

# Media Construction of the Ashanti Region: A Content Analysis of Daily Graphic and Daily Guide

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## ABSTRACT

*This study examines the extent to which major variables like ownership and ideological inclination distinguish between how the state-owned and the privately-owned leading daily newspapers, Daily Guide and Daily Graphic, portray issues related to the Ashanti region. The study employed content analysis as its methodology. A total of 27 issues that were published by the two newspapers in the six months period, January-June, 2015 in which the study was conducted were used for analysis. It was found in the study that the Daily Guide published more favorable stories on the Ashanti region than Daily Graphic in the time of the study. However, it cannot be concluded that Daily Guide is highly Ashanti region biased because the attributes to justify such a conclusion are minimal. It was also found that both papers published more stories on political themes than any other themes. The Daily Graphic was also found in the study to have published more stories on the Ashanti region than the Daily Graphic.*

**Keywords:** Media, Construction of Reality, Ashanti Region, Content Analysis

## INTRODUCTION

This study provides a picture of how Ghana's two leading newspapers *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide*, portray the Ashanti region. The focus on this region falls within the grand theory of the social construction of reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1966) but specifically, as far as media portrayal is concerned, the media construction of reality. The media, both traditional and the new, play an essential role in communicating to the public and or portraying a specific picture of the world they are operating in. Society or the receivers of such media content who do not have a direct insight into the happenings end up depending on both the portrayal of issues and their interpretation. This theoretical position resonates with the age-old agenda-setting theory, which explains that the media, apart from telling us what to think, is also key in the setting of the agenda and has the ability to redirect public interest to particular subjects, which

operate to limit the range of arguments and perspectives that inform public debate (Harper & Philo, 2013). The media is regulated by organizational, economic, political, social, and cultural forces that control the practices of news-gathering and the content of news (Andrews and Caren, 2010). As a result, reporters and editors pay special attention to the demands of the people who own their news media by publishing stories that reflect the point of view of these news organization's owners and advertisers, as argued by Altschull (1984) in the media ownership theory.

The Ashanti Region, which this study throws a searchlight on, is the most renowned region in Ghana. This region is well known both locally and internationally for a number of reasons, with the major ones being its rich culture and history. Between *Daily Guide* and *Daily Graphic*, it is reported that the privately-owned *Daily Guide* has an inclination towards the New Patriotic Party (NPP) (Sarfo-Adu, Amponsah, & Addo-Danquah, 2015). At the same time, the Ashanti region is said to favor the cause of the NPP by voting massively for them during election periods (Dapatem & Donkor, 2016). Consequently, it can be deduced that the Ashanti region and the NPP share a bond. Therefore, if the *Daily Guide* supports the NPP, then it automatically supports the Ashanti region as well. It is against this background that the present study is set to find out whether ownership and ideological inclination will differentiate how the *Daily Guide* and the *Daily Graphic* manufacture, naturalize, and institutionalize the portrayal of the Ashanti region. Therefore, the objective of the paper is to what extent does ownership and ideological inclination differentiate how the *Daily Guide* and the *Daily Graphic* manufacture, naturalize, and institutionalize the portrayal of the Ashanti region

## LITERATURE REVIEW

This study is about how specific media outlets portray the Ashanti region. It, therefore, falls within the theoretical position of the construction of reality. The issue of reality construction emanated from the sociological theory of the Social construction of reality. Berger & Luckmann are



credited with the introduction of the concept of social construction when they produced their book, which was about the sociology of knowledge. Their position is that individuals and groupings link up in every social system, and in the process, they create vivid mental representations of one another's behaviors. All these images created become institutionalized into shared roles undertaken by the particular persons in relation to one another. With time these functions become known to other individuals in the society to emulate, and such acts of reciprocity will then be habituated within that social system leading to the creation and embedding of meaning within that context. Knowledge, therefore, and the individual's perception of that knowledge becomes mainstreamed. Under these circumstances, the reality now becomes a social construction.

Rogers, Kenix, & Thorson (2007), from the perspective of media portrayal of issues and taking a cue from Berger & Luckmann (1966), define social construction of reality as a process in which social and political issues carry meaning through media images. Nord (2003) argues that the only real people can know is socially constructed. This is because, if a person does not experience a given event, the only feeling he/she can have about it is based on his/her mental image of that event (Lippmann, 1971).

Three processes of construction of social reality can be distinguished, namely, objective reality, symbolic reality, and subjective reality. Objective reality is made up of facts which is the reality experienced outside the individual. Symbolic reality is the symbolic expression of objective reality. It includes art and literature, and may include media contents (Danker-Dake, 2008). Subjective reality is constructed by individuals on the basis of objective and symbolic realities (Adoni & Mane, 1985; Jeffres, 1997).

