THE UNIVERSITY OF HULL

Social Media, Transparency and Freedom of Expression

An Empirical Analysis on the Triad's Contribution to Good Governance Practices in Tanzania

being a Thesis submitted for the Degree of

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by

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Dedication

To my beloved children Leah Jr., Lwitiko and Henry.

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I give my utmost thanks to the Almighty God for all the blessings that He has put my way. Without Him, this work would not have been accomplished.

Many people have contributed to the successful completion of this thesis. The first in line are my beloved parents who have supported me in every imaginable way. The second are my five sisters Rahel, Gloria, Faith, Sekela and Lucy who have always been there for me. The third are my closest friends who have always encouraged me.

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Abstract

This study investigates social media's contribution to transparency and freedom of expression. Its main aim is to establish if online platforms contribute to the prerequisites of good governance, especially in countries where laws and regulations are restrictive.

With a focus on the United Republic of Tanzania, the study explores how different government administrations have been enacting and implementing different laws to control the flow of communication. Special emphasis is on the period 2015-2020, in which Tanzania experienced a shrinking space of the media landscape, causing people to turn to social media platforms for information instead of the mainstream media.

A mixed-methods research approach guided the investigation. The data includes accounts derived from interviews conducted with Tanzania media stakeholders, most of them being of the view that the media landscape, specifically transparency and freedom of expression, had shrunk significantly during the period 2015-2020. They admit that during this time social media platforms had become the preference for most people to obtain news from, regardless of whether the news was genuine or fake. Furthermore, the findings of this study suggest that while most Tanzanians preferred a democratic country, deterioration of freedom of the press, freedom of civil society organisations and freedom of the opposition to function had become worse than in a few years before. On the other hand, however, the majority of Tanzanians, regardless of their age, felt that people who criticised the president should be arrested.

Following these findings, this study has also interrogated the concept of respect in African culture and how it can be misused to restrict transparency and freedom of expression. I, therefore, argue that despite the misinformation, disinformation and fake news, social media has a significant contribution to transparency and freedom of expression, especially in those places where these good governance prerequisites are restricted.

Keywords: Africa, Communication, Freedom of Expression, Mainstream Media, Magufuli, Social Media, Political Influencers, Tanzania, Transparency

Table of Contents

DEDICATION ..... **II**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ..... **III**

ABSTRACT ..... **IV**

TABLE OF CONTENTS ..... **V**

LIST OF TABLES ..... **VII**

LIST OF FIGURES ..... **VIII**

ABBREVIATIONS ..... **X**

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH **2**

1.1 Introduction 2
1.2 Research background 4
1.3 The research problem 6
1.4 Research objectives 11
1.5 Contribution to the field of Tanzania media studies 13
1.6 Scope and limitations of the study 14
1.7 Research methodology 15
1.8 Structure of the thesis 16

CHAPTER 2 SOCIAL MEDIA RESEARCH TRENDS: 2006-2020 ..... **18**

2.1 Introduction 18
2.2 2006 – 2010: The early years of social media research 19
2.3 2011 – 2015: The era of participation 23
2.4 2016 – 2020: The era beyond participation 31
2.5 The Triad's contribution to good governance practices 39
2.6 Conclusion 41

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCHING THE MEDIA: METHODOLOGY AND METHODS **43**

3.1 Introduction 43
3.2 Philosophical stance of the research 44
3.3 Research design 47
3.4 Methods of data analysis 58
3.5 Reflections from the field 61
3.6 Conclusion 64

CHAPTER 4 GOOD GOVERNANCE AND FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION: THE CASE OF TANZANIA **66**

4.1 Introduction 66
4.2 Country profile and overview of the media landscape 66
4.3 Tanganyika's pre-independence era: African newspapers in the fight for independence 69
4.4 Tanganyika/Tanzania under Julius Nyerere (1961-1985): the death of the private press in the name of nation building 74
4.5 Tanzania under Ali Hassan Mwinyi (1985-1995): Reintroduction of multi-party politics and the independent media 80
4.6 Tanzania under Benjamin Mkapa (1995-2005): Commitment to transparency and flourishing of the media 86
4.7 Tanzania under Jakaya Kikwete (2005-2015): Unfulfilled promises and a new draconian law 92
4.8 Tanzania under John Magufuli (2015-March 2021): A thousand steps backward 98

4.9 Conclusion 107

CHAPTER 5 GOOD GOVERNANCE IN TANZANIA: A PUBLIC PERSPECTIVE 109

5.1 Introduction 109
5.2 The Survey 109
5.3 Findings 111
5.4 Discussion 116
5.5 Data Limitations 135
5.6 Conclusion 136

CHAPTER 6 TANZANIA'S MEDIA LANDSCAPE: A SHRINKING SPACE? 137

6.1 Introduction 137
6.2 The ups and downs of Tanzania's media landscape 138
6.3 The period 2015-2020 145
6.4 Laws and regulations as a weapon of silence 157
6.5 Conclusion 165

CHAPTER 7 SOCIAL MEDIA VS MAINSTREAM MEDIA: THE DEBATE 167

7.1 Introduction 167
7.2 The Internet and social media use in Tanzania 167
7.3 Social media vs mainstream media: who to trust 180
7.4 Conclusion 189

CHAPTER 8 THE POWER OF SOCIAL MEDIA POLITICAL INFLUENCERS IN A SILENCED SOCIETY 191

8.1 Introduction 191
8.2 Social media influencers: what are they? 191
8.3 The birth of Tanzania's social media political influencers 193
8.4 The rise of Kigogo2014 201
8.5 Social media political influencers and the challenges they encounter 206
8.6 Delivering information where the mainstream media cannot 211
8.7 Conclusion 219

CHAPTER 9 WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE: A CONCLUSION 221

9.1 Introduction and Summary 221
9.2 Major findings: Social media's contribution to Tanzania's governance practices 222
9.3 Beyond 2020 and policy recommendations 226
9.4 Recommendations for future research 231

BIBLIOGRAPHY 232

List of Tables

Table 5.1: Better or worse freedom 112
Table 5.2: Peaceful protests, criticising the president, and limiting democratic freedoms 114
Table 5.3: Govt information, criticising the president, closing media outlets and ban on parliament 116
Table 5.4: Gender of respondents 117
Table 5.5: Freedom to say what you think vs sampled groups 122
Table 5.6: Media freedom to investigate, report vs sampled groups 123
Table 5.7: Criticising the president vs sampled groups 124
Table 5.8: Criticising the president vs political parties 125
Table 5.9: Education of respondent vs political party membership 127
Table 5.10: Residential status of respondent vs political party membership 128

List of Figures

Figure 1.1: Political map of the United Republic of Tanzania 1
Figure 1.2: IIAG score of participation, rights and inclusion 10
Figure 1.3: 5 most improved and 5 most deteriorated African countries in participation, rights & inclusion 11

Figure 2.1: Trends on social media scholarly articles published between 2006 and 2010 20
Figure 2.2: Trends on social media scholarly articles published between 2011 and 2015 24
Figure 2.3: Trends on social media scholarly articles published between 2016 and 2020 32
Figure 2.4: Trends on social media scholarly articles published between 2006 and 2021 in relation to transparency and freedom of expression 41

Figure 3.1 : The 10 most populated countries in Africa 54
Figure 3.2: Percentage distribution of the projected population by age group and sex 55
Figure 3.3: Chart showing the depth of discussion on interview topics, as captured through NVIVO software 60

Figure 4.1: Map showing Tanganyika as part of German East Africa 67
Figure 4.2: Imperial flag of Tanganyika Territory under the British 68
Figure 4.3: Number of internet users in Tanzania over the years 103
Figure 4.4: Mobile phone connectivity in Tanzania 104

Figure 5.1: Freedom to say what you think 111
Figure 5.2: Support for democracy 113
Figure 5.3: Extent of democracy 113
Figure 5.4: Age of respondents 118
Figure 5.5: Urban or rural primary sampling unit 118
Figure 5.6: Education of respondents 119
Figure 5.7: Respondents' political party affiliation 120
Figure 5.8: Number of students enrolled in educational settings in mainland Tanzania in 2019 .. 129

Figure 7.1: Individuals using the Internet in Tanzania and Kenya 1990-2019. Source: ITU. 168
Figure 7.2: Internet penetration rate in Tanzania during 2015-2020. Source: TCRA. 168
Figure 7.3: Estimate of internet users in Tanzania by March 2021. Source: TCRA. 169
Figure 7.4: Social media statistics in Tanzania 169
Figure 7.5: Screenshot of a tweet from NetBlocks confirming internet disruptions in Tanzania ... 173

Figure 8.1: Screenshot of Mange Kimambi's Instagram account as of April 14, 2022 194
Figure 8.2: Screenshot of Maria Sarungi Tsehai's Twitter account as of 8 August 2022 195
Figure 8.3: Screenshot of Fatma Karume's Twitter account as of 8 August 2022 196
Figure 8.4: Screenshot of Kigogo's Twitter account as of 8 August 2022 197
Figure 8.5: Screenshots of tweets from the Twitter Republic with the hashtag #DearNyerere 200
Figure 8.6: Kigogo cartoon-1 202
Figure 8.7: Kigogo cartoon-2 203
Figure 8.8: Screenshot of Fatma Karume's tweet criticising her colleagues after she was fired from the law firm she had helped create 207
Figure 8.9: News reports of the government's search for Kigogo 208
Figure 8.10: Screenshot of one of the tweets that appeared during the suspension of Kigogo's account, with #BringBackKigogo 209
Figure 8.11: Screenshot of Ansbert Ngurumo's tweet questioning the whereabouts of President Magufuli 213
Figure 8.12: Screenshot of Kigogo's first tweet alerting the public of the president's ill health 213
Figure 8.13: Screenshot of tweet by Kigogo declaring openly that President Magufuli was ill 214
Figure 8.14: Screenshot of Sauti Kubwa's story on 9 March 2021 on the president's ill health 215
Figure 8.15: Screenshot of a tweet by Information Minister, Innocent Bashungwa, warning against trusting and spreading rumours 216
Figure 8.16: Screenshot of Minister Mwigulu Nchemba's Instagram post warning against the spread of rumours about President Magufuli's whereabouts 217
Figure 8.17: A section of Tanzania's daily newspapers reporting about the president's whereabouts for the first time 219

Abbreviations

ABC	American Broadcasting Company
ACHPR	African Commission on Human and People's Rights
ACT	Alliance for Change and Transparency
ARPAN	Advanced Research Projects Agency Network
ASP	Afro Shiraz Party
AU	African Union
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CA	Constituent Assembly
CAQDAS	Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software
CCM	Chama Cha Mapinduzi
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CHADEMA	Chama Cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo
CIPESA	Collaboration on International ICT Policy for East and Southern Africa
CNN	Cable News Network
COSTECH	Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology
CPJ	Committee to Protect Journalists
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CTN	Coastal Television Network
DOAZ	Deutsch-Ostafrikanische Zeitung/German East African Newspaper
DTV	Dar es Salaam Television
ELCT	Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania
EPOCA	Electronic and Postal (Online Content) Regulations
HRW	Human Rights Watch
ICCPR	International Convention on Civil and Political Rights
ICJ	International Court of Justice
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDEA	International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
IGP	Inspector General of Police
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
ITV	Independent Television
KOT	Kenyans on Twitter
LHRC	Legal and Human Rights Centre

MAELEZO	Tanzania Information Services
MCT	Media Council of Tanzania
MISA	Media Institute of Southern Africa
MOAT	Media Owners Association of Tanzania
NBS	National Bureau of Statistics
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NRRC	National Research Registration Committee
NVivo	Qualitative Data Analysis Software
RC	Regional Commissioner
REPOA	Research on Poverty Alleviation
RTD	Radio Tanzania Dar es Salaam
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
SHIHATA	Shirika la Habari Tanzania/Tanzania News Agency
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TAA	Tanganyika African Association
TAMWA	Tanzania Media Women's Association
TANU	Tanganyika African National Union
TBC	Tanganyika/Tanzania Broadcasting Corporation
TCRA	Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority
TEF	Tanzania Editors' Forum
TIS	Tanganyika/Tanzania Information Services
TMF	Tanzania Media Foundation
TPF	Tanzania Police Force
TV	Television
UMCA	Universities' Mission to Central Africa
UN	United Nations
UNDHR	United Nations Declaration of Human Rights
URT	United Republic of Tanzania
VPN	Virtual Private Network
WWW	World Wide Web
ZEC	Zanzibar Electoral Commission

Figure 1.1: Political map of the United Republic of Tanzania

Source: MapsofWorld.com

Chapter 1 Introduction to the Research

1.1 Introduction

Meet Attilio Tagalile, a veteran Tanzanian journalist who had been a professional since the days of the country's first president, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere. I had an appointment to interview him at the Best Bite Café in Dar es Salaam. Mzee[1] Tagalile was a morning person and he had told me to arrive early as I would find him there waiting for me. Just as he had promised, there he was at the back table, glued to his mobile phone. As I walked over and greeted him, he started talking about the latest news circling on social media. "Do you know that people are still talking about the general elections we had two months ago? You should see this. Go on Twitter and read the comments about the Parliament being full of members from the ruling party. There are very interesting discussions going on online." I took a seat across him and opened the Twitter app on my phone. Tagalile then remarked: "Back in our days we had to go to pubs and coffee spots to hear people's views. You guys have it easy nowadays. All you have to do is take out your phone, go on social media and read what people say. And I promise you, between those words, there is always a good story for journalists to follow-up."

Documentation on Tanzania's journey towards a successful flow of communication dates back to colonial Tanganyika [Tanganyika and Zanzibar united in 1964 to form the United Republic of Tanzania]. During that time, both German and later British administrations introduced publications as a way of communicating to the people (Sturmer, 1998). The introduction of the first African newspaper in 1937 opened the possibility of citizens, through journalists, to express their views and call for independence, a move that was embraced by the people, but unwanted by the colonial masters (Scotton, 1978). Nevertheless, the introduction of newspapers as a medium of communication continued to thrive even after independence, albeit with some shortcomings.

Both colonial and post-colonial administrations introduced laws to regulate the press. The first President, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, nationalised the leading English newspaper and introduced the first Media Policy that was to promote the country's socialist strategy (Rioba, 2008). This led to Tanzania mainland having only four newspapers – two owned by the government and two owned by the ruling party. Radio Tanzania Dar es Salaam (RTD), also owned by the government, was the only radio station since its establishment in 1951 until the 1990s when Tanzania went through a democratisation process. The democratisation process was a new chapter for the country and its

[1] In East Africa=an elder (often used as a title of respect).

communication journey, as it allowed both multiparty politics and the private media (Moshiro, 1990). After the reintroduction of the private media, newspapers, radio stations and TV stations started to flourish (Rioba, 2012) and people had access to information as well as a place to express their views. However, this also led to the government enacting laws and regulations to control the flow of communication, some of which hindered freedom of expression and the right to information.

Freedom of opinion and expression is guaranteed in Article 18 of the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania, which states:

> "Every person - (a) has a freedom of opinion and expression of his ideas; (b) has out right to seek, receive and, or disseminate information regardless of national boundaries; (c) has the freedom to communicate and a freedom with protection from interference from his communication; (d) has a right to be informed at all times of various important events of life and activities of the people and also of issues of importance to the society" (URT Constitution, 1977).

Furthermore, the Access to Information Act (2016) directs information holders to proactively disclose information to the public. Simply put, the provisions of the Constitution as well as the Act provide that the government be led transparently, and citizens be able to exercise their right to express themselves. These freedoms are also championed globally and regionally, where Tanzania is a member country to both the United Nations and the African Union.

The Right to Information was officially recognised for the first time in 1948 after being formulated by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and adopted by the UN General Assembly (United Nations, no date). Article 19 of the Declaration gives people the right to freedom of opinion and expression, including seeking, receiving and imparting information through any media (UDHR, 1948). Moreover, in 1966 the UN General Assembly, through Article 19 of the International Convention on Civil & Political Rights, declared that the right to freedom of opinion and expression could be through any media of choice: in writing, in print, orally, or in the form of art (ICCPR, 1966).

Concerning the African Union, the African Commission on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR) adopted the Declaration of Principles of Freedom of Expression and Access to Information in Africa. This was during its 65th session held in Banjul, The Gambia, in 2019. The principles enshrined in the Declaration call both access to information and freedom of expression fundamental rights protected by both the African Charter and international human rights laws. While Principle 5, for instance, states that these rights shall be protected against both online and offline interference, Principle 10

of the Declaration declares that freedom of expression is a "fundamental and inalienable human right and an indispensable component of democracy" (ACHPR Declaration, 2019).

But as Mzee Tagalile told me when we met on that hot and sunny December morning of 2020, we now have it easy compared to the way he and others used to communicate back in the 1970s. However, having it easy also seems to have come with more restrictions on how to communicate, what to communicate and what not to communicate. How easy has the invention of the Internet and social media been on communication? How much have these online platforms been able to grant people the power to discuss, question, probe and share their ideas freely? Most of all, how much have social media platforms made it possible for transparency and freedom of expression to thrive despite the obstacles caused by the laws and regulations in place?

This thesis, therefore, seeks to answer the main question: Can social media contribute to transparency and freedom of expression?

The thesis also seeks to address the following sub-questions:

i. What factors influence perceptions of good governance in Tanzania?
ii. Why has there been a decline in good governance practices in Tanzania during 2015-2020?
iii. What conditions would be required for social media to replace mainstream media?

1.2 Research background

Transparency and freedom of expression are both good governance practices championed by countries and multinational organisations as pillars for progress. Darbishire (2010) posits that while proactive transparency can be achieved by public authorities taking the initiative to disclose information they hold, it also promotes government integrity and encourages citizens to be involved in policymaking. Jain (2012) states that this can help a country to progress by having informed citizenry, as it is a unique human right that enables the people to hold into account those who govern them. Williams (2014) articulates that even though different groups could have different interpretations of transparency, its collective importance is that it is firm on issues of accountability. Nigam (2015), however, cautions that the right to information, which is the outcome of transparency, is now becoming an obstruction to information since those required to disclose information are no longer willing to do so. Instead, he asserts, this has been replaced by sharing of

propaganda and only partial information aimed at influencing audiences by being selective on the facts.

Regarding freedom of expression, Howie (2018) expresses how all relevant human rights treaties have protected it since it was first included in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. She explains that it is a necessary precondition for other rights to be enjoyed such as freedom of association, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly and the right to vote. Balkin (2004) suggests that this governance prerequisite is important since it allows the participation of ordinary people in giving ideas, hence having a say that contributes to development of their nation. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights itself insists of this fundamental right, pointing out that both freedom of opinion and expression are "indispensable conditions for the full development of the person, essential for any society and a foundation stone for every free and democratic society" (UDHR, 1948).

However, not all agree that freedom of expression is indispensable. Scanlon (1972) contends that acts of expression should be restricted, as they can bring harm, injury, or damage. Wellington (1979) and Cohen (1993) seem to be in agreement, with the former arguing that speech can hurt, offend and injure a reputation, and the latter claiming that it can be offensive and produce reputational injury as well as emotional distress; hence it has unambiguous costs at times. However, what these scholars fail to establish is that freedom of expression does have limits, and this is why there are other laws in place – such as libel and defamation law – to ensure that those who abuse this freedom are held liable.

On the other hand, the term 'good governance' itself has faced criticism, especially from Africans who claim that it has now become "the word" for all development theorists and international aid policymakers, primarily encompassing how power is exercised (McFerson, 2009). Onazi (2013) claims that good governance was specifically termed for African and third world countries and used as the accepted belief for interventions in Africa by development institutions that dominate the world (Onazi, 2013: 75). Shivji (2013) argues that 'good governance' facilitates to justify the neo-liberal policies of the Western powers and other international institutions directed at developing countries, and Dei (2014) insists that instead of being imposed as it is, democracy and good governance have to be homegrown (Dei, 2014: 24). Nonetheless, Bah (2015) admits that there are incidences in Africa that are largely linked to bad governance, such as civil wars and military coups.

Perhaps one of the most interesting quotes on good governance was from Tanzania's first President, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere:

> ". . . the question of good governance in Africa came up. But it came up as a condition of giving aid to African countries . . . It was this aid-related discussion of good governance, a matter between aid givers and aid seekers, the arrogant and patronizing manner in which it was raised by the aid givers, that discredited the whole subject in the eyes of many of us in Africa and other parts of the South. For used in this manner, good governance sounded like a tool for neo-colonialism. We have therefore tended to despise the concept even as, out of necessity, we try to qualify under it" (Nyerere, 1998).

Despite the aforementioned arguments, we cannot get rid of the fact that there are some bad practices that are a contributor to underdevelopment in African countries. As Mwalimu Nyerere himself later concluded, we have to agree that bad governance is the result to most of our problems in Africa, despite our rejections in neo-colonialism or even the methods used to enforce it (Nyerere, 1998). As prerequisites of good governance, transparency and freedom of expression are among the fundamentals of a country's development. They give power to the people to question where questions need to be asked and to ensure that government leaders understand that they will be held accountable if they fail to deliver.

In Tanzania these questions are being asked not only by journalists, but also by citizens with the aid of social media. They use online platforms to communicate, engage in political discussions, question the authorities and reveal what they feel are misconducts within government and other institutions. However, the power to communicate and to question being in the hands of the people, has also revealed the other side of governance practices – that of authorities finding more ways to regulate and control the flow of communication.

1.3 The research problem

This study is grounded on the shrinking media space and the apparent lack of transparency and freedom of expression in Tanzania during the period 2015-2020.

While launching his presidential campaign at the Jangwani grounds in Dar es Salaam leading to the October 2015 general elections, the ruling party's candidate, John Magufuli, spoke fondly of journalists and how he would uphold freedom of expression so that they would continue to conduct their work in a pleasant environment (Mlekani, 2015). However, this promise was not to be kept. In March 2017 after sacking the minister responsible for information, the then President Magufuli

expressed his anger on the way the media was operating. While swearing-in the new information minister at the State House, the president issued a verbal warning:

> "I would like to tell media owners, be careful and watch it. If you think you have that kind of freedom, (it is) not to that extent." (Reuters, 2017); (Media Council of Tanzania, 2019: 32).

The president's warning came as he questioned angrily why newspapers would give a full-front page coverage and pictures to the sacked minister after he was threatened at gunpoint by security officials not to hold a press conference. According to President Magufuli, there were other "more important" things to publish. The president's warning was seen as a direct order for the newly appointed minister to observe and act against media organisations that were critical to the government, instead of working with the media to promote important agenda that would help in moving the country to the top of the development ladder.

The Media Council of Tanzania (MCT) (2019) explains how the Tanzanian government used force, threats and intimidation against the media to instil fear. Moreover, the politicisation of the development agenda promoted when the president first came into power in 2015 reached a point where whoever criticised the government or the president was considered an enemy and against the nation's wellbeing (MCT, 2019: 22). Opposition leaders, critical journalists and human rights activists were frequently arrested, political rallies prohibited, critical media outlets banned, and peaceful protests restricted (p. 23).

The MCT report also points out that 2017 was "a bad year" for the Tanzanian media, with up to 83 reports of violations of press freedom and freedom of expression being reported. Among these cases, 18 were on denial of access to information, 21 were arrests and detentions of journalists by police, 15 were on harassment of journalists, and 9 were on assaults of journalists. Additionally, up until June 2018, 30 cases of press freedom violations were received at the MCT, which included kidnappings, threats to journalists, denial of access to information, confiscation of equipment and arrests. The MCT verified some of these reported cases (MCT, 2019: 24).

More incidents have been documented in various reports, such as the Human Rights Watch (2019), Amnesty International (2018), and Freedom House (2018). The reports have recorded how the crackdown on media outlets critical to the government led to the banning of those newspapers in 2017. Examples include *Mawio* newspaper, which was banned for two years by the minister responsible for information over articles that linked two former presidents allegedly having been

involved in inappropriate mining deals in the past. Another newspaper, *MwanaHalisi,* was banned for two years accused of insulting the president and publishing stories deemed unethical, which were likely to "endanger national security". The said article was in fact querying the circumstances surrounding a critical opposition member being shot several times outside his house. This was the second time for the newspaper to be suspended within a period of only three months. Another newspaper, *Raia Mwema* was banned for 90 days in September 2017 for publishing an article '*Urais Utamshinda Rais Magufuli'* [Magufuli's presidency was likely to fail]. In October 2017, *Tanzania Daima* received a 90-day ban for what the Director of Information Services described as its continuous publication of false information. The Director claimed that it had been a trend of the newspaper to publish seditious news and features that were unethical and false, causing "fear and hatred among members of the public" (MCT, 2019: 35-36). In June 2020, the Director revoked *Tanzania Daima*'s licence, claiming that the newspaper had kept violating regulations even after receiving official warnings more than ten times. The Director clarified that he had used his powers to revoke the newspaper's licence under Article 9 (b) of the Media Services Act No. 12 of 2016 (BBC, 2020).

The fear of being critical against the government and the president was so high during 2015-2020, to the extent that sometimes newspapers were not even sure if they were in violation or not. One example is that of IPP Media – a major media house that decided in January 2018 to ban for three months the publication of its own newspaper – *Nipashe Jumapili* [Nipashe on Sunday] for writing an "untrue story." IPP Media also apologised to President Magufuli over the story. Moreover, the government issued a press release congratulating the media house's management for being accountable by banning themselves over the "untrue" story (Deutche Welle, 2018).

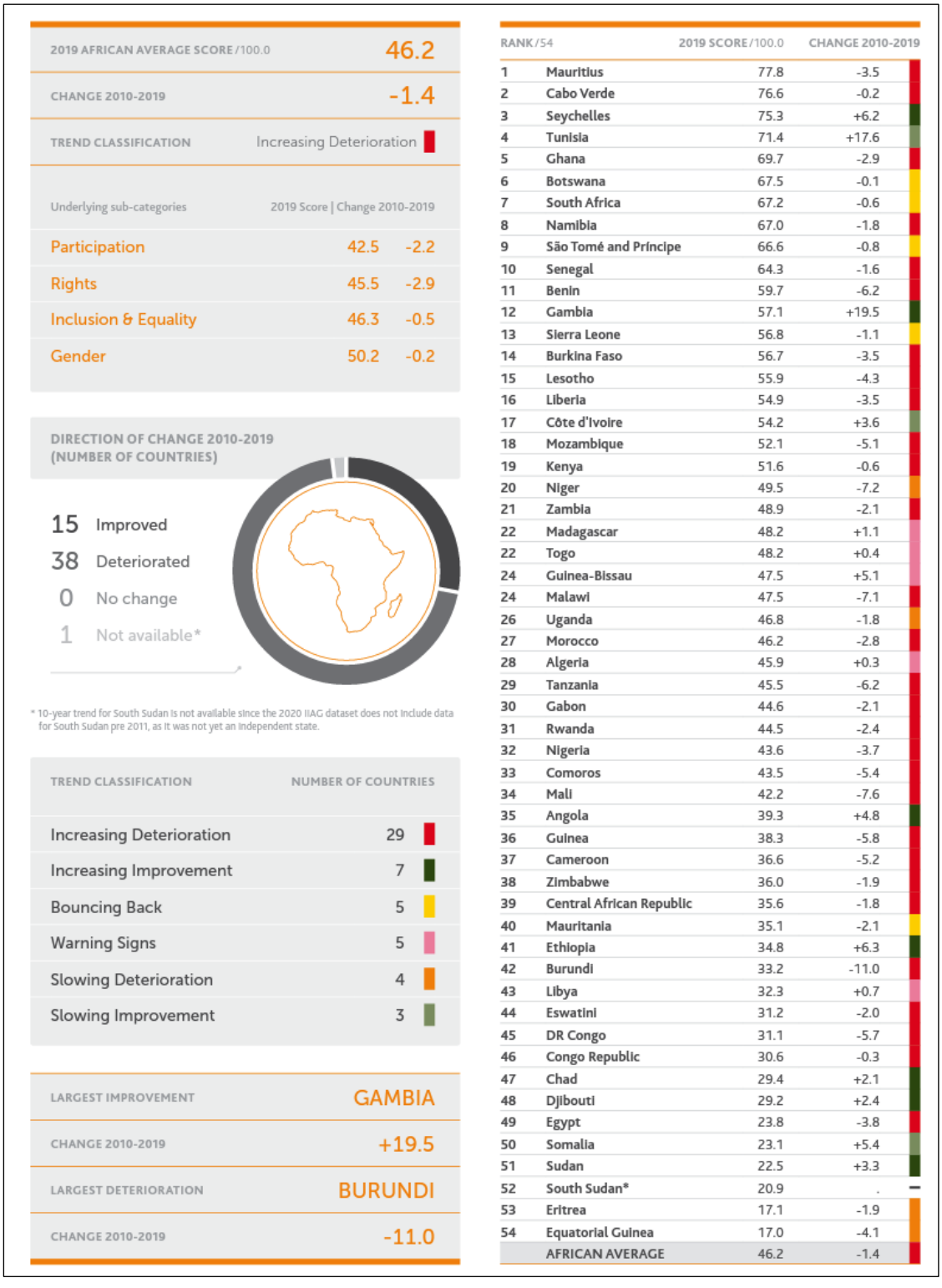
During this period an alternative to mainstream media was necessary, and social media seemed to be that alternative. With transparency and freedom of expression in the decline, this study looks at social media and how it can solve the problem. This, therefore, refers to the triad: social media, transparency, and freedom of expression. Since Tanzania experienced a decline in transparency and freedom of expression, could the use of social media solve that problem? Is it the missing link that would help Tanzania thrive once again in good governance practices?

The 2020 Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) report produced by the Mo Ibrahim Foundation shows how participation has been the most declining sub-category in the continent since 2015, and it suggests that this is due to four reasons: less freedom to associate and assemble, inability of political parties to operate freely and their lack of access to state-owned media,

deterioration of the civil society space with restriction to establish and operate freely, and repression and prosecution faced by CSOs and NGOs.

Similarly, the IIAG report has mentioned media freedom as the second largest deterioration in the continent in the five-year period, with government-led censorship and self-censorship increasing between 2015-2020. According to the report, the mainstream media in Africa has become more biased when covering opposition political parties and has been less free to criticise incumbent regimes (IIAG Report, 2020).

The 2020 IIAG statistics on Tanzania show the country as one of those in the continent with an increased deterioration in good governance practices, with Figure 1.2 showing Tanzania (number 29) having a score of 45.5 and a -6.2 decline, causing it to be marked red, as in increasing deterioration.



2019 AFRICAN AVERAGE SCORE /100.0	46.2
CHANGE 2010-2019	-1.4
TREND CLASSIFICATION	Increasing Deterioration

Underlying sub-categories	2019 Score	Change 2010-2019
Participation	42.5	-2.2
Rights	45.5	-2.9
Inclusion & Equality	46.3	-0.5
Gender	50.2	-0.2

DIRECTION OF CHANGE 2010-2019 (NUMBER OF COUNTRIES)

15 Improved
38 Deteriorated
0 No change
1 Not available*

* 10-year trend for South Sudan is not available since the 2020 IIAG dataset does not include data for South Sudan pre 2011, as it was not yet an independent state.

TREND CLASSIFICATION	NUMBER OF COUNTRIES
Increasing Deterioration	29
Increasing Improvement	7
Bouncing Back	5
Warning Signs	5
Slowing Deterioration	4
Slowing Improvement	3

LARGEST IMPROVEMENT	GAMBIA
CHANGE 2010-2019	+19.5
LARGEST DETERIORATION	BURUNDI
CHANGE 2010-2019	-11.0

RANK /54		2019 SCORE /100.0	CHANGE 2010-2019
1	Mauritius	77.8	-3.5
2	Cabo Verde	76.6	-0.2
3	Seychelles	75.3	+6.2
4	Tunisia	71.4	+17.6
5	Ghana	69.7	-2.9
6	Botswana	67.5	-0.1
7	South Africa	67.2	-0.6
8	Namibia	67.0	-1.8
9	São Tomé and Príncipe	66.6	-0.8
10	Senegal	64.3	-1.6
11	Benin	59.7	-6.2
12	Gambia	57.1	+19.5
13	Sierra Leone	56.8	-1.1
14	Burkina Faso	56.7	-3.5
15	Lesotho	55.9	-4.3
16	Liberia	54.9	-3.5
17	Côte d'Ivoire	54.2	+3.6
18	Mozambique	52.1	-5.1
19	Kenya	51.6	-0.6
20	Niger	49.5	-7.2
21	Zambia	48.9	-2.1
22	Madagascar	48.2	+1.1
22	Togo	48.2	+0.4
24	Guinea-Bissau	47.5	+5.1
24	Malawi	47.5	-7.1
26	Uganda	46.8	-1.8
27	Morocco	46.2	-2.8
28	Algeria	45.9	+0.3
29	Tanzania	45.5	-6.2
30	Gabon	44.6	-2.1
31	Rwanda	44.5	-2.4
32	Nigeria	43.6	-3.7
33	Comoros	43.5	-5.4
34	Mali	42.2	-7.6
35	Angola	39.3	+4.8
36	Guinea	38.3	-5.8
37	Cameroon	36.6	-5.2
38	Zimbabwe	36.0	-1.9
39	Central African Republic	35.6	-1.8
40	Mauritania	35.1	-2.1
41	Ethiopia	34.8	+6.3
42	Burundi	33.2	-11.0
43	Libya	32.3	+0.7
44	Eswatini	31.2	-2.0
45	DR Congo	31.1	-5.7
46	Congo Republic	30.6	-0.3
47	Chad	29.4	+2.1
48	Djibouti	29.2	+2.4
49	Egypt	23.8	-3.8
50	Somalia	23.1	+5.4
51	Sudan	22.5	+3.3
52	South Sudan*	20.9	.
53	Eritrea	17.1	-1.9
54	Equatorial Guinea	17.0	-4.1
	AFRICAN AVERAGE	46.2	-1.4

Figure 1.2: IIAG score of participation, rights and inclusion

Additionally, the 2020 IIAG Report has also listed Tanzania as the most deteriorating country in terms of participation, rights and inclusion for both a ten-year period (2010-2019) and a five-year period (2015-2019). Figure 1.3 shows how Tanzania was one of five African countries that

deteriorated the most, with a -6.2 decline between 2010-2019, and a -7.6 decline between 2015-2019, a time when John Magufuli was the country's president.

