

# **The Press Coverage of Celebrity Endorsements in Political Campaign**

**by  
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## **Abstract**

The press is regarded as a political instrument all over the world, and the media are an integral part of the political life in most democratic societies, serving for most people as their major and only link with the government and providing them with the information they need to make political decisions, based on their political dispositions. The mass media in every society can determine status and legitimacy of political leaders and issues, referred to as status conferral function of the media. The mass media can also lead in setting the political agenda for the audience by deciding what political topics the people talk about. This research essentially provides a quantitative content analysis on the nature of news coverage by three newspapers on celebrity political endorsement during political campaigns and the case of Ghana's elections 2020 is employed as a case.

## **Dedication**

To my mother, Augustina Amoah. The source of my academic progress.

The source of my life and

To the memory of my father, Christopher Obeng.

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# Table of Contents

Declaration of Committee.....	ii
Abstract.....	iii
Dedication.....	iv
Acknowledgements.....	v
Table of Contents.....	vi
List of Tables.....	viii
List of Figures.....	viii
<b>Chapter 1. Background.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1. The Role of the Media.....	2
1.1.1. The Media’s Role in Ghana’s Democracy.....	3
1.1.2. The history of political press in Ghana.....	4
1.2. Development of Electronic Media in Ghana.....	6
1.2.1. Radio.....	6
1.2.2. Television.....	7
1.3. Statement of the Problem.....	8
1.4. Scope of the Study.....	8
1.5. Significance of the Study.....	9
1.6. Operational Definition of Concepts.....	9
1.7. Goals and Objectives of the Study.....	10
1.8. Research Questions (Hypothesis).....	10
1.9. Organization of the Study.....	11
1.10. Chapter Summary.....	11
<b>Chapter 2. Theoretical Framework and Literature Review.....</b>	<b>12</b>
2.1. Introduction.....	12
2.2. Theoretical Frameworks.....	12
2.2.1. Agenda setting theory.....	12
2.2.2. Relevance of this theory to this study.....	13
2.2.3. Framing theory.....	13
2.2.4. Identifying frames in the news.....	15
2.2.5. Relevance of framing theory to the study.....	16
2.2.6. Interconnection between agenda-setting and framing.....	16
2.2.7. Media and democracy in Ghana.....	17
2.2.8. History of elections in Ghana.....	18
2.2.9. Celebrity endorsement.....	19
2.3. The Match-Up Hypothesis.....	20
2.4. Review of Empirical Studies.....	21
2.5. Celebrity Endorsement in Ghanaian Context.....	24

2.6. Media Coverage of Political Celebrity Endorsers .....	26
2.7. Conclusion .....	27
<b>Chapter 3. Methodology .....</b>	<b>28</b>
3.1. Introduction.....	28
3.2. Research Design .....	28
3.3. Sample Size.....	29
3.4. Sampling Technique and Procedure .....	30
3.5. Data Collection Technique .....	30
3.6. Data Analysis.....	31
3.7. Inter-Coder Reliability Test .....	32
3.8. Summary .....	33
<b>Chapter 4. Findings and Discussions.....</b>	<b>34</b>
4.1. Introduction.....	34
4.2. Findings .....	34
4.2.1. Number of stories from the newspapers .....	34
4.2.2. Frequency of publication .....	36
4.2.3. Nature of the stories .....	37
4.2.4. Story prominence .....	40
4.3. Conclusion of Chapter .....	41
<b>Chapter 5. Summary of Findings, Conclusion` and Recommendations .....</b>	<b>43</b>
5.1. Introduction.....	43
5.2. Extent of Print Media Publication of Celebrity Endorsement News .....	43
5.3. The Nature of Media Reports on Celebrity Political Campaign Endorsement.....	44
5.4. The Prominence Attached to the Stories of Celebrity Endorsement of Political Campaigns .....	45
5.5. Implications .....	46
5.6. Conclusion .....	47
5.7. Recommendations.....	47
<b>References.....</b>	<b>49</b>

## List of Tables

Table 1.	Number of stories reported .....	35
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## List of Figures

Figure 1.	Type of celebrity stories published. ....	36
Figure 2.	Percentage of stories published monthly. ....	37
Figure 3.	Nature of celebrity stories published by the three newspapers. ....	38
Figure 4.	Nature of stories published per newspaper. ....	39
Figure 5.	A negative reportage. ....	40
Figure 6.	Placement of celebrity stories. ....	41
Figure 7.	A positive reportage. ....	41



# Chapter 1.

## Background

Across the globe, all societies in one way or the other are deeply involved in politics. Kachii (2018) posit that all human societies practice politics in different forms; be it the politics of ideology, politics of religion, politics of ethnicity, academic politics, and what he described as the most controversial of categories; “Party Politics”. An overview of this point indicates that in the life of any society, new political tactics evolve at different stages and new strategies are developed and planted to raise the hope of creating a better fortune in the people of which Ghana is no exception to this phenomenon.

There are basically two key actors in political practice: the electorate on the one hand and candidates who seek election to political office to form a government on the other. The two are bound by a communication system which influences each other’s behavior, particularly during elections (Ansah-Asante, 2015 seen in Boateng, 2019).

Ghana has held a number of democratic elections since independence in 1957, running through the first, second, third, and the current fourth republic. In all these elections, many have argued that political communication has contributed significantly towards influencing voter choices (Drako 2016, Ansah Asante, 2015; Boateng, 2019). Over the years, political parties have relied extensively on political communication strategies through the media to get their messages across to the electorate. Key among these strategies is the use of celebrity endorsements during campaigns (Boateng, 2019).

In Ghana, the idea of employing services of showbiz personalities, musician’s celebrities and other underground musicians to endorse political parties and candidates to gain support from the electorates, has been a growing concept in recent times. (Drako, 2016; Agyepong, 2016; Boateng, 2019).

Celebrity endorsement is most commonly, with products, brands, organizations and political figures capitalizing on the public recognition bestowed on them (Erdogan

1999; Lin, 200; Boateng, 2019). A substantial amount of research (see Erdogan, 1999 for a comprehensive review) concludes that celebrity endorsement is valuable due to its ability to grab consumer attention, create differentiated product images and penetrate through the advertising clutter consumers are surrounded by daily (Erdogan and Kitchen, 1998; Choi et al., 2005). Boateng, 2019, hence argues that celebrities are able to transfer their goodwill to products and brands; then political figures are packaged as product of which celebrities sell to the electorates through the media.

## **1.1. The Role of the Media**

According to Long and Wall (2009), media is a conventional term used to describe modern means of electronic communication. This encompasses the range of newspapers, the broadcast media (radio and television) and the internet in all its variety, giving rise to the concept of new media. It also includes those practices that operate at the intersection of these various media, such as advertising and public relations.

The role of the media is important to this study. The media with reference to newspapers, radio, television and the International News Network (Internet) play a very important role. The media, as vanguard for political, economic and social development represent a working organism. In the case where the media carry out its role with professionalism, truth, fairness, and justice then the society would not suffer but rather benefit. However, where the media becomes bias mainly for profits and political gains the society suffers as a whole (Gandhi, 2005). The media play five main roles and these roles are described as the fourth estate, agenda setter, watchdog, force multiplier and the gatekeeper (Gunjan Sharma 2016, p4). ). The Fourth Estate is a phrase which refers to the profession of Journalism. The notion that the media is the Fourth Estate rests on the idea that the media's function is to act as a guardian of public interest, and as a watchdog on the activities of government. Agenda setting is one of the most important roles of the media. It is defined as the process whereby the media determine what we think and worry about. The key assumption of the media as watchdog is that they speak for the people, represent the interests of the people, and serve as checks on the government. Gatekeeping has been defined as the controlling of a strategic portion of channel, so as to have the power of

decision over whether whatever is flowing through that channel will enter the group or not. In other words, it involves a series of checkpoints that the news has to pass through before it gets to the public.

### **1.1.1. The Media's Role in Ghana's Democracy**

In the Ghanaian democratic society, the media is considered significant because of its roles in informing, sensitizing, and mobilizing the populace. Given the popularity and acceptance of democracy as the modern form of governance in most countries of the world, political, economic and social activities are often and naturally enjoy media preference in terms of reportage (Ojebuyi & Chukwunwike, 2018).

The contributions of the media in Ghana to development has been widely acknowledged in scholarly and anecdotal observations (Tietaah 2013; Tietaah 2015; Gadzekpo 2007, Karikari 2007; Boateng et. al 2017). The media in Ghana dispense their watchdog role, by tirelessly reporting on the activities of public officials and bringing to light incidences of corruption and public accountability on the part of these officials. They also perform their civic forum role by giving the Ghanaian public the voice to address issues that are of importance to them and also informing the public on pertinent issues regarding policies that affect them.

The mass media has the responsibility of informing citizens of the happenings around them. According to Tuchman (1978), by circulating knowledge, the media can influence people 's opinions about issues. In effect, aspects of reportage selected and stressed by the media over time become paramount in the eyes of the public.

Reporters Without Borders, (2002; 2018) asserted that, Ghana's media played an important role in the country's democratic journey. From its resilient advocacy during the country's struggles for independence to its current watchdog role, the Ghanaian media has continually set agendas on matters of critical importance, sustained developmental discourse, and effected change. This has earned Ghana a reputation as one of the most media-friendly countries in the world, rising steadily on the World Press Freedom Index from 67th in 2002 to 23rd in 2018, and from 19th to number one in Africa. This

attainment was dependent on constitutional provisions for a “free and independent press”, including laws against censorship, government interference and harassment (Constitution of Ghana, 1992).

