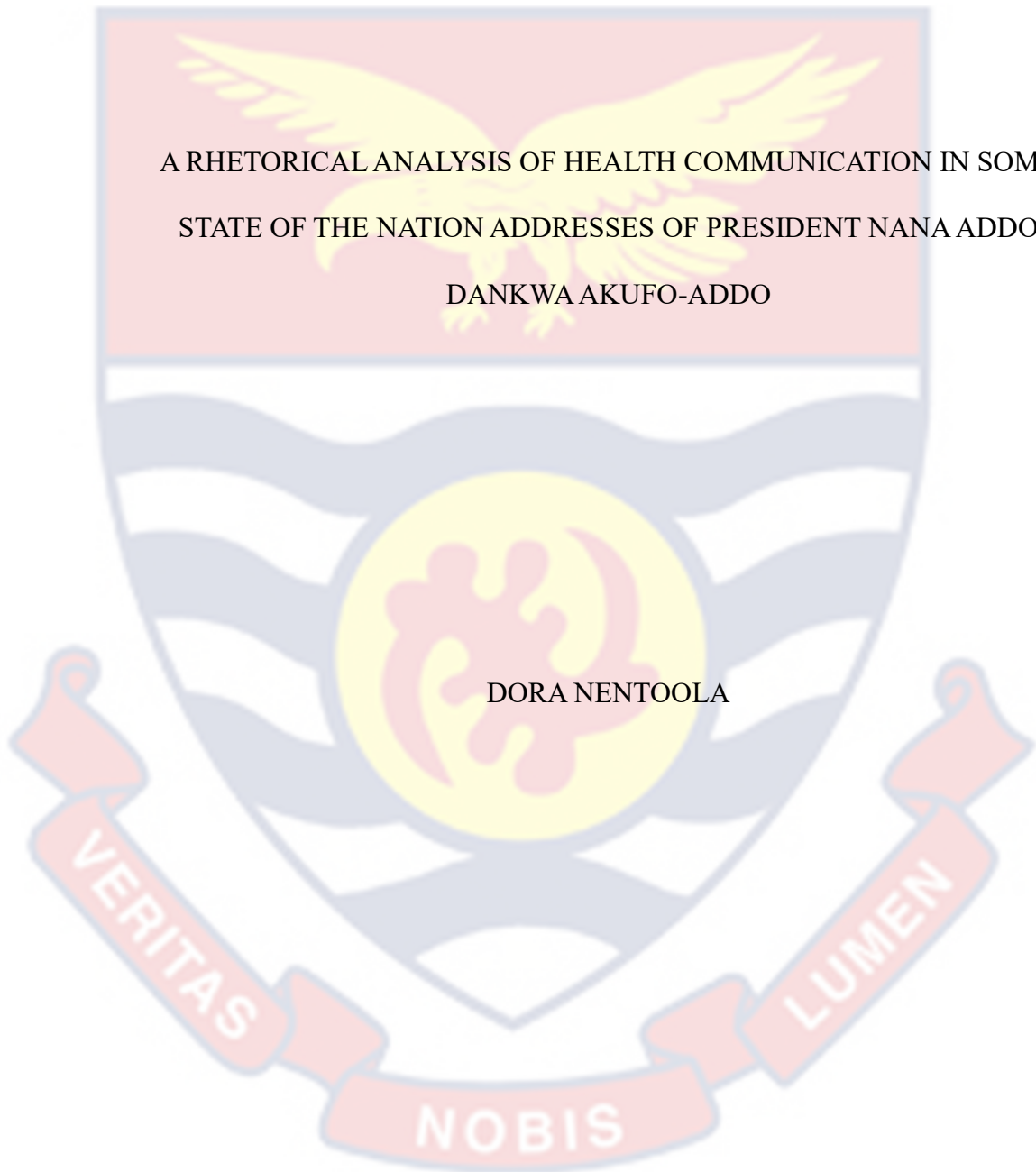


UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

A RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF HEALTH COMMUNICATION IN SOME
STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESSES OF PRESIDENT NANA ADDO
DANKWA AKUFO-ADDO

DORA NENTOOLA



2024

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DANKWA AKUFO-ADDO

BY

DORA NENTOOLA

Thesis submitted to the Department of Communication Studies of the Faculty
of Arts, College of Humanities and Legal Studies, University of Cape Coast,
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Master of Philosophy
Degree in Communication Studies

OCTOBER 2024

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature Date

Name: Dora Nentoola

Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Supervisor's Signature Date

Name: Prof. Richard T. Torto

ABSTRACT

This study examines the persuasive techniques employed by President Nana Akufo-Addo of Ghana in conveying his health policies to the public. The dataset for the study were qualitative documents retrieved from the official website of the presidency. A rhetorical analysis approach to analyse President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo's health policies captured in the State of the Nation Addresses from 2017 to 2023. The analysis of the data revealed that President Akufo-Addo used emotional appeals to connect with the public, expressing empathy and solidarity during crises like the COVID-19 pandemic, which strengthened support for his healthcare. Also, the study found that President Akufo-Addo employed logical reasoning and evidence-based arguments to demonstrate the effectiveness of his health policies, presenting concrete examples and future initiatives to appeal to the public's sense of reason. President Akufo-Addo's strategic use of kairos to give timely addresses during health crises, such as the COVID-19 outbreak, showcased his leadership and responsiveness, reinforcing the importance of preparedness and effective public health responses. Again, the study found that President Akufo-Addo did not have a chronological order of presenting aspects of his addresses. However, he prioritises any issues of great concerns first before others. It is recommended that future research in the area of presidential rhetoric and health communication should consider analysing public reception and perceptions after being exposed to the health policies of President Nana Akufo-Addo. This would help to know the effect that the persuasive techniques employed in the speeches have on the public.

KEY WORDS

Ethos

Health communication

Kairos and kronos

Logos

Pathos

Presidential Rhetoric



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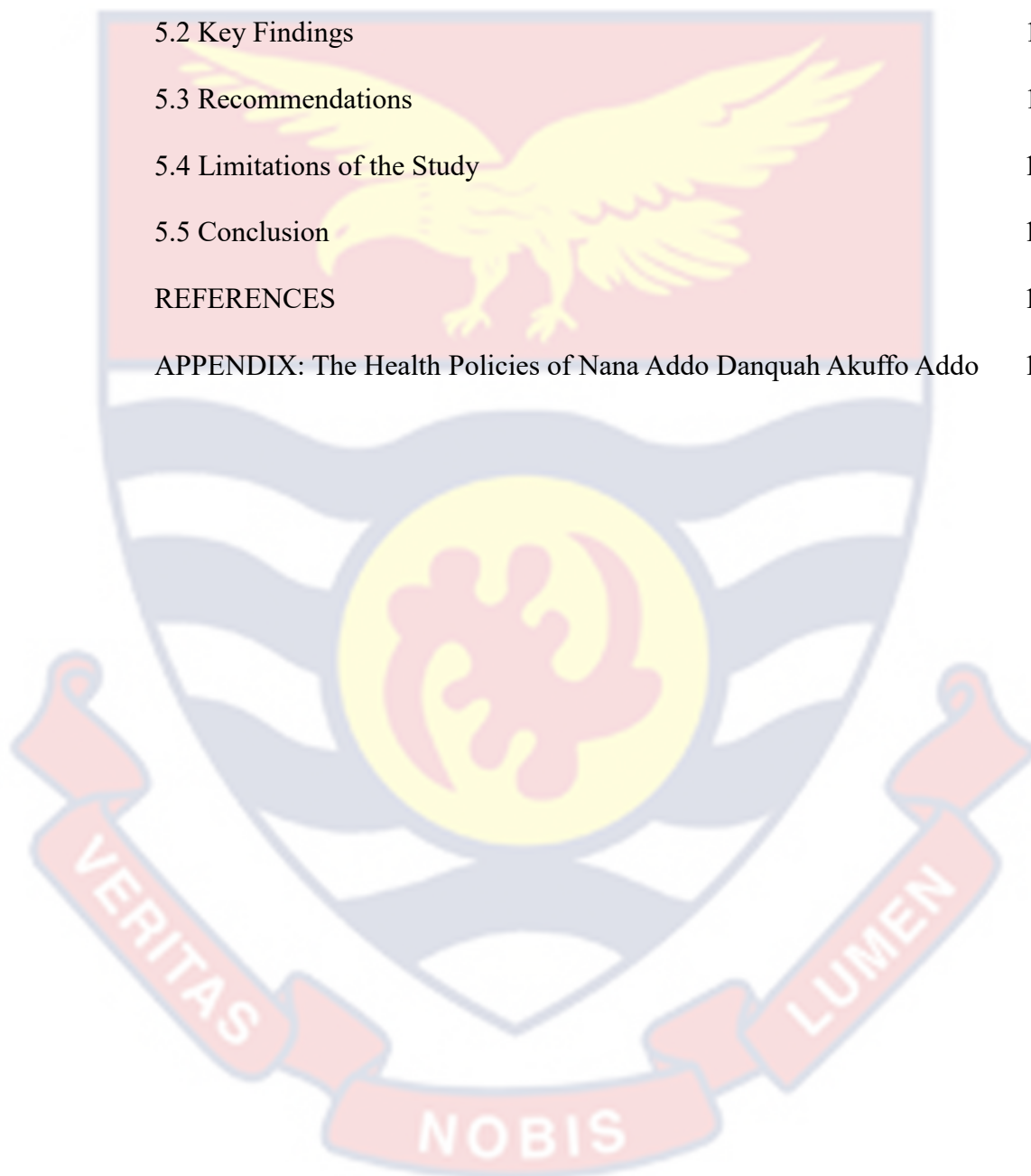
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

Presidential rhetoric intertwines with health communication as leaders use their rhetoric to inform, reassure, motivate, and guide the public during health crises and policy implementations. This study will uncover how President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo communicates his health policies to the Ghanaian public. This introductory chapter of the study lays the foundation for the study. It discusses the background to the study, Identification of gaps, statement of the problem, and explains the purpose of the study. The chapter also outlines the specific research objectives and questions guiding the study. Moreover, the chapter highlights the significance of the research and its potential impact, the limitations and delimitations of the study and the organisation of the study.

1.1 Background to the study

An ancient Greek philosopher, Aristotle, invented and wrote extensively on rhetoric in 350 BC, setting the groundwork for developing persuasive speech in Western civilization. Aristotle defines rhetoric as "the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion" (Aristotle, 1954, p. 37). Thus, rhetoric is the use of language to persuade an audience of a particular argument or point of view. According to Aristotle (2008), rhetoric refers to the act of using language to persuade, inform or motivate an audience. The concept of rhetoric has evolved, with several other scholars examining the various techniques and strategies used in persuasive communication. While Kenneth Burke, a rhetoric scholar, argues that rhetoric

is a key tool for creating and shaping identity and that it can be used to promote a sense of common purpose and shared values (Burke, 1950), other scholars like James Boyd White suggest that rhetoric can be used to create a sense of community and to encourage individuals to engage in civic discourse and democratic participation (White, 1968). Jackson and Krebs (2007) also argue that rhetoric involves the use of long exaggerated language to incite audiences to act in a way to suit the rhetor's desired ways. Meyer defines rhetoric as "the negotiation of the distance between individuals to a given question" (Meyer, 2008, p. 21). From the views of these rhetoric scholars, the concept of rhetoric appears to be mainly an interaction between a speaker and an audience, yet the difference lies within how the speaker uses his or her rhetoric. Thus, either to persuade, motivate or inform his or her audiences. Rhetoric is a very potent tool in communication especially in presidential communication. This is because presidents use rhetoric to construct specific narratives and speak about certain agenda with the citizenry.

Presidential rhetoric has increasingly been a significant subject of scholarly interest given that through it, presidents of nations establish a bond between themselves and the public by communicating their policies, plans, and accomplishments to them (Dadugblor, 2016). Zarefsky (2004) argues that "presidential rhetoric is a means by which a president defines social and political reality and the contexts by which citizens come to understand this reality" (p. 611). Presidential rhetoric is the analysis of how presidents communicate politically to garner public backing for their policies. It involves the application of both spoken and visual rhetorical strategies to sway audiences. Presidential rhetoric, particularly in Ghana comes in the form of

inaugural speeches, and State of the Nation Addresses amongst others. According to Hoffman and Howard (2010), presidential rhetoric can have many purposes, among them are: educating, explaining, persuading, proclaiming, reassuring, criticizing, blaming and credit claiming. Presidents have many ways of using their rhetoric depending on the subject and context of the communication process. Different presidents have different ways of communicating economic issues and they have different ways of communicating issues relating to education, health, and sports. For this current study, the focus will be on health communication.

Health is a key and very crucial aspect of our everyday lives. How well healthcare givers, medical practitioners or leaders can communicate health-related issues to their clients, or the public contributes to lifesaving. Health communication is a relevant field of study that investigates and explains the numerous ways in which human-mediated communication influences the outcomes of health-related issues. Communication is the centre of health care and health promotion efforts. It is through communication that patients can tell medical practitioners exactly what their problems are for diagnosis. It is the same communication that leaders and stakeholders use to inform and educate us about any health crisis. The Society for Health Communication defines health communication as the science and art of using communication to advance the health and well-being of people and populations (SHC, 2017).

According to Finset et al., (2020), “accurate and well-developed health communication can facilitate how societies manage uncertainty and fear, promote and accomplish adherence to necessary behaviour change, and meet individuals’ fear and foster hope in the face of a crisis.” (p.2.). Effective health

communication helps people cope with uncertainty and fear and encourages people to adopt necessary behaviour changes, especially during crises. This communication addresses individuals' concerns and anxieties, offering reassurance and fostering hope for better outcomes. Kreps (2003b) posits that health communication is now widely recognised as theoretically driven, pragmatic and a key contributor in shaping national health policies. Presidential rhetoric and health communication recently have been receiving scholarly attention, especially after the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. In Ghana, particularly, studies have been conducted to analyse the updates by President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo Dankwa thematically, stylistically, or systematically.

Imagine an intellectual puzzle where words serve as constituent elements, and the president assumes the role of the solution to the problem. However, the puzzle has a purpose beyond mere entertainment; it relates to a matter of utmost importance, specifically the health of individuals. Think about Ghana facing a health challenge that has everyone worried. People are eager for guidance and reassurance, and the president comes in, speaking on television or radio, making sense of the situation, and telling everyone what to do and what not to do. People listen closely, hanging on to every word, because they trust and believe in their leader. He uses his carefully chosen and well-spoken words to help the nation understand what is happening and to give hope. This is the way leaders communicate with their followers, and it is not merely an exercise in communication; rather, it is focused on the accomplishment of tasks especially, the ones that they have captured in their manifestos. In the field of health communication, the rhetoric employed by

national leaders can significantly influence public perception, behaviour, and adherence to health policies.

President Akufo-Addo and the Health Sector

Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo is the incumbent and the fifth President of the Fourth Republic of Ghana. His tenure of office began in January 2017 after emerging victorious in the 2016 general elections. President Akufo-Addo has and still demonstrates a significant prioritisation of health policies during his tenure as the President of Ghana. Considering the impactful role of leadership communication in shaping public health attitudes, it is essential to explore how it aligns with the goals of the health sector within the current Sector Medium-Term Development Plan (2014–2017). The goal of the health sector, as outlined in this plan, is to ensure a healthy and productive population that continues to reproduce safely (<http://www.moh.gov.gh/>). The tenure of the office of the President of the Republic of Ghana, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, has been marked by several health challenges, most notably the global COVID-19 pandemic. His administration's response to this health crisis articulated through various health policies and public addresses, offers insights into the relationship between presidential rhetoric and public health communication. This examination of presidential rhetoric provides a meaningful background for understanding how leadership rhetoric influences the healthcare landscape.

President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo's health policies further exemplify this connection. These policies, ranging from the establishment of health infrastructure, expanding health promotion programmes, scaling up disease prevention strategies, and improving access to curative and emergency

services through vigorous human resource and health infrastructure development and strengthening of the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS), to the management of health crises, have been pivotal in shaping Ghana's health landscape. However, beyond the policies themselves, it is the way they have been communicated by the President, to the Ghanaian public that warrants a closer examination.

Presidential Rhetoric and Public Health Behaviours and Perceptions

The use of presidential rhetoric holds significant influence in the formation of public views and behaviours, particularly within the domain of health communication in Africa. According to Obeng (2002), the president's voice in various African nations serves not just as a source of information but also as a guiding force that can influence and shape public health behaviours and perspectives. According to presidential rhetoric scholar, David Zarefsky, as cited in Theses et al. (2022) due to his influential political position and communication resources, the president, by defining a situation, has the potential to shape how the public perceives events or proposals by framing and defining the situation. During periods of health emergencies, the way a president communicates has the potential to either exacerbate public anxieties or alleviate them. The author asserts that in Ghana, the use of presidential rhetoric during the Ebola epidemic played a significant role in encouraging preventative actions and debunking misconceptions. This highlights the efficacy of leadership communication in effectively addressing health emergencies (Amoah, 2015). Assuming President Akufo-Addo, together with health experts had not come out to address the nation about the epidemic and its myths, the fear and panic alone would have even caused more harm than

good. However, as soon as the president stepped in, all nerves were calmed, and the misconceptions were corrected. Thus, the voices of presidents have ways of influencing the behaviours of their public.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that not all presidential communications have been marked by a positive tone or content. In the South African context, the expression of scepticism by former President Thabo Mbeki over the correlation between HIV and AIDS gave rise to significant public uncertainty and has been linked to the postponement of the use of antiretroviral medicines. “This highlights the substantial influence of presidential discourse on the outcomes of public health.” (Chigwedere et al., 2008, p.4,5).

Rhetorical Situation, Kairos, and Kronos in Presidential Communication

Lloyd Bitzer’s concept of the rhetorical situation, which was introduced in his seminal 1968 essay, provides a foundation for understanding how rhetoric emerges and functions in response to specific contextual needs. According to Bitzer, rhetoric is not simply a product of a speaker's intent or creativity, but rather a response to a situation that demands communication. Bitzer (1968) defines the rhetorical situation through three key components: exigence, audience, and constraints. Exigence refers to an imperfection or problem that requires a rhetorical response; it is a situation that necessitates action or change. For instance, in the context of presidential rhetoric, a public health crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic creates an exigence that demands a clear and authoritative response. The audience in a rhetorical situation comprises those individuals who can be influenced by the discourse and who have the capacity to act in response. In the case of presidential addresses, the

audience may include the general populace, healthcare professionals, and policymakers who play critical roles in implementing and responding to health directives. Constraints, which is the third component, encompass the factors that can either enable or limit the effectiveness of the message. These may include cultural attitudes, existing policies, and institutional norms that shape the way a president can respond to a health crisis. In addition to Bitzer's concept of the rhetorical situation, the concepts of kairos and kronos shed more light on the timing of rhetorical responses.

Presidents must speak on health issues as and when they occur, and in rhetoric, we refer to this as "Kairos" and "Kronos". These two Greek terms have been instrumental in understanding the essence of time and its implications for communication. Kronos refers to chronological or sequential time, the ticking of the clock, and the progression of days. It represents the steady, ongoing flow of events and information. On the other hand, Kairos emphasises the right or opportune moment in which something must happen or be said. It is about seizing the moment and capitalising on the unique circumstances of a particular context (Kinneavy, 2002).

In health communication, especially about presidential rhetoric, these concepts hold significant weight. For instance, a president's ongoing health advisories, regular updates, and policy announcements like the State of the Nation Address and inaugural speeches and all other political speeches can be seen in the light of Kronos. They are expected, structured, and part of the regular flow of information from the leadership to the public. However, during critical junctures, such as the outbreak of a pandemic like COVID-19 or a health crisis, the concept of Kairos comes into play. It is at these moments that

a president's communication takes a turn yet can make a profound difference. The way a leader seizes these Kairotic moments, delivering the right message at the right time and to the right audience, can shape public perception, influence behaviour, and even determine the trajectory of the crisis (Sipiora & Baumlin, 2002). President Akufo-Addo's health policies and communication strategies explore the interplay of kairos and Kronos. While his regular addresses and policy announcements represent the Kronian aspect of communication, his immediate addresses during the initial stages of the COVID-19 pandemic in Ghana can be seen as a kairotic response, aimed at assuaging public fears, providing guidance, and setting the tone for the nation's response (Miller, 2017).

The effectiveness of health communication by African presidents is frequently contingent upon cultural complexities and the perceived credibility of the leader. According to Ojebode (2017), among numerous African societies, the spoken language holds considerable influence, particularly when spoken by a person of authority. Hence, when presidents address matters about health, their discourse has the potential to either uphold or question established ideas and practices. Fear and uncertainty can be reduced through accurate and well-structured health communication to promote and accomplish adherence to necessary behaviour change, meet individuals' fears, and foster hope in the face of a crisis (Abou-Ismaïl et al., 2020). The extent to which their words resonate with the culture can influence the degree to which the public adheres to health advice. Nevertheless, trust plays a key role. Whenever there is a lack of trust between the public and their leaders, even healthy messages delivered by leaders, with good intentions, may be received with doubt (Mensah &

Owusu, 2016). Thus, if leaders or practitioners of health communicate about health-related issues and the public does not trust and believe in them, their communication will not be effective because the public will not act positively to the messages.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The present study seeks to address the gaps in previous studies in the field of presidential rhetoric. The predominant focus of the previous studies lies on the analysis of presidential rhetoric in traditional political contexts, such as inaugural addresses, concession speeches, and political manifestos. This trend has been noted by influential researchers in the fields of political communication (Ankrah, 2020; Hart & van den Heuvel, 2014; Zarefsky, 2010; Rowland, 2017). Again, studies by Murphy, 2022; Baum, 2004; Sikanku, Mensah, Kwansah-Aidoo, & Kuwornu, 2023 revealed that some of the previous studies were centred on Presidential rhetoric crime, and public opinion. Although, the State of the Nation Address (SONA) has been studied by Sikanku, 2022, Logogy, 2021, Agbesi et al, 2023, Israel et al, 2023, Adjei et al, 2015, their objectives focused heavily on ideational and ideological contents (Botchwey et al., 2023). Moreover, established method for scientifically analysing the State of the Nation Address (SONA) is to systematically examine the speech based on specific subject areas or topics. This approach has been employed for decades by scholars like Moen (1988) and by institutions like the University of California, Berkeley's School of Information when studying the State of the Union addresses in the United States since 1913. According to Sikanku (2022), this method has not been used in previous research on the State of the Nation Address (SONA) in Ghana,

making it valuable for the current study. Such research would involve analysing the emphasis placed on different subject areas within the national or jurisdictional context with a specific focus on health, sports, economy, or education issues that are captured in the SONA. The present study aims to address this gap by analysing only the health aspects of President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo's SONA.

There is a dearth of comprehensive research which explores how presidential rhetoric intertwines with health communication, despite the critical role that leaders play in shaping public health perceptions and behaviours. Consequently, the present study aims to fill this research gap by examining presidential rhetoric within the distinct domains of kairos (opportune moments) and Kronos (chronological time) in the context of health communication. Furthermore, Aristotle's theory on rhetoric together with the rhetoric of medicine by Judy Segal, would be applied to decipher how leaders effectively communicate their health policies using persuasive language. The integration of a health theory into the present study enhances my analysis by providing a more focused framework which addresses the intersection of rhetoric and health policies. This research seeks to provide insight into the hitherto underexplored domain of presidential rhetoric in health communication, contributing to the enhancement of public health strategies and outcomes.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The present study seeks to examine the complex relationship between presidential rhetoric and health communication, with a specific focus on President Akufo-Addo's use of persuasive strategies in communicating health

policies to the Ghanaian public. The study specifically looks into how President Akufo-Addo makes people trust and believe in what he says about his health policies, how he uses emotions to make his health communication more powerful, and how he uses logical reasoning and evidence to support the communication of his health policies to the Ghanaian public. By analysing the persuasive techniques employed by the president in his health communication, the research seeks to provide an understanding of how President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo effectively communicates his health policies to the Ghanaian public.

