journalists on the state of press freedom in each country as well as the factors responsible for that state of press freedom (see appendix 2). Questions were framed with the indicators of press freedom (UNESCO, 2014) and the understanding that democracy leads to a free press in mind. The questionnaire was made up of 60 focussed and three open ended questions on the state and conditions for media freedom, and factors responsible for that state of press freedom. The questionnaire catered for different issues including the respondents' knowledge of the indicators of press freedom: security of journalists, enabling media environment (legal and statutory provisions and adherence to them), political, ownership and commercial influence over media content, state of press freedom in the country, factors responsible for that state of press freedom and their demographic profiles.

A document analysis guide (see appendix 4) based on the factors identified in the survey was developed and used to affirm or refute the findings of the survey at the document analysis phase. An interview guide (see appendix 5) was also developed from the outcome of the triangulation of the survey and document analysis, and it was used to direct the interview. From the guide, the researcher drew possible questions and followed up with other questions from the responses of the interviewees when necessary.

3.7.0 Validity and reliability

To ensure validity and reliability of the study, the following measures were put in place at different phases of the study:

3.7.1 Survey: The researcher used a pilot study and double blind technique to ensure the validity and reliability of the instrument and gathered data. A pilot study was conducted to pre-test the questionnaire before the actual administration. This was because Wimmer and Dominick (2011:200) had noted that it was “the best way to discover whether a research instrument [was] adequately designed”. Therefore, 10 copies of the questionnaire were administered to ten post-graduate students (who are practising journalists) in the Department of Communication and Media Studies at University of Education, Winneba (Ghana) and the Department of Communication and Language Arts at University of Ibadan, Ibadan (Nigeria). Afterwards, discussions on their understanding of the questionnaire were carried out. This enabled the researcher to assess the suitability of the questionnaire for generating relevant data for the study and to make changes where necessary.

The possibility of respondents’ reactivity (during actual administration of the questionnaire) was addressed through the double blind technique (Wimmer and Dominick, 2011). Thus, the research assistants and the respondents in each country were not informed that it was a comparative study, therefore to an extent, possible response biases were catered for. In Ghana, the period of administration of the questionnaire also ensured validity and reliability of data since 2016 was an electioneering year. Thus, experience had shown that the watchdog role of the media usually heightened in the build up to elections just as the zeal of incumbents and aspiring representatives to prevent the media from exposing their short comings or wrong doings. This implied that there was the possibility of biased content from journalists since administering of questionnaire at that period (serious campaign period) could be seen as a trap by people in power to victimise them. To avoid this, the questionnaire was administered in June 2016 before the start of intense political campaign. Thus, according to Amponsah (2012), the last four months to elections in Ghana (September to early December) marked the beginning, climax and the end of serious political campaigns. In Nigeria, the questionnaire was administered in August, 2016.

3.7.2 Document Analysis: By using the findings from the survey to form a guide for the analysis, it prevented biased selection of documents. Thus, the findings of the survey pre-

determined documents to be selected and this enabled the researcher to double check the claims made by the respondents. The data was also gathered from credible documents. This enhanced the credibility of data collected for the study.

3.7.3 In-depth Interview: The outcome of the triangulation of findings from the survey and document analysis gave direction to the questions in the in-depth interview guide. This, to some extent, standardized the questions and ensured that the data gathered by this instrument centred on the thrust of the study and enabled the researcher to purposively select interviewees who were experts in the factors identified. Again, the double blind technique was used to control reactivity of interviewees. Finally, the issue of response bias from the interviewees in Ghana (the proposed period for the interview fell within the peak of the campaign) was catered for by conducting the interview after the elections and the inauguration of the elected president were over in Ghana.

3.8.0 Methods of data collection

As indicated previously, the investigation was a small-N comparative case study and a mixed method sequential explanatory approach was used by the researcher to investigate the causes of consistently varying levels of press freedom in Ghana and Nigeria despite the similar political and press histories. Therefore, survey, document analysis and in-depth interviews were logically used to collect data to establish the state of press freedom in the countries, to identify the factors responsible for that state of press freedom and to examine how the identified factors improved or affected press freedom in the countries. The procedures followed at the various phases of the study to gather relevant data for the study had been discussed in the following sections:

3.8.1 Survey

The administering of 396 copies of the questionnaire was carried out by the researcher and the two paid research assistants. The respondents were given two weeks duration to be used in answering the questionnaire and the assistants requested for two weeks to retrieve it from the respondents. The researcher monitored and followed up on the progress of questionnaire

retrieval through regular telephone calls to the research assistants whilst they (research assistants) did the same through regular visits to the organisations. After two weeks, considerable portion of the questionnaire was retrieved in Nigeria. From the 200 copies of the questionnaire administered, a total of 146 were filled and returned, therefore, recording a 73 per cent response rate. However, the retrieval of the questionnaire in Ghana took six weeks. A total of 143 copies of the questionnaire was filled and returned. Therefore, a 71.5 per cent response rate was recorded in Ghana.

3.8.2 Document Analysis

Based on the insights from the analysis of the questionnaires, relevant documents were selected for analysis. The outcome of the survey indicated that the media in the countries were partially free due to insecurity, political, ownership and commercial control as well as some shortcomings in the provisions and the implementation of the existing provisions. The outcome informed the designing of a guide for the analysis. It also informed the need to elicit explicit evidence from the documents. Therefore, Articles/Sections on press freedom in the constitutions, media policies and records of violations against the media in the countries were carried out to corroborate the findings of the survey. Selected documents were first skimmed then intensively read to combine the processes of coding and thematic analysis. Thus, data from document analysis were organised into categories that related to the research questions, then recognised patterns within the data that emerged as themes were organised as categories for thematic analysis (Bowen, 2009).

3.8.3 In-depth Interview

In each country, seven in-depth interviews with selected individuals were conducted. The interviews were conducted between January to March, 2017. The duration for each interview was about 35 minutes on the average. The interview guide was used to direct the interviews. However, follow up questions based on some of the responses given by interviewees were also used. Data from the interviews were recorded and transcribed. Data from the transcribed interviews were cleaned up before they were coded. The recognised patterns within the data that emerged as themes were organised as categories that related to the research questions for analysis (Bowen, 2009).

3.9 Methods of data analysis

The study adopted inferential and descriptive methods of data analysis for the quantitative and qualitative data respectively. Data from the survey was analysed by paired samples t-test and descriptive statistics (percentages). For the analysis of data from the document analysis, the analytical procedure in documents analysis as proposed by Bowen (2009) was adopted. Thus, after finding the needed documents, the researcher selected and appraised sections that were pertinent to the identified factors in the survey and research questions. Through analysis, codes were identified, categorised and integrated to establish the similarities and differences in the emerging themes. The outcomes were organised in major themes and categories. The in-depth interviews were analysed through an inductive approach. Texts were carefully read and coded into categories. Emerging themes/patterns were then identified and the relationships between the themes were analysed for explanations. It should be noted that based on an assurance of confidentiality to the interviewees, neither their names nor that of their organisations were mentioned in the analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the data analysis and discussion of the findings. It focuses on the analysis of data from the survey, the document analysis and the in-depth interview. Both quantitative and qualitative data on the state of press freedom, factors responsible for that state and how the identified factors affect or improve the levels of press freedom in Ghana and Nigeria are presented and discussed in this chapter.

4.1 Demographics of the journalists from Ghana and Nigeria

Table 4.1: Demographic information of journalists from Ghana and Nigeria

Variable	Response Category				
Sex	Male	Female			
Ghana	78 (54.5%)	65 (45.5%)			
Nigeria	104(71.2%)	42(28.8%)			
Age	20-30 years	31-40 years	41-50 years	51-60 years	Above 61 years
Ghana	96 (67.1%)	37 (25.9%)	8 (5.6%)	2 (1.4%)	0 (0%)
Nigeria	50(34.3%)	51(34.9%)	38(26%)	7(4.8%)	0(0%)
Education Qualification Attained	Certificate	Diploma	Bachelor's Degree	Master's Degree	PhD
Ghana	14 (9.8%)	37 (25.9%)	80 (55.9%)	12 (8.4%)	0(0%)
Nigeria	17 (11.7%)	15(10.2%)	76(52%)	36(24.7%)	2(1.4%)
Years of Experience in Journalism	5-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	Above 20 years	
Ghana	120 (83.9%)	15 (10.5%)	6 (4.2%)	2(1.4%)	
Nigeria	90 (61.7%)	28(19.1%)	19(13%)	9(6.2%)	

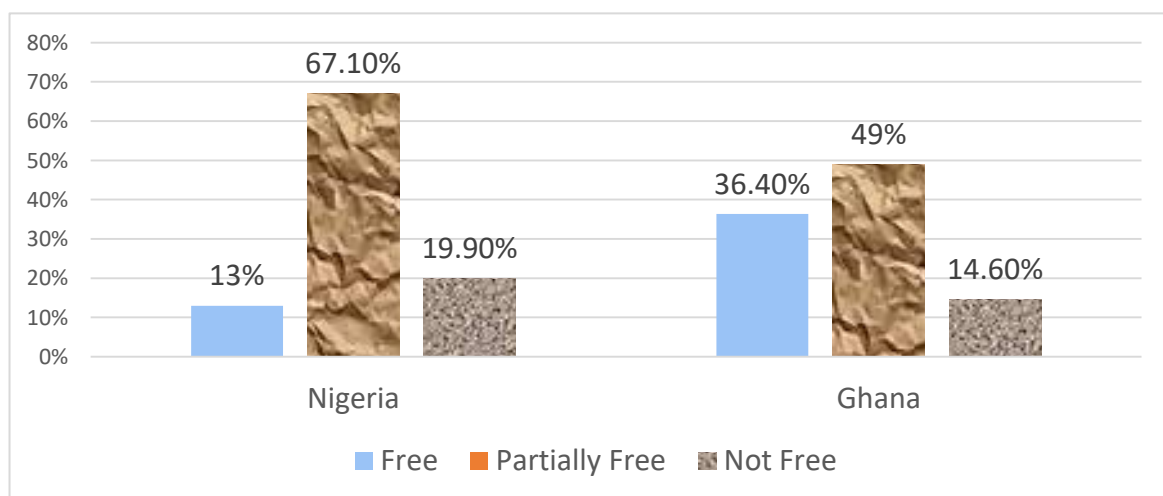
Table 4.1 contains four demographic variables of the sampled journalists. Most of the journalists from Ghana (54.5%) and Nigeria (71.2%) who participated in the study were males. Findings about their age level indicated that majority of the respondents were between the ages of 20 to 30 and 31 to 40. Thus, over a half of the journalists from Ghana (67.1%) were within 20 and 30 years while over a quarter (34.9%) of the Nigerian

journalists were between 31 to 40 years. The highest qualification obtained by most of the respondents in the two countries was bachelor's degree. In this regard, 55.9% of participating journalists from Ghana indicated that they had first degree while 52% of journalists from Nigeria chose the same qualification. It was also discovered that majority of the journalists from Ghana (83.9%) had five to ten years working experience while over half of the journalists from Nigeria (61.7%) had same years of experience in the profession.

4.2.0 Research question one: To what extent is there a difference in the press freedom levels of Ghana and Nigeria?

To be able to determine the differences in the levels of press freedom in the two countries, the state of press freedom in each country was first established before the comparison to establish the differences.

Figure 4.1: Journalists' Opinion on the state of press freedom in Ghana and Nigeria



Gathered data in figure 4.1 showed that over half of the journalists in Nigeria (67%) described the state of press freedom in their country as partially free while a little under half of the respondents from Ghana (49%) subscribed to the same view. However, about one third of the journalists from Ghana (36.4%) noted that their press was free. This was against a little over one tenth (13%) of the sample from Nigeria who shared the same opinion. By comparison of the results, the percentages for the perceptions on free and partially free state of press freedom in Ghana were closer (49%:36.4%) whilst that of Nigeria were more apart

(67%:13%). From the viewpoints of the journalists, the state of press freedom in Ghana was better than that of Nigeria even though both were partially free.

To test for the extent of differences in the states of press freedom in the countries, the study hypothesizes that:

H₁: There is a significant difference in the levels of press freedom in Ghana and Nigeria.

Table 4.2: Differences in the levels of press freedom in Ghana and Nigeria

Paired Samples Statistics					
Sample		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Sample 1	State of Press Freedom Ghana	8.0699	143	2.05779	.17208
Sample 2	State of Press Freedom Nigeria	6.7483	143	2.19304	.18339

Paired Samples Test								
Paired Differences						t	df	Sig.
Pair 1	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
State of Press Freedom in Ghana and Nigeria	-1.32168	2.98258	.24942	-1.81473	-.82863	-5.299	142	.000

The paired samples t-test results in table 4.2 clearly indicate, the mean, that the state of press freedom in Ghana was better than Nigeria. Findings also establish that there was a significant difference in the state of press freedom in the two countries. This is noted at M=-1.32168, SD=2.98258, t=-5.299, p<.000 (2-tailed level). Therefore, the alternate hypothesis is accepted.

This finding from the survey on the state of press freedom in the countries was affirmed in the documents analysis. Analyses of the legal and statutory provisions of press freedom in the two countries also indicated that though the documents provided for media freedom, there were some differences in the provisions. Thus, the constitutions and other statutory documents of the countries had differences in their provisions.

For instance, the Ghanaian Constitution gave prominence to the key contribution of the media towards democracy in the country. It dedicated a whole chapter (Chapter 12) with 12

Articles on the freedom and independence of the media. It also provided for the enjoyment of double freedom for Ghanaian journalists because they were entitled to freedom of expression as their fundamental human right and an additional freedom by the virtue of their profession as journalists. Article 21(a) of the 1992 Constitution states that “[a]ll persons shall have the right to freedom of speech and expression, which shall include freedom of the press and other media” (1992 Constitution of Ghana, p. 25). Under chapter 12 of the same constitution, Article 162 Clause One again declares that the “[f]reedom and independence of the media are hereby guaranteed” (1992 Constitution of Ghana, p 74) and Clause Four of the same article insulates editors, publishers and other institutions of mass media from governmental control or from harassment or from being penalized for editorial opinion or media content. Article 165 explicitly states that “[f]or the avoidance of doubt, the provisions in this chapter (thus Article 162) shall not be taken to limit the enjoyment of the fundamental human rights and freedoms guaranteed under chapter five of this constitution” (1992 Constitution of Ghana, p. 74). This implied that the provision in Article 162 was additional to the provision in Article 21(a) for journalists.

Though Ghana has no FOI law, these and other provisions in the 1992 Constitution do not only support and protect press freedom but also provide media freedom that is reasonably acceptable in a democracy. Dzathor in the 2012 Media Sustainability Index on Ghana has noted that “these constitutional provisions satisfy international requirements for free flow, expression and dissemination of news and opinions”. Dzathor further adds that “the Ghanaian media are perceived as the most unrestricted on the African continent, as they often carry criticisms of government policies without fear or favour” (IREX, 2012:177). Thus, Article 162 Clause Four emboldens the media to enjoy the freedoms guaranteed the media because they are assured of protection and have grounds to seek redress should they be harassed for their content.

In Nigeria, journalists enjoyed the same freedom of expression as any citizen. They were not accorded any additional freedom for the sake of their profession like their Ghanaian counterparts. Section 39 (1) under Chapter Four of the 1999 Constitution states that “[e]very person shall be entitled to freedom of expression, including freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart ideas and information without interference” (1999 Constitution of Nigeria, p. 24) and Section 22 obligates the media to hold government accountable to the citizenry. These were the only constitutional provision that was close to guaranteeing the freedom of the press. Thus, freedom of press was an extension of the provision on

fundamental human right of freedom of expression as guaranteed at Section 39 (1) of the Nigerian Constitution under fundamental human rights and freedoms. This does not mean that freedom of the press is not guaranteed by the Nigerian Constitution. This is because to UNESCO (2014:7), “press freedom is a corollary of the general right to freedom of expression”. Also, Nigeria has a FOI law and provisions in Section 1 of the law ensure easy access to information. As a result, Alaka stressed that these provisions “protect free speech and access to information” in Nigeria (IREX, 2012:315).

Comparison of document analysis results on the provisions that promote and protect press freedom in the two countries showed that Ghana had more constitutional provisions and no FOI law but Nigeria had less constitutional provisions and a FOI law. Again, the provisions in Ghana gave more emphasis on freedom to their press than that of Nigeria. Thus, the provisions in the Ghanaian Constitution repeatedly ensured that freedom of the press was guaranteed (Articles 21 (a), 162 (1) and 165). As a result, Ghana fared better than Nigeria on UNESCO’s indicator of legal guarantee of press freedom under the angle of freedom. This finding is in affirms the claim by Shardow and Asare (2016:184) that the “legal and regulatory framework of media freedom in Ghana is in line with the best international practices”. This might justify the established differences in the state of press freedom from survey findings.

In addition, Ghana has a unified national media policy that directs the operations of the media. The policy seeks to “promote and ensure a free, independent, dynamic and public-spirited media that will provide access to all ... to participate fully, freely and creatively at community, national and global levels” (Ghana National Media Policy, n d:2). Also, the National Media Commission regulates activities of the media in the country while the National Communications Authority is in charge of the allocation and regulation of licenses and frequencies. Nigeria also has the 1990 National Communication Policy, National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) Act and National Press Council (NPC) Law (CAP N128) among others that designate specific institutions to regulate and guide the operations of the media in the country. The media laws and policies of Nigeria promote and protect freedom of the press and ensure that positive aspects of national values and image are maintained.

Comparison of the media laws and policies in Ghana and Nigeria indicated that the media policies of both countries are against monopoly of ownership – concentration of media organisations in the hands of few powerful and influential people in the society. Both

countries also encourage more local media content. This finding show that by their media policies, the two countries fared better on indicator of plurality of ownership structure under UNESCO's angle of pluralism.

In Ghana, the NMC is in charge of regulating both the print and electronic media and the NCA is tasked to grant licenses and regulate frequencies to the electronic media but in Nigeria, one body, thus the NBC, is responsible for regulating the operations of the broadcast media and recommending applications to be granted license by the President. This role of only recommending but not issuing license affects the total autonomy of the commission in regulating the media in Nigeria. The print media was supposed to be regulated by the NPC but it had not been able to effectively perform its regulatory role because the Act was not accepted by journalists on grounds that its regulatory functions were prescribed by the then government of day so the commission was not self-regulatory. This might justify the reason that the print media in Nigeria had been largely free from governmental interference than the broadcast media.