Haque (1986) cited in Udomisor (2002) observed that the news media in most countries devote a substantial part of their time and resources to covering politics. For Haque (1986:p.12), the “vicissitudes of parties, personnel changes, their rise and fall, the personality conflicts and bickering combined with the all-pervasive government decisions and activities form the political process and institutions that the media must report on”. It is a notion among communication scholars in any media system whether democratic or socialist, politics and government constitute a major topic of coverage, despite the fact that ideological orientation and social structures may affect the nature of reportage in terms of central characters, issues and the manner of reporting by each medium. In Ghana, many media outlets are owned by politicians and affiliated business people who use them to espouse partisan views. Some observers celebrate opinionated media on the belief that they mobilize political involvement. However, others worry that partisan media foster apathy and dampen participation. Given that new democratic institutions are often fragile, such effects can be very consequential. Either scenario is plausible, and extant literature does not provide theory or evidence to adjudicate between them. What this means is that, many media consumers will use media that enforces their political ideas. Being perceived to be the top agenda-setters of Ghana’s politics, the interrelationship between news media and the celebrity political campaigns endorsement has not seen much scholarly examination. There has been countless accusations levelled against various media outlets for having some forms of affiliation to certain political parties- This research provides a quantitative content analysis of the press’ coverage of celebrity endorsements during political campaign in Ghana. The 2020 general elections is employed as a case study.

### **1.1.2. The history of political press in Ghana**

The African press emerged under colonialism and its development closely followed that of the press in Europe and North America (Faringer, 1991:2). Despite their

diversity, the nations of Sub-Saharan Africa and their media share common traits and a common history of colonialism (Bourgault, 1995).

The evolution of conventional mass media in Ghana dates to 1822. The then British governor Sir Charles McCarthy, who was overseeing the country as a colony of the British Empire established the Royal Gold Coast Gazette as an official newspaper for the government, however, the paper ceased publication after two years. Thereafter, the West African Herald, an Africa-run newspaper owned and edited by two brothers Charles and Edmund Bannerman also started publication in 1857. The majority of colonial newspapers established between 1931 and 1949 were owned and edited by highly educated Africans who sanctioned the freedom of the press and constantly criticized the colonial regime (Anokwa, 1997). Due to a system of free press and also because the colonial government had then ceased to publish newspapers, people were encouraged to establish several newspapers. It should however be noted that the literacy rate was very low at that time and therefore the press was mainly centered in the urban areas.

From the onset of the third wave of democratization (Huntington, 1991), several dictatorship regimes including Ghana have been transformed. For instance, Ghana today can be said to have relatively stable political institutions, access to the mass media, expansion of the mass political audience, the elevation of the news media to a more powerful institution and a proliferation of the main means of communication. The news media have been an important catalyst in the democratization process. The fact is that the media and modern democracy are strongly connected - the media serving as a link between the political leaders and citizens. Strömbäck (2005:332) believes that the media are in need of democracy. This is because democracy stands out as the only system of governance today that ensures values such as freedom of speech, expression and information as well as the independence of the media from the control of governments. Political messages and actions of politicians get to the public through the media. Perception and voting decisions are made possible by political stories supplied by the media. Although free elections are critical it is not enough for democratic governance. Blumler and Gurevitch (2005:104) observe that to ensure some level of political awareness, public discussions and media participation, a democratic society needs

extensive and intelligent news media to report on public affairs. In effect, democratic governance demands the kind of media that is truly free and also gives access to citizens to engage in quality debate.

## **1.2. Development of Electronic Media in Ghana**

### **1.2.1. Radio**

Broadcasting in Ghana is noted to have commenced in the colonial era dating as far back as 1935 when the Governor of the then Gold Coast (now Ghana), Sir Arnold Hodson, established the first and the only wired radio distribution system in Accra. It was as an extension of London's Empire Service and was later given the name Station ZOY and started service on 31 July 1935. Station ZOY was administered by the Public Relations Department of the Colonial Government between 1946 and 1953 (Asare 2009). In the colonial Ghana, radio was used to take care of information, cultural and entertainment needs of the colonial administrators, European migrants, and a small population of educated Africans, who formed the political elites of that era (Karikari 1995). At the independence, Nkrumah was aware of the prevalence of illiteracy among Ghanaians and considered radio the best tool to reach the illiterates among the Ghanaians. Therefore, the Ghana's radio service was equipped to commence broadcast programmes in several languages, including Hausa, Ewe, Twi, and Fante (Biney, 2011). Through rediffusion stations which were located in the district centres, BBC news and programmes as well as news in local languages were relayed to the local audiences. At its peak of the local radio service in the 1970's, there were 52 relay stations to which several rural subscribers were linked by rediffusion boxes. Although in the 1960s the technology was such that its spread and wider reach to the majority of the population were severely limited, people could now tune in to radio stations without direct cable links to sources of transmission (Ansu-Kyeremeh & Karikari 1998, p.4).

In response to the recommendations made by a commission set up in 1953, Station ZOY was changed to Gold Coast Broadcasting Service (GCBS) and became a separate department of government. In 1967, the GCBS was renamed the Ghana

Broadcasting Corporation (GBC) with improved infrastructure and state-of-the-art broadcasting equipment. Until then, the broadcasting service was wholly funded by government. It was in 1967 that the service became partially commercial as some programmes were allowed to be sponsored by businesses (Alhassan 2005 in Asare 2009). To take advantage of the transistor technology and make access to radio wider as well as to create a basis for development technological capacity, the state-owned industrial establishment, Ghana Sanyo Limited, entered into partnership with the Japanese company SANYO in order to assemble radio sets and related technologies in Tema. There and then, the small portable Akasanoma radio was made available in the Ghanaian market at reasonably affordable price (Asare, 2009).

### **1.2.2. Television**

Television was introduced in Ghana in 1965 as part of the services and operations of GBC. At the time, it could not cover the whole nation, the farthest it could cover was the middle belt namely, Ashanti and Brong Ahafo regions of Ghana. When Nkrumah inaugurated Ghana's television service in July 1965, he made it clear that it was to be used as an ideological tool to assist in the socialist transformation of Ghana and cautioned against the undesirable influence of advertising the content and direction of the service (Biney, 2011). Nkrumah consequently gained monopolistic control over television, and by the time of his overthrow the ten privately owned newspapers in the country that had existed at independence were nonexistent and a state-controlled media remained unchallenged (Biney, 2011). However, today television in Ghana has grown and expanded to cover the entire nation. Additionally, there are other Private television stations, such as TV 3, Metro TV, TV Africa, currently operating free-on-air broadcast. And very recently Net 2 TV, Viasat 1 and Crystal TV came on board, adding voice and values to the broadcast sector. For Nkrumah, the press, radio, and television were not only arenas of public discourse on national issues, but also a closely guarded and tightly controlled propaganda machine for achieving the major objective of political education, socialist ideals, national unity and the liberation and unification of Africa (Biney, 2011).

### **1.3. Statement of the Problem**

Ghana's president occupies the highest office of the land as an officially elected representative by the entire electorate; the President, in effect, is the Chief Executive Officer of the Ghanaian people both home and abroad.

Although politicians represent those who are otherwise too busy or uninterested to be fully engaged, the public ascertains its knowledge on their chief executive through the press. The role of celebrities has always been marked by a pronounced limelight whether they seek it or not. The president is the most central public and political figure in the nation, and increasingly in recent times, their roles have been transformed into being celebrities. As such, the president is a sizeable topic in the press and news media, especially in Ghana.

As gatekeepers of media-worthy stories, the media can twist information to influence public opinion on issues of public concern. In fact, there appear to be conflicting reasons for presidential leadership of news. On one hand, presidents appear able to influence the news agenda across different types of media, including newspaper news sources (Eshbaugh-Soha 2016). The press was also divided along these lines. In the same vein, the nation is currently split politically between the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and National Democratic Congress (NDC). The study analyzes press coverage of celebrity endorsement during elections campaigns and how this influences public sympathy for political parties. The 2020 general election is employed as a case study.

### **1.4. Scope of the Study**

This study analyzed the nature of newspaper representation of celebrity endorsement during political campaigns in Ghana by three (3) selected newspapers, two privately owned newspapers and one state owned newspaper. For the purpose of this study, *TheDailyGuide*, *The Herald*, and *TheDailyGraphic* newspapers were content analyzed quantitatively.



## 1.5. Significance of the Study

This study adds to the available small pool of literature on the quantitative press coverage of celebrity endorsements during political campaigns in Ghana. Press coverage of celebrity endorsement in political campaigns have not received any serious attention in academic research in Ghana. This study thus adds quantitative facts to the volume of available qualitative literature. Media coverage of celebrity endorsement during political campaigns have remained a major research area in countries like the United States, because of public expectations of the role the press in democracy and public administration. To a large extent, this quantitative study provides the academic community a platform for further studies. The findings of this inquiry equally provided the Ghanaian print media quantitative view of how they cover the political activities in Ghana in order to either consolidate or take corrections on how they frame and report such issues.

## 1.6. Operational Definition of Concepts

According to Wimmer and Dominick (2010), operational definition gives specification on the procedures one needs to follow in order to measure a variable. They believed observations are all essential part of research and that one should get a clear picture of what is to be observed before one carries out an observation.

The following concepts and variables were used in this study and have been operationally defined:

**Bias:** Any attempt to present information with facts that are slanted with the aim to favour one party over the other. This is in an attempt to influence audience perception of the issue.

**Audience:** Readers of newspapers who may be influenced by the direction of a news report

**News coverage:** Reportage of newsworthy events published by the newspapers.

**Neutral:** The word used here denotes an attempt by a newspaper not to be negative or positive on issues raised under the categories under study, especially stories that just reported the news.

**Negative/Critical:** An attempt by newspaper to criticize or carry stories that cast aspersions on the celebrity political engagement campaign.

Positive reportage. All news items on the President that sings his praise, highlighting only the good things he has done or will do.

**Partisan:** Projecting the interest of one political party over the other in news reportage.

**Political party sympathy:** Having the urge to favor a particular political party mostly because a newspaper may share similar political ideology with the party or simply because it favors the paper's share of the news market.

**Sensational:** Headlines that impact on the emotions of audience with the aim of influencing them to toe a certain line of thinking in relation to a news article.

## 1.7. Goals and Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to investigate into celebrity endorsement in political campaigns in Ghana. Specifically, the study is set out to:

1. Determine the extent to which the media reported celebrity political campaign endorsement
2. Determine the nature of media reports on celebrity political campaign endorsement
3. To determine the frequency of media reports on activities of celebrity endorsements of political campaigns.

## 1.8. Research Questions (Hypothesis)

Based on the objectives of this study the following questions have been raised to give meaning to the research.