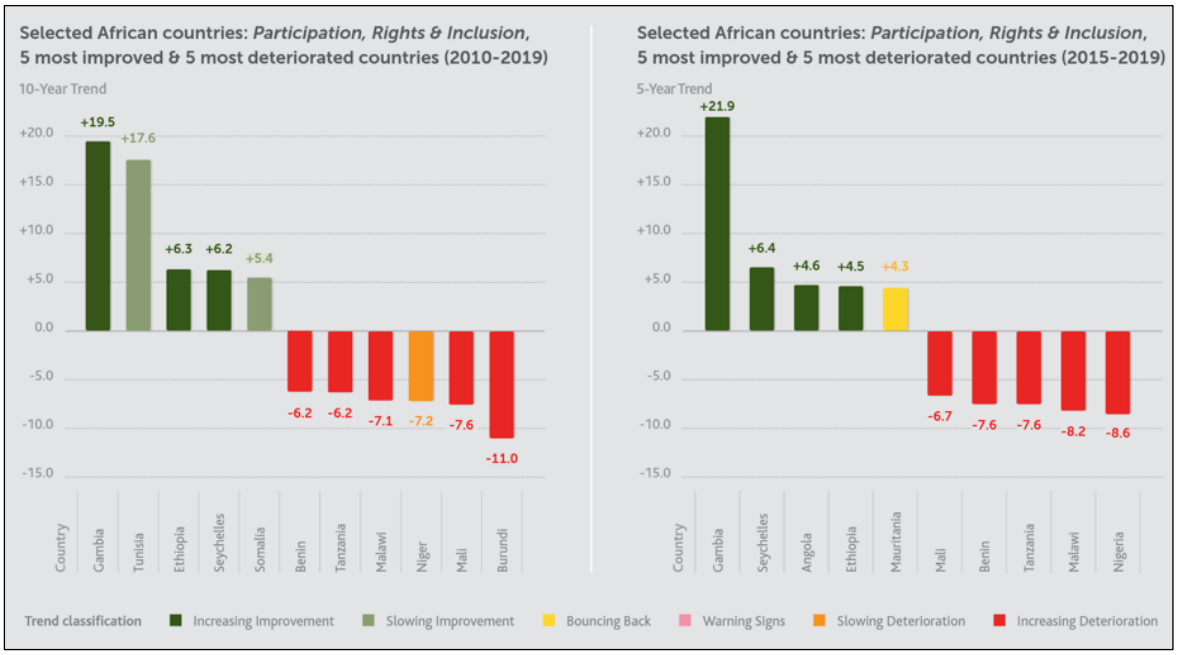


Figure 1.3: 5 most improved and 5 most deteriorated African countries in participation, rights & inclusion

1.4 Research objectives

The apparent shrinking of the media space in Tanzania in terms of transparency and freedom of expression is a situation that needs critical attention. While this study has focused on the five years under President John Magufuli's administration, it is imperative to explore how the country endured during this time and how it can survive in the future, should a similar situation transpire. The use of social media, I suggest, could be of advantage.

While the beginnings of social media promised a new way of communication amongst users, there are likewise some arguments on its limitations, with Fuchs (2014) claiming that short messages invite simplistic arguments (p. 101). Gaber (2017) explains that much of the arguments on the impact of the Internet in political communication focus on the 2009 Iranian Green Revolution and the 2011 Arab Spring. He is sceptical of this, arguing that those two examples only let scholars and commentators view the Internet as a powerful tool to facilitate social change (Gaber, 2016: 604). Similarly, while Fuchs describes 2011 as "a year of revolutions, major protests, riots and the emergence of various social movements" (Fuchs, 2014: 83), he claims that social media is given too much credit for the outcome of the protests in Tunisia and Egypt. Human actors, argues Fuchs, were

the ones that brought about change to authoritarian regimes, as the Internet does not create sociality (p. 84).

On the other hand, Karatzogianni (2013) discloses that during this time, the regimes also tried to find ways to prevent the protestors from the digital engagement. Due to this, creative ways were used through the mainstream media and social media to make sure that the protests were connected to other international actors. Nevertheless, Fuchs (2014) criticises notions such as "the revolution will be twittered" that was promoted by blogger Andrew Sullivan who was referring to the 2009 Iranian protests. According to Fuchs, basing political debates in 140-character short messages invites simplistic arguments. Twitter's character-limit per tweet has since been doubled and is now 280 characters.

While arguments raised by Fuchs (2014) and Gaber (2017) about the legitimacy of social media's impact during the Arab Spring could be valid since the Internet alone cannot bring social or political change, yet we cannot ignore how powerful these short messages are, and how much good or damage they are likely to create, despite their character-limit. Moreover, the power of social media is apparently being seen as a threat by political and government leaders due to its ability of not only providing people with more access to information, but also its potential to mobilise and challenge authorities (Dwyer and Molony, 2019b).

Indeed, social media can go beyond enabling social change, especially since it has the capacity to facilitate communication between different individuals in a society. In places where rules and regulations have been put in place to control the mainstream media, for instance, social media platforms could be in a much better position to act as mediums of communication. As Dwyer and Molony (2019) point out, the Internet growth penetration rates have significantly increased in Africa in recent years and therefore these online platforms should be expected to play an increasingly significant role in both the continent's politics and its security.

This thesis, therefore, is designed to probe the contradictions of the use of social media platforms by exploring how it can both support and damage public flow of communication. The research seeks to investigate how the use of social media could contribute towards transparency and freedom of expression, with the following research objectives:

i. To explore the understanding and importance of good governance practices as perceived by Tanzanian citizens;

ii. To assess the current laws and regulations guiding media and freedom of expression in Tanzania and their impacts;
iii. To evaluate the current use of social media platforms vis-à-vis mainstream media;
iv. To assess social impacts of using social media platforms in promoting transparency and freedom of expression; and
v. To envision what needs to be done to uphold good governance practices

1.5 Contribution to the field of Tanzania media studies

Most of the previous research has documented the development of Tanzania's media in different phases. The work of Sturmer (1998) is the most notable one for documenting the media history of the country, with a collection of accounts that happened in four phases: the German colonial media, media under the British administration, the post-colonial phase under the socialist regime and the transition phase which saw the establishment of an independent and free press.

Over the past decade during the time in which Tanzania had already gone through the democratisation process, other research in media studies have been conducted. Rioba (2012) investigated the media's accountability in the country's multiparty democracy, looking at how the media could self-regulate itself and be accountable in a 21st century democracy. Bariki Kaale (2013) took a different approach by examining how election news coverage in newspapers influenced voting outcomes of the 2010 presidential elections, ascertaining that prevalent biases and uneven representation were evident. Nkya (2017) analysed the country's mainstream media's reporting of development issues. However, all these studies did not incorporate the use of social media.

There are a few studies on Tanzania's media development in relation to social media. Kokwijuka (2020) examined newspapers produced by the Tanzania Standard Newspapers and Mwananchi Communication Limited, looking at how they had merged social media into their production. Churk and Volkmer (2021) studied social media interaction in Tanzania, examining the role of policy experts in digital policymaking. Nevertheless, the studies did not investigate the media landscape in Tanzania during the social media era and how this could support democratic practices.

This study is envisaged to make significant contributions and bring a new perspective to media studies in Tanzania, specifically on the use of social media as a new way of communicating. While Sturmer's (1998) research on the history of media in Tanzania covered a whole range of decades, it ended with the democratisation process when the independent media was introduced, and multi-party politics being practised. Other studies have focused on other specific topics that were current

during their time of publication, such as the media's development during the early days of Tanzania's democracy.

Generally, this study expands from what is already published by not only giving a general overview of the media history through different political administrations, but also by investigating how the media has been fairing after the introduction of social media. Its particular attention to transparency and freedom of expression fills the existing gaps in both the theoretical and empirical literature on debates of how media and people could communicate when the governance prerequisites are restricted.

1.6 Scope and limitations of the study

This study focuses on social media's ability to aid transparency and freedom of expression in Tanzania's governance practices. Even though focusing on Tanzania alone restricts the generalisation of the findings, it does not obstruct the validity of its outcomes. Burchett *et al.* (2013) argue that it is important for decision-makers to assess the appropriate use of research conducted elsewhere into their own setting. They add that this is especially beneficial for low-income countries that lack resources to conduct their own research, therefore making it more likely to make decisions based on research conducted elsewhere. Similarly, Pepinsky (2019) is of the view that even though single-country research has faced criticism in the past for lacking generalisability, it has had a resurgence since the early 2000s since intensive study conducted in a single country is still likely to produce general theoretic insights.

Another limitation of this study is its focus being purely on Tanzania mainland and excluding Zanzibar, which forms part of the union. While Tanganyika and Zanzibar united in 1964 to form the United Republic of Tanzania, the empirical data focused on Tanzania mainland because Zanzibar has its own laws and regulations guiding the media and the flow of information. Even though the constitution applies to both sides of the Union, the laws explored in this study are only applicable to Tanzania mainland. Furthermore, the administrations investigated are those governing fully in Tanzania mainland. Zanzibar is a semi-autonomous island with its own President, Cabinet and House of Representatives.

The third limitation of this research is that while it focuses entirely on social media's use to aid transparency and freedom of expression, the study deliberately puts less emphasis on issues related to access of social media such as infrastructure and other indeterminate constraints. Not that they are unimportant, but because other studies (Borrino, Furini and Roccetti, 2009; Arfaa and Wang,

2014; Carr and Hayes, 2015; Chukwuere, 2021; Munger *et al.*, 2021) have already investigated them as impediments to the maximum use of social media in low-income countries. Moreover, the study did not intend to divert from its main discussion of analysing social media's use in places where transparency and freedom of expression are restricted.

Nevertheless, despite a few shortcomings, the thesis has many advantages, such as understanding the connection between social media, transparency and freedom of expression, as evidenced in Chapter 8. In the chapter there is a case study on how social media assisted in breaking the news as well as giving updates on the health of Tanzania's former president John Magufuli.

1.7 Research methodology

Different methodological choices framed this study. Both the theoretical and empirical evidence in it aims to contribute to an in-depth understanding of the use of social media in different aspects and to fill the gap on how the use of social media contributes to transparency and freedom of expression in Tanzania.

This study is grounded in the principle that particular methods of investigation may not cater for the exploration of all aspects that a study is investigating, hence permitting the option for different methods to be used. The mixed-methods research approach, argue Creswell and Clark (2011), is most ideal for research problems that need answers that are beyond numbers derived from a quantitative sense, or words from a qualitative viewpoint. The combination of both the quantitative and qualitative approach provides the most needed analysis of the problems being investigated (Creswell & Clark, 2011: 22).

This study makes original contributions to the theoretical and empirical understandings of the use of social media, which Kietzmann *et al.* (2012) define simply as "interactive platforms via which individuals and communities share, co-create, discuss and modify user-generated content." Despite the strength of social media to provide a two-way communication, these platforms have also received mixed reviews on its inability to be inclusive. Borrino, Furini and Roccetti (2009) maintain that those who are more technologically advanced take advantage of social media, while the other part of society, including elders or people with disabilities is excluded from the social media revolution. Similarly, Chukwuere (2021) admits that social media has become a platform for both the great and small with its ability to break traditional barriers in relation to access to information and communication in general. However, he argues, the role that social media platforms play in less advantaged communities, such as rural areas, is questionable.

As a Tanzanian who has lived through different stages of media and communication development, the changes of political participation as well as the use of different communication channels in the country have been interesting to observe. This is analysed more in Chapter 3, which focuses on the methods and methodology used for this study.

The study, therefore, attempts to grasp the media development in Tanzania in the aspect of transparency and freedom of expression and how different administrations in the country have used punitive measures to control these freedoms. This has been analysed using both primary and secondary methodological approaches.

The study flows in three main parts: the first part investigates the historical landscape of Tanzania's media in terms of freedom of expression. This is explored through journal articles, books and journalistic stories that are accessible online. The second part presents a survey conducted to Tanzanian citizens, inquiring on their perception of good governance practices and whether they had been respected. The third part presents the in-depth interviews conducted to complement the findings from both the secondary approach and the survey. The empirical account of the media landscape in Tanzania as well as the use of social media, including the works of social media political influencers, enabled me to attain the aim of this study.

1.8 Structure of the thesis

The thesis is organised into 9 chapters. **Chapter One** is the introduction of the study and provides background to the research problem and the importance of the study. **Chapter Two** bears the literature review on social media over 15 years. This follows a bibliometric approach inspecting the focus of social media studies using a software known as VosViewer.

Chapter Three analyses the methodology and methods used to collect data for the purpose of this study. It describes how the researcher used a mixed-methods research approach and why this was necessary. **Chapter Four** presents a historical perspective on the media landscape in Tanzania in relation to transparency and freedom of expression. This investigates the landscape through six different administrations, from colonial Tanganyika to present-day Tanzania. The chapter concludes that all administrations used laws and regulations to limit freedom of expression.

Chapter Five examines the findings from the survey conducted in Tanzania exploring citizens' perceptions on good governance practices. In this survey, most respondents agree that freedom of

the press, freedom of civil society organisations and freedom of opposition parties to function is worse compared to a few years before.

Chapters Six, Seven and **Eight** analyse the findings from in-depth interviews focusing on the shrinking space of the media landscape in Tanzania during the period 2015-2020, the debate surrounding the use of social media in place of the mainstream media, and the role of social media political influencers during that time. **Chapter Nine** concludes the study by examining the study objectives against the findings. It interrogates what needs to be done for transparency and freedom of expression to be upheld for future generations.

The general finding of this thesis is that even though the use of social media has seen with it the increase of misinformation and fake news, it has a significant contribution to transparency and freedom of expression, therefore fulfilling the force of the triad. This contribution is especially for those places that are experiencing restrictions to practice the good governance prerequisites, such as it was for Tanzania during the period 2015-2020.

Chapter 2 Social Media Research Trends: 2006-2020

2.1 Introduction

This chapter analyses the trends in literature on the study of social media through a bibliometric mapping approach. This is a data-driven approach that produces maps from VOS viewer, a software tool providing a visual representation of bibliometric maps relying on computer algorithms and visualisation techniques (Eck and Waltman, 2009). Complemented by visuals maps, the chapter analyses social media research trends from 2006 (when social media started) to 2020. The review that is based on five-yearly batches intends to interrogate how social media and participation have been covered by research over the years and how the research lacks adequate information regarding social media, transparency and freedom of expression.

It is not easy to place an exact date on the start of social media. However, historians claim that in as early as 1884, Samuel Morse tried to send a telegraph with the message "*What Hath God Wrought?*" The telegraph that was sent from Washington D.C. to Baltimore could signal the first step towards social media (Howe, 2007). It was to be another 125 years for history to be made again by the Advanced Research Projects Agency Network (ARPAN). In 1969, the US military through ARPAN had intended to connect universities on a proto internet. They however only managed to transmit two letters 'LO", instead of the intended "LOGIN" (Jenkins, 2020).

Nevertheless, a number of scholars credit the year 1997 as the start of social sites (Ahmad, 2018; Kietzmann *et al.*, 2012; Ezumah, 2013). This was when Six Degrees was launched and reached about one million members in four years. The members created profiles and even "friended" each other, a format that was later copied by Facebook. In 1999 *Live Journal* was launched. This was a platform that allowed users to blog and keep each other updated about their lives. In 2002 Peter Chin, Jonathan Abrams and Dave Lee created Friendster, a platform that even attracted Google into wanting to buy it for 30 million USD. The creators, however, rejected the offer. The year 2003 saw the launch of LinkedIn, a platform where users post their work experiences and engage mostly in a business-oriented manner. In the same year, MySpace and Twitter were founded, the latter becoming so popular by 2010 where users sent out about 650 million tweets per day. Facebook was launched in February 2004 when Mark Zuckerberg and his Harvard roommates designed it for Harvard students. However, it later extended to worldwide membership, leading it having more than 2.2 billion active members by 2018. The year 2005 saw the birth of YouTube, a platform solely allowing users to upload and share videos. Snapchat was launched in 2011, and ever since then

other social media sites have continued to be introduced to the world (Ahmad, 2011; Ahmad, 2018; Samur, 2018).

2.2 2006 – 2010: The early years of social media research

"Social media" is a term that has been defined in different ways by different authors. While Dwyer and Molony (2019) caution that it could simply refer to person-to-person relations on social platforms if approached narrowly, Carr and Hayes (2015) argue that there is no accepted definition of social media within communication studies. Similarly, Fellows (2016) maintains that how social media is perceived has corresponding relationships to how one defines it; adding that it cannot be reduced to one statement, rather an understanding of technical, social, political and historical contexts where social media exists.

Nevertheless, there are those who have attempted to define the term "social media". Boyd (2009) claims that social media is "the latest buzzword in a longline of buzzwords." This buzzword, he argues, describes software that enables people to communicate, collaborate, share and even play. Fuchs (2021) and Lovink (2011) provide its technical facet, disclosing that while the terminology as well as web 2.0 became popular for describing types of World Wide Web applications such as blogs, microblogs, social networking sites and file sharing platforms, it also indicates a shift from HTML-based practices. This shift has moved to practices that happen inside closed systems, rather than the open web. Shirky (2011) reduces social media to tools, arguing that these tools have managed to increase the ability of individuals sharing and cooperating outside the traditional framework of institutions and organisations. On the other hand, Kietzmann *et al.* (2012) provide a simple definition that describes social media as "interactive platforms via which individuals and communities share, co-create, discuss and modify user-generated content" (p. 241). This definition by Kietzmann, *et al.* (2012) is the one that I refer social media to in this study.

Research on social media trends started to appear mostly in 2006, especially after the launch of several social media sites, including Facebook in 2004 (Ahmad, 2018). This was a time when researchers were trying to establish the strength of social media sites; therefore, most of the early literature was based on what it could do for businesses. A database search on social media and participat*, engag* and interact*, for instance, shows that during 2006-2010, very few articles conducted research linking social media to either participation, engagement, or interaction. Instead, literature focused mostly on how social media was used in businesses and a little bit on politics as well. Figure 2.1, for instance, indicates that there were no articles on social media

participation/engagement/interaction. The few articles that were there were only either about its use in information, or the sites that were there.

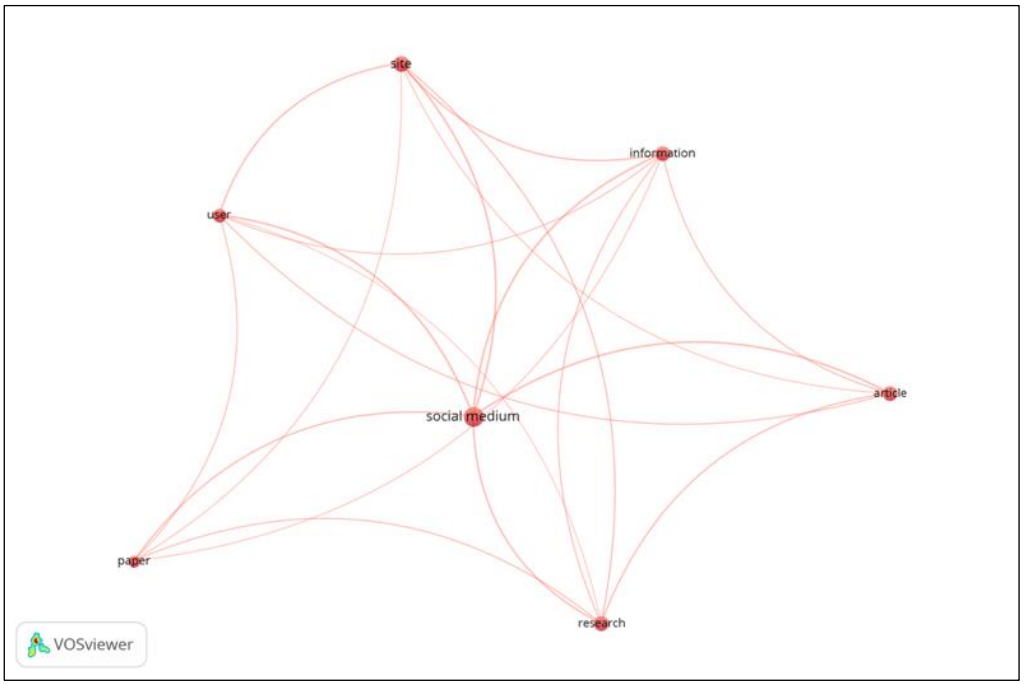


Figure 2.1: Trends on social media scholarly articles published between 2006 and 2010

2.2.1 Social media in business

Most of the literature published in 2006-2010 focused on how companies were using social media to increase their business visibility. Culnan, McHugh and Zubillaga (2010) did a study of three Fortune 100 companies looking at how they managed their social media platforms. The study found that while these platforms could provide virtual customer environments, most of them failed to engage with their customers to fully exploit the capabilities of social media platforms. The study suggested that organisations should incorporate community building as part of their implementation in order to gain business value through social media platforms. Similarly, Gallaugher and Ransbotham (2010) studied how firms had always understood the importance of customer interaction and had been doing it through a firm to customer, customer to firm and customer to customer procedure. Gallaugher & Ransbotham (2010) claimed that social media had strengthened these relationships even more with new options and more variations (p.197). While firms had in the past been interacting with customers through traditional media such as phone calls, letters and emails, social media brought the dialogue. The authors encouraged these dialogues to continue due to the options that the social media platforms offered, such as Twitter's retweets and Facebook's likes and shares options (p. 198-199).

However, while the authors agreed that social media platforms created business visibility, they also warned of the challenges related to the use of social media, such as customers posting rude comments and these comments appearing on the "wall" of the firm's Facebook page. Other challenges they pointed out were about customers deciding to register their own social media pages using the company's logo and posting things that were not from the company. They pointed out that the issue of censorship and control was the major challenge (Gallaugher & Ransbotham, 2010: 206).

Pantelidis (2010) conducted a content analysis of 2,471 customers' comments on 300 London restaurants on an online restaurant guide. He cautioned that while restaurant review sites and social media sites could bring complications to the way restaurants are run, they however could offer advice and room for improvement in businesses (p.483). He admitted that there was a growing importance of online forums since people of all ages relied more on chat rooms, offering their opinions and relying on others' opinions as well (Pantelidis, 2010: 484).

Despite some of the benefits of social media researched at the time, Rybalko and Seltzer (2010) conducted a study that revealed that companies were not taking full use of the advantages of using social media platforms. The study concluded that companies were underusing the social networking sites and were not taking advantage of the social networking features that these networks provided. They suggested the need for companies to understand the importance of dedicating a person to engage with stakeholders, initiating discussion and getting into discussion with the public who were followers of their sites (Rybalko & Seltzer, 2010: 340).

The launch of Facebook led to most companies and organisations creating profiles to interact with their clientele. Waters *et al.* (2009) point out that when Facebook allowed the inclusion of companies and organisations in 2006, more than 4,000 joined within two weeks. Despite this inclusion, no books were available to teach organisations how social networking sites should be used to strengthen relationships and increase customer-base (p.102). Similarly, the study found that these education, healthcare, human service and religious organisations did not use the platforms to disseminate organisational news. Instead, they mostly posted photographs and shared links to external news stories. Not only that, but also most of them did not use the discussion board within the previous month and did not even provide enough methods for their supporters to become more involved with the organisation. This was because the experience was still new to them, and the organisations were still sceptical about the advantages of what social media could do

in terms of building their organisations. Moreover, they did not use the most important feature of the networking site – direct interaction with their followers (Waters, *et al*., 2009: 104-105).

While some companies and organisations did not know how to utilise the benefits of social media, Barwise and Meehan (2010) explain how, after the emergence of social media, the use of traditional methods of marketing were still relevant. They posit that with the emergence of social media, companies still ought to build great brands for their businesses. Nevertheless, while social media provided quick and easy access, the backlash from criticism could be hurtful and could kill a brand. On the other hand, if businesses at the time had used social media sites to engage with customers, their brands could have had more visibility. The businesses were, however, still in a learning process.

2.2.2 Social media in politics

Even though most of the articles that appeared in 2006-2010 were based on companies' use of social media to expand their brands, a few articles that came out around 2010 were on the 2008 US presidential election. Hanson *et al.* (2010) noted that this was the first election to use major social media sites such as Facebook, YouTube and MySpace. The Obama campaign used social networking and interactive media to reach out to voters, making it the first campaign that gave an opportunity for researchers to assess the use of social media networks in campaigns (Hanson, et al., 2010: 585-586).

While much has been written on the use of the mainstream media (television, radio, newspapers) to reach out to voters, there was a need for researchers to study the use of social media sites in this aspect. The study found that the use of social media networks did not necessarily contribute to the choice of voters, but instead aided the influence of partners and friends in voter-decision. These were the factors that mostly tended to determine who a person would vote for, and not by being reached out through social media as was with President Obama's campaign (Hanson, et al., 2010: 599). Whilst the study was conducted in the early stages of social media use in the electoral process, the authors cautioned that it was too early to be taken as proof that social media sites did not have much influence in deciding election winners. They suggested that the study should rather be taken as one step towards enabling researchers to continue investigating the use of social media in other coming elections and how this use of social media could contribute towards election outcomes (p. 601).

Jaeger and Bertot (2010) investigated the importance of government transparency, citing the Obama-era which promised more government openness through various media, including the Internet (p.372). However, the article argues that governments embraced the use of social media to reach publics, with little knowledge on how sustainable this kind of interaction could be effective. It claims that government information through these platforms could be "diluted" and that governments tended to make decisions such as using social media sites to interact without knowing the pros and cons of such a move. It clarifies that using platforms such as Facebook, Twitter or YouTube to disseminate government information only indicates how governments need to rely on third party companies to convey their policies (p.374).

Despite the fact that most of the 2006-2010 articles were based on the use of social media in business and a little introduction of its use in politics after the 2008 US presidential election, the use of social media at the time was very limited. As Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) explain, there was little knowledge about how different sites worked to benefit companies, even though they wanted to engage in social media. Not knowing how to fully engage caused young people to spend too much time on social network sites to a point where the term “Facebook addict” was added to the Urban dictionary (p. 64). Most people and businesses used to register in every single network instead of being strategic to choose one which suited their purposes, hence the addiction (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010: 65).

Nevertheless, since 2006-2010 was mostly a learning period in the use of social media and researchers were still trying to conduct studies on its use in other sectors, a lot more was expected to emerge in the following years since there were clear limitations in research. This was expected to happen after users learnt to fully utilise the functions of social media, including its major function of providing a two-way communication system.

2.3 2011 – 2015: The era of participation

Research on social media continued to gain momentum from 2011, with more studies being conducted on its use in various forms. This was a time when some social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter received wide recognition for facilitating social movements in various parts of the world, including the famous Arab Spring. A database search on articles published between 2011 and 2015 recorded more than 2,700 scholarly articles with the key terms social media and participat*, engag* and interact*. Different from the previous years, this was a time when the relationship between social media and online participation started to gain momentum. Figure 2.2

illustrates how more topics were linked to social media studies during this time in relation to previous years.

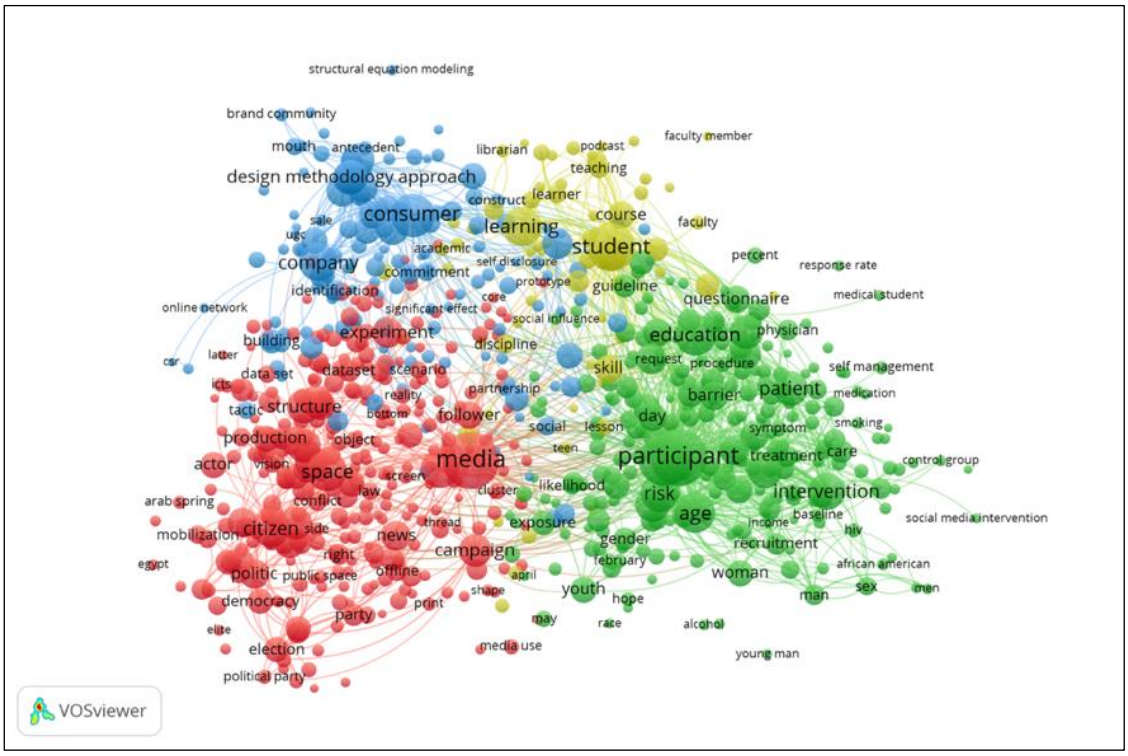


Figure 2.2: Trends on social media scholarly articles published between 2011 and 2015

2.3.1 Political participation through online platforms

With President Obama's use of social media during the US election campaign prompting the use of the platforms for other campaigns around the world, different scholars started investigating how this enabled political participation. Deligiaouri (2015) posits that social media had provided new innovative ways of digital participation, especially political participation. She mentions the three "e's", which are enabling – meaning the access allowed to citizens to participate; engaging – where people could interact and not necessarily in a top-down fashion, but both ways; and empowering – where people could influence the political agenda and discuss policies (p. 52-53). Deligiaouri argues that even though the Internet and social media had provided a forum for citizens to participate and hold discussions about policy agenda, the issue of e-participation with real politics was still pending. She elaborates that there was no evidence that all these interactions and arguments were considered in official fora where the decisions on policy and other related matters were made (p.54). Despite her scepticism, she admits that the Internet had provided platforms to citizens by going beyond boundaries. She also observes that access to the Internet was less costly. Deligiaouri further

argues that this enabled more people to engage in different political discussions while at the same time enabling e-participation to no longer be economic dependant (Deligiaouri, 2015: 54).

Dimitrova and Bystrom (2013) studied the effects of the use of digital media in political participation and whether the use of different forms of digital media affected people differently. The article points out that the use of digital media had more benefits than the traditional media, such as being cheaper and allowing voters access to campaign information immediately. The most important feature was its ability to provide immediate feedback to questions from, for instance, campaign headquarters, thereby making voters understand the candidates' priorities and getting their questions answered on the spot. The authors argue that the use of online news sites had a stronger effect when it came to political knowledge than the use of websites and social media. On the other hand, the authors agreed that the use of social media increased political participation unlike just reading information on online news and campaign websites. They insist that the use of social media encouraged participation where one questioned and the other responded.