1.4 Research Objectives

The primary objectives of the study include:

1. To explore how President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo establishes his credibility and authority in communicating health policies to the Ghanaian public.
2. To examine how President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo uses emotional appeals to communicate his health policies to the Ghanaian public.
3. To assess the logical reasoning and evidence-based arguments used by President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo to support his health policy proposals and initiatives.

1.5 Research Questions

The current study seeks to address the following research questions:

1. How does President Akufo-Addo demonstrate his credibility and authority when communicating his health policies to the Ghanaian public?

2. How does President Akufo-Addo use emotional appeals to communicate his health policies to the Ghanaian public?
3. What logical reasoning and evidence-based arguments does President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo use to support his health policy proposals and initiatives?

1.6 Significance of the study

The study of health communication by President Akufo-Addo is crucial because, given the profound influence of presidential rhetoric on public health outcomes, it can help shed light on effective strategies for leaders to build trust and legitimacy in public health discourse. Also, examining how President Akufo-Addo uses emotions to communicate health policies can provide an understanding of the role of effective communication in shaping public perceptions and responses to health issues. In practical terms, the results of this study can inspire valuable actions in the field of public health. Policymakers, healthcare experts, and advocates for public health can apply these insights to improve how they communicate. They can create messages that connect better with the public. In the end, this can lead to improved health outcomes in communities. Furthermore, the findings of this study will contribute to literature and knowledge.

1.7 Delimitations of the Study

In this study, of all the presidents Ghana has had, specific attention is paid to President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, the fifth President of the Fourth Republic of Ghana. The data and analysis primarily focused on the health policies and communication strategies during President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo's tenure of office. Historical health communication

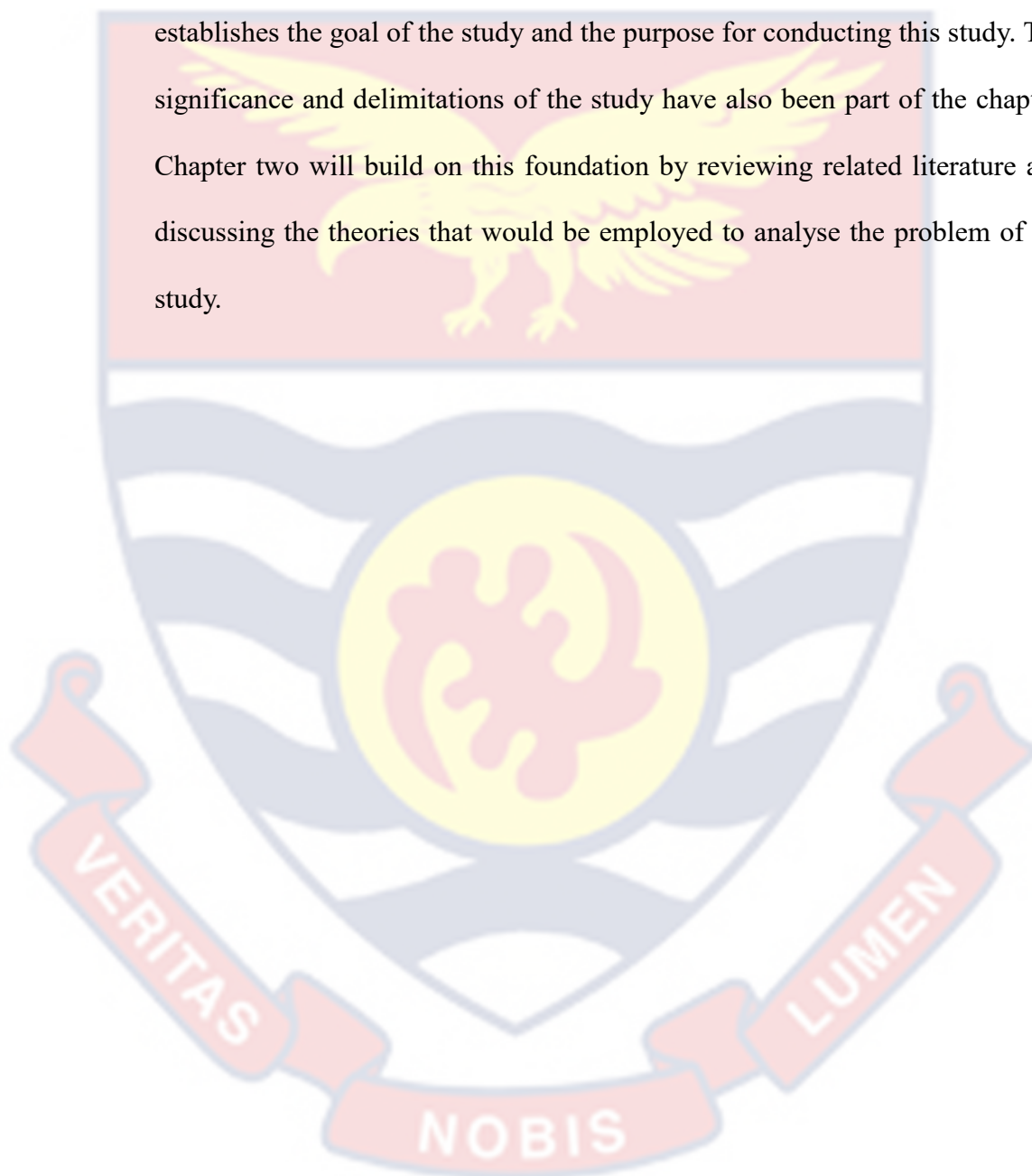
efforts preceding or following his presidency and even outside Ghana are not included. The study is delimited to only the health aspects that are captured in President Akufo-Addo's State of the Nation Address leaving out issues of education, sports, economy, and others that are as well captured in the State of the Nation Address. The study adopted qualitative analysis techniques, focusing on rhetorical analysis to understand the persuasive techniques that President Akufo-Addo used to communicate his health policies.

1.8 Chapter Outline

The study is presented in five chapters. Chapter One serves as the introductory chapter of the study. It presents the background to the study, the statement of the problem, the research objectives and questions, the purpose and significance of the study as well as the delimitations and limitations of the study. Chapter two presents a review of related literature of some studies on political speeches, studies on State of the Nation Address and studies on kairos and kronos in presidential rhetoric. The chapter also discusses Aristotle's rhetoric theory and Segal's Rhetoric of Medicine as theories in which the study is grounded. Chapter three discusses the methodology employed in this research. They include the research design and approach, sampling procedure and sample size, data collection and data analysis methods, trustworthiness of the study and some ethical considerations. Chapter four presents the data analysis and discussion and the last chapter, Chapter Five, presents the findings, conclusion, and recommendations for further inquiry into the area of presidential rhetoric and health communication.

1.9 Conclusion

Chapter one forms the basis of the study. The chapter discussed the background to the study, outlined the research objectives and research questions that guide the study, presented the statement of the problem which establishes the goal of the study and the purpose for conducting this study. The significance and delimitations of the study have also been part of the chapter. Chapter two will build on this foundation by reviewing related literature and discussing the theories that would be employed to analyse the problem of the study.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Introduction

Numerous studies have been conducted on presidential rhetoric and health communication, exploring not only their elaborate dynamics but also examining the public reception and perception of these communication strategies. This chapter of the study seeks to conduct a comprehensive review of relevant related studies on presidential rhetoric and health communication. The review has been grouped into the following sub-themes; studies on State of the Nation Address, Studies on political Speeches, Studies on Health Communication and finally, Kairos and Kronos in presidential rhetoric. Additionally, the chapter will expound upon the theoretical frameworks that underpin this study, specifically Aristotle's rhetoric theory and Health and the Rhetoric of Medicine framework by Judy Segal.

Review of Related Literature

This literature review serves critical purposes in situating this study within the existing body of knowledge. First, it acknowledges the significant contributions made in the fields of political speeches, health communication, and rhetorical analysis. Most importantly, this review identifies specific gaps in existing research, particularly the lack of focus on President Akufo-Addo's health policies within the SONA. Previous studies primarily focus on ideational, ideological, stylistic, and linguistic analyses, often neglecting rhetorical strategies related to health communication in political contexts. This study aims to contribute to the rhetorical framing of health issues in national

discourse, especially following the heightened focus on health communication due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.1 Studies on State of the Nation Address

State of the Nation Address, (hereafter, SONA) is a speech delivered to parliament or the legislative body by the President, where he reports on his management of the country and outlines plans for the forthcoming year (Adjei et al., 2015). Campbell and Jamieson (2008) argue that the SONA is “central to the maintenance of the presidency itself as it enables the president to function as a national historian, keeper of the national identity, and voice of national values” (p. 164). According to Druckman and Holmes (2004), the SONA is a “once-a-year chance for the modern President to inspire and persuade citizens. It is a significant speech because it fulfils the checks and balances aspect of democratic governance when the President accounts to the nation” (p. 759). The State of the Nation Address in Ghana, like most democracies, is a speech delivered by the President to parliament annually during the four-year tenure mandated by the constitution.

The SONA according to Sikanku (2022) is significant because it is an opportunity for the president to directly address the public on the state of national affairs and it also serves as a communicative link between the president and his citizenry. Moen (1988) emphasises the primacy of SONA by suggesting that, unlike many other presidential speeches, the SONA is meticulously crafted and represents the genuine priorities of the president. Sikanku (2022) posits that in numerous advanced democracies, the State of the Nation Address (SONA) serves as a significant opportunity to unify, motivate, and mobilise the nation toward a common goal. In essence, the nature of the

address is anticipated to be patriotic rather than partisan, typically encompassing legislative agendas. SONA covers a range of topics including economic, social, health and political issues.

Agbesi et al., (2023) conducted a stylistic analysis of the 2017 SONA about the levels of linguistic features that were employed by President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo to investigate how the presence of the linguistic features aimed to effectively persuade the audience and sustain hope for his political ambition. Using the levels of linguistic stylistic analysis by Leech and Short (2007), the study found out that the President's vocabulary consisted of simple phrases together with concrete and abstract nouns and as a result, meaning-making was easy. The study also acknowledged the fact that rhetorical and discursive techniques are frequently used by the president to gain the audience's attention. Even though the study found some techniques that the president used to gain the audience's attention, it did not analyse them using a rhetorical analysis. This gap highlights the need for further research into that area and this present study fills the gap by examining the SONA using a rhetorical analysis.

Similarly, Botchway et al., (2023) conducted a study on the thematic analysis of President Akufo-Addo's 2023 State of the Nation Address using the Theme-Rheme model of Halliday and Matthiessen's Systemic Functional Linguistics Theory. The study examined the linguistics choices made by President Akufo-Addo in constructing his State of the Nation Address and found out that the most frequently used thematized experiential element is the Participant, representing approximately 81% of all topical themes while circumstance follows the Participant in frequency, and Process is the least

thematized experiential element. The study also acknowledged the presence of a few finite verbal operators in the textual theme. The interpersonal theme includes modal adjuncts, vocatives, and finite verbal operators. The dominance of Participants in the Theme position suggests a focus on who and what engages in the processes discussed in the address. According to Botchway et al., (2023), the choice of theme plays a significant role in message organisation, expression, and cohesion within a discourse. Botchway et al.'s study primarily focused on the linguistic structure of the State of the Nation Address without specifically addressing health communication aspects. The present study, on the other hand, explicitly focuses on health communication within the context of presidential rhetoric. Again, while Botchway et al., (2023) identified linguistic patterns and themes within the SONA, this study extends the analysis beyond linguistic structure to a rhetorical analysis.

Sikanku (2022), conducted a systematic analysis of presidential discourse in Ghana, focusing specifically on the 2019 State of the Nation Address (SONA). Unlike traditional policy analyses, this study adopted a communication perspective, to uncover the policy priorities and framework of a major administration under Ghana's democracy. The study's objectives were to analyse the major topics embedded in the SONA and to identify recurring thematic elements as proposed by Shogan and Neale. The findings revealed that the social agenda, including issues such as sanitation, housing, and social amenities, takes central focus in the President's address, followed by politics and economic affairs. Additionally, three thematic elements – bipartisanship, past and future, and optimism – are identified and analysed within the

discourse. According to Sikanku (2022), the optimistic theme was exemplified when President Akufo-Addo spoke about improvement in education and the need to provide ‘life-long opportunities’ for young people and the theme of optimism similarly came in when he spoke about the Planting for Food and Jobs initiative. “In talking about the past and present, the President referred to the slow-paced nature of health care delivery in Ghana, emphasising that the introduction of drones into Ghana’s health system will bring about the speedy dispensation of health care” (p.185).

Bipartisanship was demonstrated when the President spoke of the need for both sides of the aisle to work together to address the state of political vigilantism. He likewise touched on this theme when he spoke of the need to work together to bring about constitutional amendments to the way local government officials are elected in Ghana” (p.185). These findings support Shogan and Neale (2009) who identified past and future, optimism, and bipartisanship as recurring thematic elements in addresses of this nature. The current study did a systematic analysis of the 2019 speech only whereas this present study analyses speeches spanning from the period of 2017 to 2023 to identify how President Akufo-Addo uses his ethos, logos and pathos when communicating his health policies to the Ghanaian public.

Amoakohene (2019) also examined the State of the Nation Addresses (SONA) in Ghana spanning from 1993 to 2018, with a particular focus on the integration of media and communication. The study aimed to determine the importance placed on the media and communication sector and to what degree media and communication were included in the addresses. The findings of the study revealed the extent to which media and communication were integrated

into these addresses over the period from 1993 to 2018. According to Amoakohene (2019), all presidents used the media to effectively communicate their policies to the public. However, the National Democratic Congress (NDC) devoted significantly more focus to the media within the State of the Nation Addresses (SONA) compared to the New Patriotic Party (NPP). This trend was attributed by the author to the longer duration of NDC's tenure in power. The study concluded that both the NPP and NDC administrations allocated less emphasis on media and communication in their SONAs when compared to other sectors. The twist here is that Amoakohene conducted a study on SONA, but his focus was to compare presidents from the period 1993 to 2018 to find out how they prioritized media involvement in their SONA without considering how persuasive the presidents communicated through the media. The present study has its focus on President Akufo-Addo only and the aim is to conduct a rhetorical analysis of his health policies in the SONA.

Adjei, Ewusi-Mensah, and Okoh (2015) conducted a study to examine President John Evans Atta Mills' first State-of-the-Nation address through the lens of the transitivity model, a framework within Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar. Using a qualitative research design, the study conducted a content analysis based on 536 clauses from the 2009 SONA to understand how language is used to convey political messages. The clauses were parsed into constituent parts to identify processes, code and categorize them, and determine their roles. The findings of the study indicate a dominance of material processes in the speech (59.14%), suggesting a focus on concrete actions and projects by Mills and his government to emphasise developmental progress. Conversely, mental processes are used minimally (14.37%),

implying a straightforward communication style without excessive assurances or promises, emphasizing the need for decisive action. For instance, he uses sentences like “that all Ghanaians would join me to elevate Ghanaian politics beyond pettiness,” and “it is possible to bring back smiles to the faces of all Ghanaians” to reiterate his empathetic feelings towards Ghanaians.

Relational processes using verbs such as “be,” “have”, and “become”, etc are the second most used process type, indicating President Mills' efforts to establish a positive image and assert his authority as the president. The study concludes that language structures can convey implicit meanings and ideologies, emphasizing the communicative function of language. The choice of linguistic forms in discourse is motivated and can reflect social, cultural, and historical frameworks. Also, the transitivity system helps express experiences and perceptions of reality, providing insight into how individuals position themselves and others in discourse. By applying the transitivity model, the study uncovered implicit meanings and ideologies that are encoded in linguistic structures and highlighted the importance of language in political communication throwing more light on President Mills' communication strategies and priorities during his presidency. The study analysed clauses from the 2009 SONA but the present study seeks to unearth the persuasive techniques that President Akufo-Addo employs when communicating to the Ghanaian public.

Adu-Ampong (2107) provides a critical analysis of the prioritization of tourism within the state policy framework in Ghana, focusing specifically on the President's State of the Nation Address from 2010 to 2014. Adu-Ampong highlights the significance of tourism as a key contributor to economic

development, particularly in developing countries like Ghana, which are rich in natural resources by framing his research within the broader context of Ghana's development agenda, particularly the Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda (GSGDA) 2010–2013, which identifies tourism as one of the key pillars for economic transformation. The analysis of the study focused on the frequency and content of references to "tourism" in the President's SONA speeches from 2010-2014.

The findings reveal a significant shift in the prioritization of tourism within government discourse as the study identifies a notable absence of references to tourism in the SONAs from 2010 to 2012, despite its substantial contributions to the national economy during that period. He asserts that the 2010-2012 SONA “failed to mention the impact tourism was having on the national economy. There is not a single mention of the word “tourism” neither was there a mention of the Ministry of Tourism’s estimate that the tourism sector generated \$1.8 billion as revenue, which constituted 6.2% of the gross domestic product (GDP) for the country in 2010 This absence suggests a lack of emphasis on tourism as a priority sector by the government during those years”. However, his analysis indicates a positive trend towards renewed prioritization of tourism in the SNAs from 2013 to 2014. According to Adu-Ampong (2017), “the word ‘tourism’ appears five times in the 2013 SONA and another five times in the 2014 SONA. This signifies a (re)prioritisation of the tourism sector even as one and two paragraphs were devoted to the tourism sector in the 2013 and 2014 address respectively” (p.137). He highlights the increased frequency of references to tourism in these speeches, as well as specific policy commitments aimed at leveraging the tourism, culture, and

creative arts sectors for economic development. This shift in rhetoric reflects a more initiative-taking approach by the government towards harnessing the potential of tourism for revenue generation and job creation.

Adu-Ampong concludes by emphasizing the importance of analysing government speeches, such as the SONA, as indicators of policy priorities and commitments. He argues that while formal development plans provide a strategic framework, presidential addresses offer insights into the government's immediate priorities and intentions. Like Adu-Ampong's study which focused on not analysing all aspects of SONA but narrowing to the tourism aspect, this current study prioritizes the health policies captured by President Akufo-Addo in his SONA.

The State of the Nation Address has received (2017) scholarly attention. However, most of these studies on the State of the Nation address analysed either a single speech or did a comparative study. From the reviewed literature, the most attention given to SONA is the linguistic, systematic, or stylistic analysis with a few scholars conducting a rhetorical discourse analysis. The present study is important because it seeks to through a rhetorical analysis, find out how President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo communicates his health policies as captured in the SONA to the Ghanaian public.

2.2 Studies on Political Speeches

Presidential rhetoric has received attention from a lot of scholars from different disciplines including media and communication studies (Sikanku, 2022), and linguistics (Logogye, 2021), amongst others. Mensah, Yamoah, and Djorbua's (2022), study on a Deictic Analysis of President Nana Akufo-Addo's

64th Independence Day Speech in Ghana, found a predominant use of person deixis, followed by time and place deixis, with first-person pronouns (e.g., I, we, us, and our) exhibiting the highest frequency. The research concluded that President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo strategically incorporated deictic elements, contributing to both textual coherence and establishing a tangible connection, bond, and engagement with the Ghanaian audience.

Similarly, Hamdaoui (2015), explored the persuasive power of person deixis with the focus of the inclusive pronoun “we” in the political rhetoric of President Barack Obama during the 2007-2009 monetary crisis. Using a corpus of fourteen political discourses including speeches, addresses, and press conferences between January 20th and December 8th, 2009, the study found that “We” is the most frequently used person deixis by President Obama. Similarly, this study focuses on the analysis of the persuasive power of person deixis in President Obama's political rhetoric during the monetary crisis. However, the study does not define how this deixis influence the public.

Logogye (2021) examined the use of language by President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo in his inaugural address to Ghanaians from a functional perspective. After carefully sampling 284 clauses in the inaugural address the study found out that material clauses like; “We must create wealth and restore happiness to our nation”, “We must protect the public purse”, and “We will provide vision and direction” dominate the speech whilst existential clauses like; “There could not be a better opportunity to Make in Ghana” and “There will be discipline in all sectors of our lives” were less employed. According to Logogye (2021), the president made more use of primary clauses than secondary clauses in his inaugural address. The study by Logogye conducted a

linguistic analysis of President Akufo-Addo's inaugural address whereas this present study is a rhetorical analysis of the health policies in the SONA.

Anderson (2014) conducted a study to identify inherent stylistic features prevalent in some selected speeches by John Evans Atta Mills. The study aimed to establish a potential relationship between the political actor's background and the observed stylistic elements. Drawing on Halliday's meta-function theory (1970, 1978, 1985) and Onah's concept of peace from African traditional culture, the research employed Fairclough's three-dimensional model (1989, 1995) to analyse the text and the study found out that Atta Mills strategically employed repetition, positive self-projection, and code-switching as stylistic features. According to Anderson, political actors employ these strategies to shape the perception of their personality among the audience. Atta Mills, through his choice of words, portrayed himself as a competent leader with a firm grasp of the country's economic situation and as a selfless servant willing to sacrifice for the nation.

Marfo and Aminu (2014) examined how the flag bearers of the two major political parties, the National Democratic Congress (NDC), John Evans Atta Mills and the New Patriotic Party (NPP), demonstrated rhetorical skills in the 2008 elections. They focused on John Evans Atta Mills from the NDC and Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo from the NPP, assessing their efforts to win support of the public since the 1990s. According to Marfo and Aminu (2014) the first technique that was used massively by both Presidential candidates is the inclusive technique. This is when the speakers identify themselves with their targeted groups to the extent that, in terms of communicatory strategy, members of the targeted group seem to embrace them as part of them.

According to them, President Akufo-Addo used the following to showcase his inclusiveness “I have an ardent desire to serve Ghana with a clear conscience, pure motives, and a solid character. I will offer leadership of competence, courage, compassion, and commitment. From Pusiga to Axim, from Hamile to Keta, we all by fate are Ghanaians first. We have to emphasise the things that bring us together. I believe in Ghana, and I ask you also to believe in Ghana” (p.5). Essentially, he is suggesting a sense of shared identity, implying that he belongs to their group, and therefore, they should consider supporting him. This reflects an appeal to inclusivity as a strategic approach. Similarly, Atta Mills also used the inclusive technique when he said, “Every Ghanaian, no matter where he or she comes from, deserves a fair opportunity and a chance to live a healthy and productive life” (p.4).

The transfer technique was also used by both Akufo-Addo and Atta Mills to communicate with the public to gain their support. This technique is when a speaker attempts to persuade his audience through the indirect use of patriotic or religious images, to promote his perspectives and ideas (Marfo & Aminu 2014). For instance; Akufo-Addo said, Fellow Ghanaians, as a person, I care deeply about the future of this country. Over the last three decades, I have been in the trenches, fighting to establish our democracy, to expand the frontiers of our freedoms and to make our nation better ... I believe in Ghana, and I ask you also to believe in Ghana.” Whereas Atta Mills said “I want to claim the future for the people of this country. I am looking ahead, not looking back because I want to leave an enduring legacy of a peaceful and united country where there is opportunity and prosperity for all. I want to be

remembered as the President who restored honesty, truth, and sincerity to government” (p.6).

These techniques were used by Akuffo Addo and Atta Mills to communicate well, to persuade the electorates and ultimately win power. However, the study found that Akuffo Addo used the inclusive technique more often than Atta Mills. The findings of this study indicate that presidential candidates use rhetorical techniques to communicate to their audiences during the campaign period to win their trust. But after the victory, what next? Do they still employ these persuasive techniques in their further discourses or not? This present study will analyze President Akufo-Addo’s State of the Nation Addresses to uncover how he communicates his health policies to the public to see if persuasion is still in use even after elections, or if he used those techniques only when he needed the votes.

