

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**ASSESSING THE PLACE OF THE VULNERABLE IN PUBLIC SERVICE
BROADCASTING PROGRAMMING/COVERAGE: A CASE STUDY OF
GBC'S RADIO UPPER WEST**

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School of Graduate Studies in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the award of the degree of
Master of Philosophy
(Media Studies)
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MARCH, 2021

DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

I, **William Owusu Boateng** declare that this dissertation, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my original work, which has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

Signature:

Date:

Supervisor's Declaration



I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of Dissertation as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

Name of Supervisor: Dr Michael Serwornoo

Signature:

Date:

DEDICATION

This research work is dedicated to my late Mum, Jane Baah, whose vision and foresight influenced my choice of career as a Journalist. You nurtured and guided me towards a bright future through academic pursuit. Mummy, just three months into this journey, you joined eternity, leaving me in cold. After the initial setbacks I encountered in putting together this scholarly piece, I know how proud you are now watching over me succeed. God richly bless you Mama Jane



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“O Lord, that lends me life, give me a heart replete with thankfulness! For thou hast given me in this beautiful face, a world of earthly blessings to my soul...”

(HENRY V: Act 1, Scene 1)

My sincere gratitude goes to my supervisor, Dr. Michael Serwornoo, your unflinching support and determination to see me succeed have been documented in the sands of time.

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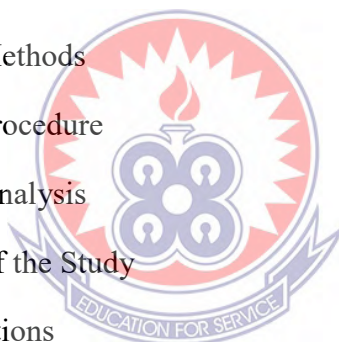
To my year group (COMMSA 12), I appreciate your efforts and contribution of ideas in making this journey a success. Special mention goes to Prosper Kwame Kuorsoh who by the greatest sign of divine orchestration has been my course mate from GIJ to UDS and finally UEW. Jack we will continue to meet at the top.

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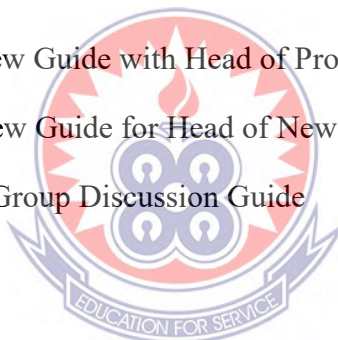
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents	Page
DECLARATION	iii
DEDICATION	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF TABLES	ix
ABSTRACT	x
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.2 Understanding Public Service Broadcasting	3
1.3 History of Public Service Broadcasting In Ghana	6
1.4 Study site (Radio Upper West)	8
1.5 The Role of the Media (Public Service Broadcasting) in ensuring Diversified Representation	9
1.6 Statement of the Problem	12
1.6 Research Objectives	14
1.7 Research Questions	15
1.8 Significance of the Study	15
1.9 Scope of the Study	16
1.10 Organisation of the Study	17
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	18
2.0 Introduction	18
2.1 Forms of Broadcasting Media in Ghana	18
2.2 The Evolution of Public Service Ideals	19
2.3 Principles of PSB and their Implications for Radio Upper West	21

2.4	Radio Upper West's Mandatory Service to the Vulnerable	24
2.5	The Concepts of Disadvantaged and Marginalised Populations	42
2.6	Political Economy Theory	44
2.7	Relevance of Political Economy Theory to this Study	65
2.8	Chapter Summary	66
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY		67
3.0	Introduction	67
3.1	Research Approach	67
3.2	Research Design	69
3.3	Sampling Strategy	71
3.4	Sample Size	72
3.5	Data Collection Methods	73
3.6	Data Collection Procedure	76
3.7	Method of Data Analysis	81
3.8	Trustworthiness of the Study	83
3.9	Ethical Considerations	84
3.10	Chapter Summary	85
CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION		87
4.0	Introduction	87
4.1	Research Question One	88
4.2	Research Question Two	108
4.3	Research Question Three	128
4.4	Chapter Summary	145



CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	146
5.0 Introduction	146
5.1 Summary	146
5.2 Main Findings and Conclusions	149
5.3 Limitations of the Study	150
5.4 Recommendations for Industry	151
5.5 Suggestions for Further Research	152
REFERENCES	153
APPENDICES	164
APPENDIX A: Interview Guide for Acting Regional Director of Radio Upper West	164
APPENDIX B: Interview Guide with Head of Programmes	165
APPENDIX C: Interview Guide for Head of News	166
APPENDIX D: Focus Group Discussion Guide	167



LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1:	Radio Upper West programmes schedule for the vulnerable	90
2:	Radio Upper West's source of funding	120



ABSTRACT

This study examines the ways by which Public Service Broadcasting programming and coverage serve the vulnerable using GBC Radio Upper West as a case study. The study was anchored on the tenets of Public Service Broadcasting, the concept of vulnerability and the Political Economy Theory of the Media. It used the qualitative research approach and the multiple methods of data collection such as in-depth interviews, focus group discussion and document analysis, to collect data from eight respondents from the period of May, 2019 to October, 2019. The data which was thematically analysed found out that Radio Upper West programming and coverage of the vulnerable respond to their special needs through diversified programming, advocacy and socio-economic empowerment, with the aim of breaking the cycle of negative societal practices against the marginalised. Also, the study discovered that the sustainability of Radio Upper West programmes and coverage relating to the vulnerable is seriously threatened by market forces such as competition and high cost of production. As the station attempts to stay afloat through revenue generation, it is forced to prioritise commercialisation over public service and by extension service to the vulnerable. This study also found that though the station, to an extent, seeks to operate in compliance with the Public Service Broadcasting principles of universal access and diversity, the participation of the vulnerable in programming and coverage is not much encouraging. The study argues that journalists at Radio Upper West are vulnerable themselves and susceptible to being at the beck and call of the powerful elite to the detriment of the vulnerable. It is one of such reasons that this study affirms the real threats posed to the Public Service Broadcasting value of universal access and participation. This study recommends to public service broadcasters to find innovative ways of making conscious allocations to the programming and coverage of the vulnerable in order to give true meaning to the principle of universal access and participation.

CHAPTER ONE

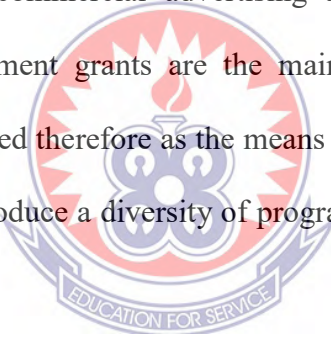
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The media is central to the everyday life of people (Dutton & Rayner 1999; Oyovbaire, 2001). Dutton and Rayner (1999) posit that people cannot escape the media for they are an integral part of everyday lives. Currently, millions of people across the globe everyday rely on the media to bring to speed coverage of issues around the world (Dominick, 2013; Ross, 2003). Again, Dominick (2013) reports that people use technology such as mobile phones, personal computer, radio and television, newspaper, social media or the internet, all in an effort to get some information about what is happening around the world. It has been argued by Bardoel and Lowe (2007) as well as Sussman (2016) that as communications technologies increase human-kind's ability to send more messages across greater distance at even faster speeds, the opportunities multiply for broader and deeper transnational information-sharing—but threats to the fair and free use of the mass media increase as well.

The advent of multiparty democracy in most parts of the world brought with it the liberalisation of the media (Ferguson, 1990; Sussman, 2016). To bring about development, foster unity and promote national culture, Ferguson (1990) suggests that the role of the media as a tool for public service broadcast is necessary and critical. Ferguson (1990) further reiterates that for the matter of frequency spectrum, radio and television should attract licensing and regulation, both of which necessitate restricted entry in the media space while at the same time providing funding for public service broadcasting.

The term public service broadcasting was originally formulated in the United Kingdom by the Sykes Committee in 1923 during the advent of radio broadcasting. The committee, in formulating regulations for the operation of radio and broadcasting in general, decided among other things that, “broadcasting should be a public utility; the airwaves were thus classified as public property” (Born, 2004, p.27). Born (2004) argues that public service broadcasters were to satisfy public need or at least attempt to. Public service broadcasting corporations are therefore set up as license fee-funded monopolies to bring into being, a culture of shared life to the people (Mpofu, 1999). They broadcast materials that portrayed a sense of oneness to the populace. In Europe, a key feature of public service broadcasting is the predominance of public funding over commercial advertising and sponsorship (Mpofu, 1999). License fees and government grants are the main forms of government funding. Public funding is considered therefore as the means critical to the ability of the public broadcasting service to produce a diversity of programming, not driven by advertisers (Mpofu, 1999).



The United Nations Development Programme (2004) recognises the crucial role of public service broadcasting towards championing the course of the vulnerable. The UNDP (2004) postulates that public service broadcasting has the mandate to promote tolerance and understanding amongst diverse groups in society as well as facilitate discussion around national development/poverty reduction plans, peace agreements, reconciliation/ dialogue processes. In affirming the importance of public service broadcasting, the UNDP (2004) emphasises that it is a medium that provides a voice for the voiceless, ensures that the general population including the vulnerable has access to a broad spectrum of views on issues of public concern. It is for this reason

that research needs to give attention to public service broadcasting in democratic societies to determine if it gives coverage to the vulnerable, therefore, this study.

1.2 Understanding Public Service Broadcasting

A publication by the World Radio and Television Council (2000) defines public service broadcasting as neither commercial nor state-controlled. Public service broadcasting's only *raison d'être*, according to the World Radio and Television Council (2000) is public service. It is the public's service broadcasting organization that speaks to everyone as a citizen. Public service broadcasters encourage access to and participation in public life. They develop knowledge, broaden horizons and enable people to better understand themselves by better understanding the world and others.

According to the World Radio and Television Council (2000), public service broadcasting rests on three basic principles; universality, diversity and independence. In a world characterised by media fragmentation, these principles remain essential. However, other scholars have proposed a fourth principle to the three principles already established by the World Radio and Television Council (2000). Scholars like Siune (1998) and Born (2004) propose distinctiveness as the fourth principle.

1.2.1 The principle of universality

The World Radio and Television Council (2000) suggests that public service broadcasting must be accessible to every citizen throughout the country. Asare (2016) argues that the principle of universality is a deeply egalitarian and democratic goal to the extent that it puts all citizens on the same footing, whatever their social status or income. Asare (2016) explains that the public broadcaster is compelled to address the entire population and seek to be "used" by the largest possible number. By

implication, it does not mean that public broadcasting should try to optimise its ratings at all times, as commercial broadcasting does, but it should rather endeavour to make the whole of its programming accessible to the entire population by operating above commercial considerations (Asare, 2016). According to the World Radio and Television Council (2000), the process does not merely involve technical accessibility; but ensuring that everyone can understand and follow its programming. Public broadcasting, while it should promote culture, should not become a platform constantly frequented by the same group of initiates (World Radio & Television Council, 2000).

1.2.2 The principle of diversity

The service offered by public broadcasting should be diversified, in at least three ways: in terms of the genres of programmes offered, the audiences targeted, and the subjects discussed (World Radio & Television Council, 2000). Public service broadcasting must reflect the diversity of public interests by offering different types of programmes which may be aimed at only part of the public, whose expectations are varied (Born, 2004; UNDP, 2004). As Asare (2016) explains, in the end, public service broadcasting should reach everyone, not through each programme, but all programmes and their diversity. In effect, through the diversity of the subjects discussed, public service broadcasting can also seek to respond to the varied interests of the public and so reflect the whole range of current issues in society (Mudrock, 1997). The World Radio and Television Council (2000) posits that diversity and universality are complementary in that producing programmes intended sometimes for youth, sometimes for older people and sometimes for other groups, ultimately means that public service broadcasting appeals to all.

1.2.3 The principle of independence

According to the World Radio and Television Council (2000), public broadcasting is a forum where ideas should be expressed freely, where information, opinions and criticisms circulate without any form of restriction. Anoff-Ntow (2016) contends that for a public broadcaster, its capacity to uphold its mandate is ultimately judged by its editorial independence even as it is forced to compete with others for resources within a liberal market place. Raboy (1996) cited in Anoff-Ntow (2016) avers that independence from politics and autonomy from the market have become the leading criteria for the definition of public spaces”, including broadcasting. For this to occur, efforts to make public broadcasting remain accessible and independent from both market and politics will remain foundational to its definition (Anoff-Ntow, 2016).

1.2.4 Distinctiveness

Born (2004) and Siune (1998) posit that the principle of distinctiveness is particularly important in countries where public broadcasting exists side by side with private commercial services. According to Born (2004) and Siune (1998), distinctiveness requires that the service offered by public broadcasting distinguishes itself from that of other broadcasting services. In public service programming — in the quality and particular character of its programmes — the public must be able to identify what distinguishes this service from other services (Born, 2004; Siune, 1998). It is not merely a matter of producing the type of programmes other broadcasting systems are not interested in, aiming at audiences neglected by others, or dealing with subjects ignored by others. It is a matter of doing things differently, without excluding any genre. This principle must lead public broadcasters to innovate, create new slots, new genres, set the pace in the audiovisual world and pull other broadcasting networks in their wake (Born, 2004; Siune, 1998).

1.3 History of Public Service Broadcasting In Ghana

Public service broadcasting was introduced to Ghana, the then Gold Coast by Governor Sir Arnold Hodson in 1935. The first broadcast was made on July 31, 1935, via Station ZOY, the broadcasting service introduced for the purpose. The station was established as a public service tool with the main motive of bringing news, entertainment and music into the homes of Ghanaians (Asare, 2016). After 1939, the station was used for various purposes, which included educational support services as well as for the spread of British propaganda during World War II (Asare, 2016). The station, initially under the Information Services Department, was separated from the Department in 1962 and renamed the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC) to serve as the Government's mouthpiece (GBC Report, 2006).

Television was introduced into Ghana with the help of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation in 1965. According to Osagyefo Kwame Nkrumah, President of Ghana at the inauguration of Ghana Television stated that television was for the education and edification, the enjoyment and entertainment of the people (State Public Corp, 1965). Two years later, the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation embarked on a major policy shift to go into commercial broadcasting. The move was in contravention with a 1953 Broadcasting Commission advice against commercial radio (Broadcasting in the Gold Coast, 1953). This happened in 1967 when the Commercial Service of the GBC was established. The government at the time explained that this was to give the business community and other individuals the chance of selling their goods and services through the fastest available means-radio and television" (Broadcasting in Ghana, 1978: 14). Equally important was the need to supplement government funding. This then marked the beginning of the commercialisation of the GBC. Subsequently, the

GBC began to engage in programming that could earn it advertisement (Anoff-Ntow, 2016).

On the other hand, at the inception of Television broadcasting thirty years later in 1965, the now Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC) focused on propagating government policies, and was guided in its editorial decisions by developmental journalism (Anoff-Ntow, 2016). As Ansah (1992) and Banda (2007) argue, the state of government monopoly on broadcasting in Africa and its attendant developmental journalism focused on educating and informing the people more than engaging in a rigorous discussion of government programmes. This was the predominant thinking at the time in Africa and government monopoly was seen as necessary and inevitable at this stage of national development (Ansah, 1991).

Anoff-Ntow (2016) citing Banda (2007) contends that developmental journalism was not merely an editorial stance but a philosophical position anchored in the creation of a revolutionary press which articulated an alternative form of social justice for Africans, or as Nkrumah puts it, establish a progressive political and economic system upon our continent that will free men from want and every form of injustice. This ideological position entailed greater state control of the media and a departure of private ownership of media evident during the colonial period (Banda, 2007). As Banda (2007) reckons, it is this position that shaped the post-independence media, especially broadcasting as instruments of this revolutionary ideology where journalists and politicians alike saw the media as forging national and continental unity, encouraging economic development, and serving formal and social education including adult literacy. The operations of GBC were, therefore, guided by the philosophical and editorial aspirations of developmental journalism until Nkrumah

was overthrown in 1966 by the National Liberation Council, a military junta (Anoff-Ntow, 2016).

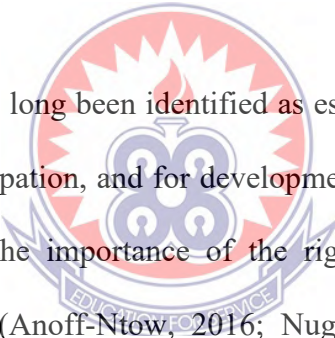
Essentially, the National Liberation Council Decree (NLCD) in 1968 redefined the purpose of GBC as that: it shall be the duty of the Corporation to provide as a public service, independent and impartial broadcasting services (both sound and television) for general reception in Ghana (NLCD 226, 1968). The Ghana Broadcasting Corporation Decree, (NLCD 226, 1968) made provision for the structure of the GBC. According to the Decree, the governing body of the Corporation shall be a Board, comprising a Chairman and eight other members including the Director-General. Per the decree, the government was responsible for the appointment of the board. The 1992 Constitution, however, gives the right to appoint members of the board to the National Media Commission, NMC (Article 168, 1992 Constitution of Ghana).

1.4 Study site (Radio Upper West)

Plans for GBC FM radio stations in each regional capital were on the books since the 1970s (Amakyi, 1988; Ansah, 1979). However, there was neither the political will nor the financial resources to realise that plan before the mid-1990s (Ansah, 1995). The new environment of political and media pluralism demanded that the role, status, and structure of the GBC be rethought (Heath 2001). According to Hasty (1999); Jeffries (1998). The stations would enable the NDC to extend and amplify its messages, a particularly important consideration in the run up to the 1996 national elections. Thus, Radio Central, Volta Star, and Savana were all commissioned in 1996 (Radio Upper West was opened in 2000, in time for that year's election campaigns). The regional FM stations of GBC undertake their programming as well as marketing and sales planning (Asare, 2016). Their incomes form part of the total income of the GBC.

Radio Upper West (study site) was the last Regional FM station to be established by GBC in December 2000. The station has the widest reach among the host of FM stations in the region. Radio Upper West broadcasts in English and three main local languages; namely, Dagaare, Waali and Sissali. The station has four operational departments which comprise Administration, News, Programmes and Technical. The station is transmitted on the frequency 90.5 and covers the entire Upper West Region. The News Staff made up of Reporters, Camera and Sounds men also double as Regional Correspondents for the mother stations in Accra, thus, GBC Radio (Radio Ghana) and Ghana Television (GTV).

1.5 The Role of the Media (Public Service Broadcasting) in ensuring Diversified Representation



Access to information has long been identified as essential for self-determination, for social and political participation, and for development (Samassékou, 2006). There is global consensus about the importance of the right to media with the numerous enactments that abound (Anoff-Ntow, 2016; Nugroho et al., 2012) Prominent is Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which states that “everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers” (UDHR: 40). In congruence, Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms also provides that “everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers. This Article shall not prevent States from requiring the licensing of broadcasting, television or cinema enterprises” (p.12).

In the case of Ghana, the 1992 Constitution emphatically allocates double power to the media by provisions under Article (21) (1) (e) which states that all persons shall have the right to freedom of speech and expression which shall include freedom of the press and other media. Again, Chapter Twelve of the Constitution states that “freedom and independence of the media are hereby guaranteed”. The ability of the media to champion the good course of the marginalised and vulnerable is strongly highlighted in literature. Scholars such as Nugroho et al, (2012); Samassékou (2006) assert that access and power to the media will enable the vulnerable groups to exercise their rights and to take part in civic engagement for they have channels which could amplify their weak voices. The aforementioned scholars argue that when access is not available for every citizen, then equality in exercising media rights is far from reality.

Anoff-Ntow (2016) observes that when the question of the public’s role in democratic governance is raised, the issue of representation and universal access to state institutions follows closely. The point is often made that the benefit and quality of such democratic governance could be threatened if the public is unable to stay in constant interaction with their elected representatives, and more importantly, hold them to account (Anoff-Ntow, 2016). From the perspective of Anoff-Ntow’s (2016), in such a governance system, the media constitute an important space within which such deliberation between the electorate and their elected representatives occur. He is of the assumption that since the electorate is unable to engage with their representatives directly, such a communicative space, albeit mediated, provides opportunity for interaction and engagement. The media under this arrangement are therefore, seen as an important democratic tool that facilitates close engagement between the electorate and their representatives (Anoff-Ntow, 2016). However, such conceptualisation of the media and their role in the democratic process is purely

normative since in practice, their performance is contingent on the legislation and policies that create them and the practical conditions under which they operate (Anoff-Ntow, 2016). Hence, to Anoff-Ntow (2016), the definition of public service broadcasting (PSB) as a publicly owned and funded media institution, mandated to generate diverse programme content, especially for minorities, without being commercially minded should therefore be seen as an effort to create such a communicative space. Thus historically, PSB has been conceptualized as a communicative space that is publicly owned and funded through licenses, and universally accessible both geographically and through diverse programming (Anoff-Ntow, 2016). This means that PSB was mandated to have national footprints, cater to the needs of all within the nation-state, and be noncommercial in its programming considerations (Anoff-Ntow, 2016). It is imperative therefore to assess the performance of Radio Upper West as a public service broadcaster which is supposed to provide access to the vulnerable. By implication, the station is obliged to ensure that its programmes meant for the vulnerable are broadcast in languages they can understand. Again, it is the mandate of Radio Upper West to have a strong transmission signal to cover the entire region in order to reach all vulnerable groups regardless of their geographical location. It can be deduced that the station will be in a better position to serve the vulnerable through information and education if its programmes are accessible in terms of language and reach.

1.6 Statement of the Problem

Murdock (1997) identified a streamlined set of interconnecting objectives for contemporary Public Service Broadcasting which includes: Universal availability – to preserve broadcasting against physical or material barriers to inclusion and maximise its ability to engage and involve the full range of citizens (programme diversity) which, in addition to broadening the generic, aesthetic and cultural range of programming that is offered, ensures the representation of a diversity of interests, voices and perspectives.

There have been numerous studies conducted on public service broadcasting service as well as public service media (Banda, 2006; Berry & Waldfogel, 1999; Grummell, 2009; Podiyan, 2013; Storr, 2011).

Banda's (2006) study focused on broadcasting models in Africa. The study discussed the broadcasting models that exist in Africa, fueling the debate about how one can characterise or define the broadcasting systems inherited by most nationalist regimes from the colonial period. Banda (2006) identifies the state broadcasting, which is controlled by the state and represents state interests and funded (at least in part) out of public money while government broadcasting is controlled by the government of the day and represents the viewpoint of the executive. The last model of broadcasting in Africa identified by Banda (2006) is the public service broadcasting which has a specific remit to broadcast content that is in the public interest. According to Banda (2006), a public service broadcaster needs not be necessarily publicly owned but privately owned broadcasters may have such a role – a public service remit.

Podiyan (2013) on the other hand examined the challenges of public service media in India. The study explored how the digital age has impacted public service

broadcasting, using three Indian public service broadcasters as a case study. A key finding from Podiyan's (2013) work was that the finance environment for public service broadcasters is changing, precipitated by the evolution of technology and the media market. Public service broadcasters thus, need to understand the forces at work, predict trends and tendencies, and try to lead public debate about financing of public service broadcasting.

In Ghana, there have been pieces of research conducted on public service broadcasting (Anoff-Ntow, 2016; Asare, 2016; Mensah, 2011). For example, Asare (2016) focused on examining the sources of funding of GBC to determine whether it was reflective of that of a Public Service Broadcaster or other Broadcasting Systems, using a qualitative approach. Two groups of six persons were used for the focus group discussion and two persons for the in-depth interview. The results indicated that GBC's funding is steadily moving towards commercial activities, its TV license fee collection is not encouraging as it accounts for less than 10% of GBC's internally generated funds. The results also indicated that as of 2011, 50% of GBC's funding came from government subventions.

Anoff-Ntow (2016) focuses on how GBC has fared within Ghana's multi-party democratic dispensation, competitive market environment, with an emphasis on the legislative regime that establishes and guides its operations. Anoff-Ntow (2016) through the theoretical lens of political economy, analyses institutional texts, interviews and other secondary data to gauge the extent to which GBC has lived up to its constitutional and public service mandate. The study concludes that while GBC has fared well in some sectors, a lot remains to be done. It observes that the current organisational arrangement where regional offices of the Ghana Broadcasting

Corporation run FM stations with a limited production crew for both news and other programmes has isolated the regions from headquarters in Accra. The implication is that in practical terms, the regional FM stations are editorially and operationally autonomous. Beyond this revelation, Anoff-Ntow's (2016) work does not mention how Public Service Broadcasting serve the vulnerable through programming/coverage and how the isolation between the headquarters and the regional stations affects their operations particularly service to the vulnerable population. More so, Raboy (1995) argues that while the problems confronting media and public service broadcasting in particular are global in nature, their prescriptions are often context-specific and vary from one society to another. By extension, the nuances of GBC's headquarters operations, may be different from that of the regional stations, and in particular Radio Upper West.

Given the above background, this current study argues that the subject of Public Service Broadcasting's compliance with the principle of universal access and participation in the case of the vulnerable has not received much academic scrutiny in the Ghanaian context. Considering the influences that the political and economic environment exert on the media, this study seeks to investigate how Radio Upper West is able to perform its mandate towards the vulnerable.

1.6 Research Objectives

Based on the foundation established by the statement of the problem, this research sought:

- i. To discover how GBC's Radio Upper West's programming/coverage serve the vulnerable in the catchment area

- ii. To analyse the issues that emerge from Radio Upper West programming /coverage of the vulnerable.
- iii. To examine the perspectives of Radio Upper West journalists on their mandate towards the vulnerable.

1.7 Research Questions

- i. How does GBC's Radio Upper West programming/coverage serve the vulnerable in the catchment area?
- ii. What issues emerge from Radio Upper West programming/coverage of the vulnerable?
- iii. What are the perspectives of Radio Upper West journalists on their mandate towards the vulnerable?

1.8 Significance of the Study

Researching this subject is of value to academia and stakeholders in multiple ways. First and foremost, this study will add up to existing literature on the place of the vulnerable in public service broadcasting programming in the Ghanaian context. The study will also pave the way for further studies to be conducted in the area of the vulnerable in public service media programming/coverage.

The PSB principle of universal access and participation lays the groundwork for programming that benefits the marginalised. Since commercial broadcasting exists to make profit and is not required to serve minorities and vulnerable groups, the findings and recommendations of this study will be useful to journalists and policy makers at large as it will serve as the guide to policy direction and formulation in programming for the vulnerable.

This study will increase the knowledge and awareness of journalists and other media practitioners on public service broadcasting programming and the participation of the vulnerable, thereby, creating a balance in programming particularly the participation of vulnerable groups in public service broadcasting. This will ultimately serve as the basis for stock-taking in terms of media performance as far as access and participation of the vulnerable in public service broadcasting programming/coverage is concerned.

Besides, the findings and recommendations of this study will provide managers and other stakeholders of public service broadcasting institutions an overview of the prevailing demands of the digital era and new media platforms and how this development has aided the transformation of radio and television broadcast, creating new opportunities for public broadcasters to become multi-platform public media organisations.

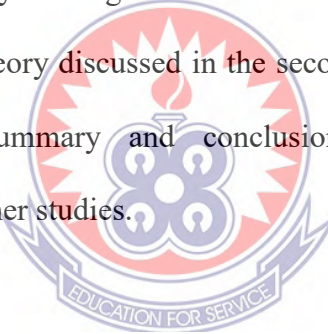
Also, the publication of this current research document will serve as a useful resource for CSOs whose work are related to vulnerable groups especially in the capacity of increasing awareness of public service broadcasting programming and the participation of the vulnerable.

1.9 Scope of the Study

The study was conducted within a period of six (6) months, from May, 2019 to October, 2019. This study focused only on GBC's Radio Upper West. Using a qualitative case study, the study also explores the dominant issues that emerged from the interviews with the Acting Regional Director, Heads of News and Programmes of GBC's Radio Upper West, Focus Group Discussion for five selected staff comprising two Reporters and three Presenters, and document analysis of the station's programmes schedule and assignment itinerary of staff of the station.