While most scholars tend to believe in the power of social media, despite some reservations, (Segaard, 2015) questions the promises that people talked about. He argues that when social media started it promised a lot of things and people talked of how it could create a lot of opportunities. Among these were how digital networks would help people to engage in political participation, but also help those who wanted to be elected to discuss their policies with voters. In short, it promised a two-way communication system that did not seem to be effective (Segaard, 2015: 65). Segaard comments that it was the politicians who believed more in social media as a forum for political participation than voters, especially since it provided politicians with a forum to campaign and talk about their policies. Despite that fact, when comparing newspapers to social media, more politicians believed in writing letters to editors for publication in newspapers than the public who did not really believe in reading letters in newspapers. Voters believed more in reading posts on social media as they were easier to access, and they could also comment on them (p.72). However, this did not mean that the politicians always responded to their queries.

Segaard suggests that the preference of politicians to use social media more during campaigns was so that they could target younger voters. They believe that the younger voters would prefer to be more politically active through social media platforms than to attend campaign rallies or listen to debates on television (p.75). Even though social media ‘promised’ political participation, the author’s arguments suggest that it was the politicians that engaged more in political debates through social media, and not the public.

Another challenge is the barriers to mobile political participation, which Martin (2014) mentions as economic and opportunity cost, and political and economic dimensions of infrastructure. With the first barrier, he claims that even though the cost of mobile phones had gone down, there still was a need to do research on how mobile participation affected those who were economically deprived, and those who did not live in urban settings. Martin adds that ICT by nature required infrastructure that could be depriving others to fully participate online. The political and economic dimensions of infrastructure, according to the author, was a barrier that involved not only the availability of bandwidth, but also online censorship. Examples of this were authorities creating laws that would prevent the freedom to participate online as well as imposing an online blackout by shutting down the Internet (Martin, 2014: 185). While most of the articles that were published in 2011-2015 focused on social media and political participation, more research was also done on the 2008 US presidential election campaign, famously known as the first Facebook election.

Carlisle and Patton (2013) explain how Facebook co-sponsored a presidential debate with ABC News on January 5 2008, which enabled users to be active before, during and after the debate through Facebook's "US Politics" application. Even though the authors claim that Facebook in particular played a major role in enabling political participation through its 'Newsfeed' function, they also argue that social media sites and Facebook had nothing to do with a person being interested in politics. Instead, they explain, a person who was already interested in politics was the one who decided to engage more in political discussions. What Facebook and other social media sites had offered was a space for political engagement, and nothing more (Carlisle & Patton, 2013: 885-891).

This concurs with Vesnic-Alujevic (2012) who argues that even though electoral campaigning on social media was a new phenomenon that was adapted in the 2008 US general elections, the use of political participation in social media should not target people who did not know anything about politics. Instead, campaign managers and political public relations people needed to target those who were already interested in politics and design messages that would engage them most. He agrees with the notion that social media does not really create new participants but helps those who are already interested into being more active (Vesnic-Alujevic, 2012: 466-469).

While the argument could be valid, it is imperative to agree that social media sites have contributed to providing digital space for political participation. Kirk and Schill (2011), for instance, cite the 2008 US presidential elections where the so-called "digital agora" was created. This was an electronic gathering place for citizens that was created by different media, such as YouTube, CNN and ABC. It saw YouTube creating a space for citizens to discuss the political debate that was being aired by

CNN, having opportunities to ask direct questions to the candidates and getting feedback (p.325). The article argues that the digital agora enabled citizens to feel more engaged in the political process because this time it was not only the journalists or significant people invited to the debate who could ask prepared questions, but digital media also allowed for direct political participation. The three important activities that happened through the Internet and social media were information seeking, online deliberation and online participation. These three things were what separated the use of social media from previous media (Kirk & Schill, 2011: 326-328).

2.3.2 The start of online social and political movements

Research published in 2011-2015 focused on the increase in social and political movements caused by political participation. In a study on the relationship between social media and social movements, Hwang and Kim (2015) established presence of a relationship between the two, since calls for action through social media could persuade people to get involved in social movements. The authors clarified that it was easier to organise such activities through social media where people were likely to be informed of the venue, the timing, the theme and what to expect. They also argued that non-users of social media platforms did not have the same opportunities to engage in social movements as users of these platforms because they were likely to be less informed (p. 479).

Lee and Chan (2015) acknowledged the increase in participation provided by digital media online and offline. They observed that through digital participation, a person could influence others to get involved in political activities such as demonstrations, even though those being influenced might have originally intended not to do so (p.881). They cited the June 4, 2014 Tiananmen commemoration in Hong Kong, arguing that most of those who attended the rallies agreed to have been convinced to participate via social media, evidencing that digital media did contribute towards political participation both online and offline (p.886).

The article by Bentivegna and Marchetti (2015) talks about the *'Italia bene commune'* debate (Italy common good), which was aimed at selecting a candidate from the centre-left coalition to lead the government. Although the November 12, 2012 debate was not watched by the majority of people, it prompted interactions of live-tweeting the discussions going on television through Twitter. This started this tradition in politics, whereby hundreds of people were discussing the debate on Twitter and giving their views about the candidates' remarks (p.632). The article also talks about the power of the hashtag and how its use shows an expression of a declaration of belonging to a community of interests. The authors comment that the hashtags helped keep the discussion going on and informed people of a certain topic that was being discussed. Bentivegna & Marchetti explain that

the Twittersphere had helped to redefine the way people interacted on issues that affected their lives, a monopoly that used to belong to the mainstream media. However, people themselves could then decide what to debate on and could carry on these discussions using a hashtag that invited others interested in the topic to also get into the discussion (Bentivegna & Marchetti, 2015: 640).

Another movement that occurred during this period was the September 2014 Umbrella Movement in Hong Kong. Lee, So and Leung (2015) report that this movement saw police fire tear gas to disperse students who were protesting against the Chinese central government's decision to block democrats from being elected as the Hong Kong chief executive. Protestors used only umbrellas and wet towels to protect themselves from the pepper spray and tear gas fired by police, hence the foreign media calling it the umbrella movement (p.356). The article argued that social media network's ability to engage in political participation had been exaggerated. It remarked that even during times when there were no political issues to be discussed, people did not cease to use social media engaging in other non-political discussions. When there were political issues such as protests and debates and elections, social media sites acted as a facilitator for these political discussions (Lee, et al., 2015: 360).

The article cautioned that since social media was seen as a force and a tool to coordinate political discussions and protests, the state and the market would eventually control it. This, warned the article, would affect the future generations that would only rely on social media. The authors clarified that the effects of this was that states would have already taken control to make sure that they pushed their own agenda while trying to block those issues that were harmful to their cause (Lee, et al., 2015: 371).

2.3.3 The case of the Arab Spring

The Arab Spring is perhaps the most researched subject during the 2011-2015 period. This was a period when scholars were trying to research the link between social media and the protests in Tunisia and Egypt that eventually led to the resignation of the countries' top leaders. During this time and beyond, researchers have tried to either hail or dispute claims that social media caused the uprisings.

Brym *et al.* (2014), explain of a joke that was going around in Egypt after the resignation of Hosni Mubarak as President on February 11, 2011. It went like this:

> "Hosni Mubarak, Anwar Sadat and Gamal Abdel Nasser are having tea in the afterlife. Mubarak asks Nasser, 'How did you end up here?' 'Poison', Nasser answers.

> Mubarak then turns to Sadat. 'What about you?' he asks. 'An assassin's bullet', Sadat says. Sadat and Nasser then turn to Mubarak. 'And you?' To which Mubarak replies, 'Facebook'." (Brym, et al., 2014: 266).

While some still dispute the strength of social media in the events that led to the Arab Spring, it is without a doubt that even though the Arab world had had revolutions before, this time was different. While other revolutions never involved masses of people, this one involved thousands of them due to the availability of social media. The network sites allowed them to organize, engage and even post photos and videos through Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, which in turn allowed massive numbers of people to go out and protest, and therefore put pressure on the government (Brym, et al., 2014: 268).

Shirazi (2013) talks about the uprisings that occurred in the Middle East and North African countries and how the political uprisings were widely discussed on social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter as well as video sharing sites such as YouTube. He explains how social media managed to facilitate the demonstrations in the streets of these countries, helping people to ask for democratic practices to be upheld. The author argues that because most of these countries followed an authoritarian-style and did not give a voice to the people, social media managed to be the effective means of communication for those citizens that were being oppressed and gave them a voice to air their frustration (p.29-30).

Shirazi gives an example of how the wave of resistance grew in Iran after the 2009 presidential elections, leading to the 'Green Movement of Iran' and how this spread to other countries. The Jasmine Revolution in Tunisia that saw the toppling of Ben Ali and the removal of Hosni Mubarak from Egypt also fuelled similar protests in Bahrain, Jordan, Libya, Syria and Yemen (p.30). However, the author argues that even though social media was used to inform people of their rights and demonstrations that were being held, the actual cause of these uprisings was the social actors who had started to call for change even before social media. They used other means of communication such as telephone, text messaging, sending emails and even holding discussions through the media. In this case, social media complemented what they had been doing all along and allowed easier access of information as well as a two-way communication method (Shirazi, 2013: 33).

Tufekci and Wilson (2012) also examined the use of social media by protesters in Egypt who used to meet at Tahrir Square to protest the rule of Egypt's once strongman, Hosni Mubarak. They agree that Internet was utilised in Egypt by groups that felt oppressed by the Mubarak regime. The groups included liberals, minorities and even religious groups. While the movement started with blogs, it

later moved to Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. The Internet in general was not censored in Egypt, even though some bloggers were arrested and jailed for criticising the government in the past (p.364).

The authors too hesitate to give full credit to social media. They suggest that three things made the revolution possible: the first one was the emergence of Al Jazeera, a satellite TV channel that contributed to a new public sphere in the Arab world. The second one was the introduction of the Internet, and specifically social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter that allowed people to engage and plan the protests without the fear of being arrested. The third, they say, was the falling costs of media gadgets such as mobile phones, which allowed people to be able to own smart phones with photo and video capability. This gave people the ability to access social media networks and engage in political discussion (p.365).

Tufekci and Wilson also point out that the traditional media cannot be left behind in taking credit, as Al Jazeera, for instance, also has a "social media" version on its website that allows other people to document events on their behalf, in the name of citizen journalism. By allowing ordinary people to report on events, Al Jazeera allowed for information to come in from even the places where they did not have representatives. This, they claim, changed the Arab world and helped citizens to be more engaged and to report the events as they were unfolding (Tufekci & Wilson, 2012: 367).

2.3.4 Enabling government-citizen engagement

While research related to the use of social media in enabling participation in 2011-2015 was based more on political communication and social movements that changed the world, some scholars tried to investigate social media's power in other issues, such as government-citizen engagement. Others went as far as trying to imagine a world where social media could solve all human problems and make the world a better place.

Schofield Clark (2015) for instance, tries to pose questions regarding the power of social media, questioning if it could be a space for democratic inclusivity. She tries to imagine a world where there was an algorithm that stopped those in power to talk until those who are voiceless from non-dominant groups could be heard. She also tries to imagine a world where there is an algorithm where people's problems could be known and discussed by the whole society, enabling those more fortunate to understand the issues of those who are less fortunate. She also tries to imagine if social media could produce this kind of algorithm that would deal with people's problems and allow for a debate and solutions through collective outcomes.

While Schofield fantasises a world where social media is a super-hero, Khan, Swar and Lee (2014) agree that it has provided a good chance for interaction between governments and people. They however warn that there are risks as much as there are benefits in using social media. The risks include 'time risk' - where users spend too much time online, even leading to less productivity at the workplace. They say that workers use up to 45% of their work time being active on social media instead of being productive at work. 'Psychological risk' is when users interact on social media and receive negative reaction which could in turn lead to self-esteem. Also, 'social risk' is when users of social media prefer online interactions more than face to face interactions, and therefore risk losing out in social settings with those people that are less active on social media, labelling the person as anti-social. 'Privacy risk' is when people share their personal information on social media, and then that personal information is used by third parties against them (p.611-612).

Song and Lee (2015) talk about the link between citizen's use of e-government and government transparency. In their study, they were trying to see if the access to information through e-governance could make people trust governments or not. They argue that even though governments can make information available, that alone will not guarantee citizen's trust towards it, as people trust more the actions that are taken and not just available information (p.434). While the study agrees that government websites could help governments be closer to citizens by informing them about their work, it is social media that could create a stronger bond. This, the authors say, would allow government to interact directly with citizens, hence improve government-citizen relationship (p.443). The authors insist that government use of social media could increase citizen's trust in government, since such interactions are seen easily by anyone who joins social media. They point out that this is an effective way for governments to provide updates of their dealings and developmental activities (Song and Lee, 2015: 444).

2.4 2016 – 2020: The era beyond participation

From 2016 to June 2020, research on social media expanded to other areas. A database search found more than 12,800 published scholarly articles with the key terms social media and participat*, engag*, interact* during 2016- 2020. This is more than four times of the articles published in 2011-2015, and more than 200 times of those published between 2006 and 2010. The increase in published articles suggests that the use of social media had also increased around the world, and scholars were investigating these different uses as well as what could be done more.

Despite participation still being a major focus, more other topics continued to be published, suggesting that the study on social media had now gone beyond participation. Figure 2.3 shows different topics that were covered during this period in social media studies.

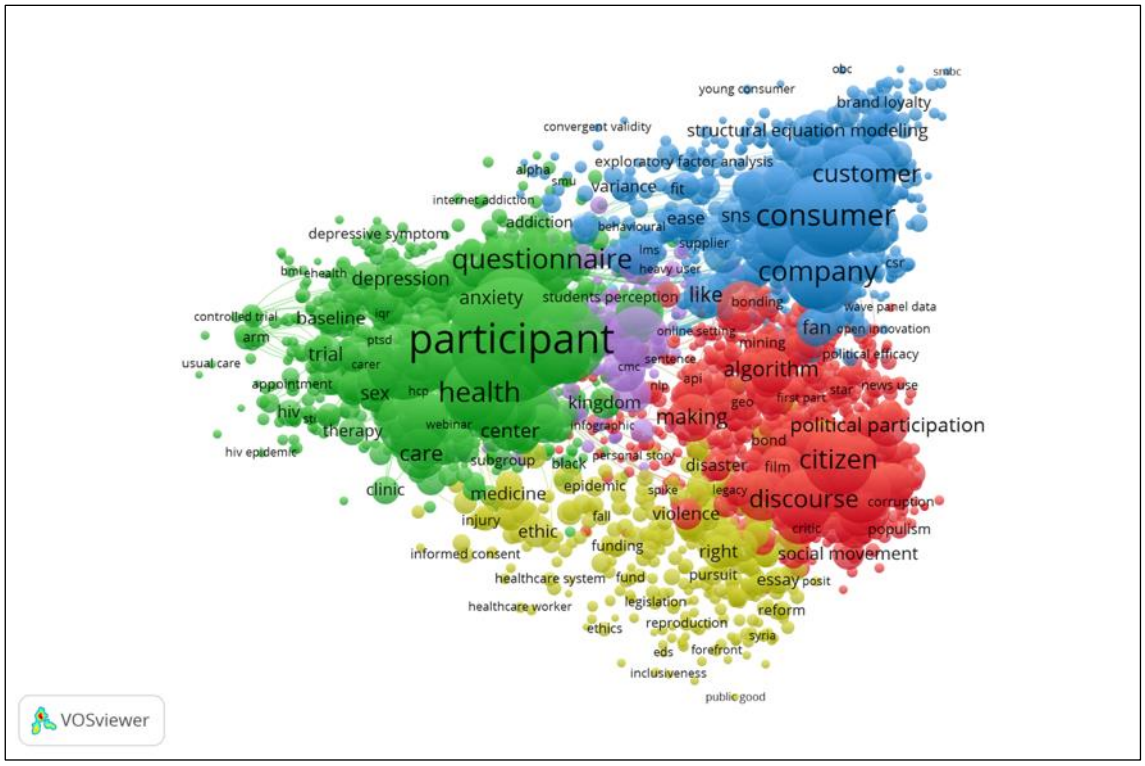


Figure 2.3: Trends on social media scholarly articles published between 2016 and 2020

2.4.1 The Arab Spring continues

The Arab Spring was such a phenomenal case that was credited to the use of social media platforms. Therefore, it is no surprise that research in this area continued to be published during the 2016-2020 period. (Hamanaka, 2020) conducted a study on the Arab Spring, focusing on the Egyptian uprising that lasted from January 25, 2011 and saw the resignation of strongman President Hosni Mubarak on February 11 of that same year. This uprising was termed as the "Facebook Revolution" or the "Web 2.0 Revolution". The study examined the link between the Internet and the anti-government demonstrations that brought down a regime so quickly.

Even though some previous studies on the Egyptian revolution have discredited notions that social media was the cause of the revolution by pointing out that face to face interactions were mostly used to inform people of the demonstrations, this study proves that there was a strong link (p.777-778). The article concludes that organisers of the protests mostly used social media, whereby their messages were either forwarded or even conveyed by word of mouth to other protesters. Despite

the fact that most literature claims that protestors knew about the meetings at Tahrir Square through direct face to face communication, it did not start with the direct communication, rather the messages conveyed through face-to-face communication originated from social media. Due to this, the author argues that social media did play a big part in the Egyptian Revolution (Hamanaka, 2020: 791).

The article by Kidd and McIntosh (2016) explored the relationship between social networking and social movements by examining available research on issues related to social networking, social activism and participation that were not online. The article argued that social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube were platforms owned by big profit-making corporations. It questioned how these capitalist-owned corporations could be part of change by providing "seeds of change" (Kidd & McIntosh, 2016: 792).

Despite agreeing that revolutions or any movements would need the assistance of social media sites to get more people easily involved, Kidd & McIntosh (2016) insisted that this did not mean that it should end there, as it was the people that were the main actors. The article argued that social media sites could actually be a hinderance for social movements, since the very same people that were being protested against – police and government – were also on social media. This could enable them to act effectively as surveillance tools. The authors agreed with other scholars that revolutions and social movements had always been there in the past before the Internet and before social media; therefore, social media was not the "seed for change", but rather a necessary tool for social movements (Kidd & McIntosh, 2016: 793).

Mundt, Ross and Burnett (2018) explored the role of social media in helping movements strengthen themselves internally or expand. Their article specifically investigated how Facebook and Twitter could broaden activists' work in various movements. It pointed out that despite its advantages, social media had limitations. One of these limitations was the inability to post anonymous posts on a platform such as Facebook because activists, especially those criticising regimes, would find themselves being questioned by authorities or being silenced. Additionally, those regimes that were being criticised could also have access to social media and post as a counter-attack measure (p.3).

Additionally, Mundt, Ross and Burnett (2018) cautioned that reliance on social media alone could not help social movements to succeed. They remarked that other traditional forms needed to go hand in hand with the use of social media, such as going to the streets to inform people about the movement and how to access it and get engaged. If this was not done, organisers might end up

with a dormant social media account that did not even have any followers (p.10). Another thing that happens with online activists is that they might find themselves spending most of their time arguing with people who did not agree with their messages; therefore finding themselves spending less time on messages of change or hope, and more time arguing and shouting at each other's comments (Mundt, Ross and Burnett, 2018: 11). Nevertheless, it is important to note that despite the arguments and the challenges and risks, social media did provide online presence and did extend the opportunity for activists to be seen and for their messages to be seen, whether received positively or negatively.

2.4.2 The pros and cons of political participation

As research on participation in social media continued during 2016-2020, focus on political participation continued to take the centre-stage. Kasadha (2020) outlines a study that aimed to find out if the use of social media mattered in developing democracies. The study that was based in Uganda found that citizens who accessed news and information through social media persuaded others to vote for a particular party or a particular candidate during elections. Kasadha suggested that governments should therefore take the advantage of using social media to engage with citizens instead of shunning away from the sites fearing that they were a security threat (Kasadha, 2019: 7).

Haenschen (2016) studied how social media could be used to put pressure on people to engage in political decisions, specifically voting. Focusing on Facebook, he revealed that people did not go to vote just by tagging them in your status urging them to vote, but by a method of shaming them by showing their voting record. The process of shaming is called social pressure (p. 556). Another method that he noted was pride treatments, whereby those who went out and voted and had a history of voting were mentioned, recognised and congratulated via Facebook. He commended that this made those who did not vote to feel envious and therefore participate in voting for the recognition (Haenschen, 2016: 557).

Chang (2019) argues that while there have been studies investigating the relationship between Internet use and political participation, online participation through social media is filled with activists who most of the time oppose almost everything about governments. Due to this, while social media does play a part in promoting political discussion, this online cynicism arouses enough sympathy. However, instead of facilitating development of online democracy, it fades quickly and has no long-term effect on online political engagement (p.197).

While Chang (2019) agrees that the use of the Internet and social media can influence young adults into engaging in political discussion, he also agrees with other authors who claim that the Internet is just an instrument. If there are no major issues that have come up that deserve to be discussed in length, it just remains as an instrument used mostly to interact with friends and family, and not really engage in any political discussions. It is the people, not the instruments that spice up political discussions, he maintains (Chang, 2019: 199).

Hampton, Shin and Lu (2017) argue that despite offering platforms for people to engage in online political discussions, social media networks have a tendency of causing people not to engage in political discussion offline. They claim that when it comes to offline conversations people tend to shun away from the discussion due to higher levels of perceived disagreements (p.1091). The authors claim that even though the use of social media in political participation has received a lot of positive reaction and is claimed to have increased political participation and provided for democratic space, it has other negative impacts. These include causing people to no longer deliberate in offline political discussions such as at homes, the workplace and other social gatherings (Hampton, Shin and Lu, 2017: 1102-1103).

Nonetheless, Mohamad, Dauda and Halim (2018) disagree with that argument. They claim that online participation, particularly the research they have done with the Facebook platform, illustrate that there is a link between youth online political participation with offline political participation. They argue that viewing posts and posting themselves as well as interacting with politicians has a positive effect on youths, encouraging them to engage in offline politics as well. The study that was conducted on Nigerian youths points out that the use of Facebook is what encourages youth to make political decisions as they have become dependent on news shared and posted through the platform. Due to this, the authors observe, it is important for political messages on this platform to be tailored in a way that would be beneficial for youth to not only engage in political discussions, but also to make sound political decisions (Mohamad et al., 2018: 202).

Similarly, Marquart, Ohme and Möller (2020) suggest that the way young adults interact with politicians on social media could have long term effects on them, such as leading them to engage more in politics and feeling confident that their voices can be heard (p.197). Marquart, *et al.* (2020) explain that engagement in political discussion by young people depends on how many politicians they decide to follow on social media. However, while this may be true, the number of posts by these politicians or political ads has no influence on their involvement in political discussion.

Instead, political posts from their own friends or close associates are what influence them into political participation (Marquart, *et al.,* 2020: 201).

Debate on the use of social media in political participation also prompted Keating and Melis (2017) to conduct a study on youth in Britain. They found that social media did not provide a new platform for youth to engage in political discussions. They argued that while social networks provided a platform for those who were already interested in politics, they did not make those uninterested to suddenly start being interested (p.877). The authors pointed out that social media did not help in solving the problem of how young adults could engage more in politics; rather, they were just tools that provided a platform for those who were already interested in politics. Those who were already interested could have been involved even without the presence of social media platforms (Keating and Melis, 2017: 891).

But Kamau (2017) cites the Kenya 2013 elections, claiming that candidate Uhuru Kenyatta had more followers on Facebook and Twitter than his opponent, suggesting that he won due to political mobilising through social media. However, Kamau also argues that political mobilisation might not be the reason candidates with more followers on social media win justly, since social media has also been accused of being a source of misinformation and fake news, especially during election campaigns (p.130). He comments that while social media networks play a major role in providing a platform for political discussion, they might not really influence a person's political choice. He concludes that most people become more aware of what is going on through social media even though sometimes it could be fake news, but what they read does not necessarily change their position on who to vote for (Kamau, 2017:142).

Nonetheless, while different authors seem to have a different opinion on the relationship between social media and political participation, Theocharis and Lowe (2016) are of the opinion that the answer could vary in different contexts. They conducted a study on Greek participants and found that Facebook actually caused a decline in political participation among those recruited. They however admitted that the study was conducted at a time when Greece was facing a number of political and economic problems. This, they felt, might have caused most people to shun away from using the platform to engage in political discussion and instead political discussion was overtaken by entertainment through social media (p.1466-1467).

Moreover, Theocharis and Lowe (2016) agree that Facebook has some features that encourage different discussions, including political discussions. They mention the 'News Feed' in which people

see what their 'friends' have posted, a function that allows for even those uninterested in politics to become interested in either reading through to know what is going on, or engaging in the political discussion at hand (p.1469). The authors conclude that assumptions about the link between social media sites such as Facebook and political participation should be exercised with caution. They explain that the study results should not be taken as a general assumption, rather the link would depend on the situation at hand. For instance, Greece was facing a lot of uncertainties, therefore most people decided to shun away from political discussion on social media and use the platform as an entertainment tool. There might be a different outcome depending on a different situation (Theocharis and Lowe, 2016: 1481).

With regard to who initiates political participation, a study on the use of Twitter in the 2015 UK general elections found that during the election campaigns it was the people, not politicians, that were the primary initiators of political calls for action. Segesten and Bossetta (2017) remark that ordinary people were also the ones who shared political beliefs much more than politicians did. They did this using four methods: hashtag commands calling for action, sharing mobilising calls posted by others, directly texting the calls for action, and frequently posting on their own profiles (Segesten and Bossetta, 2017: 1626).

A lot of studies seem to focus on social media and political participation by youth, leaving behind the adults. Towner and Muñoz (2018) point out this discrepancy, arguing that the "baby boomers" – those born between 1946 and 1964, have been left out of this research on social media's effect on political participation (p.32). Their study focused on how both traditional media and social media had an effect on the baby boomers during the 2012 US presidential election, a group that represented 25% of the American population (76 million). Towner and Muñoz (2018) comment that age plays a critical role in political decisions, as well as in news consumption (p.34).

The study found that baby boomers are as much engaged in political discussion online as younger adults. While most of them still rely on traditional media for news and information, they also engage a lot in social media because of how it provides two-way communication. While news on traditional media is filtered by journalists with no place to comment on, social media has also attracted baby boomers because it gives them the ability to engage in discussion, to comment and garner direct feedback. This means that the advantages of social media are not limited to just younger people, as the older ones are more engaged as well (Towner and Muñoz, 2018: 54).

2.4.3 Social media and the spread of fake news

Perhaps one of the emerging subjects that came up during and after the 2016 US presidential elections was the term “fake news” as championed by President Donald Trump. Social media researchers dwelt on this study as well, and the topic seemed to attract more research. A lot of articles published during 2016-2020 reflected on the subject of fake news. For example, Chadwick, Vaccari and O’Loughlin (2018) analysed the ongoing sharing of news and information through social media. They found that it was of great concern due to misinformation, disinformation and fake news. Some of the misinformation, unfortunately, was spread by newspapers and tabloids that tend to hide the reality (p.4255).

The authors cited an example of former UK Labour party leader, Jeremy Corbyn, who on Remembrance Day 2016 was photographed heading to the national remembrance ceremony in central London. The picture showed him in a certain position as if he was dancing, and *The Sun* and the *Daily Mail* published the photos on their websites and their social media accounts, accusing Corbyn of "dancing a jig". The Mail's headline said: "*Is this really the day to audition for Strictly [come dancing] Jeremy?*" While these images were widely shared on social media and Corbyn was widely criticised for disrespecting those who had died at war, the original photo emerged later showing that he was not dancing, rather walking alongside a 92-year-old Second World War veteran. Corbyn’s position alongside the veteran, who was also one of his constituents, was actually a gesture of someone who was walking and talking to a companion, and not doing a spontaneous dance as the cropped images had suggested (Chadwick, et al., 2018:4256).

The article asserts that the sharing of tabloid news online through social media has increased the challenge of fake news, misinformation and disinformation. While some people shared the news without trying to verify whether it was true, others shared the false news intentionally as they were maliciously intending to deceive. The more the news shared on social media, the more the fake news (Chadwick, et al., 2018:4261).

Andı, Aytaç and Çarkoğlu (2020) observed that the use of the Internet to get information could have both positive and negative effects. It could be positive in the sense that people would be able to get enough information if they searched for it. At the same time, it could cause negative effects since the spread of fake news has been increasing over the years, and people could get information that is not true. Additionally, the authors remark that misinformation and fake news through social media could also be spread by political figures. The authors provide an example of Donald Trump, who during the 2016 presidential campaign, a fact-checking organisation found that 70% of his

claims were false. He made these claims as a presidential candidate, and being a prominent figure, they were widely shared on social media and most people, especially his supporters, believed them.

The article also clarified that people who relied more on social media were more likely to be uninformed or opinionated because of all the fake news that was easily spread through the networks. There was no fact-checking; therefore, it was easy for a person to assume that whatever they had read on social media was correct. This could make individuals to continue spreading information without finding out the facts first. Interestingly, the study found that people with higher levels of education were also involved with spreading both correct and incorrect political information through social media. Even though they were knowledgeable, they were not likely to admit when they were unsure of an answer. This led to a higher level of spreading correct and incorrect information on their part than that of people with less education who were likely to admit if they were unsure of some information (Andı, et al., 2020).

2.5 The Triad's contribution to good governance practices

Literature on social media use has evolved over the years, and since new technological developments continue to happen every day, it is expected that more ways of online interaction will also continue to evolve. While this thesis seeks to look at the connection between social media, transparency and freedom of expression, there is limited literature looking at this triad.

A study by Asongu and Odhiambo (2019) on the link between social media and governance looked into 49 African countries. The authors agreed that the use of social media can influence policy development, specifically in matters related to governance, arguing that using the platforms promoted voice and accountability, as well as political stability. While the two admit that sometimes social media platforms could be used to promote negative practices, such as terrorism and civil unrests, they insist that using it for good practices is favorable towards political governance. They give an example of how the platforms can be utilised to mitigate violence and abuse of power exercised by different government authorities, hence giving a voice to people from different communities to express their views. Carlo Bertot, Jaeger and Grimes (2012) concur with that claim, adding that the multitude of online interaction leads to greater participation as well as information sharing. They argue that even though governments also have the ability to make use of these platforms in order to interact with users, most governments choose not to take advantage of that. Instead, ordinary people seem to be the ones enjoying the use of online platforms while governments only disseminate targeted information. The arguments of these authors coincide with

what has been viewed amongst many governments, with leaders refusing to comment on issues raised online, and instead only using the platforms to promote their own agenda.

Nevertheless, some scholars promoting the use of social media for good governance practices, Jørgensen and Zuleta (2020) posit that social media for years has been a platform of spreading both the good and the bad. The good, they say, is its ability to facilitate easy access to information and freedom of expression. On the other hand, however, platforms have enabled the dissemination of violence, discrimination, incitement and illegal content. They caution the use of social media in freedom of expression, arguing that it is placed in a vulnerable position since private actors are the ones governing public debate and therefore not likely abiding by human rights law. A study conducted by the authors found that while most people agree that social media platforms facilitated freedom of expression, respondents also admitted to observing derogatory and offensive language being used often.

Aswad (2018) agrees with the authors, also positing that despite freedom of expression representing one of the most fundamental human rights issues, it is important for social media companies to understand how this right is to be exercised under international human rights law. She explains that many a times these companies risk potential infringements on expression, and these could occur by, for instance, agreeing to government demands that do not meet the standards of international human rights law. Such demands could occur when governments ask for content critical of them to be removed. As the author argues, the world has witnessed instances where social media platforms have been used to infringe freedom of expression by agreeing with governments that some posted information incites hatred, while sometimes they are only criticisms against authoritarian regimes.

However, when it comes to using social media to complete the triad (promote transparency and freedom of expression), some literature has it that the triad could actually be beneficial, especially for places where the mainstream media is restricted. Hussain (2014) gives an example of Pakistan, where the print media has found itself under pressure for being critical of the government, and therefore decided to refrain from doing so. This has caused a vacuum in critical news, he says, opening doors to the use of social media platforms as an alternative. The author suggests that social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter could be used to stir up discussion, and therefore help uncover cases related to corruption. More research is needed in this area.

According to a database search on social media's use in transparency and freedom of expression, the study has not received much attention. Figure 2.4, for instance, shows a compilation of scholarly articles linking social media to transparency and freedom of expression/freedom of speech, with not much depth shown in the links. The database found around only 800 articles on the subject published between 2006 and 2021, with only 246 having a relevance to the governance prerequisites, suggesting that more research is needed in this area.