Moreover, while the NMC in Ghana is solely funded by consolidated fund, the NBC in Nigeria is partly funded by the government. Though the NMC is responsible for the appointments of its staff in consultation with Public Services Commission just like the NBC, the fact that NMC is funded by consolidated fund makes it more autonomous from governmental control than the NBC (which is partly funded by government). Again, the composition of the NMC favours the media but that of the NBC does not. Out of the 18 members of the NMC, five of the members are from the media industry, therefore, a high representation of the interest of the media industry but from the 12 members of NBC, only one member is from the media industry so less representation of the interest of the media.

These established differences in the operations of the regulatory bodies of the media in the countries made the regulatory situation in Ghana better than that of Nigeria. This is because even though the media policies in the countries provide that the media regulatory bodies in the two countries are funded through license fees, grants and other industry charges, the commission to regulate the broadcast media in Nigeria had not been weaned from the President so there was room for possible direct interference in the affairs of the commission. These show that Ghana fared better on the indicator of autonomy of regulatory body under the angle of independence.

The foregoing are in consonance with findings from the interviews in the countries. Six out of the seven interviewees in Ghana noted that the Ghanaian media were free. So, the Chief-Editor of a radio station in Ghana confirmed this in an interview by claiming that the press in Ghana was one of the best press systems in Africa, if not in the world. She then supports this claim with an argument that the state of press freedom in the country

...boils down to the recognition that [the] 1992 Constitution and other statutory provisions give to the freedom of expression and also of the media. With the promulgation of the Fourth Republican Constitution, we [Ghanaians] have realized that for us to properly practice and enhance our democracy, we need to give room for the media and for journalists to do their work properly (IDI, Ghana).

In Nigeria, six out of the seven interviewees agreed that their media were partially free. An interviewee supports his claim of the Nigerian press being partially free with an argument that

...in one aspect of the press which is the print media, there is not much of regulation regarding government regulation... to that extent, when you look at the print media, one would say that the press is free. But, if you look at the broadcast media, the broadcast media is not free at all. The broadcast media is shackled with many regulations and many inhibitions (IDI, Nigeria).

From the justifications of the interviewees on the state of press freedom in their countries, it was discovered that journalists in the two countries seemed to understand press freedom as the absence of governmental/political control and implementation of legal and statutory provisions on press freedom but these were not enough to define press freedom because it also entailed absence of ownership as well as commercial influences (Berlin, 2003) and security of journalists (Brimah, 2014). So, a further probe from the interviews indicated that in reality, the media in both countries were partially free because of the existence of commercial, ownership and political influences in the operations of the media and insecurity among journalists. It must be noted also, that differences existed in how these influences played out in each country.

In Ghana, it was realised that the existence of ownership and political control was at a less degree than commercial interest because the interviewees admitted that ownership and political interests sometimes played out but they were not as often as commercial interest. This may be due to the fact that most media owners in Ghana employ and allow people who are experienced in the media industry to manage the organisations. For instance, the EIB Network is owned by Dr. Kwabena Duffour. Yet, decisions regarding the management of the network are left almost entirely with the CEO, Mr Nathan Adisi - a journalist with over 20 years of experience in the Ghanaian media landscape. Again, six out of the seven interviewees in Ghana noted that media organisations tactically gave space to both commercial and public interests in their content to serve both interests but one interviewee noted that she had no choice but to spike stories that did not favour huge spending advertisers when asked by her CEO to do so. The CEO in her organisation does not have media background.

In Nigeria however, the interviewees admitted that to a great extent, the three influences did play out in their job and ownership control was the heaviest among the three influences. All the interviewees agreed that owners did not often exert their control overtly but journalists knew that they could not afford to go against ownership. It also appeared that these influences were interwoven. This is because apart from the private owner demanding that the organisation makes profits, ownership control also tends to serve the political interest of the owner of the organisation or that of the friends of the owner. For instance, an electronic media organisation spiked a story about irregularities in the payments of salaries of pensioners in a bank because that “bank patronise[d] the station on a large scale and the wife of the owner [sat] on the board of the bank” (IDI - Nigeria). Such and other similar instances affirmed the finding by Ojebode (2013) that negative stories about relatives and friends of the proprietor of the PBOs were not published.

The journalists in Nigeria were of the opinion that the print media were also not safe from these influences for the sake of surviving in the current state of the Nigerian economy and making profit. This was because an interviewee, for instance, noted that newspaper owners believed that journalists had more contacts, therefore, ownership offered commission to journalists who used their contacts to source for advertisements for their organisations. All the interviewees in the countries also agreed that journalists were not physically or financially safe.

Based on the comparison of the views of the journalists; the provisions of press freedom in the countries; the FOI law in Nigeria and recurring themes in the interviews, it was established that though both countries had provisions on freedom of the press and had regulatory bodies to oversee the operations of the media, the provisions in Ghana ensured more freedom for the Ghanaian media than the provisions for the Nigerian media. Again, data showed that the extent of commercial, ownership and political interest in the Nigerian media landscape were more than that of Ghana even though in some instances the media tried to balance these interests by giving space the conflicting interests.

However, it could be argued that the presence of these interests, especially commercial influence, in the operations of the media in the countries were not good (even when they try to balance the interests) for the thriving democracies of the countries. They are not good because McChesny (2004) has noted that when the media is explicitly driven by commercial concerns as a result of neoliberalism, it discourages the critical political coverage (and by extension the watchdog role) of the media and this results in a depoliticized society. This assertion was affirmed by Ojebode (2009) when he studied public service and profit orientation in the broadcast media within the neoliberal economy of Nigeria from 1999 to 2007. He posits that “neoliberalism policies have brought a craving for profit by entrepreneurs in media and the industry and this has beclouded social responsibility” (p. 76). Also, the presence of these influences in the operations of the media in the countries is an indication that they did not fare well on the indicator absence of political and commercial interference under UNESCO’s angle of independence. Therefore, gathered data indicate that the media in the two countries were partially free and there was a significant difference in their press freedom levels.

4.3.0 Research question two: What explains the differences in the levels of press freedom in Ghana and Nigeria?

In countries where ideal democratic principles are practised, enough provisions on press freedom that are democratically acceptable are expected to be enshrined in the constitution. Also, the provisions should explicitly state specific provisions for media organisations and journalistic operations. This is because when provisions are explicitly stated, it makes it easier for the media to justify their right to the provisions. However, it is important to note that the presence of such provisions in constitutions influences press freedom only when

they are enforced by designated institutions in democracies. Thus, the presence of such provisions in legal and statutory documents like constitutions and media policies and their enforcement by designated independent institutions provide a sense of security that empowers journalists to perform their duties and leads to public access to diversified media content. These create the enabling media friendly environments needed for press freedom to thrive. This is in consonance with the claim by UNESCO (2014:28) that “the legal status of freedom of expression/of press and how this is translated, or not into practice” are key issues in the assessment of media freedom.

4.3.1 Differences in enabling media environments in Ghana and Nigeria

The nature of media system in any country is determined by the prevailing political system (Hallin & Mancini, 2012). In democracies, the media are expected, among other things, to be reasonably free to ensure easy access to the needed information because free press is an attribute of democracy. As a result, provisions for press freedom that are reasonably acceptable are often enshrined in the constitutions of democracies. It is important to note that the presence of such provisions in the statutory books is not enough guarantee freedom for the press. For the media to be free there is the need for enough provisions and their implementation to promote and protect free speech. Findings on existing enabling media environment as discovered from the study are presented in figure 4.2.

Figure 4.2: Enabling media environments in Ghana and Nigeria as Perceived by the journalists

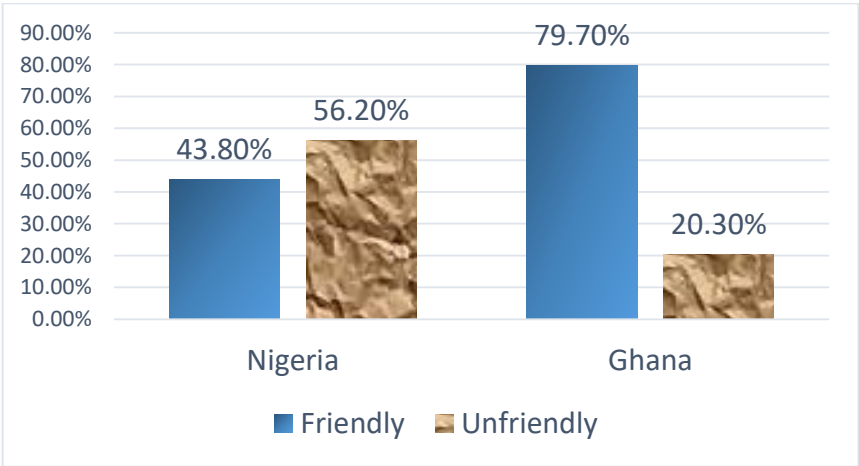


Figure 4.2 revealed the perception of the journalists on the nature of media environment the journalists and the media organisations operated in the countries. In Ghana, majority (79.7%) believed that media environment in the country was favourable to them whereas a little over half of the Nigerian journalists (56.2%) also held the same opinion.

To establish the differences in enabling media environments, the presence of stifling incidents in the prevailing media environments in the countries are examined so as to determine how press freedom is thriving or otherwise in the countries. Thus, high stifling environment means poor enabling environment. The study hypothesizes that:

H₂: There is a significant difference in the enabling media environments in Ghana and Nigeria.

Table 4.2: Enabling media environments in Ghana and Nigeria

Paired Samples Statistics					
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Sample 1	Stifling Media Environment in Ghana	56.4610	141	9.13589	.76938
Sample 2	Stifling Media Environment in Nigeria	59.5248	141	12.92704	1.08865

Paired Samples Test							
Paired Differences					t	df	Sig.
Pair 2	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference			
				Lower	Upper		
Enabling Media Environment in Ghana and Nigeria	-3.06383	16.00813	1.34813	-5.72915	-.39851	-2.273	140 .025

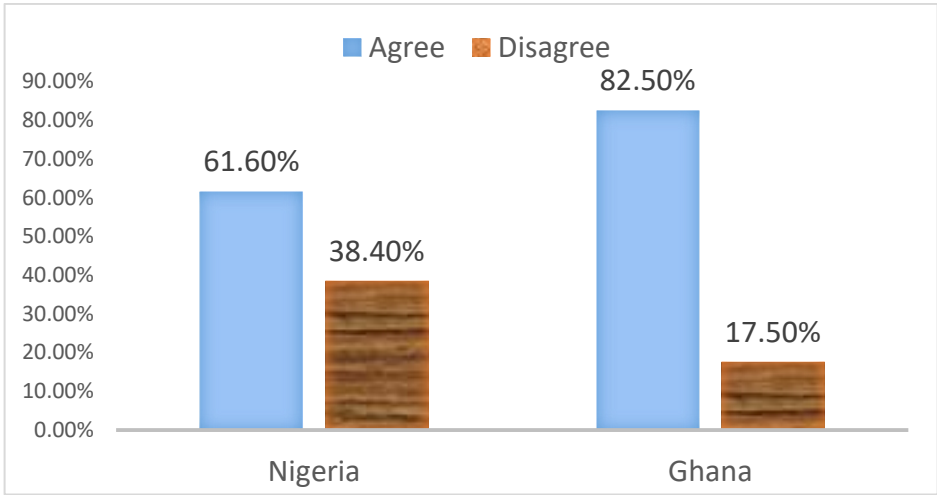
The paired samples t-test results in table 4.2 revealed that there was a significant difference in the enabling media environments in the two countries. This is noted at $M=-3.06383$, $SD=16.00813$, $t=-2.273$, $p<.025$ (2-tailed level). Analysis of the data and the comparison of the means from the two samples indicate that there are higher stifling media environments in

Nigeria than Ghana. Thus, the high mean means poor enabling media environments and low mean means better enabling environments. Therefore, the alternate hypothesis is accepted.

4.3.2 Differences in Adequacy of Provisions on Press Freedom in Ghana and Nigeria

In assessing the adequacy of the provisions on press freedom in each country, the survey sought to establish if journalists felt that the available provisions on press freedom in their country were enough to enable them to carry out their duties as journalists. The outcome is presented in figure 4.3.

Figure 4.3: Adequacy of provisions on press freedom as perceived by the journalists in the Countries



According to figure 4.3, majority of the respondents (Ghana=82.5% and Nigeria =61.6%) were of the opinion that the two countries had enough provisions that guaranteed press freedom. The result indicated that the constitutions and other statutes in the countries had enough provisions that were reasonably acceptable for journalists and media houses to operate. By the percentages, it could be argued that there was some difference in the adequacy of the provisions in the countries. The level of adequacy in Ghana was better than Nigeria.

Findings from the survey indicated that provisions on press freedom in Nigeria were enough, but in comparison to Ghana, this outcome was contradicted by findings from the document analysis. Thus, there were provisions on press freedom in Nigeria but they were not enough like the provisions in Ghana. Under Article 162 of the 1992 Constitution, Clause 2 forbids censorship; Clause 3 stipulates that there should be no impediments to the establishment of media organisation; Clause 4 insulates editors, publishers and other institutions of mass media from governmental control or from harassment or from being penalized for editorial opinion or media content; and Clause 6 affords the opportunity for rejoinder when the content of a publication offends an individual. Also, Article 169 prevents undue governmental interferences in the appointments of editors in the state-owned media by stipulating that the appointments must be done by the NMC in consultation with Public Services Commission. Article 173 also guarantees the freedom of the media from the commission - by charging the commission not to control or direct the professional functions of the media. It could be argued that these provisions were adequate to ensure enough freedom for the press in Ghana to carry out their duties.

The Nigerian Constitution also ensured easy establishment of media organisation but there were some forms of obstacles to this provision. Section 22 and 39 Clause 1 provided for free press and Section 39 Clause 2 provides that “every person shall be entitled to own, establish and operate any medium for the dissemination of information, ideas and opinions”. Though this part of the clause provided for easy establishment and operation of media organisations, the remaining part of the clause restricted the broadcast media organisations to some extent because it empowered the president but not an independent regulatory body to grant license to electronic media. Thus,

provided that no person, other than the government of the Federal or of a state or any other person or body authorized by the President on the fulfilment of conditions laid down by an act of the National Assembly, shall own, establish or operate a television or wireless broadcasting, television or the exhibition of cinematograph films (1999 Constitution of Nigeria: 24).

Again, while sub-section 3 (a) provides the grounds for regulation of broadcast media, 3 (b) provides for application of restrictive laws like the Official Secretive Act.

It is important to note that Section 1 Clauses 1-3 of the FOI Law provides for easy access to information. Moreover, the National Broadcasting Commission Act has allowed the private ownership and participation and has ended government's monopoly of broadcasting. However some provisions in the Act are used to repress the broadcast media. For instance upon the granting of license, there is the need for renewal over a period of time based upon the performance of a station and the performance is determined by NBC. While this is to ensure responsibility in the use of state property (the airwaves), it also give room for governmental control. This is because the NBC has not been weaned from the government. Therefore, the licenses of organisations that are very critical of the government can be revoked or not renewed when time is due for renewal of license.

It must be noted however, that there are some provisions in the countries that limit the guaranteed freedoms. Article 164 of the 1992 Constitution and Section 208 of the Criminal Code of Ghana subject the freedoms granted the media to limitations on grounds of national security and interest of individuals. Also defamation is no more a criminal offence but a civil offence in Ghana. This was because the Criminal Libel and Seditious Libel laws were repealed in 2001. This augmented the level of press freedom in Ghana because by decriminalising defamation, the country had met the international standard for legitimate limitations on freedom of expression (UNESCO, 2014).

In the context of Nigeria, Section 39 (2 and 3) in the Nigerian Constitution inhibited the media as well as some sections of the Nigerian Criminal Code. Sections 416 to 421 of the code are on sedition and sections 373,375, 391, 392 are on defamation. Currently, sedition is nullified in Nigeria, therefore, it cannot be used to hinder press freedom. However unlike Ghana, defamation is both criminal and civil offence in Nigeria and they are sometimes used against the media. As a result, Nigeria is unable to meet "the international standards for legitimate limitations on freedom of expression" because defamation is not decriminalised (UNESCO, 2014:29). It must be noted that instances of criminal libel are rarely used against the media in Nigeria even though the law is in the statutes of Nigeria. However, civil defamation is often used. For instance, IREX (2012) report on Nigeria noted that in the year under review, "230 civil libel cases were pending against *Daily Sun*" (p. 317). This means that Nigeria did not perform better on UNESCO's indicator of decriminalisation of defamation.

The 1999 Constitution of Nigeria appeared to be silent on protection of the media against harassments for their content or from external influences (unlike the 1992 Constitution). This silence allowed discretionary powers to be applied when dealing with issues relating to publication/broadcast content and discretionary powers always give room for abuse. Though the legal and statutory books in Nigeria also contained provisions that guarantee as well as hinder press freedom like Ghana, there were differences between the quantity of provisions that supported press freedom and the quantity that suppressed the press when compared to that of Ghana. Ghana had more provisions for press freedom than Nigeria and fewer provisions against press than Nigeria.

Based on these provisions in the legal and statutory books of the countries, it could be argued that though there were some restrictions against media freedom in both countries, the legal and statutory documents in Ghana contained more provisions to protect the media from possible harassment for their content or external influences than Nigeria. Also, Ghana fared better on UNESCO's indicator of decriminalisation of defamation than Nigeria. This could also explain the reason why there were significant levels in press freedom levels in the countries. Again, it confirms the problem of "lack of full recognition for the press" as well as the issue of "constitutional aberration in Nigeria" as identified by Akinwale (2010:50).

With regard to provisions on independent regulatory bodies to oversee the activities of the media in the countries, the main regulatory body in Ghana seemed to be more independent than its Nigerian counterpart. Thus, the functions of the regulatory bodies in overseeing the operations of the media in the countries were similar but the independence of the NMC from possible interferences from the government was explicitly provided for in the 1992 Constitution of Ghana. Article 166 of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana provides for the establishment of National Media Commission (NMC) and Article 167 Clause (a) enjoins the commission to promote and ensure the freedom and independence of the media for mass communication. To ensure the independence of the commission, Article 172 provides for the independence of commission from government. Article 166 Clause 1 enhances the guaranteed independence of the NMC through the nomination of the 18 members of the commission. The Article explicitly outlines 14 organisations/groups that are predominantly media related to nominate their representatives as members of the commission. Again, the independence of the commission from governmental control is seen through clauses 2 and 3 of the Article. Clause 2 stipulates that the members of the commission should elect the chairman, and Clause 3 disqualifies any person with political or executive influence from

being a member of the commission. This is in consonance with the assertion by Shardow and Asare (2016:184) that the NMC “serve as a buffer to prevent government and other political forces from interfering” in the operations of the media.