1.10 Organisation of the Study

The study is divided into five chapters. The first chapter is the introductory chapter which includes: the background of the study; statement of the problem; the objectives of the study; research questions; the significance of the study; delimitation; and the organization of the study. The second chapter presents a review of the literature on the study and outlines the theoretical framework underpinning the study. The third chapter presents the methods through which data was collected for analysis. Aspects of this chapter include: the research approach, research design, sample and sampling technique, data collection instruments, data collection procedure and method of data analysis. The findings and discussions of the data collected were discussed under the fourth chapter of the study. Data gathered from the study were discussed in themes and analysed using the theory discussed in the second chapter of the study. The fifth chapter presents the summary and conclusion of the findings and made recommendations for further studies.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the evolution of public service ideals, Principles of PSB and their implications for Radio Upper West and Radio Upper West's mandatory service to the vulnerable. It further discusses related literature on the concept of vulnerability as well as the dynamics of the Political Economy of the media and their relevance to the research work.

2.1 Forms of Broadcasting Media in Ghana

Robertson (2018) reports that the National Media Policy of Ghana provides for a three-tier system, namely public, community and commercial radio and television stations. Public radio and television stations, according to the policy, are operated by a publicly-owned statutory body which may be wholly or partially state-funded. In all cases, a public broadcast network is accountable to all strata of people as represented by an independent board and serves the overall public interest (Robertson, 2018). This ensures that one-sided reporting and programming be it religion, political belief, culture, race and gender-is avoided (Robertson, 2018). Community radio and television stations are those that are about, for, by and of a specific marginalised community (Robertson, 2018). According to Robertson (2018), ownership and management of such networks are representatives of the community and pursues a participatory social development agenda which is non-profit, non-sectarian and non-partisan. Commercial radio and television stations are privately owned and operated for profit and are controlled privately by independent commercial groups or individuals (Robertson, 2018).

Significantly, the UNDP (2004) argues that public media system is defined through a carefully articulated legislative framework in which the media is in public hands but management/ operations enjoy substantial programming autonomy. Its programming is driven by public interests. In the case of Commercial broadcasting, private ownership is usually accompanied by some degree of state regulation with its programming driven by commercial interests (UNDP, 2004). As the UNDP (2004) postulates, another aspect of variation between public service broadcasting and commercial broadcasting is their source of revenue. Thus, public service broadcasting relies on subscription fees from viewers/ listeners, state funding, small amount of advertising whereas commercial broadcasting depends on advertising and private investment (UNDP, 2004). In the case of Community broadcasting, the UNDP (2005) argues that it is public service broadcasting in its most decentralised and democratic form, in that a community radio station serves a defined geographical area of a village or a group of villages, and is owned and managed to serve a given community. Community media can in some cases be absolutely central for facilitating participation. Ownership and management of such networks are representatives of the community and pursues a participatory social development agenda which is non-profit. The relevance of this to this study is that Radio Upper West is a public a public service broadcaster which is supposed to be to all manner of people in the society with particular reference to serving the interest of all including the vulnerable groups.

2.2 The Evolution of Public Service Ideals

Public service broadcasting ideals became influential during television's first decades – its era of scarcity (Ellis, 2000). Two important facets of the context in which they initially thrived were a relative drought of TV channels and the need to address early concerns about the potentially negative effects of a new mass medium. Adapted to

television from radio, the broadly influential British public service broadcasting model was pioneered by Lord Reith, founding Director-General of the BBC in the period 1927–38. With the conviction that governments rather than businesses should control broadcasting and coining its trinity of values (inform, educate and entertain), Lord Reith saw PSB as an opportunity to foster greater equality between citizens through shared experiences and, in particular, to provide cultural uplift for the masses (Hendy, 2003).

The evolution of PSB in British television which saw the introduction and strict regulation of the commercial ITV network in 1955, culminated in the BBC's expansion to two channels in 1964. Again, owing to the introduction of a second public network, Channel 4 in 1982, a more progressive and ambitious set of public service broadcasting ideals emerged. By the late 1970s, the initial Reithian notion that public service broadcasting should include moral leadership, enlightenment and betterment had given way to the view that PSB should center on the provision of services, it was best facilitated by a pluralist approach, and it should work harder to meet the needs of the full range of groups in society (Medhurst, 2003).

In the 1980s, the British Broadcasting Research Unit detailed eight principles for Public Service Broadcasting which included:

the universality of availability; the universality of appeal; provision for minorities, –especially those disadvantaged by physical or social circumstance”; the attempt to serve the public sphere; a commitment to the education of the public; the maintenance of a distance from all vested interests; encouraging –competition in good programming rather than competition for numbers”; and the use of rules which attempt to –liberate rather than restrict the programme-maker (Tracey, 1998, 26–32).

With much the same combination of principles informing PSB provisions and expectations in the many countries that opted to follow the British broadcasting

model, public service broadcasting has thus been characterised by a markedly more complex, ambitious set of objectives than the Reithian values under which it originated (Tracey, 1998).

Tracey (1998) reckons that as the first custodians of PSB ideals in television, public networks had an interest in developing them as a distinctive set of objectives and strategies to demonstrate their difference from commercial networks and justify their public incomes. However, as national TV systems matured, and with the inception of new private networks accelerating in the 1980s and 1990s, public service ideals needed a change. PSB which had presumed the continued dominance of public networks needed to adapt to remain relevant in an environment now dominated by commercial operators and in which the public ownership of TV networks could no longer be justified by television's scarcity relative to other media (Tracey, 1998).

2.3 Principles of PSB and their Implications for Radio Upper West

As cited by UNDP (2004), Article 19 an International Civil Society Organisation with expertise in international public service broadcasting standards, reckons that though no international treaty directly addresses the question of Public Service Broadcasting, there exists a body of standards that are found in a number of international instruments. For the purpose of this study, some of these identified characteristics or standards of public service broadcasting are highlighted and discussed below:

Universality – This means that services of the public service broadcaster are available and accessible to the entire population in terms of content (languages) and technology (UNDP, 2004; van Felius & de Waal, 2005; World Radio & Television Council, 2000). Anoff-Ntow (2016) explains that all people within an area in which a public service broadcaster is assigned to operate, must be able to receive the signals and the

services delivered by the broadcaster. If this is anything to go by, then, Radio Upper West as a Public Broadcasting station must have strong signals to reach the homes of people within the borders of Upper West Region, and, even beyond if possible. The language of broadcast must also reflect the dominant indigenous languages which in the case of the Upper West are Dagaare, Waali and Sissali.

Diversity – refers to broad programme range. The UNDP (2004) and World Radio and Television Council (2000) posit that public service broadcasters should provide a variety of programmes, including quality content of an educational and informative nature. The obligation of diversity in programming serves to ensure that the public has access to information about a wide variety of issues and concerns. Here, it is expected of GBC Radio Upper West to have in place a cocktail of programmes that covers all segments of society including the vulnerable population. These must reflect in genres of programmes, target audience and topics treated.

Independence from both the State and commercial interests – Studies by (Anoff-Ntow, 2016; Asare, 2016) indicate that programming decisions should be made by public service broadcasters on the basis of professional criteria and the public's right to know, rather than by political pressures or commercial interests. Meaning, it is incumbent on Management and Journalists of the station to live above all possible limitations in order to retain and fulfil the normative vision of autonomy and non-profit making character of Public Service Broadcasting. By so doing, variables such as commercialisation should not dictate the production of quality programmes for the public as well as the allotting of time for such programmes. Similarly, it expected of Radio Upper West to exercise editorial autonomy especially against state actors and other prominent members of society who stand accountable to the vulnerable.

Concern for national identity and culture – this is an explicit obligation that reflects the role of public service broadcasters in building a sense of national identity, belonging and participation (Diedong, 2016; UNDP, 2004). At the same time, this principle may be problematic in implementation as it may restrict editorial freedom and contribute to promoting a dominant culture rather than multiculturalism. For this, Radio Upper West must be able to transmit in the various languages that abound in the Upper West Region to reflect the diversity of culture, while, warding off the harm of cultural infiltration.

Financed directly by the public – Mpofo (2009) avers that many PSB systems are based on a general charge on users or a television license fee. License fees are generally regarded as being less susceptible to government interference as funding is directly made by the public. However, license fees may be difficult and/or costly to collect and may be difficult to introduce for political and economic reasons, where they are not already in place. The study will therefore be interested in finding out how Radio Upper West is financed and to determine how such source of funding goes to affect programming/coverage of the vulnerable.

Standard setting- according to the UNDP (2004), this is another characteristic of Public Service Broadcasting in the sense that the absence of commercial pressure must encourage a higher standard of journalism which raises the bar for all journalists. Even in the presence of a commercial broadcast system, Public Service Broadcasting can set the standard for professional journalism and other programming partially because it is freed from purely commercial imperatives which might sacrifice public service for profit and degrade journalistic performance. For this reason, the study will attempt to find out how best Management and journalists of Radio Upper West are

able to set the standards for emulation by their counterparts in the region in terms of quality programming and adherence to professional obligations which include the duty to be watchdogs of society.

2.4 Radio Upper West's Mandatory Service to the Vulnerable

Public service broadcasting has the potential to play a crucial role in ensuring the public's right to receive a wide diversity of independent and non-partisan information and ideas. It can also help serve the needs of minority and other specialised interest groups (UNDP, 2004). It is deduced that the principle of universality and participation (World Radio & Television Council, 2000) can serve as the basis by which Radio Upper West could be of great service to the vulnerable. This normative principle is based on the premise that public service broadcasting must be accessible to every citizen throughout the country. In operation, it is a deeply egalitarian and democratic goal in the sense that it puts all citizens on the same footing, whatever their social status or income. Thus, the public broadcaster is compelled to address the entire population and seek to be used by the largest possible number. By implication, it does not mean that public broadcasting should try to optimize its ratings at all times, as commercial broadcasting does, but it should rather endeavour to make the whole of its programming accessible to the entire population. Asare (2016) reckons that the process does not merely involve technical accessibility; but ensures that everyone can understand and follow its programming. Public service broadcasting programming must be popular such that the public forum it provides should not be restricted to a minority. Thus, public broadcasting, while it should promote culture, should not become a platform constantly frequented by the same group of initiates. The meaning derived from this is that Radio Upper West as a public service broadcaster must ensure a balanced programming and coverage for all citizens. If this is realised, the

vulnerable regardless of their social, economic and political status must feature regularly on programmes and coverage of the station and not play second fiddle to the elites.

The media in all forms, including public service broadcasters have a crucial role to play towards promoting the welfare of the vulnerable and less privileged. For instance, Samassékou (2006) asserts that access to information is essential for self-determination, for social and political participation, and for development. Arnstein (1969) also holds the view that the power of mass media can enable participation of the governed in their government – hence, it becomes a cornerstone of democracy. More so, a real democratic society lies upon an informed society making political choices. Therefore, access to information is not only a basic right of citizens, but also a prerequisite of democracy itself (Joseph, 2005).

However, such conceptualisation of the media and their role in the democratic process is purely normative since in practice, their performance is contingent on the legislation and policies that create them and the practical conditions under which they operate (Anoff-Ntow, 2016, 1-2). Anoff-Ntow (2016) argues that the definition of Public Service Broadcasting as a publicly owned with the mandate to generate diverse programme content, especially for minorities, without being commercially minded should therefore be seen as an effort to create such a communicative space.

The UNDP's Bureau for Development Policy (2004) sees PSB as a major tool for the promotion of a common sense of national identity, fostering of democratic and other important social values. It also facilitates the provision of quality educational and informational programming, with service to the minority and other specialized interest groups within the country. The UN Agency tasks Public Service Broadcasting to

ensure that marginalised and disempowered groups, made up of those with no political, economic influence or power, have access to information and provide a voice for the voiceless. In this direction PSB is mandated to provide the following services:

Provide a voice for the voiceless (UNDP, 2004) - public Service Broadcasting has an obligation to promote alternative views for the purpose of enabling and encouraging debate that is vital for the functioning of democracy. This means facilitating different groups' access to the media/airwaves through supporting local programme production on themes and subjects that are of importance to for example poor and marginalised groups. Here Radio Upper West's programmes should serve as the medium for the vulnerable who are without voice in the local setting to freely express themselves and speak on issues that affect their everyday lives.

Ensure that the general population has access to a broad spectrum of views on issues of public concern (UNDP, 2004) - an important role for Public Service Broadcasters is to make governance institutions and processes better understood by the population, especially the poor and marginalised groups. The duty is to serve as the principal communication medium for raising awareness and educating the public. Strengthening national capacities for developing quality local programming for radio and TV are critical in this regard. In line with this, Radio Upper West has the mandate to educate and inform the populace policies and programmes that border on governance and contemporary issues. This obligation if fulfilled, will ensure the vulnerable are informed on programmes, policies and projects that exist to promote their wellbeing.

Promote tolerance and understanding amongst diverse groups in society (UNDP 2004) - In societies, where ethnic tensions, repression, civil strife and violent retribution are deeply engrained, public service broadcasters can play a role in providing a space for diverse groups to debate and exchange views without violence. In the absence of a common national identity, state and commercial broadcast media can be extremely partisan. Public service broadcasting systems that are developed in accordance with internationally agreed standards require legal mechanisms that protect public service broadcasters from political and commercial influence as well as requiring programming to reflect the views of diverse groups.

Facilitate discussion around national development/ poverty reduction plans, peace agreements, reconciliation/ dialogue processes (UNDP, 2004) - public Service Broadcasting play a central role in both conflict prevention and poverty reduction efforts, particularly by ensuring a freer flow of information and greater diversity in information. Market and other private sector forces do not satisfy all public informational interests and needs, and as a result need to be supplemented by PSB.

Moreover, Hammarberg (2011) postulates that a well-functioning Public Service Media can be decisive in the protection of human rights, particularly the freedom of expression, and provide room for all voices in society, not only least minorities, children and other groups which tend to be marginalized. Again, the EU Commission on Human Rights (2011) recommends among other things that rights-based approach to Public Service Media be based on human rights standards contained in, and principles derived from, international human rights instruments and should guide the policy development and implementation of PSM. As such, the rights-based approach

to PSM shall identify the rights holders and the duty bearers, and ensure that duty bearers have an obligation to realize all human rights;

Accountability - the state should be accountable for its policy in support of PSM while PSM institutions should be fully accountable for their actions. As duty bearers, state and PSM institutions should be obliged to behave responsibly, seek to represent the greater public interest and be open to public scrutiny (EU Commission on Human Rights, 2011).

Participation - the rights-based approach to PSM demands a high degree of participation of all interested parties (EU Commission on Human Rights, 2011).

Non-discrimination - principles of non-discrimination, equality and inclusiveness should underlie the practice of PSM. The rights-based approach to PSM should also ensure that particular focus is given to vulnerable groups, to be determined locally, such as minorities, indigenous peoples or persons with disabilities (EU Commission on Human Rights, 2011).

Empowerment - the rights-based approach to PSM should empower rights holders to claim and exercise their rights. This means that there should be mechanisms to compel state and PSM institutions to perform their duties (EU Commission on Human Rights, 2011).

As Radio Upper West is a Public Service Broadcasting station, per the decree establishing GBC, the station is supposed to be serving all manner of people in society. The studies reviewed (Anoff-Ntow, 2016; Asare, 2016; Hammerberg, 2011, European Union Commission on Human Rights, 2011; UNDP, 2004) brought to fore the enormous expectation placed on Public Service to effectively champion the course

of the less privileged in society, whose place in Commercial Broadcasting is restricted and in most cases undefined. As to how best/worst GBC's Radio Upper has performed its mandate towards the vulnerable population is the focus of this study.

2.4.1 Vulnerability as a concept

The word vulnerability is derived from the Latin word *vulnerare*, literally meaning to wound. (Oxford Encyclopedic English Dictionary, 1995). Vulnerability is a concept that entails many understandings and interpretations depending on the disciplines and/or the perspectives of the organizations. In general terms, vulnerability links the exposition of people, individuals or population groups to threats, their capacity of reaction, and the consequences in terms of a decline in wellbeing (ILO, 2017). Discussed below are some distinguishing definitions of vulnerability as well as perspectives and interpretations as to what the concept entails.

The World Bank (2015) defines vulnerability as the probability or risk of being in poverty today or to fall into deeper poverty in the future. It is a key dimension of welfare since a risk of large changes in income may constrain households to lower investments in productive assets -when households need to hold some reserves in liquid assets- and in human capital.

The IFRC (2012) says vulnerability can be defined as the diminished capacity of an individual or group to anticipate, cope with, resist and recover from the impact of a natural or man-made hazard. The concept is relative and dynamic. Vulnerability is most often associated with poverty, but it can also arise when people are isolated, insecure and defenseless in the face of risk, shock or stress.

According to ILO (2017), the level of vulnerability depends in great part on the people's capacities to cope with external situations, at times difficult, and also on the social, economic, political and environmental systems in which they live in. The concept of vulnerability is generally used in development work so as to:

Describe exposure to risks of being harmed, suffering a loss or being affected by the realisation of an adverse event. This can affect entire communities, countries, certain individuals, households, or groups of people. Risks are not equally distributed and certain individuals or groups of people are more exposed than others due to a wide range of factors, namely geographic location, status, age, socio-demographic characteristics, economic situation, among others (UNDESA, 2001). According to Garcia and Gruat (2003), those risks may result from natural events or from human actions; some may occur at the individual level (associated with health such as injuries, accident, or social risks for instance violence, etc.), while others may occur at a wider level (natural disasters, epidemics, political or economic crisis, for instance).

2. Understand why in terms of socio-economic policies for vulnerabilities, some proved to be effective policies and tools fail in particular conditions and certain external factors contribute to revert their effect or even aggravate the problem that seeks to be addressed through such policies. To the ILO (2017), the concept is widely used to guide the design of projects and to better define their target groups.

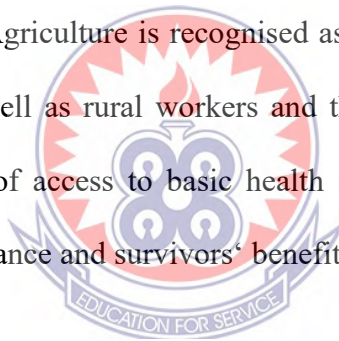
In line with the above expositions, this study defines vulnerability as the lack of socio, economic and political power by a group of people. The study therefore situates vulnerability within the context of natural (environment), social (lack of voice in decision making), economic (poverty, lack of livelihood) and political (discrimination, inequalities). Accordingly, this study categorises vulnerable groups

as women, older persons, children, youth, persons with disability and smallholder farmers.

2.4.2 Vulnerable groups and what make them vulnerable

2.4.2.1 Smallholder farmers and agricultural workers

In socio-economic and security terms, though there is an increasing diversification of economic activities in rural areas, agriculture and its related activities still remain the main source of livelihoods and employment (ILO, 2014). According to the International Labour Organisation, this sector is characterized by major decent work deficits, and evidence in several countries show that a high incidence of vulnerable employment at national level is often associated with a large share of workers in often subsistence agriculture. Agriculture is recognised as one of the three most dangerous sectors, yet farmers as well as rural workers and their families are among the least well protected in terms of access to basic health services, workers' compensation, long-term disability insurance and survivors' benefits (ILO, 2017).



In the case of the Upper West Region, a joint study by the Government of Ghana and the World Bank (2012) upholds that rural savannah with its fragile lands and declining agro-ecology is a hugely inauspicious place to live in. The stresses associated with this geographical disadvantage are largely covariant in nature. The study reports that the pattern of the savannah's rainy season has become less predictable and the duration much shorter, adding that the increasingly discordant climate patterns result in crop damage, low yields and acute food deficits. Besides, the seasonal drying up of ground waters deepens impoverishment in both the Upper East and Upper West Regions. Often, households in these regions of the savannah can only afford the cost of shallow domestic wells. These tend to dry up in the long dry season

and during droughts coupled with inadequate irrigation facilities which apparently threaten food security and sufficiency. The assessment points to a crucial link between the seasonality of employment and poverty. This is because the area's livelihoods are overwhelmingly rooted in the soil and its agriculture rain-fed. Inadequate functional irrigation resources means that labour must remain idle during the long slack season, with predictable effects on household incomes and expenditures.

Moreover, the report by Government of Ghana and the World Bank (2012) reveals that the vulnerability of smallholder farmers are further exacerbated by routine pest infestations which have a devastating effect on farming investments. The study reports that invasions of army worms have become a near-annual ritual in parts of the north. These pests are noted for their quick destruction of millet farms, resulting in low food incomes, thereby, imposing huge financial, psychological and health burdens on farmers when crops are destroyed. Another area that promotes vulnerability among smallholder farmers according to the Government of Ghana and the World Bank (2012) is the annual ritual of bush burning leading to food deficits. The study observes that repeated bush burning is a land preparation strategy deliberately deployed by people who lack adequate labour and/or financial capital to finance land clearing. It is also practiced by some herdsmen as a way of stimulating the growth of tender grass for grazing livestock. In most devastating conditions, uncontrolled bush burning destroys precious farms, robbing the affected households of food and income. The study notes that with the savannah's single planting season, recovering from such shocks can be difficult.

The above revelations will significantly help to assess whether the programmes and coverage of Radio Upper West are geared towards addressing the vulnerability of small holder farmers in the region. The focus of analysis will be how Radio Upper West per its mandate is able to educate and inform the public towards making agriculture a viable venture in reducing poverty.

2.4.2.2 Women

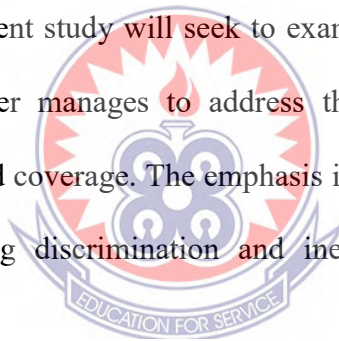
An FAO-ILO (2010) report indicates that in socio-economic terms the degree and scale of gender inequalities though vary greatly between regions and contexts. According to the report, there is evidence that on a global scale, women benefit less from rural employment, whether self or wage employment than men do and are more vulnerable to decent work deficits. The report also shows that women are often disadvantaged in accessing productive assets and resources, including land, technologies, financial services and tools. For instance, a study by Government of Ghana and the World Bank study (2012) reveals that in Northern Ghana including the Upper West Region, traditional social codes entrench disproportionateness in land access and contribute to making and keeping women in chronic poverty. According to the study, the general picture across the north is of native men owning the lands they farm, where women by contrast, are left to farm on smaller and less desirable lands located in distant locations. It discloses that in some communities, a woman may access temporary rights in land through marriage -- in return for which she is expected to help on her husband's farm and is responsible for ensuring that there is adequate food to feed the household throughout the year. By contrast, the man's income is largely his to spend as he sees fit.

Another source of vulnerability among women especially those in the rural settings according to the FAO-IFAD-ILO (2010) is the phenomenon of traditional labour division where women tend to be assigned to domestic work and to be responsible for any type of care including childcare and old-age care. The Organisations reveal that in rural areas, underdeveloped infrastructure such as transport, services, access to clean water, electricity and time-saving devices such as households' appliances lengthen the time needed for household chores, which limits women's possibility to develop income-generating activities. This revelation is corroborated by Government of Ghana and the World Bank (2012) report which discloses that due to the seasonal drying up of ground waters coupled with inadequate water facilities, women and girls are mostly compelled to travel long distances to find water. Not uncommonly, a return trip to get a single head load of water can take over an hour. This adds to women's and girls' time burdens, costing them the opportunity to engage in productive work like foraging for fuel wood and processing shea butter among other things.

Furthermore, Sustainable Agriculture Rural Development (2007) observes that women's representation and voice in rural employers', workers' and farmers' organisations are low, thus they have very limited bargaining power. This according to Sustainable Agriculture Rural Development (2007) is due to social norms and cultural perceptions as well as their limited access to education and heavy domestic responsibilities, which restrict their ability to speak out in front of men and undermine their possibilities of participation in organisations and decision-making. As a result, rural women's rights at work, including equal pay, decent wages and social protection, among others are very often not recognised, which undermine their socio-economic power and contribution, as well as their wellbeing.

In terms of governance and the rule of law, the UN Women's Executive Director in a message on the occasion of World AIDS Day in December 2014 observed that unequal power relations, discrimination, gender-based violence, inequitable laws and customary practices further exacerbate women's vulnerability. Indeed, Government of Ghana and the World Bank (2012) report affirms that women in the study area (Upper West) are mostly absent both from traditional leadership and formal representation structures. According to the report, they suffer gender unequal rules of inheritance, imbalances in access to land and lack control over other assets. Per the report, unbalanced gender roles also compel women to work much longer hours than their male counterparts, constraining their ability to respond to opportunities.

In this direction, the current study will seek to examine how Radio Upper West as a public service broadcaster manages to address the problems confronting women through programming and coverage. The emphasis is on the station's role as voice for the voiceless, eliminating discrimination and inequalities against women in the catchment area.

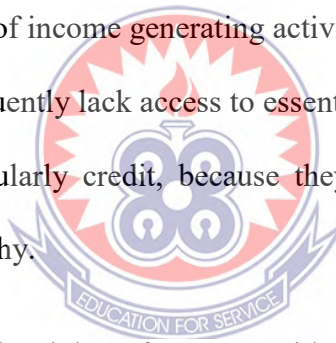


2.4.2.3 Persons with Disability (PWD)

The ILO (2017) reports that people with disabilities account for an estimated fifteen percent of the world's population and between 785 and 975 million of them are within the working age of fifteen years old or older. Most of these people live in developing countries where the informal economy employs a substantial proportion of the labour force. It reveals that due to stigma, inaccessible environments and other societal barriers, people with disabilities labour force participation rates are much lower than those of persons without disabilities. In effect, this population experiences higher rates of unemployment and economic inactivity and are at greater risk of insufficient

social protection which make them more likely to sink into extreme poverty. Furthermore, the ILO (2017) predicts that when employed, people with disabilities are more likely to be in low-paying jobs, part-time or temporary positions at lower occupational levels with poor promotion prospects and working conditions.

The Organisation further discloses that a huge majority of persons with disabilities worldwide are living in rural areas, thus their right to decent work is further hindered by the challenges characteristic of rural settings. It reveals that rural people with disabilities face exclusion and marginalisation in several ways. In addition to a high level of stigma and prejudice many people with disabilities have limited access, if existing, to transportation and rural roads. People with disabilities, who are engaged in the informal economy of income generating activities or the agricultural sector (e.g. subsistence farmers) frequently lack access to essential business development services and microfinance, particularly credit, because they are believed to be a high risk group and not credit-worthy.



In view of the fact that the rights of persons with disabilities, including the right to decent work, to social protection, to education, to community inclusion as well as accessibility in terms of the physical environment, transportation, information and communications, are frequently denied in rural areas, people with disabilities in rural areas represent a vulnerable and marginalized group (ILO, 2017) For the Upper West Region, a study by Government of Ghana and the World Bank (2012) reveals that disability is often perceived as punishment by the gods for some ancestral offence. As a result, the disabled suffer stigmatisation and prejudice not only at the community level but also within the household. The study found out that in some parts of the savannah, children born with hydrocephalus and other congenital deformities are

poisoned quietly. In the view of the respondents, this explains why people with growth hormone deficiency (a.k.a. dwarfs) are so rare in the savannah.

The background picture concerning disability will serve as the yardstick for this study to examine whether Radio Upper West has in place a specific programme allotted to PWDs. It will also serve as the basis to analyse whether the station's programming for persons with disability if any, speaks to the peculiar needs of PWDs.

2.4.2.4 Older people

A study by the ILO (2017) indicates that older people in many developing countries are one of the poorest population groups, in particular where there are no public pension schemes. The study asserts that older people who are poor have no choice to work, especially in rural areas where the informal sector is predominant, activity is irregular, with mostly seasonal and low-paid jobs that are often strenuous. According to the ILO (2017), they are vulnerable due to high unemployment and under-employment rates, age and gender discrimination. It concludes that older people are also disadvantaged through low education and literacy levels, poor health and malnutrition.