Media construction of reality is a relatively new concept in the social science that has emanated from the original phenomenon described by Berger & Luckmann (1966) as a social construction of reality or social constructionism. The media is tagged as a user of various techniques ranging from graphic pictures to vivid language to reach vast audiences with the attempt to infiltrate people's everyday lives with images that do not only aid in defining what society deems relevant and true, but also in the molding of society itself (Spitzberg & Cadiz, 2002). Again, Spitzberg & Cadiz (2002) indicate that public perceptions are influenced by the media because there is a required selectivity involved in media story selection.

Agenda-setting theory posits that if an issue receives considerable attention from the mass media, the public also places more importance on that issue and *vice versa* (Dominick, 1996; Jeffres, 1997). McCombs & Shaw (1972) carried out a seminal study of agenda-setting in the media on undecided voters in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, during the 1968 presidential campaign. Their findings supported the agenda-setting theory, as they found strong connections between media emphasis on issues and voter perception of the issues. Research has shown that agenda-

setting can be an extremely powerful technique for media analysis (Chaffee & Berger, 1987; Herman & Chomsky, 2002; Lee, 2005). However, agenda-setting typically features some degree of time lag, which could lead to inaccuracies in research; this seems to be the greatest weakness of agenda-setting theory (Danker-Dake, 2008).

Within the context of media studies, frames were defined as the principles of organization that govern events and people's subjective involvement in them (Goffman, 1974). To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text. Accordingly, apart from influencing what people think about a matter, the mass media also make a significant contribution to shaping how people think about it (Entman, 1991). The process of framing is influenced by individual journalist's values, as well as the collective perceptions and traditional understandings that are socially created (Akhavan-Majid & Ramaprasad, 1998). Logically, a frame does not only demonstrate the attitude of media professionals toward certain news events, but also reflects the intrinsic social perspectives on the related issues.

Still, within the realm of reality construction, the Cultivation theory hypothesizes that heavy television viewers will see the world through TV's lens over time (Gerbner and Gross, 1976). This is because television may subsume other sources of ideas and consciousness when long hours are spent watching it. In addition, so much exposure to the same messages from the same medium produces cultivation, which teaches common worldviews, roles, and values (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorielli, 1980). That is, television may create certain conceptions of social reality in the minds of viewers as they come to believe that what they see on television is real (Dominick, 1996).

The theory of media ownership was developed by Altschull in 1984. Altschull argues that "the content of the press is directly correlated with the interests of those who finance the press" (pp. 254). A media outlet's autonomy is given within the boundaries of the owner's profit. The content of a commercially owned media outlet will reflect the point of view of the news organization's owners and advertisers. Where the media outlet fits into what Altschull refers to as an "interest pattern," the content reflects the concerns and objectives of whoever is providing the financing.

The media ownership theory has been refined and extended by Shoemaker and Reese (1991). They argue that the owners of a media organization have the ultimate power over the news content of the newspapers. They contend that a news organization owned by a publicly held organization is primarily focused on making a profit, and objectivity is seen as a way of attracting the readers as desired by the advertisers. Commercially oriented news organizations are far more likely to use objectivity and newsworthiness as their principal standards in making news judgments (Shoemaker and Reese, 1991). Giving an explanation, they indicate that a commercial media outlet is more responsive to its audience

and advertisers, both of whom desire these qualities. In a further finding, Shoemaker and Reese (1991) report that news organizations that are primarily financed by “interest” sources are far less likely to place great emphasis on objectivity and newsworthiness. Instead, their content is more likely to mirror the thinking of the special interest group(s) that control them.

The Asante (Ashanti) Region is located in the middle belt of Ghana. It lies between longitudes 0.15°W and 2.25°W and latitudes 5.50°N and 7.46° N and covers 24,390 square kilometers, which is 10.2% of the land area of Ghana. Its population in 2010, according to the 2012 reports from the Ghana Statistical Service, is 4,780,380, representing 19.4% of the total population of Ghana. At the heart of the Ashanti Region lies her regional capital, namely, Kumase (Kumasi), which forms an important transport and commercial hub for both domestic and international traffic.

Etymologically, Kumasi is made up of two words in Akan, namely, *kum* (a type of tree) and *ase* (under). Kumasi became the capital of the Ashanti region following the divine powers of Okomfo Anokye (Mensah, 2010). According to oral accounts, Okomfo Anokye planted three *kum* seeds at three different places, namely, *Kwaaman*, *Apemso-Bankofo*, and *Oboani* (Mensah, 2010). He predicted that where the *kum* seed will germinate and survive climatic conditions to become a fully grown tree should become the capital of the Ashanti region. Later, it was only the *kum* seed planted at Kwaaman that flourished, becoming a big tree that provided shade for the King and his people. Hence, the capital of the Ashanti region became *Kumase* which literally means “under the *kum* tree.” The name takes its root from the fact that the king and his people usually sat under the big *kum* tree for shade.