Addy and Ofori, (2020) conducted a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of the campaign speech delivered by Nana Akufo-Addo, a Ghanaian opposition leader, in the build-up to the 2016 general elections. The study analysed how language, specifically the use of pronouns and repetition, is employed in speech to create a connection with the electorate and persuade them to support the candidate. The study employed Fairclough’s three-dimensional approach to analysing discourse, primarily the discourse-as-text, to examine the linguistic features and organization of the speech. The data for the analysis was obtained from a scripted speech delivered by Nana Akufo-Addo at the launch of his party’s manifesto in Accra, Ghana. Using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as the theoretical framework, the analysis revealed that Nana Akufo-Addo strategically uses pronouns and repetition in his

campaign speech to establish a personal connection with the audience and emphasise key messages. The use of pronouns such as, “I,” “you”, “our” and “we” are more frequently used by politicians compared to other pronouns. They added that these pronouns, enhance the speaker's credibility and commitment, while repetition serves to intensify certain ideas and create rhetorical effects. The expression “I want a Ghana,” was used sixteen (16) times consecutively in fourteen paragraphs.

According to Addy and Ofori (2020), President Nana Akufo-Addo uses this construction together with other statements as a way of showing solidarity and identification. In this way, he creates a picture of Ghana that is per the aspirations and desires of his listeners. Through these linguistic devices, Akufo-Addo aims to present himself as a trustworthy and competent leader, seeking to gain the confidence and support of the electorate. Based on the results of this study, it is evident that President Akufo-Addo used persuasive techniques to communicate his manifesto. The present study seeks to find out if he still uses these persuasive strategies to communicate, specifically his health policies to the Ghanaian public.

Dadugblor (2016), analysed how presidents associate or dissociate themselves from their audiences through linguistic and rhetorical strategies, particularly focusing on the inclusive and exclusive uses of the first-person pronoun "we". Using Critical Discourse Analysis Dadugblor (2016) did a comparative analysis of SONAs from different socio-political contexts to explore how presidents use language to communicate with and persuade their audiences. The study found that presidents strategically use pronouns to shape their image and convey their political agendas. The exclusive use of pronouns

like "we" serves to enhance a positive image of the government and emphasise the ruling party's commitment to fulfilling electoral promises. The study also reveals that linguistic and rhetorical strategies in presidential discourse not only aim to persuade citizens about the state of the nation but also conceal power differentials and biases of leaders. Dadugblor (2016) emphasises the significance of pronouns in presidential discourse, stating that they play a crucial role in including or excluding audiences and legitimizing power to win their trust.

Opoku-Mensah (2014) conducted a study to analyse the political speeches delivered by Kwame Nkrumah. The study employed several correlative approaches, including Aristotle's Levels of Proofs (2007), Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's Argument (1969), and Bitzer's Situation (1968). The study found that Dr. Kwame Nkrumah consistently used logical association as a rhetorical tool. Through this technique, he linked two entities, either positively or negatively to shape public perception. Negative associations were employed when describing Western colonial powers, aiming to generate unfavourable opinions about them. Additionally, Opoku-Mensah (2014) found that Dr. Kwame Nkrumah strategically targeted political opponents in Ghana and Africa using negative associations. On the other hand, he rhetorically positioned his political party, the Convention Peoples Party (CPP), as the sole viable option in Ghana, relegating other parties to a secondary role.

Studies have been conducted on political speeches delivered by Ghanaian Presidents. Most of these studies focus on analysing the linguistic and stylistic elements employed in the speeches as well as some persuasive

techniques found in the speeches. The present study is relevant because it shifts the attention from the stylistic and linguistic analysis of political speeches to a rhetorical analysis of the health policies of President Akufo-Addo as captured in the 2017-2024 SONA.

2.3 Studies on Health Communication

Health communication as a field of study has also received scholarly attention from the sciences to communication and media studies scholars. According to the Society for Health Communication (SHC, 2017), health communication is a relevant field of study that investigates and explains how human-mediated communication influences health-related outcomes.

Coker (2023) focused on the use of rhetorical empathy by Ghana's President, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, during the COVID-19 health crisis. The research identified five main rhetorical strategies employed by President Akufo-Addo to address the crisis and manage the anxieties of the Ghanaian people. These strategies included Godsplainning, epideictic rhetoric, clusivity, enthusiastic action, and presidential power. According to Coker (2023), President Akufo-Addo used empathy in his communication by projecting himself as a leader who empathized with the struggles of the Ghanaian people. He demonstrated care and concern for the citizenry by showing an understanding of their physical, psychological, and financial pains caused by the pandemic. Additionally, he balanced empathy with firmness, using his presidential power to enforce compliance with COVID-19 prevention protocols, and even employing threats when necessary.

Similarly, Stevens et al., (2020) discussed the importance of empathic communication in healthcare settings, especially during times of crisis such as

the global COVID-19 pandemic. They highlight the challenges faced by healthcare professionals in effectively communicating with patients, staff, and the community during this unprecedented time. According to Stevens et al., empathetic communication was instrumental in enhancing patient experience, supporting staff morale, and improving organizational communication during this challenging time. The study outlines specific strategies and techniques employed by the institution to enhance empathic communication, including training programs, scripting language, and the creation of resources for different communication scenarios. Stevens et al., (2020) emphasise the significance of perspective-taking, active listening, and non-verbal communication in fostering empathic connections with patients and colleagues. Furthermore, the study found that through the incorporation of empathic communication practices into their operations, the institution was able to navigate the challenges of the pandemic more effectively and maintain a sense of connection and support for all stakeholders involved.

Yachin and Duong (2024), investigated the impact of meaningful media experiences, specifically through music videos, on vaccination message communication among vaccine-hesitant individuals. The study explored how exposure to emotionally engaging content can influence attitudes towards vaccination and examined whether viewing personally relevant music videos can evoke meaningful emotions that affect the reception of vaccination messages. The study employed an experimental design where participants were exposed to either meaningful music videos or neutral videos containing vaccination messages. The study measured anti-vaccination attitudes as a key outcome variable, with a meaningful effect serving as a mediator for

hypotheses testing. The study also found that Exposure to meaningful music videos was found to have a significant impact on reducing anti-vaccination attitudes among vaccine-hesitant individuals. The study identified a joint-mediating mechanism involving meaningful effect, empathy, and reactance in influencing attitudes towards vaccination. The results suggest that incorporating emotionally engaging content, such as meaningful music videos, in vaccination messages can be an effective strategy for addressing vaccine hesitancy. Understanding the role of empathy and reactance in shaping attitudes towards vaccination can inform the development of more persuasive communication strategies.

Rimal and Lapinski (2009) highlights the pivotal role of health communication in public health, emphasizing the significance of health communication in promoting preventive measures, influencing behaviours, promoting preventive measures, and enhancing the overall well-being of individuals. Drawing insights from James Carey's conceptualization of communication as both a transmission and ritualistic process, Rimal and Lapinski (2009) argue that while many interventions focus primarily on transmitting information, they often overlook the ritualistic aspects that are inherent in communication, such as social interaction and meaning-making. By adopting a dual view of communication, they advocate for a more holistic approach that considers both the transmission of messages and the social contexts in which they are received. They identified three key intervention considerations derived from this dual view of communication.

Firstly, Rimal and Lapinski (2009) highlight the importance of recognizing the individual and social factors that shape how messages are

received and interpreted, as well as stress the need for careful examination of message discrepancies between sender and receiver to avoid unintended effects after or in the course of communicating. For my study on presidential rhetoric and health communication, I aimed to uncover any parallel lines between the strategies outlined by Rimal and Lapinski and the communication tactics employed by President Akufo Addo in promoting health policies. Using Aristotle's Rhetoric and Segal's rhetoric of health frameworks, the present study will uncover how President Akufo Addo's health policies are communicated to the public.

Malikhao (2016) in his study on Effective Health Communication for Sustainable Development, discusses the role of governments in ensuring the health of their populations through the provision of adequate health and social measures. The study highlights the importance of health communication in promoting health for all and reducing inequalities caused by unequal development. The study stresses the need for informed public opinion and active cooperation to improve public health outcomes. He postulates that health communication should no longer be a top-down approach but should consider the enabling environment that influences individual decision-making and health behaviours. It mentions the importance of empowerment, advocacy, empathy, intercultural communication skills, media literacy, and health literacy for effective health communication. Malikhao (2016), emphasises the significance of effective health communication in several key aspects: Effective health communication is crucial for promoting a holistic approach to health, encompassing physical, mental, and social well-being, rather than just the absence of disease and that everyone has the fundamental right to enjoy

the highest attainable standard of health, irrespective of socio-economic, political, or religious status.

According to Malikhao (2016), effective health communication plays a vital role in reducing health inequalities caused by unequal development, with governments being responsible for providing appropriate health and social measures to address these disparities. Further, he adds that health communication should focus on empowering individuals and communities to make informed decisions about their health and advocate for their well-being. This involves fostering empathy, intercultural communication skills, media literacy, and health literacy among health communicators. Moreover, the study suggests that effective health communication requires interdisciplinary training, encompassing knowledge from public health, journalism, communication, sociology, anthropology, environmental science, and management. He believes that these diverse skill sets are essential for health communicators to address complex health challenges.

Chan et al, (2020) compared the development processes and key messaging strategies used in creating health communication materials for COVID-19 prevention in Madagascar and Japan. Chan et al, emphasise the importance of tailored communication materials during a health crisis and the need for continuous learning and updates to build trust with the target audience. Using a qualitative case study, they conducted a comparative analysis of the health communication products developed in Madagascar and Japan. The study focused on the framing and adaptation of key messages, the use of culturally accepted designs and colours, and the involvement of graphic designers in creating visually appealing materials. The iterative process of

cultural adaptation and collaboration between community members and professionals was highlighted. The study revealed that both cases used a participatory approach in developing health communication materials, emphasizing cultural adaptation and the use of reliable sources to enhance the legitimacy of the information. The materials were tailored to the specific contexts of Madagascar and Japan, considering the literacy levels, lifestyles, and preferences of the target audiences. The findings emphasised the importance of collaboration, trust, and iterative processes in creating effective health communication materials during a crisis.

The literature reviewed revealed several gaps, like the lack of focus on presidential rhetoric in health communication during the health crisis and the under-exploration of the dual view of communication. While Coker (2023) researched the rhetorical strategies of President Akufo-Addo during the COVID-19 pandemic, Coker did not fully integrate frameworks like Aristotle's Rhetoric and Segal's Rhetoric of Health to analyse the impact of these strategies on public health policy reception. Similarly, studies by Stevens et al. (2020), Yachin and Duong (2024), and Rimal and Lapinski (2009) emphasise empathetic communication and meaningful experiences. However, they do not connect the findings to the unique rhetorical context of presidential health communication. Again, Malikhao (2016) and Chan et al. (2020) address the effectiveness of health communication and culture but overlooked the specific rhetorical approaches that are used by national leaders in communicating their health policies to their public. The present study aims to address these gaps by conducting a rhetorical analysis of President Akufo-Addo's health policies, to explore how he communicates his health policies

and how the communication strategies align with the established rhetorical and health communication theories to influence public health outcomes.

2.4 Kairos and Kronos in Presidential Rhetoric

Coker (2022) in his paper titled: Resisting the Tyranny of Convention: A Kairos Analysis of President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo's Investiture Speech at the University of Cape Coast" provides a detailed examination of the political rhetoric employed by President Akufo-Addo during his investiture speech. The author delves into the concept of kairos, emphasizing how the President strategically transformed an academic occasion into a political arena to address misconceptions about his leadership and set the stage for his upcoming speech at the Africa Journalists Leadership Conference. Coker highlights the President's use of language and rhetorical strategies to create a temporal kairos, particularly in addressing Ghana's media freedom and positioning himself as a champion of free speech. For instance; " *Chancellor, I have taken longer than I should in making what will normally be a short acceptance speech for the honour done to me by the University but I do not think there could have been a better opportunity to make these points than in an academic atmosphere you have presented to me today*" (p.1). The analysis of excerpts from the speech demonstrates how President Akufo-Addo navigated sensitive issues, such as the unresolved murder of journalist Ahmed Suale, and reassured the audience of his government's commitment to justice. Moreover, the paper acknowledged the constraints faced by the President in delivering his speech, including the ceremonial nature of the event and the need to focus on educational themes. Despite these limitations, according to Coker, President Akufo-Addo skilfully crafted his rhetoric to resonate with the

audience and asserted his dedication to upholding individual freedoms and press freedom in Ghana.

Benson (2001) aimed to explore how Abraham Lincoln strategically employed the concept of *kairos* in his speeches and writings to address the political and social context of his time and during critical junctures in American history such as the Civil War. Lincoln's speeches and writings were analysed using a qualitative research approach to identify instances where *kairos* are employed in political discourse. The findings of the study revealed that Abraham Lincoln skilfully employed the concept of *kairos* in his rhetoric to adapt his messages to the specific needs and circumstances of his audience and the prevailing political climate. Through the strategic timing of his speeches and tailoring his arguments to resonate with the concerns of the time, Lincoln effectively used *kairos* to enhance the impact and persuasiveness of his communication.

Kronos, representing the chronological order and the passage of time, is a crucial element in presidential rhetoric, impacting how leaders convey their agendas, respond to crises, and maintain public engagement. This concept is explored extensively in the literature and highlights the strategic timing of presidential communications and its effects on public perception and policy implementation. According to Graber (2003), presidents often choose specific times, such as the start of the legislative session, to outline their priorities and influence legislative processes. For instance, in the United States, the State of the Union Address is traditionally delivered in January to set the policy agenda for the year. Similarly, President Akufo-Addo's State of the Nation Addresses, usually delivered in February, align with the opening of Ghana's parliamentary

session, strategically positioning his priorities at the forefront of legislative discussions. In times of crisis, the timing of presidential communications becomes even more critical. Coombs (2007) posits that timely updates during crises help to maintain public trust and manage the narrative effectively. Jamieson and Campbell (2001) postulate that effective presidential rhetoric often builds on previous speeches, creating a narrative of continuous progress and accountability. This approach helps in demonstrating a commitment to long-term goals. Also, The regularity and predictability of presidential addresses also play a significant role in building public trust. Kernell (2006) argues that consistent, predictable communications help create a sense of stability and reliability. President Akufo-Addo's consistent delivery of his State of the Nation Addresses in February, with few exceptions, reinforces a sense of transparency and accountability. This regularity allows citizens to anticipate and prepare for governmental updates, enhancing the credibility of the administration. Zarefsky (2004) asserts that flexibility in the timing of speeches to address sudden changes or crises effectively. Presidents who adapt their communication schedules to current events can better manage public sentiment and policy responses. The previous studies did not analyse the kronos (chronological order) of the various speech types. Therefore, the present study will fill this gap by examining the chronological order of the speeches to find out if the order also contributes to the effective communication of President Akufo-Addo's health policies.

Conceptual Framework

2.5 SONA as a Rhetorical Genre

The State of the Nation Address (SONA) is a distinctive rhetorical genre that holds a significant place within the tradition of political communication. It is a formal address which is delivered annually by a sitting president to the legislative body, the public, and various stakeholders, with the goal to outline his or her administration's achievements, challenges, and priorities for the coming year. This address is not merely a report on the state of national affairs, but it is a highly strategic form of communication that is both ceremonial and persuasive. As a rhetorical genre, the SONA draws upon certain conventions, expectations, and situational characteristics that define its structure and purpose, making it a crucial platform for the president to influence public perception and policy direction. According to Calonge (2016), the SONA employs various rhetorical devices, such as metaphors, and utilizes the classical canons of rhetoric including invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery to effectively influence the audience.

One of the defining features of the SONA as a rhetorical genre is its ceremonial nature, which situates it within the tradition of epideictic rhetoric. "Epideictic rhetoric is largely understood as a response to communal exigencies and is commonly referred to as 'a rhetoric of display' or a 'praise and blame' in that it 'displays what is worthy of praise and narrates the example as a contemporary point of reference'" (Ore, 2019). In the context of the SONA, the president often emphasizes national pride, unity, and shared aspirations, drawing on symbols of national identity and invoking a common vision for the future. This aspect of the address serves to strengthen the

emotional and cultural ties between the leadership and the citizenry, as well as promote a sense of national cohesion. However, while the ceremonial function of the SONA is prominent, it also contains elements of deliberative rhetoric, as it seeks to shape future actions and policy directions. The president uses the platform to present legislative agendas, propose new initiatives, and justify policy choices, aiming to persuade both lawmakers and the public of the validity and necessity of these proposals.

Another critical aspect of the SONA as a rhetorical genre is its role in agenda-setting (Teten, 2003). The address provides the president with a unique opportunity to define the key issues that will dominate national discourse in the coming year. This agenda-setting function is particularly important in democratic societies, where the president must negotiate the attention and support of various constituencies. Through the SONA, the president can signal to the legislature and the public which issues will receive focus and investment, while simultaneously framing these issues in a way that aligns with the administration's values and political goals. The ability to control this agenda and to shape public and legislative priorities underscores the rhetorical power inherent in this address.

Furthermore, the SONA as a rhetorical genre is characterized by its situational and adaptive nature. While certain formal structures and expectations remain consistent, such as the inclusion of economic performance, social policies, and national security, the specific content and tone of the address are shaped by the prevailing socio-political context. The exigence of the moment, as defined by current challenges or opportunities, directly influences the focus of the address. For example, in times of economic

crisis, the SONA may emphasize fiscal policy and economic recovery measures, whereas during a public health crisis, it might centre on healthcare, public safety, and social welfare programs. This adaptability allows the SONA to maintain relevance year after year, as each address responds to the unique circumstances and needs of the nation at a given time. The ability of a president to effectively align the address with the concerns and hopes of the audience is critical to the success of the SONA as a rhetorical act.

The SONA also functions as a genre of rhetorical performance, where the president's delivery, tone, and language are as crucial as the content itself. The performative aspect involves the use of rhetoric to convey confidence, empathy, and leadership, aiming to inspire trust and a sense of direction. This performative dimension is important because it shapes how the message is received by both the immediate audience, such as members of parliament, and the broader audience, including citizens and the media. In this way, the SONA serves as a stage for demonstrating presidential ethos by projecting qualities such as credibility, competence, and a commitment to national well-being. The manner in which the president balances optimism and realism, aspiration, and accountability, can significantly impact how the public and political stakeholders perceive the address and, by extension, the administration's legitimacy.

In addition, the intertextual nature of the SONA is crucial to understanding it as a rhetorical genre. Each address is situated within a continuum of previous addresses, referencing past policies, achievements, and challenges while setting the tone for future discourse. This intertextuality allows the president to draw on historical narratives, institutional memory, and

continuity, positioning the current administration within a broader trajectory of national development. By doing so, the president can claim credit for past successes while also demonstrating an awareness of unresolved issues. This continuity not only enhances the sense of progress and stability but also enables the president to construct a narrative of change or transformation when needed. Thus, the SONA functions as both a reflection on the past and a projection into the future, grounding current policies within a historical and political context.

2.6 Presidential Rhetoric

Presidential rhetoric is a crucial concept in the study of political communication, leadership, and governance. It refers to the ways in which presidents use language and discourse to influence public opinion, shape policy debates, assert authority, and communicate with a diverse range of stakeholders, including citizens, other branches of government, international actors, and media. The concept extends beyond simple speechmaking, encompassing the strategic use of language, symbolism, narrative, and persuasion to achieve various political and social goals (Tulis, 1987). Presidential rhetoric is a strategic form of communication that is integral to the practice of leadership. It involves the president's ability to persuade the public, set the national agenda, and serve as a symbolic leader. For instance, through key speeches like the State of the Union, presidents can define national priorities, spotlight issues, and frame the way topics are discussed (Campbell & Jamieson, 2008). Presidential rhetoric also plays a critical role in legitimizing authority by allowing presidents to justify their actions and

decisions, thereby maintaining or enhancing their legitimacy as leaders (Kernell, 1997).

The nature and style of presidential rhetoric have evolved significantly throughout history, and has reflected changes in communication technology, political culture, and the nature of the presidency itself. In the early republic, presidents like George Washington and Thomas Jefferson viewed public rhetoric as undignified, preferring formal addresses and written messages to Congress (Ellis, 1998). This period emphasized a restrained style, adhering to norms of republican virtue, where excessive rhetoric was seen as potentially demagogic. However, with figures like Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson, the rise of the modern presidency transformed the use of rhetoric, making direct appeals to the public a central feature of presidential communication (Tulis, 1987). Franklin D. Roosevelt further expanded this role with his "fireside chats" during the Great Depression, using radio to communicate directly with the public (Houck, 2002). In the television era, presidents like John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan used the visual medium to connect with audiences, making TV an essential platform for modern presidential rhetoric (Hart, 1987). More recently, the advent of social media has allowed presidents like Barack Obama and Donald Trump to communicate instantaneously and directly with millions, marking a significant shift toward unfiltered, immediate communication that bypasses traditional media gatekeepers (Ott, 2017).

One key function of presidential rhetoric is the informative role of rhetoric, where presidents provide updates on policies, crises, and governmental actions. During the COVID-19 pandemic, for example, presidential addresses

were critical in guiding public understanding and behavior (Bennett, 2020). Another significant function is agenda-setting and framing, where presidents elevate certain issues to the forefront of national concern, influencing public and legislative priorities. Through framing, presidents shape how issues are perceived by the public, making speeches like the State of the Union pivotal in shaping the political landscape (Edwards & Wood, 1999). Beyond information and agenda-setting, presidential rhetoric is deeply persuasive. This persuasion often involves appeals to shared values and historical narratives to position policy decisions as aligned with the nation's ideals (Neustadt, 1990). Moreover, presidential rhetoric often seeks to tap into the emotional core of the nation, offering comfort in times of crisis or tragedy, and inspiring hope and unity (Campbell & Jamieson, 2008). For instance, after national tragedies, presidents have used rhetoric to unite and heal the country, emphasizing shared resilience and common purpose.

2.7 Health Communication

Health communication is a field that focuses on how information related to health is conveyed and understood. It has evolved significantly since the 1960s, when scholars began to recognize the importance of effective communication in promoting health and preventing disease (Kreps & Thornton, 1992). Initially, the field drew from theories and methodologies of social sciences and psychology, particularly in understanding patient-provider interactions and public health campaigns. For instance, public health initiatives like the Stanford Heart Disease Prevention Program exemplified how communication strategies could effectively promote health behaviors (Kreps et al., 1995). However, over the years, health communication has

expanded beyond traditional boundaries. It now encompasses a wide range of topics, including the role of communication in public health policy, health literacy, and the impact of social media on health information dissemination (Cohen, 2020). Various definitions of health communication have emerged, but a common thread is the understanding that it involves sharing information to improve health outcomes and foster better decision-making among individuals and communities.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), health communication “encompasses the study and use of communication strategies to inform and influence individual and community decisions that enhance health” (WHO, 2016). This definition explains the goal of health communication: to empower individuals with knowledge that promotes healthier choices.

The importance of health communication cannot be overstated, especially in today's digital age, where misinformation can spread rapidly. Effective health communication is essential for educating the public about health policies, disease prevention, and health promotion strategies. It plays a crucial role in shaping public perceptions and behaviours, particularly during health crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic (Hannawa et al., 2021). Health communication helps individuals make informed decisions about their health and well-being through the provision of clear and accurate information.

In the context of this study, analysing the health policies of President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo through the lens of health communication is crucial. His State of the Nation Addresses (SONA) serve as a platform for

conveying important health-related information to the public. Therefore, analysing these addresses will throw more light into how President Akufo-Addo communicates his health policies to the Ghanaian public.