As far as the Upper West Region is concerned, a report by Government of Ghana and the World Bank (2012) reveals that the elderly in that part of the country tend to be perceived as a drain on limited household resources, having exhausted their useful lives. The study reveals that older persons are entirely dependent on benevolence of others and are sometimes compelled to go for days without food due to the weakening traditional set up in which the practice of nuclear family has become the norm.

In line with the principle of universality and accessibility, Radio Upper West is supposed to have in place programmes that cover all sections of the population including older people. Against this background, the study will assess how the station through education and information responds to issues bordering on older people and their vulnerabilities.

2.4.2.5 Children

The ILO (2017) contends that child labour remains a main issue in rural areas, with nearly seventy percent of working children (from 5 to 14 years old) in the agricultural sector. Poverty, limited access to education and the absence or lack of labour laws enforcement are among the drivers. The Organisation observes that on the supply side, child labour is as a result of vulnerability at a first stage since parents neither have decent wages nor insurance, hence insufficient family income. It adds that shortage of labour force at peak agricultural season also represents a major factor; traditional attitudes towards child labour seen as a way of transferring skills or reproducing a livelihood system. The study concludes that traditional gender roles are often reproduced when it comes to child labour, young boys being engaged in agricultural work and young girls being engaged in domestic work and care tasks.

For the Upper West Region, a joint research project by the Government of Ghana and the World Bank (2012) reveals that children lack voice and often bear the brunt of household coping strategies in hard times. The study reveals that during hard times, children's labour is readily commoditised - particularly in large households -- and they may be dispatched into foster homes with virtually no background checks on the foster parents or sent off elsewhere to work for money. Similarly, adolescent girls may be married off in haste, in exchange for bride-wealth payments (referred to in

Ghanaian English as ‘dowry’) in the form of cattle and other livestock and sometimes to lessen the consumption burden on the household. The sum of these cultural practices is that when food and other resources are scarce in the household and have to be rationed, it is women and children who bear the brunt.

Moreover, a Baseline Research Report in 2014 by the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection’s Child Protection reveals high prevalence of violence, abuse and exploitation of children in the Upper West Region. The report highlights the cascading effects of the various dimensions of vulnerability and how they combine to impede the wellbeing of children and women. According to the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection’s Child Protection report (2014), extended families and communal responsibility for children are fast giving way to nuclear families in the region. In these circumstances, hardship, divorce and separation reduce the care and protection the child receives at home, thereby making the child vulnerable to harm. On outmoded cultural practices, the study reveals that though Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) was stopped several years ago, it still persists, mainly among the Waala, Dagaaba and Sissala ethnic groups. The Child Protection Baseline Research Report citing the Ghana Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) report (2011) reveals that the Upper West region has the highest rate of FGM in the country with two in five women aged fifteen (15) to forty nine (49) representing forty-one-point-one percent (41.1%) having some form of FGM, compared with the national percentage which is around four-point-zero (4.0).

For sexual exploitation, the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection’s Child Protection baseline study (2014) noted that in some rural communities, teachers consider adolescent girls as their ‘bush allowance’ and sexually abuse them. The

study also found that when these teachers defile and impregnate school girls, the teachers are simply transferred to another school or left unpunished. Such abuse often results in teenage pregnancies, abortions and sexually transmitted infections. Abused girls are often stigmatised in the community, which prevents families from obtaining community or institutional support and access to justice when they are dealing with such situations. In some cases, parents know about the abuse but do little to protect the children, because of the culture of impunity where perpetrators go unpunished.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection's Child Protection baseline study (2014) revealed that most children from low income families are engaged in child labour in various forms to support the upkeep of their families. Girls and boys sell sachet water in markets and lorry parks, wash bowls in chop bars, sell alcoholic drinks in drinking spots, carry firewood and charcoal for long distances to sell for money, and engage in hazardous work in illegal mining areas, dropping out of school, and sometimes sustain injuries that maim them for life. According to the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection's Child Protection report (2014), in the Upper West Region, Fulani children are marginalised and discriminated against. They are denied access to education and basic services which, coupled with their nomadic and pastoralist lifestyles, increase their vulnerability.

Inasmuch as public service broadcasters have the mandate to act as voice for the voiceless, the study will rely on the above painted picture to assess how Radio Upper West is able to deal with the vulnerabilities associated with children in the region through programming and coverage.

2.4.2.6 Youth

The ILO (2017) upholds that youth are sources of positive change and have a lot of potential but require a sustained investment as a target group in order to ensure they are given the proper tools to meet their productive potential. Nonetheless, the ILO (2017) observes that the limited access to education in rural areas means that potential labour productivity remains low. Moreover, limited availability of stable and paid jobs, mean that rural young women and men work primarily in own-account work or in family establishments, as unpaid family workers. Again, Elder et al. (2016) report that vulnerable employment remains the dominant status of employment among rural youth both in agriculture and in the non-agricultural sector (with exceptions), and this situation can lead to a feeling of demotivation. Furthermore, the ILO (2017) observes that there is limited access to training on means to scale up small scale enterprises while agriculture remains a vulnerable venture, with no social protection, insurance for crop failure or finances to promote investment.

As far as the study area is concerned, the joint research report by the World Bank and Government of Ghana (2012) indicates that boys are frequently pulled out of school to hunt, work in the fields and pastures or help repair flood damaged walls. On the other hand, girls may be required to skip school in order to assist their mothers in the market, babysit at home, forage for shea nuts, scavenge for firewood, carry water for the arduous task of extracting shea butter or work as head porters in urban markets. Moreover, the report by the World Bank and Government of Ghana (2017) reveals that due to decades of economic under-investment and increasingly capricious rains, life in the savannah has become increasingly challenging. As a response, local youths are leaving in droves to seek work and solace in the more urbanized south, where prospects for work and income are perceived to be much brighter.

The role of Radio Upper West will be to empower and advocate the creation of an enabling environment for the youth towards making them financially independent. The study will focus on how Radio Upper is able to achieve this through the programming and coverage of the youth.

2.5 The Concepts of Disadvantaged and Marginalised Populations

For the purpose of this work, it is relevant to understand the condition of marginalization and disadvantage of certain groups in society as it increases their exposure to risk and therefore their level of vulnerability. It also seeks to explain why words like ‘marginalised, disadvantaged, weak and minority’ are rampantly used interchangeably in the discourse of vulnerability.

2.5.1 Disadvantage

The term disadvantage refers as particular conditions affecting the possibilities of groups of population to succeed in seizing opportunities to improve their livelihoods, employment and decent work conditions due to cultural, social, economic, territorial, environmental and/or political factors (ILO, 2017). The ILO (2017) in providing insights to the tendencies that contribute to the re-enforcement of being disadvantaged explains that inequalities in rights and entitlements, (whether economic or social) are a powerful source of discrimination against vulnerable populations and can limit the control over resources. Again, the Organisation observes that due to gender inequality in accessing the same relations by societal norms and attitudes, women networks may remain weak while these are essential to connect with labour market opportunities (ILO 2017). It further asserts that where issues of youth employment are addressed, the focus is most often on better educated urban youth and results in poor quality, lack

of educational relevance and training curricula to local needs, as well as the relative high cost of schooling.

Invariably, the ILO (2017) upholds that with the aim of overcoming disadvantage conditions, socio-economic empowerment is thus the process of obtaining access to equal rights and opportunities for affected groups, either directly by them, or through the help of other people who share their own access to these opportunities. Empowerment implies visibility, voice, better knowledge of rights and obligations, and often implies strong advocacy campaigns. It will be the responsibility of Radio Upper West to wage a sustained campaign to call for an end to negative societal practices identified to be inimical to the wellbeing of the vulnerable. Consequently, the programmes and coverage of the station must be seen to address the common and diverse needs of the vulnerable groups.

2.5.2 Marginalisation

Marginalisation – from the ILO (2017) standpoint, marginalisation refers to a particular situation where a group of people have been relegated to the lower echelons, or outer edges of opportunities and progress, based on several conditions such as ethnicity, nationality, age, gender, genealogy, education, culture and/or economic status. The Organisation upholds that in many cases, marginalisation is rooted in unfair law or traditions, poor rule of law, isolation, weak and corrupted institutions which contribute to create conditions for a de facto marginalisation (ILO, 2017). It cites indigenous and tribal people, the extreme poor, persons with disability and the elderly as being among the most frequent marginalised groups of the population. It reveals that within the rural economy, situations of marginalisation can be found in a geographical isolated population, exposed to extraordinary lack of

services, limited access to alternative markets and reduced acknowledgement of economic opportunities affecting their economic competitiveness (ILO, 2017).

Essentially, the ILO (2017) recommends that in order to fight marginalisation, social and economic inclusion, becomes the adequate process to improve the conditions in which people take part in society, protecting their rights and providing opportunities to overcome their current condition. According to the International Labour Organisation (2017), socio economic inclusion measures could include update/changes on policies and improvement of mechanisms for their implementation, promote rights and entitlements literacy, promote diversification to fight economic dependency, voice and organisation, public awareness campaigns, enable access to services, knowledge and financing.

The studies reviewed indicate that while a lot of work has been done on the conceptualisation of PSB, its transformation and modern trends in operations, the issue of universal access and participation within the context of the vulnerable is not adequately highlighted. As PSB is mandated to safeguard the rights of the vulnerable and the marginalised, the studies reviewed will help provide the basis for identification of the vulnerable groups as well as determine whether Radio Upper West has in place programmes for them and how best these programmes respond to the specific needs of the vulnerable.

2.6 Political Economy Theory

The political economy theory is defined by Mosco (2008) as the study of the social relations, particularly the power relations, which mutually constitute the production, distribution, and consumption of communication resources. The theory was postulated by Herman and Chomsky (1988) in their book *Manufacturing Consent – The Political*

Economy of the Mass Media, in which they introduced the propaganda model of the media. Herman and Chomsky (1988) claim that because media is firmly imbedded in the market system, it reflects the class values and concerns of its owners. Herman and Chomsky (1988) aver that because media is firmly imbedded in the market system, it reflects the class values and concerns of its owners. They argue that the influence of money and power are able to filter out the news to fit print, marginalise dissent, and allow the government and dominant private interests to get their messages across to the public. According to Propaganda Model, the independence of journalists and editors is restricted because they are not immune to the influence of owners and managers who are also, economically motivated to please their sources of funding and viewers. Asare (2016) posits that the Propaganda Model does suggest that the mainstream media, as elite institutions, commonly frame news and allow debate only within the parameters of elite interests. Herman (1996) maintains that where the elite are concerned as against ordinary citizens, the media will uncompromisingly serve the interest of the elite. In effect therefore, public interest is subdued by the interest of the high and mighty in society due to financial considerations by the media (Asare 2016).

As far as the political economy is concerned, Richerri (2004) asserts that the global Public Service Broadcasting community faces the similar conundrum of high production cost and lower revenues through licenses; fragmentation of audiences due to digital technology, and the necessity to resort increasingly to advertising due to such audience fragmentation. Anoff-Ntow (2016); Asare (2016) have argued the imperativeness for a holistic look at how legislative and policy initiatives have impacted and continue to impact the operations of a public broadcaster as well as how its funding could facilitate such a media institution to perform its public service mandate. Flowing from this, the study seeks to analyse the media economy from the

scholarly viewpoints on existing legislations as well as the nuances of technological advancement with their subsequent impact on the operations of PSB.

Most importantly, Richerri (2004) argues that during the course of the 1980s, the ideological and cultural climate changed considerably as a result of a combination of three factors: on an individual level a return to the private, on the economic level the ideology of competition and the company, and on the social level the crisis of the welfare state. This helped weaken the idea of public broadcasting based on its role as a service as a cultural and social promoter and based on public financing.

From the perspective of Raboy (1996), the understanding of public service broadcasting as a state- owned and serving the general public through universal programming began to change from the late 1960s to late 1990s. He points out that three overlapping factors accounted for these changes. They include;

(1) The explosion of channel capacity and the disappearance of audiovisual borders made possible by technology; (2) the disintegration of the state broadcasting model with the collapse of the socialist bloc and the move toward democratisation in various parts of the world; (3) and the upsurge in market broadcasting and the introduction of mixed broadcasting systems in countries with former public service monopolies (Raboy, 1996).

Tangri (1995) also points out that the Second Wave of Africa's democratisation manifested itself in many ways. It was not only political but it also called on African governments to embrace new economic and social programmes. He observes that the late 1980s and early 1990s saw more vigorous pressure emanating from international organisations [led by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank] for

African governments to prosecute privatisation in a more resolute fashion. Most governments have embarked on quite extensive privatisation programmes. The implication is that, in addition to the state owned and public broadcaster, private and commercial broadcasters were to operate alongside as business entities. This invariably meant that hitherto state-owned and run broadcasting monopolies suddenly found themselves competing with private, commercial media and broadcasting institutions. Such state-owned and run broadcasting institutions became one of several private commercial and community media all competing for the same national audience and revenue (Cottle & Rai, 2008).

Studies bring to the fore that coupled with the deregulation of the market and its attendant competition, the advancement of technology has also significantly impacted the mandate and operations of PSB (Blumler, 1993; Raboy, 1995; Richerri, 2004). In the opinion of van Cuilenberg and McQuail (2003), the first of three paradigms that defined the direction of communication policy was driven largely by technology. Anoff-Ntow (2016) observes that the merging of telecommunication and broadcasting technology brought in its wake another phenomenon as telecommunication operators who did not by themselves generate broadcasting content began providing broadcasting content to their subscribers. Not only did this effectively shift the exclusive delivery of broadcasting content from the broadcasting institution to others, it also meant that for the first time, traditional broadcaster's audience had been fragmented through channel diversity, and technology had made it possible for such providers to offer their subscribers niche programming within a multiple channel setting (Napoli, 2010). As Horowitz (2004) points out, a multichannel broadcasting environment implied channel diversity as well as how to access them. The technological breakthrough made the institution of traditional broadcasting more

redundant since audiovisual material could be accessed without resorting to traditional broadcasting institutions (Anoff-Ntow, 2016).

Another tipping point is the rise in Internet use which to a large extent redefined the traditional roles between the broadcaster as the generator of content and the audience as the receiver of such content. Scholars like Negroponte (1996); Dahlberg (1997); Napoli (2009) refer to the once traditional audience as prosumers or netizens to reflect their dual capacity as content generators and consumers within the Internet age. By the time the Internet had taken hold, the model of PSB as generating the same content for a national audience in real time had been distorted (Negroponte, 1996; Dahlberg, 1997; Napoli, 2009). They reckon that it had been replaced by another model that emphasised narrow broadcast of content, supplying its audience with niche programming to meet their specific individual tastes. Anoff-Ntow (2016) posits that such technological advances exert pressures on traditional broadcasting to reconceptualise its social role and its audience, and in between, how to collect, process and transmit its content.

In the opinion of Horwitz (2004); Kunz (2007); Mansell (2004); Raboy (1996), the full impact of such technological advances on traditional broadcasting, especially as a model defined by, and anchored within the nation-state, is better appreciated when such technological convergence is seen as part of an economic logic of consolidation, globalisation and commodification. In analytical terms, technological and economic convergence, when viewed together, presents better opportunities in appreciating the politics of media as social, political and economic players (Skinner et al., 2005). Anoff-Ntow (2016) lends support to this observation as to him, it helps open the lid on how such technological advances are supported by an economic logic of

deregulation, which is championed by conglomerates whose interests in media are only as a business.

In that regard, Anoff-Ntow (2016) is among the scholars who point out that “the sheer economic and technological force of missionaries of such media logic therefore, presents formidable challenges to the *raison d’être* and operations of national PSBs” (52). One major sticking point is that “as businesses, some media conglomerates are richer than some nations and by riding on the backs of such technological advances, transmit media content across national borders, flattening the boundaries of such nation-states in the process” (Anoff-Ntow, 2016: 52). “Benefitting from greater economies of scale due to their size, such conglomerates’ unit costs of production is generally lower, together with their enjoyment of greater economies of scope based on the sharing of services and cross promotions” (Anoff-Ntow, 2016: 52). Typically, such corporate giants freely mixed their news content with large portions of soap operas, sports, reality programmes and other light entertainment and transmitted to a global audience through a denationalised communication infrastructure (Fraser, 2007: 18).

Anoff-Ntow (2016) observes that besides the allure of providing superior media content at comparatively lower prices to such national audiences, the convenience of its audience being in control of what to consume, as well as how to consume it, makes such international media conglomerates a formidable competitor to the national PSB (Anoff-Ntow, 2016: 53). In other words, “PSB found itself having to compete for its national audience with international media conglomerates with far better economic and technological resources” (53). At the same time, the overhead cost of production

for PSB is on the increase even as its audience size continuously dwindles (Anoff-Ntow, 2016).

Moreover, it is in perspectives that with fragmented national audiences, national PSB at times found itself in a position of complementing their commercial counterparts owing to their resourcefulness (Raboy, 1996; Raboy & Taras, 2005). In the opinion of Raboy (1996), this arrangement of PSB playing a complementary role to commercial media has grave consequences. He argues that the quality of media content is generally higher when the commercial broadcaster is mandated to provide some public service content to complement the programming efforts of the PSB. Another scholar McChesney (1999) also opines that when PSB is conceptualised as complementary to commercial media, the overall output of the entire broadcasting system is far inferior because PSB tends to be viewed as marginal, consigned to generating programmes unlikely to attract advertisers and, therefore, operating at the periphery. Rather than expanding PSB's programming horizons, such situations restrict its programming range, and undermines a crucial imperative to be divergent in programming and universally accessible (Anoff-Ntow, 2016: 56). Moreover, Anoff-Ntow (2016) maintains that restricting PSB programming range does not only undermine a critical pillar, it speaks also to modes of funding and their likely consequences on journalism. According to Anoff-Ntow (2016), "restricting PSB through its programming scope and ultimately its capacity to be attractive to advertisers becomes a double bind and impoverishes the range and diversity of programmes the broadcasting system offers" (56).

With the passage of time, the multichannel media environment largely driven by new technology, corporate consolidation and convergence, have resulted in a shift in

thinking and the recognition that both positions –advertising and licenses- need not be mutually exclusive (Anoff-Ntow, 2016). This implies that different mixes of funding, therefore, occur on the advertising license continuum (Anoff-Ntow, 2016). As cited by Anoff-Ntow (2016), the argument by McChesney (1999) that public service broadcasting [in America] officially become nonprofit, though no longer noncommercial, draws attention to the delicate strings that public broadcasting has had to pull to survive in a multichannel media environment. Scholars such as Blumler (1993); Croteau and Hoynes (2004); McChesney (1999, 2008) have pointed to the phrase explore alternative funding models as a familiar euphemism for advertising and sponsorship revenue. Essentially, this development gives true meaning to Blumler’s (1993) assertion that caught between a rock and a hard place, PSB will most likely continue to mesh money with its Public Service mandate.

Blumler (1993) cautions that –coupled with its tendency to view its audience as consumers in the marketplace instead of engaged citizens, advertising and sponsorship are inimical to access and diversity” (411). Anoff-Ntow (2016) explains that the metaphor of the payer of the piper calling the tune has often been used to drum home the possible correlation between the advertiser and his/her imprints on the symbolic content (s) he funds (McChesney, 1999; Turrow, 1997). If public levy by all users is considered the ideal funding type for public service broadcasting (Garnham, 1983; Scannell, 1996), it is because the expectation was that such a general source of funding will ensure editorial independence by guaranteeing regular income flow and, ultimately, insulate it from political and economic control. It stands to reason therefore that the rationale for this preference of funding is the recognition that the source of funding- advertising, sponsorship, corporate financing- could influence the type of media content produced. By implication, Radio Upper West may have the

tendency to shirk its principle of universal access and participation to produce programmes or offer coverage to persons/entities that have the financial strength as against the vulnerable group who lack such resources. It is for this reason that Blumler (1993) refers to advertising as a vulnerable value and an implacable foe in the pursuit of PSB's ethos; and cautions against its insidious effects on the production of content (Altschull, 1995; Croteau & Hoynes, 2006; Herman & Chomsky, 1988). The general relationship between the advertiser, programme and audience amounted to the sponsor of the programme overtly bringing him/herself to the attention of an audience guaranteed by the media organization at the point of transmitting the funded media content. The advertiser, therefore, was seen as someone whose quest for publicity translated into influencing the production of the media content in such a manner as to create an atmosphere conducive for the generous reception of his/her message (Anoff-Ntow, 2016). Moreover, Smythe (1972) argues that advertising was more an attempt to deliver the audience to the advertiser through the programmes he/she sponsored with the hope that purchases will follow such publicity.

With literature (Blumler, 1993) pointing to a symbiotic relationship between advertisers, programmes production, transmission and consumption in the face of unequal resources, the principal objective of PSB serving as a marketplace of ideas becomes a mirage. The vulnerable who by virtue of their lack of socio, economic and political power will have it tough to feature prominently in PSB programming and coverage despite the principle of universal access and participation. As far as Ghana is concerned, Asare (2016) reports that in 2008, GBC exceeded its revenue expectations by 2.5% although the funds that came in were nowhere near the figure needed for the smooth running of the corporation that year. He reports that in 2009, 73% of the expected funds for that year was realised; increasing to 97% in 2010 and then

dropping again to 61% in 2011. As Asare (2016) reckons, this clearly gives an indication of financial instability within the organisation. Moreover, Asare (2016) reports that GBC largely depends on state funds for major capital equipment and also for staff remuneration. From the year 2002 to 2008, funds provided from the state were on average only 10% of the needed funds. This figure went up to 21% and then to 46% in 2011. The rest were raised from other sources other than that of the government (Asare, 2016).

Notwithstanding this precariousness, Anoff-Ntow (2016) and Asare (2016) suggest that public service broadcasters in Africa heavily depend on advertising and sponsorship to supplement the meagre collection of TV license and government's subvention. For instance, it is on record by Anoff-Ntow (2016) and Asare (2016) that such licenses have often proven difficult to be collected. According to Asare (2016), the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation has over the years hoped to generate its funds from its television licensing system; whilst relying on state resources to make up for any extra needed funds. However, TV license has since 2009 ceased to be a source of revenue. The fees have been suspended mainly due to the fact that the rates are so low that it is more expensive collecting them (Asare, 2016). Such licenses still rake in revenues ranging from 14 percent (in Namibia) to 76 percent in Cameroon (Bussiek, 2010). In Kenya, Githaiga et al. (2011) observe that support from government is ad hoc, inadequate and irregular resulting in KBC's current condition of being hugely indebted. The Kenyan case is reflective of most African broadcasters. Thus, almost all African national broadcasters, like their private commercial counterparts, are forced to rely on alternative sources of funding such as advertising and sponsorship. Some have taken the extra step of expanding their footprints by providing exclusive commercial services in addition to their public channels. The Ghana Broadcasting Corporation and

for that matter, Radio Upper West could have a dedicated service for commercial purposes in order not to deviate from its core mandate of ensuring universal access and participation. Revenue from such commercial services could be used to fund programmes and coverage aimed at the vulnerable groups.

In the case of South Africa, its 1999 Broadcasting Act (the fourth) –divides SABC’s service into public broadcasting services intended to pursue socially desirable goals, and public commercial broadcasting services intended to pursue business goals” (cited in Sparks, 2009: 206). The South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) has operationalised this by expanding its operations, offering three commercial channels out of its 18 radio stations. Two of its television channels are public (SABC 1 and 2) with the third, SABC 3 operating as a commercial channel¹⁷. In Mozambique for instance, 60 percent of the 2009 budget of Radio Mozambique (RM) and TV Mozambique was from government subsidy. While Radio Mozambique makes up for the shortfall through annual radio license, advertisements and sponsorship, TV Mozambique (TVM) had to rely exclusively on advertisements and sponsorship to make up for its 40 percent shortfall since it does not benefit from user license fees (Mario et al., 2010).

In their survey of 12 African countries and their funding models, Bussiek et al. (2013), summarised their findings as follows:

The percentage of income from audience fees varies between 14 per cent (in Namibia), 18 per cent (in South Africa and Zambia), 30 percent (in Mozambique), and 76 per cent of the total figure (in Cameroon). Government funding brings in just 2 per cent (in South Africa), 15 percent (in Zambia), or 24 per cent (in Cameroon), and goes up to the very substantial shares of 55 per cent (in Namibia), 60 percent (in Mozambique), and two thirds of overall income in Mali. Income generated from advertisements and sponsorships account for between 13 per cent (in Mozambique), 21 per cent (in Namibia), 61 per

cent (in Zambia), 77 per cent (in South Africa), and 85 per cent (in Uganda) (43-44).

The trend of increasing reliance on advertisements and sponsorship is similar for the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) which is reported to be relying almost entirely on advertising and sponsorship (Githaiga et al., 2011). What stands out of Bussiek et al's (2013) summary on the various funding permutations opened to African state/public broadcasting is the discovery of the increasing role advertising and sponsorship play in the operations of PSB. Maweu (2014) reports that in the National Media group of Kenya, content considered damaging to major advertisers may routinely be left out or glossed over. Another side of the coin as Anoff-Ntow (2016) reports is the sale of airtime where it has become a standard practice in some countries for NGOs and even government agencies to pay for talk shows which focus on their activities – exclusively, uncritically and without viewers being advised of the fact. Anoff-Ntow (2016) reveals that another popular source of income for PSB as in the case of GBC is the sale of airtime to organisations or influential individuals for live coverage of events. At times, GBC charges interviewees for appearing on air (Anoff-Ntow, 2016).

This condition, in which broadcasters rely increasingly on a commercial logic in order to better perform their PS mandates have consequences. The likely consequence of this funding regime is that the state/public broadcaster is increasingly mimicking its commercial, private counterpart in operations and programming (Alhassan, 2005; Avle, 2011; Heath, 1988). Referring to this condition as “chronic schizophrenia”, Teer-Tomaselli (2004) argues that one of its offshoots is the provision of inexpensive programming that seeks large market share rather than better audience reach which PSB should aspire to. As Raboy (1995) indicates, like their commercial counterparts

PSB offer more and more entertainment heavy content that attracts listeners and viewers and sells easily to advertisers, and less and less innovative and unique programming for all that would justify public funding. They also opt for cheaper programmes (either foreign products or less costly local formats) and/or genres that will raise maximum advertising proceeds such as programmes targeting those with higher incomes (Bussiek et al., 2011). To Anoff-Ntow (2016), such cheaper, tried and tested, less risky formats have not only resulted in less diversified programming; they have displaced human and public interest local content from broadcasting programmes schedules. Consequently, advertisers find it safer to sponsor and advertise on such “generic” less risky programmes rather than locally produced versions such as documentaries and investigative reports that could be critical of government or the status quo. If this scenario happens to be the case at Radio Upper West, then there could be the likelihood of the station reneging on its principle of being voice of the voiceless. As Bussiek et al. (2013) have indicated, any attempt by Radio Upper West to opt for cheaper programmes and/or genres that will raise maximum advertising proceeds such as programmes targeting those with higher incomes, will see the station likely reneging on its mandate to provide universal access and participation. The vulnerable as the ILO (2017); UNDP (2004) and others have suggested, are powerless in socio, economic and political terms. For this, it must be the responsibility of Radio Upper West to carry out documentaries to portray the special needs of the vulnerable in the Region.

Aside from the aforementioned economic variable and its effect on the functionality of PSB, in political terms, literature suggests that PSB was considered to be too close to the political elite, in some cases being its lapdog and not general enough in its programming (Anoff-Ntow, 2016). It was critiqued in its journalism practice for being

too dependent on official sources and not adequately reflecting the standpoints of the ordinary person (Anoff-Ntow, 2016). Besides its over reliance on such official sources, it also tended to assemble representatives from think tanks as experts during news and other current affairs, further reinforcing the narrative of the political elite and their cohorts (Anoff-Ntow, 2016). Moreover, Curran (2005) distinguishes Public Service journalism from other forms. He points out that “journalists working for market media are increasingly entertainers; those working for civic media are advocates; while those in public service broadcasting are constrained by an obligation to mediate a balanced perspective” (142).