Due to its strategic location and role as an administrative and commercial centre, Kumasi has become a destination for both internal and international migrants. It attracts a number of migrants from different parts of Ghana and also from neighboring African countries such as Togo, Burkina Faso, Mali, Nigeria, and Ivory Coast. Also, it serves as a key transportation link between the south and north of Ghana as well as the surrounding landlocked countries, making it attractive to migrants. It is also a stronghold of Ghana’s rich culture, with almost all the ethnic groups in Ghana represented there. Nevertheless, the rich culture of the natives of Kumasi stands tall. This culture is displayed in Akwasidae festival, funerals, child-naming ceremonies, communal spirit, religion, chieftaincy institution, and traditional craftsmanship, particularly in the areas of Kente weaving, pottery making, and brass smiting.

With respect to politics, Dapatem & Donkor (2016) report that the Ashanti region has remained the political hotbed of Ghana since the inception of the Fourth Republic. They indicate that the region has lived up to its name as the ‘World Bank’ of the New Patriotic Party (NPP), where the majority of the votes go in favor of the NPP.

### **Background of the Newspapers chosen for the Study**

The *Daily Graphic* is a 64-page state-owned daily newspaper published by Graphic Communication Group Limited. It was established along with the *Sunday Mirror* in 1950, by Cecil King of the London Daily Mirror Group (Eribo & Jong-Ebot, 1997). Hasty (2005) reports that as a state-owned paper, the *Daily Graphic* regularly covers the government in a favorable light detailing and encouraging national unity and government policy.

The *Daily Guide*, on the other hand, is a 24-page privately-owned newspaper published by Western Publications Limited owned by Fredy Blay, Gina Blay, and Kwame Blay. Fredy Blay is the majority shareholder in Western Publications Limited and is also the current Acting Chairman of the ruling New Patriotic Party (NPP). The paper started as *Sports Guide* in 1983 at a time when there were no private newspapers that dealt with political issues before it later became a general newspaper (Rockson, 2011). It was subsequently published twice in a week before it later became a daily. Presently, the paper is published six times in a week, from Monday to Saturday (Adofo, 2015). In terms of principles, the *Daily Guide* is positioned to promote liberalism and multiparty democracy, underpinned by freedom of expression and a liberalized media environment as indicated by the publisher, Fredy Blay (Rockson, 2011). The Synovate Survey (2011) cited in Adofo (2015) shows that the *Daily Guide* newspaper was the second largest after *Daily Graphic* and was the most widely circulated private newspaper in Ghana, with a market share of about 15% of the newspaper industry at the time. Hence, the paper ranks second in terms of circulation in Ghana and is popular with the public because of its sensational headlines and exclusive stories (Midttun, Coutler, Gadzekpo, Wang, & Staurem, 2013) Sarfo-Adu, Amponsah, & Addo-Danquah (2015) argue that the *Daily Guide* portrays NPP in a positive light while publishing the negative side of the NDC hence, making it sympathetic to the cause of the NPP.

## **METHODS**

### **3.1 Content Analysis**

This study used content analysis for its methodology. Content analysis is a systematic method used to analyze message content. It is used to objectively, systematically, and quantitatively describe mass communication content, and has therefore become one of the frequently used methodologies for mass communication research (Kaid & Wadsworth, 1989; Stempel, 2003). For its role in mass communication research, the content analysis attempts to determine who says what to whom, how, and with what effect (Lasswell, 1971; Stempel, 2003).

Content analysis is valuable as a quantitative method of research. This is because, quantification increases the accuracy of the study’s conclusions and is able to better describe covariance between elements (Kaid & Wadsworth, 1989). Valuable content analysis must be objective and systematic. Therefore, Stempel (2003) gives the following

four methodological problems that content analysts must take into account; selection of the unit of analysis, category construction, content sampling, and coding reliability. The unit of analysis addresses what the study considers, which includes: words, sentences, paragraphs, or the whole article. This is determined by the purpose of the study. In selecting category systems, it is often advisable to use a system that has been used in other studies, and which has been proven to be workable.

**Sampling**

The *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* were chosen because they are both national dailies with large circulation figures. Secondly, the different types of ownership of the two papers was another reason for the selection of the two papers, since this was appropriate for purposes of comparison: the *Daily Graphic* is a state-owned newspaper while the *Daily Guide* is privately owned.

The time period of analysis was six months, from January to June, 2015. The study’s population consisted of all editions of the *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* published from January 2015 to June 2015. The study used a constructed week sample, which provides an optimal representation of a daily newspaper’s content. A constructed week consists of seven issues, one from each day of the week (Lacy, Riffe, Stoddard, Martin & Chang, 2001). The table below gives in detail, a representation of the number of issues from the *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* that were used in the study.