In the Nigerian situation, the regulatory commission was dependent on the government. The National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) was also empowered among other functions to regulate the broadcast media. The Section one of the NBC Act guarantees the establishment of the commission but it is silent on the independence of the commission. From the functions of the Commission as outlined in the NBC Act, it is important to note that the NBC only recommends applications for license “through the Minister to the President, for the grant of radio and television licenses”. This affirms Section 39 (2) of the Nigerian Constitution because the President but not an independent regulator grants licences to electronic media organisations.

Therefore in the absence of the President of Nigeria from the country, the future of applicants seeking for license to operate would be uncertain. It is important to note that even if the acting President can grant a license, the fact the issuing of license is the sole right of the President “does not ensure that the process is apolitical” (IREX, 2012:315). However in Ghana, the presence or absence of the President has no bearing on the granting of licences. Thus in Ghana, the NCA but not the President grants licenses to broadcast media. The NCA is a national regulatory organisation that is separated from the regular ministries and departments of state. The foregoing made media regulation in Ghana better than in Nigeria, therefore, another indication of better autonomy of regulatory body in Ghana than Nigeria.

Data from the interviews supported the outcome of the document analysis. With the absence of FOI law in Ghana, two of the Ghanaian interviewees noted that it was an established fact the provisions in Ghana were not enough therefore, the reason that critical actors argued for the passage of the FOI bill in Ghana but the remaining five interviewees felt otherwise. The five interviewees agreed that provisions on press freedom in the legal and statutory books of the country were enough and reasonably acceptable in a democracy to enable the media carry out their duties.

For instance, the General Manager at a print media organisation notes that

...yes, basically they are adequate. The provisions on press freedom at chapter 12 of our constitution grants freedoms that are

acceptable in a democracy and media policies are also in the spirit of the constitutional provisions. I don't think any objective person will say that these provisions are not enough, especially when people in the media enjoy double freedoms when it comes to expressing their thoughts. They are given more privileges than ordinary citizens. I know we don't have the FOI law yet but we will have it very soon. Actually, it was supposed to be passed by the past government but somehow it was unable to pass it. I believe that the current government will pass it. So yes, our legal and statutory provisions on media freedom are enough (IDI, Ghana).

A common agreement between all the interviewees in Ghana was that the FOI bill should be passed into law to make the provisions in Ghana better.

In the Nigerian context, one interviewee opined that the provisions "were manageable" even though they were not enough but the remaining six interviewees agreed that the provisions in their legal and statutory books were not adequate even with the existence of the FOI law. For instance, one interviewee from Nigeria says that

I think lawyers only can go into the nitty-gritty of that aspect of the law but as a practical person, someone who has been on the field for over 20 years and has practised in both the Oyo and other states, I want to tell you that practically they are not enough and even if they exist, nobody is taking cognisance of those aspects of the constitution that give protection to the press (IDI, Nigeria).

From the foregoing, it was realised that data from the document analysis and the interviews did confirm the survey findings in Ghana but they did not confirm the survey finding on adequacy of provisions in Nigeria. Again, the legal and statutory provisions in Ghana were many and elaborate and those of Nigeria were few and elaborate to an extent. The Ghanaian situation confirmed the assertion by IREX (2012) and Owusu (2012) that Ghana had more provisions on press freedom than most African countries and that these provisions were elaborate. As a result, the provisions were adequate to enable reasonable freedom for journalists to carry out their duties. However, the provisions in Nigeria were few but elaborate (to an extent) and were not enough to provide reasonable freedom for its media like the media in Ghana. This might also account for the differences in the levels of press freedom in the countries.

4.3.3 Differences in the implementation of provisions on press freedom in the Countries

Press freedom is often examined from “the legal and statutory environment in which the media and journalism operate” (UNESCO, 2014:26). It implies that how designated institutions in a country enforce its provisions on press freedom plays a key role in determining its level of press freedom. This is because no matter how adequate or elaborate such provisions are in the legal and statutory documents, they would fail in providing the needed freedom and having the desired impact if they are not enforced. This implies that differences in the degree of enforcement of the provisions will result in the differences in the levels of press freedom in the two countries. The outcome on gathered data on implementation of provisions are presented in the figure 4.4 below:

Figure 4.4: Journalists’ views on the enforcement of statutory provisions on press freedom in Ghana and Nigeria

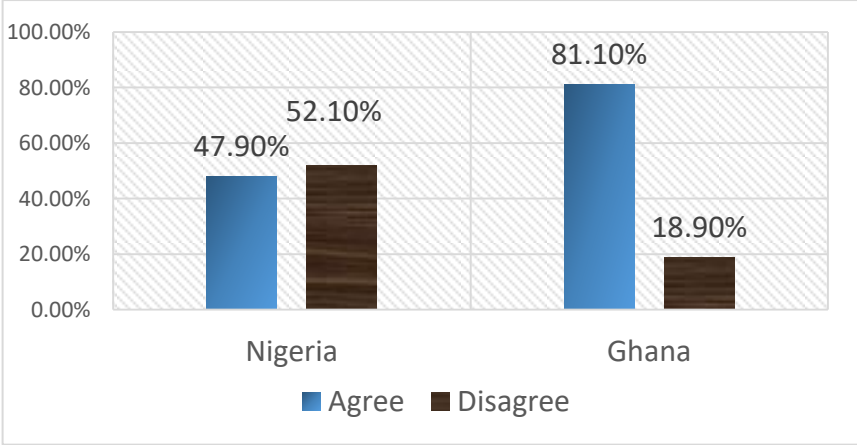


Figure 4.4 shows the opinion of the respondents on how designated institutions in Ghana and Nigeria enforced the provisions. The results showed that more than half of the Ghanaian journalists (81.1%) believed that their designated institutions enforced the provisions whereas a little over half of the Nigerian journalists (52.1%) did not believe that their institutions adequately enforce the provisions. Comparison of gathered data from the two

countries revealed differences that implied that the provisions were better implemented in Ghana than Nigeria.

The outcome of the probe from the interviewees in the countries was in consonance with the above findings. Findings indicated that provisions on press freedom were enforced in Ghana but they were not adequately enforced in Nigeria. All the interviewees in Ghana agreed that to a great extent, the designated institutions had the will power to implement the legal and statutory provisions and they were able to cite instances of interpretations of provisions in the courts to support their claim. For instance citing the recent court ruling on the NMC versus GIBA case, an interviewee from a radio station argued that provisions on press freedom were implemented in Ghana to a great extent.

She argues that

the seven-member panel unanimously held that regulations 3, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 22 of the media regulations law contravened Clause 4 of Article 164 and Article 173 in the 1992 Constitutions because they amounted to censorship and direct control on the part of NMC. So by striking out these regulations and declaring them null and void, the judiciary implemented the provision (IDI, Ghana).

However in Nigeria, all the interviewees were of the opinion that the legal and statutory provisions on press freedom were not fully implemented. They were of the view that the implementation of these provisions did not serve the self-interest of politicians/ government officials or the well positioned people in society. As a result, the government/ politicians had no will power to implement the provisions and the fact that “the judiciary seem to have been pocketed by the high and the mighty” (IDI – Nigeria) created a major challenge for the media in Nigeria.

An interviewee at a television station in Nigeria notes that

...who are the people who will implement them? They are the government officials that want their own territories to be protected too. So one thing is for you to have them and another thing is the enforcement, I mean the implementation. Basically, it is one of the major challenges we have in Nigeria – I am not talking about other places but in Nigeria, implementation is a major thing. We have many beautiful laws that make you wonder how it captures the

interest of the people but when it comes to implementation, it is a different ball game altogether. You don't get the kind of carrying-it-through that you are supposed to get when it comes to that (IDI, Nigeria).

Another interviewee who occupied a management position at a newspaper organisation in Nigeria claims that instead of implementation of the provisions,

...most of them are being observed in the books in a sense that the capacity, the will-power to execute or to implement some of these laws are not there for copious reasons. For instance the FOI law enables you to access information which will be in the public interest but if you want to access information using that particular aspect of the Nigerian law, you will now begin to see hurdles placed in your way in the sense that it is not supposed to take you more than some few minutes to access records in any public institutions whenever you want to seek information but you will find out that they deliberately now put hurdles on the way (IDI, Nigeria).

This finding in Nigeria was discovered in literature. Sadrettin et al (2016:515) noted that like Russia, Nigeria had challenges with the implementation of the provisions on press freedom: "laws which protect the press only remain on the pages of the constitution" but "never implemented".

So, data from the interviews also supported the finding that there were differences in the level of press freedom in the two countries. Thus, while the provisions were implemented in Ghana, enforcement in Nigeria was a challenge because as indicated by a Nigerian interviewee, "it did not serve the interest of the political class therefore, no will power to see to their implementation" (IDI- Nigeria). This was an indication that rule of law worked better in Ghana than in Nigeria.

4.3.4 Independence of the Judiciary in handling cases involving the media in Ghana and Nigeria

The judiciary is one of the institutions that play a critical role in democracies because it is entrusted with the duties that relate to one of the critical attributes of democracy: the rule of

law. By their job, the judiciary ensures that the boundaries that separate the powers of various actors in democracies are outlined such that there is co-existence between the governed and the governors. The watchdog role of the media increases the likelihood of a clash with the executive, legislature and sometimes even the judiciary and the expectation is that the judiciary must be independent and fair in handling such clashes when they get to the court. Therefore, opinions of journalists in the two countries were sought in this regard. The findings have been outlined in figure 4.5.

Figure 4.5: Journalists’ opinion on the judiciary and cases involving the media in the two countries.

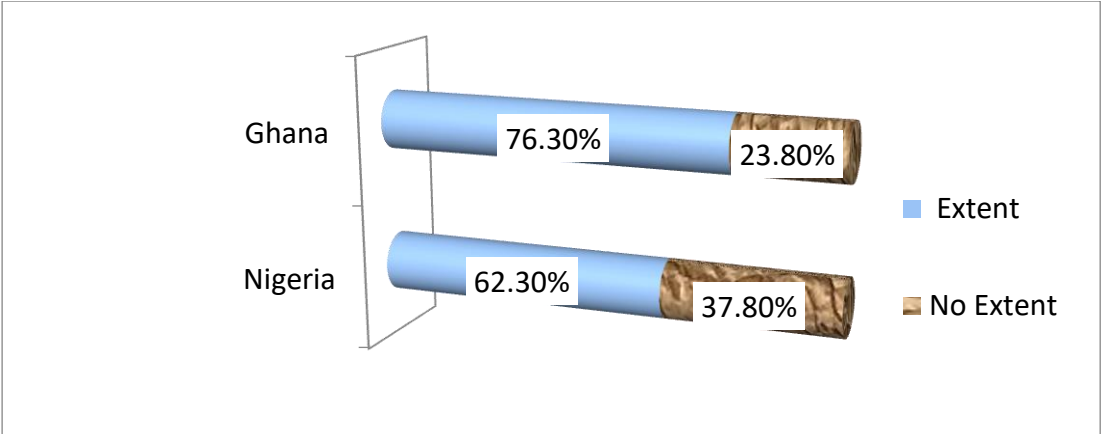


Figure 4.5 presents the views of journalists about the role of the judiciary in handling cases that relate to media organisations in the countries. According to the data, it was discovered that majority of journalists in Ghana (76.3%) and Nigeria (62.3%) were of the opinion that the judiciary in their countries judge cases independently. To affirm or refute this finding, the interview probed for more information on the independence of the judiciary in handling cases involving the media.

The interviewees from Ghana indicated that the judiciary was fair and supportive in handling the cases, therefore, implying that the Ghanaian judiciary was independent from external influences when handling cases involving the media. It must be noted however, that two of the interviewees claim that dragging a case for about a year in court was not good enough.

An interviewee from Ghana notes that

...yes, the judiciary have been very supportive, especially after the repeal of the libel and seditious law. I know that there haven't been many cases that have to do with the media in the courts in recent years but with the few that have been, rulings have been very favourable to the media. Few cases that come to mind are the Anas Aremeyaw Anas and Justice Dery case, the Adom FM editor versus NHIA case and the GIBA versus NMC Regulation law case. You know that the media became victorious at the end of the day so yes, the Ghanaian Judiciary had been very fair and supportive even when it came to supporting the media, even at the expense of exposing the skeletons in their judicial wardrobe (IDI, Ghana).

To an extent this assertion was true because many Ghanaians saw the Anas Aremeyaw Anas and Justice Dery suit as a test case for the judiciary to prove their independence since it involved serious and disgraceful corrupt practices within the judiciary and an unethical approach by the media to expose the people involved. The ruling favoured the media because the court noted that the unethical action of Anas was in public interest and was due to the nature of the investigation.

However, the above assertion might not be entirely true in some cases because it is argued that in place of decriminalising the libel and sedition laws, there had been cases where huge fines were slapped on the media as compensation for damages in civil libel cases. For instance in 2014, the *Daily Guide* and *The Informer* newspapers were fined GH¢300, 000 (US\$ 75,000) and GH¢ 250, 000 (US\$ 62, 500) respectively as compensation for damages in civil defamation cases (MFWA, 2014). The *Daily Guide* was found guilty of defaming Mr Asiedu Nketsiah, the General Secretary of the then party in power, in its publication that he used his position as the Chairman of the Bui Power Authority Board to divert building materials for his personal building project (Awuni, 2014). *The Informer* was also guilty of claiming in its publication that Kwadwo Mpiani, the former Chief of Staff in the John Agyekum Kuffour Administration, cleared goods at the port that were under-invoiced and without proper documentation (Anon, 2014). These rulings led to a public debate among the Ghanaian citizenry: while one fraction saw these judgements as being unfair, the other felt otherwise.

One fraction was of the view that such instances had negative implications for the promotion and the protection of freedom of speech and of press in Ghana. This was because in the light of the challenges the media faced in their operations during the energy crisis which Ghana faced in 2014 and the dwindling circulation of newspapers (due to the new media), these fines were seen to paint the picture of a judiciary that was not fair to the media. This was because the print media in Ghana had challenges with sales/circulation and the energy crisis being experienced at that time made media operations very costly. Thus, they had to buy diesel and depend on generators for source of power so as to publish their newspapers. So there seemed to be a disconnection between the magnitude of the damage to the people involved and the imposed fines. Therefore, it negatively affected the sustainability and developments of the media organisations.

Another fraction however opined that the judgements were fair because they felt the judges looked at the magnitude of the damages to award the compensations through fines. Thus by imputing that the personalities were involved in criminal acts, the publications wrongfully attacked the image and hard earned reputation of the public officials. So, it was fair that the judiciary looked at the issue from the angle of an individual being defamed at the expense of another individual's business making gains. To an extent, this claim may justify these fines because if the Ghanaian Constitution was fair enough to grant the media more freedom of expression than the ordinary citizen, then why must the constitution not come to the aid of a citizen with less freedom of expression (than the media) when the citizen wrongly defamed? Thus, the inability of gatekeepers of the newspaper organisations to verify available facts to be sure that they were publishing accurate, fair and balanced information is an indication that they had failed in their responsibility to the canons of their profession, their code of ethics and the nation.

Yet, it is important to note that this issue of huge fines conforms to an identified trend in freedom of expression and media development by UNESCO and IREX. Thus, "a trend evident in the last six years has been the increasing use of civil defamation, often in lieu of criminal cases, resulting in disproportionate fines and damages, particularly against media and journalists critical of governments" (UNESCO, 2014:29). Also to IREX (2012) report on Nigeria, "damages awarded to public official whenever they win civil libel cases against the media organisations are usually heavy when compared to damages awarded ordinary citizens when they are able to prove libel" (p. 317).

In Nigeria, all the interviewees agreed that the judiciary had not been supportive in handling cases that involved the media at the courts. Further probe revealed three main reasons for their view: cases dragged for years in courts, political officers and the powerful in society conspired with the judiciary to punish the media and the cost involved in pursuing cases at the court was too high. For instance, an editor from a newspaper organisation recounted an experience where a case involving his organisation and an aggrieved person dragged in court for 10 years. The organisation published a story that claimed that the plaintiff was a coup plotter. Though the person had been involved in plotting a coup before, he was not part of the particular coup the paper talked about in its publication. After the case had dragged from High Court through Appeal Court to Supreme Court for 10 years, the organisation was found guilty and was fined ₦10,000,000 (UD\$ 2,900). Therefore, the editor concluded that “looking at the cost involved in servicing [the] case through that period of 10 years and the fine at the end of the 10 years [made] it ... not worth going to the court. An apology or out of court settlement would have been cheaper” (IDI, Nigeria).

Another interviewee in a management position of a television station also notes that fairness in court depends on the nature of the cases being talked about. He further justifies his assertion with the claim that

...if you have been following developments in the judiciary in Nigeria, you will realise that the judiciary seems to have been pocketed by the high and the mighty – people that are well positioned in society. If you are pursuing a story against somebody who is well connected or well positioned in the society and you run into trouble in the process of doing that and you want to seek a redress in the court of law and that person has a deep pocket, it is easier for that person to buy over the judiciary at your own detriment as a journalist (IDI, Nigeria).

Based on the instances and experiences outlined by interviewees and other instances of such nature with the judiciary, all the interviewees agreed that out-of-court settlement or apologies, even when the press was right, was sensible than going to court. By comparing results from data on the independence of the judiciary in handling cases involving the media, gathered data established that the Ghanaian judiciary generally seemed to be fair and supportive to an extent than the Nigerian judiciary. This refuted the survey finding that the Nigeria judiciary was fair in handling cases that involved the media.

It is important to note that though journalists and media organisations in Nigeria see out-of-court settlement as the best option in the face of their challenges, the danger lies in the fact that the chosen option will not allow them to have legal precedents that would entrench the guaranteed freedoms. This is because the media in countries with high levels of press freedoms have worked for it by embracing litigations that set legal precedents for future. For instance in Ghana, the electronic media became liberalised in the Fourth Republic after Dr Wreko Brobby, based on the provision in Article 162 Clause 3, did set up Radio Eye without an allocation of airwaves by the government. Litigation on his action eventually led to the liberalisation of the airwaves. Also, the Supreme Court of Ghana was able to stop NMC from direct censorship over broadcast media content because GIBA was ready to go to court. Therefore, a legal precedent on censorship in the history of Ghana has been set because of this case. These are some of the legal precedents the Ghanaian media have set and they have entrenched the interpretations of Article 162 Clauses Two and Three. As a result, GIBA's experience would prevent the repetition of such negative incidents of attempt to censor the media content.