In general terms, Bennet (2005) and Blumler (1993) point to PSB’s lack of editorial clarity within the liberal democratic setting. From their perspective, if the news, for instance, is becoming decontextualised and lacks a critical edge, it is because it is increasingly mimicking entertainment as a format because news managers prefer to stick to tried and tested formats (Gitlin, 1970; McChesney, 2007). Bennett (2005) describes this phenomenon as “a display of infotainment (consumer trends, fashion, sports, celebrity gossip), [and] sensationalism (sex, scandal and violence), such soft news is cheap to produce, and it works reasonably well for the commercial purpose of grabbing audiences and delivering them to advertisers” (137). Joining up the conversation is Blumler (1993) who observes that such news lacks context, focuses on outcomes rather than processes, the spectacular rather than substance, on trivialities rather than important events. In direct reference to the effect of the above mentioned to the good course of the vulnerable, Blumler (1995) argues that as PSB was forced to cut back on children, documentary and investigative programming, it was reneging on one of the pillars that supported its mandate: to create a public space for rigorous debate and facilitate the shaping of national dialogue.

Apart from the afore-mentioned market forces that directly determine the quality or otherwise of programming, Quinn (2005) points out that technological advancement and its subsequent adoption brings its own set of pressures and demands on the core duties of practitioners. For instance, Brautovic's (2009) study suggests that for digitalisation to be successful, the process must take care of editors, journalist and other personnel. He reckons the need for a deliberate programme to train news professionals so they can function within the new environment. Brautovic (2009) indicates that the way to avert resistance from the news team is to provide adequate training for personnel. Again, Quinn (2005) also indicates that for new technologies into newsrooms to be successful, media organisations need to train journalists to make their transition into using the new technology effective.

In terms of modern trends, Francis (2002) identifies speed and empowerment as two main managerial themes driving the digital news movement. He describes speed as how fast pictures can air, using the now well-known advantage of server-based production. On the other hand, empowerment means allowing everyone in the production chain access to simple but effective tools to carry out their tasks. He further emphasises a process where journalists, producers, camera operators, picture editors, archivists or managers are able to see and manipulate news media at their own desk. He advocates an inclusion of all news professionals in the news production processes by equipping them with the needed skills for news gathering and production. In this light, Domingo et al. (2007) report that 60% of local and regional broadcasters do not only share materials for stories, but also sometimes produce programmes for both Radio and TV.

After the elaborate discussion on the dynamics of the political economy of the media as an institution, the discourse will be palpably incomplete if the preoccupations and activities of the journalists themselves are not highlighted. Flowing from the scholarly expositions by Castells (2009); Gans (1979); Herman and Chomsky (1988); Lipmann (1922); Nugroho (2012), media practitioners, irrespective of their respective mandate are influenced by several factors. As the study borders on media and their programming and coverage of the vulnerable groups, these scholarly disclosures are analysed to see how the nuances of the political economy affect Journalists' at Radio Upper West commitment to duty. This is because, the journalists (News and Programmes staff) happen to be the frontline personnel when it comes to programming and coverage of the station. They have a normative mandate to perform towards the vulnerable. It will also serve as the basis in questioning their views and experiences on their operations to determine whether they are in sync with the obligation of ensuring universal access and participation.

Notwithstanding the recognition of the media as the pillar of democracy, the landscape is fraught with challenges (Nugroho et al., 2012). One of the basic problems of the media in a democracy is the accuracy of news and the protection of sources (Lippmann, 1922). Moreover, Lippmann (1922) asserts that the media's role in democracy has still not achieved what is expected of it, and that the 'creation of consent' still exists. Besides, Herman and Chomsky (1988) posit that the media are always at risk of being manipulated and used by the privileged groups which are more powerful than others in society. To Herman and Chomsky (1988), the societal purpose of the media is to inculcate and defend the economic, social, and political agenda of privileged groups that dominate the domestic society and the state. The media serve this purpose in many ways: through selection of topics, distribution of concerns,

framing of issues, filtering of information, emphasis and tone, and by keeping debate within the bounds of acceptable premises” (xi).

All of this lends credence to the assertion that (real) power in the society is communication power (Castells, 2009). In other words, those who control the medium will clearly have the power to control the content and value; hence the media have become an arena for power struggles. Nugroho et al. (2012) observe that as the minorities possess very little power, if any, to convey the messages to the other citizens at large, their voices will remain ineffectual and they will become ‘second class citizens’ who are barely active in civic engagements. As a station operating on the principles of PSB, Radio Upper West has an obligation to live above external influences to ensure that the elite in society do not hijack the media space to the disadvantage of the vulnerable. As the principles of diversity and universality demand, all citizens including the vulnerable must be placed on an equal footing regardless of their socio, economic and political status. Gans (1979) defines news sources as the actors whom journalists observe or interview and those who supply background information or story suggestions. Operationally, news sources can be defined as any source, human or institutional, with a stake in the outcome of the news produced as a result of information emanating from that source (Diedong, 2016).

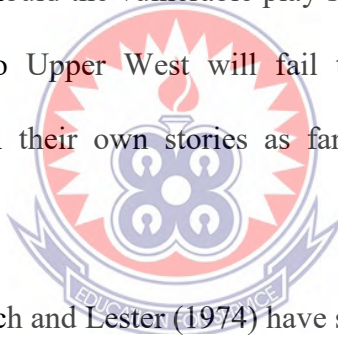
The relationship between journalists and sources are mutual; sources seek access to journalists, and journalists seek access to source (Gans 1979). Story selection and production is therefore a power struggle over what message enters the symbolic arena. Molotch et al. (1974) have argued that news is shaped by the groups in society that are powerful enough both to create what they call public events and to gain access to journalists. For example, Sigal’s (1973) findings on news sources and gathering

channels based on content analyses of the New York Times and the Washington Post over a twenty year period, confirm many of the expectations of limited diversity. Signal found out that almost 60% of the news in all stories came through routine channels, which are predominantly under source control. Gans (1979) has reported that most of the time, the power struggle is covert, for it is built in news judgments. To him, it becomes overt, however, when unhappy sources, audiences, and others express their displeasure with the outcome of news judgments. Tuchman (1978) asserts that news is negotiated. The selection of information to publish, prominence given to stories and balancing of news are influenced by more than the intrinsic news values of the stories. Tuchman (1978) argues that news helps us to form our notion of reality, helps set the agenda. McCombs and Gilbert (1986) support this position by pointing out that the public sees the world not as it but the filter of the media.

However, Diedong (2016) notes that the starting point of the filtration does not begin in the news as is often assumed. Public Relations and Information Officers working within state and non-governmental organisations, which provide the media with the bulk of their information, seek to realize the aims and objectives of their organisations through the sort of information given to the public. Moreover, Diedong (2016) reports that it has always been assumed that news sources, especially the powerful ones, more often than not try to win the favour of journalists in framing stories that best suit their interests, particularly in meeting organizational goals. In return, source considerations seem to be heavily in favour of authoritative sources or power elites.

The literature on routine reporting (Diedong, 2016; Gans, 1979) tend to support the tendency toward powerful elites as news sources which indicates that there is a strong relationship between the media and influential persons or entities. It is the function of

the media to monitor, scrutinise, and provide a running commentary on the government and duty bearers. For journalists to be able to ferret out information for the public, it is helpful if the relations between journalists and politicians are characterised by a reasonable amount of tension, suspicion, and uneasiness. However, ~~in~~ situations where journalists and politicians start patting each other on the back, it is a sure sign that there is something basically wrong somewhere, and the media is likely to be guilty of dereliction of duty” (Ansah, 1996: 166). It stands to reason that if the elites happen to be the dominant force in terms of news source, Radio Upper West’s coverage will be short of balance. The consequential effect is that the interest of the vulnerable will not be served and the principle of access and participation becoming a daydream. Should the vulnerable play second fiddle to the elites in terms of news sourcing, Radio Upper West will fail to provide the platform for the vulnerable groups to tell their own stories as far as their unique challenges and successes are concerned.



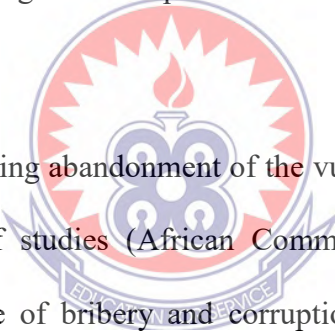
Most importantly, Molotch and Lester (1974) have suggested that non routine news is different because it stands little chance of being twisted in favour of powerful sources. Notwithstanding, there is evidence that media organisations, especially public media sources in Ghana, due to resources constraints and in a bid to be economical as possible in the process of gathering news, easily grasp such cheap information sources (Diedong, 2016). The dilemma journalists face is that they cannot simply cut ties with these powerful sources if they really want to maintain their jobs and possibly, through such links, obtain more lucrative jobs in other organisations (Diedong, 2016). Therefore, at both ends of the equation, that is, on both the side of the supplier of information and that of the first recipient of information (journalists), information independently generated and claimed to be public interest may in reality be aimed at

achieving particular purposes. He warns that the continuous reliance on governmental and other elite sources necessarily limits the diversity of information available to the public. Under such conditions, the world will not get to hear the side of the vulnerable groups which will result in a one sided narration. From hindsight, it will also defeat the PSB obligation of acting as voice for the voiceless because if those entrusted to seek the welfare of the vulnerable are the ones rather dominating the media space, it will be difficult to champion accountability and transparency towards the vulnerable groups.

Gans (1979) identifies two criteria for sources that best meet the powerful elites. They are most likely to meet the availability criterion through their power to attract journalists' attention as well as through their geographic and social proximity to journalists. Elites are also better able to meet the criterion of suitability. Due to their centrality in power systems, they can supply a great deal of information without unduly taxing their organizations or the resources of journalists. They are also more likely to meet the standard definitions of reliability, trustworthiness, authoritativeness, and articulateness. Van Dijk (1988) has noted that news reflect economic, social, and ideological values in the reproduction of society through the media. Powerful and credible sources are used and quoted the most, especially leading politicians, state and city agencies, and representatives of organisations.

However, reporters face ethical dilemmas when it comes to reporting on less powerful people. The findings of Van Dijk (1988) have confirmed that less powerful groups and opposition voices receive less attention, lower relevance and have the highest probability of being deleted. Nugroho et al. (2012) have dropped hints that in Indonesia, the exercise of minorities' rights, in particular with regard to media, seems

to be lacking. They reveal that those belonging to the Ahmadiyya Muslim sect, the diffables, LGBTs, women and children are continuously misrepresented in the media and have a very limited access to co-create the content. Moreover, Omotosho et al. (2015) cite a former Executive Director of UNICEF, Ann M. Veneman, as affirming that the largest numbers of children whose rights are daily deprived are found in Sub-Saharan Africa. Asare-Donkoh (2017) in his study on children in the media found that children are one group of people who are hardly covered by the media. This assertion has been affirmed by the National Director of World Vision International Ghana, Mr. Dickens Thundeh, who challenged media practitioners in Ghana to give space to children as he found that headlines in the media were centered on politics and galamsey instead of making children part of their headlines (Ghana News Agency, 2017).



Factors to the media seeming abandonment of the vulnerable in favour of the elite are not far-fetched. A lot of studies (African Communication Research, 2010) have pointed to high incidence of bribery and corruption among African journalists by referring to the term “brown envelope” journalism. In Tanzania, for example, it is customary for reporters to queue up and sign a form to receive a “sitting fee” from the event organizers (ACR, 2010). In Ethiopia, brown envelopes more commonly referred to as “buche”, which is derived from Amharic “bucheke” and means “snatching something” (Berhanu, 2009; Berhanu & Skjerdal, 2009). The Ethiopian case also illustrates how the nomenclature around brown envelopes has developed to fathom the manifold nature of the practice. For example, reporting places where brown envelopes do not exist are known in Ethiopia as “derek tabiya”, literally meaning “dry location”, so as to imply that going there does not bring any substance for the journalist (ACR, 2010). In Ghana, “soli” is the preferred term (Diedong, 2006). It is

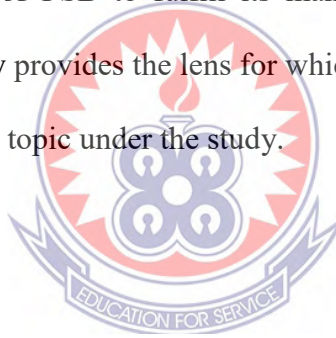
derived from –solidarity”, denoting that the source has some sort of sympathy with the despairing situation of the journalist and therefore wants to extend a helping hand which can also strengthen the ties between the two parties (Hasty, 2005). He adds that in Ghana an exclusive phrase has been introduced to describe refreshments and other freebies offered at the end of an official event, namely –item 13”. It is understood as the last (and rewarding) issue on the agenda of the meeting. On this score, Diedong (2016) argues that the power of journalists to behave extremely selectively towards persons and events, previous judgments, and the consequence of previous decisions can undermine their professional credibility. In this case, journalists at Radio Upper West may be prejudiced in their coverage of the vulnerable groups in the knowledge that they have little monetary or favours to offer as compared to the elites who have the resources at their disposal.

2.7 Relevance of Political Economy Theory to this Study

From the literature reviewed, it is evident that the media play an important role in society as the fourth estate of the realm in functioning democracies. The studies reviewed point to the direction of the media reneging on its obligation of building social cohesion and rather operating in the larger interest of the powerful elite. Thus, the basic tenets of the media both physical and non-physical, appear to have shifted from being a medium and mediator of the public sphere that enables the critical engagement of citizens to rather being tools for power to ‘manufacture consent’. Generally, the Political Economy theory of the media and its attendant scholarly perspectives aided this study in understanding and analysing the place of the vulnerable in public service broadcasting programming/coverage. Most importantly, the theory served as the basis for discussing and answering the dominant issues that arose out of the main research questions of the study.

2.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter looked at related literature on the topic of research from the global view to the African setting. Also, the theory and framework underpinning the study- Political Economy Theory and some pertinent principles of Public Service Broadcasting were discussed to show their significance to the present study. It has been established through the review of the literature that the media through information dissemination has the power to empower the vulnerable and marginalised. It further established that Public Service Broadcasting in particular has a role in protecting the interest and rights of the vulnerable through unrestricted programming and coverage. As Blumler (1993) and other scholars raise concerns over the ability and capacity of PSB to fulfill its mandate towards the vulnerable, the Political Economy Theory provides the lens for which to view the operations of Radio Upper West regarding the topic under the study.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the processes and methods adopted in undertaking the study. It discusses in detail the research approach, research design, population, sample size and sampling strategy, data collection instruments, data analysis methods, validation of instruments, and ethical considerations. This is in line with the assertion by Powell and Connolly (2004) that a research methodology is an aggregation of multiple steps a researcher employs in a study with the aim of attaining higher levels of validity and reliability.

3.1 Research Approach

Among the three research approaches available to social science research (qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods), a qualitative research approach was employed in this study. According to Creswell (2014), this approach is used when little research has been done on the phenomenon being investigated. This informed the researcher's choice of qualitative approach because review of literature indicates that in Ghana, little attention had been given to the study of Public Service Broadcasting programming for the vulnerable as clearly set out by the objectives and principles of the concept of Public Service Broadcasting.

According to Creswell (2013), qualitative research begins with assumptions, worldview, use of a theoretical lens and the study of research problem inquiring into the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. Similarly, it is assumed that GBC's Radio Upper West being a public service broadcaster gives ample coverage to vulnerable groups and has special programmes in place for the

minorities. Theoretically, it could be anticipated through the lens of the Political Economy of the media that Radio Upper would be hampered by several challenges emanating from the forces of the market and may not be able to discharge the public service mandate efficiently. Overall, the study examined the station's number of programmes targeted at the vulnerable and further analyse the perspectives of the News and Programmes staff on their mandate towards the vulnerable as public service broadcasting practitioners. Key principles of Public Service broadcasting and their linkage to the promotion human rights, and by extension, service to the vulnerable were used to establish whether GBC's Radio Upper West programming/coverage for the vulnerable falls in tandem with its mandate. Again, scholarly perspectives on the concept of vulnerability and the Political Economy Theory were used to predict, explain and analyse programming/coverage for the vulnerable.

Moreover, Creswell (2014) asserts that sometimes the available literature to researchers may not yield a lot of information about a phenomenon under study. That is why it is considered appropriate to use qualitative approach to elicit information-rich responses from participants who are knowledgeable for the objectives of the study. In line with this assertion, the researcher did not only employ in-depth interviews as a data collection process but equally employed focus group discussion and document analysis to ascertain how the Public Service Broadcaster fulfills its mandate towards the vulnerable by way of programming/coverage.

This current study did not only rely on one source of data to collect information and as recommended by Creswell (2013), adopted multiple qualitative data sources and employed in-depth interviews, focus group discussion and document analysis as key

major data collection methods to aid in providing adequate information to help achieve the goal of this study.

Also, a complex mathematical computation was not the focus of the study because the researcher was more concerned with looking into the explanations and the interpretations of the issues that emerged from studying the data collected. This in consistence with Hancock et al. (2007) who explain that qualitative research focuses on reports of experience or on data which cannot be adequately expressed numerically.

Creswell (2013) has illustrated some key factors a qualitative research must exhibit. They include the researcher being a key instrument in the entire research process. Considering this factor, the researcher was instrumental in the entire research process. For the successful completion of this study, the researcher undertook the roles of verifying and cross checking information, as well as going through great lengths to get credible, authentic and viable facts devoid of all personal biases. All the proceedings in playing this role were actively prepared and completed by the researcher. Not as in the purely scientific research where the variables are placed in an artificial environment and sometimes manipulated to get the desired results, this study being qualitative was conducted in the natural environment of the participants.

3.2 Research Design

A research design is the strategy, plan and structure that characterise a research work. It is the logic that links the data to be collected and the answers to be given to the research questions (Creswell, 2014). Yin (2009) adds that research design is the logic that links the data to be collected and the conclusions to be drawn to the initial questions of the study. In a nutshell, a research design is an action plan for getting the

research done from the initial set of questions to be answered to the conclusions of these questions. A research design is a critical cog to every research process because it gives the direction for the researcher to follow. The direction provided by a research design guides the collection of data as well as the analysis and interpretation of the data. This study employs case study as its design since it was considered by the researcher as the appropriate design for this study - on the basis that it provides the strategy, plan and structure that characterize this research work. The study also adopted case study as it served as the logical link that connects the data to be collected and the conclusions to be drawn to the research questions.

3.2.1 Case study

Case study design is used when a researcher wants to probe deeper into a phenomenon (Yin, 2009). To Yin (2009), a case study becomes relevant as a research design when a researcher's research questions are tailored in a way that would explain a present occurrence (for instance, "how" and "why" a certain phenomenon works). Creswell (2014) adds that a case study research is a qualitative design in which the investigator explores a real-life, contemporary bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information and reports a case description and case themes. In this study, GBC's Radio Upper West programming/coverage of the vulnerable was the phenomenon which the researcher delved into over a period of six months to get an in depth understanding of how the station's programming/coverage reflects/satisfies the principles of public service broadcasting. Accordingly, the researcher explores real-life contemporary bounded system (a case) in the form of real-life situations experienced at GBC's Radio Upper West over the period under

review. Thus, one case was studied, being GBC's Radio Upper West programming/coverage of the vulnerable.

Yin (2003) also stipulates that when the behaviour of the participants of the research cannot be manipulated, a case study design is appropriate for the research. Therefore, this design enforced an objective collection of data for this study.

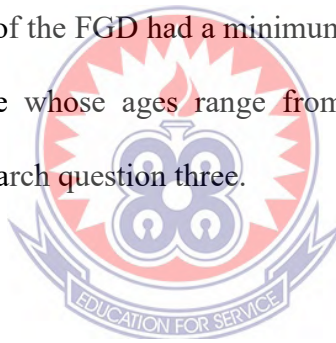
3.3 Sampling Strategy

There are different sampling strategies available to every researcher, these include simple random sampling, stratified sampling and purposive sampling. According to Daymon and Holloway (2011), qualitative approaches demand different sampling techniques and that the underlying principle of gaining rich and in-depth information generally guides the sampling strategies of qualitative researchers. Thus, under the qualitative research approach, the object or subject selected for the study, where and when, depends on certain criteria which are determined by the purpose of the study. Based on the focus of the study, purposive or purposeful sampling is applied (Daymon & Holloway, 2011). Creswell and Clark (2011) define purposive sampling as identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals that are especially knowledgeable about or experienced with a phenomenon of interest in a study. Lindlof and Taylor (2002) also note that no qualitative researcher can capture every event as it unfolds, thus, the purposeful selection of data sites for a particular study. The right choice of a sampling strategy enables researchers to make a systematic contact with communicative phenomena with a minimum of wasted effort, (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002).

Therefore, for the purpose of this study, purposive sampling strategy was used throughout the study. GBC's Radio Upper West was purposively selected as case for

this study because it operates on the principles of public service broadcasting and serves a larger vulnerable population (ILO, 2017; World Bank & Government of Ghana, 2012).

Berg (2004) emphasises that the participants for a qualitative study ought to be chosen based on their experiences and knowledge of the issue under investigation. Consequently, the three participants (comprising the ARD, HON and Head of HOP) were purposively sampled for primary data on research questions One and Two. Again five Presenters and Reporters at the station were selected for the Focus Group Discussion based on the staffing strength of the station as well as their experiences on GBC's Radio Upper West's programming/coverage of the vulnerable. By way of background, participants of the FGD had a minimum of tertiary education, comprising four males and a female whose ages range from thirty to fifty. Their responses provided the data for research question three.



3.4 Sample Size

It has been established by Creswell (2014) that in qualitative studies, smaller sample sizes can be purposively selected for better understanding of the research problem. Again, Creswell (2013) establishes that the sample size depends greatly on the type of design employed by the researcher. In order to provide ample opportunity to identify themes and the cases as well as conduct cross case analysis, Creswell (2013) recommends not more than five case studies in a single study. Besides, Lindlof and Taylor (2002) posit that a qualitative researcher needs to consider the scope of the study, the complexity of the research problem, the accessibility of potential participants and the time and resources that are available for working on the field. Based on this, the researcher selected one Public Service Broadcasting station (GBC's

Radio Upper West) as the sample size for the study. It is the only Public Service Broadcasting station in the Upper West Region and broadcasts in three main languages: English, Dagaare and Sissala. The non-probability method, specifically purposive sampling, was used in this study to determine the participants for the focus group discussions. Participants of the focus group discussions were made up of five News and Programmes staff. The number of participants for the focus group discussion was largely informed by the existing number of workforce at the station. Also, the Acting Regional Director, Head of News and Head of Programmes were automatically selected as interviewees due to their experience and expertise as management members.

3.5 Data Collection Methods

To Aina (2004), data refers to facts that are raw and unprocessed and when data is converted or processed, it becomes information. Data collection falls within two main categories, namely primary and secondary. According to Malhotra and Birks (2006), primary data collection methods often refer to information that are originally gathered by the researcher at first-hand to address an issue which is specific. This study therefore employed in-depth interviews, focus group discussion and document analyses as the data collection method. This study adopted multiple data sources because Creswell (2013) posits that such an approach aids in providing adequate information to help achieve the goal of investigations of this nature. Creswell's (201) assertion lends credence to Patton's (1990) and Yin's (2009) claims that the adoption of multiple-methods approach is a good strategy in research because they ensure data credibility. For this, the researcher found it prudent to use three data sources to gather data for the study. They are in-depth interviews, focus group discussion and document analysis.

3.5.1 In-depth interviews

Brennen (2017) defines interview as a purposefully focused conversation between an interviewer and an interviewee with the aim of unraveling participants' perspectives, opinions, and important aspects of their lived experiences. Boyce and Neale (2006) also posit that in-depth interview is a qualitative research strategy that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents with the aim of exploring respondents' views or perspectives on a particular idea, programme or situation. Therefore, three respondents comprising the Acting Regional Director of Radio Upper West, Head of News and Head of Programmes were interviewed to gain a deeper understanding of the operations of the station, particularly in the area of programming/coverage of the vulnerable. The choice of the above-named management members as respondents for the in-depth interview, is justified by Lindlof and Taylor (2002), who note that qualitative interviews are conducted on persons whose experiences are central to the research problem. Another reason for interviewing the Acting Regional Director and Heads of News and programmes is that they play active roles in the day-to-day running of the station, hence, their experiences are very much needed to give in-depth information for the study.

The interview style adopted for the in-depth interview with the Acting Regional Director, Heads of Programmes and News was unstructured. According to Gubrium and Holsten (2002), the unstructured interview is more flexible and gives the freedom to both the interviewer and the interviewee regarding how the interview content and questions are planned, implemented and organized. Brennen (2017) also suggests that to elicit the intended views and opinions from the participants, it is imperative that these interviews are unstructured; with open-ended questions.

According to Creswell (2013), this method of interviewing can be a face-to face interaction with participants, a telephone interview or focus group interviews. The study adopted face-to face interview. According to Creswell (2014), a face-to face interview enables participants to provide holistic information and also allows the researcher to have control over the line of questioning. This was employed by the researcher and afforded him the opportunity to observe the non-verbal cues of the interviewees that provided insights for some follow-up questions.

3.5.2 Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

In order to get relevant information to answer research question three which seeks the perspectives of journalists of the station regarding their mandate towards the vulnerable, this method was crucial. A focus group discussion is a form of group interviewing in which a small group – usually ten (10) to twelve (12) people – is led by a moderator (interviewer) in a loosely structured discussion of the investigation topic (Mishra, 2016). Mishra (2016) asserts that focus group discussion is a good way to gather together people from similar backgrounds or experiences to discuss a specific topic of interest. This study used FGDs as part of a multi-method approach to collect data on the topic because of its flexibility in question design and follow-up and the fact that it allowed for more people to be interviewed at a go.

3.5.3 Document analysis

In addition to interviews, this study also analysed documents as a data collection method, particularly applicable to qualitative case studies with the aim of producing detailed and rich descriptions of a single phenomenon, event, organisation, or programme (Yin, 2009). Document analysis is a form of qualitative research in which documents are interpreted by the researcher to give voice and meaning around an

assessment topic (Bowen, 2009). Daymon and Holloway (2011) explain further that documents consist of words and images that have been recorded without the intervention of a researcher. They are in written, printed, sound, visual and digital forms. Analysing documents is therefore a useful method because of its unobtrusive, non-reactive nature. This fits into the rationale for adopting document analysis as one of the sources for data collection for this study, as the researcher did not create or co-create the official documents of GBC's Radio Upper West on their programming and coverage of the vulnerable. They were put together prior to this study and was without the researcher's knowledge or inputs. Again, the programme schedules and itinerary for news coverage (documents) for the stated period of study, aided the researcher to examine Radio Upper West's programming and coverage of the vulnerable and their conformity with the principles of Public Service Broadcasting under which the station operates.

3.6 Data Collection Procedure

This section presents the processes undertaken in order to collect the required data for the study. It enumerates the step by step stages the researcher went through to gather data for the study.

3.6.1 Interviews

At the onset of this study, the researcher requested and secured introductory letters from the Department of Communication and Media Studies of the University of Education, Winneba, where the researcher is a student. The introductory letters addressed to the respective officers were personally delivered to the front office of GBC's Radio Upper West. Within a week interval, each of the participants called to communicate the interview date and time with the researcher. Prior to the scheduled

day for the interviews, the researcher formulated a semi-structured interview guide to assist him with the interview sessions.

Face-to-face interviews were conducted for the ten participants. On the scheduled day, the researcher met each participant in their offices (premises of the station). He introduced himself and offered a brief description of the study. He also made it clear to each participant that they have the right to decline questions that they find uncomfortable with. The researcher therefore appealed to each participant to feel free to share their views in an open and candid manner as much as possible. Furthermore, he asked for their permission to record the discussion with his mobile phone. Once the interview started, the researcher used his semi-structured interview guide to moderate the discussion to prevent participants from straying away from the boundaries of the discussion. The interviews were conducted with the respondents with the tenets of Public Service Broadcasting in mind. Themes were generated by the researcher from the principles of Public Service Broadcasting and questions were asked in line with the generated themes to elicit response from the interviewees under each specific theme.