	<b>January</b>		<b>February</b>		<b>March</b>
<b>1</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> , Thur.	<b>6</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> , Mon.	<b>10</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> , Mon.
<b>2</b>	9 <sup>th</sup> , Fri.	<b>7</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> , Tue.	<b>11</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> , Tue.
<b>3</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> , Sat.	<b>8</b>	18 <sup>th</sup> , Wed.	<b>12</b>	18 <sup>th</sup> , Wed.
<b>4</b>	19 <sup>th</sup> , Mon.	<b>9</b>	26 <sup>th</sup> , Thur.	<b>13</b>	30 <sup>th</sup> , Mon.
<b>5</b>	27 <sup>th</sup> , Tue.				
	<b>April</b>		<b>May</b>		<b>June</b>
<b>14</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> , Wed.	<b>19</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> , Fri.	<b>24</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> , Mon.
<b>15</b>	9 <sup>th</sup> , Thur.	<b>20</b>	9 <sup>th</sup> , Sat.	<b>25</b>	9 <sup>th</sup> , Tue.
<b>16</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> , Fri.	<b>21</b>	11 <sup>th</sup> , Mon.	<b>26</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> , Wed.
<b>17</b>	25 <sup>th</sup> , Sat.	<b>22</b>	19 <sup>th</sup> , Tue.	<b>27</b>	25 <sup>th</sup> , Thur.
<b>18</b>	27 <sup>th</sup> , Mon.	<b>23</b>	27 <sup>th</sup> , Wed.		

**Coding Scheme**

A coding guide was developed to collect, organize and interpret the relevant data. The study used the Date of Publication as an operational index of coding categories, and the following categories were used for the analysis: Themes, Actors, Frequency, Direction, Prominence, Type of story, Source of story, among others.

**Inter-coder Reliability**

This test was carried out by two trained coders and the researcher. A briefing session was organized to train the coders on codes being studied and to ensure that they fully understood the coding process in order to determine consistency and obtain more reliable data for the study. After training, the two independent coders examined all the items of the *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* during the six-month period. The inter-coder reliability was calculated with Holsti’s coefficient of agreement using the data from January and February of the *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* (one-third of the data). All coding sheets were compared in order to address discrepancies, and one set of data was used for analysis. Inter-coder reliability was tested with Holsti’s (1969) method and was found to be .88.

**RESULTS AND DATA ANALYSIS**

**Introduction**

The findings from the research covered the grand objective, specific objectives, and hypothesis statements. Essentially, this study was aimed at determining the extent to which major variables like ownership and ideological inclination distinguish between how the state-owned and the privately-owned leading daily newspapers portray the Ashanti region. This paper utilized various statistical tools to examine the thematic categories and to test the hypothesis statements on the issue of the media depiction of the Ashanti region. A total of 27 issues were published by the two newspapers in the six months period, January-June, 2015 in which the study was conducted. The data has been presented in the form of a cross-tabulation of the thematic areas for the purposes of presenting and analyzing the findings.

In terms of the themes, the two newspapers had stories that were placed under the following units under the category of themes, namely: economic, human interest, social, political, religious, and health. For these two papers, the first coding category dealt with the direction of the story as it relates to whether it was favorable, unfavorable, or neutral to the Ashanti “kingdom.” In terms of direction, *Daily Guide* published more favorable stories: economic (66.70%) and human interest (66.70%), while *Daily Graphic* published more favorable social stories (50%). On the other hand, the two papers recorded 100% for health. For the two newspapers, it is worthy of note that on the theme of politics and religion, none of them published any favorable stories. The frequency of unfavorable stories was low for the two papers, with *Daily Graphic* recording 50% for human interest and 16.70% for social.

This study showed that *Daily Guide* was slightly ahead of *Daily Graphic* when it came to how various themes were covered in terms of whether they portrayed a positive, negative or neutral image of an overarching institution, person, or issue being reviewed. One can interpret such findings as showing that the private newspaper, *Daily Guide* is more inclined towards offering a favorable impression about the Ashanti Region as opposed to its state-owned