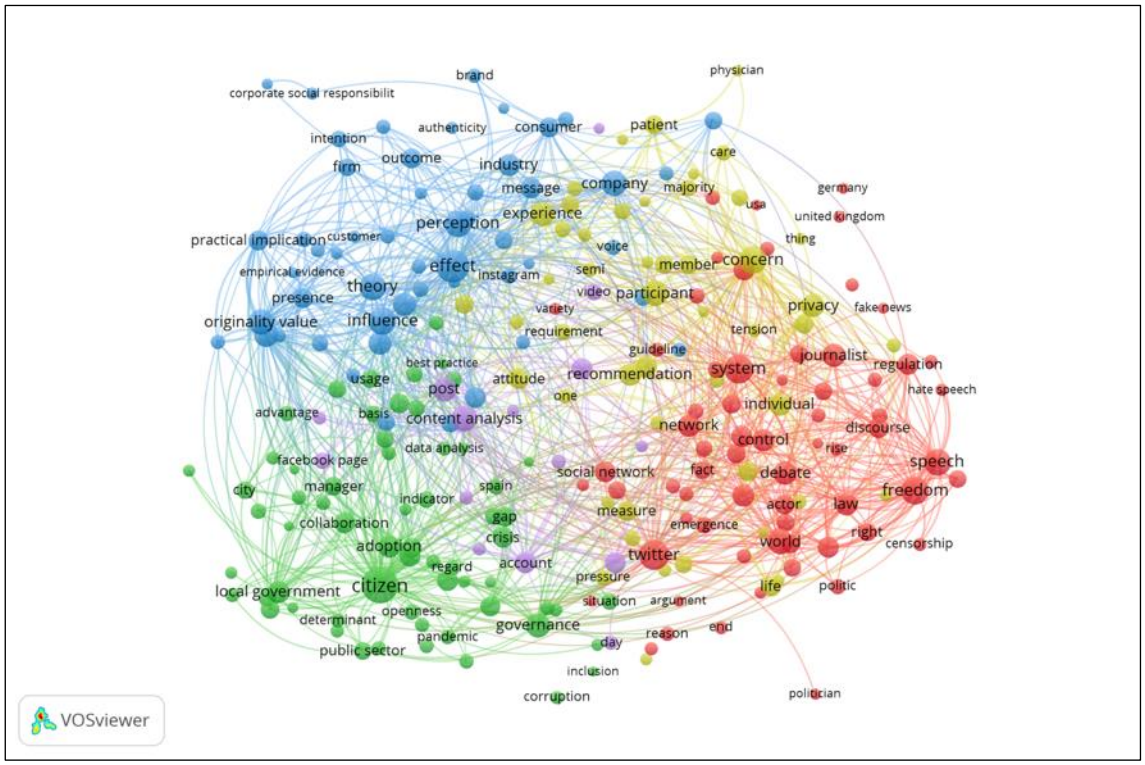


Figure 2.4: Trends on social media scholarly articles published between 2006 and 2021 in relation to transparency and freedom of expression

2.6 Conclusion

Since the start of social sites in 1997 with the launch of Six Degrees, more of them have been launched with the intention of linking people all over the world, providing a two-way communication system to people related and unrelated to each other. The use of social media has come with many positive outcomes, but has faced challenges as well, such as some people spending too much time online and becoming victims of cyber-bullying (Craig *et al.*, 2020: 5101). Other studies have shown that the use of social media has different challenges on different demographics, such as uneducated females not utilising the benefits of the networks (Hoffmann and Lutz, 2021:

16). Consequently, cities have different online interactions compared to their wealth, with those in formal settlements being more engaged than those in morphological slums, suggesting a digital divide between the rich and the poor (Taubenböck *et al.*, 2019).

Nevertheless, research on the use of social media has evolved over time, going through different phases. While during the early years of social media research (2006-2010) most literature focused on using networks to promote business brands, topics beyond business gained momentum during 2011-2015. At this time, participation was the most researched topic on social media, with examples on how the 2008 Obama campaign used the digital networks to attract voters, as well as the North Africa social movements famously known as the Arab Spring and how protestors used social media to connect. Research during 2016-2020 continued to focus on participation, but other topics were also studied, such as engagement, impact, and the Internet in general. This suggests that research on the use of social media is still advancing, and more areas are being studied to see how far social media could reach.

While social media's major function is to provide a two-way communication without any barriers, the study of social media still has limitations that need to be researched. There are a lot of areas that need to be investigated to measure social media's capabilities, and one of these areas is the use of social media in the promotion of transparency and freedom of expression. A particular focus studying how social sites could be used in places where freedom of expression and freedom of the press are challenged could help add to literature on the study of the use of social media.

This thesis, therefore, seeks to fill in this gap by studying how social media could be used beyond what has been researched; how this would promote transparency and freedom of expression, and how this could affect media practices in general.

The next chapter analyses the methodology and methods adopted for this study. It explores why the use of a mixed-methods approach was necessary and how the combination of a library search, a survey and in-depth interviews were crucial in answering the research questions.

Chapter 3 Researching the Media: Methodology and Methods

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology and methods used in this study. The adapted methodology derived from my desire to investigate the development of Tanzania's media landscape under different government administrations – from colonial Tanganyika to modern day Tanzania. The methods used were chosen specifically so that I could understand the levels at which social media was used to foster transparency and freedom of expression during the period 2015-2020. I began by undertaking a grounded research approach to the study of the media landscape in terms of transparency and freedom of expression. This was aimed at understanding how the situation differed depending on each government administration. Apart from using available literature on Tanzania's media landscape in the earlier years, I used interviews to compare the past situation to the period which this research is focused on [2015-2020]. Furthermore, I also considered ordinary citizens' perspectives whereas the survey findings helped analyse participants' perspectives on good governance practices in the country. Therefore, this study has combined both field work based and library research. The field work research through semi-structured interviews enabled analysis of experiences of media stakeholders. On the other hand, the library research facilitated studying of the history of Tanzania's media during the early days, thereby enabling its comparison to the present day. Additionally, the survey helped give voice to the people to express the direction they felt the country was heading to in terms of good governance practices.

This chapter comprises of six parts, including the introduction and conclusion. The second part informs readers about the philosophical underpinnings that underline the methodology and the methods that underpin the study. The third part is the research design, which explains both the process and practise. It encompasses the plan that I used to obtain answers to the research questions, the process of recruiting and selecting the participants of the study and details on ethical issues. While the fourth part describes the methods of analysis, the fifth part reflects on field experiences envisaged to help readers obtain a real picture of what happened during the data collection process. This part also unveils how as a Tanzanian media practitioner myself, I tried to maintain my position as a researcher in order to be as objective as possible and not to let my personal feelings about the media landscape distort the outcome of the study.

3.2 Philosophical stance of the research

The philosophical foundation underpinning the method and design of this study originates from the pragmatism paradigm, a paradigm that is a combination of both the positivist and the interpretivist perspectives.

One of the approaches to my study involved the collection of data through a survey using a structured questionnaire for a large sample derived from the population of Tanzania. Literature indicates that with the positivism approach, the researcher is normally neutral and independent, using methods that are highly structured and that require large samples. It also uses a quantitative method of analysis that although large, can be analysed (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2015).

On the other hand, another approach to my study was the use of semi-structured interviews with media stakeholders in Tanzania. Their narratives on the media landscape in the country in terms of transparency and freedom of expression produced the other part of my research, which is the interpretivism approach. This approach, according to Saunders, *et al*. (2015), focuses mostly on narratives, perceptions and interpretations as well as experiences and practices (p. 136). While the understandings of the worldviews on governance and specifically transparency and freedom of expression would be a contribution to this study, the in-depth investigations through interviews with this smaller sample would allow for qualitative methods of analysis that could be interpreted through a range of data.

Since the research design for this study intertwined these two approaches, the philosophical stance followed the pragmatism research approach as the study focused on the problems relating to lack of governance practices and sought to establish a way that would contribute to the solution to these problems. The value-driven research that I initiated was sustained by my beliefs as a researcher that the use of social media could contribute to the promotion of transparency and freedom of expression in Tanzania. This was coupled by the range of methods that I used that intended to answer the research questions and provide practical solutions and outcomes.

Saunders, *et al.* (2015) contend that a pragmatism approach strives to reconcile two things at the same time: objectivism and subjectivism. This considers the facts and values that the study seeks to uncover, as well as the rigorous knowledge and all the contextualised experiences. They posit that research starts with a problem for a pragmatist and aims to inform future practise through the contribution of practical solutions (Saunders, *et al.,* 2015: 143). As a pragmatist, the reality of social media being "the" current medium of communication mattered to me, and I saw the need to

investigate its strengths and limitations and its contribution towards good governance. This, I believe, will suggest a solution to the problem of lack of governance practices.

3.2.1 Applying the theory of reflection

A major part of this study is analysed through a reflective account. These are both the accounts of individuals that have been interviewed in this study, as well as my own account from my lived experience of witnessing the change of the political and media landscape of Tanzania. Amulya (2004) defines a reflection as "an active process of witnessing one's own experience in order to take a closer look at it, sometimes to direct attention to it briefly, but often to explore it in greater depth" (p.1). She argues that the key to do a good reflection is to examine the experience that one has gone through or witnessed, as some of them can provide powerful opportunities to learn. Similarly, Brookfield (1998) posits that critically reflective practice is "a process of inquiry involving practitioners in trying to discover, and research, the assumptions that frame how they work" (p.197). He further explains that reflective practitioners normally use four lenses in this practice: their own autobiographies; the learners' eyes, perceptions of their colleagues; and literature grounded in theoretical, philosophical, and research practices.

The scholar further explores the four lenses used by reflective practitioners, explaining how despite its importance, using one's own autobiography, which is a practitioner's personal experience, is often dismissed. However, he argues, analysing our own experiences provides an emotional level that is much deeper than that of reason. On looking at the lens of our learners, Brookfield (1998) argues that sharing experience helps those listening to interpret the findings in the exact meaning without distortion. Similarly, using the lens of colleagues' experiences helps in engaging in critical conversations with peers, which most of the time reflect back as mirrors of our own experiences. On the lens of theoretical literature, the author posits that theory can help practitioners understand how some situations came into being, such as how economic, social and political situations were the cause of what is being investigated.

Another scholar that has explored the concept of reflective practice is Finlay (2008), who examined the debate on the extent to which a person should reflect on themselves. She however argues that reflective practice cannot be applied simply, but what is needed is critical reflection. She also mentions the three skills underpinning the concept of reflective practice as self-awareness, reflection, and critical thinking. These, she explains, help a practitioner to develop understanding and evaluate the knowledge derived, promote self-awareness, social awareness and social action.

They further improve self-expression, challenging the importance of context while also identifying and challenging assumptions.

Finlay (2008) further argues that Gibbs' model of reflection is a good start, whereby it offers some basic questions that help structure a reflection. This is the model that I have applied to this thesis while talking about my experiences as well as the experiences of others during the 2015-2020 period that is the major focus of this study. These questions include:

i. Descriptive: explaining what happened in terms of the political and media landscape in Tanzania prior to 2015, as well as what happened after that, giving an analysis of the events that cause the shrinking media space and lack of transparency and freedom of expression.

ii. Feelings: the feelings that not only I, but also those that experienced the changes in Tanzania developed. These feelings have been an integral part of this thesis, as they have managed to explore the reaction of different people involved.

iii. Evaluation: The reflections in this thesis have also managed to give a critical analysis on how the experiences were both good and bad. Most of the interviewed respondents expressed how bad the experience of a shrinking political and media landscape was. However, others also explained how this could have been taken as a challenge for everyone involved to do better instead of complaining.

iv. Analysis: A critical analysis has also been applied in all of the experiences explored, and this has helped the thesis to identify areas that were the root cause of the research problem being investigated.

v. Action plan: Chapter 9 of this thesis includes a critical analysis of recommendations, with suggestions focusing on policy makers, the government, as well as the media. This analysis reflects on how changes need to be made in order for the problem that existed between 2015 to 2020 not to repeat itself, and also suggestions on what to do if such a situation were to happen again.

3.3 Research design

3.3.1 The research topic

When I originally drafted my research proposal for studying a PhD in 2016, Tanzania's 5th president, John Magufuli, had just been elected to office. The proposal therefore was generally to look at governance practices in Africa, and how social media could contribute towards that. The proposal lacked focus, but my supervisors had faith in me and believed that I could narrow down my topic to something interesting and worth researching.

When I deferred to start my studies from September 2018 to January 2019, the president was in the fourth year of his term. During that time, a lot had happened under his administration in terms of transparency and freedom of expression. The mainstream media, in particular, had stopped writing investigative stories that would expose government's malpractices. Those that dared criticise the president and his government were either fined, banned or deregistered. Most media outlets turned into what Tanzanians called "praise teams" generally publishing positive news about the government and keeping silent about the negative ones. On the other hand, the use of social media increased tremendously during this time, and it seemed as if people were relying more on information that was posted on social media platforms than the information posted on the mainstream media. Similarly, there were those who emerged as social media activists during this time. Some gained a lot of followers due to their ability to criticise the president and his government without any fear. A few others started posting sensitive information on social media – the kind of information that if done by professional journalists, would qualify as investigative stories.

But the media was not the only sector that was suffering. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), opposition political parties as well as ordinary citizens were facing the same plight. While CSOs were rebuked for making any negative comments about the government, political parties were banned from practising politics altogether (Mumbere, 2018), with the president claiming that he was building the economy and did not want any distractions (The Economist, 2017). Instead, he told the opposition to wait until the next elections. This led to a number of arrests to those opposition leaders who even held indoor meetings (The Citizen, 2017) while at the same time, those from the ruling party Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) held meetings and rallies freely under the chairpersonship of the president himself. Ordinary people were also arrested from making any negative comments about the president on social media platforms. Those who were arrested and jailed were accused of "insulting" the president and court proceedings cited the Cybercrimes Act of 2015 that had been

signed into law by Magufuli's predecessor, President Jakaya Kikwete, only a few months before he was to retire (Kuo, 2016).

3.3.2 The media, Tanzania politics and I: a reflection

The five years of President John Magufuli's administration were something that I, as a Tanzanian who started being interested in media and politics since the early 1990s, never imagined could happen. I was in my last year of primary school when I decided that I wanted to be a journalist. That was in 1990, a time when it was compulsory to study politics in school, a subject that even in secondary school was taught in Kiswahili even though the medium of instruction was English. I believe this was intended to enable students to really understand the past and present political landscape of the country. Apart from learning about African politics and how other countries gained their independence, lessons on Tanzanian politics were based on the works of the party that fought for independence – Tanganyika African National Union (TANU), and the ruling party Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM). We used to sing songs in school praising CCM and were proud of it. I particularly remember one: *"Chama chetu cha Mapinduzi chajenga nchi…"* meaning *"Our party CCM is building this nation."* In fact, the 5th of February each year used to be a national holiday, commemorating the birth of CCM in 1977. This stopped after the country re-introduced multi-party politics, and the Kiswahili-taught Politics subject (Siasa) in schools was replaced with Civics.

I was a trainee journalist when the country had its first multi-party general elections in October 1995, and the competition between the ruling party's candidate Benjamin Mkapa and the main opposition candidate Augustine Mrema, who had defected from CCM, was so interesting to the point that I decided to specialise in political journalism for some time. This included writing weekly columns that would sometimes criticise the then President Mkapa and his government. I was not the only one; the media was mostly free to criticise.

When Jakaya Kikwete became president after Mkapa finished his two 5-year terms, I had moved to the development sector as a communications specialist. I however continued to monitor the political landscape, as well as continued to write a column in a local newspaper. I continued criticising when criticism was due, and so did others. We were generally not afraid to air our views, be it in the media or in public. I do recall President Kikwete once saying that his son asked him why he was not taking any measures against those criticising and insulting him. He responded that despite him being president and having all the power that he could use against those 'insulting' him, using institutions such as the police to silence others was not ideal. His was a presidency that,

despite some challenges – as analysed in Chapter 4 – was still a safe haven for the media, the civil society, opposition parties, as well as ordinary citizens to function.

After President Kikwete's 10-year leadership, then came President John Magufuli. I was still working in the communications sector during this time and continued writing my weekly column. However, I realised very early that this was not going to be a normal ride for Tanzanians, after early signs suggested that the president's biggest weakness was that he did not like being criticised. Chapter 4 and Chapters 6, 7 and 8 of this thesis have an in-depth analysis of the media and the political landscape in the country, and how things changed to the worse. Political activities were banned, the media no longer had the freedom they used to enjoy, and ordinary citizens were arrested for something they had said on social media platforms. Even I decided to stop writing my weekly column, knowing only too well that my criticisms might not be taken lightly.

The changing media and political landscape as well as the restrictions towards freedom of expression that were experienced in Tanzania in the five years of President Magufuli's reign, are what helped shape my research topic. I chose this topic specifically because of my interest in Tanzania's media and Tanzanian politics in general, but also as a concerned Tanzanian who saw the importance of doing in-depth research of what was happening, how and why it happened, and what could be done to address the situation.

3.3.3 The choice of methods

In a bid to get the answers I was looking for, I initially thought of conducting a survey in Tanzania to get people's perspectives on how they felt about good governance practices in the country. Conducting a survey in Tanzania would have required me to be there physically, knocking on people's doors and helping them fill in the questionnaires. Knocking on doors and helping people to fill in questionnaires is the most representative data collection method in Tanzania. It however requires physical presence, a lot of time, and probably people to help with the data collection. This is because even though there is some use of the Internet in Tanzania, an online survey would not have been ideal as over 70% of the population lives in rural area (NBS, 2021). Most people in rural areas do not have access to the Internet or electricity; therefore, the online survey would not have been representative of the general population.

While I was planning for the field work, COVID-19 struck, making it impossible for me to travel to Tanzania for the surveys. Whilst contemplating on an alternative and searching for any relevant information that was available online, I stumbled across the Afrobarometer. This is an African

research institution that conducts rounds of surveys in more than 30 African countries, Tanzania being one of them. Since its launch in 1999, the institution has been conducting public attitude surveys on governance, democracy and the economy (afrobarometer.org, no date).

Afrobarometer uses a questionnaire as a tool for data collection, which Christensen *et al.* (2013) clarify, normally measures a participant's perception and opinions, hence providing more demographic information in relation to the questions asked (Christensen et al., 2013: 72). Additionally, Blaikie (2003) agrees to the use of secondary data, mentioning it as one of the three – primary, secondary and tertiary. He explains that even though the said data may have been collected for a different use from that of the secondary user, they are still raw data that could have advantages, such as time and cost saving (Blaikie, 2003: 18).

While Afrobarometer collects data in more than 30 African countries, it does not engage with data analysis, rather presents a summary of findings. The institution encourages stakeholders, such as researchers and other institutions to use their data and analyse them according to how they feel adequate as long as they acknowledge the institution. Afrobarometer had already conducted seven rounds of surveys between 1999 and 2018, and the 2018 survey on Tanzania was the ideal one for this research since it focused on the period 2015-2020.

According to Afrobarometer, their surveys use face-to-face interviews conducted in the respondent's language of choice, and samples generally have a national representation of 1,200 or 2,400 respondents, depending on the country's population. To accomplish this, the institution conducts the surveys through their national partners who are familiar with the environment and the medium of instruction of the country being surveyed. In Tanzania, this partner is REPOA Limited, a non-governmental organisation established in 1994 whose mission is to engage in policy research and dialogue that promotes socioeconomic transformation for inclusive development (repoa.or.tz, no date). REPOA has been Afrobarometer's partner since its first round of surveys in 1999, and also conducted the 2018 Afrobarometer survey in Tanzania.

Understanding that this method alone might not be sufficient to answer my research questions, I also decided to conduct interviews with media stakeholders in Tanzania. They included journalists and social media activists. Even though Dawson (2009) insists that both quantitative and qualitative methodological approaches have strengths and weaknesses, I decided to use both to complement each other. This is because while quantitative research is aimed at generating statistics through methods such as survey questionnaires, qualitative research explores issues such as experiences,

attitudes and behaviour through methods such as interviews (Dawson, 2009: 14-15; Christensen et al., 2013: 46). The use of both statistics and observation was imperative for this research.

Therefore, this study followed a mixed-methods approach, which Creswell (2013) argues involves collecting both quantitative and qualitative data, whereby the two approaches provide a clearer understanding of the research problem, unlike if one approach were to be used alone (Creswell, 2013: 4). Moreover, the use of explanatory sequential design was most suitable for my study, as I was able to use results from the quantitative data to build on to the qualitative data. According to Creswell (2013) and Creswell and Clark (2011), the explanatory sequential design allows for results from the quantitative data to inform the types of respondents for the qualitative data, and also the types of questions that should be asked.

While there are both advantages and challenges in using a mixed-methods approach, one major advantage is to provide strengths that counteract the weaknesses found in both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Creswell & Clark (2011) explain that although one might argue that there are weaknesses with quantitative research approach in understanding the setting in which people talk, qualitative research provides a good balance for this. On the other hand, the weakness of qualitative research approach could be argued as lacking in the whole idea of generalising findings due to the limited number of participants being studied. Quantitative research approach does not have such a weakness (Creswell & Clark, 2011: 12). In this case, mixing the two approaches helps one procedure complement results of the other.

Despite that fact, the challenges that come with the use of a mixed-methods research design should not be ignored. Even though it is not an ideal approach for every research problem, it also requires a researcher to have the skills to perform both quantitative and qualitative data collection and data analysis. It also requires more time and resources (Creswell & Clark, 2011: 13-16). Similarly, Creswell and Creswell (2018) explain how a researcher's personal training and experience influence the choice of approach in research. People familiar with statistics and statistical programmes tend to choose a quantitative research design, while those with experience in conducting interviews, making observations and finding joy in writing in a literary way choose the qualitative approach (Creswell & Creswell, 2018: 54). For this study, I was fortunate to have the skills for both approaches as I have been a journalist who enjoys conducting interviews and writing people's observations and feelings. Additionally, for the purpose of this research, I decided to do a course on the use of SPSS Statistics, a software package used for interactive statistical analysis.

3.3.4 Location of the study, participants and sampling approach

The primary location of the study was Tanzania – a country located in the South-Eastern part of Africa. The collection of data based on three different settings: a library search, the Afrobarometer database, and interviews.

i. Library search

One of the key issues that I wanted this research to find out was the media development in Tanzania with a focus on transparency and freedom of expression. I intended to show how different laws and regulations were enacted by different government administrations with the intention of controlling the flow of information. The most convenient way to do this was through a library search. I used three online scholarly searches, namely Web of Science, Jstor and Google Scholar. I applied a number of keywords to the search, such as "Tanzania media" "Tanzania press" "Tanganyika press". These yielded many results that I had to then narrow down by selecting abstracts that had included the terms *freedom of expression*, *freedom of information*, and *media laws and /or regulations*. Another approach that I used was identifying an article, then looking at the references and searching for those references that I found relevant for my study.

The library search identified articles and books outlining the media landscape of Tanzania from colonial Tanganyika to modern-day Tanzania. This is analysed thoroughly in Chapter 4 of this study, examining how each administration treated the media and these administrations' contributions towards transparency and freedom of expression.

ii. Afrobarometer survey

The second data collection setting was the Afrobarometer survey. Since I used the institution's raw data that was available on their website, I had to consider a number of things, such as cleaning the data. The 2018 Afrobarometer questionnaire for Tanzania has more than 100 questions. These questions seek people's views on several issues grouped under political, social and economic perspectives. For this study, a total of 14 questions about issues regarding the two prerequisites of good governance – transparency and freedom of expression, were used:

1. Do you have freedom to say what you think?
2. Freedom to say what you think: Has it got better or worse?
3. Media freedom to investigate and report: Has it got better or worse?
4. Freedom of NGOs/Groups to speak and act: Has it got better or worse?

5. Freedom of the opposition to function: Has it got better or worse?
6. Do you support democracy?
7. How much of a democracy is Tanzania today?
8. Should the opposition have the right to peaceful protests, or should government prevent protests?
9. Should Tanzanians be free to criticise the government/president, or should it be a crime to insult the president?
10. Do you prefer limited democratic freedoms, or should freedoms be protected?
11. Should government information be for official use only and not shared with the public?
12. Should people who criticise the president be arrested?
13. Should government have the right to close media outlets that criticise its policies?
14. Do you agree with government's decision to ban live broadcasts of Parliament?

A sampling approach is a very important aspect when doing surveys. Dawson (2009) explains that choosing a small and manageable sample size is important for researchers, allowing for the research findings to be generalised for the population (p. 49). Bordens and Abbott (2018), on the other hand, admit that a researcher may sometimes be forced to acquire participants depending on the needs of the study, as such a decision could be imperative for the outcome of the study (Bordens & Abbott, 2018: 170). Moreover, Fowler Jr. (2013) notes how sometimes the goal of the study is to describe results in details and not to generate a population's statistics. Due to this, he argues, one does not need a strict probability sample for every effort to gather information (Fowler, 2013: 14).

Afrobarometer uses national probability samples designed to generate a sample that is representative of citizens who are of a voting age in each country. For Tanzania, this means that the survey is representative of those individuals from 18 years and older, which Blaikie (2003) argues is ideal, providing a perfect representation of the population (p. 161). To reach this goal of every adult citizen having an equal chance of being selected for the interview, the sampling involved the use of random methods at every stage with probability proportionate to population size. For instance, the sampling procedure for this study ensured that more populated geographic units had a proportionally greater probability of being chosen into the sample.

The 2018 Afrobarometer survey on Tanzania is a clustered, stratified, multi-stage, area probability sample. It is stratified according to the main sub-national units of government, which in the case of Tanzania are its 30 regions that include 5 from the semi-autonomous island of Zanzibar. It has further been stratified according to urban or rural locations. Bryman and Cramer (2004) explain

that stratified sampling can add more precision to a sample that is either simple random or systematic. This is because while the population is divided into strata that are categories of a criterion, it offers greater accuracy and ensures that the created groups are represented in the same magnitudes as in the population (Bryman & Cramer, 2004: 125). Being the 6th most populated among the 55 African countries, the 2018 Afrobarometer survey on Tanzania has a sample size of n=2400 cases, allowing the margin of error of no more than +/-2.0% at 95 percent confidence level.

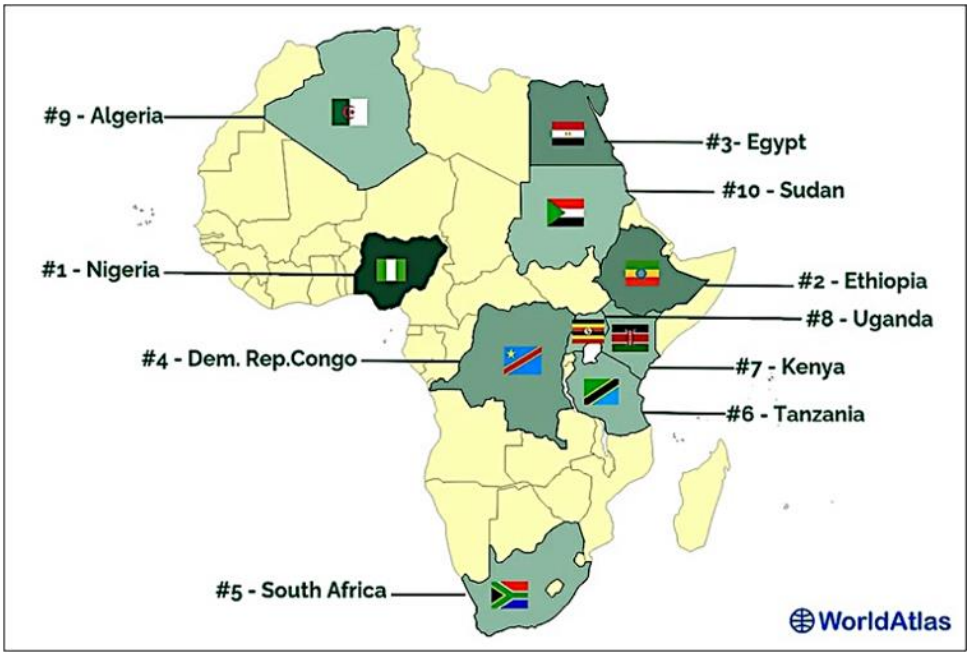


Figure 3.1 : The 10 most populated countries in Africa

Source: www.worldatlas.com

Since this study was focused on mainland Tanzania only, I did not include results of the survey from Zanzibar. As explained in Chapter 1 of this study, Zanzibar is governed by its own government and its own laws, including its own media laws and regulations. In this case, while Afrobarometer's original dataset has a sample size of n=2400, I cleared the data of the five regions of Zanzibar: Unguja Kaskazini, Unguja Kusini, Mjini Magharibi, Pemba Kaskazini and Pemba Kusini. This reduced the sample size from n=2400 to n=2160 cases.

According to Tanzania's latest National Bureau of Statistics report, Tanzania in Figures, the sex ratio in mainland Tanzania from the 2012 census was 95 males per 100 females (NBS, 2021). While the population had increased from 12.3 million in 1967 to 55.9 million in 2019 (54.2 million for mainland Tanzania), it was the younger population (under 15 years) that represented 43.9% of the entire mainland population, followed by the youth (15-24 years) representing 34.6%. The working age

population (15-64 years) comprised 52.2% and the elderly (65+ years) represented only 3.9% of the entire population. As for the geographical location, 29.1% of the mainland Tanzania population lived in the urban areas while 70.9% lived in rural areas (NBS, 2021: 21). An analysis on the findings from the survey are in Chapter 5 of this study.

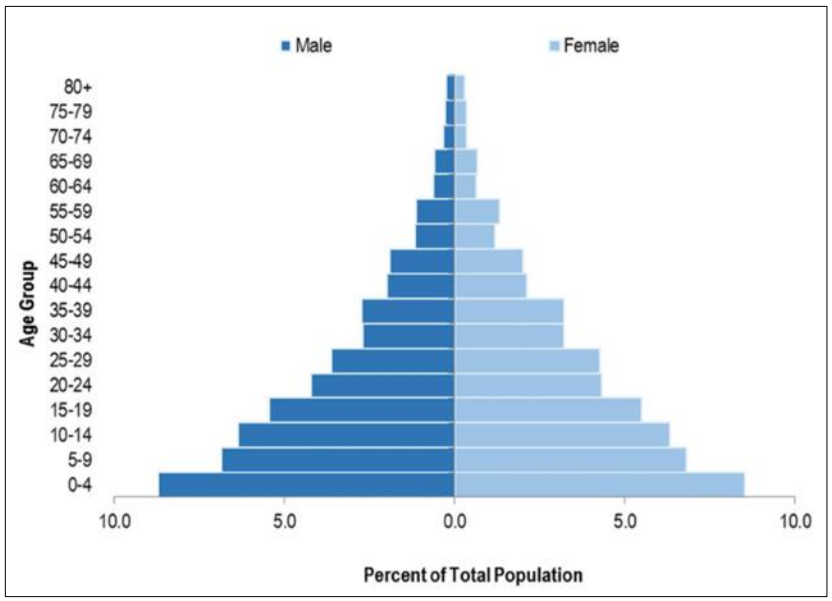


Figure 3.2: Percentage distribution of the projected population by age group and sex

Source: National Bureau of Statistics 2020 Tanzania in Figures report

iii. Interviews in Tanzania

The third data collection setting was in-depth interviews with media stakeholders. I travelled to Tanzania in December 2020 to conduct the interviews, keeping in mind that even though the Covid infection rate had slowed down, I still needed to be cautious.

I conducted the interviews in two phases. The first one was face to face interviews with 11 respondents in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania between December 2020 and January 2021. The second phase involved telephone interviews with three respondents. I conducted the face-to-face interviews mostly at the respondents' places of work, as Creswell and Poth (2017) state, qualitative analysis needs a natural setting where researchers collect data at a place where participants experience the issue that is being studied. It is not conducted in a lab, rather researchers have a one-to-one conversation with the respondents (p. 82).

The interviews were aimed at complementing what the Afrobarometer survey had found with regard to the public's perspective on good governance practices in Tanzania. I tried to reach out to

more respondents, but they were unwilling to participate. Some promised a number of times to be available for the interview, but then never responded to my meeting requests afterwards. Similarly, I tried to reach out to an official working with the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA), who responded: *"umetumwa na mabeberu?"* meaning have you been sent by the imperialists? This is actually a phrase that former President John Magufuli liked to use, hence anyone who was seen criticising the government or president was accused of having been sent by imperialists.