In all, the interviews lasted between twenty-five to thirty minutes. In addition to recording the interview sessions, the researcher also wrote down notes in his notepad as the discussions were ongoing. This is in line with Brennen's (2017) assertion that the researcher cannot trust him/herself to recollect all the insightful occurrences and ideas when on the field. Thus, it is important to carry a notebook to write down those experiences whiles on the field. The recorded interviews were transcribed and cleaned up before coding. Overall, the interviews were conducted in a cordial and relaxing setting. Participants therefore had the opportunity to express themselves freely and fully.

3.6.2 Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

Having sought Management consent through the introductory letters, the researcher was introduced to five staff of the station being Presenters and Reporters as participants for the Focus group discussion. Within a week interval, each of the participants called the researcher to confirm their availability on the already proposed date, time and venue for the discussion. Prior to the scheduled day for the discussion, the researcher formulated a semi-structured interview guide to assist him with the interview sessions. This is in consistence with Mishra (2016) who avers that the course of the discussion is usually planned in advance and most moderators rely on an outline, or moderator's guide, to ensure that all topics of interest are covered. The group of participants is guided by a moderator (or group facilitator) who introduces topics for discussion and helps the group.

Mishra (2016) asserts that the venue for a focus group is important and should, ideally, be accessible, comfortable, private, quiet and free from distractions. With this in mind, the researcher prior to arriving at the date and time for the discussion, reached out to the participants on phone where they comfortably chose the Wa multi-purpose Library Complex out of three facilities presented to them as the venue for the discussion. The discussion took place on Saturday 30th November, 2019 around 2pm and ended a few minutes past 4pm. It initially started with three participants with the remaining two joining discussion midway. According to Mishra (2016), focus groups are usually recorded, often observed (by a researcher other than the moderator, whose role is to observe the interaction of the group to enhance analysis). Again, Mishra emphasises the need for the moderator to at the start of the discussion, acknowledge the presence of the audio recording equipment, assure participants of confidentiality and give people the opportunity to withdraw if they are uncomfortable with being

taped. Accordingly, the participants of this study, prior to the discussion were informed about the presence of the tape recorder and fully consented to its usage. In addition to recording the discussion, the researcher also wrote down notes in his notepad as the discussions were ongoing. This is in line with Brennen's (2017) assertion that the researcher cannot trust him/herself to recollect all the insightful occurrences and ideas when on the field. Thus, it is important to carry a notebook to write down those experiences whiles on the field. The recorded discussions were transcribed and cleaned up before coding. Overall, the discussion took place in a cordial and relaxing setting. Participants therefore had the opportunity to express themselves freely and fully. All these processes were duly followed to arrive at the themes of *forced to renege on responsibilities towards the vulnerable, service to the vulnerable is challenging and service to the vulnerable comes with varied sources of motivation.*

3.6.3 Document analysis

Again, with the aid of the introductory letters, seven (7) weekly programme schedules within the study period were analysed. After presenting introductory letters to the management of Radio Upper West, the researcher had access to the programme line up and schedules of the station for the stated period. Again, the event book containing reporters' and presenters' diary, together with official press releases, advertisements, radio show attendance registers, as well as, letters and memoranda used during the stated period of study were handed over to the researcher.

In the context of this study, copies of the programme schedule, reporters' and presenters' diary, advertisements, radio show attendance registers, as well as, letters and memoranda from May 2019 to October 2019 of the station were collected from

management and analysed. The period of document analysis is based on the need to have a clearer understanding of the station's activities with the Month of May to October representing the second and third quarters of the year. This afforded the researcher the opportunity to fully analyse the programming and coverage of the vulnerable groups. The reporters' and presenters' diary, advertisements, radio show attendance registers, as well as, letters and memoranda were analysed to examine the main beneficial group of Radio Upper West coverage. On the other hand, the programme schedule (day, time and duration) for vulnerable groups were analysed. This was to enable the researcher establish the rate of accessibility of vulnerable group to programmes and coverage by Radio Upper West. Again, the weekly programme slots with particular attention to the days, time and duration for vulnerable groups were examined to ascertain regular time slots of special programmes for the vulnerable. The documents review played a vital role in the analysis for this study as it gave the researcher in-depth information for the evaluation of the place of the vulnerable in the station's programming/coverage. Significantly, the documents provided further information which may or may not have been provided during the interview sessions. Thus, Daymon and Holloway (2011) assert that documents can be a rich base of comprehensive primary or supplementary data than interviews conducted over a short time period.

As posited by Bowen (2009), document analysis is a form of qualitative research in which documents are interpreted by the researcher to give voice and meaning around an assessment. Thus, data from the document analysis played a vital role in the data analysis stage of this study as it provided in-depth information that enabled the researcher to examine coverage and the time slots for special programmes for the

vulnerable as well as how regularly the vulnerable group had access to programmes and operations of the station that addressed their needs and interests.

3.7 Method of Data Analysis

Data analysis is a task involving the synthetisation of all information a researcher gathers in the field and drawing parallel and logical lines in the data according to the researchers set of research questions (Frankel & Wallen, 2003). Creswell (2013) corroborates the assertion by Frankel and Wallen (2003) that a good data analysis involves the researcher making sense of the data collected. When a research work such as this study is conducted in the area of radio and television, Creswell (2013) advises that because texts and image are so dense and rich, not all of the information can be used in qualitative research. Therefore with the aim of reducing the information and selecting the most important ones to the study, Guest, Macqueen and Namey (2012) used the term to 'winnow' in explaining the process of focusing on some of the data and disregarding others. Hence, Lecompte and Schensul (1999) explain data analysis to be a process that provides the researcher room to reduce large amounts of data in order to make sense of them.

Patton (1999) proposes three general ways of conducting a data analysis namely, data organization; data reduction through summarization; categorisation; identifying and linking of data through patterns and themes. In this research work, the analytical strategy employed is the thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is the process used in analyzing the data and this involves all the steps enumerated by (Patton, 1999).

3.7.1 Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis, according to Smith and Firth (2011), describes an ~~in~~terpretive process, whereby data is systematically searched to identify patterns within the data in

order to provide an illuminating description of the phenomenon” (p.3). What this means is that the researcher in employing the thematic analysis as a technique identifies common patterns, codes or themes that are reoccurring and offers detailed description of these codes or themes. For the interviews and focus group discussions, the audio recordings were transcribed into text so as to make the identification of themes and codes easier. The researcher then read through the transcribed text thoroughly and took note of key issues raised by the participants. Reoccurring themes and patterns were identified across the responses from the interview participants and coded. These processes of identifying and analysing themes are consistent with the analytical steps employed by Asare (2016) who also conducted interviews with selected members of staff from GBC to determine whether GBC’s sources of funding was reflective of that of a public service broadcaster or other broadcasting systems.

The researcher equally employed thematic data analysis process for the documents by reading through the said documents seven times in all, moving back and forth through the pages in order to familiarise himself with the details and to gain an appreciation of the messages embedded in them. During the interpretative process, the researcher looked out for issues that were raised both during the interviews and focus group discussions as well as the ones captured in documents and how these issues related to one another; meanings were then drawn with the aid of the theories underpinning this study. Excerpts from the interviews and the documents were also used to support the analysis and discussions.

According to Maxwell (1996); Charmaz (2000), the heart of qualitative data analysis is the task of discovering themes. By themes, they meant abstract, often fuzzy, constructs, which investigators identify before, during and after data collection. On this account, the researcher derived themes from the stipulations of the principles of

Public Service Broadcasting before and during the interview to establish the place of the vulnerable in the station's programming/coverage.

3.8 Trustworthiness of the Study

Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue that ensuring credibility is one of the most important factors in establishing trustworthiness. This is concerned with how trustworthy the instruments of collection of data are to the study. Creswell (2014) submits that it is used to determine whether the processes of findings are accurate from the standpoint of the researcher, the participant, or the readers account. These procedures, Creswell (2014) notes, include triangulation, member checking, peer debriefing, prolonged time spent on the field by the researcher, clarification of bias that the researcher may bring on the study and presenting negative discrepant information that runs counter to the themes. He agrees that in qualitative research, at least two of these verification procedures must be used. Therefore, the researcher employed a number of procedures in order to make sure all information collected and analysed in this research was nothing but the most accurate truth.

First, the researcher's approach involves consulting three sources for information and this helped in the credibility of data gathered as well as trustworthiness of findings. Creswell (2014) explains triangulation in this way, "different data sources of information by examining evidence from the sources and using it to build a coherent justification for themes" (25). Thus, the researcher conducted in-depth interviews, focus group discussion and used document analysis as a means of gaining more insights into the place of the vulnerable in Radio Upper West's programming/coverage. Getting information from these different sources enabled the

researcher to employ methodological triangulation which helped in ensuring the trustworthiness of the outcome of this study.

The interview guide used in this study and the scope of the focus group discussion were designed with the tenets of public service broadcasting in mind, thereby, rendering the outcomes, a high level of credibility. Yin (2009) suggests the need to document the procedures of the case studies and to document as many of the steps as the procedure as possible. In line with this, the researcher kept good records of the study each step of the way. The time, location, site and even challenges faced were all documented to portray a true account of the data collection process. The procedures followed ensured credibility of the data collection instruments resulting in a valid converged and corroborated data gathering and analysis.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

There are standard research ethical codes prescribed by the University of Education, Winneba for its faculty and students to strictly adhere to when conducting any form of research that involves both human and non-human subjects as research participants. The researcher immersed himself in the ethical dictates so as to be able to apply them to the full scale. Top amongst them is that researchers must seek the consent of their research participants, bearing in mind that they have the right to agree or decline to participate in any research (Bowen, 2009). The researcher, obligingly, sought the permission of the participants through an introductory letter from the researcher's department delivered at the front desk of the station. The letter subsequently received a response granting the participants' consent. These were in line with the ethical postulations of Croucher and Cronn-Mills (2015) who propose that for researchers to be ethical in their research process, they ought to adhere to three basic principles –

informed consent, participants' privacy, and debriefing. Aside the fact that the interviewees were duly briefed on all facets of the research, they were also assured of maximum anonymity.

Vanclay, Baines and Taylor (2013) also note that a research study must fully disclose all the methods and analytical procedures used for the study to enable replication of the research by another researcher; enable peer review of the adequacy and ethicality of the methodology; and to encourage critical self-reflection on the limitations of the methodology and any implications for the results and conclusions. In view of this ethical principle, this study fully outlines all the various procedure through which the data collection was done and applied. It chronicles in full, the methods and procedures used in the collection and analysis of the data on the place of the vulnerable in GBC Radio Upper West Programming. Similarly, the study discusses the principles and assumptions that underpin the methods and procedures and most notably, the rationale for their selection.

Beyond these, all sources used in the study were duly acknowledged. This was done in the form of in-text citations and references. Quotations from relevant sources were given page numbers while the researcher ensured that all rules related to plagiarism were adhered to.

3.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the methodology employed to assess the place of the vulnerable in Radio Upper West programming/coverage to ascertain the fulfillment of the station's mandate as spelt out by the principles of public service broadcasting. The approach to the study was qualitative and the design was a case study. Through a purposive sampling method, GBC Radio Upper was selected for the study, owing to

the fact that it is a public service broadcasting station and operates in a region which has a huge vulnerability abounds. Data was obtained through in-depth interviews, focus group discussion and document analyses. Steps were taken to ensure that the data obtained for the study were valid and all the methods were reliable.



CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

The study set out to assess GBC's Radio Upper West Programming/Coverage of the Vulnerable to learn and report how effectively or ineffectively the station performs its mandate as a public service broadcaster with emphasis on the vulnerable group.

This chapter, therefore, presents the findings and, discussion of the data collected from the assessment of all the vulnerable related programmes of the station through the in-depth interviews, focus group discussion and document analysis.

In order to examine the place of the vulnerable in Public Service Broadcasting programming/coverage, the researcher employed thematic analysis to discuss the data from the field. In reliance on the relevant theoretical expositions, the current study brought to the fore major issues concerning the programming/coverage of the vulnerable by Radio Upper West and helped to conceptualize findings that emerged from the research.

For the purposes of identification, titles of the official positions of the respondents whose responses helped generate data for research questions one and two, were abbreviated. The following are the abbreviations for the respondents: ARD (Acting Regional Director); HON (Head of News) and HOP (Head of Programmes). In ensuring anonymity of respondents for research question three, were codified as FGD R (Focus Group Discussion Respondents).

The following research questions guided the data collection and analysis:

1. How does GBC's Radio Upper West programming/coverage serve the vulnerable in the catchment area?
2. What issues emerge from GBC's Radio Upper West's programming/coverage of the vulnerable?
3. What are the perspectives of Radio Upper West journalists on their mandate as public service broadcasters?

4.1 Research Question One

How does GBC's Radio Upper West programming/coverage serve the vulnerable in the catchment area?

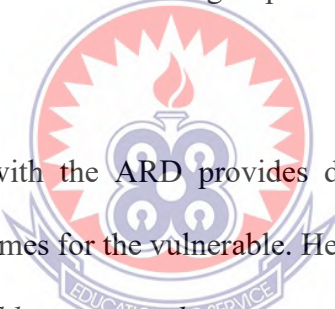
The National Liberation Council Decree (NLCD) 22, defines the purpose of GBC as that: "It shall be the duty of the Corporation to provide as a public service, independent and impartial broadcasting services (both sound and television) for general reception in Ghana". Besides, Article 163 of the 1992 Republican Constitution of Ghana provides that all state-owned media, which GBC is a part of, shall afford fair opportunities and facilities for the presentation of divergent views and dissenting opinions. The themes that emerged from the in depth interviews and document analysis are *diversified programmes for the vulnerable, through advocacy and socio economic empowerment*.

4.1.1 Diversified programmes for the vulnerable

The UNDP's Bureau for Development Policy (2004) sees PSB as a major tool for the promotion of a common sense of national identity, fostering of democratic and other important social values as well as provision of quality educational and informational programming, with service to the minority and other specialised interest groups within the country. The UN Agency tasks Public Service Broadcasting to ensure that

marginalised and disempowered groups, comprising people with no political, economic influence or power, have access to information and provide a voice for the voiceless. Indeed, the vulnerable per the reports by ILO (2017) and World Bank & Government of Ghana (2012) define vulnerability to mean marginalised and disempowered groups, made up of those with no political, economic influence or power. The ILO (2017) categorises the vulnerable group as smallholder farmers and agricultural workers, women, children, older persons, youth and persons with disability. The key indicator for this theme is the existence of programmes that target the various vulnerable groups in the region whose needs are peculiar. The indication is that Radio Upper West through its programming does not treat all vulnerable groups as a single entity but a diverse group of people with different needs and characteristics.

The in-depth interview with the ARD provides deeper insights into the station's diversification of programmes for the vulnerable. He is quoted as saying;



...For the vulnerable group we have programmes like women's digest which is broadcast in Dagaare. It comes in Dagaare since it is the dominant language in the region and with majority of the target audience being non literate rural folks. There is also farmers' forum broadcast in Dagaare as a great number of farmers do not speak English. The other programmes run for the vulnerable are "disability not inability", children's hour and youth focus which are all aired in English. These programmes through education, information and entertainment tend to deal with the complexities associated with vulnerability and marginalisation... (ARD).

The claim by the ARD on the existence of the above mentioned programmes by the station was corroborated by the programmes schedule of Radio Upper West. This is evidenced by the table below:

Table 1: Radio Upper West programmes schedule for the vulnerable

DAY OF PROGRAMME	TIME OF PROGRAMME	NAME OF PROGRAMME
Monday	12: 00 pm-1.00pm	Disability not inability (Dagaare)
Tuesday	9:00 pm -10: 00pm	Women’s Digest (Dagaare)
Friday	7:00 pm – 8: 00pm	Farmers’ Forum (Dagaare) / (Farm Radio Intl. (Sponsored programme)
Saturday	8:30 am -9:00am	Children’s Hour
	1:30 pm – 3:00 pm	Youth Focus
Sunday	8: 00 pm -9: 00pm	Repeat of Farmers’ Forum

The above revelation is an indication that Radio Upper West’s programmes for the vulnerable are diversified, for the fact that the marginalised and disadvantaged group of people as indicated by the ILO (2017) are generally captured and catered for. Thus, the station has in place a programme for women in the form of *women’s digest*; *children’s hour* for children; *youth focus* for the youth, *farmers’ forum* for smallholder farmers; *disability not inability* for persons with disability.

The station’s diversified programmes for the vulnerable is in fulfilment of the Public Service mandate to have in place, programmes that are diversified in terms of type of genres, topics treated and the nature of audience targeted. In practical terms, Radio Upper West seeks to fulfill its diversity mandate by trying to cover everyone, not through each programme, but all programmes and their uniqueness. It emerged from analysis of the programmes line up that through the diversity of programmes offered and subjects discussed, Radio Upper West is able to respond to the varied interests of the vulnerable by reflecting on the whole range of current and societal issues that pertain to the vulnerabilities. The researcher in trying to discover the rationale for the station’s diversified programmes for the vulnerable, enquired from the HOP as to the

philosophy behind the variety of vulnerable related programmes. These were her words;

...Actually, programmes for the vulnerable do not come with any quantifiable financial return as they mostly lack sponsorship. But it is crucial for us not to renege on our Public Service Broadcasting mandate of putting every citizen on equal footing and treating all as the same. We are enjoined by our mandate to make our programmes accessible for all manner of persons regardless of their status. I think it is the major reason why we need to be funded by the public through the collection of TV license fees to be able to provide quality programming for the benefit of all... (HOP).

The World Radio and Television Council (2000) postulates that universality and diversity are complementary. The finding of this study affirms the same as far Radio Upper West's programming for the vulnerable is concerned. This is in the sense that producing programmes intended for the youth, older people, women, children and other vulnerable groups, ultimately makes Radio Upper West's programming for the vulnerable diversified and universal. As the study discovered, vulnerability in itself is varied. Hence, Radio Upper West programmes intended for the vulnerable are not lumped together with each of the identified marginalised and disadvantaged population having in place specific programmes that speak to peculiarities. Per the data, the diversity of the station's programmes for the vulnerable groups is realised from their specific objectives and their unique target audience. Significantly, the study discovered that in terms of programmes for the vulnerable, there are some that exclusively address the concerns of women, children, the youth, persons with disability and small holder farmers, as well as the ones that address vulnerability in general.

It came out clearly that the programmes offered by Radio Upper West are generally aimed at addressing vulnerability in the region. It was deduced in significant

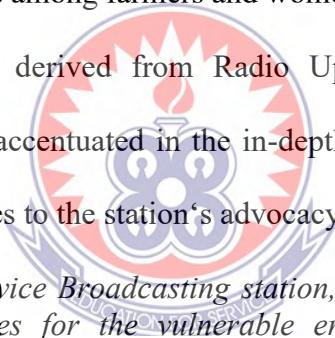
proportions from programmes line up that with all the thematic aspirations put together, programmes of Radio Upper West significantly fall within the domain of the four main aspects of vulnerability: environmental, social, political and economic. It stands to reason therefore that the programming grid of Radio Upper West particularly that of the vulnerable is diversified in nature and serves as the platform for the representation of their diverse interests.

4.1.2 Through advocacy

The theme of advocacy implies that Radio Upper West through its programmes and coverage uses communication strategies to influence positive societal behaviour towards the vulnerable. Given the huge vulnerable population of the station's catchment area as already affirmed by the ILO (2017) and World Bank & Government of Ghana (2012) report, this study also discovered through analysis of topics treated and background of panelists for almost all the station's six programmes for the vulnerable had advocacy elements. The theme of advocacy was indicated by the station's programmes for the vulnerable which have the main preoccupation of speaking for; appealing for; lobbying for; calling for; an action (s) towards the betterment of the marginalised and disadvantaged groups. The study discovered from the analysis of documents that the pattern of advocacy comes in areas of health, education, agriculture, society and livelihood. Thus, in the area of health, the study found out that the "women's digest" programme for instance, dedicated significant time to call for establishment and resourcefulness of modern medical facilities in areas where there are none to eliminate the prevalence of maternal mortality in the region. As discovered by review of the "women's digest" programme, another aspect of health advocacy came in the form of education against the stigmatisation of certain debilitating diseases such as obstetric fistula and breast cancer which are peculiar to

women. Again, the data revealed that on “children’s hour”, there was an advocacy towards ensuring that children are given the best of care in terms of regular balanced diet to prevent malnutrition and stunted growth. In the area of education, the programme mostly sought to press home the need for deprived parents to take advantage of the numerous interventional programmes by government to send their wards to school especially the girl child. Moreover, the analysis of document revealed that both programmes of “farmers’ forum” and “women’s digest” were used to emphasise the need for farmers to adopt modern farming practices to boost yields as well as reduce the impact of climate change. Also, both programmes advocated the provision of storage facilities in the region to forestall post-harvest losses which deepens the vulnerabilities among farmers and women.

The theme of advocacy derived from Radio Upper West programmes for the vulnerable became more accentuated in the in-depth interview with the HOP. These were some of her responses to the station’s advocacy drive;



...As a Public Service Broadcasting station, most of our programmes especially the ones for the vulnerable entail a lot of awareness creation intended to remove all societal and cultural barriers against the vulnerable and marginalised. The discussions segments on the programmes for the vulnerable normally feature people of diverse background to speak in favour or against issues pertaining to the vulnerable. For instance, the programme dubbed “disability not inability” usually has topics that campaign against certain conditions that inhibit the potential of persons with disability... (HOP)

Also, in the area of health, the in-depth interview with the HON revealed that the station through education and information creates awareness on prevalent diseases and medical conditions such as maternal and infant mortality, Cerebral Spinal Meningitis (CSM), obstetric fistula and malaria in the region. He made this known by saying;

...Diseases are common in this region with some of them becoming almost perennial. For instance, we record high cases of CSM every year especially in the dry season when temperatures are hot. In such times, most of our programmes consistently educate the public particularly those in the meningitis belt on how to prevent the disease. We equally use such periods to drum home the need for provision of quality an accessible health care delivery as well as supporting campaigns and projects initiated by government and civil society organisations... (HON)

Furthermore, the in depth interview with the ARD, revealed that Radio Upper West through its programmes for the vulnerable engages in political advocacy with the aim of fostering political inclusion. Moreover, the conversation with the ARD brought to the fore that the stations during political seasons like District Level Elections and general election, wage educational campaigns to bring the vulnerable on board in terms of their representation and participation. He sheds more light on this point;

...The issue of vulnerability manifests in so many ways in the region. One key area where vulnerability persists is in politics. The political rights of marginalised people like women and persons with disability are often trampled upon. In some communities, women and persons with disability in particular are barred from contesting in elections or even participating in the process by way of voting. We therefore advocate the need for inclusiveness at levels of decision making process... (ARD).

Moreover, the study found that another key area where the advocacy role of Radio Upper West comes to bear on the vulnerable is farming and agriculture. With the region noted for environmental vulnerability like deforestation, unfavourable weather patterns and crop pests (World Bank & Government of Ghana, 2012), the study sought from the HOP, the role of Radio in helping to build the resilience and mitigating capacity of the vulnerable farmers. She said the following;

...On programmes like “famers forum” we highlight a lot of issues affecting farmers to rally support for them. The programme normally dilates on the need for policy makers to be responsive to the myriad of challenges affecting farmers and agricultural productivity. We identify the bad nature of roads in the region as a bane to food production. Naturally, the remote areas happen to be the food basket of the region,

yet due to inaccessible roads, it becomes difficult for farmers to cart their farm produce in large quantities resulting in post-harvest losses and food insecurity. So, on the farmers' forum, we try to bring attention to authorities to make intervention where necessary within the agricultural value chain system. Thus, we campaign for the provision of essential services for farmers to assuage their vulnerabilities... (HOP)

From the in-depth interview with the HOP, it also became apparent that the station through its programmes especially the children's hour campaigns against the human rights violation against children. The study found that on the children's hour programme, issues such as domestic abuse, child labour, early child marriages, teenage pregnancies and school drop-out feature regularly in discussions as way of bringing to light the perpetrators of such acts.

The above findings are largely consistent with the stipulated guidelines relevant for championing the course of the vulnerable. For instance, the ILO (2017) posits that empowerment implies visibility, voice, better knowledge of rights and obligations, and often implies strong advocacy campaigns. Moreover, the advocacy role of Radio Upper West as a Public Service Broadcaster is in line with the UNDP's Bureau for Development Policy (2004) admonition to Public Service Broadcasters to provide a voice for the voiceless by promoting alternative views for the purpose of enabling and encouraging debate that is vital for the functioning of democracy. This means facilitating different groups' access to the media/airwaves through supporting local programme production on themes and subjects that are of importance to the poor and marginalized groups. Again, Radio Upper West's advocacy functions is in tandem with the UNDP's enjoyment to Public Service Broadcasters to facilitate discussion around national development/ poverty reduction plans, peace agreements, reconciliation/ dialogue processes.

4.1.3 Through socio economic empowerment

The theme of socio economic empowerment indicates that Radio Upper West as a Public Service Broadcaster seeks to develop among the vulnerable group the sense of autonomy and self-confidence to overcome societal barriers through programming and coverage. It is a crucial intervention by the station in giving the less powerful the power to act individually and collectively to change social relationships and the institutions and discourses that exclude them and keep them in poverty. The key indicators for the theme of socio economic empowerment are that Radio Upper West through its programming and coverage strives to give the vulnerable groups the platform to air their concerns through the discussion and phone in segments of all the six vulnerable related programmes. This theme is also indicated by the station's attempt to equip the vulnerable groups with alternative livelihood and basic employable skills through education and information. In other words, the objectives of the station's programming and coverage of the vulnerable by way of educating them on basic sources of livelihood, giving them representation and providing information on how to demand their rights informed the theme of socio economic empowerment.

Actually, it emerged from the in-depth interview with the HOP that –women's digest" is one key programme which aims at empowering women to confront all forms of marginalisation, inequality and discrimination in society. The study found that the –Women's Digest" is a radio magazine programme which is broadcast in Dagaare on Tuesdays from 9 pm to 10 pm. The HOP who doubles as the Producer elaborates further on the activities on the programme;

...The Women's Digest is a kind of feature programme with the focus on issues bordering on the development of women. In this part of the world, it's not been easy trying to achieve women's empowerment. The

difficulty comes from family, society, and even the mindset of women themselves. Regardless of the situation, we try to do more. So, Women's Digest exists primarily to empower women to resist domestic violence, male dominance... (HOP)

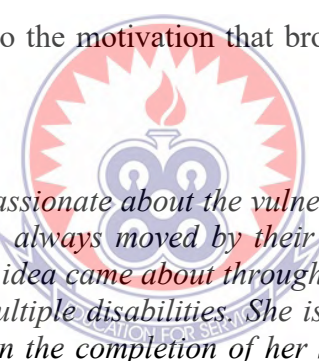
A document on some of the programme's schedules made available to the researcher revealed that the outline involves features on topical issues like outmoded cultural practices that impede the wellbeing of women, domestic violence, women in politics, women in agriculture and women source of livelihood. It was also discovered that as a magazine programme, "Women's Digest" is interlaced with education/information, entertainment through music, discussions and phone ins. She sheds more light;

...As magazine, this is a pre-recorded programme, normally we choose one contemporary issue and run them through the various segments. So, on the show itself, we play the produced item and activate the phone lines with 45 minutes into the programme for contributions from the public. The programme does not target just illiterate women but all in its entirety. For instance, if the topic borders on fertility issues, it's a general concern for women and not exclusive to the non-educated... (HOP)

The role of Women's Digest in empowering women is a step in the right direction as according to FAO-ILO (2010), in socio-economic terms, evidence shows that on a global scale, women are often disadvantaged in accessing productive assets and resources, including land, technologies, financial services and tools. In the case of Ghana, the World Bank and Government of Ghana's report (2012) detailing some of the social/ life cycle factors of vulnerability affirms that Women in Northern Ghana including those in the Upper West Region are compelled to farm on smaller and less desirable lands located in distant locations as land ownership especially farmlands is the preserve of native men. Essentially, the World Bank report reveals that women in the study area are usually absent both from traditional leadership and formal representation structures. They together with other vulnerable groups are widely

excluded from policy-making processes where decisions are made by public officials without consultation or involvement of local people.