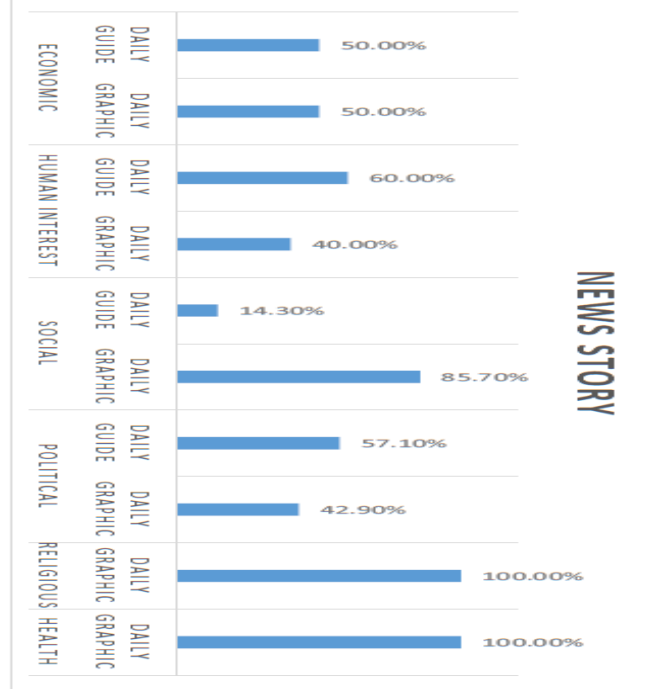
counterpart. This resonates with the position espoused by Dapatem & Donkor (2016); Sarfo-Adu *et al.* (2015) that the Ashanti region is more inclined towards the NPP, which makes it imperative for the *Daily Guide*, which is ideologically inclined towards the NPP, to publish more positive stories about the region as opposed to the state-owned *Daily Graphic*. This interpretation is also confirmed

by the study which analyzed Akosua Cartoons in the *Daily Guide*, where Rockson (2011) states that the *Daily Guide* supports the ideology of liberalism, multiparty democracy, which are hinged on freedom of expression and reflect the ideological stance of the publisher which was an inclination towards the New Patriotic Party.

**TYPE OF NEWSPAPER \* DIRECTION \* THEME**

		Direction		
		FAVO- RABLE	UNFAV- RABLE	NEUTRA L
<b>Economic Theme</b>	<i>Daily Guide</i>	66.70%	0%	33.30%
	<i>Daily Graphic</i>	33.30%	0%	66.70%
<b>Human Interest</b>	<i>Daily Guide</i>	66.70%	33.30%	0.00%
	<i>Daily Graphic</i>	0.00%	50.00%	50.00%
<b>Social</b>	<i>Daily Guide</i>	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
	<i>Daily Graphic</i>	50.00%	16.70%	33.30%
<b>Political</b>	<i>Daily Guide</i>	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
	<i>Daily Graphic</i>	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
<b>Religious</b>	<i>Daily Guide</i>	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
	<i>Daily Graphic</i>	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
<b>Health</b>	<i>Daily Guide</i>	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%
	<i>Daily Graphic</i>	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%

**Story**



**TYPE OF NEWSPAPER \* PROMINENCE \* THEME**

The issue of prominence is very important when it comes to newspaper coverage. How much premium a newspaper places on an issue, institution or actor is hinged on several factors, but for our purposes, the emphasis is on the placement of the story and whether it includes a picture. In other words, where an issue is important, it should get pride of place on the front page, center spread, back page, or special pages devoted to the issue. Various newspapers depending on their house style, may have the page 3 or page 2 as a page that shows how prominent the story is. Some leading newspapers in the country have developed the style of having no story at all on the front page while using that page for various headlines with or without pictures. Under such circumstances, the size of the headline, with or without a picture or even whether it's colored or not, and the size of the picture tells the story of prominence. This coding category was therefore utilized to show the kind of inclination that each newspaper has towards the so-called Ashanti Kingdom.

The table below has four units, namely: “with picture”; “front page reference with picture”; “front page mention with a colored picture,” and “front-page mention.” For our analysis, we focused on “front page reference with picture”

and “front page mention with colored picture.” *Daily Guide* under the prominence unit described as “front page reference with picture” scored 100% for human interest and social related stories. *Daily Graphic*, on the other hand, scored 100% for the earlier unit and scored another 100% still for political for “front page mention with colored picture.”

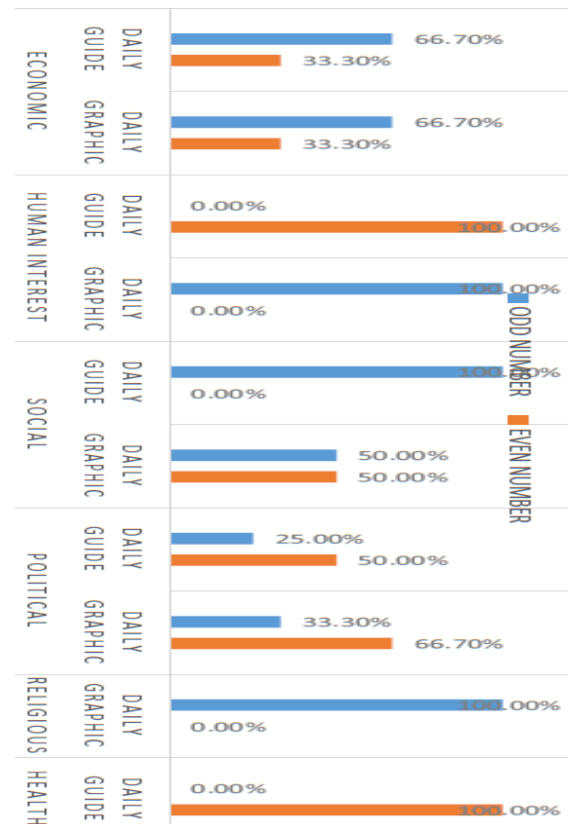
The table does not present any distinct differentiation between the two newspapers. While *Daily Guide* has 100% for human interest and social, for front page reference with a picture, *Daily Graphic* scored the same for both “front page reference with picture” and “front page mention with colored picture.” The interpretation for this is that prominence as far as the front page is concerned can be described as the same for the two newspapers.