Theoretical Framework

2.8 Aristotle's Rhetoric Theory

The current study employs Aristotle's rhetoric theory to dissect President Akufo Addo's health communications. "A useful approach for the analysis of the persuasiveness of political speeches is rhetorical analysis. Rhetoric, in its many manifestations, has traditionally focused on ethical speaking as well as the effective persuasive strategies used by rhetors to construct and convey messages in particularly situated contexts" (Dadugblor, 2016, P.11). The technique of evaluating a text (or spoken words, visuals, and other kinds of communication) to identify how the author persuades their audience is known as rhetorical analysis. "It is more concerned with the "how" than the "what. Instead of simply summarising the text, rhetorical theory considers a variety of factors, including ethos, pathos, logos, and Kairos (Nickerson, 2015). According to Dadugblor, in both classical and modern traditions, rhetoric continues to be used as an analytical method for the analysis of texts, including but not limited to political speeches. For rhetorical scholars, the variations between the ideas associated with different figures like Aristotle, Cicero, Plato, and Isocrates, amongst others, are significant and the subject of a productive, ongoing body of scholarship. "In terms of rhetorical theory and analysis, however, the most influential figure here has been Aristotle, who offered a systematic theory of the means of persuasion" (Nickerson, 2015).

Rhetoric, with its roots in Aristotelian philosophy, examines how texts persuade and influence, often via ethos (credibility), pathos (emotion), logos (logic), and kairos (timing/context). The Rhetoric is considered by many rhetoricians as “the most important single work on persuasion ever written.” Unlike Plato, who criticized rhetoric as immoral, Aristotle saw it as an art worthy of systematic study. The treatise falls into three divisions based on the classes of listeners to speeches: deliberative rhetoric (concerned with advising or dissuading an audience regarding future actions), judicial rhetoric (about legal matters), and epideictic rhetoric (focusing on praise or blame in ceremonial contexts). Rhetoric as a potent tool in a presidential message according to Aristotle deliberative because the topic of the messages is political and advice about future action is usually discussed (Aristotle, trans. 2007). According to Aristotle, rhetoric is “an ability in each [specific] case, to see the available means of persuasion” (p. 37). Rhetoric often involves using emotional appeals, logical arguments and appeals to credibility or authority to persuade the audience to accept a particular point of view (Aristotle, 1926).

The idea of an audience is what defines the rhetorical theory. Hence, there will not be rhetoric without the presence of an audience or audiences. That is why Segal (2005) postulates that “a core principle of the rhetorical theory is that discursive encounters are conditioned by speakers’ audiences” (p.37). Segal made this observation and statement in her study on the rhetoric of medicine. This supports Aristotle’s assertion that a speech is a joint of three things; the speaker, his subject matter and the person addressed. McCormack, (2014) adds that every audience is unique as such, rhetors have ways of presenting arguments towards specific audiences. McCormack's (2014) study

was on rhetoric in the courtroom, and he acknowledged Aristotle's modes of persuasion as applicable in the legal setting as well. The difference is that in each specific setting, the rhetor uses his or her rhetoric differently, to engage different forms of audiences. Rhetoric, therefore, is an interdisciplinary subject since all disciplines make use of it and acknowledge its importance in dialogue. Charland (1987) emphasises that constitutive rhetoric shapes community identity and perception.

- **Ethos**

According to Aristotle, the very first mode of persuasion, known as ethos, is dependent on the speaker's character and not only the content of their speeches. It refers to the speaker's personality, credibility, and reputation as communicated to the listener through their language, conduct, and actions. This rhetorical element is dependent on the reputation of the person delivering the message. The author or speaker must be a well-known figure or authority on the subject. Aristotle believed that audiences are more likely to be persuaded by speakers who are perceived as knowledgeable and experienced in their field. This can be done by citing relevant credentials, qualifications, or firsthand experiences. According to Aristotle's work "Rhetoric," ethos is one of three basic ways of Persuasion that are achieved through three means: phronesis (practical wisdom), arete (virtue), and eunoia (goodwill). Aristotle posits that the credibility of the speaker is crucial in persuading the audience to accept their argument because the audience is more inclined to trust and accept ideas provided by a speaker with a positive ethos. He says that various things, including skill, experience, reputation, and personal attributes can influence a speaker's ethos. For example:

"Persuasion is achieved by the speaker's character when the speech is so spoken as to make us think him credible. We believe good men more fully and more readily than others: this is true generally whatever the question is, and true where exact certainty is impossible and opinions are divided" (Aristotle, Book 1, Chapter 2).

Ethos is not solely about personal character but also involves showcasing expertise, demonstrating moral uprightness, and expressing goodwill (Aristotle & Kennedy, 1991). Aristotle recognized that it is not true, as some writers assume in their discussions on rhetoric, that the goodwill revealed by the speaker contributes nothing to his power of persuasion; on the contrary, he believes that the speaker's character may almost be called the most effective means of persuasion he possesses. Analysing the present study in the light of ethos will help me to understand how President Akufo-Addo establishes his credibility speaks about his health policies.

- **Pathos**

The second mode, pathos, involves the speaker's ability to evoke emotional responses from the audience. According to Fortenbaugh (1975), who agrees with Aristotle, a reader's reaction to an author's emotional pleas demonstrates intelligence that can result in Persuasion. Aristotle posits that "our everyday experiences leave little doubt that our emotions can influence the decisions we make, much as the outcome of our decisions can influence the emotions we experience" (p.66). An emotional appeal allows the audience to respond emotionally while also experiencing the writer's feelings. Pathos is the effect of communication on the listener's emotions and intellect. It also has

a rhetorical effect on readers' judgments and actions (Ramage & Bean, 1998). Burke (1969) defines rhetoric as an appeal to emotions and prejudices.

Rhetors sometimes capitalize on the state and conditions audiences find themselves in and capitalize on their emotions by using emotional appeals to lure and gain audiences' trust. This is why Aristotle says that "our judgments when we are pleased and friendly are not the same as when we are pained and hostile" (p.67). Richard Weaver, a modern rhetorician, claims that pathos is a God's term as well as a Devil's term. This is because according to him, emotional appeal or emotions can be negative or positive in that if you do not use it strategically and carefully, it may yield a negative impact on the audience. Therefore, it is a double-edged blade that must be managed with care when using it. Aristotle categorized emotions into anger, fear, pity, and empathy. Hence, depending on the context and the audience, several types of emotions can be employed to achieve the desired persuasive effect. Although pathos relies on emotions, Aristotle stressed the importance of complimenting emotions with logic. He argued that an effective persuasive argument should appeal to both the audience's emotions and their rationality. The concept of pathos will help me understand how President Akufo-Addo uses emotive appeals to effectively communicate his health policies to the Ghanaian public.

- **Logos**

The appeal to logical reasoning, known as logos, is the third persuasive technique, according to Aristotle. The term "logical appeal" pertains to the linguistic, communicative, and rhetorical strategies employed by a speaker or writer to persuade their audience. Aristotle uses logos in Rhetoric to refer to proofs available in the words, arguments, or logic of speech. The term "logos,"

derived from the Greek language, can be interpreted as “word” or “reason”. By presenting robust evidence, data, or rational arguments, a communicator strengthens the logical appeal of the message. “Logos is a tool used to convince the audience to realize the truth and even the audience can use the same tool to understand the hidden truth in the words of the speaker” (Murthy & Ghosal, 2014, p.251). According to Herrick (1997), logos studies arguments or reasoning related closely to logic.

A writer can use two distinct kinds of logic: A writer can use inductive logic by presenting to their audience some parallel illustrations and then drawing a general idea from them. Inductive Reasoning proceeds from a specific area to the general. According to Murthy and Ghosal (2014), inductive reasoning of logos collects the data of information regarding observations in the form of premises, uses leading or relative mathematical reasoning, and is future-oriented. This type of logos uses mythical hypothetical and historical examples to conclude. On the other hand, a writer can employ deductive logic by presenting a few general propositions to their readers and then drawing a specific statement of truth from them. Murthy and Ghosal (2014) posit that deductive reasoning is past or present-oriented as its premises are already evaluated and through which some conclusions can be made. Any argument presented, either inductive or deductive reasoning logos, portrays the speaker as a credible person since he or she can provide logical reasoning to support their claims.

According to Nickerson (2015), the three means of persuasion are referred to as rhetorical appeals and are often a primary framework for organising the work of a rhetorical analyst working from a traditional

perspective. The essence of rhetoric is the art of persuasion, and presidents often employ specific rhetorical strategies to gain public support, shape perceptions, and drive policy acceptance (Aristotle & Kennedy, 1991). Kairos, an ancient Greek term for an appropriate time, has long been significant in rhetorical thought because it provides analysts with a compelling idea for assessing the timing of communication events.

The study of presidential rhetoric and health communication from a rhetorical perspective becomes advantageous due to the influential role that leaders, particularly presidents, assume in using their platforms to engage in persuasion, dissemination of information, and motivation of their constituents. The choice of vocabulary, manner of expression, and communication platform can exert a significant impact on public sentiment, and policy trajectories, and perhaps shape historical developments. This theory bears significance to the field of the study of rhetoric as it will facilitate the comprehension of the persuasive strategies which are employed by President Akufo Addo to elicit national pride, appeal to shared values, or credibly present scientific evidence. Additionally, it will enable me to ascertain whether President Akufo-Addo employs fear, hope, compassion, or urgency when addressing health policies.

In the context of Kairos, it would be beneficial to examine how President Akufo Addo strategically employs timing and context to reinforce his message, particularly considering the health difficulties encountered by Ghana or the occurrence of global health crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. This analysis is crucial since rhetoric possesses the capacity to influence and guide subsequent actions. During the COVID-19 pandemic, it is possible that President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo's speeches

incorporated a combination of statistical data (logos), emotionally compelling narratives of impacted families (pathos), appeals to the nation's collective identity and credibility (ethos), and an emphasis on the importance of timely action (kairos) to effectively communicate with the Ghanaian public.

Aristotle's rhetoric theory is not without critiques. Lunsford and Ede (1984) opine that the rational man of Aristotle's *Rhetoric* is not a logic-chopping automaton, but a language-using animal who unites reason and emotion in discourse with others. This means that for a fact that a speaker will unite all the modes of Persuasion, audiences still have the power to decide for themselves whether to side with the speaker or not. Again, while the Aristotelian rhetoric's primary association with persuasion has persisted across classical and modern studies, not all ancient scholars viewed it solely in this light. For instance, Quintilian regarded rhetoric as the skill of a virtuous individual articulating just, equitable, and truthful ideas. In contemporary rhetorical analysis, there is a rising interest in revisiting rhetoric's non-persuasive aspects. This perspective suggests that attempting to persuade others may entail imposing unfamiliar opinions onto them. Some scholars do not also agree on the universal applicability of Aristotle's rhetoric theory across distinct cultural contexts.

The Aristotelian rhetoric theory is essential to this study on the basis that the three modes of evaluating persuasion, as the theory posits, could help identify which mode or modes of persuasion is or are mostly employed by President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo when communicating his health policies to the Ghanaian public and how these persuasive techniques make his communication effective.

2.9 Health and the Rhetoric of Medicine

Judy Segal's "Health and the Rhetoric of Medicine" published in 2005, stands as a seminal work within the field of medical rhetoric, which sheds light on the complex relationship between language and health discourse.

Health and the Rhetoric of Medicine by Segal is a book that encourages readers to reflect on individual, public, and global health issues from a rhetorical perspective. This framework presents a couple of case studies to explain how language constructs and perpetuates societal perceptions, policies, and practices that are related to health, leaving a profound influence on individual and collective well-being. The framework recognizes that language operates not merely as a neutral medium for communication but as a potent force that shapes and reflects social realities. Through an interdisciplinary lens drawing from rhetoric, sociology, anthropology, and medical humanities, Segal illuminates how linguistic choices and techniques employed by leaders, policymakers, healthcare professionals, and the media frame health issues, shape public attitudes and justify policy decisions.

Segal first talks about the rhetorical principle of *kairos*, which refers to contingency and fitness-to-situation. She uses the concept of *kairos* which has to do with a rhetor seizing a moment and capitalising on the unique circumstances of a particular context in the field of medicine to explain how practitioners should refer to medical history to seize some opportune moments to make certain decisions. "Segal emphasises that physicians should persuade their patients based on specific conditions, background, and needs of the patient." (Mao, 2008, p.85).

Again, Judy Segal examines various aspects of communication between healthcare providers and patients, as well as their families. She analyses how certain patient identities, such as those who suffer migraine headaches and hypochondriacs, are rhetorically constructed even though physiology and biochemistry account for that. She posits that “the physician-patient interview is a rhetorical encounter in which the behaviour of one interlocutor is determined to a great extent by his or her view of the other” (p. 40). Mao (2008) asserts that this “explains why the interaction between patients and physicians can strongly influence the treatment and the treatment outcomes” (p.85). Thus, the intractable problem of a patient’s rejection of a doctor’s advice, says Segal, can be considered a rhetorical failure or a failure of persuasion.

Additionally, Segal talks about conversations between healthcare providers and family members of people who are close to death, exploring the rhetorical dynamics at play in these interactions. This is the most interesting yet personal part of her book where she is the relative to the close-to-death patient who happened to be her mother. She raises questions about trust, expertise, and decision-making. According to her, while it is not certain that medical expertise is the primary requirement in decision-making for end-of-life, medical expertise may be needed to be able to make decisions regarding medical treatment, especially on the appropriateness of antibiotics and or the advisability of childhood vaccinations. Segal confirms that the rhetorical principle of ethos, the character of the speaker, is a central element in persuasion as Aristotle posits. The chapters six and seven of Segal’s *Rhetoric of Medicine*, according to Zerbe (2007) Segal’s choice of situations stands out

because rhetoric is vivid and prominent in them to the point, it appears that the situations may not even exist without it. Segal moved ahead to talk about how health practitioners use metaphors like “diagnosis is health” (p.125), “medicine is a business” (p.124) and “the body is a machine” (p.115) to communicate with their patients. She added that the outcomes of health-policy debates are challenged by the metaphors used and those metaphors are significant to public perceptions of health and illness. She suggests that metaphors of silence together with other forms of metaphors be used in the rhetoric of medicine.

An underlying assumption of Segal's framework is that language serves as a site of contestation where competing interests vie for dominance. Within this rhetorical arena, different stakeholders deploy different forms of linguistic techniques to advance their agendas, whether they are advocating for some healthcare interventions, legitimizing institutional authority, or contesting prevailing health narratives. Mao (2008) postulates that although Segal primarily focuses on analysing Western medicine and health systems, a lot of the rhetorical analyses and arguments in this book are also applicable in cross-cultural healthcare contexts. Mao (2008) further advises that Segal's book should not be of interest to only rhetoricians and health communication researchers, but also to medical practitioners, public health policy advocates and other people who have an interest in rhetoric and health issues. However, even though Segal's framework gives insights into the rhetorical dimensions of health discourse, it is not without critique. Some scholars argue that the emphasis on language may overshadow structural determinants of health, such

as socio-economic inequalities and institutional barriers, and that will limit the framework's explanatory scope.

For my study which seeks to analyse the health policies of President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, applying Segal's framework on the rhetoric of medicine will provide a rich analytical tool to aid me unpack the rhetorical strategies that President Akufo-Addo employs when communicating his health policies to the Ghanaian public. While Segal's framework operates within a more contemporary context and focuses specifically on health discourse, it resonates with several key aspects of Aristotle's rhetoric. Both Segal and Aristotle recognize the leading role of language in shaping perceptions and influencing action. Aristotle famously defines rhetoric as the art of persuasion using language, highlighting the importance of rhetoric in public deliberation and decision-making. Similarly, Segal emphasises the power of language to construct meaning and shape social realities, particularly within the domain of health and medicine. By analysing the rhetorical strategies deployed by actors in the health sphere, Segal elucidates how language functions as a tool for persuasion, advocacy, and social control.

Moreover, both Segal and Aristotle address the persuasive function of rhetoric, albeit in different contexts. Aristotle's rhetoric encompasses a wide range of rhetorical devices and strategies applicable to various domains, and Segal's focus on health and medicine narrows the scope to a specific field of discourse. Nevertheless, the underlying principles of persuasion articulated by Aristotle's modes of persuasion, ethos (appeal to credibility), pathos (appeal to emotion), and logos (appeal to logic), remain relevant to Segal's analysis of health rhetoric. For instance, Segal made mention of how healthcare

professionals use appeals to authority and expertise (ethos) to convey medical information. Again, Segal and Aristotle recognize the inherently rhetorical nature of public discourse and its entanglement with power dynamics. Therefore, the application of these two theories to my study will help me understand how power dynamics and persuasion influence health communication discourse in the Ghanaian context.

2.10 Conclusion

The chapter reviewed existing literature that is related to the study. The review began with some discussions on Studies on Political speeches, studies on State of the Nation Address, studies on health communication and finally kairos and kronos in presidential rhetoric. Aristotle's rhetoric theory and the rhetoric of medicine by Judy Segal have also been discussed in this chapter. The Aristotelian rhetoric together with the rhetoric of health throws more light on how leaders, health practitioners and stakeholders effectively communicate health-related issues. The next chapter, chapter three, will discuss how data for the present study would be collected and analysed.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This study seeks to uncover how President Akufo-Addo communicates his health policies to the Ghanaian public. This chapter, which describes the methodology, considers such issues as the research design, the sampling procedure, the data sets, sample size, data collection and the analytical framework. The chapter also outlines the ethical principles guiding the data collection and addresses potential challenges.

3.1 Research Approach and Design

The present study adopts the qualitative research approach. The study's explanatory adequacy is evident through the clarity of its research objectives and questions. Unlike quantitative research, which relies on numerical data and statistical analysis, qualitative research emphasises interpretation, context, and depth. Creswell & Creswell (2017) define the quantitative research approach as “a methodical and empirical examination of observable events using statistical, mathematical, or computational tools (p.3).” For Tracy (2010), “qualitative research entails a naturalistic and interpretive approach to the world” (p. 27). It aims to capture the richness of lived experiences. Qualitative researchers immerse themselves in the field, observing, interviewing, and analysing data in context. Creswell (1994) also argues that because of the flexible nature and procedures of the qualitative research approach, it is the appropriate design to explore and describe any phenomenon that is inconspicuous to a study. This research approach involves methodically and objectively counting and coding various specific contents or qualities

within a set of media; specifically for this study, President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo's health policies that are captured in the State of the Nation addresses (SONA). Considering the timing and context of these speeches is crucial. The opportune moments when these policies were communicated and the sequential times when they were communicated. Hence, the qualitative research approach chosen for this study enabled a nuanced exploration of President Akufo-Addo's health policies as captured in his State of the Nation Addresses.

The research design that was considered for the study is the case study design. Case studies are a qualitative design in which the researcher explores in depth a program, event, or activity. The case(s) are bound by time and activity, and researchers collect detailed information using a variety of data collection procedures over a sustained period. "Case studies are research situations where the number of variables of interest far outstrips the number of data points"(Yin, 1994, p.13). The study analyses President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo's speeches because of their recency. According to Coker (2024), President Akufo-Addo's speeches on health have been described as very empathetic so it merits further scrutiny on how empathetic it could be.

3.2 Justification for Selecting State of the Nation Address

The selection of the State of the Nation Address (SONA) as the primary focus of this study is grounded in the nature and purpose of the address itself. Druckman and Holmes (2004) describe SONA as an annual opportunity for the president to motivate and influence the public. This speech plays a crucial role in the democratic process, as it serves as a moment for the president to provide an account of their actions and policies to the nation (p. 759). SONA

is a unique platform where the president delivers comprehensive updates on national issues, including health policies and priorities, to the nation. According to Obeng (2002), political leaders often use such national addresses as an opportunity to communicate crucial policy information to the public, emphasizing their governance strategies and policy directions.

Moreover, the SONA serves as a formal and authoritative source of information, where health policy updates are typically outlined. This makes it distinct from other types of presidential communications, such as press briefings or special announcements, which may focus on isolated events or emergencies rather than offering a broader policy outlook (Shogan & Neale, 2009). Therefore, analysing the SONA allows for a deeper understanding of the broader health communication strategies employed by the president, rather than being limited to specific crisis communications.

Furthermore, the timeline selection in this study, which focuses on SONAs delivered before and after the COVID-19 pandemic, is informed by the unique nature of health communication during this period. The COVID-19 pandemic indeed heightened the global and national focus on health issues, but it also shifted the tone and content of presidential communications. During the peak of the pandemic, presidential addresses were largely centered on pandemic response measures, including lockdowns, vaccination campaigns, and public health guidelines, rather than general health policy frameworks (Sikanku, 2022). This study aims to capture the president's communication about the general health policies that extend beyond the immediate context of the pandemic by centring on SONA. This will allow for a more detailed analysis of the president's long-term health communication strategies and policy

directions, which are often reflected in SONAs but may be overshadowed during crisis-specific addresses (Zarefsky, 2004).

The relationship between the State of the Nation Address (SONA) and the president is a very crucial one which encompass aspects of authorship, institutional authority, and the performative nature of the address. The President of a nation, who doubles as the principal figure who delivers the SONA assumes a dual role as both the author and performer. This allows the president to assert a personal vision for the nation's future while simultaneously reflecting the general policies of his or her administration. The SONA is, therefore, a unique rhetorical space where the president directly communicates with the legislature and the public, by shaping perceptions through the lens of executive authority (Pruitt, 2024).

Again, the SONA is tied to the president as an institution and reflects the constitutional role that mandates the head of state to deliver such an address. According to Schlesinger (1966), the modern presidency has evolved to include the SONA as a critical venue for communicating the President's perspective on national progress and challenges. This makes the president not only the voice of the nation's achievements and challenges but also a symbol of continuity in governance. Moreover, the SONA serves as a performance that requires rhetorical finesse, by blending the ceremonial aspects of governance with persuasive communication. As Pruitt (2024) postulates, the SONA is not merely a report, but a strategic tool which is designed to influence legislative priorities and public sentiment. The act of delivering the address in a formal setting, such as a joint session of parliament, emphasizes

the symbolic role of the president as a unifying figure, capable of rallying the nation towards shared goals and ideals.

Furthermore, attributing the SONA which would be analysed for this study to President Akufo-Addo is also a matter of historical and constitutional context. According to Ghana's 1992 Constitution, the president is required to deliver an annual message on the state of the nation to Parliament, thus directly tying each address to the sitting president (Constitution of Ghana, 1992). This responsibility ensures that each SONA reflects the priorities and rhetorical style of the individual president, making it a direct expression of their leadership and policy agenda (Asiedu, 2020). Hence, the reason I attribute the 2017 to 2024 SONA to President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo.

3.3 Data Collection

According to Creswell (2009), the processes involved in qualitative research are interviews, observation, audio-visual and documents. The study employed the qualitative document data collection type. The qualitative document data collection type is when you examine existing documents or records to extract relevant information for analysis. The rationale for the choice of the qualitative documents data collection type was that the data source of my study which is web portals (online media) is a subcategory of documents as Creswell postulates. Creswell posits that two data sources are linked with qualitative document data collection type. They are private and public documents. Private documents comprise emails, letters, and personal journals. Whereas the public documents comprise speeches, newspapers, minutes of meetings and official reports.

According to Creswell (p.180), document-type analysis enables a researcher to obtain the language and words of participants and can be accessed at a time convenient to the researcher. Data was collected online from the web portal of the Office of the Presidency (<https://presidency.gov.gh>) and since web portals are accessible to the general public, no authorization was required for the data retrieval, and this simplified the data collection process. I visited the portal, looked through the speeches uploaded there, and singled out the SONA from 2017-2024. Given that the objectives of the study are to analyse President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo's health policies, after downloading the speeches, the health aspects captured in the SONA were specifically sampled for the study.