Despite that, there were two sets of interviewees for this study. The first set included those who I personally interviewed face-to-face and those that I interviewed by phone. The second set included interviews that were conducted by Ujuzi Era TV involving five senior journalists. Ujuzi Era Television is an online TV channel accessed through YouTube, and includes interviews with different people about social, political and economic issues on Africa. One of the respondents that I had interviewed sent me a text message directing me to this channel, saying he believed that some of the interviews were relevant to my research. As Creswell & Poth (2018) point out, in qualitative research researchers do not have to rely on one form of data but could instead collect their data through many other forms such as observation, documents and interviews, making a sense of the data after reviewing it (Creswell & Poth, 2017: 82). Of the five interviews from Ujuzi Era TV, two were also in the first set of those who I interviewed. This then brought the total number of respondents to 17. I decided to include the interviews they had with Ujuzi Era TV as there was additional information relevant to this study. I never personally interviewed the remaining three, but since the questions they were asked by Ujuzi Era TV involved the media landscape in Tanzania, I found them relevant to this study.

The interviews were semi-structured, which as Dawson (2009) argues, are flexible and allow the respondent to make additional remarks that might help the research. The respondents were asked questions with more follow-up questions depending on their responses. All respondents were asked three main questions, which are:

1. How can you describe the media landscape in Tanzania compared to five years ago (in terms of transparency and freedom of expression)?
2. Can social media contribute to transparency and freedom of expression?
3. What can be done for these governance prerequisites to be upheld?

These three questions reflect on the triad's contribution to good governance practices in Tanzania, since the first question talks about the two concepts: transparency and freedom of expression, the second question talks about social media and how it can fit into the two concepts, and question three talks about how the triad could complement each other for good governance to be upheld.

Despite the three main questions, there were also more follow-up questions asked to each respondent, depending on the answers that they gave. For instance, my interview with the respondents who were journalists included more than ten other questions for them, despite the three main questions. Similarly, my interview with the Jamii Forums Founder, Maxence Melo, as well as the interview with the man known as Kigogo were the longest ones, whereby I asked them more than 15 follow-up questions, apart from the main three.

3.3.5 Ethical considerations

This study on social media's contribution to transparency and freedom of expression was not treated as risky. I sought the consent of the respondents that I interviewed and asked them whether I could record our discussions. They all agreed to this, being aware that the interviews were going to be used for my PhD study as well as any other academic publications such as journal articles and conference presentations. They did not want to sign a consent form, rather gave verbal consents, which are included in the recordings.

According to the National Research Registration and Clearance Guidelines (2018) issued by the Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology (COSTECH), the National Research Registration Committee (NRRC) assists COSTECH in reviewing research proposals and issuing permits to allow a person to conduct research in the country. I did not seek research clearance for this study due to two main reasons:

(i). I am a Tanzania national and therefore did not require any permission to be in the country or to speak with people.

(ii). The research that I was conducting was looking at the decline of good governance practices in Tanzania. At the time of data collection, President John Magufuli was still in power, and that was also a time when most government officials and institutions served "at the pleasure of the president", meaning such research would be seen as exposing the government's bad practices. It would not have been easy to gain clearance for my research by a public institution.

3.4 Methods of data analysis

All the findings were organised and summarised according to the methods that were used. Bordens and Abbott (2018) explain the importance of organising and summarising data before interpreting it. They remark that this depends on the research design, the number of variables observed and recorded, and the observations made that are supposed to be grouped and subdivided (Bordens & Abbott, 2018: 398). Since this study followed a mixed-methods research approach, I applied a mixed-methods analysis whereby I delt with all sets of data sequentially.

I started my analysis of Tanzania's media landscape by organising the data I found from the library search. I organised the data by administration, starting with Tanganyika's pre-independence era. This era covered good governance and freedom of expression under the German colonial administration (1891-1916) as well as the British colonial administration (1916-1961). After this, I examined Tanganyika/Tanzania's post-colonial administration under the five presidents the country had had since independence – Julius Nyerere, Ali Hassan Mwinyi, Benjamin Mkapa, Jakaya Kikwete and John Magufuli. The analysis is covered in Chapter 4 of this study, aiming at exploring how different administrations treated the media. In the chapter I argue that despite the laws and regulations in place, the one in command is more likely to either enforce these laws or not.

The second set of analysis is found in Chapter 5, coming from the quantitative data. The data for this chapter was already inputted to SPSS by Afrobarometer. As Bordens & Abbott (2018) explain, data has to be organised into different columns, such as numbering the respondents, the questions and the demographic items (Bordens & Abbott, 2018: 398). After cleaning the data and remaining with only the one that I was going to use for this study, I analysed the selected survey results in cross tabulations using the same software, which according to Bryman and Cramer (2004), is simple and frequently used to demonstrate the presence or absence of a relationship (p. 201). Furthermore, I described the tables in terms of what they implied, with the numbers being described intending to state the conclusion of the tested ideas. On this, Trieman (2009) states: "The point of presenting data is to test ideas so the data should be discussed in terms of their implications for the ideas (hypotheses) being tested; simply citing the numbers is not sufficient" (Trieman, 2009: 61).

Since I used an explanatory sequential approach for data collection, my data analysis also followed the same approach. Results from the analysis of the quantitative data helped design the qualitative data collection approach, which in turn enabled me to decide how the qualitative results explained the quantitative results. Creswell & Clark (2011) explain about the data analysis in mixed methods

research, arguing that in the quantitative data the research should start with converting the raw data into a useful form for data analysis, meaning assigning numeric values to each of the responses and creating special variables. This could then be computed using a statistical computer programme such as SPSS. For the qualitative data analysis, on the other hand, the use of a codebook is important for a researcher, but also transcribing text from interviews into word processing files. Consequently, coding of the data is important (Creswell & Clark, 2011: 203-208).

I recorded all the interviews that I conducted using a digital voice recorder with the consent of the interviewees. I then transcribed all the interviews manually. Transcription using a software was not possible, since all, except for one of the interviews were in Kiswahili, which is not yet included in the software that I used for coding. Even though transcribing of the interviews was a long and not too easy task, doing it manually enabled me to get a second feel of the data, after having got the first feel during the interviewing itself. This also enabled me to think about the themes that I wanted to use, and I noted them down in my notebook as I continued to transcribe.

The next stage was to use a software to analyse the interviews, and I opted for NVivo, which is a Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS). Azeem and Salfi (2012) point out that this software assists the researcher in not only manipulating data records and coding them, but also in gaining quick and accurate data records whenever needed (p. 264). I then coded the data I exported to NVivo, a process of analysis that involves exploring the data, assigning codes to it, linking the codes to create themes, and thinking about the meaning in a broader context (Fairclough, 2003). The coding, which is the first step to data analysis, manages qualitative data, enabling easier search for patterns, relationships, similarities and differences (Lewins and Silver, 2007: 81-82).

While initially I had more than twenty codes when coding using NVivo, familiarising myself with the data and going through it several times enabled me to create themes, depending on how the codes were linked to each other. I then narrowed them down to nine themes, which are:

1. Media landscape
2. Social media use
3. Struggling mainstream media
4. Social media vs mainstream media
5. Crackdown on media and public
6. Laws and regulations
7. News vs reports

8. Tanzania's social media platform; and
9. The future envisioned

Figure 3.3 illustrates the depth of discussion in some of the themes, with 'Media landscape' attracting more discussion, followed by 'Social media use', and 'Crackdown on media and public'.

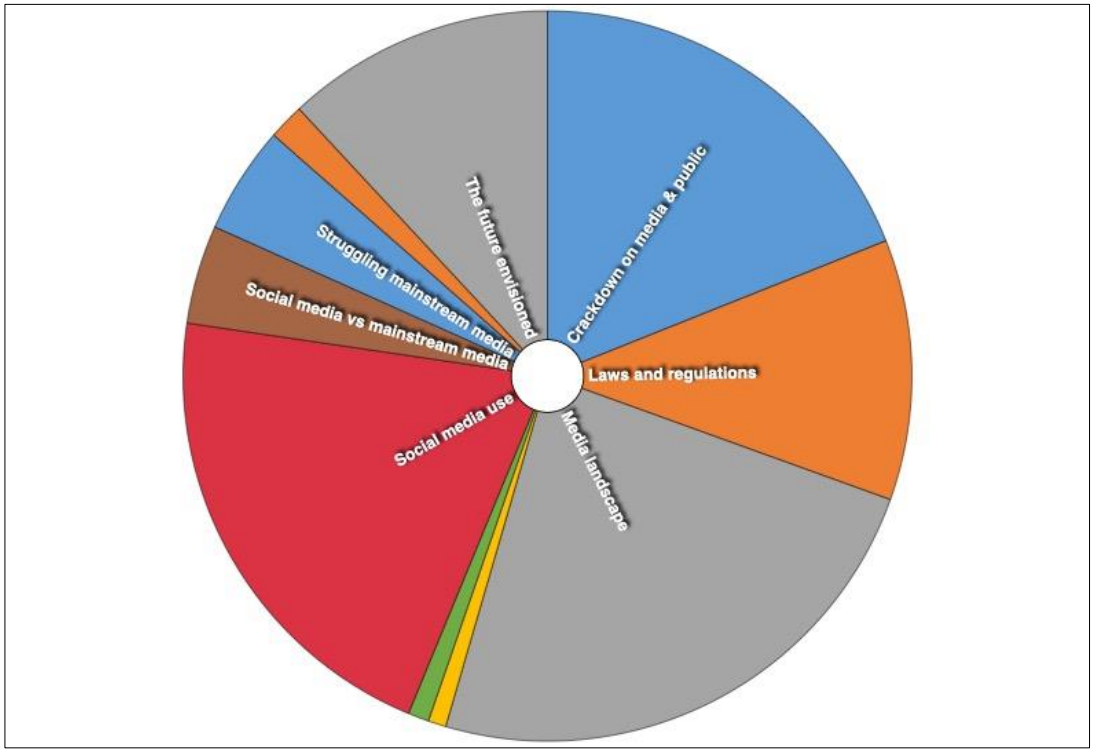


Figure 3.3: Chart showing the depth of discussion on interview topics, as captured through NVIVO software

Using narrative analysis

This study included a large amount of narratives describing how Tanzania fared in terms of transparency and freedom of expression and the journey over the years as described in Chapters 6, 7 and 8. All of the interviewees were media stakeholders, and almost all of them had personal experiences of the situation. Some had been personally persecuted while conducting their work and others had become social media activists because of what they had experienced personally and /or from others. In this case, the qualitative study used mostly a narrative analysis approach to present its findings.

Narrative research has attracted a lot of exploration over the years. Caine, Estefan and Clandinin (2013) argue that as a method, it involves experiences being expressed by those who have been witnesses, or through told stories. Czarniawska (2004) describes it as a qualitative design that uses

spoken or written text with the aim of explaining an event, action or series of events. Butler-Kisber (2018) expands the meaning to include oral and written narratives from not only short stories and particular events, but also extended substantial accounts of aspects of lives as well as entire life stories. Wertz *et al.* (2011) simply define it as a way to use textual form to explore and conceptualise human experience. Furthermore, Kim (2015) explains that it provides human experiences, enabling one to feel involved in a personal way as it presents feelings, emotions and life situations that might not be felt with other methods.

This study analysed the narrations of the interviewees through the themes that I identified during the coding of the data. In Chapter 6, for instance, the narration includes the journey of Tanzania's media after independence up until 2020, a journey that is narrated by journalists who worked through those different periods. Special attention is on the section that talks about the period 2015-2020, which includes narrations of how the media landscape shrunk during that period compared to any other period ever experienced. The narrations involve issues on how the government had been using laws and regulations in place to control the media as well as to control transparency and freedom of expression. These narrations are from lived experiences. Furthermore, all respondents, except for one, wanted to be mentioned in this study, acknowledging that it would make the research more authentic. The one who preferred anonymity explained that they had experienced a number of threats due to their work and their opinion in regard to the media landscape; therefore preferred not to be named.

3.5 Reflections from the field

3.5.1 Positioning self

I was interested in this research topic specifically because of my background in journalism. I started as a trainee journalist in late 1995 while I was a student at the Tanzania School of Journalism and went on to practise fully from 1998. This was a time when multi-party politics and the independent media had been introduced in the country and there was a lot of enthusiasm amongst citizens to read about politics in the private press. I remember the first article that I wrote appeared in *Mwananchi* newspaper (at the time owned by Media Holdings T Ltd) on the day of the first multi-party general elections, 29 October 1995. It was the lead story of the newspaper, with the banner headline: "*CCM ikiiba kura itakiona cha moto*" (CCM will see our wrath if it steals votes). Even though the news article was of only six paragraphs as I was still on training and did not know what else to add apart from what people were singing at the main opposition presidential candidate's

campaign rally, it made a big impact on my career choices. I decided to specialise on writing about politics, and in the later years I had a weekly column that analysed Tanzanian and African politics.

Even though I later left the newsroom and started working as a communications specialist, my love for writing about politics and politicians continued and I also continued writing the weekly column that appeared in a local newspaper. I was particularly interested in learning the media history of Tanzania, linking it to ongoing events and asking myself why and how things happened.

Embarking on this study has been an eye opener for me. It has helped me learn the past practices as well as the present ones. Moreover, as an interested media person who has been following the development of the media landscape in Tanzania, some parts of the findings of this research are based on my own observations. Chapter 8, which talks about the power of social media political influencers in a mummed society, is one example.

3.5.2 Fieldwork in Tanzania

My fieldwork plans had been delayed for about six months due to Covid restrictions, and in December 2020 I travelled to Tanzania for data collection purposes. Even though Tanzania was at the time not releasing Covid-related statistics, information from friends and family suggested that infections had gone down; therefore, I found it safe to travel and conduct the interviews. Conducting face to face interviews enabled me to visit my interviewees at their workplaces, something that made them feel valued and made them more open in responding to my questions.

Most of my interviewees were journalists. I have strong ties with journalists in Tanzania, especially those who I used to work with during my days in the newsroom as well as those who treated me as a source of information when I was communications specialist. They all agreed to being interviewed and even suggested others that I could interview in order to help me get the answers for my research. They were very friendly, very helpful and ready to be interviewed immediately. They even acknowledged that my research topic was very important as they were experiencing something that they had never experienced before, and that they never thought could happen in Tanzania. It was a great experience and a great learning process for me. However, as soon as I travelled back to the United Kingdom, I fell ill, experienced most of the Covid symptoms and had to delay writing my thesis for almost one month. Nevertheless, it was a great experience and the amount of knowledge that I have gained from conducting this research is immeasurable.

There are arguments as to the role of an insider researcher and whether this compromises the research or not. Simmel (1950) argues that being an outsider is more beneficial for research as the insider could not be objective. He claims that an insider researcher is not as natural as an outsider. However, Merton (1972) posits that an outsider might not understand what they are working on as research might not be related to them in terms of topic, culture and status, hence finding difficulty in justifying their study. Bonner and Tolhurst (2002) and Smyth and Holian (2008) believe that by being familiar with the cultural and political structure, researchers benefit since they already have some knowledge about the issue and can relate well with the participants from whom they extract data. Similarly, Saidin (2016) talks of the important role that a researcher plays in the success of the topic under investigation, claiming that an insider could have more understanding and be more passionate about their study, therefore committing themselves despite any obstacles.

While my position as an insider researcher gave me a lot of advantages because of my familiarity with Tanzania and my passion for media development, I was aware of the fact that my feelings about what was going on could make me biased. Considering this, I made sure that I listened to and included all ideas I collected from the participants, and I did not leave something out just because they were agreeing or disagreeing with the situation that was going on. I believe I have done this research justice.

3.5.3 Challenges encountered

My field experience in Tanzania was generally good. Tanzania is my home; therefore, I looked forward to traveling back, seeing familiar faces and enjoying the December heat. Despite this, there were a few challenges that I encountered during the data collection process as listed below:

No responses and being ignored by some potential respondents

I personally reached out to the people that I wanted to interview for my study. Most of them agreed immediately and were very helpful in giving me the information that I was seeking. However, there were a few who did not respond to, or ignored my request for an interview. I recall one of them who sent me a text message claiming that they were out of the country. When I asked if they were willing to be respondents for my research so that we could plan to meet upon their return, they never responded. Another potential respondent that I approached confirmed that they were available for the interview after the holidays, but when I contacted them after New Year, they never picked up my calls nor responded to my messages. Nevertheless, those who I did interview were very helpful in suggesting other respondents who would be good for my research, and they

participated willingly. One respondent even sent me a link to Ujuzi Era TV so that I could find interviews conducted to some senior journalists and use them in my study. These videos that are on Ujuzi Era's YouTube channel form the second set of interviews that I have used in this study.

Warnings to delete the recorded interviews

As I pointed out earlier, all respondents agreed to the interviews being recorded on the digital recording device that I was using. They did warn me, however, that if the device fell in the wrong hands while I was still in Tanzania, it could be confiscated, and I could land into trouble. This was a time when most people were not free to speak or criticise the government openly. Even though my respondents agreed to take part in the interviews and agreed to be mentioned in the study, they feared for my safety, if I were to be found with the recordings. They suggested that I upload all the interviews to the cloud and delete the ones on the device. I heeded their advice and uploaded them to the cloud. Nevertheless, I did not encounter any problems, I was never searched as I was leaving Tanzania and my recording device was safe.

Warnings not to interview government officials

While a few respondents suggested that I should also interview a government official, such as someone from the ministry responsible for information or from the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA), most of the other respondents advised against it. They gave me examples of how they were harassed because of their work and suggested that since my work intended to analyse the declining of good governance practices over the past five years, the government's response might not be positive. Furthermore, they warned me not to tell people that I had come to Tanzania for data collection, rather to emphasise that I was on holiday and only visiting home. I discussed this situation with my supervisors, and they agreed that it would be safer for me to heed the advice given. Despite a few people knowing that I was collecting data, I did this task without any problems, and I travelled back safely to the United Kingdom upon completion.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter has described the methodological practices that I used to collect data for my research. It has given an overview of the research's philosophical underpinnings, the research design and the methods of data analysis, and a reflection of my time in the field. The mixed-methods approach that I have explored is what I have used for my research.

The next chapter is the first of the five chapters that analyse the data for this study. This chapter is based on the library search that I did and explores the media landscape in Tanzania in terms of transparency and freedom of expression. The sections in this chapter follow a chronological order, starting with the media landscape in colonial Tanganyika, going through the media in independent Tanzania. The aim of this chapter is to examine how the media landscape was affected by different administrations.

Chapter 4 Good Governance and Freedom of Expression: the Case of Tanzania

4.1 Introduction

While the previous chapter outlined the methodology and methods used for this research, this chapter is based on the library search aimed at investigating the media development of Tanzania. Its focus is on freedom of expression as one of the prerequisites of good governance. The chapter traces the origins of communication from the colonial era by determining how both the German and British administrations facilitated the establishment of newspapers but used strict laws against those who criticised their colonial policies. It then examines the country's media development through five different post-colonial administrations, noting how the presidents and their governments had been imposing stricter media laws as the years went by. The chapter establishes how freedom of expression was more challenged as the media industry continued to develop, and how this challenge suggests an impediment to good governance practices that needs to be addressed.

4.2 Country profile and overview of the media landscape

The United Republic of Tanzania was formed on 26 April 1964, after the union of two countries – Tanganyika and Zanzibar. Before gaining independence on 9 December 1961, Tanganyika was part of German East Africa, whereby German colonialists who arrived in the 1880s declared the region a protectorate in 1891. However, the British captured the German holdings during World War I, making it a British mandate in 1920 (britannica.com, no date).

Despite the Germans ruling Tanganyika since 1891, until 1899 the administration depended on the British *The Gazette of Zanzibar and the East African Protectorate* to publish both official and private announcements (Sturmer, 1998: 32). Undoubtedly, a formal medium of communication that enables an administration to communicate with the population is crucial in any society. However, even though some Christian newspapers appeared in the second half of the 19th century, the German administration did not have its own established medium of communication during its early years of rule. Eventually, the administration persuaded a German settler to launch a newspaper in the territory, a move that marked the first private German newspaper in the territory (Sturmer, 1998: 32).

The British administration in Tanganyika came at a time when African political leaders were trying to establish themselves as possible successors. They needed to both criticise the authority and

appeal for African support, and for this it was imperative that they have a newspaper of their own. This was however challenging since most of the Africans were illiterate at the time (Scotton, 1978: 1-2).

Sturmer (1998) explains that while freedom of the press was highly valued in Britain, the administration in Tanganyika still tried to control the media from the early days. The *Tanga Post and Coast Advertiser*, for instance, was the first independent newspaper under the British administration, though not African. As soon as the publisher, Martin van Jaarsveld, launched the newspaper, he received a letter from the district officer, which in part said: "Sir, I am directed to inform you that until further notice your newspaper should be regularly censored before publication." (Sturmer, 1998: 72). This suggests that for those issues that were censored, anything that did not please the administration was not allowed to be published.

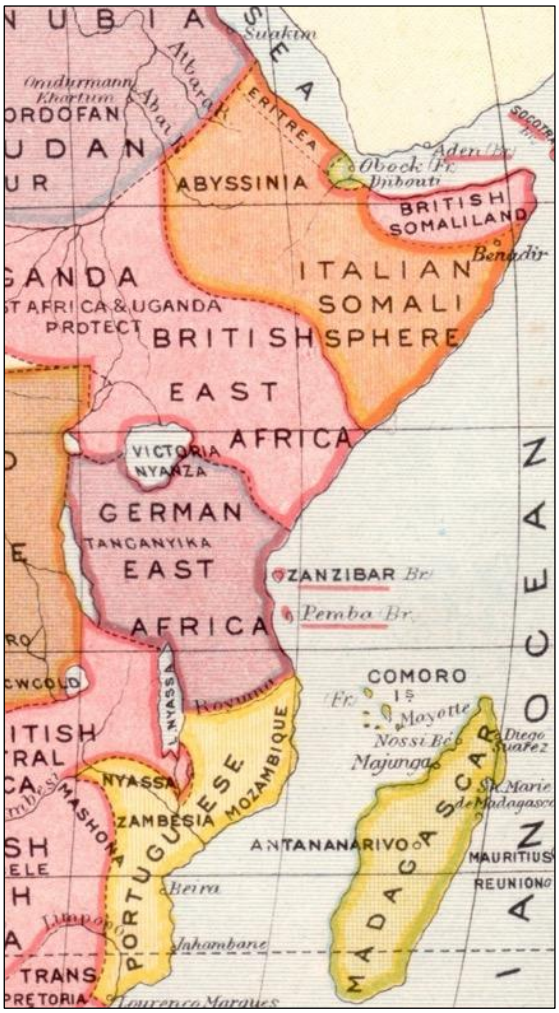


Figure 4.1: Map showing Tanganyika as part of German East Africa

(Source: dcstamps.com)

Figure 4.2: Imperial flag of Tanganyika Territory under the British

(Source: britishempire.co.uk)

Nevertheless, most of the documented media history of the United Republic of Tanzania started from 19 August 1885, when the Germans ceded the coastal settlement of Dar es Salaam, which is currently Tanzania's business capital (Ofcansky and Yeager, 1997). All along, people used to communicate through traditional methods which served their needs at the time. These included some members of the community being tasked to climb up the tallest tree or rock and give feedback of any impending dangers they noticed while watching over the territory. Additionally, there was the drumbeating informing community soldiers of an invasion or informing the community of the season for young boys and girls to undergo initiations (Rioba, 2008: 9). With these methods, the people communicated effectively and understood the messages being relayed.

Tanzania has gone through different stages in its media development. While it started with the beating of drums to the current interactions through online media platforms; these developments have also had a major impact on good governance practices. It was evident during the early years of colonial rule that freedom of expression was the most significant element of good governance that the communities thrived for. This started with the launch of newspapers that spoke for the African natives in the country that was once known as *Deutsch Ostafrika*, meaning German East Africa (Mwakikagile, 2009: 60). Ever since Tanzanians started raising their voices through different media, one thing has become certain: that while the people want to be heard by the administrators, the administrators make sure that they endorse different laws to govern how people raise their voices. During the colonial administration, it was about fighting for independence; in the post-colonial era and beyond, it has been about demanding for a "better" Tanzania.

4.3 Tanganyika's pre-independence era: African newspapers in the fight for independence

4.3.1 The German administration: 1891-1916

While there is limited documentation on the early media development under the German administration, the work by Sturmer (1998) appears to be the only one that gives a comprehensive account to the details of the media history of Tanzania. Sturmer explains how Christianisation efforts led to the increase in the number of African-language newspapers. In 1888, *Msimulizi* (The Storyteller) became the first newspaper to be published by the Anglican Universities' Mission to Central Africa (UMCA) in Zanzibar. However, since the aim of this newspaper and others that followed was specifically to spread the Gospel, the German administration needed its own mouthpiece. They eventually found it in a settler named Willy von Roy.

Willy von Roy immigrated into German East Africa in 1898 and was persuaded by a close associate of Governor Eduard von Liebert to establish a German-language newspaper. He agreed, and the weekly *Deutsch-Ostafrikanische Zeitung* (German-East-African Newspaper) was first published on 26 February 1899. The newspaper, shortly known as DOAZ, was a mouthpiece for the German farmers. Nevertheless, to ensure its autonomy, von Roy published a separate supplement called *Amtlicher Anzeiger für Deutsch Ostafrika* (Official Announcer for German East Africa) aimed at making administrative declarations.

It was uncommon for a government to depend on a private newspaper as its mouthpiece as any fallout between the two could cause serious repercussions to the one who had no official authority. Therefore, it was no surprise with the events that followed when von Roy's relationship with the German administration started to suffer in 1907. The settler had sided with a farmers' newspaper that criticised the administration's colonial policy, causing the then governor, Albrecht von Rechenberg, to order his officers not to edit the newspaper as they normally did. While von Roy used his own newspaper to criticise the administration, there were no media laws that could have stopped DOAZ's anti-government campaign. Due to this, the governor launched his own newspaper – *Deutsch-Ostafrikanische Rundschau* (German-East-African Review) with the intent of harming DOAZ financially. He revoked 250 government subscriptions as well as the supplement. Additionally, von Roy was sued for libel and convicted after accusing an official of pederasty. He was also ordered to emigrate German East Africa. While back in Germany von Roy's warrant of arrest was cancelled by Kaiser Wilhelm II, his request to return to the colony was never granted

(Sturmer, 1998: 35). This was the first incident in the territory that highlighted the intention of administrations to use their power to control freedom of expression.

The conflict between von Roy and the administration highlighted the need for a law to govern the media in order to prevent further libellous allegations. However, none was put in place until April 1912 when Berlin implemented press ordinances in all its protectorates, leading to the German-East-African newspaper law. This law that was known in Germany as the Reichspressegesetz (The Reich's Press Law) was enacted by Kaiser Wilhelm I in 1874. The law allowed the governor to ban foreign publications and prohibit the publication of articles on troop activities or the defence system during domestic conflicts and wars. There is, however, no evidence that the German administration ever used the first enacted press law in the territory (Sturmer, 1998: 42).

Whilst the press under German East Africa was still in its infant stage when World War I escalated in the region, the young press disappeared when the most important towns were captured by the allies. A private African newspaper was never established during the German rule, and the natives had to depend on settlers such as von Roy to speak for them. Even though there were no media laws in place until 1912, those who accused the government of mistreating Africans were persecuted, suggesting that freedom of expression was not respected under the German administration.

4.3.2 The British administration: 1916-1961

It took a long time for an African newspaper to be launched in Tanganyika, and the only newspapers circulating in the territory were missionary publications. Some Africans attempted to launch newspapers, but they did not survive. In 1937 Erica Fiah, a Ugandan living in Tanganyika established *Kwetu*, which means 'Our Home' in Kiswahili. This is regarded as the first African-owned newspaper in Tanganyika. *Kwetu* was published for the first time on 18 November 1937 with all its articles written in Kiswahili, except for one on health conditions in Dar es Salaam. The British administration was supportive of Fiah's newspaper, with Tanganyika's Attorney General writing to the acting chief secretary: "The African is bound to want a paper of his own in time and this seems to be quite a good beginning." (Scotton, 1978: 4).

Scotton (1978) and Mwakikagile (2009) explain how African newspapers published during this period played an important role in the events leading to independence. Not only did they report what was taking place, they also shaped public opinion in varying degrees and facilitated political discussions among the natives. Unfortunately, in the beginning most of the coverage in the papers was not in the Africans' best interests due to the nature of colonial rule. Even some highly influential

Kiswahili newspapers favoured the interests of the white settlers and rulers. The reason behind this was that while Africans wanted newspapers to be critical of the government, these newspapers depended on advertisements from Europeans and Asians who did not advertise in newspapers that criticised the colonial authorities. For them, losing their business licences over support of a newspaper that criticised the administration was something that they could not risk (Mwakikagile, 2009: 60 & 79). This suggests that even though there was no law preventing freedom of expression, the status quo did not allow for this freedom to flourish.

Scotton (1978) conducted considerable research on how African newspapers provided a pre-independence forum for the natives. The research explains how *Kwetu* devoted considerable space to report African grievances against the British administration, examples including articles about tax collectors entering houses at night. There were also letters of complaint, an example being from an African exclaiming how the natives were forced to wait for treatment at government hospitals that were largely staffed by Indians. The director of medical services actually agreed to these accusations, but claimed that by publishing them, *Kwetu* was being irresponsible (p. 4). Nevertheless, the newspaper was finally able to provide a platform and bring changes that Africans sought from the government.

One noteworthy incident that *Kwetu* experienced did not even come from the government, but the Church. The newspaper had published an article accusing the Christian missionaries in Tanganyika for mistreating Africans. Two issues of the newspaper criticised the churches for refusing to bury natives who were not members, while burying any European without question. This led to the Roman Catholic Mission in Mahenge to ban the newspaper at its Mission because of what Bishop Edgar claimed: "preposterous" charges against the Church (Scotton, 1978). This could be evidenced as the first time a newspaper was banned in Tanganyika, albeit by a private institution.

However, while sedition laws remained the basic legal restraint, in August 1952 the Legislative Council voted for stricter registration requirements, putting freedom of expression to test. This included a law requiring registration and bonding of newspapers if they appeared within at least every two weeks, a law that caused newspapers like *Kwetu* being published occasionally (Mwakikagile, 2009: 66). This occasional publishing of newspapers caused the decline on platforms where people could exercise their right to freedom of expression.

Julius Nyerere and the first sedition charges

African political activity was still low in Tanganyika in the early 1950s, until 1953 when the Tanganyika African Association (TAA) asked a schoolteacher named Julius Nyerere to be its leader.

His first act was to change TAA from a struggling social society to a political action group. He became full-time director in 1954 and renamed it Tanganyika African National Union (TANU). TANU issued its manifesto on 7 July of that year, which stated: "This territory, although multi-racial in population, is primarily an African country and must be developed as such" (Scotton, 1978: 10). The statement was a clear declaration of African nationalism, leading to its support from African people in the territory.

Freedom of expression continued to be a challenge under the British rule. An example is when Nyerere successfully addressed two large open-air meetings in Dar es Salaam in January 1957. The British administration was not happy with this success and announced a ban on TANU meetings due to the "inflammatory nature" of Nyerere's remarks. The government also denied him permission to travel to Tanga for a political meeting, knowing that his messages relied entirely on public appearances. Due to this, TANU decided to start issuing its own pamphlets and newssheets. One of them – *Sauti ya TANU* (The Voice of TANU) – became the party's official newspaper (Scotton, 1978: 10).

Obviously, the growth of independent newspapers was a threat to the colonial administration. Mwakikagile (2009) notes that since sedition laws were not used against newspapers, the government decided to launch its own newspapers to respond to issues being reported in the African ones. It feared losing the influence it once had on the indigenous population and thought that having its own newspapers that would respond to issues brought forward would help its cause. These government newspapers tried to neutralize nationalist sentiments as well as play down the influence the nationalist leaders had among the Africans (Mwakikagile, 2009: 70-71). Nevertheless, this did not stop African newspapers from exercising their freedom to express how they felt about the administration.

Scotton (1978) tells of how the African newspapers started losing patience at Tanganyika's slow political process. To show their frustration, the newspapers became more critical of the government, hoping that this would speed up the political process. However, this measure led to the first sedition charge against an African newspaper. In 1958 Kheri Rashidi Bagdelleh and Robert Makange who were editors of *Mwafrika* (The African) became the first victims of the law after they published an article titled "The Price of Peace – Economy". Part of the article read:

> "All of us know that the Britisher is here in our country for the purpose of sucking our blood and to obtain for himself raw materials, and let him not deceive us that he is here because he is sorry for us or for the purpose of teaching us civilisation or to bring progress to the country…That sort of talk is just meant to pull the wool over our eyes and the longer he stays here the more minerals and money will be taken out of this

> country and sent to his country in which without it they cannot continue to exist comfortably." (Scotton, 1978: 14).

The British administration charged Bagdelleh and Makange with seditious publication, arguing that the phrase "the Britisher is here in our country for the purpose of sucking our blood" was likely to "raise discontent and promote ill-will among the different classes and communities" (Laws of Tanganyika, 1955: S.63B). The defendants counter-argued that the translation of the phrase should be "the British government which is here in our country is here to exploit us". However, like the codes in all the British colonies, the Tanganyika Code prohibited publication of anything likely to "cause disaffection" toward the government. Bagdelleh and Makange eventually served six months in prison after an unsuccessful appeal to the High Court (Scotton, 1978: 14).