PROMINENCE					
		WITH PICTURE	FRONT PAGE REFERENCE WITH PICTURE	FRONT PAGE MENTION WITH COLOURED PICTURE	FRONT PAGE MENTION
Economic	<i>Daily Guide</i>	50.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
	<i>Daily Graphic</i>	50.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Human Interest	<i>Daily Guide</i>	66.70%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%
	<i>Daily Graphic</i>	33.30%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
Social	<i>Daily Guide</i>	100.00%	100.00%	0.00%	100.00%
	<i>Daily Graphic</i>	14.30%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Political	<i>Daily Guide</i>	85.70%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
	<i>Daily Graphic</i>	25.00%	100.00%	100.00%	0.00%
Religious	<i>Daily Graphic</i>	75.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Health	<i>Daily Guide</i>	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

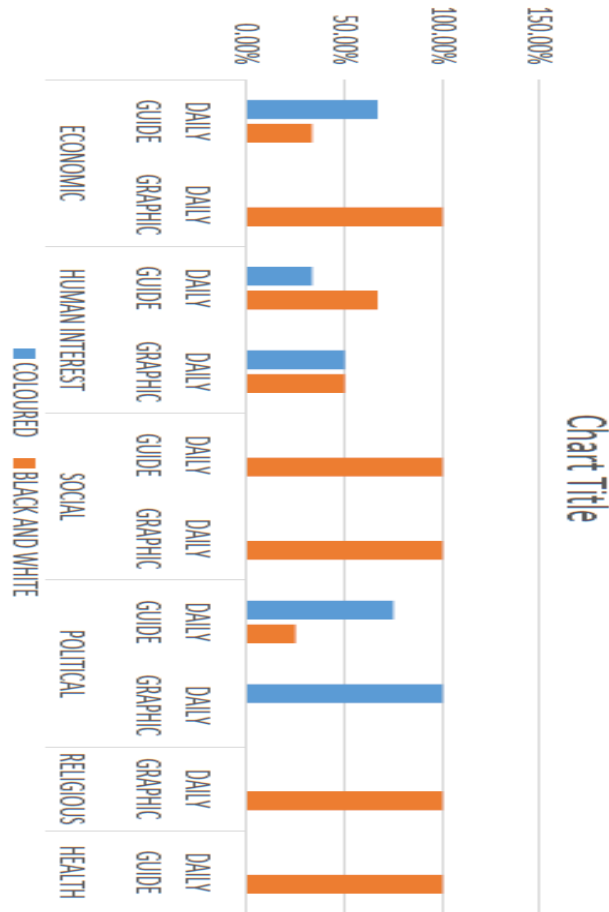
**TYPE OF NEWSPAPER \* MENTION OR FULL ACTOR \* THEME**

		BOTH	MENTION	FULL ACTOR
Economic	<i>Daily Guide</i>	33.30%	33.30%	33.30%
	<i>Daily Graphic</i>	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
Human Interest	<i>Daily Guide</i>	33.30%	33.30%	33.30%
	<i>Daily Graphic</i>	50.00%	0.00%	50.00%
Social	<i>Daily Guide</i>	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
	<i>Daily Graphic</i>	66.70%	0.00%	33.30%
Political	<i>Daily Guide</i>	75.00%	0.00%	25.00%
	<i>Daily Graphic</i>	0.00%	33.30%	66.70%
Religious	<i>Daily Graphic</i>	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
Health	<i>Daily Guide</i>	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%