Another programme run by Radio Upper West that reflects the theme of empowerment of the vulnerable is “disability not inability” broadcast in Dagaare from 12:00 pm to 1: 00 pm on Mondays. Analysis of documents revealed that the programme which is targeted at persons with disability aims towards stressing the point that disability is not inability. Also, it was realised from the interactions with the Acting Regional Director that the programme is a recent addition geared towards promoting the social inclusion of persons with disability by waging a campaign against stigmatization and discrimination associated with disabilities. The ARD provided more insights into the motivation that brought about the programme. He is quoted as saying;



...I'm personally passionate about the vulnerable, particularly persons with disability. I'm always moved by their plight. The programme is my brainchild. The idea came about through a female National Service Person who has multiple disabilities. She is with the Dagaare section of the station. Upon the completion of her service, she stayed on and we thought of engaging her by incorporating “Disability not Inability” into the station’s core programmes for the vulnerable... (ARD)

The move by the station to introduce a disability focused programme and going further to engage a disabled female as the host is one of the key indicators of the socio-economic empowerment theme of “I can do all things”. Significant to this study is an ILO finding which indicates that People with Disabilities (PWDs) account for an estimated 15 per cent of the world’s population and between 785 and 975 million of them are within the working age (15 years old or older). Most of these people, according to the Organisation live in developing countries where the informal economy employs a substantial proportion of the labour force. It reveals that due to

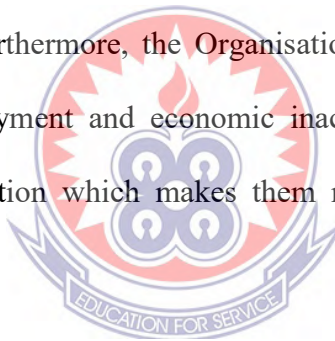
stigma, inaccessible environments and other societal barriers, people with disabilities have lower rates of participation in the labour force. In the case of the Upper West Region, the World Bank reveals that Disability is often perceived as ‘punishment by the gods’ for some ancestral offence. As a result, PWDs suffer stigmatization and prejudice not only at the community level but also within the household. The data gathered from the in-depth interview with the Acting Regional Director authenticates this assertion, which according to him inspired the need to promote the rights of PWDs through the ‘I can do all things’ programme. These were some of his words;

...I have observed that in this part of our country, persons with disability are the worst victims when it comes to human rights abuses. In the region they encounter many problems and are often subjected to stigma and discrimination. Because of their conditions, they are marginalized and poor. As a Public Service Broadcasting station, we have a major role to play by way of promoting their social inclusion, that’s what this programme seeks to do... (ARD)

After the researcher perused further documents detailing some of the programme’s schedules, it emerged that the one hour show has segments such as titbits, interview, discussions and phone ins. The study found out that the issues that emanate from the interviews which usually articulate the concerns of PWDs are dovetailed into the discussion segment. Again, it was discovered that the programme analyzes current affairs that are of essential concern to PWDs where experts’ opinions are usually sought on those subject matters. Furthermore, some of the programmes outline revealed that there are also special topics for discussions which usually center on awareness creation on the relevance of formal and vocational education to PWDs and their rehabilitation, disability and income generating activities. The ARD elaborated further the significance of these subject matters to the course of the vulnerable. He said;

...Because most families are unable to afford sending their children with disabilities to school, the children sometimes find themselves being used in begging to make money for their families. In this region, children with disability are sometimes trafficked to the cities for begging. We try to sensitize parents, especially those in the rural areas to the opportunities available for children with disabilities. The programme talks of access to basic education, rehabilitation and all that... (ARD)

The effort of using the programme to promote education and vocational trainings among PWDs is a useful pointer towards the empowerment of the disabled if the postulations of some studies are anything to go by (ILO, 2017; World Bank and Government of Ghana, 2012). For instance, the ILO (2107) report indicates that in terms of education, people with disabilities in rural areas are frequently excluded from basic education, therefore, do not meet the entry requirements for formal vocational training programmes. Furthermore, the Organisation reveals that PWDs experience higher rates of unemployment and economic inactivity and are at greater risk of insufficient social protection which makes them more likely to sink into extreme poverty.



From the data gathered through the in-depth interview with the HOP as well as document analysis on the programme line up of Radio Upper West, it was discovered that another vulnerable related programme being run by the station is ‘farmers’ forum’ which is referred to as ‘~~K~~uoriba Vuo’ in the local parlance. The study found out that this programme airs in Dagaare on every Saturday from 7pm to 8pm. The researcher was told that the programme aims at empowering the target audience mainly farmers on modern agricultural practices towards building their resilience against all forms of vulnerability associated with farming. Moreover, the HOP disclosed to the researcher during the in-depth interview that the over twenty year programme has been temporarily put on hold for the running of another agricultural

related programme under the auspices of Farm Radio International in conjunction with the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA). She provided further details on the project dubbed Green Leaf Magazine;

...The magazine programme comes in episodes with a variety of segments bordering on informative and educative topics. The ultimate aim is to educate farmers on modern farming practices, linkages and real life experiences. This programme has two senior staff including myself and other as the hosts with two producers who are non-staff... (HOP).

Moreover, the researcher learnt from some previous schedules that the Green Leaf programme has seven main segments: News, Let's get farming, Have your say, Digging deep, your weather, your markets and The partners' corner. The HOP detailed in a chronological manner, activities undertaken within each segment. She said;

...In all, we have six segments on the one-hour programme. The first segment is termed the Green Leaf News which brings farmers up to date about events or happenings in the region that may affect or interest them. The second segment is Let's Get Farming aimed at providing small scale farmers education about general best farming practices. We also have the Have your say which gives listeners the opportunity to ask questions or contribute to the discussion. The fourth segment is termed digging deep geared towards supporting listeners in taking up one or several specific practices that provide an attractive and realistic solution to a problem that farmers identify with... (HOP)

In addition, a document containing the programme's outline provides clearer insights into the last two segments of the show: *your weather, your market* where information is provided to farmers based on predicted weather and market opportunities to enable them to make better decisions as well as link them with buyers and all other actors in the value chain. The last on the agenda is the Partners Corner, a segment which presents commercial messages from the sponsors to help farmers learn about goods and services. One of the episodes made available to the researcher reveals some of the contents of the Green Leaf magazine programme. The focus of the episode in question

was education on soya bean cultivation and harvesting. Some of the core messages to be treated on the show as indicated by the outline are signs of maturity, time of harvesting (threshing, winnowing and drying).

This effort by the station and the collaborators can be seen as a direct response to the numerous challenges confronting smallholder farmers as identified by an ILO report (2014). The report projects an evidence of a high incidence of vulnerability among a large share of people often engaged in subsistence agriculture. The report adds that despite an increasing diversification of economic activities in rural areas, agriculture and its related activities remain the main source of livelihoods and employment, yet, the sector is riddled with challenges. Farming, particularly in the Savannah, as made known by the World Bank & Government of Ghana (2012) report is confronted with challenges, ranging from unfavourable weather conditions, poor access to roads and ready markets which go a long way to reinforce the poverty cycle of farmers. In the case of the Upper West Region, the joint research project by the World Bank and Government of Ghana on vulnerability and poverty in Northern Ghana (2012) reveals that effects of climate change such as erratic rainfall results in crop damage, low yields and acute food deficits, thereby, deepening the poverty level of farmers and compounding their vulnerability.

From the in-depth interview with the HOP, it emerged that the station has another programme for the vulnerable dubbed “Youth Focus” broadcast in English on Saturdays from 2pm to 3pm. The one hour programme aims to empower the youth on all aspects of life to make them useful citizens. The data from the in-depth interview with the HOP revealed that the “Youth Focus” programme comes in segments which are vox pops, discussions and phone ins. She sheds more light on the programme;

...As the programme exists basically for youth empowerment, we take into account issues pertinent to youth development. Most of the topics we treat on the programme revolve around current affairs. These issues are usually on youth unemployment, youth and peacebuilding, mental health, general health issues and road safety among others... (HOP)

The HOP added that in electioneering periods the programme introduces a segment dubbed –Accounting to the Youth” which provides the platform for political candidates particularly Parliamentarians to address the youth and allow questions from the audience on how their development agenda for the youth. She speaks more on the programme’s main structure.

...On the discussion segment, we first play a pre- recorded vox pop detailing the views of the youth on the subject matter, after which we seek the response of duty bearers particularly those under whose jurisdiction a given issue directly falls under. Then, usually we activate the phone lines for the public contribution by the 45th minute into the programme... (HOP).

She made further disclosures;

...Normally, paneling of the programme is determined by the sort of issues at hand. On a whole, we use lecturers, members of the youth parliament and mostly, duty bearers. The discussion segment lasts for 30 minutes and the major challenge is getting the rightful resource persons to empanel. As most of the persons we need to speak to are outside the region, we reach out to them via telephone... (HOP)

As the study found, the empowerment of the youth through –Youth Focus” is not out of touch for it has been established by the ILO (2017) that youth are sources of positive change and have a lot of potential but require a sustained investment as a target group in order to ensure they are given the proper tools to meet their productive potential. Nonetheless, evidence abounds that the youth constituting part of the vulnerable group also suffer high levels of deprivation and marginalisation (Elder et al., 2016). For instance, the ILO (2017) report observes that the limited access to education in rural areas means that potential labour productivity remains low.

Moreover, limited availability of stable and paid jobs, mean that rural young women and men work primarily in own-account work or in family establishments, as unpaid family workers. Again, Elder et al. (2016) report that vulnerable employment remains the dominant status of employment among rural youth both in agriculture and in the non-agricultural sector (with exceptions), and this situation can lead to a feeling of demotivation. Furthermore, the ILO (2017) posits that there is limited access to training on means to scale up small scale enterprises while agriculture remains a vulnerable venture, with no social protection, insurance for crop failure or finances to promote investment. As far as the study area is concerned, the report of a joint research project by the World Bank and Government of Ghana (2012) indicates that boys are frequently pulled out of school to hunt, work in the fields and pastures or help repair flood damaged walls. On the other hand, girls may be required to skip school in order to assist their mothers in the market, babysit at home, forage for shea nuts, scavenge for firewood, carry water for the arduous task of extracting shea butter or work as head porters in urban markets. Moreover, the report propounds that due to decades of economic under-investment and increasingly capricious rains, life in the savannah has become increasingly challenging. As a response, local youths are leaving in droves to seek work and solace in the more urbanized south, where prospects for work and income are perceived to be much brighter.

Furthermore, data from the in-depth interview with the HOP indicates that the station seeks the empowerment of children through the programme known as “Children’s Hour” which is broadcast in English on Saturdays from 8:30 am to 9:00am. It emerged from data that the programme has segments such as news of the child, and interviews with duty bearers, drama and poetry recitals. She elaborated further;

...This programme is also a pre-recorded one with about thirteen school children serving as producers under my guidance. As it concerns children, we try to involve pupils at the basic level, from primary to Junior High Schools. On news of the child segments, we scurf the media space to be abreast with issues concerning children. The news is then presented on the show by the children themselves... (HOP)

She divulged further information;

...For the drama segment, mostly pupils from the basic schools design brief but meaningful sketches on educative topics like the importance of eating balanced diet, exercising the body and hand washing with soap among others to educate their peers... (HOP)

Moreover, it emerged from the data on some of the programme's outlines is that resource persons normally feature on the programme to educate children on their rights as well as factors to consider when making a career choice. For instance, the researcher discovered that one of the shows had a legal practitioner who took the children through the topic "The Right of the Child". Again, one of the sessions, had a Counselor from the Ghana Education Counselling Unit, who had a discussion with the children on how to report sexual harassment at school and at home without fear or favour.

These segments as they appear ultimately empower the children to be in control to react to matters affecting them. There is sufficient evidence by the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (2014) to suggest that children in the Upper West Region are exposed to high levels of vulnerability in all sectors of society, be it cultural, political, education or economic. Indeed, a Baseline Research Report in 2014 by the Ministry's Child Protection, summarises the situation regarding violence, abuse and exploitation of children in the Upper West Region. The report highlights the cascading effects of these dimensions of vulnerability and how they combine to impede the wellbeing of children and women. According to the report, extended

families and communal responsibility for children is fast giving way to nuclear families in the region. In these circumstances, hardship, divorce and separation reduce the care and protection the child receives at home, thereby making the child vulnerable to harm. On outmoded cultural practices, the study reveals that though Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) was stopped several years ago, it still persists, mainly among the Wala, Dagaaba and Sissala ethnic groups. The study citing the Ghana Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) report (2011) discloses that the Upper West region has the highest rate of FGM in the country with two in five women aged fifteen to forty nine representing forty-one-point-one percent having some form of FGM, compared with the national percentage which is around four-point-zero.

For sexual exploitation, the baseline study noted that in some rural communities, teachers consider adolescent girls as their 'bush allowance' and sexually abuse them. The study also found that when these teachers defile and impregnate school girls, the teachers are simply transferred to another school or left unpunished. Such abuse often results in teenage pregnancies, abortions and sexually transmitted infections. Abused girls are often stigmatized in the community, which prevents families from obtaining community or institutional support and access to justice when they are dealing with such situations. In some cases, parents know about the abuse but do little to protect the children, because of the culture of impunity where perpetrators go unpunished.

Moreover, the baseline study revealed that most children from low income families are engaged in child labour in various forms to support the upkeep of their families. Girls and boys sell sachet water in markets and lorry parks, wash bowls in chop bars, sell alcoholic drinks in drinking spots, carry firewood and charcoal for long distances

to sell for money, and engage in hazardous work in illegal mining areas, dropping out of school, and sometimes sustain injuries that maim them for life. In the Upper West Region, Fulani children are marginalized and discriminated against. They are denied access to education and basic services which, coupled with their nomadic and pastoralist lifestyles, increases their vulnerability.

Altogether, the study identified the contents of the aforementioned programmes for the vulnerable by Radio Upper West to be educative and informative which ultimately result in empowerment and political inclusion of the marginalised. The effort at empowerment is realised through the objectives of the programmes which summarily seek to transition the vulnerable from a place of powerlessness to that of power. The opportunity given to them to express themselves through the discussion and phone in segments enables them to raise their voice and fight against injustice, exploitation, abuse, and violence done to them which would have been impossible without these programmes. In other words, Radio Upper West as a public service broadcaster through its programmes for the vulnerable, try to play the facilitating role of making the marginalized powerful to increase their self-esteem, to be assertive/ self-confident, to enable them to confront injustice and oppression.

Invariably, the empowerment of the vulnerable by Radio Upper West is a step in the right direction, because, for instance, the ILO (2017) upholds that with the aim of overcoming disadvantage conditions, socio-economic empowerment is the best approach as it involves processes of obtaining access to equal rights and opportunities for affected groups, either directly by them, or through the help of other people who share their own access to these opportunities to promote alternative views for the purpose of enabling and encouraging debate that is vital for the functioning of

democracy. This means facilitating different groups' access to the media/airwaves through supporting local programme production on themes and subjects that are of importance to for example poor and marginalized groups. The study found out that the platforms created through these programmes for the vulnerable to directly engage public service holders on issues of concern to a large extent, enable the less privileged to participate fully in the decision making process. Essentially, this leads to the promotion of accountability, participation, non-discrimination and empowerment, as enshrined in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and recommended by the European Commission on Human Rights (2011). The Commission advocates that the rights based approach to Public Service Media be based on human rights standards contained in, and principles derived from, international human rights instruments. Given this major finding, the study can conveniently conclude that Radio Upper West lives up to its mandate of promoting the welfare of the vulnerable in all spheres through the station's programming and coverage. The programmes and coverage of Radio Upper West thus conform to the principles of universal access and participation, for the fact that the station has programmes that address the diverse vulnerable groups and their peculiarities.

4.2 Research Question Two

What issues emerge from Radio Upper West's programming /coverage of the vulnerable?

The freedom of the media to perform their role is guaranteed by the 1992 Republican Constitution. The entire Chapter Twelve of the 1992 Constitution is dedicated to the independence of the media. As fourth estate of the realm and the watchdog of society, the media in general have a defined responsibility to meet: providing the citizenry with accurate and reliable information and holding public service holders

accountable and responsible. Consequently, the media constitute an important space within which such deliberation between the electorate and their elected representatives occur.

However, Anoff-Ntow (2016) argues that such conceptualisation of the media and their role in the democratic process is purely normative since in practice, their performance is contingent on the legislation and policies that create them and the practical conditions under which they operate. He asserts that the definition of Public Service Broadcasting (PSB) as a publicly owned and funded media institution, mandated to generate diverse programme content, especially for minorities, without being commercially minded should therefore be seen as an effort to create such a communicative space. Besides, scholars like Diedong (2016), posits that Public Service Media is the model that encourages access to and participation in public life—a meeting place, where all citizens are welcomed and considered equals. He indicates that the greatest hallmark of Public Service is the fact that it stands for education and the promotion values of national unity, patriotism, stability, tolerance and social justice.

Nonetheless, Political Economy Theorists seek to downplay the so called autonomy of the media by basically pointing out among other things social elites' use of economic power to exploit media institutions. Empirically, Nugroho et al. (2012) report from Indonesia that despite stories on how the media are rigorously making attempts to fulfill their democratic mandate, the general portrayal of minorities and the vulnerable seems to tell the opposite story. They posit that the poor access to the media has potentially bound the minorities in their attempts to strive for their rights: in exercising the freedom of religion, in terms of employment, in gaining education, in

receiving proper treatment in health and public service, amongst others. Having all these foretold stories in mind, this study sought to advance the argument by analysing how Radio Upper West as a Public Service Broadcaster with a unique mandate negotiates between the principles of PSB and the contending forces of the neoliberal logic of the market in championing the course of the vulnerable through programming and coverage. After a rigorous analysis of the gathered data through coding, various themes were identified as to how the dynamics of the media economy affect Radio Upper West's programming/coverage of the vulnerable. The themes were *navigating through technology, the impact of training and threat to the principle of universal access and participation*. These themes were explained using the Political Economy theory of the media.

4.2.1 Navigating through technology

The theme of navigating through technology indicates that Radio Upper West in its quest to live up to its normative mandate particularly in promoting the rights of the vulnerable is left to contend with the forces of technology. The key indicators of this theme are the adoption and use of modern soft wares in gathering and processing information on the vulnerable and the dependence on technology to cover the entire vulnerable population (geographical reach). As the in depth interviews with the ARD, HON and HOP revealed, technology is a key variables in the day to day affairs of the station in terms of the processes of content production and distribution. The identification of technology as a major resource to the operations of Radio Upper West ties into Katz and Wedell (1977) assertion that the factor that most determines the structure of broadcasting is technology. Indeed, studies have confirmed that the major leaps in communication and broadcasting technology have changed the way media content is produced, transmitted and consumed (Brautovic, 2009; Quinn,

2005). Using new technology and establishing a stronger regional presence with 10 FM stations in each regional capital, were some of the ways GBC responded to the new media landscape (Heath, 2001; Ghana Broadcasting Study, 2005). Both technologically and operationally, therefore, GBC was responding to the competition by adopting FM technology that ensured better audio quality while, at the same time, decentralizing some of its operational and editorial powers to the various regional offices which operated the FM stations.

Having been armed with this vital information, the Researcher enquired from the HON the ways and means by which technology is applied to facilitate the processes of information gathering and dissemination. These were some of his words;

...We have come a very long way in terms of our news sourcing and packaging, thus from the days of the typewriter to the fax machine and now the internet. As Regional News Staff, we have double responsibility to serve the regional FM station, our mother stations in Accra being Radio Ghana and GTV. The job is quite demanding but with the use of technology, we are able to meet bulletin deadlines... (HON)

In a bid to know more, the researcher sought from him the actual technological devices that the news staff made up of reporters, cameramen and sounds men frequently use in carrying out their duties. He disclosed that regarding news gathering in the case of radio, the staff usually relies on tape recorders and mobile phones to pick sound bites whereas for TV the main tool is the digital camera and in some cases smart phones with —open camera” settings. He is quoted as saying;

...Since the advent of mobile phones, the hustle of reporting from this part of the world has eased quite tremendously. In times past, it was daunting for us to do live reports due to limited access to telephone coupled with poor telephony services. Now when there are national events, we are also able to give timely reports through the national bulletin... (HON).

It was further revealed through the in depth interview that the news staff have in possession modern software that also helps them to process their news items in efficient manner. He made particular reference to the –Adobe Audition” purposely used for the editing of sound bites. This software according to him adds professional value and colour to news items because sound bites, when proficiently processed could add good ambience to the story and give it authenticity. For the purposes of clarification, the study sought to know the platforms through which radio news items are channeled for the final distribution. These were some of his words;

...Like I have said already, as Regional Correspondents serving both the region and national, we have different ways of channeling our stories. For instance, at the regional level, when the news is gathered and bulletin prepared, we present live from the studios to the nook and cranny of the region. In the case of Radio Ghana, we try to send the narration of the story through the national newsroom email address while the sound bites are sent via the newsroom WhatsApp line. We no longer fax our stories... (HON).

Bearing in mind that the regional news staff also report for TV coupled with the influence of technology to the media ecology as literature reveals, the study found it imperative to know the means through which the News Department deploy technology in their daily routine of news gathering. The HON disclosed that in terms of news gathering, the station is equipped with a digital Electronic Newsgathering camera and accessories. He is quoted as saying;

...We were fortunate in 2018 to receive one lighter digital electronic camera with microchips instead of tapes, together with the installation of a state of the art digital audio and video editing suites. This makes it faster and easier to gather and process news... (HON).

In addition to the acquisition of the above mentioned ultra-modern news gathering and procession equipment, the HON revealed in the in depth interview that Radio Upper West and for that matter the News Department has been provided with a backpack technology that is intended to aid outside broadcast coverage. He threw

more light on the workings of the back pack technology and how it complements efficiency;

...The back pack technology uses internet and was introduced to replace the massive Outside Broadcast (OB) van, which requires at least 14 crewmembers to function. For us in the regions, the idea is to enable us to contribute to the national news bulletins through live audiovisual feed from location. It makes newsgathering and delivery much faster and more interactive... (HON).

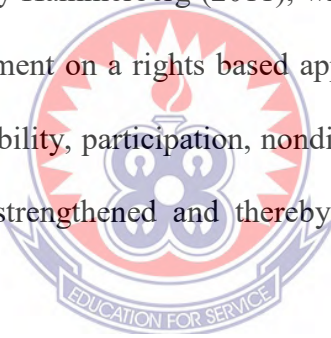
The scenarios painted above affirm the assertions that technology is a critical cog in the efficient running of the broadcasting industry. From the data gathered through the in depth interviews, it was evident that technology has a great impact on the operations of Radio Upper West with its implications on the vulnerable in terms of their access to information as well as the station's fulfillment of the PBS principle of universality and participation. Radio Upper West operates in a region classified as vulnerable in terms of economic, social and natural (Ghana Statistical Service, 2015; ILO, 2017; World Bank & Government of Ghana, 2012). For instance, the Ghana Statistical Service's Ghana Poverty Mapping Report (2015) estimates that the Upper West Region is the poorest in the country with a score of 70.7 percent. It is then clear that the operations of Radio Upper largely target a huge vulnerable population. In that regard, the adoption and use of technology for efficient coverage to a greater extent inure to the benefit of the vulnerable in the region. If the changing trends in the media spearheaded by technological advancement are anything to go by, then GBC's investment in technology can be said to be a step in the right direction. The investment in technology by GBC to enhance its operations must be seen as a direct heed to the caution by Anoff-Ntow (2016) that If PSB fails to adopt such new technologies to reinvent itself from content generation through to reception, it stands the chance of being asphyxiated due to its inability to navigate the technology jungle.

As studies have pointed out (Anoff-Ntow, 2016; Richerri, 2004), the emergence of technology, its adoption and advancement come with its own benefits and perils to PBS. This is because technological and economic convergence, when viewed together, present better opportunities in appreciating the politics of media as social, political and economic players (Skinner et al., 2005).

Consequently, GBC's deployment of modern technology to enhance its operations therefore, signals the Corporation's preparedness to meet the competition by expanding access and integrating its audience more into its programming through more local language use and interactive programming (Anoff-Ntow, 2016). It can also be interpreted as an effort by the station to position itself in changing how it gathered, and processed its content. All these have wider implications for the quality of service delivered to the vulnerable in so many ways. First of all, the adoption of such new technology goes a long way to benefit the vulnerable as Radio Upper West has enormous place for the marginalised in programming and coverage. It also compels the station to sit on its toes to better serve the vulnerable because there exist other media outlets which though are commercially inclined, might do what it is public service that Radio Upper West fails to do. In the in depth interview the HON provides more explanation as to how technology helps in coverage of the vulnerable. He said;

...We used to send our TV stories from Wa to Accra through public transport which mostly delayed our stories. Our coverage of current issues did not feature promptly on time as far the national bulletin is concerned. So, for example, if a district is cut off from the rest of the region due to flooding, it took days to be telecast on the national tv. For Radio Ghana, we could not meet the ready-to-go-bulletin as we needed to fax our reports. Just imagine the awkwardness with our version of a national event being shown on TV days long after they have taken place. Now, thanks to the technological platforms at our disposal we are able to stay current... (HON)

In all, the net effect of Radio Upper West's utilisation of technology in its operations is an efficient delivery of service including those targeted at the vulnerable and marginalised. It came to light that in times past, the voice of the vulnerable groups in the Upper West Region did not feature in the national news bulletins (Radio Ghana and GTV) due to the packaging process which was limited to faxing. As is the case now, the use of recording gadgets and modern means of transferring the news items from Upper West to national newsroom in Accra, make it possible for the vulnerable to be heard in their own voice. In the process of serving the vulnerable through technology and other useful means, Radio Upper West benefits by gaining the acceptance of the public for being seen as fulfilling its mandate. This finding is in tune with the prediction by Hammerberg (2011), who indicates that if Public Service Media base their development on a rights based approach - encompassing principles of human rights, accountability, participation, nondiscrimination and empowerment – their credibility will be strengthened and thereby enable them to act in the best interests of the public.



4.2.2 The impact of training

The theme of impact of training is an indication that training has a role to play in Radio Upper West's programming and coverage including those for the vulnerable. The key indicators of this theme were realised through the capacity of journalists to use technology, serve as sources of empowerment and advocates for the vulnerable. The indication is that Reporters and Programmes staff of Radio Upper West need training to be able to serve the vulnerable by first utilising technology, having the ability to detect what constitutes vulnerability and how to address it through advocacy and empowerment. Already, Brautovic (2009) has suggested that for digitalisation to be successful, the process must take care of editors, journalist and other personnel. He

posits that there must be a deliberate programme to train news professionals so they can function within the new environment. Brautovic (2009) indicates that the way to avert resistance from the news team is to provide adequate training for personnel. Quinn (2005) supports this position by indicating that for new technologies into newsrooms to be successful, media organisations need to train journalists to make their transition into using the new technology effective. Data from the in depth interview with the HON revealed that training impacts the operations of the station in two significant ways: professional delivery and the ability to manipulate technology. Nonetheless, he criticised training culture of the Corporation. He made these pronouncements;

...I can describe as appalling the training arrangement that usually accompanies the introduction of technologies in GBC. Mostly, such training programmes are often done after the technology has been introduced. And if they eventually come off, the focus is always on our colleagues in Accra. Most times, we take it upon ourselves to learn the new trends in technology. We do this so as not to lag behind... (HOP).

For her part, the HOP made known that programmes staff of the station per their job description do not receiving any form of training in modern ways of news gathering. She confessed that most Presenters of the station are still not familiar with even audio techniques such as the software for sound editing. According to her, in most cases, some of the programmes staff have had to rely on the benevolence of the Technicians at the station who accept to help albeit reluctantly. The implication for the vulnerable is that once the programme staff are deficient in modern use of technology due to inadequate training and or the lack of it, the free flow of information suffers, thereby undermining the rights to information. Besides, PSB are being tasked to lead the way in terms of technology to enhance public participation in programming (Anoff-Ntow, 2016; Diedong, 2016; Hammerberg, 2011). It must stand to reason therefore, that the

erratic nature or lack of in-house training deprives the news and programmes staff, the opportunity to imbibe the institution's culture of doing things which among other things include serving the vulnerable to the best of ability. This ultimately affects the capacity of journalists to be abreast of the trends in vulnerability and the ability to tackle them as the PSB principles mandate.