1. To what extent do the media report on the activities of celebrity political campaign endorsement?

2. What is the nature of news media reportage on celebrity campaign endorsement?
3. How often do the news media report on celebrity political campaign endorsement?

## **1.9. Organization of the Study**

This study provides a quantitative analysis of how *The Daily Graphic*, *The Daily Guide* and *The Herald* newspapers covered stories on celebrity political endorsement in five chapters. The introductory chapter provided the background to news coverage by newspapers in Ghana. The chapter argued for the responsible role the media could play in ensuring it stuck to objective reportage in order to reduce partisan sympathy in the nation. Chapter two (2) of the study provides a discussion on the framing theory as the theoretical backing that underpinned the study and also contained review of related literature.

Chapter three (3) discussed the systematic method followed in sampling the newspaper editions, and in gathering and analysing data. Chapter four (4) was devoted to the presentation, analysis of the findings using frequency tables, and graphs to make meaning out of the data obtained. It also contained the discussion of the findings from the data gathered in relation to the relevant theoretical background and related studies. Chapter five (5) provided summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendations. discussed the findings of the study.

## **1.10. Chapter Summary**

This chapter provided the general background to the study about the extent of news coverage by newspapers in Ghana in covering the celebrity political campaigns endorsement activities in Ghana. The chapter provided information on news reporting by these newspapers. The chapter defined the problem being studied and outlined the scope and significance that formed the focus of the study. Certain concepts that were applied in the study were operationalized. The next chapter presents the review of related literature and the theoretical background of the study.

## **Chapter 2.**

### **Theoretical Framework and Literature Review**

#### **2.1. Introduction**

This chapter covers various theories to be used for the study and their relevance to the study. It focuses on review of concepts and related studies done in respect to celebrity endorsement and political campaigns. It takes into consideration views from various scholarly works that speaks on how media cover celebrity endorsement during political campaigns.

#### **2.2. Theoretical Frameworks**

According to Sutherland (196:9), a theory is “an ordered set of assertions about a generic behavior or structure assumed to hold throughout a significantly broad range of specific instances. Again, Borgatti (1998) as cited in Attawura (2015), a theoretical framework is a collection of interrelated concepts, likely a theory but not necessarily so well worked-out. It guides the research by determining what things to measure and what statistical relationship to look out for. In the context of this research, heavily rely on the Agenda Setting Theory and Framing Theory.

##### **2.2.1. Agenda setting theory**

There is a plethora of theories on media and conflict including the agenda setting theory in the last five decades. According to Seteolu (2017: 80) the agenda setting theory was made popular by Bernard Cohen in 1963 when he said the press “may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is successful in telling it readers what to think about”. The original work is, however, credited to Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw in 1972 in their article titled: *The Agenda Setting Function of the Media*. To McCombs and Shaw, the agenda setting is the process whereby the news media lead the public in assigning relative importance to various public issues through

the tools of framing and priming. The media accomplish this agenda setting function not by directly telling the public that one issue is more important than the other, which has proven to be ineffective, instead, the media signal the importance of certain issues by giving these issues preferential treatment, such as more frequent coverage and more prominent positions. Castells (2007:4) re-enforced this perspective when he argued that “what does not exist in the media does not exist in the public mind even if it could have a fragmented presence in individual minds”.

There is evidence that the media have a strong influence on the people’s perception of which issues are important and which problems they want their government to do something about. The influence of mass media increases when the need for orientation among the viewers is much. The agenda setting theory explains the effect of media power in shaping the perception of people concerning a particular issue. The agenda setting effect is stronger for concrete issues that are easy to visualize than for abstract issues (McCombs & Reynolds, 2002; Yagede & Dozier, 1990; Yangar, Peters, & Kinder, 1982).

### **2.2.2. Relevance of this theory to this study**

Since the media have a strong influence on the people’s perception of issues, so would the media be able to use the tools of agenda setting in terms of how it covers celebrities who endorse politicians in the country. The media through the priming effect (thus a concept through which the media effects among the people are enhanced by providing a basic perception human minds take decisions based on the preconceptions that are already been stored in our memory) would signal the magnitude of election issues by giving these issues preferential treatment, such as more frequent coverage and more prominent positions that it will attract the public attention for action.

### **2.2.3. Framing theory**

The Framing theory is one of the oldest media theories within media landscape. It is one of the theories within research in mass communication and political communication, from 2000s (Bryant & Miron 2004). Framing theory was prepared by

Goffman (1974), who argued that people “locate, perceive, identify and label” events and occurrences from the media. Framing Theory talks about where specific piece of information is organized or structured and then shown by the media to audience. The ‘Frame’ essentially is set to influences the mindset (perception) of people and impacts their decision making on the topic which is changed by media.

However, the recent antecedents of the theory can be traced back to Goffman (1974), who wrote about ‘frame analyses. According to Arowolo (2017), the theory is deeply related to the agenda setting theory but focuses on the essence of an issue instead of the topic at large. Scholars such as Ghanem (1997), Weaver (2007), and McCombs (2005) perceived the theory as a ‘second level’ agenda setting theory. The theory, according to Arowolo (2017) argues that how an issue is presented to a media’s audience (known as the frame) influences the choices people make about how to process information concerning the issue. The theory therefore argues ultimately that media audiences’ perceptions of issues are greatly influenced by how the media presents it to them. Thus, the continuous presentation of themes concerning an issue affects audience’s cognition of the issue. Arowolo (2017, p.3) define framing as “organizing ideas or themes, ways of linking together stories historically, building up a narrative over time and across political space.

Also, Druckman (2007) posits that framing is an indication or a revelation of what the speaker sees as relevant to the topic at hand. Framing therefore presents an instance where the reality of the audience is pre-defined by the media or sender of a message. Druckman (2007: p.100) view framing as “words, images, phrases, and presentation styles that a speaker (e.g. a politician, a media outlet) uses when relaying information about an issue or event to an audience. However, Saunders (2006) observes that framing can be presented continually and not as a single event. This strategy builds single events into a historic context and possibly proposes the future of the series of events. The media use the ‘serial frame’, which is used to provide a framework for following a long-term story in a way that keeps the audience interested.

Fairhurst and Sarr (1996), posit that to frame, one has to employ slogans, jargon and catchphrases which can be used to structure a subject in a memorable and familiar fashion. Thus, to illuminate corporate values through physical vestiges (sometimes in a way language cannot). In campaigns and advertising, Examples of much-used frames include the ‘war on drugs’, or a person’s ‘battle with cancer’, or the ‘cold war’, phrases that elicit widely shared images and meanings.

Thus, indicating that a political communication strategist draws the public attention to certain topics; it decides where people think about through the media using elements of the frames. Thus, the one of many topics or stories chosen by journalists, presented to the audience make up the frame in which the news is presented, hence, framing refers to the way media and media gatekeepers organize and present the events and issues they cover, and the way audiences interpret what they are provided. Frames are abstract notions that serve to organize or structure social meanings.

#### **2.2.4. Identifying frames in the news**

Boateng (2019) citing Tankard, (2003), provides one of the most comprehensive approaches to framing by listing framing mechanisms for identifying and measuring news frames and these are: headlines, lead, subheads, photographs, photo captions, source selection, quotes, statistics and charts, concluding statements, quote selection, pull quotes, logos and paragraphs. To Boateng (2019), the inductive approach is one of the approaches in identifying frames in news items.

Nonetheless, Cappella and Jamieson, (1997) have suggested four criteria that a news frame must meet. A news frame must have identifiable, conceptual and linguistic characteristics, secondly, it should be commonly observed in journalistic practice, thirdly, it must be possible for one to distinguish the frame reliably from other frames and lastly, a frame must have representational validity and not a fragment of the researcher’s imagination.

Entman, (1993) also suggests that frames in the news can be examined and identified by “the presence or absence of certain key words, stock phrases, stereotyped

images, and sources of information and sentences that provide thematically reinforcing clusters of facts or judgments” p.52).

### **2.2.5. Relevance of framing theory to the study**

Since the media have a strong influence on the people’s perception of issues, so would the media be able to use the tools of frames in terms of how it covers celebrity endorsement during political campaigns. The media through the priming effect would signal the magnitude of election issues by giving these issues preferential treatment, such as more frequent coverage and more prominent positions that it will attract the public attention for action. Kuypers (2002) asserts that media studies done on political communication are deeply rooted in this theory, thus, providing reasons as to how the media intentionally and unintentionally project political leaders, governments and policies. Again, Richardson (2013) posits media framing determines how media audiences see political leaders, and how organizations describe political issues and events, space allocation, hence, placing much emphasis on cognition of the audience and their perception.

The theoretical underpinning of framing theory will help the study explore the nature of media’s coverage of celebrity political campaigns endorsement in Ghana. Thus allowing the researcher to gain deep insight into how celebrity political campaigns endorsement were presented in the media which is considered core to the study.

### **2.2.6. Interconnection between agenda-setting and framing**

McCombs and Shaw, (1993) were the first to try connecting the theory of agenda-setting and framing. They assumed that news carries information about an issue – this is how agenda-setting takes place. At the same time, news emphasizes or conceals some attributes of the issue; thus, how the framing of the issue takes place (McCombs & Shaw, 1993).

As a media effect tool, framing theory is closely related to the agenda setting functions of media. It is argued that, the process of agenda setting has two stages: the first



stage is framing and agenda setting is the second stage. The media not only provide information for the people but also try to motivate the people to consider some events as the most important issues for the day, while, at times intentionally, keeping other issues out of public attention. In doing this, the media may highlight certain issues that are relevant to their purposes and policies.

Both focus on how media draw the public's eye to specific topics and in this way, they set the agenda. But Framing takes this a step further in that, the way in which the news is presented creates a frame for that information. This is usually a conscious choice by journalists, in this case a frame refers to the way media as gatekeepers organize and present the ideas, events, and topics they cover. They are thought to influence the perception of the news by the audience, in this way it could be construed as a form of second level agenda-setting. Frames do not only tell the audience what to think about (agenda-setting), but also how to think about that issue (second level agenda setting, otherwise known as the framing theory). Thus, this research, sets out to investigate how the media set the agenda and the framed the coverage of the electoral processes during the 2020 General Elections in Ghana.