**TYPE OF NEWSPAPER \* PAGE PLACEMENT \* THEME**



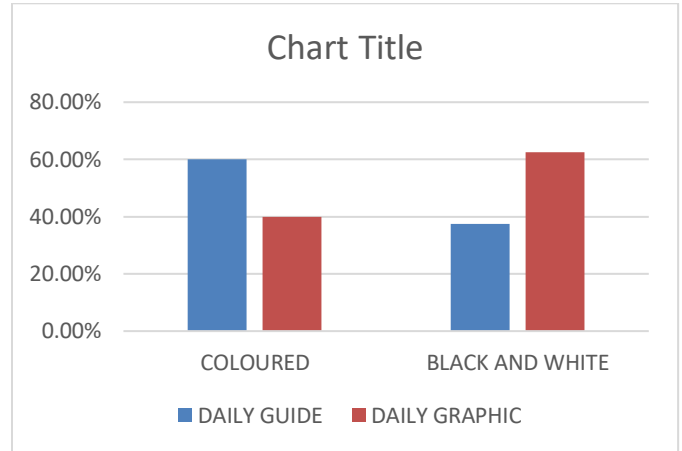
**TYPE OF NEWSPAPER \* PICTURE COLOUR \* THEME**



hypothesis that *Daily Guide* is likely to publish more favorable stories about the Ashanti region than the *Daily Graphic*.

**Hypothesis 2: *Daily Guide* will give more prominence to stories on the Ashanti region than the *Daily Graphic***

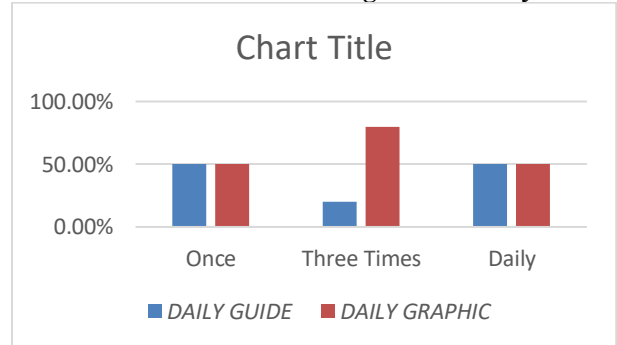
**Picture Coloured**



Chi-Square value 2.092 df 2 Asymptotic Significance (2-sided) 0.351

Since the asymptotic significance (p-values) 0.351, 0.291, 0.163 are greater than 5% (0.05) then, the null hypothesis that *Daily Guide* will give more prominence to stories on the Ashanti region than the *Daily Graphic* in terms of color is accepted.

**Hypothesis 3: *Daily Graphic* is likely to publish more stories on the Ashanti Region than *Daily Guide***

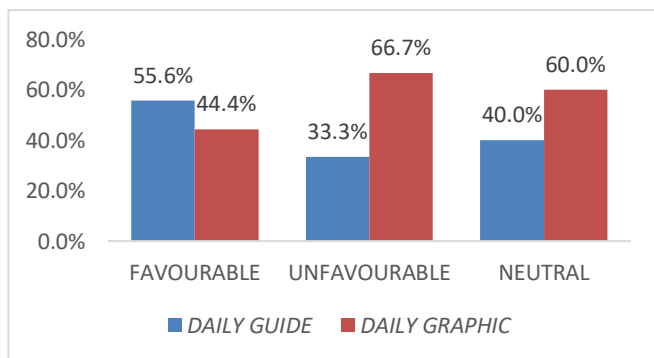


Chi-Square value 1.485 df 2 Asymptotic Significance (2-sided) 0.476

Since the asymptotic significance (p-values) 0.476, 0.451, 0.532 are greater than 5% (0.05), then hypothesis 3, which asserts that *Daily Graphic* is likely to publish more stories on the Ashanti region than *Daily Guide*, is supported.

**PICTURE COLOUR AND DIRECTION**

**Hypothesis 1: *Daily Guide* is likely to publish more favorable stories about the Ashanti Region than *Daily Graphic***

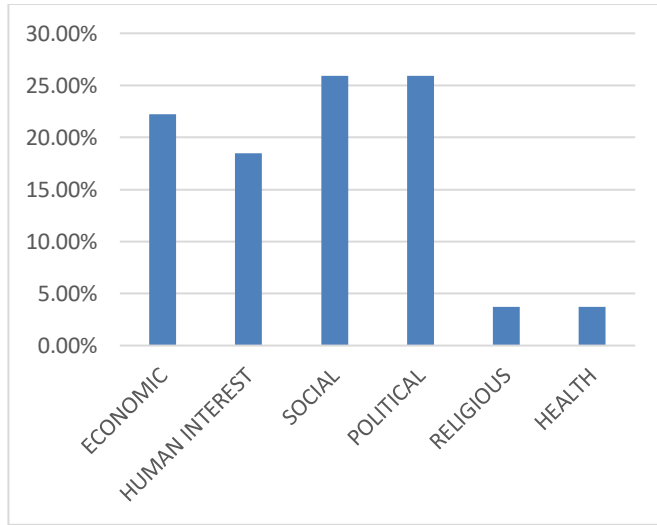


Chi-Square value .720a df 2 Asymptotic Significance (2-sided) 0.698

Since the asymptotic significance (p-values) 0.698, 0.69, 0.489 are all greater 5% (0.05) then, it confirms the null