4.3.5 Differences in journalists' accessibility of information in Ghana and Nigeria

Among other things, the purpose of having provisions of press freedom in legal and statutory documents of democracies is to ensure easy access to information. As the mediator between the public interest and the government, the media need to access information on policies and events relating to governance, disseminate them to the public so that citizens can make informed decisions and intelligent choices (Whadalh, 2004). The study sought for the views of journalists on easy access to information since it was an indication of the state of press freedom in a country. In Ghana, the FOI law is still on the drawing board after years and has not been passed. However, it was presumed that journalists were familiar with the yet to be passed bill because it had been in public domain for some years. Nigeria has the FOI law and it has been in effect since 2011. Therefore, Nigerian journalists were asked to use the existing FOI law to respond to the questions while journalists in Ghana were asked to consider the prevailing media context and the yet to be passed FOI bill to answer the questions. The outcome is presented Table 4.4:

Table 4.4: Journalists' views on accessibility of information in the countries

Statement	Ghana		Nigeria	
	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
Enabling administrative framework is in place to make the laws on access to information work	43.3%	56.7%	50%	50%
Restrictions to the right of information are clearly defined in the laws	49.7%	50.3%	56.9%	43.1%
Journalists are able to secure public records through clear administrative procedures	47.6%	52.4%	45.8%	54.2%
Journalists are able to secure public records at affordable cost	39.8%	60.1%	37%	63%
There are deterring punishments for public officials who illegally refuse disclose public records	17.5%	82.5%	33.5%	66.5%

Findings from table 4.4 showed that a little over half of the Ghanaian respondents (56.7%) and half of the Nigerian respondents (50%) did not think there was an enabling framework to allow access to information in their countries. A little over half of the total respondents in Ghana (50.3%) and a little under half of the respondents from Nigeria (43.1%) opined that the FOI bill had not clearly defined the grounds for denial of information. This data did not indicate much difference in easy accessibility of information in the countries.

In the interviews, all the interviewees from the two countries indicated that generally, journalists were able to access information but certain information, especially the ones that related to national security, even though not seen as a threat to national security, was not easily accessible.

In the words of an interviewee from tertiary institution in Ghana,

...journalists sometimes do have challenges accessing certain information, especially when it relates to... sensitive information or the kind of information that government officials will not want the public to know. This problem is compounded by the fact that the FOI is still pending. I feel they are playing politics with it because they know it will not let them get away with certain things (IDI, Ghana).

The interviewees in Ghana also hoped that the passage of the FOI bill into law would address most of the restrictions journalists face in accessing certain kinds of information.

However, their Nigerian counterparts agreed that journalists in the country were reluctant to use the FOI law to access information due to their challenges with the FOI law and this affirms Ojebode's (2011) finding that Nigerian journalists were not using the FOI law even though it has been in existence for some time in the country. For instance one interviewee was of the view that media organisations needed strong institutional backing and lots of money to invoke the FOI law to access information because invoking the FOI law amounted to challenging the status quo. Three interviewees also claimed that many artificial hurdles were placed in the way of journalists who tried to access information through the FOI law and their organisations would sometimes have to hire a lawyer to challenge the public institution at the court before access could be granted. Another common challenge was the domestication of the FOI law at the state level. Thus, though the law had been in effect at the Federal level since 2011 and binding to all Nigerians, the Lagos and Oyo states were yet to adopt and implement the law at the state level. For the law to be domesticated at the state level it would have to be deliberated upon at the State House of Assembly but it had not been done because they had no will power to domesticate it.

So, an interviewee in a management position at a print media organisation notes that

... of course the State House of Assembly is in the pocket of the Governor and quite so often, the information you may be seeking would be against the governor or key actors of government who are also answerable to that same Governor... that thing [domestication of the law at state level] will not see the light of the day, it will stay at the State Assembly because most of the people there...are laddies of the Governor so the thing will just die a natural death, it will not come out because they know that once it comes out, it is activated and they would be the people who will be under the crucibles (IDI, Nigeria).

From the comparison of data gathered from the two countries, it was established that generally there was no difference in accessibility of information in the countries. There was easy accessibility of information in the two countries except information on sensitive topics. This situation is not good for press freedom in the two countries if access to such information is not detrimental to national security. Though the presence of FOI in Nigeria must enhance the performance of the country on UNESCO's indicator of FOI laws, its

performance is undermined by the fact that Nigerian journalists are not using their FOI to access information.

The comparison of perceptions of the respondents on adequacy and implementation of the provisions, independence of the judiciary in handling cases involving the media and accessibility of information indicate that Ghana performed better than Nigeria because not only did Ghana has many provisions that were elaborate enough to protect their freedoms but also they were enforced. In comparison to Ghana, Nigeria had fewer provisions that were elaborated but not well implemented to an extent. The judiciary in the countries were generally independent and fair in handling cases involving the media. However, journalists in the two countries also had challenges accessing information that were considered sensitive. While Ghana has no FOI therefore Ghanaian journalists cannot use it access information, the Nigerian journalists were not willing to use their FOI to access information. This was because they were of the opinion that the procedures were cumbersome, public officials in charge intentionally created artificial hurdles to make accessibility impossible and the fact that the law has not been domesticated at the state level prevented them from even using the law. These explain the better enabling media environments in Ghana than Nigeria.

Data from the document analysis and the in-depth interviews supported the findings of the survey. Data gathered establish that the level of media friendly environment in Ghana was higher than that of Nigeria. This was because Ghana had more enabling media environment than Nigeria. The study therefore, assumes that the availability of many provisions and the implementation of the provisions in the legal and statutory books provide some sense of security for journalists to go about their duties. It also indicates the kind of media system in the country as well as its level of media friendliness. Therefore, the high state of media friendliness in Ghana was an indication of the prevailing enabling media friendly environment in the country. On the other hand, Nigeria's low state of media friendliness also indicated the prevailing media unfriendly environment. This explained the higher level of press freedom in Ghana than Nigeria. In sum, the study established that the nature of enabling media environment in Ghana was friendlier than that of Nigeria and this explained the significant differences in the levels of press freedom in the countries.

4.4.0 Research question three: To what extent are there differences in the sense of security among journalists in the two countries?

Freedom of the press and security of journalists are among the key principles of democracy because participatory governance thrives when citizens are able to express their views of interest without fear (Briamah, 2014). To examine the sense of security of journalists in the countries, the study first considered the state of security among journalists in the two countries before examining the physical and financial security among journalists. Also, the study looked at security of journalists by interrogating how professional associations of journalists in the country advocated for the protection and welfare of their members. This was to enable the researcher gain insights and explanations on the issue of sense of security among journalists. Data gather on the security of the journalists has been discussed in the next section.

4.4.1 Differences in the State of Security among Journalists in Ghana and Nigeria

Journalists' security is an issue of great importance when assessing press freedom in countries. As a result, there is the need for the provision of a safe working environment for journalists (UNESCO as cited by Oyewo & Oyewo, 2016:35). This is because, as noted by the authors, journalists ensure that "the space for freedom of expression is kept open in order to build democratic societies which are just and participatory". The study examined the safety of journalists in the countries and the outcome is presented in Table 4.5.

To establish differences in the state of security among the journalists in the two countries, the study hypothesize that:

H₃ There is a significant difference in the state of security of journalists in Ghana and Nigeria.

Table 4.5: State of security among journalists in Ghana and Nigeria

		Paired Samples Statistics			
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Sample 1	Insecurity of Journalists in Ghana	46.4406	143	6.47816	.54173
Sample 2	Insecurity of Journalists in Nigeria	47.6643	143	9.80367	.81982

Paired Samples Test

Pair 1	Mean	Paired Differences				t	df	Sig.
		Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Insecurity among Journalists in Ghana and Nigeria	1.22378	11.69773	.97821	-.70997	3.15752	1.251	142	.213

The paired samples t-test results in table 4.5 revealed that there was a no significant difference in the state of security among journalists in the two countries. This is noted at $M=1.22378$, $SD=11.69773$, $t=1.251$, $p>.213$ (2-tailed level). Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

4.4.2 State of physical security among journalists in Ghana and Nigeria

According to Braimah (2014), press freedom is not just about liberal and pluralistic media but about protection of the media “against real and possible attack, censorship, harassments, threats, arrests and detentions, or even murder, while in their line of duty” (p. 3). Safety issues are central to press freedom and they point particularly to the responsibility of the state in protecting media freedom and ensuring that there is not impunity for crimes against journalists (UNESCO, 2014:82). The logic in this assertion lies in the fact that democracies thrive when the press is free but insecurity hinders the freedom necessary for a free press to thrive. It is important to note that safety issues are central to press freedom because they indicate the duty of the government to protect journalists against impunity and press freedom. Thus, attacks, threats and killings are not only just about human rights issues or how the government is able to protect the lives of the citizenry but also, they have serious implications for press freedom. For instance, the inability of the Ghanaian government to address such unfortunate occurrences in the country in 2015 led to a drop in Ghana’s global and Sub Saharan rankings in the 2016 annual press freedom report by Freedom House (Freedom House, 2016). Therefore, data gathered on physical security of journalists in Ghana and Nigeria is presented in table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Journalists' opinion on the state of physical security

Statement	Ghana		Nigeria	
	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
Journalists often suffer attacks in the course of reporting	77.7%	22.3%	89%	11%
Certain geographical locations are no go areas for journalists	48.3%	51.8%	73.3%	26.7%
Risky situations (war, insurgency) impede the work of journalists	70.7%	29.3%	80.8%	19.2%
Journalists working in danger zones are given protection by state security agencies	30.8%	69.2%	19.8%	80.2%
Property of media outlets are often seized	51%	49%	60.9%	39.1%
State authorities offer adequate protection to journalists when threatened by criminal agents	40.5%	59.5%	30.1%	69.9%

Data from table 4.6 indicate that the majority of journalists in Ghana and Nigeria, (77.7% and 89% respectively), were of the opinion that they suffered from attacks in the course of their work while a little over half from Ghana (69.3%) and over three quarters from Nigeria (80.2%) felt the state security agencies failed to offer them protection when they were in danger zones. Data from the survey point to the fact that there were no differences between the perceived states of physical security among journalists in the countries.

To seek further explanation on the survey findings, the researcher analysed of cases of media freedom violations in the countries, as documented by MFWA. The outcome supported the most of the findings in Table 4.6. Physical attacks and threats on journalists were the leading cases of media freedom violations in 2014 and 2015 and the leading perpetrators of these violations were security agencies. Findings from the document analysis are presented table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Violations of media freedom in 2014 in Ghana and Nigeria

Country	Cases of Violations of Media Freedom in 2014									Total
	Attack/Threat	Arrest/Detain	Censorship	Killing	Sentence	Court Action	Kidnap	New Legis.	Fine	
Ghana	9	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	14
Nigeria	10	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	12

Source: Media Foundation for West Africa (2014a, b, c).

Table 4.7 summarized the available records of cases of media freedom violations journalists in the two countries experienced for exercising their right to freedom of expression in the course of their duties in 2014. Nine cases of physical attacks/threats as well as three cases of arrests/detentions were recorded in Ghana. In Nigeria, ten cases of physical attacks/threats, and a case each of arrests/detention and new legislature suppressing freedom of expression for journalists were recorded. The findings showed no major difference in the cases of violations against journalists in Ghana and Nigeria. This situation had negative implications for the press freedom in the countries because it indicated an existence of an environment that was not conducive for the protection and promotion of free expression and freedom of the press. It also indicated that the performance of the countries on UNESCO's safety indicators of absence of physical threats and absence of incarceration and arbitrary arrests was poor.

Table 4.8: Violations of media freedom in 2015 in Ghana and Nigeria

Country	Cases of Violations of Media Freedom in 2015								Total
	Attack/Threat	Arrest/Detain	Censorship	Killing	Sentence	Court Action	Kidnap	New Legis.	
Ghana	8	-	-	1	-	1	-	1	11
Nigeria	19	1	3	1	1	3	1	-	29

Source: Media Foundation for West Africa (2015a, b, c)

A summary of cases of media freedom violations in Ghana and Nigeria for 2015 had been presented in table 4.8 above. Ghana recorded 11 cases of violations against media freedom: eight physical attacks/threats and a case each of killing, court action and new legislature. On the other hand, Nigeria recorded 29 cases of media violations: 19 physical attacks/threats, one arrest/detain, three censorship, 1 killing, 1 sentence, three court actions and one kidnap. It was also discovered that most of the violations against media freedom were perpetuated by the security agencies, followed by political parties and the general public (MFWA, 2015).

Though there were no differences in violations in the countries in 2014, there seemed to be difference in 2015. In Nigeria, there seemed to be an increase of the violations in 2015 and this might be because it was an election year. Most of the violations recorded were election related. For instance in May 2015, a reporter for *Daily Trust*, Hir Joseph, was beaten to a state of unconsciousness by supporters of the governor of Nasarawa State for unfavourable coverage (Freedom House, 2016). In another instance in June 2015, Kamarudeen Ogundele, a reporter for *Punch* newspaper, was beaten by supporters of the governor of Ekiti State for taking picture of the supporters trying to prevent opposition lawmakers from entering the state's House of Assembly (MFWA, 2015). Basically in election years, the need for the watchdog role of journalists and the need for political actors to prevent negative coverage/stories increase, hence, the high number of cases of abuse.

It is also important to note that for the first time in over 20 years in Ghana, a journalist died in line of duty (Freedom House, 2016). George Abanga, a reporter with Success FM and Peace FM, was killed by unknown assailants while he was returning from duty at Brong Ahafo Region. Reports linked his death to unfavourable coverage on theft of fertilizers for farmers in Brong Ahafo Region as well as his unfavourable coverage of defections from then ruling NDC party but the Police had not been able to arrest and punish the culprit(s).

Findings from the document analysis on the state of press freedom in the countries indicated insecurity of journalists and this was again affirmed by the data from the interviews. All the interviewees in Ghana and Nigeria agreed that journalists in the countries were not physically secure because they were often attacked by security agencies, party supporters and the public. As noted by a Ghanaian interviewee,

...the security agencies, especially the police are not supportive when it comes to protecting the media. For instance, some policemen were caught on camera attacking photo journalists for taking pictures at the inauguration of President Akuffo Addo. Though the journalists were taking pictures for the public, the police did not understand the job of the journalists. Sometimes, there is a clash with the police when it comes to the coverage of certain events like the elections. During coverage of some events, they insist that the media cannot cover or be within some public space or take pictures. I think the police do not understand the job of the media and they think the media do not understand theirs" (IDI, Ghana).

The situation in Nigeria was in agreement with the above assertion because all the interviewees also agreed that they were not physically secure. For instance an interviewee in Nigeria also said that journalists were seen as people who were interested in issues that were of no concern to them.

As a result, he notes that

... the natural reaction is to push, shove and to also brutalise... If anything should happen anywhere, it is the journalist that will be brutalised, it is the journalist that will be beaten for recording anything, it is the photo journalist that will be beaten for his life if he is seen taking strategic photographs, it is the camera man who will be beaten up for recording scenes of riots or scenes of untold so in Nigeria, it (attack on journalists) is an everyday occurrence” (IDI, Nigeria).

All the interviewees in the countries also agreed that grounds of national security were often used as an excuse to bully and to deny them access to information. However, majority of the Ghanaian interviewees (five out of seven) admitted that there had been instances where the top hierarchy of the security agencies had apologised to the media for some attacks and even replaced smashed cameras. On the contrary, majority of the interviewees from Nigeria (six out of seven) claimed otherwise.

It was again discovered that most of the journalists in the countries did not have life insurance. In Ghana, four interviewees from two media organisations confirmed that the lives of journalists in their organisations were insured and they were also on a health insurance scheme. Yet, the remaining three interviewees noted that life insurance for journalists in media organisations was not a common practice in the country. In Nigeria, one interviewee from a private media organisation said that journalists in his organisation had life insurance while two interviewees from government owned media organisation also noted that they had a corporate health insurance but no life insurance for individual journalists except during election coverage. The remaining four interviewees from Nigeria agreed that journalists in their organisations were not insured. According to one of such interviewees, journalists from his organisations were currently not sent on dangerous assignments.

This is because

...everything boils down to cost. If you are fraternising with Nigeria, you will realise that we (the media) are gasping and some things will have to do.... I have not been insured for one day in my over 20 years in the media and I have covered a war. I was in the Bakasi war and I went and came back” (IDI, Nigeria).

Threats experienced by Ghanaian interviewees were mostly verbal threats via phone calls or through text messages. There, however, were cases of physical threats and attacks. For instance, female interviewee from Ghana was brutally assaulted by public officials of National Health Authority in 2014 while doing her job. In Nigeria, physical attacks and threats as well as threats via phone calls and text messages were often experienced by the interviewees. All the interviewees in the two countries called for the need for co-operation between journalists and security agencies because their work was complementary but not antagonistic.

Data gathered from the survey, document analysis and the interview established that the journalists in the two countries were not physically safe from the security agencies and other perpetrators of violations of media freedom. Findings revealed that both countries did not fare well on the following indicators of safety: absence of threats, arrests, impunity, harassment, killing and destruction of equipment. Though it is a common occurrence in the profession to clash with interests, it must not be encouraged. This is because it has become “evident that another distinctive underlying component for press freedom is safety for public expression” (UNESCO, 2014:15). Also, when “such crimes go unpunished, perpetrators and potential ones get emboldened to commit further violations” (Briamah, 2014:4) so the media are intimidated and the culture of silence emanates.

4.4.3. The state of financial security among journalists in Ghana and Nigeria

When considering safety of journalists, it is not just about the physical security but financial security as well. This is because financial security also matters when it comes to press freedom. Research has established that the issue of “brown envelope journalism” which is “a product of low remuneration” and other factors (Ojebode, 2013:307) affect objective coverage. This situation have implications for press freedom because it makes journalists vulnerable to financial inducements and that undermine the independence needed to produce and to disseminate objective information in the interest of the citizenry.

Therefore, the study examined the state of financial security among journalists as perceived by the journalists in Ghana and Nigeria. Table 4.9 presents the outcome.

Table 4.9: Journalists’ views on the state of Financial Security in the Countries

Statement	Ghana		Nigeria	
	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
Salary levels are sufficiently high to discourage bribery in the course of duty	10.5%	89.5%	8.9%	91.1%
Journalists request for incentives in order to cover stories	56.6%	43.4%	61.6%	38.4%
Government officials pay journalists to have their stories covered.	56%	44%	64.3%	35.7%

In table 4.9, data gathered from respondents indicated that a great majority of journalists in Ghana and Nigeria (89.5% and 91.1% respectively) believed that their salaries did not discourage them from bribery while on duty. Comparison of results from the survey showed no difference in the perception of journalists in the two countries on their state of financial security.