Julius Nyerere's libel case

Like most African leaders during the struggle for independence, Julius Nyerere was a regular writer in *Sauti ya TANU* and even edited the newspaper. While he was at first of the view that Tanganyika's economic needs must come first before self-government, he later changed this view. Nyerere decided that the British were not setting a date for self-government by claiming that the territory's economy was weak. In the newspaper's 2 March 1957 edition, he wrote: "To be governed is a disgrace…It is only madmen who are patient enough to first get education and wealth when they might be governing themselves" (Scotton, 1978: 12). Even though this was closely scrutinised by the British administration, no charges were brought against him. It was the 27 May 1958 edition in which Nyerere's libel charge originated from. In it, he wrote an article accusing the Mahenge District Commissioner of mistreating Africans. A sentence in the article that was the basis of his libel suit read:

> "These same officials would have people committing perjury in court if only to vilify TANU. These same people who intimidate and punish innocence, cajole and reward crockery, have the temerity to invoke law and order." (Scotton, 1978: 15).

Although *Sauti ya TANU* was a Kiswahili newspaper, Nyerere wrote the article in English, pointing out that he wanted to make sure the government would understand the message. Even though he pleaded innocent to the charges against him, the court found him guilty of using the words: "these same officials would have people committing perjury", arguing the officials were acting within the law; therefore, he committed libel. He chose to pay a USD375 fine over six months in jail, maintaining that he had no intention of becoming a martyr and at the same time embarrassing the new governor who was only a month into his new post (Scotton, 1978: 15). Nyerere's suit provides

evidence of how exercising freedom of expression could not only help to send across a message intended to promote good governance practices, but also how this right could mean not to please those targeted by the message, especially if it challenged their authority.

On 1 May 1961, Tanganyika was granted internal self-rule and Julius Nyerere became its first prime minister. Seven months later, Tanganyika gained full independence from Great Britain on 9 December after 76 years of colonial rule, and the journey towards a new fully independent country began (Ofcansky and Yeager, 1997).

4.4 Tanganyika/Tanzania under Julius Nyerere (1961-1985): the death of the private press in the name of nation building

While different authors have highlighted the role played by newspapers in Tanganyika during the pre-independence era (Scotton, 1978; Sturmer, 1998; Rioba, 2008; Mwakikagile, 2009), consequences faced by those who criticised the colonial authorities were also evident in post-independent Tanganyika. This was expected in the territory since Tanganyika was a colony, suggesting that authorities tend to use strict laws to curb freedom of expression when their interests are threatened. In a newly independent country one would therefore expect the same laws used during the colonial era not to be used against fellow countrymen. However, the reality of the media development in post-independent Tanganyika was all about controlling the media in the name of "nation building".

Mitten (1977) explains that one important legacy was left to the country from the colonial period, and that was the tradition of government to be involved in the media. That tradition was to be continued in the new Tanganyika (p. 37). The media's role leading to independence was obvious to everyone, including to TANU itself. This indicates why the new government embarked on making sure that the media was on its side, knowing only too well that allowing it to be free to publish anything would be a mistake. Julius Nyerere's Cabinet decided to rename the colonial Public Relations Department and place it under the Prime Minister's Office. It was then named Tanganyika Information Services (TIS), and Nyerere himself was the one in charge of the information sector (Sturmer, 1998: 106).

However, Nyerere was still not as satisfied, as the four dailies at the time (*Mwafrika, Standard, Ngurumo and Daily Nation*) were private newspapers. He started thinking about the possibilities of having them under the supervision of the state, and he pointed this out in a speech explaining his future plans for the development of the media sector:

> "Too often the only voices to be heard in 'opposition' are those of a few irresponsible individuals who exploit the very privileges of democracy – freedom of the press, freedom of association, freedom to criticise – in order to deflect the government from its responsibilities to the people by creating problems of law and order… The government must deal firmly and promptly with the troublemakers. The country cannot afford, during these vital years of its life, to treat such people with the same degree of tolerance which may be safely allowed in a long-established democracy" (Tegambwage, 1989: 101).

With this, it was evident that the private press was on its way to elimination in the new Tanganyika. But there was also the issue of the Tanganyika Broadcasting Corporation (TBC), the radio station launched in 1951 and had its own autonomy (Mitten, 1977: 38). In a parliamentary debate in February 1961, a backbencher called Mr Sijaona addressed the parliament about the future of TBC. Part of his address said:

> "A broadcasting system is a very powerful instrument and it can be a very dangerous instrument if those who are responsible for running it happen to hold different views from those of the government and great harm can be done to this country by giving emphasis to the wrong thing and paying very little attention to those things which need attention. It is my view that to avoid this powerful instrument being used by people who may not have the interests of the country by heart, this instrument should be taken over by the Ministry of Information Services and run as one of the government departments." (Tanganyika, 1961)[2]

This and other debates on how to control the media was the beginning of the end of freedom of expression in Tanganyika. While Africans had enjoyed expressing their views in the press during the years leading to independence, the 'nation building' of the new country was threatening to take this right away.

The newly independent country continued to go through a number of changes in its formation. One year after independence, Tanganyika became a republic. At this time Nyerere had resigned as prime minister and was elected as the republic's first president. A month later on 14 January 1963, TANU's National Executive Committee decided for Tanganyika to become a one-party state. Major changes continued when the Republic of Tanganyika and the People's Republic of Zanzibar united on 26 April 1964, forming what was called at the time the United Republic of Tanganyika and Zanzibar. However, the country's name changed yet again on 29 October 1964 following public consultations, and it was renamed the United Republic of Tanzania (Ofcansky and Yeager, 1997), a name it holds till today.

[2] 15 February 1961 Parliamentary Debates

The media development in the new Tanzania also continued to take new turns. On 16 March 1965, the formal autonomy of the radio station came to an end when the TBC Dissolution Bill was brought by the Minister for Information and Tourism, Idris Abdul Wakil[3]. Not a single MP voted against it, and the bill became a law. TBC was renamed Radio Tanzania Dar es Salaam (RTD), with its director being appointed by the president ever since (Sturmer, 1998: 115). The fact that the director is a presidential appointee has had considerable debate over the years since the station is mostly seen as a government mouthpiece instead of a public broadcaster.

4.4.1 The 'socialist' media under The Arusha Declaration

There were to be more changes in the way the country was governed. Grosswiler (1997) explains how some African nations embraced colonial powers after gaining independence, following a Western media model. Consequently, others followed a totalitarian media model after being influenced by the Soviet-Communist. Tanzania, however, developed a socialist media policy designed by President Nyerere. It was aimed at achieving cultural autonomy, and at the same time minimising foreign culture influences from both the Western countries and the Soviet spheres (p. 102).

Rioba (2008) describes how the media development took a turn after TANU's National Executive Committee met in Arusha in 1967. The meeting led to the publication of President Nyerere's *Ujamaa na Kujitegemea* (socialism and self-reliance) ideology. The socialist manifesto is famously known as the Arusha Declaration. Following the Arusha Declaration, the government decided to redefine the roles of the media so that they could suit the socialist principles outlined in the Declaration. One of the roles of the media following the Arusha Declaration was to promote general literacy and mass civic education. The government introduced rural newspapers that replaced the local newspapers with earlier ties to former colonialists. The argument by politicians who used to criticise the colonial administration for silencing the press, was that since the country was pursuing socialistic politics, leaving the media in the hands of the opposers would be self-defeating (Rioba, 2008: 12). This was clear indication of infringement of freedom of expression, and yet it seemed to be accepted.

There was no law at the time barring the registration of private newspapers in the country, but its growth was nevertheless prevented by ideological constraints, lack of personnel and prohibitive

[3] Idris Abdul Wakil was a Zanzibari. Customarily, Zanzibaris tend to use three full names instead of two

taxes. The President's Charter of 1970 was until the early 1990s seen as an information policy forcing the press to support the socialist ideology. TANU actually embarked on a mission to turn media personnel into believers and crusaders of the socialist ideology, holding regional seminars for the purpose. The first seminar was opened by President Nyerere himself who underscored that defending the party's policies was the purpose of the media in Tanzania (Rioba, 2008: 13).

After the government had made sure that its media policy was clear, it passed legislations to ensure that the media adhered to a practise that followed the socialism and self-reliance policy. The government therefore controlled the press using The Newspaper Ordinance (1952)[4], The National Security Act (1970)[5], The Newspaper Act (1976)[6], The Tanzania News Agency (SHIHATA)[7] Act (1976) and the Films and Stage Plays Act (1976)[8]. Furthermore, The Radio Tanzania Dar es Salaam Act (1965)[9] replaced the colonial Tanganyika Broadcasting Corporation, making it the government and party's mouthpiece. So strict were the laws that it was hard to say there was any freedom of expression. For instance, The Newspaper Act empowered information ministers to prohibit or ban a publication, or even refuse registration; under the Tanzania News Agency Act, SHIHATA was given the monopoly to distribute and collect all news; and the National Security Act prevented the publication of any information that was prohibited or classified…which meant most of government communication (Rioba, 2008: 14).

4.4.2 The Information Policy (1970)

Before the introduction of these official legislations aimed at controlling the media, President Julius Nyerere himself gave a directive on what was viewed as the country's first Information Policy. This policy was published after President Nyerere decided to nationalise the *Standard* and merge it with the *Nationalist,* forming the *Daily News,* which exists until today as a government-owned newspaper. The policy came to public knowledge on the 5 February 1970 edition of the *Daily News*, in the form of a signed editorial. Part of it read:

> "The mass media will support the country's policy of Socialism and Self Reliance. They (mass media) will give general support to the policies of the Party and

[4] Cap. 229

[5] Act No. 3

[6] Act No. 3

[7] Act No. 4

[8] Act No. 4

[9] Act No. 11

> Government. They will be free to initiate discussions on any subject relevant to the development of a socialist and democratic society in Tanzania. The mass media will be free to criticise any particular acts of individual Party or Government leaders, and to publicise any failure in the community. They will endeavour to spread an understanding about socialism in Tanzania among the people" (Rioba, 2008).

This policy that was seen as a reflection of President Nyerere's political philosophy, was both hailed and criticised. While there were those who credited it for its impact on the country's national unity, identity and universal primary education, others saw it as an impediment to the establishment of a free press in the country. Rioba (2008) argues that the policy was likely to scare off anyone wishing to establish an independent media and exercise true freedom of expression in a democratic society. With President Nyerere's policy, Rioba (2008) points out, media practitioners became no different from civil servants, leaning more towards the party and the government goals. This was against the president's often call for honest criticism, since the policy promoted a culture of obedience among the citizens and media practitioners (Rioba, 2008: 28).

Literature indicates that from the mid 1960s onwards, freedom of expression was a challenge in Tanzania. Grosswiler (1997) presents an example of some journalists who were persecuted by the government. He mentions a Reuters reporter who was expelled in 1963; the censoring of up to three weeks of outgoing press dispatches; two Kenyan newspapers being banned and a British journalist being expelled in 1964; another British journalist being tried secretly on spying charges, and another one from the BBC being expelled in 1974 (p. 105).

On the part of the Tanzanian media and Tanzanian journalists, the situation was the same. For instance, the editor of *Ulimwengu* was detained in 1967 and the weekly newspaper had to close down during trial. Grosswiler (1997) remarks that the media had to practise self-censorship. He provides an example of Radio Tanzania Dar es Salaam (RTD), which in 1966 decided not to broadcast the overthrow of Ghana's President Kwame Nkrumah until there was a published statement from the Tanzanian government. In 1972 President Nyerere dismissed his appointed *Daily News* news editor who had criticised Sudan's practise of executing rebels. The government defended the expulsion as "unacceptable criticism of a fellow African leader." In another incident in 1982, there was no news report of the hijacking of an Air Tanzania plane in London. (Grosswiler, 1997: 105-106).

Sturmer (1998) observes that soon after the parliament had passed the Newspaper Act, a number of media practitioners were arrested or fined. He cites the International Press Institute (IPI) that mentioned six journalists as having been imprisoned during that year (Sturmer, 1998: 169). These

could be seen as actions defending the government's policy, since journalists were reminded from time to time of their obligation to follow the party's lines. In 1973, for instance, President Nyerere cautioned the media to "ensure that such factors did not tarnish the image of the nation nor undermine her objectives." (Grosswiler, 1997: 106).

Ramaprasad (2001) explains how Africa's media were seen as tools to encourage national unity and development after independence, making it a requirement for the press to mobilise for that goal. He explains that President Nyerere clearly articulated the role of the press under his *Ujamaa* policy (p. 541). Additionally, Condon (1967) argues that while TANU newspapers – *Nationalist* and *Uhuru* had the same editor, they were right from the beginning intended to be "the voice of the party" (p. 337). Ultimately, Mitten (1977) points out that President Nyerere wrote in 1966 that freedom of expression had to have limits (p. 36). It is no wonder then that during President Nyerere's administration, the only daily newspapers were owned by the government and the ruling party. There was also only one radio station owned by the government and no TV station on mainland Tanzania.

Even though it was in the name of "nation building", the decline of Tanzania's private press was inevitable under President Nyerere's administration due to the country's socialist policy and the president's own Information Policy. The media laws that were introduced afterwards were not intended to promote media activities that respected freedom of expression, rather to promote government policies, even if they were not accepted by all. The government's campaign to instil the president's *Ujamaa* values to the nation and media practitioners could be viewed as a move intended to silence any criticism that seemed to go against the country's values. It could indeed be argued that this was the main reason why the private press disappeared in Tanzania, even though it was the same private press that helped Nyerere and TANU during their fight for independence. As they became the rulers, they knew only too well how allowing freedom of expression could work for or against those in power.

President Julius Nyerere remained in power until 1985 when he announced his retirement after being continuously elected as president of Tanzania four more times. On 1 November 1985 Ali Hassan Mwinyi[10] was elected to succeed Nyerere, enabling policy reforms that were increasingly being demanded by foreign donors. At the time that President Mwinyi took office, the ruling party had been renamed Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM). This was after the union between Tanganyika and

[10] Ali Hassan Mwinyi is a Zanzibari, hence the customary use of his three official names

Zanzibar forced the mainland ruling party, TANU, to unite with Zanzibar's Afro Shiraz Party, forming CCM on 5 February 1977 (Ofcansky and Yeager, 1997).

4.5 Tanzania under Ali Hassan Mwinyi (1985-1995): Reintroduction of multi-party politics and the independent media

President Mwinyi continued his leadership under the same media laws that had been imposed during Nyerere's administration, and the private press was non-existent during that time. While the nation had to rely on the government and party press for information, Moshiro (1990) points out that very few people bothered to question the monopoly of Radio Tanzania Dar es Salaam (RTD). He argues that this could be derived from the fact that Africa of the 1960s and 1970s was tainted with military coups, and the possession of a radio station was what determined whether the coup had been successful or not. Moshiro (1990) further adds that the stable political system and national unity instilled among Tanzanians during President Nyerere's era would make coup fears irrelevant (Moshiro, 1990: 30). In actual fact, there was growing need for a private media in the country, and this was to come in the early 1990s under the wave of the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs).

Rioba (2008) reflects on how the end of the Cold War brought about an international wind of changes, causing Tanzania to move away from its socialistic norms. This was long expected, as the severe economic crisis of the 1970s had forced donors to make conditions with granting of aid (Frimpong, 2021). Tanzania had to implement the SAPs which were introduced by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which meant the liberalisation of the economy. This opened up a debate on constitutional amendments, whereby the public openly challenged the legitimacy of the ruling party. Debates furthermore called for the need of independent social organisations that were not controlled by the government, among them being a free and independent media (Rioba, 2008: 15).

As a follow-up to this, in June 1990 a workshop on press freedom was held. The workshop that was organised by the government-owned Tanzania Standard (Newspaper) Limited, publishers of the *Daily News,* brought together for the first time journalists who discussed the future of Tanzania's media. Most of them rejected the idea that the country enjoyed freedom of expression and examples were cited of how security officers harassed both readers and publishers. While the Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Ahmed Hassan Diria, tried to defend the relevance of the "President's Charter" of 1970, the next day the government-owned *Daily News* came out with a banner headline on its front page stating: "No press freedom in Tanzania" (Sturmer, 1998: 170-

171). This was the beginning of a new era in Tanzania's media development and the whole notion of freedom of expression.

4.5.1 The Nyalali Commission and Tanzania's democratisation process

The biggest obstacle towards democracy in Tanzania was the one-party system that the country still employed. In order for Tanzania to head towards democratisation, this had to change. The change started in 1991 when President Mwinyi appointed a commission to collect people's views on whether or not they preferred a multiparty system. The commission was officially known as *The Presidential Commission on Single Party or Multiparty System in Tanzania.* It was under the chairmanship of Chief Justice Francis Nyalali; therefore, became famously known as the 'Nyalali Commission' (Rioba, 2012: 14). Even though the commission established that 77% of those interviewed favoured a one-party system, both President Mwinyi and retired president Nyerere explained to the public that the contrary was more pragmatic. They argued that Tanzania was not an island that could go against the changes taking place all over the world, as it was bound to face similar pressure for the kind of democracy that involved everyone (Rioba, 2008: 25). With this, the process of legalising multi-party politics began.

One important aspect of the report was its call for a review or repeal of 40 laws that would likely be an impediment to the democratisation process. Among them were the Newspapers Act of 1976 and the Tanzania News Agency (SHIHATA) Act of 1976, both of which restricted media and people to fully participate in the democratic governance of the country (Rioba, 2012: 23). Under the chairmanship of Justice Raymond Jumbe Ambilikile Mwaikasu, the Law Reform Commission of Tanzania examined these laws to recommend repeal or amendment as appropriate, and in November 1993 submitted to the government its initial recommendations on them.

In relation to the Tanzania News Agency (SHIHATA) Act, Judge Mwaikasu's Commission report pointed out that SHIHATA was given the monopoly to collect and distribute news material from different sources inside and outside the country. It explained how Nyalali's Commission had found certain provisions in the Act contravening Article 18 of the Constitution, expressing concern that those provisions violated freedom of expression. Judge Mwaikasu's Commission recommended for the monopoly over news collection and distribution to be removed. Consequently, the commission also advised that provisions of the Act violating freedom of expression should be repealed (Mwaikasu Report, 1994: 64-65).

On the case of the Newspapers Act of 1976, Judge Mwaikasu's Commission report explained how the Nyalali Commission had criticised provisions of the Act that gave the president extensive

discretionary powers which violated some basic rights, including freedom of expression and the right to be informed (Mwaikasu Report, 1994: 67). The Act was deemed unconstitutional for violating provisions of Article 18 of the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania, which states:

> 18 (i) Subject to the laws of the land, every person is entitled to freedom of opinion and expression that is to say, the right to freely hold and express opinions and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers and freedom from interference with his correspondence.
>
> 18 (ii) Every citizen has the right to be kept informed of development in the country and in the world, which are of concern for the life of the people and their work and of questions of concern to the community (URT Constitution, 1977).

According to Judge Mwaikasu's Commission report, most members of the public supported the strict application of the Newspapers Act of 1976, claiming that it insisted on the publication of accurate information and professionalism from journalists and publishers. Nevertheless, while the public wished for the law to continue, the commission recommended for the minister's power to prohibit publication of a newspaper to be subject to appeal (Mwaikasu Report, 1994: 67-68).

On 7 May 1992, Tanzania's National Assembly endorsed the 8th constitutional reform draft bill to legalise opposition parties, and on the 12th of that same month, it legalised private newspapers. Two days later Zanzibar's House of Representatives also endorsed a bill amending its Constitution to legalise opposition parties, and on 17 June 1992 the Union government permitted opposition parties to petition for legal status (Ofcansky and Yeager, 1997). This was a major milestone towards the democratisation process in Tanzania, as it was now believed that freedom of expression in the country was possible in a number of ways: from hearing different views from members of other political parties to more engaging articles from the private media.

4.5.2 Enactment of new laws to control the media

The re-introduction of multi-party politics and the legalisation of private newspapers was an important step for the country towards freedom of expression. However, this also meant that the government was ought to find ways to control this freedom. In 1993, for instance, the Minister for Information and Broadcasting attempted to regulate activities of the private media by tabling the second media policy, which was known as the Media Professions Regulation Bill of 1993. There were two main things to this Bill: the registration of journalists, and the establishment of a media council controlled by the government. The minister proposed that even though journalists had to be suitably qualified to be eligible for registration, the media council had the power to reject their

application if it thought that "his professional and general conduct render him a fit and proper person to be registered" (Shivji, 1993 as cited in Sturmer, 1998: 173).

However, the Tanzanian public was not willing to accept this law at a time when the country was going through a democratisation process. Private publishers led protests criticising the Bill, and both parliamentarians and academics criticised the Bill harshly, pointing out that it was wrong to curb the newly independent media. The negative response was so overwhelming that the government had no choice but to withdraw the Bill six months after it was first tabled in Parliament. This was a big win for the private media in Tanzania and the first time in the history of the country that the government bowed down to public pressure (Sturmer, 1998: 174).

That same year, the National Assembly passed the Broadcasting Services Act. One of the provisions of this Act was the formation of the Tanzania Broadcasting Commission. This Commission was empowered to take necessary measures against broadcasters who "violated" rules and regulations governing them. Section 14 of the Act, for instance, empowered the commission to impose a fine, suspend the broadcasting licence, or even revoke the broadcasting licence of a holder who had violated conditions and duties laid down. It was no surprise therefore that most people thought that this was a restrictive law, since it enabled the commission to discipline and ban those in the electronic media through the excuse of "public interest" or "national security" reasons (Sturmer, 1998: 176-177).

Until 1994 Tanzania mainland did not have an operating television network, and RTD was the only radio station. However, Radio One was launched later that year, making it the most popular radio station at the time, with RTD losing most of its audience that was ready for an alternative broadcasting service (Sturmer, 1998: 187). The Coastal Television Network (CTN) also became the first TV station on 14 February 1994, followed by the Independent Television (ITV) on 10 June 1994. On 2 December of that same year, Dar es Salaam Television (DTV) became the third TV station to start broadcasting in the country (p. 194-195). It was at this point that Tanzanians no longer had to rely on state-owned media, and more and more people became aware of what was happening not only in the country, but also around the world. It should be noted that these new TV stations sometimes connected directly to international broadcasts such as the BBC, Sky News and CNN. It was no longer a matter of RTD choosing what kind of international story to share in its news bulletin, but for people to have a choice of directly watching news from around the world. When they saw and heard how citizens elsewhere delivered opinions about their governments, it became evident to Tanzanians that it was possible for them too to exercise their right to express their views, and probably for the first time, be heard.

4.5.3 The rise of the private media: strengths and challenges

The first attempt to re-establish a private media in Tanzania was in March 1987. However, this was short-lived after copies of the new weekly newspaper, *Africa Baraza* were seized by police. The newspaper had a story criticising the existence of corruption under former President Nyerere's administration. The following year, *Business Times* was launched as an English weekly, becoming the first re-established privately owned in the country. Soon after, *Family Mirror* followed as a bi-monthly newspaper. In February 1992, Media Holdings Ltd launched two weekly newspapers – the English language *The Express* and the Kiswahili *Mwananchi* (The Citizen) (Grosswiler, 1997: 107-108). Ever since then newspapers continued to be registered, and the government continued to find ways to control them.

Sturmer (1998) points out that the flourishing of the newspaper industry was one of the most obvious results of the democratisation process in Tanzania. He however points out that during the early years of the re-introduction of the private press, some newspapers were hesitant to do political reporting. He cites the founding editor of *Business Times*, Fili Karashani, who explained that he was afraid that the newspaper would be confiscated; therefore, rejected political coverage (p. 177). Nevertheless, by the end of 1995, the Tanzania Information Services had registered more than 300 newspapers and magazines, among them being six dailies: *Uhuru* and *Daily News* owned by CCM and the government, respectively, and the private *Majira, Nipashe, Mtanzania* and *The Guardian* (p. 178).

The mushrooming of newspapers, however, also meant the inclusion of sensational articles that started to worry both media professionals and the government. Rioba (2008) remarks that even though the private press started to concentrate on issues related to corruption, embezzlement of funds and abuse of power, it was also characterised by both structural and ethical lapses. He attributes this to four reasons: first, excitement over the new "freedom" that the press thought they had; second, lack of adequate experience in the newspaper business; third, lack of enough professionally trained journalists; fourth, the handling of the truth by the public since it was used to a closed and docile society. Rioba observes that this led to lack of direction for the private press that engaged mostly in shallow reporting and distortion of facts (Rioba, 2008: 17).

Some examples of questionable reporting in the early years of the private press in Tanzania are cited in Rioba and Karashani (2002). A Kiswahili weekly published a front-page story titled *'Nyerere ni mtu wa kuchinjwa'* (Nyerere deserves to be slaughtered). There was another one that published a headline *'Ntimizi akampeni akiwa nusu uchi, ajionyesha mfano halisi wa kiruka njia'* (Ntimizi

campaigns while half-naked, portraying herself as a hooker). There was another article that even involved the military, with a published headline reading *'Wanajeshi nao wakiri uchaguzi kuwa batili'* (The army also declares elections null and void). Essentially, anything that helped sell the newspapers was published.

Some newspapers continued to practise fair reporting but were still given a warning, a few were banned, and some editors and publishers were arrested. For example, *Cheka* and *Michapo* were banned in 1993 and Baraza was closed down in 1994, with its editor, Hassan Yahya, considered not qualified enough. That same year *The Express* editor Pascal Shija was held at the police station for over ten hours for publishing an article headlined '*Is Tanzania a big garbage dump?*' And in October of that same year, a reporter with *Mwananchi,* Alloyce Komba, was interrogated by police three months after publishing an article related to the use of tear gas at a Mosque. The editor of *Majira,* Sammy Makilla, was charged with sedition along with the publishers over an article on embezzlement of funds by government officials in a deal to purchase a new radar. The publisher and editor of *Shaba* were arrested for publishing a leaked letter from the Minister for Home Affairs about instructions to curb activities of an opposition politician. All political cartoons were also banned by the Home Affairs Minister in July 1995 (Sturmer, 1998: 182-184). The Newspaper Act of 1976 started to be used against the private press, and freedom of expression was tested yet again.

Rioba (2012) acknowledges that President Mwinyi's era was the era that brought notable changes to the media industry in Tanzania. He mentions six changes: first, change in numbers where media outlets grew largely; second, change in diversity from content about the state and its socialist ideology to opinions, approaches and presentations; third, change in economic liberalism and political pluralism where the media were not only information providers, but also business seeking profits; fourth, more trained individuals, where in the past journalism in the country was a haven for the few; fifth, journalism training institutions where a number of them were now established with courses ranging from three month certificates to three year degrees; and sixth, the involvement of media owners where they were ready to publish anything just so they could make profits, as these media organs had become commercial investments (Rioba, 2012: 30-31). Indeed, this was a major shift from President Nyerere's era when the government and ruling party newspapers determined what was good for the country in terms of news consumption.

Most of the press violations that occurred under President Mwinyi's era happened during the run-up to the 1995 general elections, which were the first multi-party elections after independence. Even President Mwinyi told journalists that they would live to remember this period. He was quoted as commenting:

> "I could not ban these newspapers simply because they had insulted me… I knew by insulting me the publishers were able to sell and by selling their children were able to get food and education." (Rioba, 1996: 7).

Rioba argues that even though there was some amount of press freedom during President Mwinyi's reign, it was his tolerance and understanding that guided this era, more than the laws and policies. The laws were still restrictive, but the president was not.

Until this day, Tanzanians will continue to remember President Mwinyi's rule as one that moved the country from its socialist ideology towards neoliberalism, with it allowing a liberalised economy, political pluralism and the independent media. No wonder his nickname *"Mzee Ruksa"* (literally meaning the one who allows things) is still famous among the people. Freedom of expression was definitely one of the major things that were allowed during President Mwinyi's era, even though it also led to the government's need for more restrictive laws to control this right.

4.6 Tanzania under Benjamin Mkapa (1995-2005): Commitment to transparency and flourishing of the media

The first multi-party general elections were held on 29 October 1995 and the ruling party's Benjamin William Mkapa won, making him the third president of the United Republic of Tanzania (Ofcansky and Yeager, 1997). As soon as he was sworn-in, President Mkapa declared his leadership doctrine as *"Ukweli na Uwazi"* meaning Truth and Openness/Transparency. This was a change to the kind of leadership that Tanzanians had been used to – that of government secrecy and coverups in the name of nation building and national security. However, mixed feelings followed Mkapa's doctrine declaration, with some questioning how it could be applied in a country full of laws and regulations created to control the very same information and freedom of expression.

In 2003 while he was in his second term in office, President Mkapa's government held a workshop aimed at discussing ways in which it could improve its communication with the public. While this workshop was organised by the State House Directorate of Communication, it brought together key stakeholders, including permanent secretaries and senior members of the media industry. The president himself opened the workshop, emphasising the relationship between effective government communication and development. Two key challenges were highlighted: first, the laws and regulations that were seen as an impediment to the president's doctrine; and second, the mindset of the civil service itself with its culture of secrecy (Rioba, 2008: 52). For a doctrine of truth and openness to work, it could be argued, the government ought to first look at the laws and regulations that guide freedom of expression and access to information. Apart from that,

governments and politicians could be heard promoting one policy, but acting differently because the laws did not allow them to do what they preached.

It should be noted that President Mkapa had previously worked in the media industry. He was the managing editor for the *Nationalist* and *Uhuru* newspapers after independence, and later managing editor for the *Daily News* after the *Nationalist* and the *Standard* were merged. He was also the founding director for the Tanzania News Agency (SHIHATA) as well as President Nyerere's press secretary. When he became president, the media industry was excited. He had come to power at a time when Tanzania had started implementing neoliberal policies. The fact that the country had just legalised multi party politics and allowed the independent media to function, to many this meant that the laws prohibiting freedom of expression and access to information could change. With President Mkapa at the helm, there was hope that the time had come for these "bad" laws to be repealed.

4.6.1 Proposals for the review/repeal of legislations

In 2001 when President Mkapa was in his second term, media stakeholders in the country met for consultations to review laws that were an impediment to freedom of the press and freedom of expression. A report that emerged from this meeting mentioned the laws that needed to be either reviewed or repealed. Some of these laws included the Constitution itself, The Newspapers Act, The National Security Act, and the Broadcasting Services Act.

Rioba (2008) has extensively analysed the report that came out of the stakeholders' meeting. On scrutinising the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania, he argues that the stakeholders noted how Article 18 was being undermined by a clause that started with "Subject to laws of the land, every person has the right to freedom of expression…" They argued that this meant that the Constitution, which is the principal law, was relegating its power to guarantee people's rights and freedoms to other subordinate laws. Furthermore, they suggested additional provisions under Article 18, which could guarantee press freedom and access to information. The suggestions were to have Article 18 (3) which would state:

> There shall be no restrictions in the establishment of private media institutions, and specifically, there shall be no law that requires any person to acquire a license as a condition for establishing a newspaper, magazine, or any media outlet (Rioba, 2008: 39).

They also suggested another provision, Article 18 (4), which would state:

> Every citizen has the right to access information held by government or its agency, except when the exposure of such information poses a threat to national security or an individual's privacy (Rioba, 2008: 40).

While these suggested provisions were never added to the Constitution, the opening clause to Article 18 "Subject to the laws of the land" was removed in the 2005 Constitutional amendments.

With regard to the Newspapers Act, stakeholders pointed out that it was not in harmony with democratic values. For the National Security Act, they observed that the type of information that could be accessed by the public was restricted by the state, something that was also undemocratic. Under this Act, the "restricted areas" being mentioned in the law could be declared by the President whenever he felt necessary for matters of public interest. This law was a continuation of the English Official Secrets Act (1911) enacted at a time that World War I was looming and Great Britain was at threat. The law was thus unconstitutional, the stakeholders argued, since Tanzania was not at war. With the Broadcasting Services Act, the stakeholders suggested that it should be replaced by another legislation as that one was too restrictive. One of the major suggestions for the new law was for all radio and television stations to be allowed to broadcast throughout the country, unlike the law at that time that granted them a licence to cover only 25 percent (Rioba, 2008: 40-41).

While the other legislations remained the same, the Broadcasting Services Act of 1993 was amended and replaced by the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA) Act of 2003, allowing radio and television stations to broadcast throughout the country.