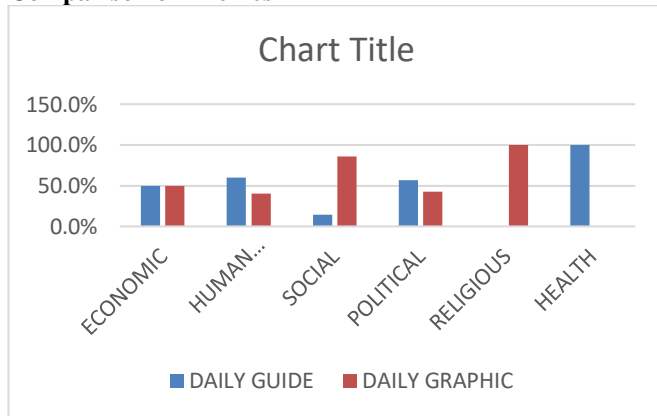
**Hypothesis 4: The two newspapers are likely to publish more stories with political themes than other themes**



Chi-Square value 5.651 df 5 Asymptotic Significance (2-sided) 0.342

Since the asymptotic significance (p-values) 0.342, 0.24, 0.95 are all greater than 5% (0.05), hypothesis 4, which claims that the two newspapers are likely to publish more stories with political themes than other themes, is supported.

**Comparison of Themes**



**CONCLUSION**

The major objective of this study was to determine the extent to which ownership and ideological inclination determine the color of the portrayal of a phenomenon. In fact, the Media Ownership Theory, as espoused by Altschull (1984), shows that the content of the media is always related to the interests of the financiers. From the perspective of Shoemaker and Reese (1991), other important factors like responsiveness to the dictates of the advertisers and the audience should be fully examined when it comes to the issue of ownership. Also, the specific interests of owners will be paramount in reporting their news or the media construction of reality. The study’s first hypothesis confirms that *Daily Guide* is

likely to publish more favorable stories about the Ashanti region than the *Daily Graphic*. In the arguments of Addo-Danquah (2015) and Dapatem & Donkor (2016), the *Daily Guide* has a connection to the Ashanti region because it positively portrays the NPP, which is also widely accepted in the Ashanti region. Therefore, it can be inferred that ownership and ideological inclination influence how the *Daily Guide* and *Daily Graphic* portray the region. The second hypothesis, which asserted that the *Daily Guide* would give more prominence to stories on the Ashanti region than the *Daily Graphic* in terms of color, was also accepted. The third hypothesis asserted that *Daily Graphic* is likely to publish more stories on the Ashanti region than *Daily Guide*, and this claim was supported. The fundamental difference between the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* is the fact that the *Daily Graphic*, as a public sector newspaper, is a long-established publication and is the lead newspaper within the Graphic Communications Group Limited (GCGL) newspapers. It is also the oldest publication and the one with the highest circulation in the country. Its position within the newspaper sector means that it enjoys certain economic advantages due to its credibility and long-standing existence. It also has the highest number of pages amongst all newspapers in the country. It, therefore, means that with the standard size of 64 pages, it definitely will be in the position to publish more stories on any issue than any other newspaper in the country. It must also be noted that it has large regional offices and also several correspondents so that all these attributes identified will lead to this paper producing far more stories than any other competitor.

Lastly, hypothesis four claimed that the two newspapers are likely to publish more stories with political themes than other themes, and that assertion was also accepted. The two papers are basically politics and governance-related when it comes to themes. This is the hallmark of all the dailies which come under the general themes category. The reading public is very much inclined to expecting routinely on daily basis news on politics and governance. These newspapers also have pages or sections which deal with other areas like entertainment/arts, sports, human interest, to mention a few. The market and industry demand, therefore, make it an imperative that there should be a greater focus on politics-related news.

This study strived to explain how the Ashanti region is portrayed in these two leading newspapers. The findings, on the whole, show that there are no sharp differences between the two newspapers and that from a political perspective, the two newspapers attempt to generally portray a picture of the Ashanti region without any strong biases. Notwithstanding the fact that the *Daily Guide* is inclined more towards the New Patriotic Party (NPP), which has the Ashanti region as its stronghold, there are no clear discerning attributes that show a very large inclination towards doing favorable stories and prominence on the region in such a way that it can be concluded that it is highly Ashanti biased. Since within the media landscape there are both the traditional and the new



media, it may be useful for future researchers to examine how radio stations and television stations portray the region more, especially since it is associated with a particular major political party. Another area the new media is also likely to provide some useful information is on how regions and/or ethnic groups and even political parties are portrayed in the Ghanaian media. It is the expectation of these researchers that the broad academic pursuit of understanding how variables like ownership and ideological inclination can be explained will be validated in subsequent research endeavors.

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