The above revelation of the lackadaisical approach towards Radio Upper West staff training has been foretold as literature points to erratic training opportunities for staff as a malady of an institutional culture plaguing the Ghanaian Public Service Broadcaster (Anoff-Ntow, 2016). For instance, some studies make known that besides economic and technology constraints, human resource constitutes one of the most telling weaknesses in GBC's operations (Heath, 2008; Karikari, 2012). Anoff-Ntow (2016) affirms that over time, as a result of high economic and time costs of training, as well as greater emphasis on academic qualifications for prospective recruits, GBC has slacked in its in-house training, resulting in a pool of people with formal education but very little professional competence to meet GBC's immediate institutional needs and culture. In the in depth interview, the HON and HOP disclosed that aside the occasional capacity building workshops organized by Civil Society Organisations and corporate bodies for media practitioners on developmental issues, in-house refresher training programmes for staff is nothing to write home about. He gives explanations as to how the almost non-existent in-house training regimes affect the work of the News Department. The HON said this;

...We need regular training to better serve our mandate because journalism isn't just about the mere possession of a professional or academic certificate. In our field for instance, you need to have the ability to speak universal grammar of broadcast language. So in the absence of an in-house training at the regional level on quality presentation skills taking into consideration pronunciation and

phonetics in general, we those in the regions find ourselves at a disadvantaged position... (HON).

The seeming lack of in-house training for staff of the station as revealed has a potential consequence on their daily demands as front line staff of the station. As a result, the researcher sought from the HON how the news staff are able to navigate through their duty in the face of the training deficits alluded to. He made these remarks;

...The norm in GBC here is that we have readers and non-readers. The readers are the ones who have acquired the skill of presentation through years of experience and practice. So when we put together a script be it for radio or TV, it is the responsibility of the readers to voice the report authored either by themselves or others who may be non-readers. Normally, when we voice our reports from the regions without the needed quality, they do not see the light of day. And this sometimes includes stories concerning the vulnerable... (HON).

The obvious lackluster approach towards training is referenced by Anoff-Ntow (2016), which cites a former Minister of Information in 2014 as pointing out that GBC is unable to generate the internal funds that will allow them to do comprehensive retraining of their people.

4.2.3 The threat to the principle of universal access and participation

Significant to this study is Murdock's (1997) set of interconnecting principles for contemporary Public Service Broadcasting: Universal availability – to preserve broadcasting against 'physical or material barriers to inclusion' and maximise its ability to engage and involve the full range of citizens; and Programme diversity – which, in addition to broadening the generic, aesthetic and cultural range of programming that is offered, ensures the representation of a diversity of interests, voices and perspectives. The implication is that all citizens whatever their social status or income must be on the same footing. Thus, Radio Upper West as a public

broadcaster is compelled to address the entire population of Upper West and avail itself to be used by the largest possible number including the marginalised through programming /coverage. The key indicator of the theme is that Radio Upper West in its programming/coverage of the vulnerable encounters challenges that threaten/undermine the principle of universal access and participation. Thus, the station in its operations has to grapple with the external forces identified by the political economy theory (Moscow, 2008).

Already, studies reviewed (Anoff-Ntow, 2016; Asare, 2016) indicate that the full realisation of this fundamental normative vision is seriously hampered by the forces of the market with key among them being the source of funding for programmes of public service character. The overall implication is not far-fetched as the issue of funding public broadcasting tends to be tied to how one funding type or another supports or undermines its editorial independence (Bagdikian, 1994; Blumler 1993; McChesney, 1999; Raboy, 1995). Whether such funding is derived from user fees by the public or through sponsorship and advertising sources from clients, goes a long way to affect a broadcaster's programming quality and diversity (Scannell, 1995). It is for this reason that Blumler (1993) itemises programme quality, diversity, and independence of programme sources from commercial influences as some of the values that are most at risk for public broadcasters within the competitive media ecology. Richerri (2004) contends that PSBs globally face the similar conundrum of high production cost and lower revenues through licenses; fragmentation of audiences due to digital technology, and the necessity to resort increasingly to advertising due to such audience fragmentation. Data from the in depth interviews as well as documents analysis of the dynamics of financial inflows, operational costs and its effect on news coverage and programming revealed that the quality and efficiency of Radio Upper

West operations including service to the vulnerable are undermined by the impact of high production cost and lower revenues through licenses, the fragmentation of audiences due to digital technology. As the study learnt, due to the almost struggle for survival, the station finds it a necessity to resort to advertising. Regarding the issue of lower revenue, the ARD said though the public is mandated by law to pay a monthly fee of partly three Ghana Cedis for one set of television and five Ghana Cedis as TV licenses, the station could go all year without receiving a penny in that regard. As a result, the station relies mainly on internally generated funds to carry out its operations. For confirmation, the study analysed a document detailing the source of funding for the station within the stipulated period of this study. The document as made available to the researcher had the following indications:

Table 2: Radio Upper West's source of funding

Revenue Source	Percentage
Spot adverts	56.5
Airtime sale	28
Announcement	21.5
Sponsorship	3
Impress	Undisclosed

Significantly, there was no percentage assigned to revenue from TV license fees. The ARD made further disclosures;

...I don't remember the last time we received any amount in the form of TV license. We survive on IGF from advertisements, social and commercial announcements as well as sale of spots. We need money for our core operations, without which we cannot function as a station... (ARD).

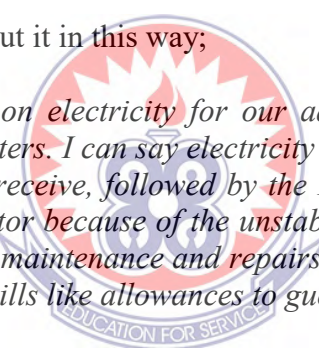
Having made these disclosures, the researcher sought from the Acting Regional Director whether aside the IGF, the station receives any form of financial support from the Headquarters for operations. He is quoted as saying;

...We receive impress from Accra but on a condition. The station has to meet a monthly minimum revenue target of Two Hundred and Fifty Thousand Cedis which is transferred to Accra before we are reimbursed with an impress which has a cap ceiling of eleven thousand Cedis. So, the higher we generate the guarantee for us getting the quoted figure... (ARD).

The ARD further disclosed that failure to raise the needed revenue within the stipulated period automatically deprives the station of any quantum of impress. As a result, they are left with no option than to pursue aggressive revenue mobilisation at the expense of programmes that are of public service and all inclusive. By implication, airtime and slots of programmes which have no sponsorship like –Children’s Hour”; Disability not Inability, –Women’s Digest; –Youth Focus” are mostly sold resulting in the postponement of the schedules. Anoff-Ntow (2016) contends that by arguing that with PBS sliding into raising more internally generated funds, generating socially relevant and public interest programs could most likely be affected in the process. More so, Blumler (1993) asserts that the strong pull of commercialisation, including sponsorship and advertising, has dire consequences on public service broadcasters’ programming and remit. He reckons that due to its effect on programming, advertising has often been seen as a problem, an implacable foe of programme diversity. Data from the in-depth interview with the HOP and documents analysis revealed that the thirty minutes spot for –Children’s Hour” on Saturdays is sometimes sold on to outsiders like herbalists and religious entities thereby causing frequent postponement of the programme. This to extent could be seen to explain why Blumler (1993) opined that coupled with its tendency to view its audience as consumers in the marketplace instead of engaged citizens, advertising and sponsorship –should be seen as an implacable foe to PSB because it imposes a hedonistic value on its programming” (411). Nonetheless, the study found out that

because advertising and sale of airtime tend to be tied to business cycles, in addition to affecting programme quality, they also inhibit programming planning and scheduling with those for the vulnerable not exempted. As far as these revelations are concerned, the study asserts that though, the place of the vulnerable exists at Radio Upper West, it is shaky and threads on a wobbling leg due to the uncertainties and dynamics of the market.

Aside the low revenues, data from the in depth interview with the ARD revealed that the impact of high cost of production remains the bane of the station and to a larger extent service to the vulnerable. He said as the station is compelled to depend on a meagre revenue base, its operations also come at a high cost leaving the station mostly cash strapped. He put it in this way;



...We spend a lot on electricity for our administrative work and to power our transmitters. I can say electricity alone takes more than half of the impress we receive, followed by the Diesel we buy to cater for the standby generator because of the unstable nature of power supply. We use the rest for maintenance and repairs, refurbishment, utility and other operational bills like allowances to guest artistes... (ARD).

The in depth interview further revealed that due to the suffocating nature of the cost of operations, programming and coverage of the vulnerable are adversely affected. For instance, it was revealed that the station though, has specific programmes allocated to the vulnerable, it is unable to extend its tentacles to cover all vulnerable groups as accordingly identified by literature. In this regard, the study discovered that vulnerable groups such as older people, persons with HIV and AIDS, migrants, do not have specific programmes that speak to their peculiarities except instances when such issues are giving a passing mention in the mainstream programmes. This deficit as the in depth interview revealed is owed to the rippling effect of high electricity consumption which forces the station to shut down at 11 pm instead of the stipulated

time of 12:30pm. Consequently, programming for the vulnerable has to be narrowed in that manner as new ones do not have space for airing. Aside from this, the participation of the vulnerable in the programmes meant for them leaves much to be desired. Analysis of documents made it evidently clear that the time of airing of programmes like ~~–Women’s Digest~~” which is at 9: 00 pm -10: 00 pm does not favour the womenfolk who are the target audience. These because majority of them are farmers and may potentially fall asleep before or during the broadcast. Besides, the married ones may not have the luxury to either walk into the studios or be able to call into the show to make contributions. The same applies to ~~–Farmers Forum~~ which is aired around 7: 00 pm -8: 00 pm for the first time and repeated on Sunday around 8: 00pm – 9 pm.

Moreover, the in-depth interview with the HOP gave some hints that as far as programmes for the vulnerable are concerned, ~~–Children’s Hour~~” remains the most vulnerable. The interview revealed that the programme has nothing like sponsorship nor budget, meaning, its production lies entirely in the bosom of the HOP who doubles as the lead producer. She had this to say;

...The children’s programme is very educative and important to the well-being of children. Unfortunately, it’s one that has a lot of challenges in terms of production. I use my own money in getting the programme produced. So, mostly, we have to repeat some of the previous edition or we decide to call it off entirely and play music instead. Even, when we are able to come out with something, the participants are always drawn from Wa, due to lack of finance... (HOP).

The unstable nature of the ~~–Children’s Hour~~” programme is not new in literature, as Blumler (1993) reports that in trying to stay competitive, PSB increasingly resembled its commercial counterparts in its programming, targeting a wider market share rather than audience reach. As Blumler (1993) reports, tried and tested programme formats

such as entertainment and reality shows increasingly replaced investigative reports due to the effects of such deregulation on its operations. He argues that as PSB was forced to cut back on children, documentary and investigative programming, it was renegeing on one of the pillars that supported its mandate: to create a public space for rigorous debate and facilitate the shaping of national dialogue. As the study observed, most of the vulnerable related programmes of Radio Upper West find themselves under this particular condition.

Further interactions with the HON and HOP brought to the fore that the only official vehicle belonging to the station has been grounded for more than two years without the needed funds to get it back on road. The HON provided explanation on how the breakdown of the station's vehicle impedes news coverage of the vulnerable:

...Since the breakdown of the office Pick up, our mobility has been limited and we cannot do anything meaningful without the means of transport. The problem is that we are unable to move to the interiors on our own to cover programmes because of the poor transportation system in the region. Most often, we are made to rely on the Regional Coordinating Council and event organizers to transport us to and fro assignments... (HOP).

Analysis of the news room assignment diary from the period under discussion revealed that many of the events covered by the news crew were for officialdom with the venues of such programmes mostly in Wa, the regional capital. In view of the fact that most of the vulnerable population reside in the rural areas and without having the needed resources to provide transport for the news crew to give them coverage, some of the pertinent issues bordering on their development are always put on the back burner. As far as facilitation of movement and programming are concerned, the HOP made these disclosures:

...In the absence of an official vehicle, we rely mostly on resource persons based in the Wa Municipality to do our programmes. Because of the challenge, we are not able to invite some of the vulnerable from

the hinterlands to help in the deliberations. When the Pick-up was around, we used to join the news crew on location to produce our programmes featuring the rural dwellers that are the vulnerable, now can't do our programmes outside Wa... (HOP)

Furthermore, analysis of the programmes schedules for the vulnerable revealed that most of these programmes go through a repetitive cycle with content of previous editions being re-visited. Even occasions where the contents are not repeated verbatim, topics for discussions turn out to be the ones already tackled. This is an indication that without enhanced mobility, programmes staff will not be able to pursue uncharted territories where as a result, programmes for the vulnerable will not be able to address vulnerability in its entirety. In view of the high impact of cost of production manifesting in the lack of funds to maintain the only vehicle limiting staff mobility coupled with the frequency with which the elite frequent the media space, it can be argued that the normative vision of universal access where all citizens are put on the same pedestal is defeated. From the studies reviewed (Hammerberg, 2011; Mudrock, 1997; UNDP, 2004; World Radio and Television Council, 2000) one of the key differentiations between PSB and its commercial counterparts is the unlimited access guaranteed the vulnerable and marginalised based on the principle of universal access and participation. In other words, vulnerable groups such as smallholder farmers, persons with disability and the likes cannot as in reality pay to be held in the commercial media, they should however be able to receive ample coverage through PSB. This rather proved not to be the case as the vulnerable are not able to call the shot in the station's programming/coverage. Given the situation Radio Upper West finds itself, it can be argued that stories concerning poor farmers in the remotest part of the region and victims of human rights abuse in the villages will remain untold. The reason is that journalists at the station are not able to comb the

entire region but over concentrate on the Wa, the regional capital due to mobility challenges.

The above enumerated operational challenges caused by the impact of high cost of production do not only threaten the principle of universal access and participation but also the survival of Radio Upper West as the only public service broadcaster in the region. As alluded to by (Richerri, 2004), PSB are as well living dangerously in view of the fragmentation of audiences championed by digital technology. The liberalisation of the airwaves has also come with media pluralism, implying abundance in channels availability. As Radio Upper West operates in an environment of media plurality, the relevance of the station seems to be questioned as evidenced by the poor showings in the collections of the mandated TV licenses. Gambaro (2004) was right when he pointed out that given the improvement of audio and video quality, amid the wider bouquet of programmes and the convenience of choice that subscribers enjoy, the relevance of PBS has been questioned in recent times. Again, Gambaro's (2004) assertion that the growth of the television market, increased competition and the diversification of suppliers have changed the environment of the old monopolist public broadcaster in a fast pace is vindicated by the media ecology of the Upper West Region. As the in depth interviews showed, with the influx of local FM stations and several Regional Correspondents purporting to be working for media outlets outside the region, Radio Upper West has ceased to be the star of attraction it used to be. The HON throws more light on the effects of audience fragmentation on operations:

...When the station was opened in the early 2000s, we were the only ones on board. As the official mouthpiece of the region, all communications be it public, social or civil got to the public domain through Radio Upper West. We used to generate sufficient revenue because we were highly visible. Now, there are more than eleven

Radio stations in Wa alone, all trying to mimic our programmes to steal our audience... (HON).

The share of audience with commercial stations resulting in revenue fluctuation largely means key programming operations, upon which the station's public service mandate is expressed, depend almost on the ups and downs of the market. This is further buttressed by the seeming limited number of sponsored programmes that exist on the station's grid of programmes as compared to spot advertising. The data from the station's programmes line up disclosed that out of the total number of 150 programmes run by the station, only four have sponsorship: –ADRA Farmers RACE”, –Time with the Wa Credit Cooperative Union (WACCU)” and the AGAMAL Malaria Control Programme. In an environment of stiff competition as admitted by the interviewees, the possibility of some of these sponsored programmes eluding Radio Upper West to other rival stations in the region is high. As the study found out, Radio Upper West stands the risks of imminent collapse if management does not devise strategies to beat down the bane of high cost of production in order to meet competitors boot for boot. The consequence of Radio Upper being run over by their commercial counterparts is amply highlighted in literature. In the opinion of Raboy (1996), the quality of media content is generally higher when the commercial broadcaster is mandated to provide some public service content to compliment the programming efforts of the PSB. Again, McChesney (1999) has warned that when PSB is conceptualised as complementary to commercial media, the overall output of the entire broadcasting system is far inferior because PSB tends to be viewed as marginal, consigned to generating programmes unlikely to attract advertisers and, therefore, operating at the periphery. It therefore stands to reason that with the forces of the environment in full swing culminating in Radio Upper West's dwindling

financial turn over, the station's programming and coverage of the vulnerable will continue to be at the periphery.

4.3 Research Question Three

What are the perspectives of Radio Upper West staff on their mandate towards the programming /coverage of the vulnerable?

Perspectives of Radio Upper West staff have to do with the views or thoughts of the key actors in the station's programming and coverage of the vulnerable. The process involves the gathering and processing of information which happens to be the direct output of departments of News and Programmes. Thus, it is appropriate to learn the experiences as well as gauge the professional commitment of these front liners by analysing their role in championing the course of the vulnerable as Public Service Broadcasters. It has been established in research question one the adherence to PSB principle of universal access and participation which serves to provide a place for the vulnerable in Radio Upper West's programming and coverage. Secondly, the research question two which focuses on the impact of the media economy on the programming and coverage of the vulnerable gives a fair idea from the point of view of management at the station as to how the principle of access and participation is threatened by the pull and push factors of the market. The research question three therefore seeks to explore the point of views of journalists on Radio Upper West's programming and coverage of the vulnerable. The study after a rigorous coding through repeated listening and transcription of audio recordings, came up with themes from the data gathered from the field through a focus group discussion with Reporters and Presenters of the station. The themes derived from the responses for this question are *forced to renege on responsibilities towards the vulnerable, service to the vulnerable is challenging and service to the vulnerable comes with varied sources of*

motivation. These themes were analysed with the aid of scholarly perspectives emanating from the Political Economy Theory of the Media.

4.3.1 Forced to renege on responsibilities towards the vulnerable

The UNDP's Bureau for Development Policy (2004) tasks public service broadcasters to ensure that marginalised and disempowered groups, made up of those with no political, economic influence or power, have access to information; provide a voice for the voiceless; facilitate discussion around national development/ poverty reduction plans, peace agreements, reconciliation/ dialogue processes. The key indicators of this theme are that journalists at Radio Upper West have other duties to perform aside from service to the vulnerable, they are constrained in performing duties towards the vulnerable and are able to do so occasionally.

In the course of the discussion, one point of view from journalists at Radio Upper West who mostly double as reporters and presenters is the fact that as gatherers and processors of information, they do not work in isolation but with the complements of others. They made known that per their mandate, they have the daily onerous duty of filling the air space with current information through programming whereas in news, they are expected to take charge of the regional bulletins as well as contribute frequently to the national bulletins of both radio and TV. Already, Gans (1979) has reckoned that the relationship between journalists and sources is mutual; sources seek access to journalists, and journalists seek access to source. Gans (1979), defines news sources as the actors whom journalists observe or interview and those who supply background information or story suggestions. Thus, in operational terms, news sources are defined as any source, human or institutional, with a stake in the outcome of the news produced as a result of information emanating from that source. The data

gathered from participants of the focus group discussion clearly points out that their main sources of information are government functionaries, local government authority, Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), corporate bodies, civil society organisations donors and influential personalities of society. This was how one participant put it when asked about their procurement of information as a raw material;

...As a journalist, my duty is to go searching for news and as it is, news don't grow on trees so we depend on sources. For me and like most of us, I cover activities of the Regional Coordinating Council a lot, and these assignments mostly cover the activities of the Regional Minister. Aside the RCC, we mostly cover the Assemblies too, especially their meetings and other decentralized activities... (FGD R3)

Data retrieved from the interaction with the journalists through the focus group discussion actually indicates that they all have a common source of information for the fact that they have a common cause to execute. As earlier revealed by FGD R3, the conversation proved that the Regional Minister who happens to be the Political Head of the Region is the center of attraction in terms of media coverage and programming followed by the other sectors and personalities already identified. As the regional representative of the president, the Regional Minister appears at almost every function be it public, social or commercial. Other entities come into the picture through the organization of events with an invitation to the media. Out of inquisition, the researcher enquired the nature of assignments most covered. One respondent chipped in the following;

...As our job demands, I have a network of source where I'm always prompted to be on standby for particular assignments. Mostly, I cover the opening ceremonies of workshops, the climax of activities like traditional festivals, anniversaries, national events like Independence Day, national best farmers' day and many others... (FGD R1)

These revelations to a greater extent lend support to Molotch et al., (1974) who argue that news is shaped by the groups in society that are powerful enough both to create what they call public events and to gain access to journalists. This pertinent finding also confirms Sigal's (1973) study which based on content analyses of the New York Times and the Washington Post over a twenty year period found out that almost 60% of the news in all stories came through routine channels, which are predominantly under source control. Considering the fact that none of the participants readily mentioned any vulnerable group in information sourcing, the researcher sought from them how and when they cover the vulnerable. One participant offered this explanation;

...We cover the vulnerable. You know, a greater part of the population in this region is vulnerable, so by extension, all our activities are around them. For instance, I mostly cover programmes involving Wa School for the Blind and School for the Deaf. At times too, I attend programmes pertaining to vulnerable groups such as women groups and the Ghana Federation of the Disabled. Most times, we have NGOs focusing much of their interventions on the vulnerable where we provide coverage.... (FGD R4)

Another participant offered a different insight;

...There comes a season where all our lenses are focused on the vulnerable, especially in times of disasters and crisis. Looking at the geographic nature of the region, most residents are prone to disasters such as floods and droughts. We also have the occasional outbreak of Cerebro Spinal Meningitis (CSM). In such situations, we bring to the attention of the world, the severity of the problem as well as help define the interventional role of duty bearers. We also speak to victims to know how they cope under such occurrences... (FGD R5)

It emerged from data that the journalists in sourcing information take into consideration the principles and values of news such as balancing, fairness, accuracy and objectivity vis a vis the newsworthiness of a given issue or an entity. Almost all the participants affirmed that in story attribution, they follow certain criteria to determine the structure. These are the views of one participant;

...One key thing that impacts my efforts at looking for information is accessibility to source. This is because no matter how determined you are to get to the bottom of a matter you will hit a wall if you do not have access to the material or the news maker. So, I mostly deal with sources that are always willing to divulge information by speaking to an issue... (FGD R2)

Another participant offered insights to the criteria used when planning gathering information. These were her pronouncements;

...The first thing I look out for is the quality of the source. For my programme to be interesting and captivating there is the need for the source to be articulate, trustworthy and credible. In this era of digitization, the quality of the soundbite matters a lot... (FGD R3)

The above revelations perfectly fit into Gans (1979) identification of the two criteria for sources that best meet the powerful elites which are availability and suitability. Gans (1979) contends that the powerful elites are most likely to meet the availability criterion through their power to attract journalists' attention as well as through their geographic and social proximity to journalists. They are also better placed to meet the suitability criterion due to their centrality in power systems. If so, this then largely explains why most of Radio Upper West's sources of information emanate from officialdom with activities mostly concentrated around Wa, the regional capital which serves as the place of abode for most of the elites and the journalists as well. In the end, with the vulnerable mostly living in outlandish area, coupled with the high levels of deprivation among them are unable to have easy access to the journalists as the elites do.

Again, Gans (1979) is vindicated to have asserted that routine reporting tends to support the tendency toward powerful elites as news sources which indicates that there is a strong relationship between the media and influential persons or entities. It was discovered that the main caveat available for the vulnerable to prominently

feature in routine sourcing is through the facilitation of the elite who in certain instances ride on the back of the vulnerable to have access to the media. For instance, when a disaster strikes and duty bearers embark on familiarization tours with media accompany, the vulnerable get featured because it is about them. Another scenario is when government functionaries make speeches on global activities such as World Autism Day, World Desertification Day and others. Per the data, the vulnerable basically assume prominence and become the focus of the media when they become victims of circumstances and or when the need to make speeches around such groups becomes imperative for the elite. This was the exact point Van Dijk (1988) sought to drum home, when he noted that news reflect economic, social, and ideological values in the reproduction of society through the media. His contention is that powerful and credible sources are used and quoted the most, especially leading politicians, state and city agencies, and representatives of organisations.

4.3.2 Service to the vulnerable is challenging

One dominant point of view from journalists at Radio Upper West that run through the data from the focus group discussion is the fact that programming and coverage of the vulnerable is a challenging task. The theme of challenging was arrived at using indicators like lack of access, stress, exposure to risks and ethical dilemmas of journalists in the course of promoting the vulnerable. These somehow appear to affirm the logic of Lipmann (1922) that despite the contribution of the media towards democratic gains the media's role has still not achieved what is expected of it, and that the 'creation of consent' still exists. Data from the participants revealed that their mandate to provide accurate and reliable information and holding duty bearers accountable is riddled with teething challenges. One area of concern that gained traction in the discussion is the issue of transportation. A participant lamented the

extent to which the lack of an official vehicle for the journalists and its attendant restriction in mobility affects the coverage of the vulnerable;

...As I have come to know, one of the biggest developmental challenges confronting this region is means of transportation. There are not enough good vehicles here and almost all the roads in deplorable conditions too, making travelling very difficult. So, we are unable to travel frequently to the hinterlands to work on the vulnerable, as majority of them are out of Wa... (FGD R5)

Another participant recounted how the situation undermines his commitment towards the vulnerable. He said;

...I wish I could do more for the vulnerable in terms of coverage because I always crave for exclusivity which officialdom don't provide. As of now, I don't have the resources to afford my own to trek around the region. Here, trotros don't work like in the south. Again the roads are not safe for motor riding, not to even talk about riding through the harsh weather conditions. Hence, my ability to satisfactorily cover the vulnerable is hampered... (FGD R1)

This position was re-echoed by another participant who expressed regret over his incapacity to serve the vulnerable to the best of ability. These were his words;

...We are not doing well with regard to highlighting issues of vulnerability. But it all boils down to logistical and financial constraints. As we speak today, most of our colleagues in other stations have their own vehicles purposely for criss crossing making them to have a bit of advantage over us in terms of the benefits of easy mobility... (FGD R2)

Moreover, the researcher was informed by the participants that coverage of the vulnerable also comes with enormous risks in view of the lack of transportation and having to trek long distances to gather information about the vulnerable. As a result, coverage of the vulnerable largely hinges on the convenience of the journalists. On the risk factor associated with the coverage of the vulnerable, one participant offered insights into the other side of the coin. She made these disclosures;

...Everything about the vulnerable is risky, as I have come to know. First of all, you are not guaranteed the chances of the item being used by the Editor as they alone have that discretion. So imagine going

through the entire story, and the Editor for reasons best known to him or her finds it necessary to discard the story, it becomes an effort in futility... (FGD R5)

The operational challenges as identified by the participants appear to evoke a certain degree of guilt among the journalists for the seeming shirking of responsibility towards the vulnerable. This is the situation Diedong (2016) explains as the dilemma of journalists for the fact that they cannot completely cut with these powerful sources, thus, if they really want to maintain their jobs. It emerged from the discussion that due to the lack of official vehicle for the station and other logistical constraints, the journalists have to depend on external sources to transport them outside Wa to carry out their duties. The problem as revealed by the participants impedes self-initiated stories, hence, the seeming over reliance on routine sources which feature more of the elites than the vulnerable. As Molotch and Lester (1974) have suggested, non-routine news is different because it stands little chance of being twisted in favour of powerful sources. This then explains why there is abundant evidence of persistent human rights violation in the region as the journalists due to logistical challenges are unable to adequately venture into investigative reporting which could have helped stem the tide. If these revelations are anything to go by, then Berkowitz (1987) is justified in his assertion that media organisations, especially public media sources due to resources constraints and in a bid to be economical as possible in the process of gathering news, easily grasp such cheap information sources. This is the exact situation in which journalists at Radio Upper West find themselves.