This finding was confirmed from the data from the interviews. All the interviewees confirmed the poor state of financial security among journalists in Ghana and Nigeria. It was realised that the remuneration of journalists in the two countries was very poor but in the Nigerian situation, the problem was compounded with the fact that some media organisations owed journalists as many as 10 to 20 months of unpaid salaries.

An interviewee from Ghana notes that

...journalists have lots of issues with financial security...We are not well paid at all. It is recently that there have been some salary adjustments. Among the media organisations in Ghana, it is only Graphic Communications Group, EIB Network and Multi-Media Group that pay slightly well but journalists in the rest of the media organisations are not well paid. In most cases, few journalists who are stars of the organisation are isolated and paid well and most of them are on contract. So in a radio station or newspaper, it is the editor and maybe two other star writers who are well paid but the rest are not well paid. That is why the “soli” issue (brown envelope) will not go away because journalists are suffering...Some journalists

are paid five hundred Ghana Cedis (US\$125) or eight hundred Ghana Cedis (US\$200) and this is as a result of recent salary adjustments” (IDI, Ghana).

Commenting on the issues of poor state of financial security among journalists, a Nigerian interviewee also says:

... if you should now assemble 2000 journalists here today, I am very sure that you will not find 50 who are financially secured compared to the banking sector, the telecom sector, the oil and gas sector, even the engineering sector. So journalism has become an all comer’s kind of thing - everybody goes in there not necessarily because it is lucrative because it is not - but it is because maybe it puts you in a position of influence where you can enrich yourself by extorting people and doing things like that but it takes the issue of lack of financial security to what we said earlier – ownership” (IDI, Nigeria).

All the interviewees in the countries also agreed that the poor state of financial insecurity made journalists open to bribery and self-censorship. Therefore, Ghana and Nigeria did not fare well on UNESCO’s safety indicator absence of economic harassment.

It was revealed, by gathered data, that the financial insecurity among journalists was as a result of lack of professionalism in the industry, ownership attitude and unemployment. Firstly, the interviewees noted that journalism was open to everyone regardless of qualifications. So many people without mass communication qualifications were practising journalism. That made it difficult for a structured qualification and deserving salary levels to be put in place. Secondly, it was discovered that salaries of journalists were determined by ownership, especially in privately owned media organisations, and ownership did not owe anybody an explanation as to what informed salaries to be paid to their employees. This had a ripple effect on another discovery made: journalists in government owned media organisations were paid a little better than their counterparts in privately owned media organisations. This was because journalists in government owned media organisations in Ghana belong to the Trade Union Congress (TUC) and are affiliated to Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) so they had the benefit of their unions fighting for their conditions of service. Though some private media organisations in the countries had

unions therefore, the salaries of their members are bargained for, others did not or could not belong to any union so the only option was to take whatever ownership decided to pay.

For instance, an interviewee in Nigeria narrated a case where owners of *Daily Independent* owed almost two years of unpaid salaries. One day, the owners just locked up the premises, called their staff, paid half of the salaries they owed the workers and put up new advertisements for new recruitment. Unfortunately, the owners could do that and could get away with it because of the high rate of unemployment and under employment situations in the country (IDI, Nigeria). Evidence gathered from investigations in Ghana and Nigeria established that there were no differences between the states of financial security of the journalists in the two countries.

4.4.4 Professional associations and the welfare of journalists in Ghana and Nigeria

Article 21 (e) and Section 40 of the Ghanaian and Nigerian constitutions respectively provide for freedom of association. By these provisions, journalists in the countries have the right to join any association or trade unions of their choice for the association to seek for their welfare and the needed security for members. Apart from this, advocacy from professional associations is one of the attributes UNSECO considers when assessing media freedom because it is an indication of “autonomy for professional journalism” (UNESCO, 2014:64). Therefore, the study sought the opinions of journalists on the performance of Ghana Journalists Association and Nigeria Union of Journalists (main and well recognised professional associations of journalists in the countries) in securing the welfare of journalists. Gathered data is presented in table 4.10.

Table 4.10: The journalists’ views on profession associations and their welfar

Statement	Ghana		Nigeria	
	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
Associations of journalists are able to fight for the interest and welfare of their members	48.2%	51.8%	50%	50%
Associations of journalists are able to express their professional views on threats to press freedom	90.3%	9.7%	76%	24%
Journalists are free to join associations to protect and secure their interest	92.4%	7.6%	64.3%	35.7%

Findings from table 4.10 showed that majority of the respondents in Ghana and Nigeria (92.4% and 64.3% respectively) had the freedom to exercise their right to join professional associations. The majority (90.3% for Ghana and 76% for Nigeria) also agreed that the associations were able to draw attention to threats to press freedom. However, about half of the respondents (51.8% and 50% from Ghana and Nigeria respectively) felt their association was not able to fight for their interests and welfare. This particular finding was of relevance to the issue under investigation, therefore, the interviews were used to probe for more insights and explanations.

Findings from the interviews in the country were mixed bag. While three of the interviewees in Ghana agreed that the GJA was doing its best to fight for the interests of its members, four of the interviewees did not agree. In the same vein, an interviewee in Nigeria felt the NUJ was able to secure welfare of journalists but five of the interviewees did not agree with the submission. One interviewee however, noted that the NUJ was doing well but it was not good enough.

In Ghana, the four interviewees felt the GJA was not effective in fighting for the interest of journalists because it could advocate some issues relating to press freedom but could not fight for better conditions of service for its members. However, the three interviewees, (two of them were past presidents of the association and the other is the current secretary of the association), disagreed with the submission. To them, GJA had been very active in advocating issues of interest to the journalism like the passage of the FOI bill and physical security of journalists. There had been instances where the association had followed up on attacks on members and had ensured that not only apologies had been rendered to victims but also that smashed cameras of photo journalists had been replaced. They further added that as an association, its six-member national executive body could not do more than they were already doing. This was because they needed all the members to get on board and actively raise issues affecting them for debate so that the association could deal with challenges facing journalists but Ghanaian journalists had left the work for the executives alone that was the reason that the association seemed not effective.

An interviewee from Ghana notes that:

...the GJA has been struggling all these years to transform the association to a union so that it can have a bargaining certificate to

be able to negotiate better conditions of service on behalf of journalists who are members of the association but it has not been successful so far. As journalists, we are equally concerned about this problem but the point is that the GJA is not an employer. It is just an association of professionals so until it is able to receive the bargaining certificate from the Labour Department, it cannot negotiate for anything on behalf of journalists” (IDI, Ghana).

In Nigeria, five of the interviewees were of the view that the NUJ was unable to fight for the interests and welfare of journalists because they had lost focus and their main objective was to make money for themselves as individuals. An interviewee from a newspaper organisation claims that

...when you take the statistics of the executives [of NUJ], those who are not working in media houses are in the good lead. Few of them are gainfully employed in media houses. So of course they use the platform for self-gain... They will say that they are organising conferences, that they are taking some people to abroad to go and do courses but if you look at the aggregate of what they are doing, then you will see a disconnect between the actual needs of members and what they are doing. That is it (IDI, Nigeria).

On the contrary, an interviewee (NUJ Chairman) was with the opinion that the NUJ had been working for the welfare of its members and added that some journalists were complaining about the union because they had not seen the union being confrontational in its dealings with stakeholders. He further noted that the union had been constantly negotiating for better conditions of service for its members but most of the members did not attend meetings/conferences or did not pay their dues so were unaware of happenings in the union. An interviewee (from a tertiary institution) admitted that the two submissions were true. Thus he notes that:

...the problem of NUJ is that it is a hydra-headed union. It is both a professional and a trade union. And it becomes a bit difficult when you combine these two in one ... as individuals (journalists)... most of them are so individualistic that when you call meetings ... They show so much apathy towards the union. Many of them don't even pay their check-up bills. Many of them feel “so what is the union doing for us?” Nothing, so let's survive on our own. So every man

to himself so to say. So journalists have a lot of apathy towards the union and that can be a problem (IDI, Nigeria).

Based on comparison of evidence gathered from data on sense of security among journalists in Ghana and Nigeria, it was established that there were no differences between the findings. The media in the countries were faced with physical and financial insecurities and it appeared their professional associations could not do much to help overcome the insecurities.

4.5.0 Research question four: To what extent are media operations in the countries controlled by political, ownership and commercial interests?

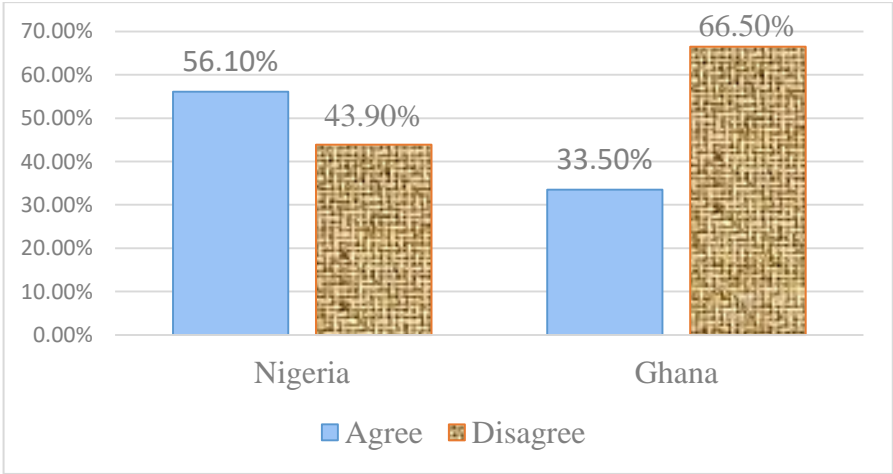
In democratic societies, the media are “entrusted with the responsibility of the surveillance of the [political] environment through presentation and analysis of the happenings in society” (Nwanne, 2014:11). A critical component in the performance of the watchdog function of the press is always undertaken on behalf of the citizens (Dagbanja, 2014). As the watchdog of the society, the media is mandated to seek and protect public interests in democracies. The watchdog role is assigned to the media because it is a known fact that many interests – government/political, ownership and commercial - do compete with public interest in democracies when they seek for favourable coverage at the expense of public interest. Research has shown that these interests negatively affect public interest when the press is not free and such interests are able to downplay public interest (Bagdikian, 2004; McChesny, 2004; Curran, 2002; Akinwale, 2010; Ojebode, 2009; 2013; Ali, 2015; Shardow & Asare, 2016). The study therefore, separately examined the presence or absence of each of the interest (political, ownership and commercial) in the Ghanaian and Nigerian media environments so as to gain insights into and explanations for the variations in the state of press freedom in the countries.

4.5.1 Political Interests in Media Operations in Ghana and Nigeria.

The advent of press freedom as a concept was due to suppression of the media by governments. Press freedom originated from struggles for freedom from authoritative

regimes. Though at a point in time in history the media was able to be free from total control of governments, experience had shown that some form of governmental/political control, either overt or covert, still exists in democracies. As trustees of public interests, governments were able to easily hold information from public for self-interest since the release of such information would not put them in a good light (Caparini, 2004). In the context of this study, literature has established governmental control in the two countries (Shardow and Asare, 2016; Akinwale, 2010; Ojebode, 2013; Nwanne, 2014). Therefore, the study investigated the existence of political interests in the operations of the media in the two countries so as to determine its impact on the disparities in press freedom levels in the countries. This is because their presence or otherwise in the media operations in the two countries will determine the autonomy of the media from political actors in carrying out their duties. The outcome is presented below:

Figure 4.6: Political/Governmental Control over Media Content as Perceived by Journalists in the Countries.



According to figure 4.6, majority of the respondents from Ghana (66.5%) disagreed with the assertion that government or political actors had influence over media contents and operations but more than half of their Nigerian counterparts (56.1%) felt otherwise.

To determine if the difference political influence in media operations in the countries is significant, the study hypothesizes that:

H_{4a}: There is a significant difference in political interests in media operations in Ghana and Nigeria.

Table 4.11: Political Interest in Media Operations in Ghana and Nigeria

Paired Samples Statistics				
	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Political Influence Ghana	19.7055	146	5.51508	.45643
Political Influence Nigeria	24.0342	146	5.29855	.43851

Paired Samples t-test

Paired Differences					t	df	sig	
Paired Samples	Mean	Std. Dev.	Std. Error Mean	95% confidence interval of the difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Political influence in Ghana and Nigeria	-4.32877	7.69246	.63663	-5.58705	-3.07049	-6.799	145	.000

In table 4.11, the paired samples statistics indicates that political influence is higher in Nigeria (24.0342) than in Ghana (19.7055). The paired samples test establishes that there is significant difference in the presence of political influences in the media operations in the countries: this is established at $M = -4.32877$, $SD = 7.69246$, $t = -6.799$, $p < .000$. As a result, the alternate hypothesis is accepted.

Data from the interviews confirmed these findings. Thus, analysis of the interviews revealed claims of political control in the two countries but the claims were made more in the Nigeria than Ghana. In Ghana, all the interviewees acknowledged that political influence did exist especially in the government owned electronic media organisations than privately owned organisations. This was because the Board of Directors in government owned organisations were appointed by the NMC in consultation with the President (Article 168 of 1992 Constitution). Therefore, “there [was] the tendency for such an organisation to tilt towards

news items that [favoured] the government or put the government in a good light” (IDI, Ghana) because the government could influence the appointments.

However, they also agreed that political influence was not so profound and the government-owned print media were free from political interferences to a large extent. This was realised in the analysis of the interviews because the editor of a government owned print organisation admitted the existence of the influence but noted that in critical situations when public interests conflicted with political interests, public interest took pre-eminence because he could not be sacked if he was right. This bold stance, in the era of high unemployment and under employment, could be because the editors of government owned organisations were appointed by not only the Board of Directors but in consultation with Public Services Commission (Article 169). By extension, if he was going to be sacked because he published an unfavourable story about the government, then the decision would be taken by bodies that gave him the appointment and not only by the Board of Directors of his organisation.

Again, it was revealed that political influence indirectly affected the sense of security of some journalists. This was because some media organisations in the country were aligned towards political parties. For instance, it is a common perception that Mr Kwaku Baako, the editor of *The New Crusading Guide*, and Mr Kwesi Pratt, the managing editor of *Insight* are aligned to the NPP and the NDC respectively. This is because the content of their newspapers have always been soft on the government they are perceived to be aligned with. Therefore, journalists in organisations aligned to parties in opposition feel insecure in their coverage of issues against the government in power. An interviewee confirms this when she notes that

...today in Ghana, there are some journalists who feel that their lives are in danger now that the NPP is in power. This is because they work for an aligned newspaper - papers that are aligned to NDC. It was the same when NDC was in power. There are some journalists in my organisation like Manasseh Azure and myself who also did not feel comfortable when NDC was in power. I could not cover the last NDC Congress because I had been tagged as a regime changer so I felt that my life has been threatened” (IDI, Ghana).

This and other instances recounted by the interviewees in Ghana indicated the existence of political/governmental control in the Ghanaian media.

In Nigeria, however, the political influence was more profound than it was in Ghana. Like in the case of Ghana, the Nigerian print media were free from governmental influences to some extent because the few surviving government-owned print media in the country did not have national visibility but had some visibility at the state level, therefore, the government could not interfere with content. However, the electronic media were not free from such interference. From the analysis, it was discovered that political influence was exerted not only over media content but also in other areas like licensing of electronic media.

The Nigerian interviewees admitted that it was impossible for journalists in government owned organisations to broadcast stories that were critical of government likewise their counterparts in politician-business person owned (PBO) organisations and other privately owned organisations whose owners were associated with some political personalities. For instance, an interviewee noted that journalists in government-owned media primarily function as the mouth pieces of government and this was not due to the fact that there were no professionals in the organisations but it was due to the system (IDI, Nigeria).

An interviewee in government-owned organisation sums up political influence in media operations in Nigeria when she claims that press freedom

...depends on who you are working for, where you are working, and when it is being expressed... This is because the information that ordinarily you will want to give is supposed to be something you are so sure will benefit everybody but now it doesn't interest your principal because your principal feels that he may be embarrassed by it, so what do you do? Then you drop it" (IDI, Nigeria).

The situation could be attributed to the fact that government or politicians in Nigeria, from independence to date, had always interfered in the operations of the media because they used the media to further their political agenda (Ismail, 2011). Before Nigeria's independence, the media were successfully used by aspiring politicians to fight against colonial control. So after independence, politicians saw the press as instrument for "acquiring their different aspired office to the extent that those who did not have any print media were motivated to establish their own" to serve their political interest (Ismail, 2011:9). This phenomenon appeared not to have changed since independence because the all the interviewees in Nigeria

agreed that both the government-owned and the privately owned media were still tools for furthering political agendas.

Another discovery was that political interests also influenced the implementation of the provisions on press freedom in Nigeria. A common theme that emerged from analysis of data from the interview on implementation of the provisions was lack of will power on the part of the Nigerian government and politicians to implement the provisions. It may be for this reason that years after the passage of the FOI law at the Federal level, Oyo and Lagos States were yet to domesticate the law and adapt it at the state level. Politicians at the State House of Assembly in the states did not attach urgency to adapting the law because it did not favour their interest (IDI, Nigeria). Rather, it favoured the public interest and emboldened the media to hold them accountable as Section 22 of the 1999 Constitution demands. So, the first excuse for denial of access to information through the FOI in these states was 'it has not been adapted in the state'. In such a situation, the organisation can either insist and be ready for artificial hurdles that would be created through the procedure for access the information to impede access or go to court (IDI, Nigeria).

An interviewee narrated an experience where his organisation wanted to access information on the cost involved in sending the wives of legislators of a state to the UK for training as well as the coffers the amount was taken from. The organisation was denied access with the excuse that FOI had not been domesticated in the state. However, the organisation challenged it at the court and the case dragged for a long time because the first judgement was challenged at the Appeal Court. Eventually, judgment was in the favour of the organisation. Though judgement finally favoured the organisation, the information had lost its relevance by the time that final judgement was given.