3.4 Sampling Procedure

The study adopted the purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method that allows the selection of participants who meet criteria that are relevant to the research question or study objectives (Babbie, 2016). Purposive sampling is closely tied to the research objectives and questions. Hence, researchers identify specific criteria or characteristics that are important for addressing their research aims, such as age, gender, occupation, expertise, or experiences related to the phenomenon under study. Participants are then selected based on how well they match these criteria. This method was employed because it aided me in selecting the sample size based on the rationale of the study, which is to assess the persuasive strategies used by President Akufo Addo to convey his health policies to the public. In purposive sampling, the researcher uses prior knowledge of the data and the purpose of the study to select the data that will

best represent the data under study (Frankel & Wallen, 2000: p. 59). I purposively sampled seven (7) speeches out of the eight (8) speeches delivered by the president. Hence, the State of the Nation's Address for the years 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023.

- **Inclusion Criteria**

The rationale behind this decision is that the president commenced his initial term in 2017, and at the onset of his new tenure, he introduced health policies and objectives outlined in the State of the Nation Address (SONA). The data was collected over seven years, spanning from 2017 to 2023, excluding the year 2024. The year 2018 was sampled to know if there were shifts in communication strategies, policy narrative or public health priorities a year into office. The year 2020 is an exceptional case due to the outbreak of the new coronavirus, resulting in the President's decision to allocate a huge portion of the speech to address the health implications of the virus at the expense of his health policies. However, because the study takes into consideration the interplay of kairos, it was essential to include the year 2020. This best helps us understand how the president used opportune and chronological moments. The year 2021 was included in the analysis due to the significant developments in the field of health in the preceding year, which warrants a comprehensive discussion. The SONA for the year 2022 was also included because the president devoted a portion of the speech to address issues on health. The year 2023 was also included in the analysis due to its recency and relevance to the president's health policies as they pertain to the final stages of his tenure.

- **Exclusion Criteria**

The year 2024 was not sampled for the study because President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo did not specifically and extensively talk about his health policies in the SONA. The exclusion of the 2024 State of the Nation Address from this study is rooted in the need to focus on speeches that provide substantial discourse on health policies. Given the aim of this study to analyse the rhetorical strategies employed by President Akufo-Addo in communicating health policies, it is essential to select speeches where such content is prominently featured. The decision to exclude the 2024 address is a deliberate methodological choice made to ensure a more targeted examination of the president's communication of health policies, thus enhancing the clarity and depth of the analysis.

3.5 Sample size

Out of the eight (8) speeches, a sample size was selected for the study. As Hair et al. (2019) postulate, “the term ‘sample size’ pertains to the number of units, such as individuals or observations, that are chosen from a population to be incorporated in a study to make inferences about said population (p. 123)”. For this specific study, the determination of the appropriate sample size was guided by several considerations. The sample size is based on the feasibility of detailed content analysis and a diverse range of speeches that capture the persuasive techniques used by President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo to communicate his health policies. The determination of the study's sample size was based on the concept of data saturation, which refers to the stage at which the inclusion of more data no longer contributes significant current information to the study (Guest et al., 2006). This is

because according to Sebele-Mpofu (2020), data saturation serves as a contemporary method to address issues of subjectivity in qualitative research and to bolster the trustworthiness of a study. Therefore, out of the eight speeches which constitute the data set, seven (7) of them were sampled for the study. This deliberate selection ensured that the study remained focused, rigorous, and capable of revealing patterns and insights that are relevant to President Akufo-Addo's health policies.

3.6 Data Analysis Procedure

The data for this present study went through a five-step process during the analysis stage. They include data organization, immersion, codification, categorization and thematization. Firstly, I downloaded the State of the Nation Address delivered by President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo from the year 2017 to 2023 via the web portal of the Office of the Presidency. I created a folder and made sure that I kept my data safe.

After the organization of the data, I immersed myself in the data. At this stage, I read the speeches thoroughly. I took inspiration from Marshall and Rossman's (2016) assertions that the second phase of the data analysis process involves reading and rereading or viewing and reviewing all your data. This process ensures that the researcher acquires a comprehensive and detailed understanding of the data to be able to develop thick descriptions of them. I made sure I familiarized myself with the data and this helped me to extract the paragraphs that were dedicated to the discussions about the health policies in the SONA. Hence, during and after the immersion phase, I was left with the health policies that were captured in the 2017 to 2023 SONA.

Codification ensures that data elements are consistently represented using a common set of codes. Coding involves naming and simplifying data to make them comprehensible within the context of a study. Researchers generate interpretations (referred to as codes) that symbolize or translate the data that they have collected (Vogt et al., 2014). It simplifies data storage, retrieval, and analysis by replacing lengthy descriptions with shorter codes. During the immersion phase, I identified some patterns and so based on those patterns, I developed a set of categories that captured the essence of the data. I used colours to separate the codes from each other for easy identification and I did this for all seven speeches.

After the colour coding, I went ahead to categorize all the similar themes or ideas. Categorization is a basic procedure that involves the identification of the differences and similarities among codes. According to Smith and Jackson (2018), data categorization is a systematic process of classifying and organizing data into divergent categories based on their attributes or shared characteristics. The phase of the data analysis procedure was essential to my study of a rhetorical analysis of the health policies of President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo because it enabled me to simplify the complex datasets and I was able to identify patterns which led to the facilitation of my analysis and interpretation.

The next phase of my data analysis procedure was the thematization phase. Braun, and Clarke (2006) posit that thematic analysis should be seen as a foundational method for qualitative analysis, and it should be the first qualitative method of analysis that researchers should learn because it provides core skills that will be useful for conducting many other forms of qualitative

analysis. Thematization goes beyond mere categorization, to delve deeper into the underlying meanings and the connections between various categories. “Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organizes and describes your data set in (rich) detail” (P.79). For my study, after the categorization of the speeches, the reoccurring ideas and concepts were thematized into; credibility and expertise, future-oriented vision, showcasing achievements, amongst others that were identified. Through thematization, I developed a structured approach which made the analysis process more concise and efficient.

The final stage of my data analysis procedure was to group my themes into concepts to speak to each of my research objectives. I called this phase the conceptual integration phase. The reason was that at this phase, I synthesized the identified themes into concepts that directly addressed my research objectives. Hence, similar themes that gave hints about President Akufo-Addo’s efforts to show how credible he is were grouped under ethos. Other themes that demonstrated President Akufo-Addo’s use of emotional appeals were grouped under pathos, which is research objective two. Finally, themes that demonstrated how President Akufo-Addo used logical reasoning to appeal to the Ghanaian public were classified under logos, which is research objective three.

3.7 Analytical Framework

The primary method that I used for the analysis of President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo's health policies as outlined in the State of the Nation Addresses was the rhetorical analysis method. Rhetorical analysis is a method of examining and interpreting texts to understand how authors or

speakers use language, structure, and other rhetorical devices to convey their message, to inform, educate, motivate and or persuade their audience. It involves dissecting a piece of communication either a speech, advertisement, political campaign, an essay, or any other form of discourse to uncover the persuasive elements employed and their underlying meanings. Rhetorical analysis focuses on how messages are put together, highlighting the main goal of communication in texts (Manrique et al, 2019). A useful approach for the analysis of the persuasiveness of political speeches is rhetorical analysis.

In both classical and contemporary traditions, rhetoric continues to be used as an analytical method for the analysis of texts, including political speeches (Dadugblor, 2016, p.11). Rhetorical analysis is a technique for evaluating a text to discern how the author persuades their audience. It is more concerned with the “how” than the “what,” considering factors such as ethos, pathos, logos, and kairos (Nickerson, 2015). This method aptly helped me to dissect the speeches, which led to the identification and understanding of the main rhetorical techniques used by President Akufo-Addo. Within the realm of health communication, the application of rhetorical analysis serves to illuminate the way leaders strategically construct and present health-related matters. This analytical approach also allowed for an examination of how President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo employed specific narratives, selectively prioritized them, and effectively engaged the emotions, values, and beliefs of the Ghanaian public while delivering his health policies through the SONA. The speeches were analysed in the light of Aristotle’s modes of persuasion; ethos, pathos, and logos to help answer the research questions.

3.8 Trustworthiness of the Study

Ensuring the trustworthiness of the findings of a qualitative inquiry is paramount to establishing the credibility and rigour of the study. As Gibbs (2007) posits, while traditional notions of validity and reliability may not directly apply in qualitative inquiry due to the subjective nature of data, the concept of trustworthiness serves as an alternative framework to assess the quality and integrity of the research. Trustworthiness in qualitative research is multifaceted and involves using several strategies to enhance the credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability of findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Trustworthiness in qualitative inquiry is achieved through transparency, reflexivity, and methodological rigour.

Therefore, to ensure the trustworthiness of this study, multiple strategies were employed. A coding scheme was developed with the necessary information to look out for when coding. I coded the data myself. The first step was to read the speeches with an open mind, the next step was to look out for the elements of persuasion President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo uses when communicating his health policies through the SONA to the Ghanaian public. After that, I grouped similar ideas and thematized them using colour coding and finally grouped them under the modes of persuasion, ethos, pathos, and logos. After the coding, I gave the results to a senior member of my department to review the data for me. By doing this, I aimed to enhance the credibility and dependability of the findings. Through this process, I believe that any discrepancies that were not identified during the coding process could be identified and resolved through discussion and consensus,

thereby, strengthening the correctness and reliability of the interpretations of my findings.

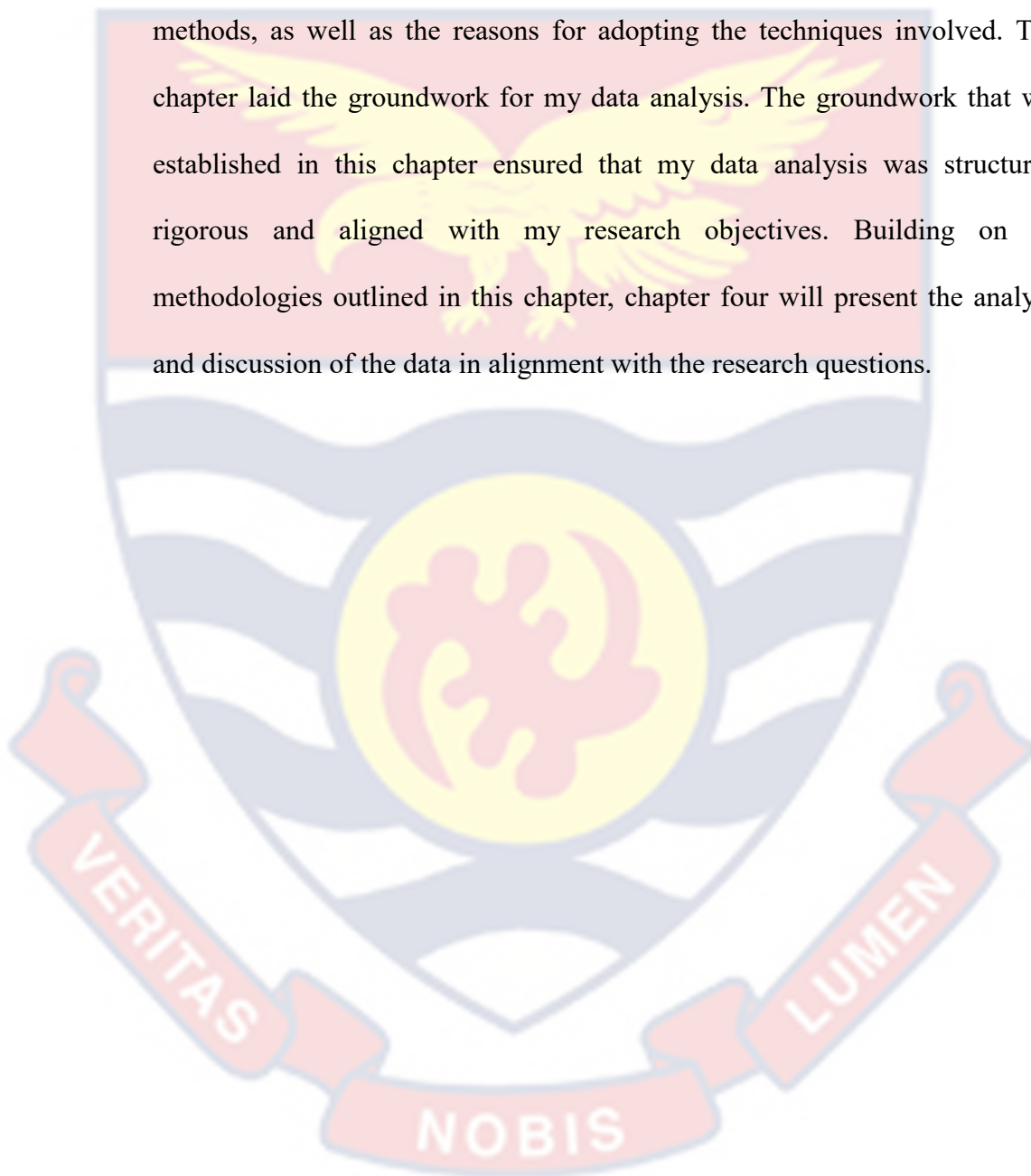
Secondly, the process of data analysis involved thorough documentation of analytical decisions and reflexivity in acknowledging my perspectives and biases. This transparency enhances the confirmability of the findings by allowing readers to assess the coherence between the data and its interpretations. Furthermore, the clustering of coded data into themes was conducted with careful attention in alignment with the research objectives, which helped to ensure that the interpretations were grounded in the collected data and relevant to addressing the research questions. This systematic approach enhances the trustworthiness of the study by demonstrating the meaningfulness and usefulness of the inferences drawn from the data (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000).

3.9 Ethical Considerations

In terms of ethics, Sarah Tracey's idea of situational ethics was used. Situational ethics according to Tracy (2013) refers to ethical issues that arise in specific contexts of study or with specific sample populations. Thus, everyone can think of acts that may be ethical in some situations or with some people, but not in other situations with other people. Considering the nature of the study, even though the data collected for this study were obtained online, there was a need for ethical consideration. I acknowledged all data sources and provided in-text citations and a bibliography for all reference materials that were used for the study to avoid plagiarism.

3.10 Conclusion

This chapter discussed how the present study was conducted. It described the sample size and procedure, data collection and analysis methods. The chapter also explained the procedures involved in applying the following methods, as well as the reasons for adopting the techniques involved. This chapter laid the groundwork for my data analysis. The groundwork that was established in this chapter ensured that my data analysis was structured, rigorous and aligned with my research objectives. Building on the methodologies outlined in this chapter, chapter four will present the analysis and discussion of the data in alignment with the research questions.



CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

The study seeks to uncover how President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo communicates his health policies to the Ghanaian public. This chapter is structured as follows: Section 4.1, which is the first section of the chapter, presents an analysis and discussion of ethos, Section 4.2 presents the analysis of pathos, which is the research objective two and Section 4.3 presents an analysis and discussion for logos, which is the research objective 3. There is an analysis of kairos in section 4.4 and a chapter summary is also presented in Section 4.5.

A careful study of the data revealed that President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo used several compelling persuasive strategies like credibility expertise, showcasing achievements, future-oriented vision, inclusivity, or nationalism, technology, and digitalization, amongst others, to communicate his health policies to the Ghanaian public. These strategies have been grouped under ethos, pathos, and logos, which constitute the study questions.

4.1 Research Question One

The following discussion seeks to respond to the first research question which aims to analyse how President Akufo-Addo demonstrates his credibility and authority when communicating his health policies to the Ghanaian public.

Ethos, according to Aristotle, is the first mode of persuasion. It relies on the speaker's character, credibility, and reputation, not just the content of their speech. A speaker's ethos is conveyed through language, conduct, and actions. To establish a positive ethos, the speaker should be a recognized

authority or well-known figure in the subject matter. Citing relevant credentials, qualifications, and firsthand experiences enhances ethos. Aristotle believed that audiences are more likely to accept ideas from a credible speaker. Ethos is one of three basic persuasive methods, alongside phronesis (practical wisdom) and eunoia (goodwill). Thus, a speaker's credibility is crucial for persuading an audience to accept their argument. The concept of ethos is demonstrated in the themes below and some excerpts from the SONA, about the health policies, would be used to further discuss ethos.

- **Credibility and expertise**

The analysis of the data showed that President Akufo-Addo emphasised the expertise and competence of his administration in managing the health sector. The concept of credibility as proposed by Aristotle falls under ethos. According to Aristotle, speakers or rhetors use or show how credible they are when communicating to their audiences to gain their trust and support. The analysis of the data showed that President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo highlighted the role of the health minister and the government's prudent management in reviving the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) and clearing debts when he was communicating about COVID-19 and its impact. By associating the policies with competent individuals and their achievements, he aims to build trust and credibility among the public. For instance;

Excerpt one

“...we dare not compromise on the health of the population. We have cleared a substantial part of the debts and arrears that were choking the National Health Insurance Scheme, courtesy of

the prudent management of the able chartered accountant, Health Minister Hon. Kwaku Agyemang Manu, MP for Dormaa Central...” (State of the Nation’s Address, 2018)

By shining a spotlight on the significant role of the esteemed Health Minister, Hon. Kwaku Agyemang Manu, Member of Parliament for Dormaa Central, and underscoring his background as a highly regarded chartered accountant, the President aims to highlight the qualifications and exceptional capabilities of the individual leading the critical health sector. There are more excerpts that testify to the use of credibility and expertise as a way to appeal to the Ghanaian public. For instance;

Excerpt two

“We moved rapidly to secure the provision of vaccines first for the frontline officials and workers and those most at-risk, and then to the general mass of the population, always relying on current scientific thinking.” (State of the Nation’s Address, 2021)

President Akufo-Addo's explicit reference to the government's reliance on "current scientific thinking" serves as a testament to the administration's unwavering commitment to evidence-based decision-making. By prioritizing the integration of the latest research findings and medical advancements into policy formulation, the government is demonstrating its dedication to ensuring that health-related initiatives are driven by the most credible and reliable information available.

Excerpt three

"We have to thank Dr. Samuel Annor's brief, but productive stewardship as CEO of the National Health Insurance Authority for that." (State of the Nation Address, 2019)

The President reinforces the legitimacy and effectiveness of the National Health Insurance Authority's leadership during his administration. Through acknowledging and crediting the specific efforts made under Dr. Annor's office. Such statements help to build trust with the audience, because they present the administration as one that values expertise and recognizes effective service delivery and credible in managing national health policies.

The president, in his rhetoric, employs credibility to build and gain the audience's trust. In his powerful and persuasive rhetoric, he strategically employs the crucial element of credibility to establish and foster trust among the public. According to Ojebode (2017), among numerous African societies, the spoken language holds considerable influence, particularly when spoken by a person of authority. This calculated move not only emphasises the Health Minister's expertise in managing financial matters but also signals his ability to lead and make informed decisions in the realm of public health. "Persuasion is achieved by the speaker's character when the speech is so spoken as to make us think him credible. We believe good men more fully and more readily than others: this is true generally whatever the question is, and true where exact certainty is impossible and opinions are divided"(Aristotle, Book 1,Chapter 2). Just as Burke (1969) defines the concept of rhetoric as persuasion and the nature of rhetoric as addressed to an audience for a particular reason or

purpose, the president, through his rhetoric, emphasises credibility for a reason to gain the people's trust.

Furthermore, this approach conveys a strong message to the public that the government is actively seeking to implement measures that have a solid foundation in scientific knowledge and expertise, ultimately enhancing overall trust in its competence and credibility.

In essence, through his adept use of rhetoric, the fifth President of the Fourth Republic of Ghana, President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo Addo skilfully showcases the qualifications and abilities of the health minister and his entire administration while also affirming the government's dedication to making well-informed and scientifically backed decisions in the healthcare domain. This will convince the public that they have competent experts managing their healthcare needs and as a result, there should be no cause for alarm. "You are in good hands" as the president will say. This combination of highlighting expertise and emphasising evidence-based decision-making reinforces the president's application of ethos to lend credibility and foster public confidence in the government's ability to effectively address health-related challenges and create a robust and reliable healthcare system for the nation. Nana Addo's use of my able chartered accountant, and the health minister is, therefore, a clear indication that he has 'the men' who have the requisite expertise by his side and that makes his administration a very credible one.

- **Problem-solving and Accountability**

President Akufo-Addo also addresses critical concerns within the health sector, demonstrating his awareness of challenges and his commitment

to resolving them. The president acknowledges issues such as the shortage of childhood vaccines and the need to strengthen healthcare infrastructure. By openly acknowledging challenges and articulating plans to address them, President Akufo-Addo aims to build credibility and assure the public that his administration is responsive to pressing healthcare issues. The following excerpts support these assertions:

Excerpt four

“We shall restore the National Health Insurance Scheme to good health...And yes, the Minister for Finance will restore the allowances to trainee nurses in the budget.” (State of the Nation Address, 2017)

This excerpt about the restoration of the National Health Insurance Scheme presents the president and his administration as leaders who have the interest of Ghanaians at heart, think about their health and are doing their best to get Ghanaians the good health services they deserve. The next excerpt also elaborate on how much of problem solvers the president and his government are.

Excerpt five

*“We have cleared a substantial part of the arrears that were choking the National Health Insurance Scheme. Mr. Speaker, we have **restored** teacher and nursing training allowances.”* (State of the Nation Address, 2018)

Through this excerpt, the President portrays his administration as one which is capable of solving problems that other governments could not solve. Thus, this is meant to convince the Ghanaian public that this

government is very active and efficient. Again, there are other excerpts which throws more light on the problem-solving skills that this government has. The following excerpt testify to that.

Excerpt six

...the Ghana Health Service has developed an elaborate programme to catch up on children who have missed their vaccinations immediately when stocks arrive. (State of the Nation Address, 2023)

From the excerpts, the president of the Republic of Ghana, Nana Akufo Addo, addresses some issues of national concern, exhibits his problem-solving abilities, and shows how accountable his office is to the people of Ghana. The idea of making known to the public the persistent problems and letting them know the plans you put in place and how well you managed to solve those problems even though they were quite challenging, is that you want to present yourself to the public as their best bet and capable of solving their problems. This is another strategy that President Nana Akufo-Addo employed to build his credibility and gain the trust of Ghanaians. I emphasise the words restore and restored, because it appears it was in existence but failed to be sustained, and he has brought it back to life. Thus, allowances were there but taken away by the previous opposition government, but his administration has brought it back. This emphasises his government's good things and emphasises the bad things of the previous government (Logogy, 2021).

From the excerpts and the discussion, President Akufo-Addo strategically employs credibility and expertise to bolster public trust and

confidence in his administration's management of the health sector. Aristotle's concept of ethos, focusing on the credibility and character of the speaker, finds resonance in President Akufo-Addo's rhetoric, particularly through his emphasis on the competence and achievements of key figures like the Health Minister. By associating policies with capable individuals and highlighting their accomplishments, the President aimed to instil trust among the populace, leveraging the societal reverence for his people in authority. For Segal, while it is not certain that medical expertise is the basic requirement in decision-making for end-of-life communication, medical expertise may be needed to be able to make decisions concerning medical treatment. Even in the field of medicine, Judy Segal supports the assertion that the rhetorical principle of ethos, the character of the speaker, is a central element in persuasion as Aristotle posits.

Moreover, the President's commitment to evidence-based decision-making, as exemplified by his reference to "current scientific thinking," further reinforces the administration's credibility in addressing health-related challenges. This combination of highlighting expertise and emphasizing evidence-based approaches serves to reassure the public of the government's capability and fosters confidence in its ability to effectively tackle healthcare issues. Additionally, the President's acknowledgement of existing challenges within the health sector and articulation of plans to address them demonstrate his accountability and problem-solving orientation, further enhancing his ethos and positioning his administration as responsive to the needs of the people. Through these rhetorical strategies, President Akufo-Addo effectively builds

credibility, instils confidence, and fosters public trust, essential elements for effective governance and societal cohesion.

4.2 Research Question Two

The following discussion seeks to respond to the first research question which aims to analyse what emotional appeals President Akufo-Addo used to connect with the Ghanaian public when discussing health policies with the Ghanaian public.