The consequences of the above development have long been warned by Diedong (2016) who maintains that the continuous reliance on governmental and other elite sources necessarily limits the diversity of information available to the public. On another leg, it can be deduced that the mobility challenge affecting journalists of

Radio Upper West is the direct result of the entrenchment and persistence of the high levels of vulnerability in the Upper West region as literature portrays. The mere admission of exchange of resources between duty bearers and journalists also gives cause for concern. This is because Ansah (1996) upholds that it is the function of the media to monitor, scrutinize, and provide a running commentary on the government and duty bearers. Indeed, Ansah (1996) argues that for journalists to be able to ferret out information for the public, it is helpful if the relations between journalists and politicians are characterised by a reasonable amount of tension, suspicion, and uneasiness. However, in situations where journalists and politicians start patting each other on the back, it is a sure sign that there is something basically wrong somewhere, and the media is likely to be guilty of dereliction of duty (Ansah, 1996).

Aside the issue of transportation challenges, it emerged from the focus group discussion that one very aspect that the journalists find it most challenging is the utilisation of technology, particularly when it comes to covering the vulnerable outside Wa. Almost all the participants mentioned the difficulty in assessing mobile network to send timely and accurate information from the remotest part of the region.

This is how one participant articulated the challenge;

...By the nature of this region, majority of the people who are vulnerable live outside Wa. In most of these communities, there are no mobile network services meaning no access to the internet. When we go on such locations, it is difficult reporting live. The pain is that most often, particularly during national events which impose the need for regional balance, we are left out of the bulletin until a subsequent edition when the information has become staled... (FGD R3)

In furtherance, another participant highlighted how the challenge of poor mobile networks inhibits efficiency and output towards the vulnerable. These are his words;

...In communities closer to Burkina Faso, the dominant networks there are usually the ones in Burkina Faso. When you are within such geographical locations, you receive text messages from Burkinabe

telecommunication networks, welcoming you to Burkina. This makes service rates expensive as even reception of a mere call comes with charges. As a result, we normally don't file such stories from location, which to me affects timely and prompt representation of the vulnerable in our bulletins... (FGD R1)

The challenge in using technology to drive efficiency as admitted by the journalists is well highlighted in literature (Brautovic, 2009; Nugroho, 2012; Quinn, 2005). . Notwithstanding the celebratory arguments in favour of the empowering value of technology, scholars like Curran (2012) and Sunstein (2001) have argued that access to the technology did not automatically translate into effective use. They maintain that although the technology has promise, it stood the chance of being captured by corporate interests in just the same way as it had done with previous technologies. They point out too, that access to the technology was difficult for some people in some parts of the world, and the competence to use it effectively in itself could serve as a barrier to effective and democratic use. They contend that differences in language, social, cultural, political and economic conditions of users are some of the constraints that can keep people disempowered, as well as create deliberative enclaves.

4.3.3 Service to the vulnerable comes with varied sources of motivation

The theme of varied source of motivation means that journalists at Radio Upper West, in their line of duties as vanguards of education, information and entertainment are influenced by certain conditions which propel them to give of their best or worse. The indicators of this theme are that journalists at Radio Upper West have political, economic and social motivations which drive them to serve the vulnerable either efficiently or inefficiently.

In fact, Weaver (1994) reports that, journalists have other reasons besides perceived freedom and job satisfaction of which unattractiveness of other jobs could be like a likely consideration. The discussion therefore confirmed that indeed journalists have motivations for what they do. In terms of political factors, one participant told the researcher that the need to be motivated by political demands is not negotiable as a public service broadcaster serving as the mouthpiece of the region. He explained eloquently;

...When an issue borders governance, no matter the working conditions I find myself at the time, I have no excuse to slack as a regional correspondent. So when it's about the Regional Minister or any of the political figures, I'm obliged and motivated to do my best so as to avoid any queries... (FGD R4)

Another participant gave reasons why she finds motivation in political matters;

...As a journalist, I have a major role to play in the democratic development of the country, how I will be able to contribute my quota if I'm not motivated in that regard. So I'm always poised when issues of politics come about, because I believe it's a critical area where I can help champion the course of accountability and transparency... (FGD R5)

Also, it emerged from data that, apart from the non-negotiable responsibility to report on political matters, journalists are equally enticed and motivated to serve the political class in view of the benefits associated with such a course. One participant elaborated this point animatedly;

...As a Public Servant, my job is cut out for me, be in the performance of duty, I get acknowledged and that motivates me a lot. For instance, due to the seriousness I attach to my work, I'm well known to officials who in turn help me to stay connected. I don't find much trouble looking for help when it comes to protocol consideration and all these help me to serve better... (FGD R2)

From these revelations what stood out clearly is that the political motivation of the journalists at Radio Upper West is more or less driven by the imperativeness to appease the political class. It also came to light that the mandate to hold public

officials accountable does not appear to be enough motivational grounds which apparently might be due to the socio economic conditions which make it almost impossible for both the media and the vulnerable to attract each other. This finding lends credence to the assertion by Castells (2009) that (real) power in the society is communication power. In other words, Castells (2009) seeks to emphasise the point that those who control the medium will clearly have the power to control the content and value; hence the media has become an arena for power struggles. Again, it affirms Nugroho et al. (2012) observation that as the minorities possess very little, if any, power to convey the messages to the other citizens at large, their voices will remain ineffectual and they will become second class citizens who are barely active in civic engagements.

In economic terms, data retrieved from the focus group discussion indicates that almost all the journalists are motivated by economic factors. In the sense that together with their monthly salary, they are motivated by external monetary inflows which they deem very crucial and necessary. When it comes to economic influence on the performance of African journalists, a lot of issues abound in data (African Communication Research, 2010). Most crucially to the topic is the fact that most of the studies accuse African journalists of bribery and corruption under a term known as ‘brown envelope’ journalism. For instance, the African Communication Research (2010) reports that in Tanzania, for example, it is customary for reporters to queue up and sign a form to receive a sitting fee from the event organizers. According to Diedong (2016), in Ghana, the preferred term is ‘-soli’ which is derived from solidarity, denoting that the source has some sort of sympathy with the despairing situation of the journalist and therefore wants to extend a helping hand which can also strengthen the ties between the two parties (Hasty, 2005). Having these revelations in

mind, the study sought to find out the experiences of the Public Service broadcasters on the phenomenon of ‘brown envelope’ and how its dynamics affect their professional commitment and what it portends for the vulnerable and marginalised. Almost all the participants admitted knowledge of the term *soli* and how it operates on the media landscape. This is the perspective of one of the participants;

...Soli is a major issue in the media fraternity, even student journalists who have not been on any practical attachment before might have come across the word in one way or the other. It is a huge motivation factor considering the stress we have to go through to get a story done. Sometimes, you leave in the house as early as 5 am and return late in the night just to cover a programme. So you can imagine the disappointment that we go through when we are not giving anything... (FGD R1)

Another participant threw more light on the practice and its motivational effect. These are his pronouncements;

...This is money given to journalists to appreciate their time and service. So far example, if I'm invited to a programme, that is time that I could have perhaps used to pursue my own agenda. More so is the risks and inconveniences involved in having to travel several kilometers outside Wa, so at the end of the day, the organizer gives you something to compensate the time lost, I don't think it necessarily influences your professional judgment but as a source of motivation... (FGD R3)

Data from the discussion that all the participants seem to be in agreement that the exchange of money is a mere handshake in appreciation to the journalists hustle and not a decoy to change an outcome. From the discussion, it became apparent that ‘*soli*’ is a nomenclature that resonates well among the journalists with an indication of its continuous evolution. The researcher was provided instances where the ‘*reward*’ is given and means of its collection. These are the articulations of one participant;

...This job, comes with a lot of stress as we always ran around even on holidays, so if once a while we get the chance to party, it motivates us a lot, like when the RCC and other institutions organize press soiree for us, it provides a lot of motivation knowing too well that your efforts are being recognised... (FGD R4)

She further elaborated reasons why she finds press soirees as one key source of motivation;

...Press soirees are moments when as journalists, we come face to with duty bearers to exchange ideas on a particular discourse within a given period. So, like in the case of the RCC, it is common for journalists to be feted with food and drinks, after listening to speeches and making contributions, we queue up, sign a sheet and take home an envelope. Such occasions, you are motivated to even write or report more than necessary... (FDG R4)

The treatment meted out to journalists including the Public Service Broadcasters as revealed by the respondent is what Hasty, (2005) describes as ‘item 13’ where according to him, refreshments and other freebies are offered at the end of an official event. Hasty (2005) explains the term to mean the last (and rewarding) issue on the agenda of the meeting. The above revelation validates Molotch et al. (1974) argument that news is shaped by the groups in society that are powerful enough both to create what they call ‘public events’ and to gain access to journalists. In the case of journalists at Radio Upper West one key source of motivation is to dine and wine with the elite through press soirees where the ritual of speeches is repeated. It also affirms Diedong (2016) assertion that Public Relations and Information Officers working within state and non-governmental organisations, which provide the media with the bulk of their information, seek to realize the aims and objectives of their organisations through the sort of information given to the public. Again it proves Diedong (2016) right when he assumed that news sources, especially the powerful ones, more often than not try to win the favour of journalists in framing stories that best suit their interests, particularly in meeting organisational goals.

As literature indicates, the phenomenon of ‘brown envelopes’, though dwells on a similar philosophy, it comes in different forms and shapes across countries within Africa with varied terms giving it (African Communication afr. For instance, Berhanu

and Skjerdal (2009) report that in Ethiopia, brown envelopes are more commonly referred to as “buche”, which is derived from Amharic “bucheka” meaning “snatching something”. Furthermore, they reveal that reporting places where brown envelopes do not exist are known in Ethiopia as “derek tabiya”, literally meaning “dry location”, so as to imply that going there does not bring any substance for the journalist. With some of these African perspectives featuring in the discussion, the respondents shared their views on having to report from “dry location” as it pertains in the Ethiopian case. These are the views of a respondent;

...Here, reporting from locations that do not come with soli or any economic benefit is known among journalists as communal labour, because it is basically voluntary. When you are assigned to such locations continuously, you might even think the editor has an issue because it is more or less seen as a punishment. Most reporters can easily feign sickness when they anticipate an assignment to be a communal labour... (FGD R1)

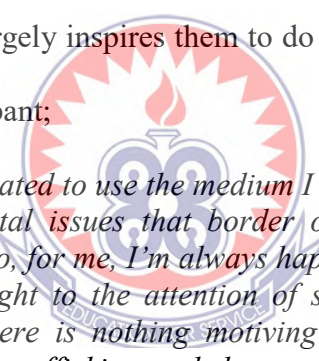
As a confirmation, another participant revealed that by virtue of experience, journalists are able to detect the assignments that come with loftiness and others that are dry. He offered this explanation;

...Most times, when I'm on assignment, I psyche up myself for anything untoward, because I have grown to know that in journalism, the higher your expectation the greater your disappointment, so I don't expect much when I attend programmes involving the vulnerable, because on such locations you even be compelled to give out your own money mostly through fundraising sections on programmes agenda... (FDG R2)

The danger about the above disclosures lies in Diedong's (2016) argument that the power of journalists to behave extremely selectively towards persons and events, previous judgments, and the consequence of previous decisions can undermine their professional credibility. Thus, with the admission by the journalists that they deem reporting from areas without personal benefits as “dry location” and communal labour, the consequences for the vulnerable group is glaring as by their political, socio

economic conditions do not have the resources to refresh the journalists if they are to access their services, an evidence that the principle of the “payer calling the tune” is not banished.

Moreover, data from the discussion reveals that journalists at Radio Upper West find motivation to do their best when it comes to issues related to society which to some extent reflect their professional values. It became apparent that as members of society, journalists at Radio Upper West strive to reflect and represent society by highlighting the pertinent societal issues such as outmoded cultural practices, teenage pregnancy, early and forced marriage among others. The data retrieved indicates that issues of such society which normally concern the vulnerable are of premium priority to some of the journalists which largely inspires them to do more in that regard. These are the postulations of one participant;



...I'm always motivated to use the medium I have to bring to light some of the developmental issues that border on negative practices that impede progress. So, for me, I'm always happy when through my work, a problem is brought to the attention of stakeholders and solutions found to them. There is nothing motivating to me than for instance, reporting on child trafficking and the perpetuation of female genital mutilation, especially, when I find such information to be credible and worth pursuing... (FGD R1)

Another participant shed light on instances when she is motivated socially;

...Most of the time, I'm encouraged to help people with serious health conditions and require the support of the public for medical expenses. As voice or the voiceless, I'm always touched and moved by such situations to help put smile on the faces of the needy. Giving my all to help alleviate the plight of others is an innate passion I don't renege on... (FGD R5)

Moreover, the researcher was told at the focus group discussion that the journalists value societal recognition in the form of award nomination and the ultimate winning. Thus, in pursuit of those professional dreams, they are motivated to go all out in

chasing a particular developmental story, they find to be a potential award winning one. It came also to light that some of the journalists are motivated to push for societal interests as a way of setting example for others to follow. This is how one participant articulated this point;

...As Public Service Broadcasters, it's incumbent for us to set the standards in terms of our role as agent of socialization and development. If we fail to lead the way, professional standards will fall as most of the guys in the industry look up to us. So, credibility and integrity are very crucial in our work, hence, I carry out my duties with diligence in order not to erode the confidence reposed in me as a senior broadcaster... (FGD R2)

The finding regarding journalists' at Radio Upper West motivation in setting the professional standards reflects another characteristic of Public Service Broadcasting. Article 19, an International Civil Society Organisation with expertise in international public service broadcasting standards, reckons that the absence of commercial pressure must encourage PSB to ensure a higher standard of journalism which raises the bar for all journalists. The Organisation maintains that even in the presence of a commercial broadcast system, Public Service Broadcasting can set the standard for professional journalism and other programming partially because it is freed from purely commercial imperatives which might sacrifice public service for profit and degrade journalistic performance. In the case of journalists at Radio Upper West, though, they work under depressing challenges, they remain conscious of the need to be exemplary in setting the pace for professional standards.

In all, the theme of *service to the vulnerable comes with varied sources of motivation* explains that journalists at Radio Upper West have a mandate towards the vulnerable as public service broadcasters, but seek to fulfill their duty out of varied sources of motivation. First of all, they have the motivation to work for the vulnerable, if the nature of coverage has political undertones. Thus, if the coverage of the vulnerable

involves a political figure, the action of the journalists could be interpreted politically with its attendant sanctions or rewards. As the findings portray, if coverage has to do with economic benefits, journalists at Radio Upper West will go the extra mile to give off their best in assurance of having monetary rewards. For this, it does not matter their limitations, the vulnerable would be covered. The study also established that journalists see themselves as social beings. As such, they try to work for the good of society by reporting on negative societal practices which impede the wellbeing of the vulnerable. Apart from this, they sometimes make effort to go every length to cover the vulnerable so as to have good standings in society for doing the extra ordinary. When the journalists are able to get a scoop out of vulnerable related stories, they are recognised by way of personal honour and awards which serve as motivation.

4.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter encapsulates the findings and analysis of the research questions for the study. The gathered data on the three research questions were critically explained, described and analyzed through the lenses of the principles of Public Service Broadcasting and the Political Economy Theory of the Media. The first research question, which sought to examine how Radio Upper West serves the vulnerable in programming and coverage revealed three main themes; diversified programming for the vulnerable; through advocacy; socio-economic-empowerment. With regard to research questions two (2) and three (3), a total of six (6) themes were analysed and discussed. That is, research question two had three themes; navigating through technology; the impact of training; the threat to the principle of universal access and participation. Research question three (3) also had three themes; forced to renege on mandate towards the vulnerable; service to the vulnerable is challenging; service to the vulnerable has varied sources of motivation.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter entails the summary and conclusions drawn from the study which aimed at examining Radio Upper West's service to the vulnerable through programming/coverage to determine the station's conformity to the principles of Public Service Broadcasting within the period of May, 2019 to October 2019. It further analysed the underlying factors that influence the operations of Radio Upper and how it affects the station's programming/coverage of the vulnerable. The chapter also provides a discussion of the limitations of the research study and offers recommendations for future studies in this area.

5.1 Summary

The preceding chapters (One, Two and Four) of this study have demonstrated that Public Service Broadcasting all over the world are going through various transformations which in effect affect their mandate and impact operations. Scholars have attributed some of these changes to the forces associated with the neo liberal market, advancement in technology resulting in multiplicity of media outlets and low revenue mobilisation through the collection of TV license. It has also been established that Public Service Broadcasters globally, face similar challenges but their impact on operations are different and context specific. The background to this research study is that Radio Upper West operating as a Public Service Broadcaster is not immune to the changes in the industry but may have a different and unique account to present in terms of programming/coverage of the vulnerable.

Given the above background, the study sought to examine the place of the vulnerable in Public Service Broadcasting programming/coverage using GBC's Radio Upper West as a case study. It evaluated the station's adherence to the PSB principles of universal access and diversity in programming and coverage. It also analyses the dynamics of the political economy and its impact on the operations of Radio Upper West. Again, the research analyses the perspectives of journalists at Radio Upper West on their mandate towards the vulnerable.

In order for the research to actualise its objectives, three major research questions were posed;

1. How does GBC's Radio Upper West programming/coverage serve the vulnerable in the catchment area?
2. What issues emerge from Radio Upper West's programming/coverage of the vulnerable?
3. What are the perspectives of Radio Upper West Journalists on their mandate towards the vulnerable?

Also, there was an extensive review of literature which served as the foundations upon which the findings of this research were critically analysed. The reviewed literature were organised under concepts such as the evolution of public service ideals; principles of PSB and their implications for Radio Upper West; vulnerability as a concept. These reviews apart from helping the researcher to familiarise with what has been explored in literature in the area of study also enabled him to identify the lacunae in the research area. This knowledge guided the researcher to construct the focus of this research in order to make it relevant to literature. The research

furthermore, identified and utilised the Political Economy Theory of the Media which assisted the researcher to explain and make sense out of the data gathered.

The research approach and design for this study were qualitative (Creswell, 2014) and Case Study (Yin, 2009) respectively. These gave the researcher chance to assess the place of the vulnerable in Radio Upper West programming/coverage of the vulnerable and also allowed him to have a deeper understanding of the meaning journalists at the station ascribed to the phenomenon in its natural setting. Radio Upper West as well as the participants of the study were selected using the purposive sampling technique (Creswell & Clark, 2011). Data was drawn from multiple sources, specifically through qualitative in-depth interviews, document analysis and focus group discussion.

Employing in-depth interviews and focus group discussion, the researcher engaged eight participants (three for in-depth interviews and five for one focus group discussions). Also, the document analysis focused on the programme line up and schedules of Radio Upper West, reporters' diary and sources of financial inflow within the period of study. Finally, to describe the data in a comprehensive and elaborate manner, thematic analysis was employed (Smith and Firth, 2011)

From the thematic analysis of data through in-depth interviews and focus group discussion, the researcher came up with nine themes to answer the three research questions. The themes that answered the first research questions were *diversified programmes for the vulnerable, through advocacy and through socio empowerment*. Research question two had responses through the themes of *navigating through technology, impact of training and the threat to the principle of diversity and universal access*. Finally, themes like *forced to renege on responsibilities towards the*

vulnerable, service to the vulnerable is challenging and service to the vulnerable has varied sources of motivation answered research question three.

5.2 Main Findings and Conclusions

After analysing the gathered data, the key findings from the data led to several findings. As noted above, the research sought to answer three research questions. In realising research objective one which was to examine the ways by which Radio Upper West programming/coverage serve the vulnerable in the catchment area, it was discovered that the station's programming/coverage of the vulnerable is knitted along the PSB principles of universality and diversity (World Radio & Television 2000). On the other hand, the themes of advocacy and socio economic empowerment that run through all the station's programmes for the vulnerable fall under the underpinnings of the International Labour Organisation (2017).

The second objective which sought to analyse the issues that emerge from Radio Upper West's programming and coverage of the vulnerable established that the station nevertheless the conscious efforts to live up to its PSB mandate is bedeviled with operational challenges, resulting in inefficiency. The data gathered under this research objective is in direct affirmation to the assertion by Richerri (2004) that the global Public Service Broadcasting community faces the similar conundrum of high production cost and lower revenues through licenses; fragmentation of audiences due to digital technology, and the necessity to resort increasingly to advertising due to such audience fragmentation. Essentially, this observation is summed up in the themes like navigating through technology, impact of training and the threat to the principle of diversity and universal access.

The findings of the third research objective revealed that journalists at Radio West have different motivational factors in terms of their mandate towards the vulnerable. The data showed that their commitment to the vulnerable is driven by a myriad of factors influenced by the Political economy of the media. It emerged from data that the source of information represents one of the most formidable challenges as far as service delivery to the vulnerable matters. On the other hand, it was discovered that Journalists at Radio Upper West have varied sources of motivation which basically hinge on socio, economic and political considerations.

5.3 Limitations of the Study

The first and foremost limitation of this study is the fact that it focused on one single case study. Consequently, the findings of this research cannot readily be extrapolated to mean same to other Public Service Broadcasters and their operations. Any attempt to extrapolate the findings would be to ignore the large variation between Public Service Broadcasters in terms of their geographical location, mode of funding and the prevailing democratic culture of countries where PSB is practiced. More so, Raboy (1995) has argued that while the problems confronting media and Public Service Broadcasting in particular are global in nature, their prescriptions are often context-specific and vary from one society to another. Hence, the findings of this research do not represent them all.

Another limitation has to do with time allotted for this research. The period within which this research was conducted did not allow the researcher to increase the number of participants for the in depth interviews and the focus group discussion or even employ observation as a method of data collection at Radio Upper West.

However, these limitations did not take away the credibility of the study, as it provides legitimacy for further studies.

5.4 Recommendations for Industry

The following recommendations are made based on the research questions and objectives, findings, discussions and conclusions of the research in the area of Public Service Broadcasting programming/coverage of the vulnerable.

Findings from the study confirm the assertion that the mass media irrespective of their normative aspirations are somehow vulnerable due to the effects of the political economy which make them serve the interest of the elite to the detriment of societal good. The study therefore recommends to Public Service Broadcasters to be innovative in their approach towards revenue inflows to reflect in the quality of programming. As Hammerberg (2011) suggests, PSB will gain more credibility by leading the charge towards issues on human rights. By this, PSB could dedicate part of their revenue to strengthening their programming/coverage of the vulnerable.

Again, management of PSB should take the training of journalists seriously to engender professional delivery. Such training must be geared towards workshops on the mandate of PSB journalists especially in the area of human rights, presentation skills and technology adoption.

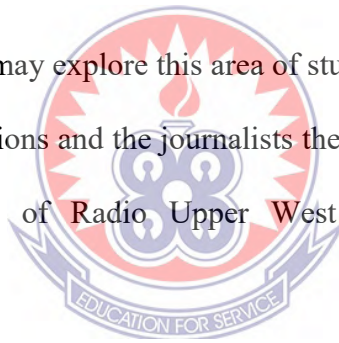
Also, management of PBS must provide enabling environment for their journalists to do more of non- routine coverage with the focus on the vulnerable. When such conditions are provided, staff promotion and attendant rewards should be based on meritorious service to the vulnerable through programming/coverage. This the study

believes when done, will go a long way to give true meaning to the Public Service Broadcasting accolade as the voice for the voiceless.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Research

The study suggests that future researchers can follow-up this work by doing a multiple case study in order to draw out the similarities and differences in the way normative principles are adhered to in relation with programming and coverage of the vulnerable. For instance, a future study may carry out a comparative analysis on Radio Upper West representing Public Service Broadcasting and Radio Progress, a Community Radio to ascertain which of the two has in place elaborate programming /coverage of the vulnerable.

Also, future researchers, may explore this area of study with the focus on the audience and not the media institutions and the journalists themselves. Such a study can look at the audience perception of Radio Upper West Programming/Coverage of the vulnerable.



As technology advances, future studies can also dwell on the transition from PSB to Public Service Media and audience participation in programming/coverage. Besides, this study could be replicated in other seemingly deprived areas of Ghana for a holistic understanding of the phenomenon in the country.

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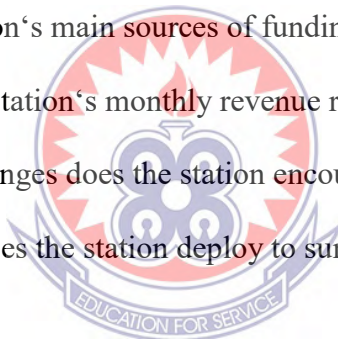


APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Interview Guide for Acting Regional Director of Radio Upper West

1. When was Radio Upper West established?
2. Can you tell me the extent to which the station complies with the PSB principles of universality, diversity and independence?
3. What is your understanding of vulnerability and which categories of people in your view constitute the vulnerable group?
4. Have you introduced any vulnerable related programme since your appointment as Acting Regional Director?
5. What are the station's main sources of funding?
6. How much is the station's monthly revenue return?
7. What major challenges does the station encounter?
8. What strategies does the station deploy to survive competition the industry



APPENDIX B

Interview Guide with Head of Programmes

1. What is your understanding of vulnerability?
2. What role do you play in putting place programmes for the vulnerable as the head of the section?
3. How many programmes do you have in place for the vulnerable group?
4. What is the nature of the vulnerable related programmes, in terms of language used, topics discussed, type of panelists and time of broadcast,
5. Who/what determines the programming schedule of the vulnerable at your station?
6. What factors determine the content of programmes run by your station for the vulnerable?
7. What main resources do you require to broadcast quality programmes for the vulnerable?
8. As a station how do you ensure programmes adhere to the principles of Public Service Broadcasting?
9. In what ways do you ensure that as a station, the needs and wants of the vulnerable are met through your programming strategies?
10. How do you fund programmes for the vulnerable?
11. Do staff of your department receive any form of training or capacity building especially in the area of human rights promotion?
12. How does the presence or absence of training impact the station's programmes for the vulnerable?
13. What challenges do you face in putting together standard programmes for the vulnerable?

APPENDIX C

Interview Guide for Head of News

1. What is your understanding of vulnerability?
2. What role do you play in the coverage of the vulnerable as the head of the news department?
3. As a station, do you have specific news bulletins in place that target the vulnerable group?
4. At what point does the vulnerable group get featured in your general news coverage?
5. How do you ensure the station's reportage responds to the needs of the vulnerable in terms of their social inclusion and empowerment?
6. How do you go about coverage of the vulnerable group?
7. What logistics do you require to ensure that the vulnerable group is adequately covered in your reportage and news bulletins
8. How are the logistics requiring the coverage of the vulnerable made available to you?
9. What effect does the availability or lack of logistics have on the coverage of the vulnerable group?
10. Do staff of your department receive any form of training or capacity building especially in the area of human rights promotion?
11. How does the presence or absence of training impact the station's coverage of the vulnerable?
12. What are some of the challenges that impede the station's desired coverage of the vulnerable?

APPENDIX D

Focus Group Discussion Guide

1. How do you see your mandate as Public Service Broadcasting journalists?
2. What are your views on the principles that underpin Public Service Broadcasting
3. How does your knowledge of the Public Service Broadcasting principles impact your professional delivery?
4. Are there any specific factors that motivate you to give off your best as Public Service Broadcasters?
5. What is your main source of information for programmes and or news bulletins?
6. How will you describe the relationship that exists between yourselves and information sources?
7. What criteria do you use in determining broadcast and news worthy information?
8. Which category of the population do you consider to constitute the vulnerable?
9. To what extent does your mandate as Public Service Broadcasters fit into the promotion of human rights?
10. How do you describe programming/coverage of the vulnerable
11. What would you propose should be done to make Public Service Broadcasters more independent?
12. Have there been threats from the government or its representatives or ministers in playing your role as voice for the voiceless?
13. In the current democratic dispensation, where the media is liberalized, how do you see yourselves in the eyes of the public?

