

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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+233-24-5883575  
info@packs-africa.org  
www.packs-africa.org



**Location:**  
#12, Mango Tree Avenue  
Asylum-down, Accra  
GhanaPost GPS: GA-0028-5403

PACKS Africa is a youth-led Pan-African think tank operating from Accra (Ghana) and providing support services in the evidence-to-policy sector.

We have a vision of a Pan-African development process that is fueled by evidence-informed policies.

We work mostly with government agencies across Africa to enhance production and use of evidence in policy, practice and general social policies.

Our work normally involves;

- Information Systems Research
- Knowledge Management
- Advocacy for Evidence-Informed Policies

On the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), our work involves Goal 9 (target 9.5), Goal 16 (target 16.10) and Goal 17 (targets 17.6, 17.7, 17.8, 17.17, 17.18 and 17.19).

PACKS Africa....

*... where we promote  
knowledge for Pan-African  
development*

## STOP CONFUSING 'SEARCH RESULTS' WITH 'RESEARCH RESULTS' — GOOGLE HAS NOT 'CONFIRMED' ANY CLAIM THAT THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF GHANA IS THE BIGGEST LIAR

**Accra, Ghana** – Our attention has been drawn to a recent publication making waves across social media, claiming a Google confirmation for the Vice President of the Republic of Ghana as the biggest liar. As an organisation that envisions a Pan-African development process that is fueled by the systemic use of evidence, we consider it necessary to issue this statement, in clarification of the context for such supposed 'confirmation'. We take the opportunity also to educate the public on the difference between searching for content (which produces search results) and research results (which require more rigorous processes).

Most importantly, associating the supposed claim with the corporate entity Google (as though the publication was from a research commissioned or conducted by the entity), is erroneous, since it attaches some amount of credibility that is unfounded. Our checks reveal that the claim originated from the Twitter account of one Yayra Koku, a devoted campaigner for H.E. John D. Mahama (Flagbearer of the NDC). The first publication thereafter was celebritiesbuzz.com.gh, which was further disseminated by other blogging websites, but not any credible news portal.

We will take this opportunity to clarify the difference between searching for information and conducting research, two phenomenon that are very often misrepresented or confused by the averagely educated person. With access to the internet and search engines, searching for information has become very easy – and we commend that achievement with technological advancement for the promotion of access to information. However, this cannot be equated to conducting research, which is a professional activity that requires the application of rigorous methodological considerations to ensure the highest levels of credibility. In essence, we can all search for information, but we cannot all be researchers, since the latter requires some extra investment in professional competence.

From our accumulated understanding of the way search tools (including Search engines like Google search) operate, rankings of web resources are made based on the relevance of keywords in submitted search strings, with content from individual webpages. The more keywords appear in a particular web article therefore, the more pronounced the relevance will be. However, our checks from the Wikipedia article (which pops up first) being cited as proof of this claim from Google search, has no single reference to the Vice President as a liar, hence does not conform to this principle of search tools. We wish to mention that Google search (as an instrument) incorporates some other algorithms for corporate advantage, which explains this abnormal phenomenon.

In conclusion, we feel that it is inadequate to make such a claim based on a single search result.

**END**