Pathos, as the second mode of persuasion, entails the speaker's skill in eliciting emotional responses from the audience. Aristotle and Fortenbaugh suggest that readers' emotional reactions to authors' appeals demonstrate intelligence, potentially leading to persuasion. Emotions influence decisions and can be influenced by outcomes, allowing emotional appeals to connect the audience with the writer's sentiments. Pathos affects both the emotions and intellect of listeners, influencing their judgments and actions. Rhetors capitalize on audiences' emotional states to gain trust and support, recognizing that emotions can be either positive or negative depending on their strategic use. Weaver highlights the dual nature of pathos, emphasizing the need for careful handling to avoid negative impacts. Aristotle categorized emotions such as anger, fear, pity, and empathy, suggesting their varied use for persuasive effects. However, Aristotle also emphasised the importance of combining emotions with logic for effective persuasion, appealing to both the audience's emotions and rationality. Pathos is identified and has been classified under the concept of clusivity. The discussions under empathy and the excerpts from the speeches throw more light on pathos.

Empathy

Empathy involves the ability to comprehend and share the feelings of others, which can evoke emotional responses and connect with audiences on a deeper level. According to Bylund & Makoul (2005) Empathy is a person's ability and willingness and to view things from another's perspective, recognize and vicariously experience their emotions, and communicate that understanding back so that person feels supported and cared for. From a rhetorical viewpoint, it involves "employing emotion and establishing personal rapport" (Blankenship, 2013: 2). Speakers who demonstrate empathy are mindful of how their messages affect the emotions of their listeners (Zillmann, 2006), as they strive to understand the perspectives of others (Ratka, 2018). President Akufo-Addo demonstrates empathy in his speeches by expressing concern for the well-being of Ghanaians and acknowledging the challenges they face, particularly in the context of healthcare. In his State of the Nation Addresses (SONA), President Akufo-Addo consistently shows empathy towards the plight of Ghanaians, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. An example of the use of empathy is found in this excerpt.

Excerpt seven

"I have written to President Xi Jinping to convey to the government and the people of China the solidarity and sympathy of the compassionate people of Ghana. We trust that, with the tough decisions being implemented to curb the spread of the virus, this nightmare will be over, and, soon, they will recover from its devastating social and economic impact." (State of the Nation Address, 2020)

From this excerpt, even though Ghana had not yet recorded its first case of COVID-19, President Akufo-Addo sympathizes with China over the outbreak of COVID-19, acknowledging the global impact of the virus and expressing solidarity with affected nations. He also showed empathy towards Ghanaian students who were on scholarship to study in China and assured them that the government was with them and was doing its best to help them. Through this, President Akufo-Addo demonstrates his ability to understand and relate to the suffering of others, fostering a sense of shared humanity. Furthermore, in addressing healthcare challenges within Ghana, President Akufo-Addo emphasises the importance of access to affordable and quality healthcare services. In his speeches, he discusses efforts to improve healthcare infrastructure, enhance disease prevention strategies, and ensure the availability of essential medical supplies. I believe that by prioritizing these issues and articulating plans and policies to address them, he shows empathy towards those who rely on the healthcare system for their well-being.

Excerpt eight

“Mr. Speaker, I must say, however, that the current shortage of some childhood vaccines in the country has concerned me greatly. This shortage, if prolonged, will affect negatively Ghana’s Childhood Immunisation Programme, which has been recognised as one of the most successful in the world.” (State of the Nation Address, 2023)

When President Akufo-Addo expresses concern about the shortage of childhood vaccines in the country and its potential negative impact on Ghana's Childhood Immunisation Programme, he is demonstrating empathy towards

the children and families who rely on these vaccines for protection against preventable diseases. According to Stevens et al., empathetic communication was instrumental in enhancing patient experience, supporting staff morale, and improving organizational communication during this challenging time. Through this, the Ghanaian public tends to see him as a president who cares for all. Additionally, President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo shows empathy through his State of the Nation Address particularly in the health aspects, towards those affected by the shortage and reassuring them that steps are being taken to address the issue, by highlighting the efforts of the government to procure and supply vaccines as a matter of emergency and to catch up on missed vaccinations. This empathetic statement aims to convey the president's understanding of the importance of immunization and his commitment to ensuring access to vaccines for all children in Ghana.

This is why Coker (2023) noted that President Akufo-Addo used empathy in his communication by projecting himself as a leader who empathized with the struggles of the Ghanaian people. He demonstrated care and concern for the citizenry by showing an understanding of their physical, psychological, and financial pains caused by the pandemic. Additionally, he balanced empathy with firmness, using his presidential power to enforce compliance with COVID-19 prevention protocols, and even employing threats when necessary. Another empathetic statement that President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo made while he was delivering his State of the Nation Address can be derived from the following excerpt:

Excerpt nine

"Mr Speaker, I remember, a year ago, we were in the midst of the second wave of Covid infections and deaths; there was widespread fear; again, there was consensus we should concentrate all attention and resources on protecting lives. By that time, a little more was known about the virus and the anxiety had shifted to the provision of vaccines. We moved rapidly to secure the provision of vaccines first for the frontline officials and workers and those most at-risk, and then to the general mass of the population, always relying on the current scientific thinking." (State of the Nation Address, 2021)

In this statement, President Akufo-Addo acknowledged the fact that fear and anxiety gripped the public during the second wave of COVID-19 infections even though his administration had and was putting measures in place to reduce the spread of the virus. Emphasizing the government's swift action to secure vaccines for frontline workers and vulnerable populations, The President and his administration demonstrated empathy towards those who were deeply concerned about their health and safety amidst the pandemic. This acknowledgment of people's fears and initiative-taking measures to address them reflects empathy towards the well-being of the citizens. Through this empathetic rhetoric, the data connects with the emotions of his audience, instilling a sense of reassurance and solidarity. This emotional connection fosters trust and confidence in his leadership, as it demonstrates his genuine concern for the welfare of Ghanaians. Ultimately, by appealing to the emotions of his audience and demonstrating empathy towards their struggles,

President Akufo-Addo effectively utilizes pathos to convey his message and garner support for his policies and initiatives.

President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo and his administration, through their health communication appeals to the emotions of the Ghanaian public to emphasise how credible he is. This is not so different from what happens in the health sector. According to Yachin and Duong (2024), the incorporation of emotionally engaging content, such as meaningful music videos, in vaccination messages can be an effective strategy for addressing vaccine hesitancy. Again, according to Iannarino (2023) “empathy has been associated with positive outcomes in patients, clinicians, and in the patient–clinician relationship and clinicians who employ empathy with patients have reported higher job satisfaction, better diagnostic ability, and a lower likelihood of being sued for malpractice” (p.2). This means that practitioners and conveyors of health information often also employ emotionally engaging content to appeal to the public to act in a certain direction towards health initiatives and policies. This also supports Aristotle’s assertion of empathy as a concept of pathos.

4.3 Research Question Three

The following discussion seeks to provide answers to research question three which aims to examine the logical reasoning and evidence-based arguments that President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo uses to support his health policy proposals and initiatives

The appeal to logical reasoning, known as logos, is the third persuasive technique, according to Aristotle. The term “logical appeal” pertains to the linguistic, communicative, and rhetorical strategies employed by a speaker or

writer to persuade their audience. Aristotle uses the word logos in Rhetoric to refer to proofs available in the words, arguments, or logic of speech. The term “logos,” derived from the Greek language, can be interpreted as “word” or “reason”. By presenting robust evidence, data, or rational arguments, a communicator strengthens the logical appeal of the message. According to Herrick (1997), logos studies arguments or reasoning related closely to logic. After a careful examination of the data, elements of logos were identified and have been classified under the concepts of showcasing achievements and future-oriented vision. The discussions under the concepts of showcasing achievements and future-oriented vision, and the excerpts from the speeches throw more light on logos.

- **Showcasing Achievements**

President Akufo-Addo highlighted his administration's achievements in the health sector during a significant national address, the SONA. These accomplishments include the development of a user-friendly mobile application for the NHIS, which improved healthcare access for citizens. Additionally, a successful drone delivery service for medical supplies was implemented, benefiting remote and under-served areas, and saving lives. The President also revealed plans for a domestic vaccine production facility aimed at enhancing self-reliance in healthcare and enabling rapid responses to emerging health challenges. For instance;

Excerpt ten

“We promised last year to increase the share of the District Assembly Common Fund for persons with disabilities from 2 per

cent to 3 per cent, and we delivered". (State of the Nation's Address, 2018)

From this excerpt, President Akufo-Addo stresses his government's commitment to fulfilling promises and prioritizing social welfare policies. By delivering on the pledge to increase the share of the District Assembly Common Fund for persons with disabilities from 2 per cent to 3 per cent, the government signals its dedication to inclusivity and equity in governance. This policy initiative and fulfilment of promise not only reflect a recognition of the needs and rights of marginalized groups within society but also has tangible implications for the well-being and empowerment of persons with disabilities. The mention of this accomplishment in the address suggests its significance to both the government and the public, inviting further analysis of its impact, reception, and implications for future commitments. The president made this statement so that it can serve as a testament to the government's efforts to address societal needs.

Excerpt eleven

"I note, in particular, with satisfaction, that they have developed a self-enrolment mobile application (My NHIS App) that allows Ghana Card holders to self-enrol in the scheme, and this application enables registration and renewal for oneself and others by linking NHIS cards to Ghana cards." (State of the Nation's Address, 2023)

President Akufo-Addo's focus on developing the My NHIS App serves as a strategic move to highlight concrete achievements in Ghana's healthcare sector. By emphasizing this innovation, the president aims to demonstrate his

administration's commitment to using technology for the benefit of citizens. Additionally, the app's convenience and accessibility for healthcare enrolment and renewal processes contribute to building public trust in the government's ability to address critical issues. Moreover, promoting initiatives like the My NHIS App showcases progress and modernization efforts in essential services, garnering support, and recognition for the administration.

Excerpt twelve

"In May 2018, Ghana won accolades at the World Health Assembly for having eradicated Trachoma, an eye disease that has plagued us for a long time. Today, our NHIS is buoyant. The government has paid up the GH¢1.2 billion arrears we inherited and brought the operations of the NHIS back to life." (State of the Nation Address, 2019)

This excerpt hammers on the significant achievements in healthcare in Ghana. President Akufo-Addo uses the opportunity to celebrate the country's success in eradicating Trachoma, an eye disease that has affected people for a long time. This achievement not only demonstrates progress in public health efforts but also reflects his administration's commitment to improving the well-being of its citizens. Additionally, the excerpt mentions the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) being in decent shape and the fact that the government cleared a large debt inherited from previous administrations, amounting to GH¢1.2 billion, which revitalized the NHIS. This financial stability ensures that more people can access healthcare services without financial barriers. Overall, these accomplishments showcase Ghana's strides in

healthcare provision and its dedication to ensuring the health and welfare of its population.

Excerpt thirteen

“Our drone delivery service is firmly established, and Ghana now has six (6) centres for Zipline drone services, making Ghana the largest aerial logistics distribution network in the world.”

(State of the Nation’s Address, 2023)

Following these efforts, the general public may have developed a more favourable impression of the NHIS, which is particularly evident in the public's renewed respect for the NHIS card. The successful implementation of the self-enrolment mobile application and the drone delivery service for medical supplies has demonstrated the government's commitment to leveraging technology and innovation to bridge gaps in healthcare services, particularly in remote areas. These achievements have resonated with the Ghanaian public, instilling a sense of confidence in the administration's dedication to improving healthcare and fostering a healthier nation. According to Burke, the "basic function of rhetoric" is to use the words of human agents to form attitudes or induce actions in other human agents. By showcasing his successes, it appears that the president hopes to convince the general public that his administration is working hard to improve the accessibility and delivery of healthcare, as well as the government's dedication to developing innovative ideas for improving healthcare delivery.

- **Future-oriented Vision**

The President presents a future-oriented vision for the health sector in Ghana. He emphasises the establishment of the National Vaccine Institute, the

one constituency, one ambulance, and the Agenda 111 project, which aims to construct new hospitals and create jobs. By outlining these ambitious plans, he appeals to the aspirations and hopes of the Ghanaian public, presenting a positive outlook for the future of healthcare in the country. For instance:

Excerpt fourteen

“Agenda 111 was born out of the necessity to address some of these shortcomings. At the normal rate of growth, we are not likely to make up the deficit in our health facility infrastructure for a very long time. Hence the need for a special, dedicated programme of infrastructural development. We are undertaking the construction of 111 entities.” (State of the Nation’s Address, 2021)

The introduction of Agenda 111, a special program aimed at addressing shortcomings in Ghana's healthcare infrastructure acknowledges that at the current pace of development, it would take a long time to bridge the gap in healthcare facilities. Therefore, President Nana Akufo-Addo's government has initiated a dedicated program specifically focused on infrastructure development. Agenda 111 aims to construct 111 new healthcare entities across the country. This program signifies a proactive approach by the government to improve access to healthcare services for all citizens. By investing in healthcare infrastructure, Ghana seeks to enhance the quality and availability of medical care, ultimately contributing to the well-being and health outcomes of its people. Following the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the nation, where huge sums of money were released to make sure that Ghanaians are safe and sound, the president addressed this issue to let

Ghanaians know that he has a long-term vision which will benefit the nation even after his administration.

Excerpt fifteen

“...the establishment of a National Vaccine Institute to implement the strategy, which will enable us to begin the first phase of commercial production in January 2024. A bill will shortly be brought to you in this House for your support and approval for the establishment of the National Vaccine Institute.” (State of the Nation’s Address, 2021)

This excerpt from the 2021 SONA emphasises the government’s commitment to ensuring that a vaccine institute would be established so that Ghana can be able to produce their own vaccines without having to solely depend on external forces for vaccine production and testing. This idea of letting Ghanaians know the future-oriented goals will make them believe and appreciate the government as a working institution. In addition to this, the SONA revealed other future-oriented goals like the procurement and distribution of ambulances to all constituencies. The following excerpt explains further.

Excerpt sixteen

“The health delivery system will be significantly strengthened by the expected arrival in June of 275 ambulances, i.e., one per constituency, to make treatment of emergency cases more effective.” (State of the Nation’s Address, 2019)

From these excerpts, by emphasising the implementation of a strategy and the goal of starting commercial production by a specific date (January

2024), the President aims to showcase the government's proactive approach in responding to health challenges, particularly in the context of vaccine availability and self-sufficiency. The mention of "commercial production" suggests a desire to achieve self-sufficiency in vaccine production, and the goal is to enhance the country's capacity to produce vaccines domestically, thereby, reducing dependency on foreign suppliers and ensuring timely access to vaccines during health crises. The detailed explanations of how relevant the vaccination is, how useful these ambulances would be the importance of infrastructure, and the scientific reasoning behind safety measures that were provided during the COVID-19 pandemic, aimed at logically persuading listeners, thus appealing to their reasoning. Aristotelians refer to this as the appeal to Logos.

In the excerpts provided, President Akufo-Addo emphasises future-oriented plans for the healthcare sector in Ghana, demonstrating a logical appeal or logos in his communication strategy. For instance, in Excerpt 21, the introduction of Agenda 111 is presented as a response to the current shortcomings in healthcare infrastructure. By highlighting the need for a dedicated program of infrastructural development and outlining the construction of 111 new healthcare entities, the president logically appeals to the audience's understanding of the challenges facing the healthcare system. Similarly, in Excerpt 15, the establishment of a National Vaccine Institute is discussed in terms of its strategic implementation and the timeline for commercial production. By specifying the target date of January 2024 for the first phase of commercial production and mentioning the forthcoming bill for parliamentary support, the president employs a logical appeal to demonstrate

the government's proactive approach and commitment to achieving self-sufficiency in vaccine production.

Furthermore, in Excerpt 16, the arrival of 275 ambulances, one per constituency, is presented in the State of the Nation Address by President Akufo-Addo as a measure to strengthen the healthcare delivery system and improve emergency treatment effectiveness. By providing concrete details about the number of ambulances and their distribution, as well as the expected timeline for their arrival, the president appeals to the audience's sense of logic and practicality, emphasizing the tangible benefits of the initiative. “Logos is a tool used to convince the audience to realize the truth and even the audience can use the same tool to understand the hidden truth in the words of the speaker” (Murthy & Ghosal, 2014, p.251). Through the application of strategic planning, specific timelines, and practical outcomes, President Akufo-Addo employs a logical appeal or logos in his communication to persuade the audience of the government's proactive and effective approach to addressing healthcare challenges in Ghana.

- **Technology and Digitalization**

The theme of technology and digitalization is prominently featured in President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo's SONA, illustrating the government's commitment to leveraging innovative solutions to enhance healthcare services and emergency response capabilities. The excerpts provided highlight the transformative impact of technology in revolutionizing Ghana's healthcare infrastructure, ensuring efficient and effective delivery of emergency medical services and other healthcare interventions across the country. The excerpt below attests to this assertion.

Excerpt seventeen

“Each ambulance has a tracker that determines its location instantly from the command centre. The emergency number, one-one-two (112), has also been linked to the Ghana post GPS, such that if any call to the number is made using the Ghana post GPS app, emergency services will know the exact location of the caller instantly.” (State of the Nation Address, 2020)

This excerpt highlights the integration of advanced tracking technology into each ambulance, allowing for real-time monitoring of their locations from a centralized command centre. This technological innovation significantly improves the coordination and dispatch of emergency medical services, enabling faster response times and better allocation of resources. Furthermore, the linkage of the emergency number, one-one-two (112), to the Ghana post GPS further enhances the system's effectiveness by enabling emergency services to pinpoint the exact location of callers using the Ghana post GPS app. This integration of technology not only streamlines emergency response operations but also enhances the safety and well-being of individuals in need of medical assistance.

Excerpt eighteen

“We are employing drones to deliver emergency medical supplies in remote areas, and, today, Ghana has the largest medical drone delivery service in the world!” (State of the Nation Address, 2020)

This excerpt also showcases the innovative use of drones to deliver emergency medical supplies to remote areas, addressing challenges associated

with access and logistics. President Akufo-Addo proudly announces Ghana's achievement of having the largest medical drone delivery service in the world, emphasizing the country's leadership in adopting innovative technology to overcome healthcare disparities and improve health outcomes for all citizens. This initiative demonstrates the government's proactive approach to leveraging technology to bridge gaps in healthcare access and delivery, particularly in remote and hard-to-reach areas.

Excerpt nineteen

"The scheme is currently one of the better-digitalized institutions, and I hope they get the public support that they need." (State of the Nation Address, 2023)

Moreover, the mention of the digitization efforts within the healthcare system highlights the government's commitment to modernizing healthcare institutions and processes. By describing the healthcare scheme as "one of the better-digitalized institutions," President Akufo-Addo emphasises the importance of embracing digital solutions to enhance efficiency, transparency, and service delivery within the healthcare sector. This acknowledgement reflects a broader strategy of harnessing technology to address systemic challenges and improve overall healthcare performance.

Excerpt twenty

*"On 19th December 2018, the introduction of mobile renewal of membership was launched. Since then, there have been, on average, seventy thousand (70,000) members renewing their membership every week, by dialling *929# on any mobile phone network. Soon, in collaboration with the National Identification*

Authority, Ghanaians would be able to register, renew and access health care services using the Ghana Card.” (State of the Nation Address, 2019)

From the excerpt, it appears that the introduction of mobile renewal of NHIS membership in 2018 marked a significant milestone in leveraging technology to streamline administrative processes and enhance citizen convenience. With an average of seventy thousand members renewing their memberships weekly through a simple dialling code, it highlights the power of mobile technology in improving service delivery and increasing accessibility. Moreover, the forthcoming collaboration with the National Identification Authority to integrate the Ghana Card for registration and access to healthcare services as said by President Akufo-Addo, further demonstrates his administration's commitment to leveraging digital solutions for the benefit of citizens. Through these initiatives, the president not only showcases tangible achievements in advancing technology and digitalization but also persuasively positions himself as a leader who is proactive in harnessing innovation to address societal needs, thereby winning the trust and support of the Ghanaian public.

President Akufo-Addo's emphasis on technology and digitalization in his speech highlights the transformative potential of innovative solutions in advancing healthcare delivery and emergency response services. By leveraging technology to address longstanding challenges and improve efficiency within the healthcare system, the government demonstrates its dedication to promoting public health and ensuring the well-being of all citizens.

President Akufo-Addo strategically appeals to logical reasoning by presenting tangible evidence of the government's achievements and investments in healthcare infrastructure. “Logos is a tool used to convince the audience to realize the truth and even the audience can use the same tool to understand the hidden truth in the words of the speaker” (Murthy & Ghosal, 2014, p.251). By showcasing the implementation of tracking technology in ambulances, the linkage of emergency services to GPS systems, and the deployment of medical drones, the President provides concrete examples of how technology is being utilized to enhance emergency response capabilities and improve healthcare access. This evidence-based approach appeals to the audience's sense of reason and logic, reinforcing the government's commitment to evidence-based policymaking and effective resource allocation in the healthcare sector. With logical reasoning, leaders like presidents communicate their thoughts, ideas, and policies convincingly to their public. Consequently, McNelly and Perry (2008) remarked that “generally we trust people who are knowledgeable and experienced, who are decent, fair, reliable, and honourable and who demonstrate goodwill with others. We tend to trust people who are more like us, who identify with our values and beliefs” (p. 56). Logos leads human actors to a conviction which eventually lasts after the emotion evaporates. (Coker, 2024, p.6)

Aside from the three modes of persuasion that were identified through the analysis of the data as answers to the research questions, Kairos, another important concept in the field of presidential rhetoric was identified as another element of persuasion that President Akufo-Addo used to communicate his health policies to the Ghanaian public. Again, Kronos, an important concept in

presidential rhetoric was also identified as another theme. Sections 4.4 and 4.5 discuss these two themes extensively.

4.4 Kairos

Kairos emphasises the right or opportune moment in which something must happen or be said. It is about seizing the moment and capitalising on the unique circumstances of a particular context (Kinneavy, 2002). Analysing President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo's speech under the theme of kairos reveals how he strategically addressed the pressing issue of the COVID-19 outbreak before transitioning to discuss his administration's health policies. Kairos, the opportune moment or timing of an argument or communication, played a crucial role particularly in the 2020 State of the Nation Address as the President recognized the urgency of addressing the COVID-19 global pandemic even before delving into other policy matters. In the opening paragraphs of the speech, President Akufo-Addo immediately addresses the COVID-19 outbreak, acknowledging its significance and expressing sympathy for the people of China, where the outbreak originated. This, he stressed in the following excerpt:

Excerpt twenty-one

"China is unfortunately battling an outbreak of the deadly COVID-19 virus. We sympathize with the people of China at this time of great trouble." (State of the Nation Address, 2020)

By addressing this current and urgent issue at the outset of his speech, the President seizes the moment to demonstrate solidarity with China and emphasise the importance of global cooperation in addressing the crisis. President Akufo-Addo highlighted the measures taken by his government to

support Ghanaian citizens, particularly students, who are affected by the outbreak in China. He mentions the Ghanaian community in China, including students studying in the epicentre of the outbreak, and emphasises the government's efforts to help and support them. The President states, "The Ghana government, through its Mission, also supplies logistics, and the Embassy has given, so far, five hundred United States dollars (US\$500) to each student." By discussing these efforts, President Akufo-Addo demonstrates his administration's proactive response to the crisis and reassures the Ghanaian public of the government's commitment to their welfare during this challenging time.