### **2.2.7. Media and democracy in Ghana**

The 1992 constitution of the Republic of Ghana on article 162 (4) reveals the importance of the media in democratic dispensation. Thus, stating that “editors and publishers of newspapers and other institutions of the mass media shall not be subject to control or interference by government, or shall they be penalized or harassed for their editorial opinions and views, or the content of their publications. Thus, the press should spur the democratic dispensation in a civil society.

Arthur, (2010) posits that media as the fourth estate plays a role in preserving Ghana's democratic credentials through the watchdog and monitoring functions. Thus, the media exposes attempts of votes buying, and influence electorate during elections. The media also act, particularly as a check on the government and public office holders by raising issues of transparency and accountability.

Furthermore, Arthur, (2010) claim is supported by Gadzekpo (2008) that, the NPP government in 2002 abandoned the attempt to raise \$1 billion loan from the International Finance Consortium, a company considered to be of doubtful credential as a result the media's role. Also, in 2003 the government, haven faced much pressure on the airwaves against the sale of Ghana Commercial Bank, withdrew the decision, saying it was a "listening government" (Afrimap et al., 2007).

Nonetheless, Gyimah-Boadi, (2001) observed that through the dissemination of information, the media through framing and agenda setting, created political awareness, political and civic education, and educating electorates on the need to contribute to free, fair and peaceful elections. Gyimah-Boadi, (2001) assertion was supported by Fobih (2008) who reveals that that the press has provided many information about governance in Ghana, facilitating the understanding of the general public of the agenda, manifestoes of the political parties and their candidates, as well as helped expose corrupt practices in government.

### **2.2.8. History of elections in Ghana**

Elections in Ghana date back to the pre-independence era, where elections were characterized by both negative and positive outcomes. The 1951 election, in which the Convention People's Party (CPP) won, was evidence of the party's organizational and strategic abilities, even though the elections and referenda of the mid- 1950's and 1969 were tainted with ethnic regionalist motives. There was also the abuse of incumbency in the 1960's by the Nkrumah led CPP government. Paradoxically, the 1979 election was held under worse conditions, yet produced one of the fairest outcomes.

The presidential candidate Hilla Limann of the People's National Party (PNP), a diplomat and a scholar who had not been involved in the politics of the country before, won the run-off winning seven of the then nine regions. After Limann's administration, the advent 'of the 4<sup>th</sup> republican constitution, has seen six (8) major successive elections since 1992 to 2020. These elections have been globally commended by countries, institutions and personalities as being free and fair. Although these successive elections have been recognized as free and fair by both local and international election observers,

the success of the county's electoral process has been belittle by election related violence (Akortia, 2015; Gyamera, 2018).

### **2.2.9. Celebrity endorsement**

The practice of celebrity endorsement has been a global phenomenon. Um (2020) reveals that the use of celebrity endorsers in the US accounts for about 25 percent of TV commercials account for the use of celebrity endorsers while, in Japan and Korea more than 70 percent of TV commercials feature one or two celebrity endorsers. According to the author, celebrity endorsers are likely to appear in TV commercials through a careful selection based on “credibility, attractiveness, favorability, expertise, or popularity” (p. 272). The preferred candidate must possess certain appropriate attributes that should match with the attributes of the brand positioned in the minds of the target markets.

According Um (2020) citing Atkin and Block (1993) express that people perceive that celebrity endorsers as more attractive than non-celebrity endorsers. Thus, advertisements featuring celebrity endorsers can lead to greater purchase intention and brand evaluation than featuring non-celebrity endorsers. Freeman et al (2015), attractiveness is a “crucial factor and is highly credible in measuring the perceived image of celebrity endorsers” (p. 216). Thus, consumers of products and services find attractiveness in an endorser through identification.

Again, the identification occurs when “individuals conform to the attitude or behavior advocated by another person because these individuals derive satisfaction from the belief that they are like that person” (Freeman et al, 2015; Friedman & Friedman, 1979). Hence, identification is related to credibility and attractiveness, and best explains the persuasion process by a celebrity endorser

According to Ford (2018), celebrity endorsement is based on marketing principle that these people enhance advertisement credibility and linking, as well the brand's image, creating awareness and encourage positive purchase behavior. Thus, the right choice for an endorser is an essential decision for an advertiser. Ford (2018) shows that celebrity

endorsement enhances brand credibility, and the trust and confidence in them attracts attractiveness from followers who are both powerful influencers of potential consumers.

Nonetheless, Chan et al (2018) posit that Celebrity endorsement have a three-part meaning transfer process which includes “dramatic roles, political campaigns or athletic achievements of the celebrity”. The second stage is a “result of celebrity endorsement and transfer to a product”, and thirdly celebrity endorsement and “transfer from a product to a consumer” (p. 18). Chan et al (2018) agree with assertion by (Till & Busler, 2000) that celebrities are highly efficient endorsers for products and services.

Again, citing Turner (2013) argue that celebrities emerge from two industries including sports and entertainment and thus are visible via media, television and movies, and are more effective communicators than non-celebrities.

Celebrity endorsement has been considered viable options for brands to increase awareness, promote products and build capacity. According to Okoli (2016) about 14 to 19 percent of advertisement aired in the United States features celebrities that endorse brands and products. It is critical to note that endorsement of products by celebrities increase sales and maximize profits due to the actors influence in decisions of consumer purchase

### **2.3. The Match-Up Hypothesis**

Several Research studies have examined match-up between the celebrity and the product effectiveness of celebrity endorsements. Results reveal that the match-up between the celebrity and product is a pivotal factor for examining the effectiveness of celebrity endorsements. There was a positive impact of celebrity–product match-up on various celebrity-, advertisement- and brand-related evaluations (Parmar et al, 2020).

Match-up between the endorser attractiveness and the product which leads to favourable brand attitudes. Similarly, Bergkvist et al. (2016) also show that for expertise-related product, the fit between the celebrity expertise and the brand has positive effects

on attitude towards brand. However, Patel and Basil (2017) also posit that the physical attractiveness of celebrities is more relevant for products that are beauty related.

Ahmed et al. (2012) posits that the Product Match-Up Hypothesis should be perfect match between personality characteristics and brand attributes of the celebrity. Thus, match-up is determined by the degree of fitness between the brand and the celebrity. Many political parties worldwide and in Ghana particular exert great emphasis upon the importance of proper match-up between celebrities and their campaign messages. The aspect of companies takes into consideration the fitting link between celebrity's personality and product attributes. Political campaign or party supporter will also expect congruity between the celebrity and the political message.

Again, Ahmed et al. (2012) citing (Kamins, 1990 and Ohanian, 1991) reveals that product celebrity match-up does not rely only on congruency, but on the physical attractiveness of celebrities. Thus, celebrities who are attractive are more persuasive, hence it enhances the attractiveness of the product.

The model emphasizes that the physical attractiveness of a celebrity endorser will enhance evaluations of the products characteristics only if the characteristics of the product "match-up" with the image conveyed by the celebrity. Hence, an extension beyond attractiveness and creditability towards a consideration has to be done in terms of making the entire image of the celebrity with the endorsed brand (Ahmed et al, 2012; Ohanian, 1991)

## **2.4. Review of Empirical Studies**

Within literature, attention has been paid to studies concerning media activities and politics. Especially, within the enclave of political reporting in the media, many scholars have dedicated their works to understand how media reporting influences political activities (see for instance Sanyaolu et al., 2017; Stromberg, 2015; Caldero, 2018; and Kahne, 2018) and how politics influences media activities (Stieglitz & Dang-Xuan, 2014).

Literature regarding the media political landscape thus abounds which throw insight into how the two inter-relate with each other; more specifically, empirical studies concerning the media's reportage on celebrity political campaigns endorsement have not been left untouched. Some scholars have tried to identify how national media organizations capture celebrity political campaigns endorsement other issues closely related to political campaigns endorsement but not how media covered the celebrity endorsers. These studies span all type of media, ranging from print to broadcast and even social media. One of such studies that regards media's reportage of presidents is Ileri (2014)'s investigation into how four newspapers situated in different countries reported on then President Barack Obama's multi-racial identity before, during and after the 2008 USA elections. The study looked at publications from newspapers such as the New York Times – US; Times – Britain; China Daily – China and Daily Nation – Kenya. The author employed the use of a quantitative content analysis design to probe into how these media organizations representing different human races captured the multi-racial identity of the past US president.

In his paper, *Presidents and Front-page News: How America's Newspapers Cover the Bush Administration*, Peake (2007) offers a comparative study of coverage of the Bush presidency on the front pages of 100 American newspapers during a five-month period in 2006. Using the quantitative content analysis method, Peake focused on how front-pages of newspapers covered Bush's administration while paying close attention to local newspapers in the United States of America. The primary focus of Peake's study was to first, find out how partisan newspapers covered the Bush administration. The focus of the paper therefore considered the political leanings of these newspapers and how they projected the Bush administration in their reportage. Peake's study found that, newspapers studied slanted their coverage of the then president to suit the political context of the local audience and the newspapers orientation. Peake (2007) found that "local newspapers slant their coverage of President Bush, and the slant is influenced in part by the markets of the newspapers and the political atmosphere of newspaper organizations as represented by editorial endorsements" (p.63).

Kamau (2016) in his article *Agenda setting via gate-keeping theory in the press coverage of presidential candidates in Kenya* sought to reveal how the media covered the presidential candidates in the 2013 general elections. Three mainstream newspapers (The Nation, The Standard and The Star Newspapers) were used to gather build-ups of the elections which focused on two presidential candidates; Raila Odinga and Uhuru Kenyatta. Kamau (2016) deeply rooted his findings in the concept of gate keeping where the researcher argued that the media played the role of the gatekeeper for the audience because they guarded and decided what the audiences received as messages and how they perceived them. The findings of the study also revealed that a little below half of the media's coverage within the four sampled newspapers projected Uhuru Kenyatta positively, while it focused less on other candidates. Central to this study is portrayal of the candidates as a package and highlights of some of the tools that worked for them including the use of celebrity endorsers and all other political campaign strategy that worked for the candidates. Hence, this suggests less attention paid by the researchers on the subject matter since it was not among the major issues of study.