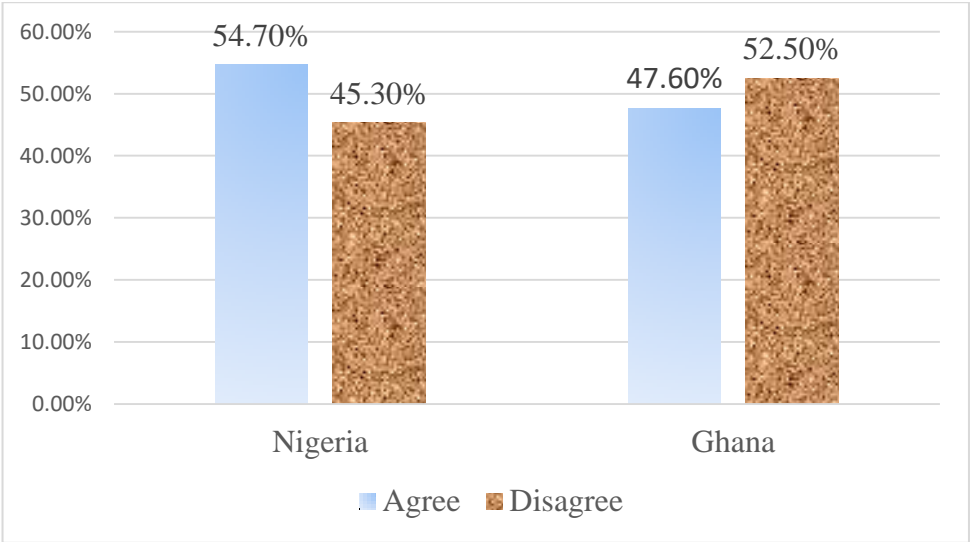
Apart from influencing media content, evidence from gathered data suggested that political interests also influence the licensing of electronic media in Nigeria indirectly. The President is the only person who can grant license in Nigeria. This has the likelihood to call the fairness in the granting of the license to question and may also explain the reason that most of the media organisations in Nigeria are owned by politicians or people connected with politicians. Thus, the likelihood of a politician being granted a license, to some extent, might be higher than the likelihood of the average Nigerian being granted a license. On the other hand, there had been an instance in Nigeria where the President had publicly delegated the right of issuing licenses to the NBC. In October 2010, former president Goodluck Jonathan

publicly “authorized the NBC to issue broadcast licenses to communities seeking to establish radio stations and delegated his powers to issue licences to the NBC” (Olanrewaju as cited in IREX, 2012:315). This also suggests that it may not always be the case that the president of the day may grant license to only politicians. However, the presence of political influence over media contents in the countries proves that they performed poorly on the indicator of absence of political influence.

4.5.2 Ownership Interests over Media Content in the Countries.

The influence of ownership over media content cannot be ignored (Curran, 2002) because it is considered among threats to media freedom. Thus through ownership influence, media content can be skewed to suit self-interests rather than public interests. This happens when by virtue of ownership the watchdog is successfully turned into a lap dog (Ojebode, 2013). The extents of ownership influences in the operations of the media in the countries were examined. Findings are presented in the figure below:

Figure 4.7: Ownership interests over media content as perceived by journalists in the countries



Data in the Figure 4.7 revealed that media content in the two countries were subjected to ownership influence. While a little under half of the Ghanaian respondents (47.6%)

indicated that media contents in their country were subjected to ownership influence, a little over half of the respondents from Nigeria (54.7%) agreed with them. This finding implied that the presence of ownership influence in the operations of the media in the countries were almost the same. To validate or refute this finding, the following hypothesis was used to establish if there was any difference in the views of the journalist was significant:

H_{4b}: There is a significant difference in ownership interest in media operations in Ghana and Nigeria.

Table 4.12: Ownership Interests in Media Operations in Ghana and Nigeria

Paired Samples Statistics					
	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	
Ownership Influence Ghana	16.551	145	4.86189	.40376	
Ownership Influence Nigeria	17.944	145	4.45312	.36981	

Paired Samples t-test								
Paired Differences					t	df	sig	
Paired Samples	Mean	Std. Dev.	Std. Error Mean	95% confidence interval of the difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Ownership influence in Ghana and Nigeria	-1.39310	6.33147	.52580	-2.43239	-.35382	-2.649	145	.009

In table 4.12, the paired samples statistics indicates that ownership influence is higher in Nigeria (17.9448) than in Ghana (16.5517). The paired samples test establishes that the difference is not significant (M=-1.39310, SD=6.33147, t=-2.649, p>.009).

Data from the interviews buttressed the findings of the paired samples t-test. It showed that ownership influence existed in the operations of the media in the two countries but it was stronger in Nigeria than Ghana. Data from Ghana indicated that ownership influence did play out in determining media content, especially in the privately owned organisations. All the interviewees agreed that ownership influence existed in media operations in Ghana but

they did not experience it very often. It was also discovered that there seemed to be an emerging trend in ownership influence in Ghana: some private owners used of media content of their organisation to promote the business interests of the owner. Thus, business men who were also media owners used their media organisations as the platform to promote or give publicity to their line of products as well as possibly use it for damage control in times of crisis or damaging occurrence in their business/company.

For instance, an interviewee notes that “if a company like Despite Group of Companies is taken as an example, the owner has powerful media organisations as well as other manufacturing companies. If you sample their content, you realise that most of the adverts promote products from the manufacturing companies” (IDI, Ghana). She further added hypothetically that should the manufacturing company end up circulating sub-standard products in the Ghanaian markets, there was no way that Despite media organisation would expose their manufacturing company and “this [was] because the ownership of Despite media organisations [had] shares in the Despite manufacturing companies so the media organisations would rather do a PR (public relations) job for the manufacturing company to protect its image when public interest should rather be their priority” (IDI, Ghana). These are some of the negative emerging occurrences in the media industry in Ghana that hinder press freedom because they stifle content diversity and objectivity.

In Nigeria, data gathered suggested that the problem of ownership influence in media operations was profound. All the interviewees admitted the existence of ownership influence in the operations of the media. It was discovered that the interviewees constantly experienced it and they could not do anything about it. An interviewee recounted an instance where a story about a contract on a bridge at Apete that had been awarded to the son-in-law of a governor on five different occasions (even when the project was not carried out) was spiked because the son-in-law of the governor happened to be the best friend of the owner of the media organisation. Thus, the editor did not want the owner of the organisation to be dragged before the Olubadan Council over this issue since the owner was a chief. An interviewee from a tertiary institution also noted that ownership influence was experienced even at the point of employment into the profession because ownership employed only people who were sympathetic to their ideologies.

Another interviewee from a television station, for instance notes that

...ownership influence... is so pronounced in Nigeria. I don't know about other places but here in Nigeria, in fact it has gotten to a state that personally I tend to ask myself the question that 'Am I still practising journalism or I am just reporting almost like a press release?' You are just there to echo, echo and echo. It is only in those times that ownership would not be bothered about a particular story that you can go all out and do a live story (IDI, Nigeria).

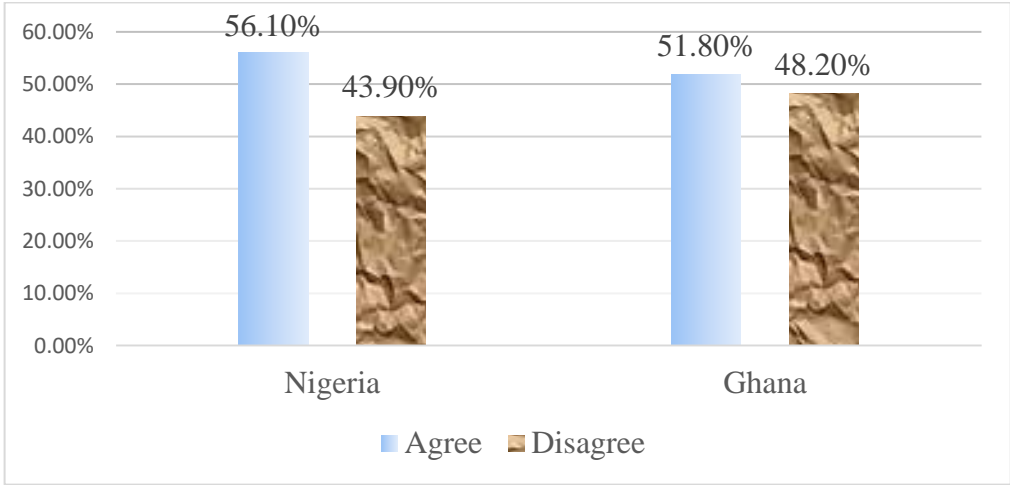
Another discovery was ownership interference in Nigeria appeared to have implications for the security of journalists in some privately owned media organisations. Data showed that journalist in some organisations could not join unions because ownership would not say categorically that a journalist could not join a union but "the body language policy" of ownership made it clear they did not want that happening in their organisations (IDI-Nigeria). As a result an interviewee in a radio station noted that often, private ownership saw an attempt by employees to form a union was seen as a threat his/her business. These and other instances appeared to portray high ownership influence in the Nigerian media. Ojebode (2013:307) reported of a "near-total control" of ownership influence that seemed "to be on greater scale than what" was "found in literature". From the analysis of evidence gathered from the interview data in Nigeria, it appeared the situation had not changed. Findings from the gathered data in the countries confirmed ownership operations in media operations in the countries. This finding upholds the outcome of ownership dominance over media content by Ali (2015). It also undermined the independence of media in both countries.

4.5.3 Influence of Commercial Interests over Operations of the Media in the Countries

By the media policy in Ghana and the NBC Act of Nigeria, existence of commercial media is allowed. Basically, commercial media organisations are owned by business-oriented people and their focus is profit making which is mostly realised through advertisements. However, dependence of commercial media organisations, especially the free to air ones, on advertisers creates challenges for press freedom and media content. Thus, as a result of patronage, the production of media content is then directed to serve the needs of advertisers (people who have money to spend) than public interest. McChesny (2004; 200) identifies this situation in America when he describes it as a media market that is determined by "one dollar, one vote". Thus, media content which must be predicted by public interest is

predicted by money and the media operations in Ghana and Nigeria are not immune to the “one dollar one vote situation”. The study sought to examine the influence of commercial interests on the state of press freedom in the countries and the findings are presented in figure 4.8

Figure 4.8: Journalists’ perception of the influence of commercial interest over media content



From figure 4.8, data indicated that over half of the respondents (56.1% in Nigeria and 51.8% in Ghana) agreed that media contents were subjected to commercial interests in their countries. Based on the findings, it could be argued that commercial interests were experienced in the operations of the media in the countries. This was because there was no difference in their perceptions.

In testing for the extent of significant difference in commercial interest in media operations in the countries, the study hypothesizes that:

H_{4c}: There is a significant difference in commercial interests in media operations in Ghana and Nigeria.

Table 4.13: Commercial interests in media operations in Ghana and Nigeria

Paired Samples Statistics					
	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	
Political Influence Ghana	5.2260	146	1.60504	.13283	
Political Influence Nigeria	5.7123	146	1.38444	.11458	

Paired Samples t-test								
	Paired Differences				t	df	sig	
Paired Samples	Mean	Std. Dev.	Std. Error Mean	95% confidence interval of the difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Political influence in Ghana and Nigeria	-.48630	2.03499	.16842	-.81917	-.15343	-2.887	145	.004

Data in table 4.13 shows that ownership influence is higher in Nigeria (5.7123) than in Ghana (5.2260). The paired samples test establishes that the difference is significant ($M = -.48630$, $SD = 2.03499$, $t = -2.887$, $p < .004$).

Data from the interviews indicated that commercial interest influenced media operations in the country but the influence was higher in Nigeria than Ghana. All the interviewees in the two countries noted that media organisations had to bend to accommodate commercial interests, especially advertisers who spend huge sums of money. An interviewee succinctly described the situation by noting that “the real world out there [was] for the journalist who [knew] that the advertiser [was] the editor” (IDI, Nigeria). However, they also admitted that in critical situations, both the commercial and public interests were balanced so as to serve both interests. This was because the media organisations gave space to both interests in their content or self-censorship was carried out. Though they all noted that ideally that should not happen, they also said that the realities regarding the economic situations in the countries were such that they had no choice than to do that because the media, especially the privately owned ones, needed revenue from advertisers to survive.

For instance, a Ghanaian interviewee who is the CEO of his organisation notes that

...the media business is capital intensive so revenue is needed from advertisers so that we can pay salaries and allowances, pay life insurance premiums, pay taxes, rent and other expenses...As a private media organisation, advertisers are our only source of revenue so we cannot just ignore their interests” (IDI, Ghana).

A Nigerian interviewee from a management position in a print media organisation also admitted to this situation in the Nigerian context when he also claimed that often, the advertisers did not mount pressure on the media not to publish negative stories about them but media organisations rather felt they were under moral bondage to save their advertisers from negative situations. This was because in doing so, the media organisations would have not only the needed revenue to survive but the advertiser would always remember the loyalty of the media organisation and reciprocate the gesture with good advertisements. So for instance, an editor noted that sometimes, a newspaper would have a fantastic front page story for the next day but if an advertiser was ready “to pay 10 million Naira for the cover, what do you do? You drop the story and sell the cover” (IDI, Nigeria). The above findings confirm the existence of commercial influence in media operations in the two countries.

However, data from Nigeria suggest that commercial influence in media operations seem to be a higher than the Ghanaian experience. This was because from the results, it was discovered that journalists were also expected to secure advertisements for their organisations. An interviewee, for instance, notes the managements of media organisations

...believe that you (journalists) have more contacts and if you have more contacts it means you can also drive business so you use your contacts to bring in adverts and you are entitled to a commission. So in a way, that also ensures that the journalist is comfortable and the newspaper also has money to run his business (IDI, Nigeria).

Data from the survey and the interviews confirmed the existence of commercial interests in media operations in the countries. This means that the Ghana and Nigeria’s performance on the indicator of absence of commercial interests was poor.

Based on data gathered, it was concluded that political, ownership and commercial interests were experienced by the media in the countries. Thus, though the media in the countries covered human interest stories, public interest was often sacrificed for other interests whenever there was a clash. Though there were very little differences in how political and commercial influences played out in the operations of the media in Ghana and Nigeria, there was no major difference in the influence of ownership interests in Ghana and Nigeria.

Apart from this finding, it was also discovered that these influences were interwoven. Comparison of these influences in data gathered from the countries showed that political influence in the government-owned organisations was due to the fact that to an extent, the government in power occupied the ownership position. Also, data indicated that commercial influence in privately owned organisations was due to ownership influence.

The existence of these interests, no matter the degree, poses a challenge for press freedom in the countries. This is because public interest must be paramount in all the engagements of the media. Unfortunately, the existing reality seems to be that other interests in the media are placed above public interest. This situation contradicts the fact that the press is for public service and show that the media in the countries were not autonomous to some extent. This is because they fail to perform under some of UNESCO's indicators of independence.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter basically summarises the study. It considered the summary and conclusions of the study as well as recommendations made based on the outcome of the study.

5.1 Summary

The study investigated reasons why there were disparities in the press freedom levels in Ghana and Nigeria. This was because the countries had similar political and press histories except their press freedom levels and this situation conflicted with the explanation that democracy is characterised by free press. The study, therefore, adopted and adapted the indicators of press freedom (UNESCO, 2014) to examine how free flow of information was allowed or inhibited in the two countries.

The study was hinged on the libertarian and social responsibility theories of the press but the authoritarian theory of the press was also considered. This was because the theories offered insights on the excesses and vulnerability of press freedom under various political contexts and this aided data collection. The study adopted a small N comparative case study design, specifically cross-case spatial design. The design was employed because it enabled multi-dimensional observations of factors responsible for the variations in press freedom level of Ghana and Nigeria. By this design, the researcher was able to hold constant the similarities in the political and media environments in the countries and examine the differences in press freedom levels. The mixed method sequential explanatory approach was used to enable the researcher achieve an in-depth and nuanced view on the causes of the disparities in the countries. Therefore, survey, document analysis and in-depth interviews were used to investigate the state of press freedom in the countries and factors responsible for the differences in the state of press freedom.

Using the mixed methodology approach, the researcher was able to determine how journalists sampled in each country perceived the state of press freedom and the factors responsible for that state as well as probe for why that state of particular state of press

freedom and how the factors responsible for that state play out in their countries. Stratified, purposive, available and random sampling techniques were used to select 396 journalists from 36 media organisations in Accra Metropolitan Area and Lagos- Ibadan Axis, 20 statutory provisions, 66 cases of media freedom violations and 14 interviewees from in Ghana and Nigeria. The study adopted inferential and descriptive methods of data analysis.

Findings indicated that there was a significant difference ($M=-1.32168$, $SD=2.98258$, $t=-5.299$, $p<.000$) in the levels of press freedom in Ghana and Nigeria. Ghana had elaborate constitutional provisions and Nigeria had elaborate provisions in the Freedom of Information Act, yet responses from journalists and interviewees indicated that Ghana fared better than Nigeria on the indices of adequacy of provisions on press freedom (Ghana:82.5%; Nigeria: 61.6%) and the implementation of the provisions (Ghana:81%; Nigeria:47.9%). It was also discovered that there was a significant difference ($M=-3.06383$, $SD=16.00813$, $t=-2.273$, $p<.025$) in the enabling media environments in the countries. Outcome from the journalists and the interviewees revealed that Ghana had a friendlier media environment (79.7%) than Nigeria (43.8%) because rule of law was considered more effective in Ghana than Nigeria. Data gathered again indicated there was no significant difference ($M=1.22378$, $SD=11.69773$, $t=1.251$, $p>.213$) in the security of journalists in both countries. Records revealed that attacks and threats were often experienced by journalists in the countries. The interviewees also affirmed that the state of financial and physical security in Ghana and Nigeria was poor. Also, no significant difference ($M=-1.39310$, $SD=6.33147$, $t=-2.649$, $p>.009$) was found in ownership influence over media content in the countries. However, significant differences were established in political ($M=4.32877$, $SD=7.69246$, $t=6.799$, $p<.000$) and commercial influences ($M=-.48630$, $SD=7.203499$, $t=-3.887$, $p<.004$). Responses from the interviewees showed that public interest was often sacrificed in the countries if it clashed with political, ownership and commercial interests.

From the forgoing, it could be argued that the state of press freedom in both Ghana and Nigeria was partially free because of state of insecurity among journalists and the presence of political, ownership and commercial interests in the operations of media in the countries. These give the indication that the countries performed poorly on some indicators of independence as well as indicators of safety. Again, there was a significant difference in the state of press freedom in the countries. This was because rule of law was effective in Ghana so it had a better enabling media environment that allowed press freedom to thrive. However, rule of law seemed not to be effective in Nigeria, therefore, it did not have an

enabling media environment so press freedom was undermined. This means that Ghana fared better on the indicators of freedom and some indicators of independence.