Moreover, the President's speech strategically transitions from discussing the COVID-19 outbreak to highlighting his administration's achievements in healthcare and emergency response. He mentions the procurement of ambulances and the establishment of a fully functioning emergency response system, emphasizing the government's commitment to improving healthcare infrastructure and services in Ghana. President Akufo-Addo states,

Excerpt twenty-two

"For the first time in many years, Ghana has a fully functioning emergency response and ambulance system...The government has procured three hundred and seven (307) ambulances, with one assigned to each constituency." (State of the Nation Address, 2020)

These excerpts highlight significant achievements in Ghana's healthcare infrastructure and emergency response capabilities. President Nana

Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo's statement about the establishment of a fully functioning emergency response and ambulance system signifies a notable milestone in Ghana's healthcare sector under his leadership marking a departure from previous inadequacies. The acquisition of 307 ambulances, with each constituency being allocated one, emphasises President Akufo-Addo and his administration's commitment to ensuring prompt and accessible emergency medical services across the country.

By juxtaposing the discussion of the COVID-19 outbreak with his administration's healthcare initiatives, the President highlights the importance of preparedness and effective healthcare systems in addressing public health emergencies. President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo's speech exemplifies the strategic use of *kairos* to address the COVID-19 outbreak and transition to discussing his administration's healthcare policies. By addressing the pressing issue of the pandemic at the outset of his speech, the President seized the opportune moment to demonstrate solidarity with affected countries and reassure the Ghanaian public of the government's proactive response. Furthermore, the speech effectively highlights the government's healthcare achievements, emphasizing the importance of preparedness and effective healthcare systems in addressing public health challenges.

Another interesting observation about this particular SONA and the significance of the concept of *kairos* was that the president deviated from his normal trend about the organization of his speech. From the other State of the Nation Addresses, I noticed that President Akufo-Addo in no particular order, addressed issues of the economy, education, transport, and sometimes the energy sector before health-related issues. However, for the 2020 SONA, right

after President Akufo-Addo's usual salutation, he talked about the outbreak of COVID-19 first, and his health policies next, before discussing other issues. The most interesting part is that at the time of this speech, Ghana had not yet recorded its first COVID-19 case but the president devoted a part of the speech to talk about it because the pandemic was a significant global concern. As a responsible leader, who knows how to communicate with his public, President Akufo-Addo recognized the importance of addressing this global crisis and reassured the Ghanaian public about his government's commitment to public health preparedness and readiness to respond effectively to emerging health threats. Through this, he envisions the future and demonstrates that he is ready to work towards that.

Again, aside from the obvious fact that the President addressed the COVID-19 that had hit China at that moment because of Ghanaians living in China and students on scholarships, It appears that another reason for his prioritization of the COVID-19 pandemic and China is because of diplomatic relations. Addressing the COVID-19 pandemic was a way of expressing solidarity with China for diplomatic purposes to strengthen bilateral relations and demonstrate Ghana's support for its international partners in times of need and crisis. This step could be also important to the president because of the presence of Ghanaian students in China. Addressing the COVID-19 outbreak invokes feelings of empathy and concern among the audience. President Akufo-Addo seized the kairotic moment to strengthen diplomacy. This supports Kinneavy's (2002) assertion that kairos is about seizing the moment and capitalising on the unique circumstances of a particular context. Moving away from communication into the field of medicine Judy Segal, in her Health

and Rhetoric of Medicine also emphasised the importance of the rhetorical principle of *kairos*. She uses that to explain that physicians and practitioners of medicine, at some point in their communication need to seize opportune moments to refer to the medical histories of their patients to guide them to make some decisions. “Physicians should persuade their patients based on specific conditions, background, and needs of the patient.” (as cited in Mao, 2008, p.85).

By expressing sympathy for the people of China and highlighting the potential impact of the virus, President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo appeals to the emotions of Ghanaians to evoke a sense of solidarity and compassion. He said,

Excerpt twenty-three

“I have written to President Xi Jinping to convey to the government and the people of China the solidarity and sympathy of the compassionate people of Ghana,” and “Mr Speaker, I have spent time talking about how well we are doing on the international scene and the many plaudits that are showered on Ghana wherever I go”. (State of the Nation Address, 2020).

This emotional appeal reinforces the seriousness of the issue and emphasises the need for collective action and support.

Further, President Akufo-Addo's decision to dedicate a portion of his SONA to address the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrates his credibility and authority as a leader. By acknowledging the global concern and expressing solidarity with affected countries, he establishes himself as a responsible and empathetic leader who prioritizes public health and safety. This appeals to

ethos by reinforcing the audience's trust and confidence in his leadership. For instance, when he said,

Excerpt twenty-four

“the government is in constant touch with experts on the subject, who advise that the basic principle of public health is to confine the disease to the area of its origin, but we have not ruled out the option of evacuating the students from Wuhan, if that becomes necessary”, “We have put in place measures to ensure that their evacuation back into Ghana if it happens, does not lead to the dissemination of fear and panic amongst the general population”
(State of the Nation Address, 2020).

President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo stressed his administration's competence, knowledge, and expertise, to spread calm and assure the Ghanaian public that everything is under control.

Moreover, President Akufo-Addo's address of the COVID-19 pandemic is also supported by logical reasoning and evidence-based arguments. In his speech, he emphasised the global significance of the outbreak, the importance of preventive measures, and the government's preparedness to respond effectively. Through the provision of factual information and emphasizing the rationale behind the government's actions, he appeals to logos, appealing to the audience's sense of reason and logic. For instance;

Excerpt twenty-five

“the Ghanaian community includes four thousand, seven hundred and sixty (4,760) students, out of which three hundred

(300) are studying in Hubei Province and two hundred (200) in the city of Wuhan, the epicentre of the outbreak..., the Ghana government, through its Mission, also supplies logistics, and the Embassy has given, so far, five hundred United States dollars (US\$500) to each student.” (State of the Nation Address, 2020).

From the excerpt, this logical appeal strengthens the persuasiveness of his message and reinforces the importance of taking proactive measures to address the public health threat.

President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo's 2020 SONA exemplifies the strategic use of kairos to address the COVID-19 outbreak and transition to discussing his administration's healthcare policies. By addressing the pressing issue of the pandemic at the outset of his speech and seamlessly transitioning to healthcare initiatives, the President effectively seizes the opportune moment to demonstrate leadership and reassure the Ghanaian public of the government's proactive response to public health challenges. At the same time, the concepts of ethos, pathos and logos were not left out. This is to say that even when the President seizes a kairotic moment to address the Ghanaian public, he makes use of persuasion to communicate effectively. In health communication, this supports Segal's (2005) assertion that medical practitioners use kairos when communicating with their patients to persuade them.

4.5 Kronos

Kronos, which represents the chronological order and the passage of time, is another persuasive element that President Akufo-Addo uses to present President Akufo-Addo's State of the Nation Addresses. These addresses,

delivered annually, adhere to a systematic timeline that aligns with the nation's governance cycle, legislative requirements, and strategic planning. An analysis of the data revealed that the SONAs are predominantly delivered in February, marking consistent annual addresses to the nation. For instance, the SONA from 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020 were all delivered in February, which indicates a deliberate choice to maintain this timeline. This timing appears to be strategically chosen to coincide with the opening of the parliamentary session and to set the tone for the government's agenda for the year.

In 2021, the speech was delivered in March, likely delayed due to the complexities and disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. On March 9, 2021, the focus of the speech was heavily on the government's response to the pandemic, vaccine procurement, and distribution efforts. For example, President Akufo-Addo stated,

Excerpt twenty-six

“We have procured vaccines, and we are determined to vaccinate twenty million Ghanaians” (State of the Nation Address, 2021).

The occasional shift from February to March reflects flexibility in addressing emergent national crises or ensuring comprehensive updates on momentous events. Similarly, the March 2023 address highlighted ongoing improvements in health services and the challenges posed by childhood vaccine shortages, which appears to be a strategic decision to delay the speech to provide a more comprehensive update.

From the data, each speech sets strategic goals and priorities for the year, and this reflects a clear chronological progression in policy implementation and the addressing of ongoing challenges. For instance, the February 2017 speech

emphasised the need to restore the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) and trainee nurse allowances, and that set a foundation for subsequent healthcare reforms. In that speech, President Akufo-Addo asserted,

Excerpt twenty-seven

“We will restore the allowances that the previous government cancelled”
(State of the Nation Address, 2017).

Subsequently, each speech provided updates on previously announced initiatives, demonstrating a commitment to accountability and continuous improvement. The February 2018 speech reported on the progress in clearing NHIS debts and improving conditions for health workers, building on the 2017 commitments. President Akufo-Addo mentioned,

Excerpt twenty-eight

“We have cleared a substantial amount of the NHIS debt inherited from the previous administration” (State of the Nation Address, 2018)

The chronological sequence also shows adaptability, with speeches adjusting focus based on emerging national and global issues, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. The March 2021 and February 2022 speeches were heavily focused on COVID-19 response measures, vaccine procurement, and the establishment of the National Vaccine Institute, reflecting the immediate needs of the time. This adaptability is crucial for effective crisis communication, as timely updates and adjustments in messaging address the evolving nature of crises. President Akufo-Addo's strategic use of Kronos not only highlights the importance of timing in effective communication but also emphasises his role in guiding the nation through a more structured and responsive governance framework. This supports Graber's (2023) assertion

that strategic governance communication aligns with the consistent annual delivery of addresses to the Nation to build public trust and ensure accountability. Furthermore, effective crisis communication requires timely updates and adaptability in messaging to address the evolving nature of crises, as noted by Coombs (2007).

Moreover, the use of Kronos is clear in the chronological sequence of President Akufo-Addo's health policies as captured in the SONA. By delivering these addresses at strategic times and providing updates on previously announced initiatives, President Akufo-Addo demonstrates his commitment to transparent and adaptive governance.

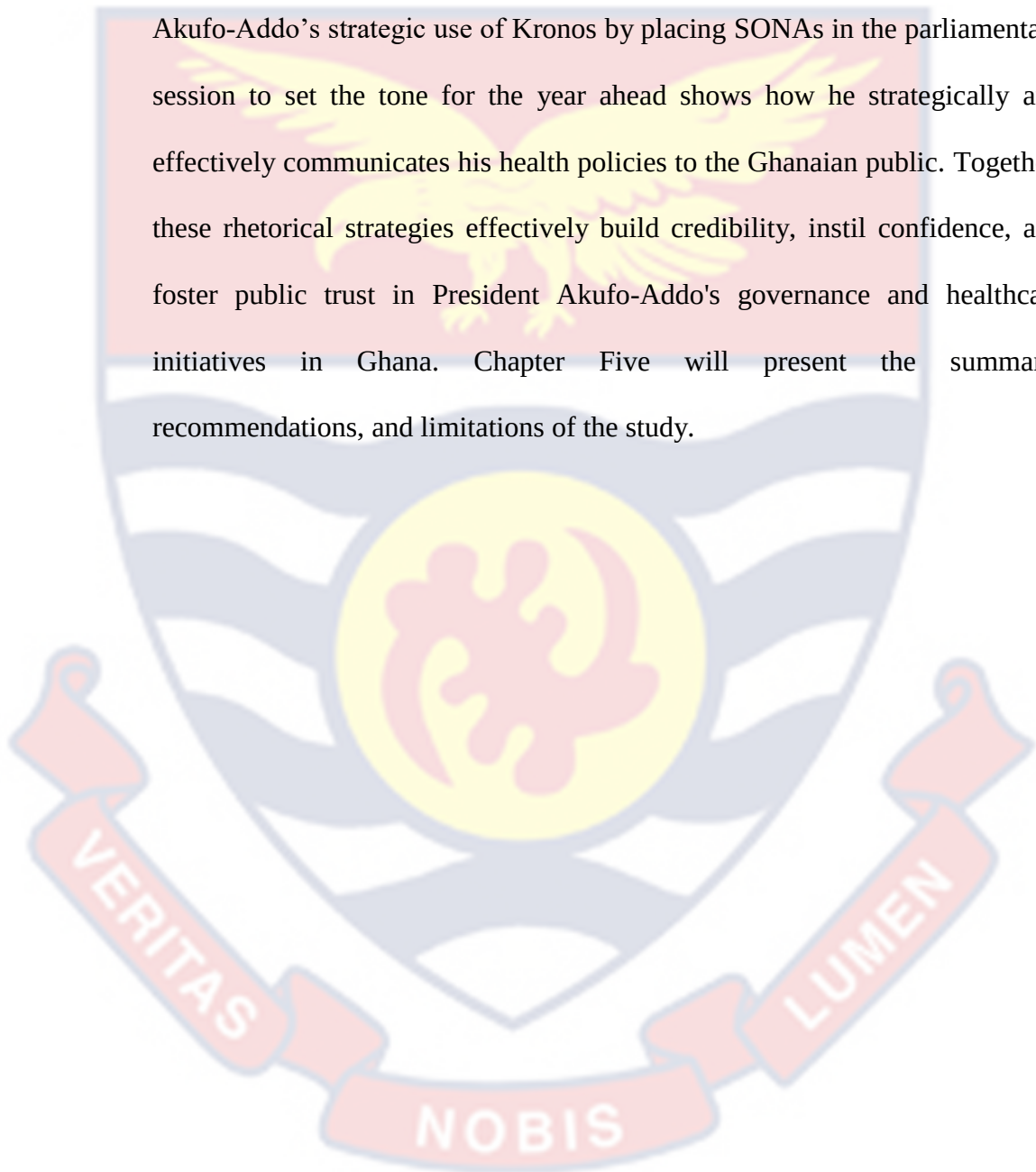
In terms of the organisation of the various health aspects of the SONA, President Akufo-Addo did not have a chronological pattern that he followed. However, an observation made during the data analysis is that President Akufo-Addo prioritises any issues that are of great concern each year and addresses them first before talking about other issues. For instance, following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, in his 2021 SONA, he addressed issues about health first. Similarly, since COVID-19 was still a prominent issue, in the 2021 and 2022 SONA, he started his speech by first addressing the challenges and impact of the global pandemic on all aspects of the economy. Nonetheless, in the 2023 SONA, since COVID-19 was over, another prominent issue in health was prioritised by President Akufo-Addo. These are evident of the fact that President Akufo-Addo does not chronologically present the order of his addresses, but he gives priority to aspects that are of significant importance each year.

President Akufo-Addo used persuasive strategies such as credibility, addressing concerns, showcasing achievements, technology and digitalization, empathy and presenting a future-oriented vision to convey his health policies to the Ghanaian public. According to him, “Health is wealth, and it is only a healthy population that can make Ghana prosperous” (State of the Nation Address, 2019), hence, his reason for prioritizing the health and well-being of the Ghanaian public. Through the eloquent articulation of his aspirations for a more advanced, equitable, and resilient healthcare system, President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo has ignited a sense of shared purpose and optimism within the Ghanaian public. This visionary approach not only instils hope for a brighter future but also encourages active participation and support for ongoing health initiatives.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter presented the analysis of the data collected for my study, specifically the health aspects of President Akufo-Addo’s State of the Nation Addresses. In summary, the analysis of President Akufo-Addo's health policies captured in the SONA reveals a strategic use of rhetorical appeals to bolster public trust and support for his healthcare policies and initiatives. Through ethos, he establishes credibility by highlighting the expertise and achievements of some key figures of his administration and in the health sector and demonstrating accountability and problem-solving orientation. Pathos is employed to connect with the emotions of the Ghanaian public, evoking empathy, and solidarity before, during, and after times of crisis and demonstrating genuine concern for their well-being. President Akufo-Addo also uses logos to present logical reasoning and evidence-based arguments,

persuading the audience of the effectiveness of his administration's health policies and plans. Moreover, his strategic use of kairos involves timely addressing of pressing issues like the COVID-19 outbreak, demonstrating leadership and responsiveness to public health challenges. Finally, President Akufo-Addo's strategic use of Kronos by placing SONAs in the parliamentary session to set the tone for the year ahead shows how he strategically and effectively communicates his health policies to the Ghanaian public. Together, these rhetorical strategies effectively build credibility, instil confidence, and foster public trust in President Akufo-Addo's governance and healthcare initiatives in Ghana. Chapter Five will present the summary, recommendations, and limitations of the study.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

In this study, I analysed how President Akufo-Addo effectively communicates his health policies to the Ghanaian public. This concluding chapter presents a summary of the entire work and highlights the major findings of the study. Conclusions were drawn, based on the findings of the study. The chapter further presents some recommendations for policymakers and for further studies.

5.1 Summary of the Study

This study delved into the interplay of presidential rhetoric and health communication. The primary objective was to investigate how President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo communicates his health policies to the Ghanaian public, particularly through his State of the Nation Addresses from 2017 to 2023. The study aimed to analyse the persuasive strategies employed by the President in these speeches to engage and inform the public about health initiatives. The specific research questions that guided the study were: How does President Akufo-Addo demonstrate his credibility and authority when communicating his health policies to the Ghanaian public? What emotional appeals does President Akufo-Addo use to connect with the Ghanaian public when discussing health policies with the Ghanaian public? And What logical reasoning and evidence-based arguments does President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo use to support his health policy proposals and initiatives? The theoretical frameworks of ethos, pathos, and logos, rooted in Aristotle's rhetoric theory and Segal's Rhetoric of Medicine, were central to

understanding the persuasive elements in presidential communication and their impact on health policy dissemination.

Methodologically, the study used a rhetorical analysis approach to dissect the speeches and uncover the underlying persuasive techniques used by President Akufo-Addo. The data analysis process involved a systematic five-step procedure, including data organization, immersion, codification, categorization, and thematization. The coding process simplified the data, making it comprehensible within the study's context, while the thematic analysis provided a structured framework for interpreting the President's communication strategies. Through these steps, I meticulously examined the speeches, identified key themes related to health policies, and grouped them under ethos, pathos, and logos to address the research objectives effectively.

The analysis of President Akufo-Addo's State of the Nation Addresses revealed significant findings regarding his communication of health policies to the Ghanaian public. The study highlighted the President's adept use of ethos to establish credibility and expertise in health governance, pathos to evoke emotional responses and garner public support for health initiatives, and logos to present logical reasoning and evidence-based arguments for policy implementation. These persuasive strategies, showcased through the speeches, demonstrated President Akufo-Addo's multifaceted approach to engaging with the public on critical health issues and shaping perceptions of his leadership in the healthcare sector. The study's findings emphasise the nuanced ways in which presidential rhetoric influences public discourse and public perception of health policies, contributing valuable insights to the fields of health communication and political discourse analysis.

5.2 Key Findings

The key findings of the study are presented in the subsequent paragraphs based on the research questions:

The analysis revealed that President Akufo-Addo strategically employs ethos, as defined by Aristotle, to bolster public trust and confidence in his administration's management of the health sector. By emphasizing the expertise and competence of key figures such as the Health Minister and citing their achievements, the President aims to establish credibility and foster trust among the populace. By associating policies with capable individuals and highlighting their accomplishments, he leverages societal reverence for authority figures to instil confidence in the government's ability to address healthcare challenges effectively. Furthermore, the President's commitment to evidence-based decision-making and his acknowledgement of existing challenges within the health sector demonstrate accountability and problem-solving orientation, further enhancing his ethos and positioning his administration as responsive to the needs of the people. These rhetorical strategies effectively build credibility, instil confidence, and foster public trust, essential elements for effective governance and societal cohesion in Ghana.

Again, the analysis of the data revealed President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo strategically used pathos, or emotional appeal, to connect with the Ghanaian public and garner support for his healthcare policies. Through his rhetoric, President Akufo-Addo skilfully evokes emotions such as empathy and solidarity, particularly during times of crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic. By expressing concern for the well-being of Ghanaians and acknowledging their struggles, he fosters a sense of shared humanity and reassurance. For

example, he empathizes with those affected by the shortage of childhood vaccines, highlighting efforts to address the issue and ensure access to vaccines for all children. Additionally, he acknowledges the fear and anxiety experienced by the public during the pandemic, while emphasizing proactive measures taken by his administration to secure vaccines and protect lives. Through these empathetic statements, President Akufo-Addo connects with the emotions of his audience, instilling a sense of trust and confidence in his leadership. This emotional connection serves to strengthen support for his healthcare policies and initiatives, as it demonstrates his genuine concern for the welfare of Ghanaians and his commitment to addressing their needs.

Moreover, the analysis of the data revealed that President Akufo-Addo strategically uses logos, or logical reasoning, in his speeches to persuade the Ghanaian public of the government's achievements and plans in the healthcare sector. Through concrete examples and evidence-based arguments, he presents a compelling case for the effectiveness of his administration's policies and investments. For instance, by highlighting the implementation of tracking technology in ambulances and the linkage of emergency services to GPS systems, the President demonstrates how technology is improving emergency response capabilities and healthcare access. Additionally, he emphasises future-oriented initiatives like Agenda 111 and the establishment of a National Vaccine Institute, appealing to the audience's sense of reason and logic. By presenting tangible evidence and logical arguments, President Akufo-Addo effectively convinces the public of his government's proactive approach to addressing healthcare challenges and fostering innovation in the healthcare

sector. Using logos, he established credibility and trust with the audience, ultimately garnering support for his policies and initiatives.

Furthermore, President Akufo-Addo's strategic use of kairos in his speeches is evident in his timely address of the COVID-19 outbreak, demonstrating empathy and solidarity with affected countries like China. The analysis of the data revealed that President Akufo-Addo capitalised on the opportune moment to establish credibility and demonstrate leadership. Moreover, his seamless transition from discussing the pandemic to highlighting his administration's healthcare policies emphasises the importance of preparedness and effective response to public health challenges. The concept of Kronos is also evident in the address such that, President Akufo-Addo gave five of his speeches in February and three in March which happens to be the parliamentary session.

Following the discussions and findings presented in the study, it can be concluded that President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo's health communication strategies are deeply rooted in the principles of rhetoric, effectively leveraging ethos, pathos, and logos to engage with the Ghanaian public. The President's ability to establish credibility and authority (ethos) is evident in his consistent communication of health policies, which has likely contributed to public trust and adherence to health guidelines. His use of emotional appeals (pathos) has been instrumental in connecting with the populace on a personal level, particularly during health crises, fostering a sense of unity and collective responsibility. Considering these findings, it is plausible to speculate that the strategic communication approach adopted by President Akufo-Addo in delivering his health policies as captured in his State

of the Nation Addresses reflects a deliberate effort to connect with the public on an emotional level and presenting logical reasoning while projecting a sense of authority and empathy in addressing healthcare challenges.

Furthermore, the study identified a similarity in the consistent portrayal of President Akufo-Addo as a credible and compassionate leader dedicated to improving the nation's healthcare system. This recurring theme of leadership and accountability resonated throughout the speeches, reinforcing the President's image as a trustworthy figure in steering the country's health agenda. The study also highlights the significance of timely and contextually relevant communication (Kairos) by the President, which has been pivotal in addressing immediate health concerns and shaping public perception. The interplay between Kairos and Kronos in the President's rhetoric highlights the importance of both ongoing health advisories and the seizing of opportune moments and chronological moments to guide public response during health emergencies.

Unexpectedly, the study revealed that despite the critical role of appeal to emotions (pathos) in policy communication, these elements were not always the primary focus of the President's addresses. Instead, there was a notable emphasis on creating a narrative that resonates with logical argumentation rather than narratives which and evokes empathy and solidarity among the Ghanaian public. This deviation suggests that in the context of health communication in Ghana, appealing to shared values and emotions and balancing them with factual evidence may be more effective in influencing public behaviour than relying solely on emotional appeals. Throughout the

speeches, emotional appeals were less employed as compared to appeal to logical argumentation and credibility.

5.3 Recommendations

From the findings that emerged from this study, I put forward the following recommendations:

Recommendations for Further Studies

It is important to acknowledge that the success and effectiveness of persuasive strategies can be influenced by a myriad of factors, including socio-economic context, regional disparities, and the evolving landscape of public opinion. While President Akufo-Addo's ways of communicating his health policies may be good, the interpretation, and what people think about them may be different due to the factors mentioned earlier. Therefore, future research in the area of presidential rhetoric and health communication should consider analysing public reception and perceptions of the health policies of President Nana Akufo-Addo. This study exposes us to the effects of the persuasive communication of health policies on Ghanaians and how the public makes and thinks of President Akufo-Addo's rhetoric.