In Nigeria, Ngwu (2014) assessing "*media's coverage of the then president of Nigeria, Umaru Yar'Adua*" explored media's coverage of the '78 days' presidential power vacuum crisis under President Umaru Yar'Adua and how issues were framed by the media in relation to the president's incapacitation. Four dailies (*The Guardian, New Nigerian, Daily Trust and This day newspapers*) were purposively sampled, thus, representing the Northern voice the Southern voice. Using the time range from November 23, 2009 and February 9, 2010, found out that the prominence media organization in Nigeria gave rise to the power crisis under Yar'Adua's administration.

Ngwu (2014) findings show that Yar'Adua's incapacitation covered on most front pages of the newspapers, hence the media employing the agenda setting tool in ensuring that the president's absence from office received much attention. Ngwu reveals that news articles, editorials and feature opinions heavily criticized the absence of the president from office while lesser publications within the four newspapers studied took a more empathetic stance on the issue

Nonetheless, Ileri (2014) in investigating “how four newspapers situated in different countries reported on former President Barack Obama’s multi-racial identity before, during and after the 2008 United States of America’s elections”. Thus, publications from newspapers such as the New York Times – US; Times – Britain; China Daily – China and Daily Nation – Kenya. Ileri (2014) adopted the quantitative content analysis design to investigate how the media represented and captured different human races and the multi-racial identity of the former President. The study identified racial themes like the ‘African American’, ‘black’, ‘Kenyan roots’ and ‘white roots’ that represented the multi-layered identity of Barack Obama. The study again sought to identify the particular racial frames Barack Obama represented through the coverage of the four newspapers’ during the 2008 elections.

The findings revealed that racial frame in Kenyan were dominant amongst all the other racial frames - taking a share of 47.5 per cent. It was followed by the black frame (34.1%), African American (10%) and white (8.4%). The Daily Nation of Kenya was more likely to engage in all the four frames in their reportage with emphasis on the Kenyan racial frame than any other newspaper studied, hence concluding that Kenyan media as well as political landscape is highly tribal. Again, Ileri (2014: p.33) found that the overall media framing of Obama’s racial identity was positive rather than negative, thus showing that that “all four newspapers gave favorable coverage. However, racial coverage by the New York Times did not focus on stereotypes associated with African Americans, which the researcher says it could have worked against Barack Obama.

## **2.5. Celebrity Endorsement in Ghanaian Context**

In the Ghanaian context, extensive search of literature by the researcher of this present study suggest that coverage of political celebrity endorsers has received no or little attention by scholars. Admittedly, there exist some studies on influence/effects or impact of celebrity endorsement to politicians during campaigns (Agyepong, 2016; Boateng 2019), however, these studies do not provide the crust of what the present study investigates. Therefore, the researcher will attempt to highlight on some of these studies to provide basis on what the present study is looking at.



To start with, Freeman et al (2015) posit that celebrities are signed up by companies with the expectation to give them a unique and relevant position in the minds of consumers. Hence, the celebrity is known in the public eye does not qualify the fellow as an ideal candidate to promote brands. These celebrities then act as spokespersons to advertise and promote the company's products, services or ideas (Freeman et al, 2015), hence making celebrity endorsement a popular trend in contemporary marketing. For example, the famous footballer Stephen Appiah endorses a water brand X mineral water; Ghanaian actress Nana Ama McBrown endorses the electronic brand, Hisense; Ghanaian singers such as Daddy Lumba, Sakordie, and many others endorse political campaigns for the main political parties such as the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and New Patriotic Party (NPP).

Agyepong (2016) cited in Boateng (2019) used mixed methods (Qualitative and quantitative content analysis carried out on selected media coverage of celebrity political endorsements of presidential candidates/political parties in the 2008 and 2012 election campaigns). Her thesis aimed to investigate the role of celebrity endorsement in the political marketing of the 2008 and 2012 general election campaigns, drawing on emerging theories about celebrity capital. The study looked at the perspectives of the Ghanaian media, voters, and election campaign managers from the two main political parties in Ghana, and celebrity political endorsers in the 2008 and 2012 general election campaigns.

Agyepong's (2016) findings indicate that the most successful role played by celebrity endorsers (including musicians) was generating excitement for political parties'/candidates' campaigns, especially in terms of attracting potential voters to rallies. However, their success in directly influencing voters' choices, even of their fans, is seen as minimal. In relation to celebrity political endorsers from the entertainment and media fields, it was found that their specific role in the 2008 and 2012 election campaign of the NDC and NPP parties was to entertain and attract people to the campaign.

Boateng 2019 used quantitative method to study the influence of celebrity endorsements and political campaign songs as political communication tools in the

Western Region of Ghana and found that; closely related to Agyepong's findings, that the public do not seem to be directly influenced by activities of celebrity endorsers. However, the findings indicated that celebrity endorsement is critical for politicians during campaign seasons. the study also found that electorates have positive perceptions towards celebrity endorsers and see them as a very critical tool for political parties to utilize. The researcher thus recommended, political communication strategist to device was of translating the goodwill of these celebrities onto their candidate because the people

## **2.6. Media Coverage of Political Celebrity Endorsers**

The media effect theory provides a framework to interrogate the role of the mass media in political campaign seasons. The media can contribute to intensification of such attention on the activities of political celebrity endorsers by reporting the occurrence and location of such of their activities constantly. McQuail (2000) recognizes that the media can instigate collective behavior during situations of public turmoil, mass celebration among others. According to Smith & Temin (2001), the media in Ghana has become very crucial to the conduct of electoral politics in the country. Focusing on the 2000 elections, the paper argues that the media's coverage of political events before and after the elections provided access to all political parties, and citizens the information and opportunity to discuss policies to discuss policies and programmes of various political parties.

To properly interrogate how the media cover political celebrity endorsers in the country, there is the need to examine media frames of political endorsers. This includes how the print media in the country frame the celebrity endorsers during and after election in the country. This will help determine if the celebrities given attention on the media because of their affiliation to the political parties/ candidate or if their support rather translate goodwill to the politicians. It is also important to study the tone of coverage given to the political celebrity endorsers as well as the frequency of coverage within that political campaign period.

As stated earlier, based on extant search of literature, the data suggest little has been done to study how the media, particularly the print media covered political celebrity endorsers in the country.

## **2.7. Conclusion**

This chapter has reviewed related literatures that exist in relation with the subject matter of the study. It first looked at the theories that the work is grounded on (Agenda Setting Theory and The Framing Theory). Concepts that are found in the work are also reviewed as well as reviewed literature on studies covering influence of celebrity political endorsements outside the country as well as in the country. The study hence argued that there seems to be a gap in how the media (print media) covered celebrity endorsers in the country and not the politicians or parties they endorse. These therefore provide the basis upon which this present study is conducted.

## **Chapter 3.**

### **Methodology**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

This chapter presents research methods to be used to achieve the main objective thus, to investigate into print media coverage of celebrity endorsement in political campaign. Specifically, the study is set out to determine the extent to which the media reported celebrity political campaign endorsement, to determine the nature of media reports on celebrity political campaign endorsement and to determine the frequency of media report on activities of celebrity endorsement of political campaigns. This section discusses the study area, the population studied, the study design, the sample size and sampling procedures, measurement instruments and methods of data collection. The limitations and delimitations of the research will also be addressed. Descriptive and non-descriptive methodology are both considered for the study.

#### **3.2. Research Design**

The data collection technique to be used in this study is quantitative content analysis. According to (Berelson, 1952), content analysis is a quantitative, systematic, and objective technique for describing the manifest content of communications.

By quantitative, occurrences are counted with respect of a unit of interest. By systematic, all relevant aspect of the sample is counted because. Since we cannot arbitrarily pick what aspects get analysed units for analysis are selected and categorized using clearly defined criteria. The manifest content means what is tangible and observable is counted

Some researchers used content analysis to examine environmental themes in newspaper advertising (Özkoçak & Tuna, 2011), antisocial behavior in a reality TV show (Wilson, Robinson, & Callister, 2012), portrayals of obesity on YouTube (Yoo & Kim, 2012), risk taking in action movies (Beullens, Roe, & Van den Bulck, 2011), and, more

generally, media. Wimmer and Dominick (2010) indicated that content analysis can be useful in describing communication content, testing of hypotheses of message characteristics, comparing media content to the real world, assessing the image of particular groups in society, and in establishing a starting point for studies of media effects. Considering the fact that content analysis is suitable in describing communication content, comparing media content to the real world, and in testing hypotheses of message features, the approach was chosen for this study. It was, thus, expected to serve as a useful tool in analysing the nature in media coverage of celebrity political campaigns endorsement in Ghana quantitatively. The purpose and methodical analysis of the stories were to show the extent of coverage and their nature.

### **3.3. Sample Size**

The newspapers selected for the content analysis are The Daily Guide, The Herald, and The Daily Graphic. The Daily Graphic will be selected because, it is state owned and should be seen playing a more neutral role in their coverage of events. It is the most widely read newspaper in Ghana with high circulation rate. The Daily Guide is the most widely-read private newspaper in Ghana (Press Reference, 2011). It is owned by honourable Freddie Blay, the current Chairman of the NPP. The paper has high political sympathy towards the NPP and as such, is expected to project their ideologies. The Herald, a private newspaper, is anti-NPP and most of its reportage about the party is negative. The political affiliations and ideological stance of these newspapers influence the political stories they publish. The political stories are mostly about the two major political parties, because these stories sell, especially in an election year. Its selection is also because it is consistent on the market and have a wider circulation in the nation. Editions of The Daily Graphic, The Daily Guide and The Herald newspapers which were published within the last six (6) months to the December 2020 election will be sampled study. Equal numbers of each the editions would be selected and used for the analysis because of their readership coverage. The selection of the newspapers is on purpose of comparison. *The Herald* and *The Daily Guide* are newspapers purported to be affiliated or have political sympathy toward the two dominant political parties in Ghana while *The Daily Graphic* represents a daily for national interest. Results from these two

categories will be analysed to determine the nature of reportage since the celebrities only endorsed the two dominant political parties.