5.2 Conclusion

This study sought to investigate factors responsible for the variations in press freedom levels of Ghana and Nigeria despite their similar political and press histories. From the analysis of the data gathered, findings indicated that the media in Ghana and Nigeria were partially free but there was a significant difference in the state of press freedom in the countries. This supported the assertion by literature that the press in Nigeria was partially free (Nwanne, 2014; Ojebode, 2013; Akinwale, 2010), but contradicted claims by some studies that the press in Ghana was free (Manco, 2013; Gargliardone et al, 2012) – thereby confirmed the findings of Shardow and Asare (2016). This was because like the press in Nigeria, the Ghanaian press was not only unable to protect public interest from political, ownership and commercial influences but journalists in the country were also physically and financially unsecured. Findings revealed that there was no significant difference in that state of security and ownership influence. However, significant differences were established in political and commercial influences over media content. So though the press in the two countries had some freedom to carry out their duties, the margin of freedom was not reasonably acceptable in a democracy because the margin was such that public interest was not always protected. Thus, data indicated that there were no significant differences in the state of physical and financial securities of journalists in the countries as well as ownership influences in the countries. However, it was discovered that there was a significant difference in the adequacy of press freedom provisions in the legal and statutory books of the countries and the implementation of the provisions.

It was also discovered that though the media in the countries were partially free, the state of press freedom in Ghana was better than that of Nigeria because it had better enabling media environment than Nigeria. Thus to an extent, Ghana fared better on the assessment of most of the UNESCO's (2014) indicators of press freedom than Nigeria and that accounted for the variations in press freedom levels in the countries. This finding was in consonance with the global press freedom ratings by Freedom House (2011; 2012; 2013; 2014; 2015; 2016) and Reporters Without Borders (2011; 2012; 2013; 2014; 2015, 2016). Ghana had more and elaborate provisions and the prevailing democratic context in the country – effective

actualisation of rule of law to a great extent - ensured better implementation of the provisions on press freedom. There was significant difference in the nature of enabling environments in the countries. Therefore, this made the Ghanaian media environment friendly which resulted in better enabling media environment for press freedom to thrive. On the other hand, Nigeria had provisions that were few but elaborate provisions and the prevailing democratic context in the country – ineffective actualisation of rule of law to a great extent - did not encourage better implementation of the provisions so this made the media environment in Nigeria not very friendly and it led to a media environment that did not encourage press freedom to thrive.

In conclusion, Ghana is considered as one of the successful democracies in West Africa (Baba, 2015) because democracy is better entrenched in Ghana. Findings supported the claim that rule of law – one of the critical underpinnings of democracy - worked better in Ghana so the implementation of the provisions of press freedom in the legal and statutory books of Ghana was better. As a result, it is theoretically congruent that Ghana’s transition into democratic rule is accompanied by its transition to libertarian press (Ojebode, 2013). Though Nigeria is considered as a successful democratic society, it seems democracy is not as entrenched in the country as Ghana because it seems not to be a perfect example of a full democracy (Adingupu, 2012; Lindberg, 2006). To a great extent, the rule of law seems not to work better in Nigeria because implementation of the provisions on press freedom in their legal and statutory books was not adequately enforced. Therefore, its press has not transitioned to a libertarian press and this is “theoretically incongruent” (Ojebode, 2013:308). These account for reasons why there are variations in the press freedom levels of Ghana and Nigeria despite their similar political and press histories.

5.3.0 Recommendations

The outcome of the study necessitates the need for stakeholders in the media industry in Ghana and Nigeria to implement some recommendations to safeguard democracy and press freedom in the countries. This section therefore outlines general recommendations for both countries and specific recommendations for the countries based on the peculiarities of the established nature of prevailing political and press systems in the countries.

5.3.1 General recommendations for Ghana and Nigeria

All the stakeholders in the Ghanaian and Nigerian media must acknowledge and appreciate that the press is for public service than self-interest and therefore, collectively work towards ensuring the existence of a free and independent press. This will reduce ownership/political influences in the operations of the media. Again, the recognition that the press is for public good has positive effects on strengthening democracy and that attracts not only donor agencies to help build the country but it also encourages foreign investments. This is because the existence of a free press in any nation paints a positive image of democratic governance in that nation.

Laws on regulation of media ownership in the two countries must be reconsidered. The media in the countries are not immune to challenges of media concentration and it seems to be an emerging trend in the countries. Vast evidence from research has established the negative impact of media concentration on democracies. Therefore, such evidence must serve as useful lessons to learn from. It will be unfortunate if the media in the countries will have to experience the negative impacts of media concentration before their regulations are reconsidered.

Stakeholders in the media industry must find sustainable ways to provide public subsidies for the media to address cost related challenges in media operations in the countries. This can be through tax reductions or exemptions. Thus, taxes paid by media organisations or licenses fees can be reduced to lower cost related challenges facing the media or tax on materials for productions of media content can be exempted. This will reduce the level of commercial interest or control on the operations of the media.

Professional associations of journalist must do more to advocate security and welfare of journalists. The association should encourage journalists who suffer any physical insecurity to come out and report. The association can create a platform for victims to lodge complaints of attacks and threats. This can help the association to document and monitor the rate of violations against the media. In the same vein, they can create a website like media vaults, especially in Nigeria, to assist journalist to easily access information through the FOI laws because as a recognised body, they have the backing that public institutions cannot help but acknowledge. Also, the associations can partner with owners of media organisations to secure risk insurance schemes for their members because it would be easy for ownership to agree to insure journalists if they know that the associations

would bear part of the cost. However, the associations will be able to do this if their members get actively involved in the activities of the associations as well as pay their dues.

The hierarchy of security agencies and professional associations of journalists should find ways of ensuring more engagements and collaboration between the media organisations and the security agencies in their duties towards the public. Such engagements will reduce the number of attacks on the media as a result of clashes or misunderstandings between the media and the security agencies.

5.3.2 Recommendations for Ghana

The FOI bill must be passed into law in Ghana. Also, problematic areas in the yet-to-be passed FOI bill in Ghana that relates to the accessibility of information to the media must be amended before the bill is passed into law. For instance, timeliness is of essence in the media industry so the clause that provides for waiting for three weeks upon request of information will not benefit the media. Again, there should be clearly defined boundaries on grounds of national security. Amending these and other problematic areas in the yet to be passed bill will enhance press freedom in Ghana for better.

The law on appointment of Board Members of government owned media organisations (Article 168) must be amended so that instead of NMC appointing them in consultation with the President, it will be done with Public Services Commission. This will reduce the possibility of governmental influences over the operations of government owned media.

The GJA must strive to attain a bargaining certificate from the Labour Department so that the executives can have the needed bargaining power to engage ownership on conditions of service for its members. Journalists in Ghana should actively support the association to address challenges confronting the association.

5.3.3 Recommendations for Nigeria

Libel offences should be decriminalized so that the country can meet the international standard for free expression. Thus, the presence of such laws in the statutes of the country creates negative impression about the country despite the fact that they are hardly used against the media.

Some laws relating to the operations of the broadcast media should be amended. The law on issuing of license in Nigeria should be amended so that an independent regulatory body (NBC) will be responsible for issuing license for broadcast media. The current law gives that right to issue license to only the President and this seems to question the objectivity or the credibility of how license are issued in the country. It also encourages entrenchment of political influence in the operations of the media. Nigeria can review its 1990 National Communication Policy and fully implement it because the policy made good recommendations that weaned media regulatory bodies from government with regards to the issuing and regulating of licenses for the electronic media.

The political actors in Nigeria must ensure enforcement of the rule of law in Nigeria. The democratic status of the country is questionable without enforcement of laws in the country because democracy is not only about public participation but rule of law as well. Considering the fact that the provisions on press freedom in the 1999 Constitution are few, supporting laws like the FOI law which is elaborate must be enforced.

The Nigerian judiciary must establish more new courts to settle the numerous human right cases and to prevent cases in the courts from dragging for years. This will reduce the pressure the courts and the undue delay in settling disputes. It will also ensure that the average Nigerian will regain their confidence in the judiciary in handling cases.

References

- Aalberg, T., & Curran, J. (Eds.) 2012. *How media inform democracy: a comparative approach*. New York: Routledge.
- Adebayo, P. & Ojo, E. O. 2007. Freedom of speech: comparative study of United States of America and Nigeria. *Journal of Humanities* 13.1: 89-99.
- Adingupu, C. 2012. The fourth republic has failed says Sagay. *Vanguard*. Retrieved May 26, 2014, from <http://www.vangurdngi.com>
- Adoi-Elaigwu, S. (February) 2016. Top TV stations in Nigeria and Ghana, Q4 2015. Retrieved May 24, 2016 from <http://www.blog.geopoll.com/top-tv-stations-in-nigeria-and-ghana-q4-2015>
- African Media Barometer, 2013. Ghana 2013. Retrieved June 7, 2016, from http://www.fesmedia-africa.org/uploads/media/AMB_Ghana_2013.pdf
- 2015. Nigeria 2015. Retrieved June 7, 2016, from http://www.fesmedia-africa.org/uploads/media/AMB_Nigeria_online.pdf
- Akinwale, A. A. 2010. Repression of press freedom in Nigerian democratic dispensations. *Africa Development* 3:47-70.
- Ali, A. 2015. Media ownership and control versus press Freedom in democratic Africa. *Mass Communication and Journalism*. 5:239. doi: 10.4172/2165-7912.1000239.
- Amponsah, P. N. 2012. The Daily Graphic coverage of presidential campaigns in Ghana, 1992 – 2004. *Journal of Political Science, Government and Politics* 1.1:1-15.
- Anon. 2016. Top 10 Newspapers in Nigeria. March, 2016: Retrieved August 2, 2016 from <http://nigerianfinder.com/daily-newspapers-in-nigeria-the-top-10/>
- Anon., 2014. Court Slaps Informer Newspaper GH¢3,000,000 for Libel. Feb 28: Retrieved Jan 10, 2017 from <http://www.myjoyonline.com/news/2014/February-28th/court-slaps-informer-newspaper-gh300-000-for-libel.php>
- Awuni, M. A. 2014. Asiedu Nketia wins GH¢250k defamation suit against Daily Guide. Feb 27: Retrieved Jan 10, 2017, from <http://www.myjoyonline.com/news/2014/february-27th/asiedu-nketia-wins-gh250k-defamation-suit-against-daily-guide.php>
- Ayeni, C. O. 2003. Nigeria, status of the media. *Encyclopaedia of International Media and Communication*. California: Academic Press. 351-362.
- Ayodele, I. B. 2002. The press under military rule in Nigeria, 1966-1993. PhD Thesis. Dept. of Communication and Language Arts, Arts. University of Ibadan. Xiv+pp.

- Baba, I. 2015. Political culture and democratic transition in West Africa: The Nigerian experience. *Universal Journal of Management*, 3.3:115-121.
- Bagdikian, B. H. 2004. *Media monopoly*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Baneseh, M., 2015. GIBA drags NMC to court. *Daily Graphic*. Jan 24: Retrieved Jan 10, 2017, from <http://www.graphic.com.gh/news/general-news/giba-drags-nmc-to-supreme-court.html>
- Baran, S. J. and Davis, D. K. 2012. *Mass communication theories: foundations, ferment and future*. 6th ed. Boston: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.
- and.....2003. *Mass Communication theories: foundations, ferment and future*. 3rd ed. Boston: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.
- Berlin, L. 2003. Freedom of the press in former soviet republics. *Encyclopaedia of International Media and Communication*. California: Academic Press. 155-167.
- Biaku, G. (August) 2015. Radio ratings in Ghana, May-July 2015. Retrieved May 24, 2016, from <http://www.blog.geopoll.com/radio-ratings-in-Ghana-may-july-2015>
- Blanchard, M. A. 2003. Freedom of the press in United States. *Encyclopaedia of International Media and Communication*. California: Academic Press. 181-192.
- Bowen, G. A. 2009. Document Analysis as a qualitative research method. *Qualitative Research Journal*. 9.2:27-40.
- Braimah, S. 2014. The state of journalist's safety in Ghana. Paper presented at a forum by UNESCO to mark the UN Day on safety of journalists and the issue of impunity in Ghana, November, 2014. Retrieved Nov 28, 2015 from <http://mfwa.africafex.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/State-of-Journalists-Safety-in-Ghana-20141.pdf>
- Brown, G. M. 2013. Nigerian political system: an analysis. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*. 3.10:172- 179.
- Carparini M. 2004. Media and the security Sector: oversight and cccountability. *Media in Security and Governance*. Retrieved July 29, 2016 from <http://www.dcaf.ch/Chapter-Section/Chapter-1-Media-and-the-security-sector-oversight-and-accountability>
- Chowdhury, S. K. 2004. The effect of democracy and press freedom on corruption: an empirical test. *Economics Letters*. 85:93-101.
- Curran, J. 2002. *Media and power*. London: Routledge.
- Curran, J., Iyengar, S., Lind, A. B. and Salovaara-Moing, I. 2009. Media system, public knowledge and democracy: a comparative study. *European Journal of Communication*24.5:5-26.

- Dagbanja, D. N. 2014. Privacy in context: the right to privacy and freedom and independence of the media under the constitution of Ghana. *African Journal of International and Comparative Law*, 22.1: 40-62.
- Doyle, L., Brady, A. & Byrne, G. 2009. An overview of mixed methodology research. *Journal of Research in Nursing*. 14.2: 175-185.
- Eko, L. 2003. Freedom of the press in Africa. *Encyclopaedia of International Media and Communication*. California: Academic Press. 117-125.
- Enyi, J. E. 2014. Nigeria's Fourth Republic – democratic or civil Rule. *Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review (Nigerian Chapter)*. 2.2:31-40.
- Eun-Suk, S. A. 2013. Distorted democracy and freedom of the press under capitalism. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*. 3.11:161-171.
- Falola, T. 2001. *Culture and customs of Nigeria*. Westport: Greenwood Press.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999. The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Retrieved July 22, 2016 from https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Nigeria_1999.pdf?lang=en
- Firdaus, A. S. 2012. Past and present of Siebert & colleagues' four theories of the press: sequential modifications of press theories associated with the media's social obligations within the framework of the social environment of the day. *Malaysian Journal of Media Studies*. 14.1:1-16.
- Folarin, B. 1998. *Theories of mass communication: an introductory text*. Ibadan: Stirling Horden Publishers (Nig) Ltd.
- Freedom House, 2016. Freedom of the press 2016. Retrieved August 2, 2016, from <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/freedom-press-2016>
-2015. Freedom of the press 2015. Retrieved November 10, 2015, from https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/FreedomofthePress_2015_FINAL.pdf
- 2014. Freedom of the press 2014. Retrieved November 20, 2015, from <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press-2014/press-freedom-rankings>
- 2013. Freedom of the press 2013. Retrieved November 10, 2015, from <https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/Global%20and%20regional%20tables.pdf>
- 2012. Freedom of the press 2012. Retrieved November 10, 2015, from <https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/Global%20and%20Regional%20Press%20Freedom%20Rankings.pdf>
- 2011. Freedom of the press 2011. Retrieved November 10, 2015, from <https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/FOTP%202011%20Global%20%26%20Regional%20Rankings.pdf>

- Garliardone, I., Stremiau, S. and Nkrumah, D. 2012. Partner, prototype or persuader? China's renewed media engagement with Ghana. *Communication, Politics and Culture*, 14:174-196.
- Gerring, J. 2007. *Case study research: Principles and Practices*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Griffin, E. 2003. *A first look at communication theories* (5th ed). Boston: McGraw.
- Hallin, D.C. and Mancini, P. 2012. Introduction, *Comparing media systems beyond the western world*. D. C. Hallin and P. Mancini. Eds. New York: Cambridge University Press.
-and.....2004. *Comparing media systems: three models of media and politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Introduction: 1-
- Hardy, J. 2008. *Western media systems*. London: Routledge.
- Hariman, T. 2006. Is there a future for democracy in Nigeria? Public lecture presented at Department of International Development, Oxford University on 5th June, 2006.
- Hawkson, E., 2016. Court strikes out NMC media control regulations. *Daily Graphic*. Nov 25: Retrieved Jan 10, 2017 from <http://www.graphic.com.gh/news/general-news/supreme-court-strikes-out-nmc-s-content-regulation-law.html>
- Hayes, D. and Guardino, M. 2010. Whose views made the news? media coverage and the march to war in Iraq. *Political Communication*. 27.1:59-87.
- Heath, C. W. (2003). Ghana, status of media. *Encyclopaedia of International Media and Communication*. California: Academic Press. 251-264.
- Ibekwe, N. 2015. Why I collected N2.1b from ex-NSA Dasuki – Dokpesi. *Premium Times*. Dec. 2: Retrieved Feb 24, 2016, from <http://www.premuimtimesng.com/news/headlines/194303-why-i-collected-n2-1-bn-from-ex-nsa-dasuki-dokpesi.html>
- Imoh, G. 2013. Mass media and democratic consolidation in Africa: problems, challenges and prospects. *New Media and Mass Communication*. 16:42-52.
- IREX (International Research and Exchange Board) 2012. *Media sustainability index 2012: development of sustainability independent media in Africa*. Washington DC, Westland Enterprise Inc.
- Ismail, O. 2011. The Nigerian press: the journey so far. *Continental Journal for Sustainable Development*. 2: 2-19.
- Johnson, R. B. and Onwuegbuzie, A. J. 2004. Mixed method research: a research paradigm whose time has come. *Educational Researcher*. 33.7: 14-26.
- Johnson, R. B., Onwuegbuzie, A. J. and Turner, L. A. 2007. Toward a definition of mixed method research. *Journal of Mixed Method Research*. 1:2:112-133.