Again, I recommend that further studies should conduct comparative analyses with speeches on health policies that are captured in the SONA from previous Ghanaian Presidents to understand evolving rhetorical strategies in health communication. Also, I recommend that comparative studies be conducted to examine the rhetorical strategies employed by Presidents from other nations, thereby offering a more comprehensive viewpoint on the efficacy of health communication techniques and their influence on public health results. Moreover, future research could explore the impact of different

communication channels (e.g., social media, and traditional media) on the dissemination of health policies. This research will help to know the medium of the delivery of health policies that could have an impact on how the public will receive and understand them.

Recommendations for Forthcoming leaders and policymakers

In light of the influence of presidential rhetoric on public health communication and its consequences, forthcoming leaders and policymakers should undergo training in proficient health communication to guarantee their ability to articulate health-related policies in a manner that effectively engages the general public. Furthermore, it is imperative on the part of leaders to build continuous feedback systems to assess the public's perception of health communications. This will enable the implementation of adjustments to the communication plan as and when required.

5.4 Limitations of the Study

A limitation to the study is the fact that I am the sole researcher who coded the data. While this approach offers consistency in coding methodologies, it also raises concerns about the potential for subjectivity. Introducing multiple coders could have mitigated this issue by providing diverse perspectives and reducing individual biases. Therefore, to address this limitation and enhance the credibility of my findings, I engaged an expert to review and validate the coded data. This external validation not only ensures the accuracy and reliability of the coding process but also offers insights that could enrich the interpretation of the results and enhance the quality of the study. Another difficulty I encountered during this study was that I did not get the 2017 SONA on the web portal of the office of the presidency therefore, I

had to explore other options by visiting other online portals before I could get the 2017 which was time and resource-consuming.

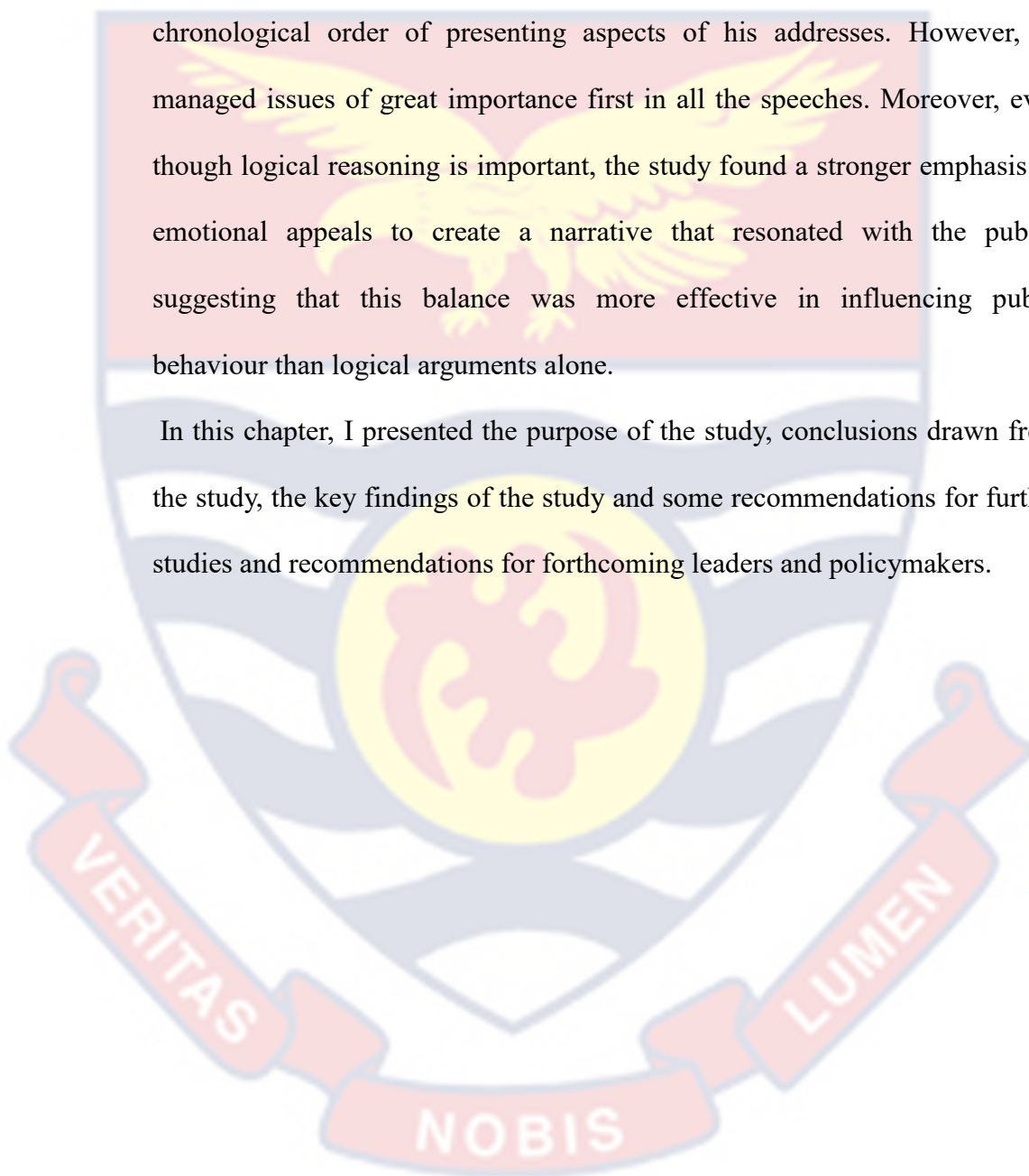
5.5 Conclusion

The purpose of the present study was to explore the relationship between presidential rhetoric and health communication, with a particular emphasis on President Akufo-Addo's use of persuasive strategies in conveying his health policies to the Ghanaian public. The study specifically analysed how President Akufo-Addo fostered trust and belief in his health policy statements, how he leveraged emotions to enhance the impact of his health communication, and how he employed logical reasoning and evidence to support his health policy messages to the Ghanaian public. By analysing the persuasive techniques used by the president in his health communication, this study aimed to understand how President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo effectively communicated his health policies to the Ghanaian public.

The study found that President Akufo-Addo effectively established credibility by highlighting the expertise of key health figures and committing to evidence-based decision-making, which bolstered public trust in his administration's health policies. Again, the findings of the study revealed that the President used emotional appeals to connect with the public, expressing empathy and solidarity during crises like the COVID-19 pandemic, which strengthened support for his healthcare. Also, President Akufo-Addo employed logical reasoning and evidence-based arguments to demonstrate the effectiveness of his health policies, presenting concrete examples and future initiatives to appeal to the public's sense of reason.

The President's timely addresses during health crises, such as the COVID-19 outbreak, showcased his leadership and responsiveness, reinforcing the importance of preparedness and effective public health responses. In terms of Kronos, the study found that President Akufo-Addo did not have a chronological order of presenting aspects of his addresses. However, he managed issues of great importance first in all the speeches. Moreover, even though logical reasoning is important, the study found a stronger emphasis on emotional appeals to create a narrative that resonated with the public, suggesting that this balance was more effective in influencing public behaviour than logical arguments alone.

In this chapter, I presented the purpose of the study, conclusions drawn from the study, the key findings of the study and some recommendations for further studies and recommendations for forthcoming leaders and policymakers.



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APPENDIX

The Health Policies of Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo Addo

The health system in the country is critical for national development. Our vision is to see that the right to health of all Ghanaians is guaranteed through an established health sector with sustainable ability to deliver affordable, equitable and easily accessible healthcare.

To realise this vision, we will expand health promotion programmes, scale up disease prevention strategies and improve access to curative and emergency services, through vigorous human resource and health infrastructure development and strengthening of the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS).

1. Message on The State of The Nation by The President of The Republic, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, On the Occasion of The State Opening of Parliament on Tuesday, February 21, 2017.

Mr. Speaker, we have to be healthy if we are to make a success of the plans and aspirations we have. The National Health Insurance Scheme remains the best option we have devised to ensure that as many people as possible have access to health care in our clinics and hospitals. The scheme is not in a good state, and there are too many providers that are owed money. They are threatening to opt out and stop offering their services to the most vulnerable in our society. We shall restore the National Health Insurance Scheme to good health.

And yes, the Minister for Finance will restore the allowances to trainee nurses in the budget.

2. Message on The State of The Nation Delivered by The President of The Republic, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, on Thursday, 8th February 2018, Parliament House, Accra

In much the same way, we dare not compromise on the health of the population. We have cleared a substantial part of the debts and arrears that were choking the National Health Insurance Scheme, courtesy of the prudent management of the able chartered accountant, Health Minister Hon. Kwaku Agyemang Manu, MP for Dormaa Central. This has led to the revival of the NHIS, and the renewal of respect for the NHIS card. The health needs of our people are being better served. Moreover, as we work to open up the country, I hope that our efforts at improving the conditions of work for health workers would be appreciated, and there would no longer be the reluctance to serve in some parts of Ghana.

Mr. Speaker, in line with our commitment to building a fair and inclusive society, we promised, last year, to increase the share of the District Assemblies Common Fund to Persons with Disabilities from 2 percent to 3

percent, and we delivered. Effective July last year, the policy of ensuring that 50% of the persons who manage the country's toll booths are Persons with Disabilities started. Nonetheless, we are determined to address the other concerns of Persons living With Disabilities.

3. Message on The State of The Nation by The President of The Republic, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, On the Occasion of The State Opening of Parliament, On Thursday, 21st February 2019, Accra.

Mr. Speaker, when our children master the connection between science and their everyday lives, we would reach the stage in Ghana where we would be rid of the many diseases, borne of filth and poor hygiene, that are still part of our lives. In pursuing these goals, we need to remind ourselves repeatedly that health is wealth, and it is only a healthy population that can make Ghana prosperous.

In May 2018, Ghana won accolades at the World Health Assembly for having eradicated Trachoma, an eye disease that has plagued us for a long time. Today, our NHIS is buoyant. Government has paid up the GH¢1.2 billion arrears we inherited and brought the operations of the NHIS back to life. On 19th December 2018, the introduction of mobile renewal of membership was launched. Since then, there have been, on average, seventy thousand (70,000) members renewing their membership every week, by dialling *929# on any mobile phone network. Soon, in collaboration with the National Identification Authority, Ghanaians would be able to register, renew and access health care services using the Ghana Card. We have to thank Dr. Samuel Annor's brief, but productive stewardship as CEO of the National Health Insurance Authority for that. I wish him well in his retirement.

To deliver healthcare to Ghanaians more efficiently, in 2018, Government granted financial clearance for the recruitment of eleven thousand, one hundred and eighteen (11,018) health personnel to increase existing clinical staff. To augment the efforts of clinical staff, in September, 2018, the Ministry of Health received further financial clearance to employ fourteen thousand, five hundred and twenty-four (14,254) Nurse Assistants (Clinical and Preventive). These nurse assistants belong to the tranche that passed their exams in 2016 from Government Health Training Institutions, and have commenced work by 1st February, 2019. The Ministry of Health is working to obtain financial clearance for the recruitment of the 2017 and 2018 graduates.

The health delivery system will be significantly strengthened by the expected arrival in June of 275 ambulances, i.e. one per constituency, to make treatment of emergency cases more effective. Drone technology has also been introduced into that system to help deliver essential medicine, blood and blood products to remote communities.

We still face problems of inadequate infrastructure in our health establishments. We have problems of numerous structures at various stages of completion that cannot be finished and brought into use, because newer structures are being started, and there is no money to finish the ones started earlier. Mr Speaker, again, this is a long-standing problem that is a mark of our underdevelopment. We will not ignore or sweep the problem under the carpet. We are dealing with it, and will complete them.

Ghana's hardworking nurses and doctors would do their best, as they have always done, to make sure we get the best health care, but it behoves on each one of us to look after ourselves better. Apart from exercising and taking our regular health check-ups seriously, it is imperative that we eat healthy diets to prevent diseases that are caused by poor choices of nutrition.

4. Message On The State Of The Nation By The President Of The Republic, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, On The Occasion Of The State Opening Of Parliament, On Thursday, 20th February, 2020, At Parliament House, Accra.

Mr Speaker, today, China is unfortunately battling an outbreak of the deadly Covid-19 virus. We sympathize with the people of China at this time of great trouble. I have written to President Xi Jinping to convey to the government and the people of China the solidarity and sympathy of the compassionate people of Ghana. We trust that, with the tough decisions being implemented to curb the spread of the virus, this nightmare will be over, and, soon, they will recover from its devastating social and economic impact.

There is a sizeable Ghanaian community in China and our government, through our Embassy, has been working with the Chinese authorities to find the best way to deal with the situation.

The Ghanaian community includes four thousand, seven hundred and sixty (4,760) students, out of which three hundred (300) are studying in Hubei Province and two hundred (200) in the city of Wuhan, the epicentre of the outbreak. We have a difficult and delicate situation on our hands, Mr Speaker, and it does not benefit anybody to try to score points by introducing ill-judged politics into this ongoing medical conundrum and humanitarian tragedy.

Most of these students are on Chinese government scholarships, and, since the crisis started, the Chinese government has done its best to keep them supplied with food and other logistics. The Ghana government, through its Mission, also supplies logistics, and the Embassy has given, so far, five hundred United States dollars (US\$500) to each student.

However, we know that no amount of logistics will make up for the extreme stress and trauma that these young people are going through, and I entreat members of this Honourable House to set an example by helping to pour oil over troubled waters, instead of instigating tension and spreading fear and panic among the young people. The government is in constant touch with experts on the subject, who advise that the basic principle of public health is to

confine the disease to the area of its origin, but we have not ruled out the option of evacuating the students from Wuhan, if that becomes necessary. We have put in place measures to ensure that their evacuation back into Ghana, if it happens, does not lead to the dissemination of fear and panic amongst the general population.

Mr Speaker, I have spent time talking about how well we are doing on the international scene, and the many plaudits that are showered on Ghana wherever I go. But the test of how well our country is doing can, and should, be measured by how Ghanaians themselves feel about their situation.

Mr. Speaker, for the first time in many years, Ghana has a fully functioning emergency response and ambulance system. As promised, Government has procured three hundred and seven (307) ambulances, with one assigned to each constituency. Each ambulance has a tracker that determines its location instantly from the command centre. The emergency number, one-one-two (112), has also been linked to the Ghana post GPS system, such that if any call to the number is made using the Ghana post GPS app, emergency services will know the exact location of the caller instantly.

We are employing drones to deliver emergency medical supplies in remote areas, and, today, Ghana has the largest medical drone delivery service in the world!

5. Message on The State of The Nation by The President of The Republic, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, On Wednesday, 30th March 2021, At Parliament House, Accra.

I remember, a year ago, we were in the midst of the second wave of Covid infections and deaths; there was widespread fear; again, there was consensus we should concentrate all attention and resources on protecting lives.

By that time, a little more was known about the virus and the anxiety had shifted to the provision of vaccines. We moved rapidly to secure the provision of vaccines first for the frontline officials and workers and those most at-risk, and then to the general mass of the population, always relying on the current scientific thinking.

We had to learn some very hard lessons, and our belief in the need for self-sufficiency was reinforced when vaccine nationalism was played out blatantly by the rich and powerful countries. Mr. Speaker, the Presidential Vaccine Manufacturing Committee, which I set up to respond to this obvious deficiency, has put in place a comprehensive strategy for domestic vaccine production, and the establishment of a National Vaccine Institute to implement the strategy, which will enable us to begin the first phase of commercial production in January 2024. A Bill will shortly be brought to you, in this House, for your support and approval for the establishment of the National Vaccine Institute.

This pandemic exposed other shortcoming of our country, which have, undoubtedly, contributed to the anxieties that have befallen the nation. Agenda

111 was born out of this necessity to address some of these shortcomings. At the normal rate of growth, we are not likely to make up the deficit in our health facilities infrastructure for a very long time. Hence, the need for a special, dedicated Programme of infrastructural development. We are undertaking the construction of 111 entities, which comprise standard 100-bed district hospitals for one hundred and one (101) districts without hospitals, with accommodation for doctors and nurses; six (6) new regional hospitals for each of the six (6) new regions; the rehabilitation of the Effia-Nkwanta Hospital in the Western Region; one (1) new regional hospital for the Western Region; and three (3) psychiatric hospitals for each of the three (3) zones of the country, i.e. North, Middle and Coastal. It is an ambitious project, which must and will be done, and which will create some thirty-three thousand, nine hundred (33,900) jobs for construction workers, and, on completion, some thirty-four thousand, three hundred (34,300) jobs for health workers.

Mr. Speaker, I have to report that, like all major construction projects, it is evident that the initial schedule we gave for the completion of Agenda 111 was overly ambitious. Identifying suitable sites around the country, for example, has turned out to be even more problematic than had been anticipated. I am able to say that a great deal of the preparatory work has now been completed, and work has started at eighty-seven (87) of the one hundred and eleven (111) sites. I have been assured that preliminary work on the remaining twenty-four (24) sites is ongoing. We have every intention of seeing this project through to a successful end, which will enable me to commission all one hundred and eleven (111) hospitals before I leave office on 7th January 2025.

6. Message on The State of The Nation by The President of The Republic, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, On the Occasion of The State Opening of Parliament, On Thursday, 21st February 2022, Accra

The world before COVID now seems such a long time ago, and the trauma of a world ruled by a pandemic has changed all our perspectives. Back in March 2020 when the first cases of COVID hit our country, we and the rest of the world were in uncharted territory, fear and sheer terror gripped our land. Probably, to future generations, it will look quite obvious what should have been done, but, two years ago, it felt like we had fallen into a dark, malicious and terrifying abyss. We could not have been prepared for the catastrophe that hit us, even the richest economies with the most sophisticated structures were unprepared. Maybe some of us have forgotten what the experts were predicting at the time.

Our health and medical infrastructure was woefully inadequate, and we would not be able to cope. There were going to be piles of dead bodies strewn across the streets of Africa. I took the decision we would prioritize the saving of lives, and, then, we would get together to rebuild our economy. Nobody imagined the devastation would be so widespread and last so long. We had to

learn some very hard lessons, and our belief in the need to be self-sufficient was reinforced when vaccine nationalism was played out blatantly by the rich and powerful countries.

Mr Speaker, the Presidential Vaccine Manufacturing Committee, which I set up to respond to this obvious deficiency, has put in place a comprehensive strategy for domestic vaccine production, and the establishment of a National Vaccine Institute to implement the strategy, which will enable us to begin the first phase of commercial production in January 2024.

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Mr Speaker, we have saved lives and fared much better than we had feared and the experts predicted, but the consequences of lockdowns, border and business closures, and unplanned expenditures have combined to have a devastating impact on our economy. The unplanned expenditures included, but were not limited to, the recruitment, on a permanent basis, of fifty-eight

thousand, one hundred and ninety-one (58,191) healthcare professionals, and the payment of extra incentives to our frontline health workers.

It took an unbudgeted GH¢1.9 billion to ensure that our children and teaching staff went back and stayed in school safely. Some, including a few in this Honourable House, went as far as to accuse the government of trying to kill Ghanaian children when we introduced the controlled school re-openings. I might add here that, in some countries, school closures have lasted for twenty (20) months, and children are only now going back to school. Our children did not lose a single academic year.

7. Message on The State of The Nation by The President of The Republic, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, on Wednesday, 8th March 2023, At Parliament House, Accra.

We must be cheered by the improvements being made in the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) to make access easier. The scheme is currently one of the better-digitalised institutions, and I hope they get the public support that they need. **I note, in particular, with satisfaction, that they have developed a self-enrolment mobile application (My NHIS App) that allows Ghana Card holders to self-enrol in the scheme and this application enables registration and renewal for oneself and others by linking NHIS cards to Ghana cards.** In 2022, over 5 million members' data was linked to their Ghana card to enable them to access healthcare using the card.

The National Health Insurance Authority has also improved its claims management processes with an emphasis on e-claims and paperless systems at all four Claims Processing Centres. In the year under review, electronic claims processing was about seventy percent (70%) of all claim's submissions. As of 31st December 2022, the scheme paid a total claim of GH¢1.014 billion to health service providers.

Mr. Speaker, **our drone delivery service is firmly established and Ghana now has six (6) centres for Zipline drone services, making Ghana the largest aerial logistics distribution network in the world.** Zipline, through the national-scale drone delivery services, has delivered some 14.8 million (14,809,463) units of life-saving medicals, vaccines, and blood products to health facilities in Ghana by the end of 2022. Childhood vaccines top the list with the delivery of 8.3 million doses, followed by 2.05 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines.

Mr. Speaker, **I must say, however, that the current shortage of some childhood vaccines in the country has concerned me greatly. This shortage, if prolonged, will affect negatively Ghana's Childhood Immunisation Programme, which has been recognised as one of the most successful in the world.** The WHO has only recently expressed worry about a steady decline in measles vaccination coverage globally, because of the concentration on the fight against COVID-19.

In accordance with our desire not to become part of this global trend, Government has taken steps to ensure that stocks of these vaccines are procured and supplied, as a matter of emergency. The Ghana Health Service

has developed an elaborate Programme to catch up on children who have missed their vaccinations immediately stocks arrive.

Mr. Speaker, I want to encourage all parents and caregivers to ensure that eligible children are vaccinated once this Programme begins. No child should be denied access to vaccination. Mercifully, so far, not a single child has died as a result of the outbreak.

This House has already passed into law the National Vaccine Institute Bill, which is yet to be brought for my assent. In the near future, this Institute will ensure that, no matter what happens to the global vaccine supply chain, we can produce our own vaccines locally.

CODING SCHEME

COLOR	CODE	DESCRIPTION	SAMPLE TEXT
Teal	Kronos	President Akufo-Addo predominantly delivers his SONA in February and March	SONA 2024, 2020,2019,2018 and 2017 were all delivered in February. SONA 2021, 2022, and 2023 were delivered in March.
Turquoise (PATHOS)	Empathy	President Akufo-Addo empathized with China and some Ghanaians	“I have written to President Xi Jinping to convey to the government and the people of China the solidarity and sympathy of the compassionate people of Ghana.
Mauve (KAIROS)	Kairos	The president seized opportune moment to talk about COVID-19 in his 2020 SONA	“Mr Speaker, today, China is unfortunately battling an outbreak of the deadly Covid-19 virus. We sympathize with the people of China at this time of great trouble.”
Yellow (LOGOS)	Technology and Digitalization	President Akufo-Addo stresses on his administrations innovative ideas to go digital as a positive initiative	“We are employing drones to deliver emergency medical supplies in remote areas, and, today, Ghana has the largest medical drone delivery service in

			the world”
Black (ETHOS)	Credibility / Expertise	President Akufo-Addo plays emphasis on the good expertise and competence of his administration in managing the health sector.	“courtesy of the prudent management of the able chartered accountant, Health Minister Hon. Kwaku Agyemang Manu, MP for Dormaa Central”
Blue (LOGOS)	Future oriented vision	The President presents a future-oriented vision for the health sector in Ghana	“And yes, the Minister for Finance will restore the allowances to trainee nurses in the budget.”
Green (LOGOS)	Showcasing achievements	President Nana Akufo-Addo highlights the accomplishments of his administration improving the health sector	“This House has already passed into law the National Vaccine Institute Bill, which is yet to be brought for my assent”
Red (PATHOS)	Inclusivity	Nana Addo uses pronouns like “we”, and “our” to show inclusiveness.	“We must”, “I” “our” ...
Grey (ETHOS)	Problem Solving and Accountability	The president address issues that are of great importance	“Mr. Speaker, we will restore and we have restored teacher and nursing training allowances”