### **3.4. Sampling Technique and Procedure**

Sampling involves the selection of segments of a population to represent the entire population (Amendahe, 2005). Sampling allows a researcher to study a relatively smaller number of units in lieu of the target population and to obtain data that are representative of the whole target population (Amendahe, 2005). In this study, since analysis of the entire newspaper universe was not possible and might not give significant advantage over a sampled universe, newspaper editions were selected and analysed from the universe. The edition dates that were analysed in this study were selected by constructing a composite week for each month within the study period. The study sampled all published newspapers from Monday to Friday to gain a sample between the period of June to November 2020. For the random selection process, all published newspapers between June and November in 2020 were written on slips of papers. The slips were folded and dropped into a container. After the slips were mixed up, 10 of them were randomly picked, one at a time and record was kept of the date on each selected slip. The process was applied to all different newspaper categories till the sample was constituted. Wimmer and Dominick (2010) believe that “the number of edition dates to be studied should be a function of the incidence of the phenomenon in question and that the lower the incidence, the more dates must be sampled.” This means that the event one is studying should determine the number of edition dates to select for the analysis, and that when the event does not occur often, one must sample more edition dates for the analysis.

### **3.5. Data Collection Technique**

According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (2011), data collection is the process of gathering data through observing, measuring, collection or questioning respondents to obtain relevant information for a study. Data collection forms a fundamental part of any research study. Inaccurate collection of data

can affect the results of a study and ultimately lead to invalid results. The data collection technique used in this study is quantitative content analysis. Data collection from the three newspapers basically focused on the nature of reportage (measured as Positive, negative, neutral, praise singing reportage), the extent of bias (measured wording of content, tone, photo enhancement) in stories published under the various categories of issues. Data collection for the content analysis was undertaken using a coding guide that was developed based on the research objectives. The coding guide contained four variables which were applied to the various stories based on certain instructions. The coding guide was useful in classifying the data on the coding sheet by simply reading and placing the categories in their designated spaces based on the numbers assigned to them.

The stories were searched for by going through all the pages of the sampled editions of The Daily Guide, The Herald, and The Daily Graphic. Locating the stories involved going through the newspaper pages and searching for all news items, articles and editorials falling under the categories. The data gathering procedure involved reading every identified story and looking out for the appropriate categorization of each item. Code for each observation of a category was then entered into the appropriate cell on the coding sheet. Headlines were also analysed to check for sensationalism to complement the four categories listed above.

### **3.6. Data Analysis**

After completing all the coding activities, the data will be entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. The coded content will be analyzed quantitatively for trends, patterns, relationships, similarities, and differences. This will be carried out through the formation of various frequency distribution tables and bar charts based on the objectives for easy analyses and interpretation. Statistical differences and analyses would be described beneath each of the tables, bars, and charts, in simple percentages and sometimes in frequency counts. Discussion on the findings were related to scholarly works and theory within which the study will be situated.

I focused on the print media because gaining access to published materials was easier. In my case, I worked in the parliament house of Ghana and I had access to the parliamentary library making it easier to access archived newspapers on the subject of my research, celebrity endorsements.

Including news stories from radio/television outlets would have added a useful angle to my research however, retrieving news stories published by these outlets was a cumbersome process, especially among those without online platforms where information can easily be stored and retrieved. Thus resulting in the loss of news items on celebrity. The newspapers were thus selected to avoid the bias and insufficiency of radio/ TV outlets. The print media is a very vibrant avenue through which Ghanaians access their daily news. The print media was a major tool employed in the fight for independence in Ghana and had lived on to become the most accessed platform for news stories. The research thus focused on the print media due to the high readership and impact it has in Ghana's media sphere.

### **3.7. Inter-Coder Reliability Test**

Wimmer and Dominick (2010) explained inter-coder reliability as the “levels of agreement among independent coders who code the same content using the same coding instrument. A study is reliable when repeated measurement of the same material results in similar decisions or conclusions.”

In this study, two independent coders will carry out an inter-coder reliability test. Reliability checks on a sample of content across stories will be conducted following several discussions. The independent coders will be introduced to the codes being studied in the stories and the coding guide with which to identify them. They will then be given the coding sheet that will be developed for the study and will be assigned samples of the newspapers to be coded. Agreement between the two coders will be assessed with Holsti's formula as cited in Wimmer and Dominick (2010) which specified that reliability =  $\frac{2M}{N1 + N2}$ . In the formula, M represents the number of coding decisions on which



the two coders agreed and N1 and N2 represent the total number of coding decisions by the first and second coders respectively.

### **3.8. Summary**

The focus of this chapter was the systematic procedures that will be used in collecting data for this study. The most relevant data gathering approach to be used for the study is content analyses, since the study primarily will examine contents of newspaper publications about the celebrity endorsements. The chapter threw light on the systematic steps to be used in selecting the newspaper editions to ensure that every edition has an equal chance of being selected for the analysis. The instrument to be used in collecting the data, how the actual data will be collected, and the tools to be used in analysing the data were discussed in detail.

## **Chapter 4.**

### **Findings and Discussions**

#### **4.1. Introduction**

This chapter presents data and analyses of the findings in response to the stated objectives. Data were collected using the quantitative content analysis approach. Both uni-variate and bi-variate analyses of the findings have been presented in the form of tables and bar charts. Analyses focused on newspaper stories of *The Daily Graphic*, *The Herald* and *The Daily Guide* newspapers. It looked at stories covering the celebrity endorsements and the relevance attached to them.

#### **4.2. Findings**

The various categories of findings have been quantitatively presented below. The findings are centred on political celebrity stories which are positive in nature, negative or neutral.

##### **4.2.1. Number of stories from the newspapers**

Out of the 111 publications from the three newspapers analysed 45 (41%) were found to carry stories that were celebrity focused. The 45 publications had 162 stories in total which translate into an approximately four stories per publication within the period under review. The 162 identified stories published by the three selected newspapers that were found to be celebrity stories between June 2020 and December 2020. From the data gathered, *The Daily Graphic* had majority of stories carried by all the three newspapers reviewed while *The Daily Guide* and *The Herald* newspapers carried a little lower respectively. *The Daily Graphic* published as much as 53% stories about various celebrities and has 41 more stories than *The Daily Guide* and 55 more stories than *The Herald* newspaper as shown by table 1 below. It is obvious from the data analysed that, celebrity news reported in the newspapers between June were minimal compared with other news stories. It can also be said that the *Herald* which publishes three times in the

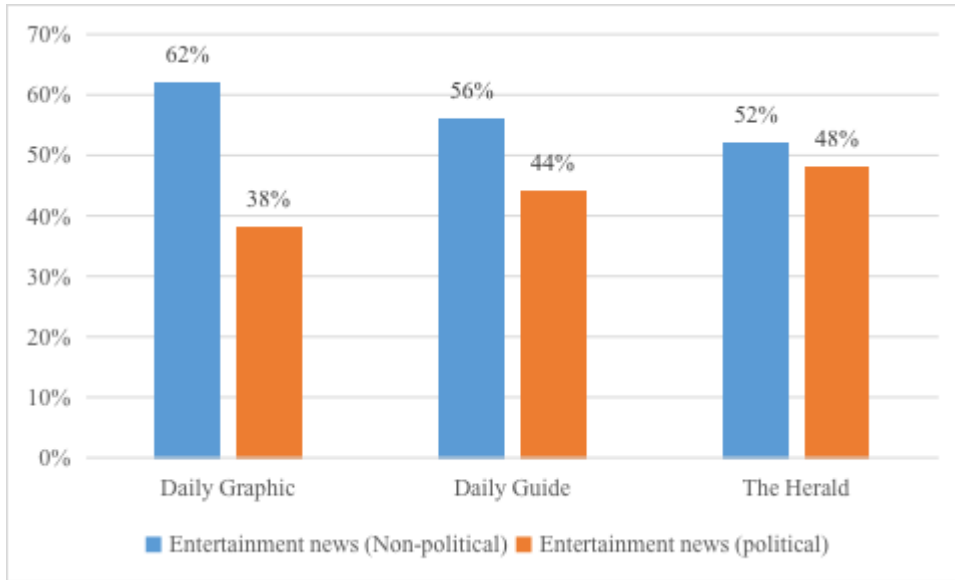
week carried the least of stories covering celebrity news which means that less of their readers will not have read or receive information about celebrities endorsing one political party of the other.

**Table 1. Number of stories reported**

<b>Newspaper</b>	<b>Frequency of stories</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<i>Daily Graphic</i>	86	53
<i>Daily Guide</i>	45	28
<i>The Herald</i>	31	19
<b>Total</b>	162	100

Source: Three newspapers' review, 2021

The researcher categorized the type of stories into two main categories. The first is to check whether the news item published by the papers was the normal entertainment news and secondly if it is an entertainment news but political in nature. The data revealed that only 42% of the stories published can be classified as entertainment political news and the rest being normal entertainment news stories. As presented in figure 1 below, *The Daily Graphic* had 38% of its 86 stories published as entertainment with political connotation while *The Daily Guide* had 44% of 45 and *The Herald* with 48% out of 31 stories. This means that, *The Daily Graphic* (State owned newspaper) had a total share of 49% of all the stories with political connotations as against 51% of the two pro political newspapers combined basically also because it has more pages (at least 80 pages) compared with the other two which have about 25 or a more pages. Even though the period under review was the heat of the political campaign, the entertainment stories published were more of normal stories (58%) than being political (42%). It could be that the newspapers only focused on salient entertainment political news because of the low number of stories published by the three newspapers. It should also be noted that, while there are entertainment focused newspapers, the three selected newspapers offer a more political dimension towards the election rather than the entertainment focused newspapers.