- Kumar, D. 2006. Media, war, and propaganda: strategies of information management during the 2003 Iraq war. *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies*. 3:1:48-69.
- Kwansah-Aidoo, K. 2005. *Topical issues in communication and media research*. New York: Nova Publishers Inc.
- Levy, J. S. 2008. Case studies: types, designs, and logics of inference. *Conflict Management and Peace Science*. 25:1-18.
- Lindberg, S. I. 2006. The surprising significance of African Elections. *Journal of Democracy*. 7.1: 139-151.
- Littlejohn, S. W. & Foss, K.A. 2011. *Theories of human communication* (10th ed). Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press Inc
- Manco, G. 2013. Six ways the world can learn from Ghana about press freedom. Retrieved Jan 26, 2016 from <http://ejc.net/magazine/article/six-ways-the-world-can-learn-from-ghana-about-press-freedom#.VsW2rb8j4qQ>
- Mbaka, C. A. & Soola, E. 2015. "Health communication: tracking research trends in the journal of communication and media research". *Journal of Communication and Media Research*, 7.1: 183-198.
- McChesney, R. 2004. *The Problem of the media: U. S. communication politics in the twenty-first century*. New York: Monthly Review Press
- MFWA, 2014a. State of free expression violations in West Africa: January-April, 2014. Retrieved Aug 3, 2016, from <http://mfwa.africafex.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/FoE-Monitor-Jan-April-2014.pdf>
- 2014b. State of free expression violations in West Africa: May-August, 2014. Retrieved Aug 3, 2016, from <http://www.mfwa.org/free-expression-violations-in-west-africa-increased-by-52-in-mid-2014-mfwa-report/>
- 2014c. State of free expression violations in West Africa: September-December, 2014. Retrieved Aug 3, 2016, from <http://www.mfwa.org/security-forces-remain-biggest-threat-to-freedom-of-expression-in-west-africa-mfwa-report/>
- 2015a. West Africa free expression monitor: January-March, 2015. Retrieved Sep 13, 2016, from <http://mfwa.africafex.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/MFWA-FoE-Monitor-Jan-Mar-2015.pdf>
- 2015b. West Africa free expression monitor: April-June, 2015. Retrieved Sep 13, 2016, from <http://mfwa.africafex.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/MFWA-FoE-Monitor-April-June-2015.pdf>
- 2015c. West Africa free expression monitor: January-March, 2015. Retrieved Sep 13, 2016, from <http://www.mfwa.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/FoE-Monitor-July-December-2015-final.pdf>

- National Media Commission, n. d. National Media Policy. Retrieved Sep 10, 2016 from <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/ghana/03699.pdf>
- Ninson, K. A. 2006. Institutional development and democratic consolidation. *Voting for democracy in Ghana: the 2004 elections in perspective*. K. Boafo-Arthur. Ed. Accra: Freedom Publications. 59-78
- Nwanne, B. U. 2014. Another look at press freedom in Nigeria. *European Journal of Research in Social Science*. 2.4: 10-20.
- Ojebode, A. 2013. Ethical dilemma revisited: PBO newspapers and the professional elbowroom of the Nigerian journalists. *Journal of African Media Studies*. 5.3: 295-312.
- 2011. Nigeria's freedom of information act: provisions, strengths and challenges. *African Communication Research*, 4.2: 267-284.
-2009. Media and communications industries in Nigeria: impacts of neoliberal reforms between 1999 and 2007. *Public Service Versus Profit Making: The Nigerian Broadcast Sector in a neoliberal economy*. Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press. 59-80.
- Oladapo, A. O. & Ojebuyi, B. R. 2017. Nature and outcome of Nigeria's #NoToSocialMediaBill twitter protest against the frivolous petition bill 2015. *Impact of the social media on African socio-economic developments*. O. Nelson, B. R. Ojebuyi & A. Salawu. Eds. Hershey, Pennsylvania, IGI Global. 106-124.
- Onyango, E. (May) 2015. Top radio stations, Nigeria and Ghana. Retrieved May 24, 2016 at 16:07 from <http://www.blog.geopoll.com/top-radio-stations-nigeria-ghana-may2015>
- Owusu, W. Y, 2011/12. The Ghanaian media landscape: how unethical practices of journalists undermine progress. PhD Thesis. Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism. University of Oxford. xi+1-78.
- Oyedemi, L.O. 2014. A political history of Nigeria and the crisis of ethnicity in nation-building. *International Journal of Developing Societies*. 3.1: 87-95.
- Oyewo, A. and Oyewo, O. O. 2016. World press freedom day and safety of journalists: implication for people's freedom of expression. *New Media and Mass Communication*, 54:34-38.
- Patanjali, D. 2007. Freedom of speech and expression: India v America – a study. *India Law Journal*. Retrieved November 20 2015, from http://indialawjournal.com/volume3/issue_4/article_by_dheerajendra.html.
- Rakner, L. and van de Walle, N. 2009. Democratisation by elections? Opposition weakness in Africa. *Journal of Democracy*, 20:3, 108- 121

- Reporter Without Borders, 2016. 2016 World press freedom index. Retrieved Nov 12, 2016 from <https://rsf.org/en/ranking>
- 2015. 2015 World press freedom index. Retrieved Nov 25, 2015 from <https://rsf.org/en/ranking/2015>
- 2014. 2014 World press freedom index. Retrieved Oct 12, 2016 from <https://rsf.org/en/ranking/2014>
-2013. 2013 World press freedom index. Retrieved Oct 12, 2015 from <https://rsf.org/en/ranking/2013>
- 2011/2012. 2011/12 World press freedom index. Retrieved Nov 12, 2015 from <https://rsf.org/en/ranking/2012>
- Republic of Ghana, 1992. The 1992 Constitution of Ghana. Retrieved July 22, 2016 from https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Ghana_1996.pdf?lang=en
- Sadrettin, H., Bayram, P. and Emeagwali, L. 2016. Media systems, politics and press freedom: perspectives on contemporary Russia and Nigeria. *International Review of Management and Marketing*. 6.3:510-516.
- Seawright, J. and Gerring, J. 2008. Case selection techniques in case study research: a menu of qualitative and quantitative options. *Political Research Quarterly*, 61.2:294-308
- Seibert, F.S., Peterson, T. & Schrumm, W. 1956. *The four theories of the press*. Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press.
- Severin, W. J. & Tankard, J. W. Jr. 2001. *Communication theories: origins, methods and uses in the mass media*. 5th ed. New York: Longman.
- Shardow, M.S. and Asare, B. E. 2016. Media ownership and independence: implications for democratic governance in the fourth republic of Ghana. *Africology: The Journal of Pan African Studies*, 9.9:179-198.
- Stiglitz, J. 2017. Toward a taxonomy of media capture. *In the service of power: media capture and the threat to democracy* A. Schiffrin. Ed. Washington: The National Endowment for Democracy.
- Stroller, E. P., Webster, N. J., McCormick, R. A., Hund, A. J., Perzynski, A. T., Kanuch, S. W., Thomas, C. L., Kercher, K. & Dawson, N. V. 2009. Alcohol consumption decisions among non-abusing drinkers diagnosed with hepatitis C. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*. 3.1: 65-86.
- Strömbäck, J., Orsten, M., & Aalberg, T. 2008. *Communicating politics: political communication in the Nordic countries*. Sweden: Nordicom.

- Temin, J. & Smith, D. A. 2002. Media matters: evaluating the role of the media in Ghana's 2000 elections. *African Affairs*. 101: 585-600.
- Trumber, H. & Prentoulis, M. 2003. Freedom of the press in western Europe. *Encyclopaedia of International Media and Communication*. California: Academic Press. 193-202
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation. 2014. *World trends in freedom of expression and media development*. France: UNESCO.
-b May, 2014. Media freedom for a better future: shaping the post-2015 development agenda. Retrieved 18 April, 2015 from <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/unesco/events/prizes-and-celebrations/celebrations/international-days/world-press-freedom-day/2014-themes/>
- 2007a. *Defining indicators of media development: background Paper*. Paris: UNESCO.
- 2007b. *Media legislation in Africa: a comparative Legal Survey*. South Africa: School of Journalism and Media Studies, Rhodes University.
- Voltmer, K. 2008. Comparing media systems in new democracies: east meets west. *Central European Journal of Communication*. 1.1:23-40.
- Waldahl, R. 2004. *Politics and persuasion*. Harare: Weaver Press
- Wimmer, R.D. & Dominick, J. R. 2011. *Mass media research: an introduction*. 9th ed. Boston: Cengage Learning.
- Youm, K. H. 2003. Freedom of the press, concept of. *Encyclopaedia of International Media and Communication*. California: Academic Press. 69-80.

APPENDIX 1 A

Freedom House Rankings of Ghana and Nigeria (2011-2016)

<i>GLOBAL RANKINGS</i>			<i>SUB-SAHARAN RANKINGS</i>		
Year	Ghana	Nigeria	Year	Ghana	Nigeria
2011	54 th	106 th	2011	2 nd	15 th
2012	58 th	104 th	2012	3 rd	17 th
2013	55 th	106 th	2013	2 nd	17 th
2014	53 rd	106 th	2014	2 nd	17 th
2015	52 nd	113 th	2015	2 nd	20 th
2016	63 rd	106 th	2016	4 th	17 th
Total number of countries	199		50		

SOURCE: Freedom House Press Freedom Reports (2011-2016)

APPENDIX 1 B

Reporters Without Borders Rankings of Ghana and Nigeria (2011/12 – 2016)

Country	Year and Position in Global Rankings				
	2011/2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Ghana	30 th	30 th	27 th	22 nd	26 th
Nigeria	115 th	115 th	112 th	111 th	116 th

SOURCE: Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Reports (2011/12 – 2016).

APPENDIX 2

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR JOURNALISTS

Dear Respondent,

The researcher is a doctoral student at the Department of Communication and Language Arts, University of Ibadan, Nigeria. This questionnaire seeks to establish the level of press freedom in your country and you have been randomly selected to participate in the research as a respondent. For the objective of the research to be achieved, your utmost cooperation and honest acceptance to respond to the questions are very important. The information you will give will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will **ONLY** be used for academic purposes. To this effect, you are **NOT** required to provide your name on this questionnaire. The questions were adapted from the Methodology Questions and Bullet Guidelines of the 2015 Freedom of the Press Report by Freedom House Organisation. The researcher appreciates your cooperation in advance. Thank you.

SECTION A: SECURITY OF JOURNALISTS

1a. How secure do journalists in this country feel while carrying out their professional duties? Very secure () A little secure () Insecure () Very insecure ()

1b. *Tick (✓) appropriate box for each statement as it applies to the situation in your country*

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Journalists are free to join associations to protect and advocate their interest in my country				
Journalists are able to express their professional views on threats or violations to press freedom in this country				
Journalists often suffer attacks or harassment in the course of covering stories				
Certain geographical locations are no go areas for journalists in this country				
Risky situations (war, insurgency etc) impede the work of journalists in my country				
Journalists in this country who are working in danger zones are given protection by the state security personnel				
Journalists are subject to injury, threats, abduction, illegal				

detention, arbitrary arrest or torture in the course of duty in this country				
Journalists/media outlets are often targeted by organized crime, insurgent groups, political, religious or ethnic extremists or armed militias in my country				
Journalists go into hiding or exile to avoid such consequences in this country				
State authorities offer adequate protection to journalists when threatened by criminal situations or agents in this country				
Media outlets are often attacked physically or their properties destroyed or seized in my country				
Journalists/editors are likely to lose their jobs as a result of what they publish in this country				
Salary levels of journalists/ media professionals are sufficiently high to discourage bribery in my country				
Journalists/ media outlets request incentives in order to cover certain stories in this country				
Government officials pay journalists/media outlets to have their stories covered in this country				
Individuals/advertisers influence media content that is injurious to them in my country				
Associations of journalists are able to fight for the interests of their members in this country				

SECTION B: ENABLING MEDIA ENVIRONMENT

2a. Is the legal environment in this country is media friendly? Very friendly ()
 Friendly () Unfriendly () Very unfriendly ()

2b. *Tick (✓) appropriate box for each statement as it applies to the situation in your country*

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Old repressive laws are maintained in the Constitution in my country				
Government officials are protected under defamation laws in this country				
Defamation laws are routinely used to protect government officials from public scrutiny in this country				
Journalists are prosecuted or jailed for libel or slanderous offense in my country				
Heavy monetary fines are imposed on journalists/media outlets in civil libel cases with the intention of deterring future criticism in this country				

3a. Does the judiciary independently judge cases concerning the media in your country?

To a great extent () To some extent () To a little extent () To no extent ()

3b. *Tick (✓) appropriate box for each statement as it applies to the situation in your country*

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The judiciary recognise rights to freedom of expression and information as important in this country				
The judiciary act in lawful and non-arbitrary manner in handling cases concerning the media in my country				
Contempt of court charges are filed against journalists who attempt to cover court cases in my country				
Bans on coverage are frequently imposed by the judiciary on legal cases in this country				

4a. Does the Freedom of Information (FOI) legislation exists in your country?

Strongly agree () Agree () Disagree () Strongly disagree ()

4b. Are journalists in your country able to use the FOI?

To a great extent () To some extent () To a little extent () To no extent ()

4c. *Tick (✓) appropriate box for each statement as it applies to the situation in your country*

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
There are laws that guarantee access to public records in my country				
Enabling administrative framework is in place to make the laws on access to information work in this country				
Restrictions to the right of information are clearly defined in the law				
Journalists are able to secure public records through clear administrative procedures and timely manner at affordable cost in my country				
There are deterring punishments for public officials who illegally refuse to disclose public records in this country				

5a. Is there freedom for journalists to practise their profession in your country?

To a great extent () To some extent () To a little extent () To no extent ()

5b. *Tick (✓) appropriate box for each statement as it applies to the situation in your country*

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Journalists are required by government to be licensed in my country				
Journalists must belong to a particular professional organisation so as to work legally in my country				
Journalists must have certain qualification in order to practise journalism in this country				

SECTION C: POLITICAL, OWNERSHIP AND COMMERCIAL INFLUENCE OVER MEDIA CONTENT

6a. Are news and information content of media outlets determined by public interest? To a great extent () To some extent () To little extent () To no extent ()

6b. *Tick (✓) appropriate box for each statement as it applies to the situation in your country*

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Media content is subject to pressure from authorities, private owners or editors in country				
Media content is excessively partisan in this country				
Opposition parties have access to state-owned media, especially during elections in this country				
There is an official body for censorship in my country				
Media outlets are forcibly closed due to coverage of critical issues about government in this country				
Newspapers are sometimes seized from distributors/vendors by authorities in this country				
Authorities issue coverage guidelines to media outlets in my country				
Certain issues (official corruption, role of political opposition, human rights) are officially no go areas for media organisations in my country				
State tries to control media through subsidies or advertisements allocation in this country				

7a. Are news and information content are determined by private ownership's interests?

Very likely () Likely () A little likely () Not likely ()

Or that of its conglomerates? To a great extent () To some extent ()

To a little extent () To no extent ()

7b. *Tick (✓) appropriate box for each statement as it applies to the situation in your country*

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
There is transparent details of owners of media outlets to enable public determine impartiality of news content in this country				
There is excessive self-censorship by editors/owners in my organisation				
There are implied rules that prevent journalists from covering certain stories/issues in my organisation				
Media content is subject to pressure from private ownership in this country				
Implied rules prevent coverage of certain stories/issue on conglomerates of ownership in my organisation				
There is use of withdrawal of adverts (by advertisers) to influence editorial decisions in this country				

8a. Is there public access to diversified news and information that reflect the dynamics of the situation in your country? To a great extent () To some extent ()

To a little extent () To no extent ()

8b. *Tick (✓) appropriate box for each statement as it applies to the situation in your country*

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
There is public access to diverse print media sources of information representing social and political viewpoints in my country				
There is public access to diverse broadcast media sources of information representing social and political viewpoints in my country				
Media contents represent the diverse interests in my				

country				
In my country, critical examination of government policies or actions of powerful political actors exist in media content				
Critical examination of societal personalities exist in media content in this country				
Journalists freely investigate issues/stories about official corruption in this country				
There is coverage of potentially sensitive issues in my country				
Economic situation negatively impact financial sustainability of private media outlets in this country				

SECTION D: STATE OF PRESS FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBLE FACTORS

9a. Does the constitution in my country have enough provisions that guarantee press freedom?

Strongly agree () Agree () Strongly disagree () Disagree ()

9b. Are the provisions for free press in the constitution in this country adequately enforced by the government?

To a great extent () To some extent () To a little extent () To no extent ()

9c. How will you describe the current state of press freedom in your country?

Free () Partially Free () Not Free ()

9d. Outline the factors responsible for your answer in 9c

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.
- f.
- g.
- h.
- i.
- j.

SECTION F: GENERAL INFORMATION (Please tick in the space provided)

10a. *Sex* Male () Female ()

10b. *Age*

20-30 years () 31-40 years () 41-50 years () 51-60 years () Above 61 years
()

10c. *Marital Status*

Single () Married () Divorced () Separated ()

10d. *Education Qualification Attained*

Certificate () Diploma () Bachelors Degree () Masters Degree () PhD ()

10e. *Years of experience in journalism*

5 – 10 years () 11-15 years () 16-20 years () Above 20 years ()

APPENDIX 3 A

MEDIA OUTLETS SELECTED FROM GHANA		
Newspapers	Television	Radio
Daily Graphic	UTV	Peace FM
Ghanaian Times	TV3	Adom FM
Ghanaian Chronicle	Joy Prime	Joy FM
Daily Guide	Adom TV	Citi FM
The Democrat	GTV	Radio Gold
Daily Dispatch	GH One TV	Happy FM

APPENDIX 3 B

MEDIA OUTLETS SELECTED FROM NIGERIA		
Newspapers	Television	Radio
Guardian	AIT	Ray Power
Vanguard	NTA	Splash
Punch	TVC	Brila
The Nigerian Tribune	Channels	Cool
This Day	Silverbird	Faaji FM
The Daily Sun	On TV	*Bond FM

APPENDIX 4

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS GUIDE

Two broad frames were identified as tools for the document analysis based upon the reading of the legal and statutory documents on media in the two countries:

Pro-press freedom: Articles/sections/clauses that promote or enhance press freedom.

Anti-press freedom: Articles/sections/clauses that inhibit or hinder press freedom.

LEGAL AND STATUTORY DOCUMENTS

1. What is the date of publication on document to be analysed?
2. What is the heading? Write the heading as it appears on the document.
3. Does the Article/Section explicitly provide for freedom of speech? And of the press?
4. Are the provisions clearly stated? Adequate? And elaborate?
5. Are there repressive clauses in the document?
6. Are the repressive clauses for or against the interest of the public?
7. Does the document provide for formation of unions?
8. Does the document provide for easy establishment of media organisation?
9. Is there a provision that clearly prevent censorship?
10. Is there a provision for independent press regulatory bodies to ensure self-regulation?
11. Is the membership of the regulatory body clearly designated?
12. Does the designation favour press freedom?
13. Are there provisions to discourage political, ownership and commercial influences?
14. What image does the content paint for press freedom?

CASES OF VIOLATIONS OF MEDIA FREEDOM

- a. What is the date of publication of the case to be analysed?
- b. What is the heading? Write the heading as it appears on the document.
- c. What is the summary of the document?
- d. What is the type of violation?
- e. Who is the perpetrator of the violation?
- f. What image does the content paint for press freedom in the year under review?

APPENDIX 5

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. What is the state of press freedom in the country?
2. Any justification for the state of press freedom?
3. Are the legal and statutory provisions for press freedom enough to ensure reasonable freedom that is accepted in a democracy?
4. Any specific recommendations for amendments to some of or the provisions?
5. Are the provisions enforced?
6. Any artificial obstacles to accessibility of information?
7. Does the role of the judiciary support the media freedom when handling cases that involve the media?
8. Do the security agencies often clash with journalists?
9. What is the state of physical, financial security of journalists? What is the way forward?
10. Is the union for journalists effective in fighting for the interests and welfare of journalists?
11. What are the interest(s) that influence(s) media content in media operations?
12. Any other information on press freedom in the country that you will want to add?