4.6.2 The new Information and Broadcasting Policy (2003)

After the government's failed attempt to pass the Media Professionals Bill of 1993, an Information and Broadcasting Policy came into effect ten years later. While what could be cited as the first information media policy came from President Julius Nyerere in 1970 and the second one that was attempted in 1993 came from the government, this time around stakeholders were involved. The policy was a result of a participatory process that involved consultations with media practitioners, lawyers, the civil society and government representatives (Rioba, 2008: 31). The government's approach towards the design of the policy suggests its realisation to a participatory approach in order not to be humiliated as it did ten years prior with the attempted Media Professionals Bill. Rioba (2008) contends that unlike previous documents that treated the media sector as a "passive recipient of directives from the government", this one was a detailed document that specifically set a direction for the functioning of the media sector in Tanzania (Rioba, 2008: 37).

However, according to Article 19, which is a global organisation campaigning for freedom of expression, the Policy still needed some improvements. The organisation asserted that while the Policy contained some positive specific recommendations such as a commitment to promote an independent and diverse media sector, there were some weaknesses. Some key concerns raised in the report included a provision in which the Internet was being treated in the same manner as radio and television broadcasters. According to the organisation, even though the Internet had the ability of carrying broadcasts, it was not a broadcast medium; therefore, subjecting it to the same regulatory standards acceptable for broadcasting was not legitimate. Furthermore, licensing those running a webpage that could simply include a few pictures and text was neither practical nor reasonable, and it should require a different treatment from broadcasters. This, the organisation argued, was in breach of international standards of respect for freedom of expression (Article 19, 2004: 9-10).

Another provision highlighted was the one declaring that the government would continue to own media outlets. Article 19 posited that this was unclear since any public media had to be independent from the government so that there could be no political influences or other interference. The organisation also talked about the provision on registration of newspapers stipulated in the Policy, explaining that even though international law did not rule out registration for mass media organisations, this served no purpose and could be misused by the state to hamper freedom of expression.

Indeed, it is accurate to say that the Information and Broadcasting Policy of 2003 was another major step in the media development of Tanzania. The fact that it was a participatory process between the government and other media stakeholders suggests that it was a policy heading towards the right direction, despite some of its weaknesses. The fact that some organisations such as Article 19 took time to read the policy and make recommendations on how it could be improved, implies that it was a good effort and could have been better. Nevertheless, despite the "good intentions" of the Policy, "unhealthy" provisions such as government's ownership of media outlets and the registration of newspapers only prove that freedom of expression was still controlled by law. Having these provisions as well as other laws governing the media in Tanzania only continued to make it easy for authorities to continue regulating who said what, and at the same time punishing those who acted against their will.

4.6.3 Violations of press freedom continue

Tripp (2000) describes how even though deemed unconstitutional by the Nyalali Report, The Newspapers Act of 1976 remained in effect. He explains that this was mainly due to the fact that it permitted the government to continue with its control of public communication. "Not only were there no signs of withdrawing the Act, but its more repressive elements were being fine-tuned," Tripp notes, citing the 1994 amendments aimed at increasing fines for those charged with sedition and publication of false news (p. 209).

The Broadcasting Services Act as well was used to punish those who were accused of violating their licences. In 1995, for instance, the Dar es Salaam Independent Television (DTV) was fined for broadcasting that the opposition candidate had emerged the victor in Zanzibar's presidential election. DTV was fined for making a major announcement before the Zanzibar Electoral Commission (ZEC) and in the end ZEC announced CCM's candidate as the winner, even though the election was widely considered rigged in favour of the ruling party. In another incident, the Independent Television (ITV) decided to open public viewing centres in twelve regions so that more people could access television services in the country. However, due to the provision that stations were not permitted to broadcast in more than 25 percent of the country, ITV was forced to close down these public viewing centres. In 1997 the Tanzania Information Services (Maelezo) warned that it would not hesitate to ban any newspapers and media outlets that ridiculed government officials (Tripp, 2000: 209-210).

Despite some efforts to introduce some policies and repeal some provisions that were considered a stumbling block to freedom of expression, the existence of other laws, specifically The Newspapers Act and the National Security Act, seemed to slow down these efforts. It reached a point where even other government arms acted against media practitioners while performing their tasks. A good example of this is cited in the 2005 report of the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ). In September 2005, Mpoki Bukuku who was chief photographer for the *Sunday Citizen* newspaper was assaulted by a group of prison wardens and prisoners acting on orders. Bukuku was covering the forceful eviction of families from houses purchased by the Tanzania Prisons Department at a time when the families were challenging the repossession in court. While journalists were officially ordered not to cover the event, Bukuku and an Information Officer for the local Legal and Human Rights Centre, Christopher Kidanka, attempted to do their jobs. They ended up being assaulted, with their cameras and notebooks being confiscated. The reason for this act from the prison wardens was that taking pictures was not allowed at the "restricted area", referring to a phrase from the National Security Act of 1976.

What surprised many was the reaction of the Minister for Home Affairs, Omar Ramadhan Mapuri, who defended the assault, claiming that "reasonable" force was used by the Prisons Department officials during the evictions, and that it was a restricted area. This prompted a counterattack from local journalist associations who announced a suspension on all coverage concerning the minister. In response, the Police Department described the assault as "criminal" and announced that they had formed a committee to investigate. Two days later Minister Mapuri apologised for his support of the wardens, but the media vowed that the ban on him would continue until appropriate action was taken against all those concerned, including the minister himself (CPJ, 2005).

Kalyango (2008) posits that even though the media plays a central role in fighting for human rights, these same journalists also practice increased self-censorship due to the existing laws set to control their activities (p. 72). On the other hand, Ramaprasad (2003) argues that it has not been an easy road for the Tanzanian press to change gears from practising development journalism, to being a vehicle for public information and government criticism. This was because the African socialism ideology – Nyerere's *ujamaa* engrained in the journalists of that time could not just alter overnight. Grosswiler (1997) agrees with him, arguing that there is a unique way in which Tanzanian journalists today perceive their roles – There is a mixture of socialism and a little bit of acceptance of Western ideas of press freedom. Generally, he argues, most journalists still lean toward some kind of socialist model.

Ramaprasad, (2003) conducted a study to assess how this African tradition inspired by Nyerere's *ujamaa* was reflected in the assignment of roles of Tanzanian journalists, and found that Tanzanian journalists believed in different roles. While most of them thought it was the government media's duty to help unify the country, they also believed that the private media should be a vocal critic of the government, while simultaneously promoting political pluralism. At the same time, journalists in the government and ruling party media considered themselves as more responsible, blaming sensationalism on the private media that they claimed was more into business, seeking larger audiences for financial returns (Ramaprasad, 2003: 20-21).

Nonetheless, it is fair to conclude that the era of President Mkapa saw a major growth in the media industry in Tanzania. It was a time when more newspapers were registered, and broadcasting services expanded throughout. the number of media outlets grew from about 12 prior to 1990 to over 50 publications, 64 radio stations and 24 television stations by 2005 (Rioba, 2012: 30). It was also a time when other people outside of the media industry knew of their rights and sought action

from independent bodies such as the Media Council of Tanzania (MCT)[11]. Furthermore, the president introduced a monthly schedule where he "spoke to the nation" every month-end through a televised address from the State House. These addresses would highlight a major topic that was being discussed in the country, be it a scandal or a promising development, and people would be waiting eagerly for the president's address to find out how he would tackle, and conclude, the matter.

Despite President Mkapa's efforts to initiate his "Truth and Openness" doctrine, the "bad laws" were still in place and were used against those who were accused of overstepping their boundaries. Sadly, some of those who attacked the media for performing its duties resorted to physical assault, as was the case with the prison wardens against Bukuku and Kidanka. Rioba (2008) puts it succinctly:

> "Tanzania's democratic reforms may not be successful if the media sector is left under a legal regime that controlled the sector during one-party era. Also, strict control of media sector by state does not necessarily promote ethical journalism" (Rioba, 2008: 7-8).

With these repressive laws still in place, the media industry and freedom of expression in Tanzania still had a long way to go.

4.7 Tanzania under Jakaya Kikwete (2005-2015): Unfulfilled promises and a new draconian law

In November 2005, Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete won the presidential elections, becoming the fourth president of the United Republic of Tanzania, replacing Benjamin Mkapa who had retired after serving two 5-year terms. The first President Nyerere was famous for his *Ujamaa* (African socialism) ideology; his successor, President Mwinyi was known as *"Mzee Ruksa"* for allowing neo-liberal practices, and the third President Mkapa publicised his "*Ukweli na Uwazi*" (Truth and Openness) doctrine. However, unlike his predecessors, President Kikwete did not have a leadership doctrine, apart from his famous campaign slogan "*Maisha bora kwa kila Mtanzania"* (Better life for Tanzanians).

President Kikwete started his presidency at a time when the independent media was continuing to flourish. At the same time, the use of the Internet was on the rise and people had started to engage using online platforms. His was a presidency that witnessed even more developments in the media

[11] The Media Council of Tanzania (MCT) is discussed in more detail in section 4.7: Tanzania under Jakaya Kikwete

sector and a greater flow of communication that allowed not only journalists, but also ordinary people to exercise their right to freedom of expression through online platforms. With this development came government proposals for more restrictions, and a law aimed at regulating online platforms. Nevertheless, this time the media was also prepared to reason with the government through representative associations such as the Media Owners Association (MOAT), Tanzania Media Women's Association (TAMWA), the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA), Tanzania Editors Forum (TEF) and the Media Council of Tanzania (MCT). Of these, the MCT was the one that took the lead and coordinated most of the deliberations on the state of the media in Tanzania.

The Media Council of Tanzania (MCT) is an independent, non-statutory and voluntary organisation that however did not start during President Kikwete's era. It was actually founded on 30 June 1995 at a media stakeholders' meeting and started its operations on 22 May 1997 after being registered under the Societies Ordinance of 1954 (Rioba, 2012: 25). The formation of the MCT was a huge step for the media industry in Tanzania, considering the fact that the government had wanted to impose its own media council through the 1993 policy that had been rejected. Since its formation, the MCT has been involved in training journalists in ethics and investigative journalism, organising workshops to discuss ethics and the media development in the country, and producing publications that address matters related to ongoing trends of journalism in the country.

One of the major functions of the MCT is to conduct arbitration of complaints, a function that Rioba (2008) asserts has exhibited the strength of the organisation. Despite the fact that the MCT Board has been led by people who command public respect, such as a former Prime Minister and Second Vice President, former university Vice Chancellors, renowned scholars and a respected retired judge, its strength goes beyond that. The fact that different people have turned to the MCT to file complaints and receive judgment within a short period of time compared to court cases, has made this institution stand out among most other media institutions in the country.

Rioba (2008) explains that the profile of complainants has ranged from an ordinary girl to prominent people, such as former Vice President Dr. Omar Ali Juma, former Prime Ministers Cleopa Msuya and Frederick Sumaye, another former Prime Minister Edward Lowassa who filed a case before he became PM, and former Speaker of the National Assembly, Samwel Sitta. Others are former ministers, regional commissioners, the son of former President Nyerere, and the University of Dar es Salaam. All of them filed complaints against newspapers. Furthermore, through the MCT, journalists have also filed complaints against authorities (p. 112-113). The biggest of all cases was when the Zanzibar Revolutionary Government filed a complaint against *Dira* newspaper, something

that Rioba argues showed the Island government's highest indication of respect for the institution. The MCT is viewed as the best example of how an independent media council can promote freedom of the press, freedom of expression and media accountability. Due to the respect it commands, journalists in other countries inside and outside Africa have asked the institution with help to form councils based on the Tanzania model (Rioba, 2008: 113).

4.7.1 A new Bill and a Constitutional Review

During President Kikwete's era, the government attempted to introduce more laws to control the press as well as freedom of expression. One of these was the Right to Information Bill. While this Bill included provisions on the right to information, the right to grant access, the protection of journalists and confidential sources, media operations, the protection of people's privacy, and the protection of whistle-blowers, media stakeholders criticised it. Led by MCT, they called for the separation of media services from the right to information (CIPESA, 2014; CIPESA, 2015).

Thomas (2015:20) describes the rejected draft Bill as a "copy and paste" of some provisions from the very same oppressive laws that the media fraternity was battling against. Following this, the media stakeholders formed a coalition under the MCT and prepared two alternative bills – The Right to Information Bill and The Media Services Bill. They prepared these two bills with the hope that the move would start a dialogue between the government and the stakeholders, and a consensus would be reached on how the draft would be worded. Despite these efforts of proposed bills by media stakeholders, Thomas (2015) explains that until 2015 no dialogue had taken place and the media laws that had been there continued to be operational without friendlier ones being enacted. Furthermore, despite the president's promises that a Freedom of Information law would be enacted before he left office, this never happened (p. 21).

President Kikwete would have gone down in history books as the one that had given Tanzania a much-needed new Constitution. This was after he announced in his 2011 New Year address that he understood the need for a new Constitution and would therefore form a Constitution Review Commission to coordinate and supervise the process. He kept the promise of forming a commission when he unveiled it on 6 April 2012 under the chairmanship of former Attorney General and Prime Minister, Judge Joseph Warioba, with former Chief Justice, Augustino Ramadhani as the Vice Chairman (Branson, 2015). The commission gathered opinions throughout the country and unveiled the first draft of the new Constitution on 3 June 2013. The second draft was presented to President Kikwete and to the President of Zanzibar six months later, allowing for it to be presented to the Constituent Assembly for the enactment of the proposed constitution (Constitutional Review Act,

2011). While most people were looking forward to the referendum, for the media industry, however, this was to be the Constitution that would finally bring an end to the oppressive media laws.

Thomas (2015) explains how through the Coalition for Rights to Information the MCT lobbied members of the Constituent Assembly to make sure that the proposed draft Constitution included provisions on the media as suggested by media activists. The MCT Executive Secretary, Kajubi Mukajanga, was even a member of the Constituent Assembly, a position that he used to engage with other CA members, briefing them on the proposals that the stakeholders wished to be included. The lobbying was successful, as there were only slight changes to the media activists' proposals (Thomas, 2015: 18).

According to an unofficial translation of the proposed draft by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA), this new Constitution included articles on both freedom of expression as well as on freedom of information and the mass media. The inclusion of an article that was specifically aimed at the mass media was a big step for the country's media development. The fact that the 1977 Constitution and all its amendments had not seen the need to include any provision on the freedom of the mass media, suggests that this new Constitution was a true reflection of a country that was no longer under a single party system. It also suggests that the country finally appreciated the independent media and the work it was doing, something that needed to be reflected in the Constitution for it to be respected by law. Nevertheless, despite the formation of the commission and the deliberations in the Constituent Assembly, the referendum was never called, and President Kikwete finished his two terms without the promised new Constitution. This meant that there was no close end to the oppressive laws controlling freedom of expression and freedom of the press, as the ones enacted since the 1970s still reigned.

4.7.2 The Cybercrimes Act (2015)

There was, however, one major law that was enacted during President Kikwete's era, and this is the Cybercrimes Act of 2015, signed into law on 25 April 2015. This Act has received a lot of criticism for being a government tool that controls accessibility and ICT use. The most talked about is Section 16, which states:

> "Any person who publishes information or data presented in a picture, text, symbol or any other form in a computer system knowing that such information or data is false, deceptive, misleading or inaccurate, and with the intent to defame, threaten, abuse, insult, or otherwise deceive or mislead the public or councelling commission of an offence, commits an offence, and shall on conviction be liable to a fine of not less

> than five million shillings or to imprisonment for a term of not less than three years or to both." (Cybercrimes Act, 2015).

Ndumbaro (2016) points out that Section 16 of the Cybercrimes Act was actually a replica of The Newspapers Act of 1976, which he reminds, was declared unconstitutional in 1992 by the Nyalali Commission. He explains that most of the targeted information under this provision were on political elections, making it a trap for those who wanted to exercise their freedom of expression through blogs, online media and other mobile-friendly platforms, such as WhatsApp (p. 25-26). Manyama (2018) points out that the Act was a challenge to freedom of expression, especially since the offences carried harsh sentences, not correlating to the crimes committed (p. 26). Paget, (2017) explains how the government, since the beginning of 2015 had become intolerant of public opposition, responding to criticism with licence revocations, state harassment and threats. The Cybercrimes Act, he argues, had increasingly narrowed online space where political discussions were more likely to take place (p. 156). On his part, Bussiek, (2015) relates this Act to a similar one that was pronounced unconstitutional by the Uganda Supreme Court in 2004. The law, he says, was introduced by the British colony in 1954, and prohibited reporting "false" information that was likely to cause "fear and alarm". In upholding the judgement, the Court had declared:

> "[T]he right to freedom of expression extends to holding, receiving and imparting all forms of opinions, ideas and information. It is not confined to categories, such as correct opinions, sound ideas or truthful information… [A] person's expression or statement is not precluded from the constitutional protection simply because it is thought by another or others to be false, erroneous, controversial or unpleasant… indeed, the protection is most relevant and required where a person's views are opposed or objected to by society or any part thereof, as 'false' or 'wrong'." (Bussiek, 2015: 5-6).

Another section of the Act that has received criticism is Section 31 (1), which authorised law enforcement officers to enter any premise and search or seize a computer system and secure computer data without a warrant. Misso (2017) argues that this particular section did not respect the right to privacy, giving the police too much power. Having such powers without the need to get a court warrant, he argues, raised suspicion and made abuse of power easier (p. 5 and p. 46). Ndumbaro (2016) cites this particular section as being used by police during the 2015 general elections when they entered premises of the opposition party and of the human rights organisation that was monitoring the elections, seizing computers, cell phones and other gadgets (p. 22). The fact that it was signed into law just a few months before the general elections suggests that the main aim of this Act was to control, and not to protect. It was aimed to control the use of the

Internet and how people accessed data during the elections; that is why it was used against those who were monitoring the elections and updating results from different polling stations.

4.7.3 Assaults that shook the media industry

The relationship between the media in Tanzania and President Kikwete's government was a bitter-sweet one; he was a media favourite during the early years of his presidency. As Mhegera (2007) points out, the media portrayed Kikwete as "a man of the people" (Mhegera, 2007: 14), with a lot of coverage focusing on how he related with others, shaking hands with children, youth and older people alike, something that Tanzanians were not used to seeing in a president. Mhegera further explains that Kikwete enjoyed a positive media coverage even during his first presidential campaigns, whereby some newspapers reached a point of speculating on his cabinet even before the votes were cast (Mhegera, 2007: 18-19). However, when the media started to point out government weaknesses, this relationship changed.

While President Kikwete himself had never personally threatened the media, the laws controlling the media, such as The Newspapers Act, were in full use. Even though the media industry was used to the banning of newspapers, one thing that was new during this era was the physical assaults against journalists who were critical of either the government or other state organs, such as the police force. Three incidents in particular shook the media industry:

1. In January 2008, two journalists from the weekly *Mwanahalisi* newspaper were attacked. They were Saed Kubenea who was also the owner and Ndimara Tegambwage, the editor. The attack happened at night when the two were at the newspaper offices, where the assailants beat them with machetes and threw acid at them. Two suspects were arrested after a few days. Local journalists linked the attack to the newspaper's investigative stories that mostly uncovered corruption and government mismanagement (CPJ, 2008).

2. In September 2012, a television journalist was killed in a police incident while covering demonstrations by supporters of an opposition party. Daudi Mwangosi was killed while confronting police who were attempting to detain another journalist, and in the moment, fired a tear gas canister into Mwangosi's stomach at close range. He died instantly. The police officer responsible for firing the canister was sentenced to fifteen years in prison (CPJ, 2012).

3. In March 2013, The Managing Editor of New Habari Ltd who was also the Tanzania Editors Forum (TEF) chairperson, Absalom Kibanda, was attacked by unidentified people outside his home as he was returning from work. He was brutally beaten up, one of his fingers was cut,

one of his eyes was pierced and his teeth were broken. Even though the Inspector General of Police (IGP) assigned detectives to the case, no arrests were made. According to findings from a joint investigation by the MCT, TEF and the Tanzania Media Foundation (TMF), the attack against Kibanda was most likely due to his journalistic work (MCT Report, 2013).

Nevertheless, while Mzee, (2015) agrees that the government had at times used force against the Tanzanian media, he also insists that journalists themselves cannot be spared of irresponsible coverage. He argues that some newspapers embraced political activism instead of acting professionally, at times the reporting being too skewed to suit the editors' feelings (p. 12). Whereas Mzee's sentiments about professionalism vis-à-vis political activism might have some truth, it should be remembered that there were regulations that controlled the media and laid out punishment that had to be taken against those who "broke" the law. As oppressive as they were claimed to be, there was nowhere that the law allowed for police brutality and physical attacks against those who contravened them. In fact, it was the duty of the police to protect the people, no matter how offensive they might think these people had behaved.

While the president seemed to remain silent on most of the press violations that happened during his era, one thing that could be said of him is that he was a man of many promises when it came to freedom of expression, but never really delivered. He promised twice that the country would have had a Freedom of Information Act before he left office, but the draft that was presented to media stakeholders was later shelved. He also promised a new Constitution that would have also included provisions to freedom of expression and freedom of the press, but that one too never happened even though the Parliament had already passed the draft. The media-related law that he provided under his leadership was the Cybercrimes Act, which however received a lot of criticism due to provisions intended to curb online communication. It was apparent that with the continuous growth of the media sector that included ordinary people being able to interact through online platforms, the government did not stop finding ways to enact laws to control how people interacted.

4.8 Tanzania under John Magufuli (2015-March 2021): A thousand steps backward

The media development in Tanzania has gone through different phases dependent on two major factors: technological advancement, and the different administrations that were in place. These two have gone hand in hand over the years, with each administration introducing new laws and regulations, most of them seen as an infringement to freedom of expression. As this study addresses the contribution of social media in promoting good governance, it is important to review

how the media has been involved in the promotion of governance under different administrations, and how media advancements, in particular, have risen to this challenge.

Each administration – from colonial to post independence – had a huge impact on the country's media development process. It was expected, therefore, that after being elected as the 5th President of the United Republic of Tanzania in October 2015, the media environment would go through yet another transformation under Dr John Magufuli. During the campaigns leading to the elections, Magufuli spoke fondly of journalists and how he would uphold freedom of expression so that they could continue to conduct their work in a pleasant environment. He even advised media workers to form an association that would fight for their rights so that once elected, he could meet with the association to discuss how to defend their interests (Mlekani, 2015). This was a good sign for media workers in Tanzania, as there was hope that they would be valued and their contribution to the development of the country would also be considered. Indeed, the use of social media was now on the rise and Tanzanians were about to find out how a new administration would react to this technological advancement that allowed not only journalists, but also common people to express their views.

President Magufuli had a reputation of being honest, ethical, hardworking and results-oriented since his days as Minister for Works. After he was sworn-in, he introduced his leadership doctrine as "*Hapa Kazi Tu"* meaning his administration was going to focus on work, and nothing else. Bamwenda (2018) explains how the new president won local and international public opinion during his first days in office. He banned the purchase of business class tickets for travelling government officials; he also prevented foreign travel of government officials in exchange for domestic travel, ordering international affairs to be resolved by the country's ambassadors. The president further lowered the first parliamentary meeting's budget by over 90 percent, saving almost USD90,000 which was later used to purchase hospital beds and pay for road works. He even cancelled the Independence Day parade, moving the USD1.9 million expenses to road works and organising a health day. His actions of reducing foreign trips by government officials, reducing spending by public institutions and having conferences taking place in public buildings instead of expensive rented hotel conference rooms, saved the government at least USD429.5 million in one year. This, and many more of his moves aiming at fighting corruption earned him the title Best President of 2016 by the UN Economic and Social Council (Bamwenda, 2018: 129-134).

4.8.1 Government crackdown on freedom of expression

Despite his efforts of fighting corruption and reducing government spending, President Magufuli was accused of implementing his policies at the cost of constraining democratic space and barring freedom of expression. Pelizzo (2017) provides an example of how the government banned live broadcasts of Parliamentary sessions, only giving media houses edited clips of what had transpired in the discussions. Wanjiru (2018) cites how the president banned all political activities, making it impossible for opposition parties to organise rallies and demonstrations, claiming that the elections were over, and the government needed to be left to work and deliver on campaign promises. Paget (2017) points out that a sharp authoritarian turn by the president and the ruling party CCM was restricting good governance practices, specifically freedom of expression, freedom of the press and freedom of assembly (p. 156). Bamwenda (2018) explains that President Magufuli believed criticism hindered the implementation of promises he had made during the campaign; therefore, had his critics penalised or imprisoned (p. 138).

This style of governance introduced by President Magufuli was new to most Tanzanians. While his predecessors used to be criticised in the media without fearing any consequences, President Magufuli even issued a verbal warning to media owners during a swearing-in ceremony of his newly-appointed minister in charge of information. He made the warning following media reports and pictures of the sacked minister for information receiving front-page coverage, something that the president thought was not right, since there were other "more important" things to publish. In his warning he stated:

> "I would like to tell media owners, be careful and watch it. If you think you have that kind of freedom, (it is) not to that extent." (Reuters, 2017).

The president's warning was considered as a direct order for the newly-appointed minister to observe and act against media organisations that were critical of the government. The fact that he had issued a warning claiming that there were other more important news than the ones the media decided to publish, suggests that President Magufuli wanted the media to promote his agendas and nothing more. Telling the owners to "be careful" and "watch it" as they did not have that kind of freedom, also suggests a direct threat that if they did not heed to his order, they would suffer negative consequences.

The *State of the Media 2017-2018 Report* published by the Media Council of Tanzania (MCT) in 2019 explains how the Tanzanian government used force, threats and intimidation against the media to instil fear. It points out that the politicising of the development agenda promoted when the

president first came into power in 2015 had reached a point that whoever criticised the government or the president was considered an enemy and being against the nation's wellbeing (MCT, 2019: 22). Opposition leaders, critical journalists and human rights activists were frequently arrested, political rallies were prohibited, critical media outlets were banned, and peaceful protests were restricted (p. 23).

The MCT report cites 2017 as "a bad year" for Tanzania's media, with most cases of violation of press freedom and freedom of expression amounting to 83 being reported. Of these cases, 18 were on denial of access to information, 21 were on arrests and detentions of journalists by police, 15 were on harassment of journalists, and 9 were on assaults on journalists. Additionally, up until June 2018, 30 cases of press freedom violations were received by the MCT, which included kidnappings, threats to journalists, denial of access to information, confiscation of equipment and arrests. Some of these reported cases had already been verified and recorded by the MCT, while others were still under verification (MCT, 2019: 24).

A number of incidents documented in various reports such as the Human Rights Watch (2017), Human Rights Watch (2018), Amnesty International (2017), Freedom House (2018) and the MCT (2017 & 2018), have demonstrated how the crackdown on media outlets critical of the government led to the banning of those newspapers in 2017. Examples include *Mawio* newspaper, which was banned for two years by the minister responsible for information over articles that linked two former presidents alleged in inappropriate mining deals in previous years. Another newspaper, *MwanaHalisi*, was banned for two years accused of insulting the president and publishing stories deemed unethical, which were likely to "endanger national security". The said article was actually calling for prayers for Tundu Lissu, a very critical opposition member who was shot several times outside his house but miraculously escaped death. This was the second time for the newspaper to be suspended within a period of only three months. Another newspaper, *Raia Mwema*, was banned for 90 days in September for publishing an article '*Urais Utamshinda Rais Magufuli*' (Magufuli's presidency was likely to fail). In October of the same year, *Tanzania Daima* received a 90-day ban for what was described as continuous publication of false information by the Director for Information Services. The director claimed that it was a trend for the newspaper to publish seditious news and features that were unethical and false, causing "fear and hatred among members of the public" (MCT, 2019: 35-36).

The fear of being critical against the government and the president was so high to the extent that sometimes newspapers were not even sure if they had violated rules or not. A good example is of a major media House – IPP Media – that decided in January 2018 to ban for three months the

publication of its own newspaper – *Nipashe Jumapili* (Nipashe on Sunday) – for writing an "untrue story" and apologising to President Magufuli over the story. As expected, the government issued a press release congratulating the newspaper's management for being accountable by banning themselves over the "untrue" story about the president (Deutche Welle, 2018).

While these incidences of threats and intimidation were common among Tanzanian journalists, two cases standout. The first is of Azory Gwanda, a freelance journalist writing for *Mwananchi* newspaper, who on 21 November 2017 mysteriously disappeared after being taken by unknown men. Azory had written a series of articles on a string of murders. No arrest has been made up to now, and no one knows if Azory is still alive or dead (MCT, 2019: 34). The second is of freelance investigative journalist Erick Kabendera who was taken from his home by security officials in July 2019. When journalists started questioning his whereabouts, they were told that he was being held by Police in relation to his citizenship. When this was queried as to why a known Tanzanian citizen would be questioned about his citizenship, it was later alleged that he was facing seditious charges. On the day of his first appearance in court, however, none of these claims were mentioned, except this time the charges read were on organised crime and money laundering, which under Tanzania law are unbailable offences (CPJ, 2019). The case of Kabendera increased fear among journalists, with some newspapers refusing to employ or publish articles of those who were critical of the government, and others deciding to simply refrain from writing about anything that could bring them harm. Chapter 6 presents an in-depth analysis of the threats and intimidation that journalists went through during this period.

4.8.2 Social media use in Tanzania

The use of social media platforms in Tanzania has increased over the years, especially on matters concerning political participation. Kwayu (2018) links this increase of political participation through social media platforms to the government's crackdown on opposition political parties, whereby there was a temporary ban since 2016 of political parties conducting public meetings and rallies. Because of this, most opposition politicians and citizens decided to resort to holding discussions on social media platforms where it was not easy to control the discussions that took place.

The MCT's State of the Media 2017-2018 Report revealed the gradual increase in access to Information and Computer Technology (ICT) by citizens of Tanzania mainland, with the increased accessibility in mobile devices, smart phones and other communication gadgets. According to the report, these were expected to increase access to information and freedom of expression, even though the opposite was what had been the case (MCT, 2019: 65). According to the State of Internet

Freedom in Africa 2018 Report, quoted in the MCT report, Tanzania had about 23 million internet users. This was about 45% of the total population, an increase of 5% compared to 2016. There had been an annual increase in the number of internet users in the country over the years, with 2012 recording 8 million users, 2013 recording 9 million, 2014 recording 14 million, 2015 recording 17 million, 2016 recording 20 million, and 2017 recording 23 million users. Most of the Internet users accessed it through mobile phones. Additionally, the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA) published that mobile telephone subscription from 2015 to 2018 grew by 8%, from 39.8 million SIM cards in December 2015, to 42.9 million in September 2018 (MCT, 2019: 66).

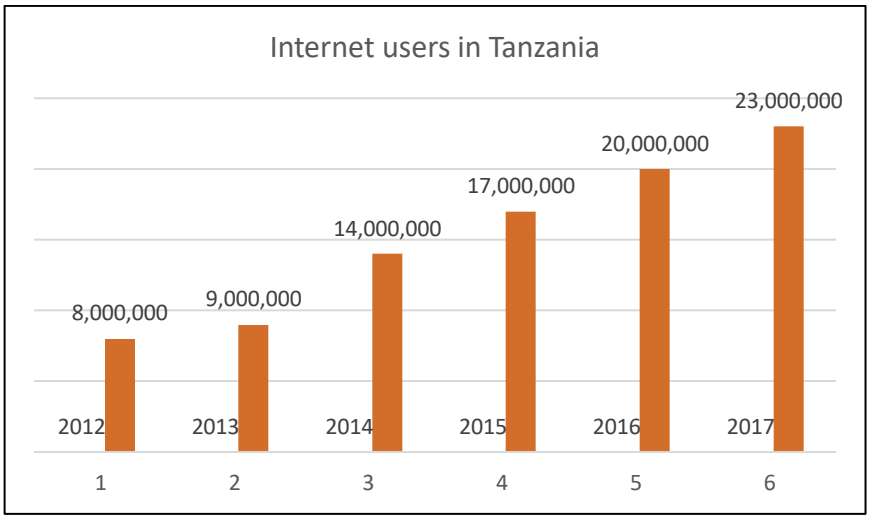


Figure 4.3: Number of internet users in Tanzania over the years

However, while there had been an increase on internet use in the country, especially through the use of social media and engaging in political discussion on different platforms, the government seemed not pleased by that. Buguzi (2016) quotes Tanzanian President Magufuli talking about social media users who were critical of his decision to buy two new aircrafts for the government's national carrier. At an event to commission the arrival of the new planes, the president said:

> "I wish angels could come down and switch off all social media platforms for at least one year, and re-open them after the country has made developmental milestones" (Buguzi, 2016).

Such a statement suggests a dislike by the president of discussions that were going on around social media platforms, feeling that such debates discouraged what he saw as his efforts of building the nation. Consequently, one could argue that the president's statement threatened future internet access, since he could have used his power to shut down the Internet, hence preventing the people's right to freedom of expression.

Tanzanians communicate mostly through WhatsApp compared to other social media platforms, making it the most used platform in the country. This is because the platform is easier to interact for anyone who has a mobile phone, as well as forwarding messages to individuals or groups. The most common practice has been for users to take screenshots of posts from other platforms, such as from Twitter, Facebook and Instagram and to share them through WhatsApp, hence reaching even those who are not members of the other platforms.