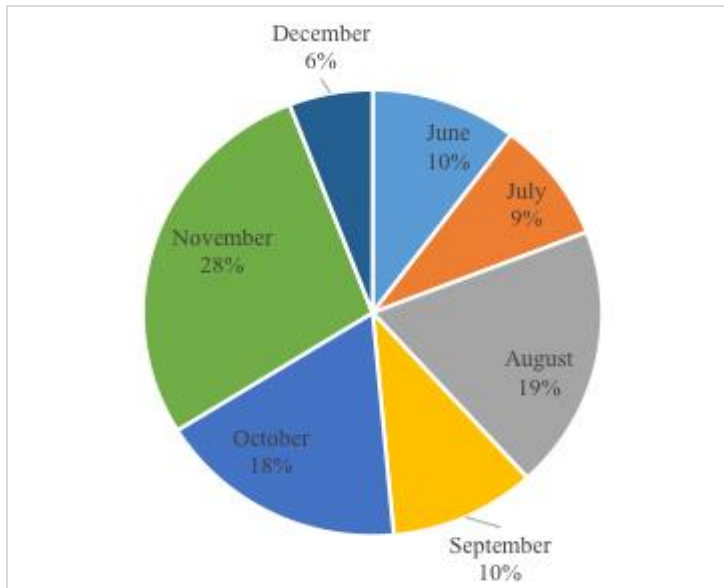


**Figure 1. Type of celebrity stories published.**

Source: Three newspapers’ review, 2021

#### 4.2.2. Frequency of publication

The analysis showed that most of the celebrity stories relating to political entertainment news were published in the last three months before the election. From figure 1 below, the month of October, November and December had a collective 52% of the stories relating to political entertainment news stories published while 48% of the stories were published earlier than the three months. It was also noticed that, majority of celebrity news get the attention on Mondays (31%) than any other day while Tuesdays had the least of stories (5%) published. This information shares that, most celebrity activities happen during the weekends which make headlines during the early part (Monday) of the week. It should be noted that celebrity only 41% of the 111 publications reviewed contained celebrity political stories reviewed from the three newspapers during the heat of the political campaign which means that approximately 2 stories on celebrities per day were published daily during the period.



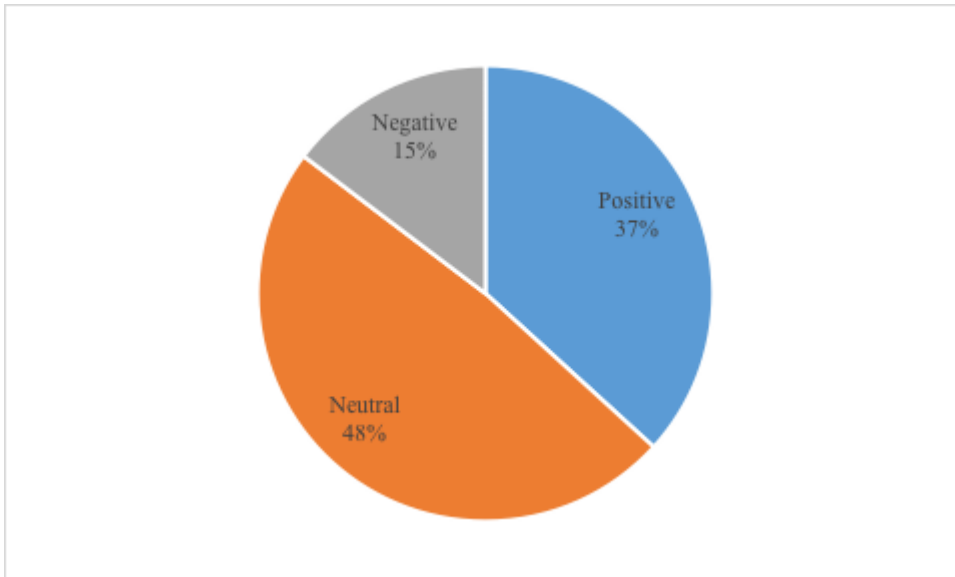
**Figure 2. Percentage of stories published monthly.**

Source: Three newspapers review

#### 4.2.3. Nature of the stories

The next level of analyses relates to the nature of the stories published. The researcher wants to find out if the stories relating to political entertainment stories were negative, positive or were neutral in nature. The study identified that 48% of all stories published in relation to political entertainment news were neutral which means that the stories were not critical or criticizing the celebrity in question but just reported what the celebrity said or did. It found that 37% were positive stories – intended to praise the party they endorsed or garner support for the parties while 15% were found to be negative – intended to report or criticize the celebrity or bring out certain bad deeds of such celebrities. *The Daily Guide* and *The Herald* were found to have published more positive celebrity stories (constituting 72% of all positive celebrity political stories) which turn to support their political party interest than *The Daily Graphic* which published more neutral stories (Which constitute 79% of neutral political stories) that admonished politicians to be circumspect in their activities before the elections. The *Daily Guide* on its news one entertainment page on Wednesday, November 11, 2020 published a positive story with the headline “**4More 4 Nana-Shatta Wale**” in support of NPP campaign, giving more support for Nana Addo’s campaign stressing on the good deeds of the government at the time. The analyses showed that *The Daily Graphic*

published no story that portray negativity towards the celebrity or the political opponents or party the celebrity endorsed. This means that during the period under review all of its stories were either positive (21%) or neutral (79%) in nature. The Daily Graphic on Thursday July 23, 2020 published a positive story on Mr. Beautiful with the headline “**My sweat. My blood for Mahama – Mr. Beautiful**” sings the praises of Mr. Mahama while indicating that the current administration failed woefully to alleviate the plight of Ghanaians and exactly 81 days to the election, *The Daily Graphic* on its ‘SHOWBIZ’ page carried a neutral story with the heading “**Beverly Afaglo cautions NPP/NDC arts campaigners**” which cautions celebrities and other political campaigners alike to desist from causing so much tension but focus on issues that confront the nation and proffer the desired solutions.

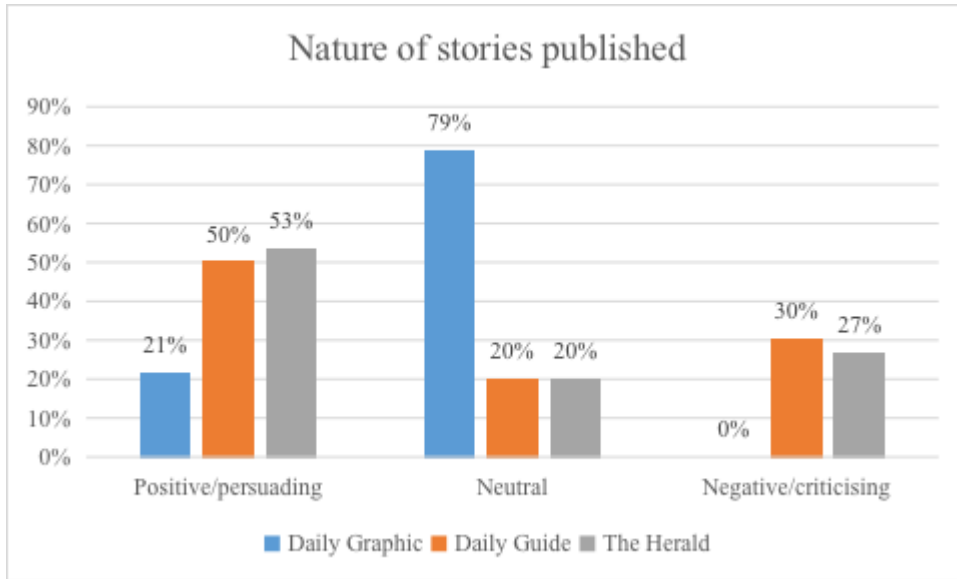


**Figure 3. Nature of celebrity stories published by the three newspapers.**

Source: Three newspapers review

*The Daily Guide* published more negative stories (50%) than negative stories (30%) and neutral stories (20%). The negative stories were mainly about celebrities that endorsed John Mahama’s campaigns while the positive stories were about celebrities that endorsed Nana Addo’s campaign. *The Herald* on the other hand also, like *The Daily Guide* published more positive stories (53%) than negative stories (27%) and neutral stories (20%). It is also with noting from here that *The Herald* newspaper also followed

the same trend of publication just like that of *The Daily Guide* newspaper. Its stories were more positive towards celebrities endorsing Mahama’s campaign than those who supported Nana Addo’s campaign. This suggest that, the affiliation of the two pro political newspapers determine the type nature of stories they published while *The Daily Graphic* published more neutral stories. Figure 5 below is the graphical representation of how the newspapers published their stories under the review period.



**Figure 4. Nature of stories published per newspaper.**

Source: Three newspapers review



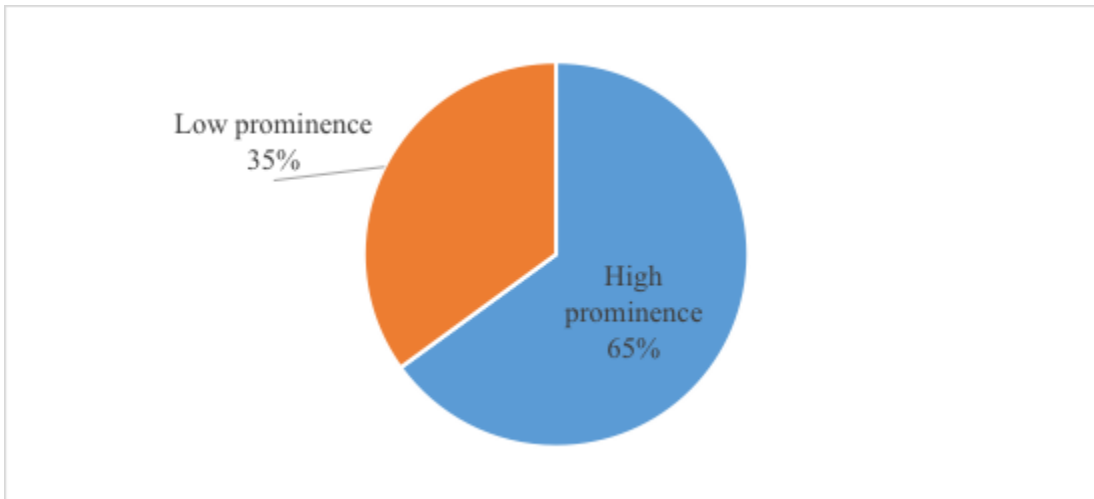
**Figure 5. A negative reportage.**

A story that can be classified as negative story that was published about MZBEL, (a known celebrity that endorsed the NDC) on the choice of running mate for NDC published by the daily Guide newspaper on Monday, 17<sup>th</sup> August 2020.

#### 4.2.4. Story prominence

The prominence of the stories published were determined based on where the stories were placed in the newspapers. The researcher categorised some sections of the newspapers as high prominence -where readers are likely to read often such as the front page, 3<sup>rd</sup> page, middle page and the entertainment sections of the papers, and low prominence- any other place of the newspaper described as high prominence. The analyses showed that, there was high prominence attached to the stories published. Most of the stories (65%) were located at the front page, the entertainment section of the newspapers while the rest were found on other pages other than pages indicated as prominence. While celebrity endorsement stories were few in number they gained importance or were placed at more prominent sections in the newspapers although not much of them are published which have the potentials of influencing voters in every election. It is unclear the reason for such placement but this conforms to the agenda setting theory discussed in chapter 5 item 5.4.





**Figure 6.** Placement of celebrity stories.

Source: Three newspapers review



**Figure 7.** A positive reportage

A story that can be classified as positive story that was published about Shatta Wale who endorsed the '4 more 4 Nana' campaign published by the daily Guide newspaper on Wednesday, 11<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

### 4.3. Conclusion of Chapter

Celebrity endorsement stories were all over the place during election 2020 in Ghana. After quantitatively analysing 111 editions, the researcher found that

approximately 45 (41%) of them published celebrity related stories. The 45 publications published a total of 162 celebrity related stories 68 (42%) of which were found to be celebrity political related stories. The study identified that the stories were more neutral in nature because the State's newspaper had more of the stories which were neutral in nature and were given high prominence in terms of placement of the stories.

## **Chapter 5.**

### **Summary of Findings, Conclusion` and Recommendations**

#### **5.1. Introduction**

This chapter summarizes and provides discussion on the extent to which the media reported celebrity political campaign endorsement, the nature of media reports on celebrity political campaign endorsement and the prominence attached to the stories of celebrity endorsements of political campaigns.

#### **5.2. Extent of Print Media Publication of Celebrity Endorsement News**

One main objective of the study is to determine the frequency with which celebrity endorsement stories are published within the last six months of elections in Ghana. The data analyses provide that a total of 111 publications were randomly selected monthly between the 1<sup>st</sup> of June and the 7<sup>th</sup> of December 2020 which represents the peak of the election campaigns. Out of the 111 newspapers selected only 41% provided celebrity related stories on their pages. The study located 162 stories published by the newspapers of which 42% were established to have had political connotations. That is to say that the stories were centered around celebrities endorsing one political party or the other. The study also established that, the newspapers published more of celebrity political stories within the last 3 months of the election campaign than they did three months earlier. While the election campaign was said to be at its peak within the last six months, the data showed that, the print media do not frequently publish celebrity stories that are political in nature. This is because as much as 58% of the stories were normal entertainment news and not in relation to celebrities campaigning for their endorsed political parties. The study concedes that the print media has limited celebrity stories relating to political activities which is not enough to influence voting behaviour. In addition to the above, the State-run-newspaper (*The Daily Graphic*) sometimes contains over 100 pages while *The Daily Guide* and *The Herald* have less than 50 pages. This

might account for the fewer stories published by the two non-state-newspapers even though other factors such as editorial policy might have also played even though the study did not analyze editorial policies of the newspapers.

### **5.3. The Nature of Media Reports on Celebrity Political Campaign Endorsement**

The researcher sought to quantitatively describe the nature of celebrity stories published in the three newspapers. Johnson (2012), analysed that word choice and tone are one key area of showing particularly partisan bias in news coverage. To this end the newspaper deliberately chooses negative or the positive tone in reporting stories that are of interest to it. As a result, it may present a negative tone for stories that are contrary to its interest whilst giving a positive tone to stories that favour its partisan interest. This finding is also rooted in the framing theory. Kuypers (2002) asserts that media studies on political communication are deeply rooted in this theory, thus, providing reasons as to how the media intentionally and unintentionally project political leaders, governments and policies. Again, Richardson (2013) posits media framing determines how media audiences see political leaders, and how organizations describe political issues and events, space allocation, hence, placing much emphasis on cognition of the audience and their perception. The study established that, 48% of the stories relating to political campaign were more neutral in nature but more positive (37%) in favour of the political party the celebrity endorsed than negative (15%) against the political party the celebrity opposed. This means that, more than half of the stories published were either positive in favour of the political parties or negative against the political parties. The study found that the two non-state-newspapers published were positively or negatively framing the celebrities endorsing their political parties depending on their affiliation while the state newspaper published largely, stories which framed a more neutral situation. *The Daily Guide* newspaper pushed a total of 20 stories during the period of which 30% were negative against celebrities endorsing John Mahama's campaign while half of its stories were positive stories about celebrities who endorsed Nana Addo's campaign. Similarly, *The Herald*, a pro NDC newspaper did the opposite. It had a total of 15 stories out of which more than half of the stories were positive in favour of celebrities endorsing NDC's

campaign while 27% were negative stories against celebrities that endorsed NPP's campaign. *The Daily Graphic*, a state-owned newspaper published not even a single story that could be classified as negative because all the 33 stories identified were either neutral (79%) or positive (21%) in nature. It is deduced or implied that, celebrities gain favourable or unfavourable stories published about them in the pro political party newspapers and gain more neutral or favourable publications in the state-owned media. Again, while the editorial policies of the newspapers are not part of this study or analyses, the study suggests that, the state-owned newspaper might focus more on stories that are more neutral in nature and not want to publish any negative story that might injure the reputation of the celebrity while on the other hand, the pro party newspapers may positively or negatively promote the celebrities based on their interest. This implies that celebrity political stories in the newspapers might not influence the voters to a large extent since majority of the stories were more neutral than positive or negative.

#### **5.4. The Prominence Attached to the Stories of Celebrity Endorsement of Political Campaigns**

The study also analyzed the prominence attached to the stories published in the newspapers that were political. This is to quantitatively determine the importance attached to such stories in the newspapers. Johnson (2012) observed that the placement of a news item in a newspaper spells the story's importance to the media house. As such stories that are placed on the front pages may supposedly be more relevant than stories placed somewhere in the newspaper. The researcher placed prominence under two main categories to include: High prominence- Stories found on the front pages, page 3, middle pages and entertainment sections of the newspaper- and Low prominence-stories found on other pages other than described under high prominence. The study found that as much as 65% of the stories were found to have high prominence while 35% were found to be of low prominence. While celebrity endorsement stories were few in number the newspapers attached a lot of prominence to them. The high prominence attached to the few stories support the perspective reinforced by Castells (2007:4) that what does not exist in the media does not exist in the public mind even if it could have a fragmented presence in individual minds. So, while the stories are few in numbers, they were placed

at places where readers could easily see and read them. The findings also follow the agenda setting theory of the press. McCombs and Shaw suggest that the agenda setting is the process whereby the news media lead the public in assigning relative importance to various public issues. The media accomplish this agenda setting function not by directly telling the public that one issue is more important than the other, which has proven to be ineffective, instead, the media signal the importance of certain issues by giving these issues preferential treatment, such as more frequent coverage and more prominent positions. This also support Agyepong's (2016)'s findings that the most successful role played by celebrity endorsers (including musicians) was generating excitement for political parties'/candidates' campaigns, especially in terms of attracting potential voters to rallies which is why the newspapers attached such high level of prominence to the stories published. This study imply that the high prominence attached to the stories could play an important role in the choices that voters made during the elections.

## **5.5. Implications**

The findings of the study suggest that democracy in Ghana is not limited to only a section of the Ghanaian populace and that every person whether celebrity or not have the opportunity to endorse one political party or the other. The media in general is the vehicle though which information is churned out to the populace however, the print media in particular is not the right medium to look out for celebrity stories that support political campaigns as suggested by the data. Elections in Ghana have so many angles and consequences, it is difficult to determine what exactly influences voter's choice of candidate but the publications of celebrity stories that are positive or negative in nature intended to court public attention cannot also be undermined. This is also because, the placement of the stories and the nature of the stories follow the agenda theory and framing theory which are crucial theories in media studies which reveal the intentions behind the stories published by the various newspapers

## **5.6. Conclusion**

The study conducted a quantitative enquiry into print media publications of celebrity endorsement of political campaigns in Ghana with three main objectives. The study was to find out how frequent celebrity political endorsement stories are published in the newspapers, the nature of the stories and the prominence attached to the stories by analyzing the contents of *The Daily Graphic*, *The Daily Guide* and *The Herald* newspapers. *The Daily Graphic* is a state-owned-newspaper while the other two were pro political party newspapers. The study concludes that the print media might not be the appropriate media outlet to look out for celebrity political news because it had fewer representations than the normal entertainment celebrity stories found in the newspapers. Celebrity political stories in the newspapers might not influence voters in the choices they make because close to half of the stories identified were more neutral in nature than positive or negative. However, the newspapers will publish positive or negative stories depending on their own political orientations or editorial policy. While the stories were few in nature, they gained high prominence in reportage and it was assumed that, readers of the newspapers would have seen these stories and form their own opinions.

## **5.7. Recommendations**

Having quantitatively analyzed the content of the three newspapers, the study recommends the following:

- Celebrities endorsing their political parties should in collaboration with the parties push for more positive stories to be published about them during the election campaigns and beyond and a deliberate attempt must be made to get readers to see such stories.
- Since newspapers, especially the state-owned newspaper is more neutral, but with wider readership, political parties and their endorsed celebrities should ensure they have more representation of positive stories because the positive stories might be a deciding factor or the choices that electorates might make

- A more hypothetical research be carried to determine the extent to which readers of newspapers are influenced by celebrities endorsing activities of political parties.
- Political parties should ensure that stories about their endorsed celebrities have more coverage in the print media as that is largely lacking
- Pro political party newspapers should publish more stories about their celebrities to attract readership and change perception about them.



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