According to analysis from Kepios, an organisation that produces yearly data on social media use around the globe, WhatsApp is the most favoured social media platform in the world, followed by Facebook and Instagram (Kepios, 2022). Additionally, the analysis shows almost all countries in sub-Saharan Africa as big users of WhatsApp, Tanzania included. Moreover, 60% of East Africa has mobile connectivity, with 75% of Tanzania's population having mobile phone connections, as evidenced in Figure 4.4 below. One of Tanzania's leading mobile companies, Tigo had even offered its customers free WhatsApp messaging services, claiming that there were over 8 million users of WhatsApp in Tanzania, and that the offer would enable citizens to continue communicating easily through texts as well as sharing of pictures, audios and video clips (Tigo, 2016).

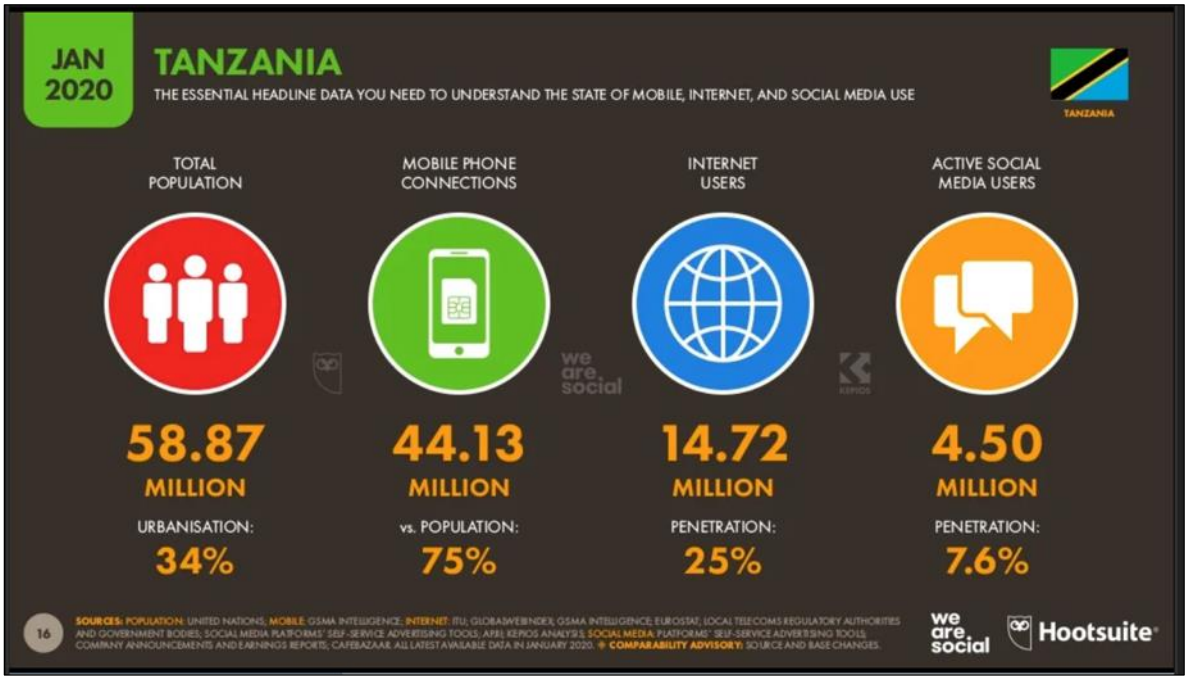


Figure 4.4: Mobile phone connectivity in Tanzania

Source: datareportal.com

Despite the fact that social media could be seen as a safer place for people to interact, discuss and openly share opinions, such online conversations could still be risky, especially in countries that did not respect good governance practices. Dwyer and Molony, 2019a) explain how some countries have proposed and passed legislations criminalising some aspects of social media use (Dwyer & Molony, 2019: 10-11). They remark that although the laws were passed as a security measure, it is the online political conversations that seem to be the target. What is more worrying is the increase of users being accused of "un-patriotism", with others acting as online informants, assisting state security officials with information of what was discussed in different platforms, such as WhatsApp groups (Dwyer & Molony, 2019: 12).

Cross (2019) corroborates Dwyer & Molony's claims by arguing that in most African countries, the police have been the ones running crackdowns on users of social media organising protests and disseminating news related to politics or government's leadership. Cross explains that the police justify the crackdowns as necessary to ensure peace and security as well as prevent the continual dissemination of "false" information (Cross, 2019: 195). With the involvement of the police and other security officials, there are laws enacted to justify the control of social media use. In Tanzania, there is the Cybercrimes Act of 2015, and the Electronic and Postal Communications (online content) Regulations of 2020.

4.8.3 Laws and Regulations controlling online communication

September 2020 marked five years of the Cybercrimes Act of 2015 that was passed by parliament in Tanzania and signed into law by President Jakaya Kikwete, just as his presidency was about to end. The law that was promoted as being passed to curb online crimes such as child pornography, hate speech and terrorism, had instead been seen by many as enforced to target government critics. The Media Council of Tanzania argues that this Act has mostly been used against those critical of the government of President Magufuli and its policies (MCT, 2019: 72).

Cross (2019) explains how states in Africa use police forces to control users on online spaces, having their own interpretation of what constitutes cybercrime, but mostly influenced by political calculations on the ongoing discussions (Cross, 2019: 196). Most of these police forces, she argues, are closely tied to ruling parties that used to govern the country since gaining independence. She cites an example of the Tanzania Police Force (TPF) that has close ties to the ruling CCM party that ruled Tanzania during the country's twenty-six years as a single-party state. The reintroduction of multiparty politics did not change the tie, as the Inspector General of Police (IGP) is a presidential appointee, along with Regional Commissioners (RCs) who have the power to order police to arrest

anyone deemed to commit a breach of peace (Cross, 2019: 197). Furthermore, the government's decision to halt live broadcasting of parliament proceedings in 2016 (Cross, 2019: 199) is indeed one of the reasons to the increase of political discussions through social media platforms. This is also the reason to the increase on the use of laws regulating political discussions, such as the Cybercrimes Act.

While the Cybercrimes Act does include provisions addressing issues such as cyber bullying, child pornography and computer fraud, the law appears to have been used more against critics of the government, something that was from the start a big concern voiced by journalists, opposition parties' members and human rights activists. In an interview with Cross in January 2018, a Mwanza region senior police officer explained to her about the online policing they conduct, asserting that "if you insult the President, it is a matter of security" (Cross, 2019: 202). This implies that in Tanzania, this Act has mostly targeted critics of the government.

With the technological advancement that now allows a two-way communication, journalists are no longer the only ones being targeted by security officials. In September 2016, five people were charged of insulting the president on social media. In November 2016, Ezekia Mwaifunga, a member of an opposition party, was convicted of posting offensive messages directed at the president and he was sentenced to two years in prison. In January 2017, a businesswoman, Ester Kapona, was charged of allegedly insulting the president through a message she had posted on Facebook (The Guardian, 2017). In 2016, a Tanzanian lecturer was charged with insulting the president on WhatsApp (Reuters, 2016). In 2017 a popular rapper, Emmanuel Elibariki, was arrested after producing a song that included a verse asking why a certain powerful person did not like to be criticised. It was alleged that he was insulting the president in that song (Africa News, 2017). Similarly, in 2020 a popular comedian, Idris Sultan, was arrested after he had posted on Twitter a video of himself laughing while looking at an old picture of President Magufuli dressed in an oversized suit. The police said that he had "cyber-bullied" the president (Amnesty International, 2020). These are just a few examples of how this law continued to curb freedom of expression, and how the administration acted against those who it felt expressed their views against the president.

But the Cybercrimes Act is not the only law that controls online communication in Tanzania. In 2018, the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA) issued the Electronics and Postal Communications (Online Content) Regulations. These were replaced by the Regulations of 2020, bearing the same name. According to an analysis published by the Media Council of Tanzania (MCT), the regulations contain provisions that negatively impact freedom of expression in general. It cites Regulation 4 (1), which requires a licence for sharing online content services, except where

transmitted in private communications. The MCT argues that this requirement is unreasonable and goes against the constitution that allows individuals to seek, receive and impart information through any media. The MCT finds this as a restriction of the right to freedom of expression (MCT, 2020: 3).

John (2019) argues that the evolving digital world is the reason that led to the adoption of the Online Content Regulations (p. 47). Because of this, bloggers are required to register their sites with the TCRA as well as pay an annual fee for publishing online. The fee that amounts to USD930 per year exceeds the normal person's average annual income (Lichtenstein, 2018). When these Regulations were announced, most bloggers had to either transfer ownership of their blogs or shut them down. Examples include Chambi Chachage who had to transfer ownership of his site called *Udadisi* (Curiosity) to a Zimbabwean writer and editor. Another one, Elsie Eyakuza shut down her site *The Mikocheni Report* and now describes herself as a digital refugee. Aikande C. Kwayu, a political scientist whose blog covered political and cultural analysis shut it down, claiming that not only did the Regulations require bloggers to be cautious, but they also forced them to regulate, remove and report comments by readers (Lichtenstein, 2018: 70).

The continuous introduction of laws and regulations to control how people communicate and express their opinion could be viewed as government's insecurity in the way it performs its duties. The threats and intimidation that were witnessed during President' Magufuli's era suggest that for this president, criticism was something he could not tolerate. Despite the fact that he had previously received praise for tackling corruption and delivering on his campaign promises, since the state seemed intent to control freedom of expression, the use of social media platforms were seen as the best way for people to air their views, albeit the laws trying to control that.

4.9 Conclusion

The United Republic of Tanzania has gone through significant changes in its media development since the days of the colonial administrations, to the post-colonial era under President Julius Nyerere. The press under both the British and German colonial administrations was about fighting for independence, where the African newspapers focused on the need for Africans to govern themselves (Scotton, 1978). President's Nyerere's era can be defined as a time of nation-building, where the press was tasked to promote the country's African socialist views known as *Ujamaa* (Condon, 1967). During President Ali Hassan Mwinyi's administration, Tanzania underwent Structural Adjustment Reforms (SAPs) that saw the country go through a democratisation process. This process included the re-introduction of multi-party politics, economic reforms, and an independent media (Sturmer, 1998). President Benjamin Mkapa's administration was all about

engaging the new multi-politics democracy. This led to the increase in number of independent newspapers, radio and TV stations, and the introduction of media policies and laws to regulate them (Rioba, 2008; Rioba 2012). President Jakaya Kikwete's era was full of promises for the country and the media development. It introduced a draft Constitution that, if passed, would have protected freedom of the press and freedom of expression (Thomas, 2015). It was also a time that saw the introduction of the Cybercrimes Act of 2015 (Ndumbaro, 2016). For President Magufuli's era, online communication was at the rise and laws regulating this kind of communication were enacted and in full force, targeting mostly those criticising the president and his government (Cross, 2019; MCT, 2019).

This chapter has demonstrated how different government administrations were involved in the media development in Tanzania, with each administration finding ways to control the media and regulate freedom of expression. The next chapter analyses how Tanzanians perceive good governance practices in the country. The analysis is a result of a survey conducted in Tanzania, aiming at measuring the level of governance practices as perceived by Tanzanian citizens.

Chapter 5 Good Governance in Tanzania: a Public Perspective

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter analysed the media development in Tanzania from the colonial days to the present day. The analysis was based on a library search aimed at investigating how different government administrations managed good governance practices, and specifically freedom of expression.

This chapter presents the findings and discussions on a study that collected views of Tanzanian citizens on some selected governance practices in the country. These findings were derived from the Afrobarometer survey that was conducted to members of the public, expressing how they felt about issues related to transparency and freedom of expression. The findings were analysed through different statistical methods computed using SPSS. The chapter further presents a discussion around the findings, comparing responses to different groups of society in order to ascertain whether there was any association between two variables as opposed to the general public.

This chapter, therefore, seeks to answer the question: what factors influence perceptions of good governance in Tanzania?

5.2 The Survey

As detailed in Chapter 3 [Researching the Media: Methodology and Methods], this survey was conducted by Afrobarometer, an African research institution that conducts surveys in the continent's countries. This particular survey was conducted in 2018 with its raw data made available on Afrobarometer's website in 2019. Since this study focused on the period 2015-2020, the selected data was ideal.

The research problem for this study was '*The shrinking media space in Tanzania and the apparent lack of transparency and freedom of expression.*' Blaikie (2003) remarks that addressing a research problem is what a social research project needs so that research questions are stated and objectives are defined, thereby assisting in the investigation of the problem (p. 10). This chapter, therefore, seeks to explore the understanding and importance of good governance practices as perceived by Tanzanian citizens.

Survey questions

The 2018 Afrobarometer questionnaire for Tanzania had more than 100 questions. These questions seek people's views on a number of issues that are grouped under political, social and economic perspectives. For this study, only those questions on issues regarding two prerequisites of good governance: transparency and freedom of expression were used. In this case, a total of 14 questions reflecting on those two prerequisites were applied for this quantitative part of the research:

1. Do you have freedom to say what you think?
2. Freedom to say what you think: Has it got better or worse?
3. Media freedom to investigate and report: Has it got better or worse?
4. Freedom of NGOs/Groups to speak and act: Has it got better or worse?
5. Freedom of the opposition to function: Has it got better or worse?
6. Do you support democracy?
7. How much of a democracy is Tanzania today?
8. Should the opposition have the right to peaceful protests, or should government prevent protests?
9. Should Tanzanians be free to criticise the government/president, or should it be a crime to insult the president?
10. Do you prefer limited democratic freedoms, or should freedoms be protected?
11. Should government information be for official use only and not shared with the public?
12. Should people who criticise the president be arrested?
13. Should government have the right to close media outlets that criticise its policies?
14. Do you agree with government's decision to ban live broadcasts of Parliament?

Results of these questions have been analysed in different figures and cross tabulations using SPSS, which according to Bryman and Cramer (2004) is simple and frequently used to demonstrate the presence or absence of a relationship (p. 201). The tables are further described in terms of what they imply, with the numbers being described intending to state the conclusion of the tested ideas. As Trieman (2009) states: "The point of presenting data is to test ideas; so the data should be discussed in terms of their implications for the ideas (hypotheses) being tested. Simply citing the numbers is not sufficient" (Trieman, 2009: 61).

The following are the findings to the 14 questions that were tested.

5.3 Findings

Q. 1: Do you have freedom to say what you think?

One of the major debates about freedom of expression is whether people feel that they have freedom to say what they think (van Mill, 2021; Barendt, 2005; Sullivan, 2010) without the fear of any repercussions. The previous chapters have analysed how freedom of expression was tested during the period 2015-2020; however, respondents of the survey felt the contrary. Figure 5.1 shows that more than 80% of them felt that they were free to say what they thought, compared to the less than 20% that felt otherwise. This led to a conclusion that despite the challenges that were mentioned in the previous chapter, in Tanzania there was enough freedom to say what one thought.

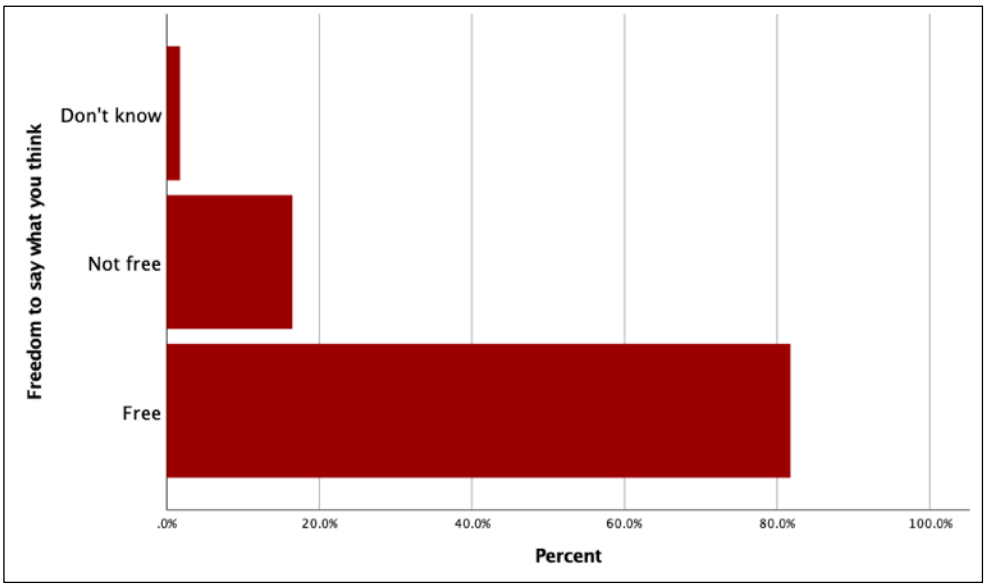


Figure 5.1: Freedom to say what you think

Q. 2: Freedom to say what you think: Has it got better or worse?

Q. 3: Media freedom to investigate and report: Has it got better or worse?

Q. 4: Freedom of NGOs/Groups to speak and act: Has it got better or worse?

Q. 5: Freedom of the opposition to function: Has it got better or worse?

While results from the survey concluded that there was generally enough freedom to say what one thought in Tanzania, results differ when it comes to the freedoms of individual groups. For instance, while Table 5.1 shows that the freedom to say what one thought had got better compared to a few years before (47.9%), the findings are different in other categories. More respondents (45.2%) felt

that media freedom to investigate and report had got worse. Similarly, more respondents (45.7%) felt that the freedom for NGOs and Groups to speak and act had got worse as did 53.8% who felt that the freedom of the opposition to function had also got worse compared to a few years before.

Results in these categories conclude that even though people felt that they had more freedom to say what they felt, they also thought that the media, NGOs as well as the opposition did not share the same freedom. These results correspond with the analysis in Chapter 4 that investigated good governance and freedom of expression in Tanzania, exploring how the period 2015-2020 was a thousand steps backward in terms of freedom of expression for the media sector. Similarly, the following chapters of this thesis also have an analysis highlighting how the opposition as well as other groups were not free to perform their duties during that period.

Table 5.1: Better or worse freedom

	More freedom		Same		Less freedom		Don't know	
	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %
Better or worse: freedom to say what you think	1032	47.9%	216	10.0%	841	39.0%	66	3.1%
Better or worse: media freedom to investigate, report	786	36.5%	167	7.8%	972	45.2%	226	10.5%
Better or worse: freedom of NGOs/groups to speak, act	615	28.5%	190	8.8%	986	45.7%	365	16.9%
Better or worse: freedom of opposition to function	611	28.3%	162	7.5%	1159	53.8%	224	10.4%

Q. 6: Do you support democracy?

Another question in the survey was on the support for democracy. This question had three statements for respondents to choose from: 'Democracy is preferable to any other kind of government', 'In some circumstances, a non-democratic government can be preferable' and 'For someone like me, it doesn't matter what kind of government we have".

Overall, 78.4% of the respondents preferred democracy compared to 6.9% who felt that a non-democratic government could sometimes be preferable, while 8.9% of respondents thought that it did not really matter as to what kind of government was in power. These results, as shown in Figure 5.2 suggest that the majority of Tanzanians preferred democracy to prevail.

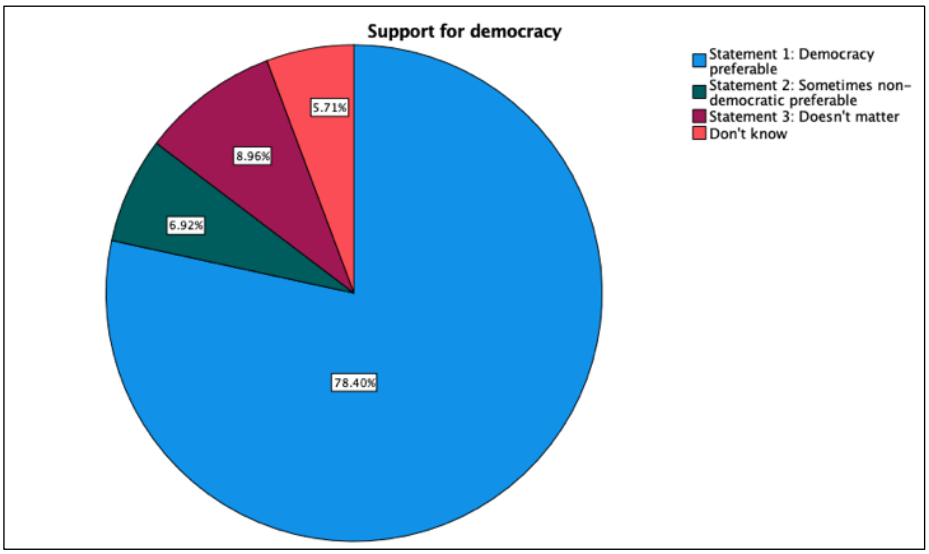


Figure 5.2: Support for democracy

Q. 7: How much of a democracy is Tanzania today?

A similar question was about the extent of democracy in the current Tanzania. This question as well had statements to choose from, which are: 'A full democracy', 'A democracy with minor problems', 'A democracy with major problems', and 'Do not understand democracy'.

Figure 5.3 shows that the majority (54%) of respondents to that question felt that Tanzania is a democracy with minor problems, while 22.5% felt it is a full democracy. At the same time, 11.8% felt that the country is a democracy with major problems.

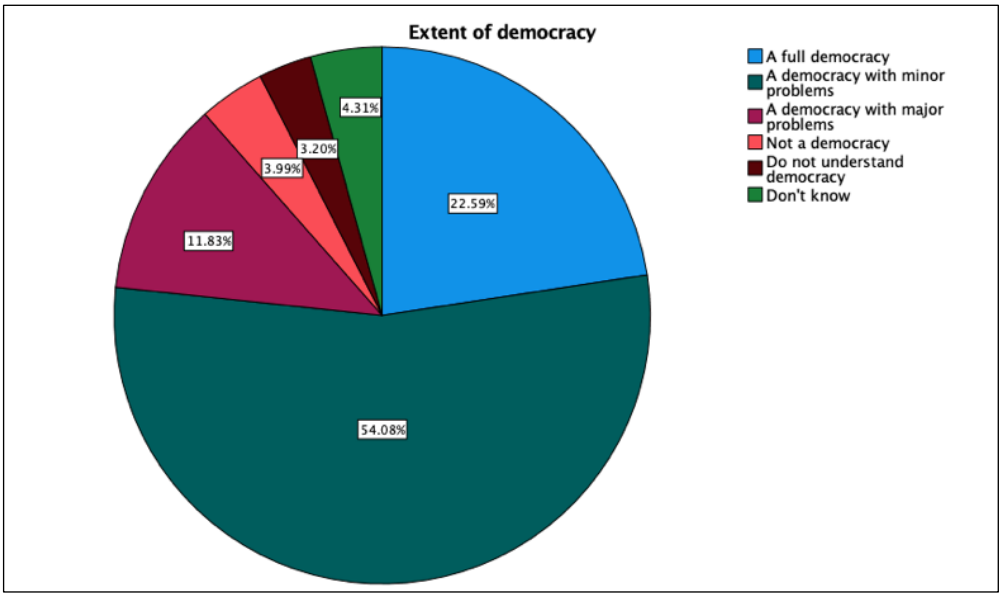


Figure 5.3: Extent of democracy

Q. 8: Should the opposition have the right to peaceful protests?

Q. 9: Should Tanzanians be free to criticise the government/president?

Q. 10: Do you prefer limited democratic freedoms?

I grouped these three questions in the same category as they required respondents to choose between agreeing with statement 1 or agreeing with statement 2. The first question was based on the right of the opposition to have peaceful protests, asking whether the opposition had the right to peaceful protests or if the government should prevent protests. This right had halted in 2016 when the government announced the ban on all political activities until the general elections. For this question, a slight majority (50.6%) agreed with the government preventing protests, while 46.7% agreed that the opposition should have the right to peaceful protests.

Similarly, Table 5.2 shows another slight majority (49.9%) agreeing that it should be a crime to insult the president, with 48.9% arguing that Tanzanians should be free to criticise the government or the president. The same Table shows a majority of the same respondents (66%) agreeing that freedoms should be protected, vis-à-vis the 31.4% who say a government that gets things done is more important than democratic freedoms.

The results shown in Table 5.2 are very interesting as they show that while most Tanzanians wanted freedoms to be protected, they still felt that the government and the president should not be criticised, and also that the opposition should not be allowed to hold peaceful protests. These are prerequisites of good governance, as through criticising and through peaceful protests, people can exercise their right to freedom of expression.

Table 5.2: Peaceful protests, criticising the president, and limiting democratic freedoms

	Agree with Statement 1		Agree with Statement 2		Agree with neither		Don't know	
	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %
Opposition right to peaceful protest vs govt prevent protests	1007	46.7%	1092	50.6%	20	0.9%	38	1.8%
Tanzanians free to criticize govt/president vs crime to insult president	1055	48.9%	1078	49.9%	15	0.7%	11	0.5%
Limit democratic freedoms so govt gets things done vs protect freedoms	677	31.4%	1425	66.0%	13	0.6%	43	2.0%

Q. 11: Should government information be for official use only and not shared with the public?

Q. 12: Should people who criticise the president be arrested?

Q. 13: Should government have the right to close media outlets that criticise its policies?

Q. 14: Do you agree with government's decision to ban live broadcasts of Parliament?

The last four questions that I selected from the survey were all on issues related to transparency and freedom of expression, with respondents choosing whether they agreed, disagreed, or neither agreed nor disagreed.

The first question, for instance, was very important in relation to government transparency, asking if government information should only be for official use and not shared with the public. For this question, 70% of the respondents disagreed on government secrecy and instead showed their preference for information to be shared with the public. On the question asking if government should have the right to close media outlets that criticised its policies. Here again the majority of the respondents (50.4%) disagreed, showing that they preferred freedom of expression. This question was based on the Media Services Act of 2016, in which the government may close newspapers that criticise its policies. Similarly, 69.4% of the respondents disagreed with the government's decision to ban live broadcasts of parliament, maintaining that Tanzanians preferred both transparency and freedom of expression as governance prerequisites.

An interesting outcome, however, is on the question that asked if people who criticised the president should be arrested. Table 5.3 shows that 54.1% of the respondents agreed to it, with only 33.9% disagreeing. This is interesting because while results in the Table show that Tanzanians preferred both transparency and freedom of expression, when it comes to the president the case is different. For example, the previous chapter has explored how the 2015 Cybercrimes Act had been used to punish people who criticised the president, whereas these individuals had been accused of "insulting" the president. Results on this Table prove that most Tanzanians agreed to these punishments.

Table 5.3: Govt information, criticising the president, closing media outlets and ban on parliament

	Agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree		Don't know	
	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %
Government information for official use only	479	22.2%	24	1.1%	1508	70.0%	144	6.7%
People who criticise the president should be arrested	1168	54.1%	35	1.6%	732	33.9%	224	10.4%
Govt should have the right to close media outlets that criticise its policies	809	37.5%	34	1.6%	1088	50.4%	226	10.5%
Agree with govt decision to ban live broadcast of parliament	332	15.4%	22	1.0%	1496	69.4%	306	14.2%

5.4 Discussion

According to the findings of the survey, it is evident that Tanzanians have varied opinions on the issue of good governance practices, particularly on what was right and what was wrong in relation to transparency and freedom of expression. While the findings generally show that most people in the country claimed that they were free to say what they thought (Figure 5.1), they also felt that there were some things that had got worse over the previous few years. These include the freedom of the media to investigate and report, the freedom of NGOs and groups to talk and act, and the freedom of the opposition to function as evidenced in Table 5.1. Furthermore, even though more people agreed that freedoms should not be limited (Table 5.2), they also felt that those criticising the president should be arrested. However, they did not agree with government closure of newspapers that criticised its policies (Table 5.3).

These findings show contradictions with regard to how Tanzanians perceived good governance in their country. On one hand the findings suggest that most Tanzanians would prefer a democratic country with democratic practices that allow its people to receive information and air their opinions as well as criticise it. On the other hand, the findings suggest that Tanzanians were very cautious when it came to criticising the president. This is a contradiction because it leads to the question of how Tanzanians perceived freedom of expression in relation to criticising the president. Does it mean that from a Tanzanian perspective a president should be immune from criticism? Or does it also mean that criticising a president could be regarded as disrespectful, hence their support to arresting those who committed this offence? This will be discussed further in the chapter. First, it is important to look at the sampled population that responded to the survey questions, as this could provide a picture on who exactly agrees or disagrees with upholding transparency and freedom of expression.

5.4.1 A closer look at the sampled population

One of the ways to study the contradiction on how Tanzanians perceive good governance practices is to establish where the contradictions come from. Is it the whole sampled population or a group within that population that happens to have the majority of respondents? The answers to this could be found by analysing some characteristics and relationships in some social phenomenon. Blaike (2003) points out that there are four types of analyses: univariate descriptive, bivariate descriptive, explanatory and inferential (p. 29). The easiest way to analyse characteristics and relationships on Tanzanians' perspective towards good governance practices is through a bivariate descriptive analysis, which is involved with establishing either similarities or differences between the characteristics of categories. By doing so, it would be possible to describe the patterns or connections between the characteristics to see whether one variable corresponded with their view on another (Blaikie, 2003: 29). An example of this would be measuring the views of respondents according to their level of education or age or residential status. This would help to know if those with the same level of education, for instance, tended to be in agreement of a certain view, or if those of a younger age had a different opinion compared to the older respondents.

The sample size for the survey on how Tanzanians perceived good governance was n=2160 cases. These included four different categories: the gender of the respondent, the age of the respondent, the residential status and the level of education.

Table 5.4 shows that there was an equal representation to the gender of the respondents. Of the 2160 respondents, 1080 were male and 1080 were female. This concludes that since there was an equal representation of both men and women in the study, the gender category would not affect the findings on an opinion having more support due to its larger representation.

Table 5.4: Gender of respondents

Gender of respondent

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	1080	50.0	50.0	50.0
	Female	1080	50.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	2160	100.0	100.0	

As for the age of the respondents, Figure 5.4 indicates that the division of respondents was unequal. The majority were aged between 25 and 34 years (600 respondents or 27.7%), followed by those aged between 35 and 44 years (513 respondents or 23.7%). The least represented were those who were aged between 65 years and above (142 respondents or 6.5%) followed by those aged between

55 and 64 years (174 respondents or 8%). This means that the younger population were the most represented in the survey; therefore, they had a position different from the older respondents that could affect the general findings of the study.

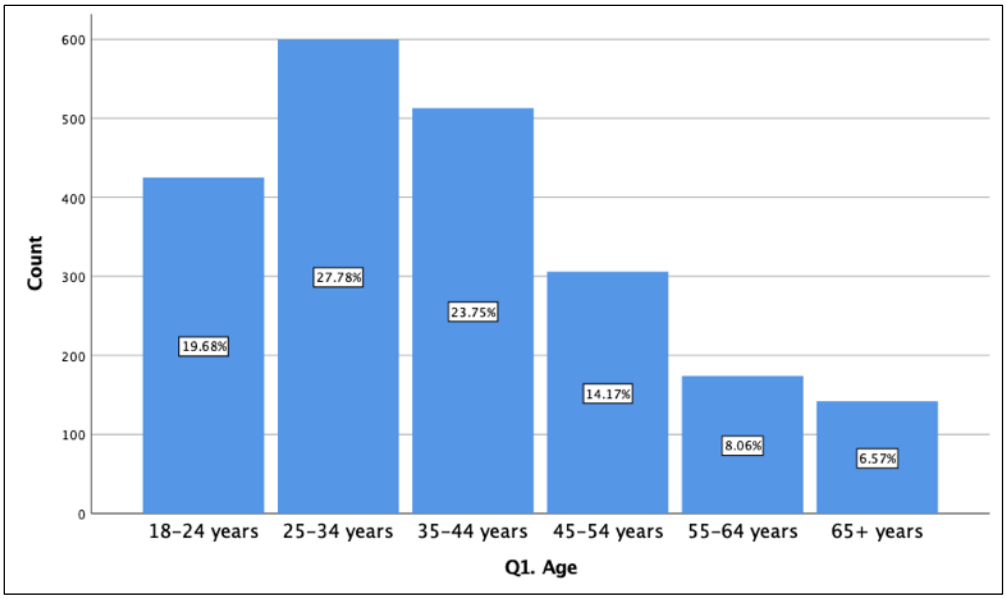


Figure 5.4: Age of respondents

Another category was the residential status, which is divided into two: those living in urban areas and the ones living in rural areas. This category also was not divided equally as evidenced in Figure 5.5, as there were more respondents from rural areas (1456 or 67.4%) than those from the urban areas (704 or 32.6%). Due to this big difference, a position regarded in terms of residential status was likely to greatly affect the outcome of the survey.

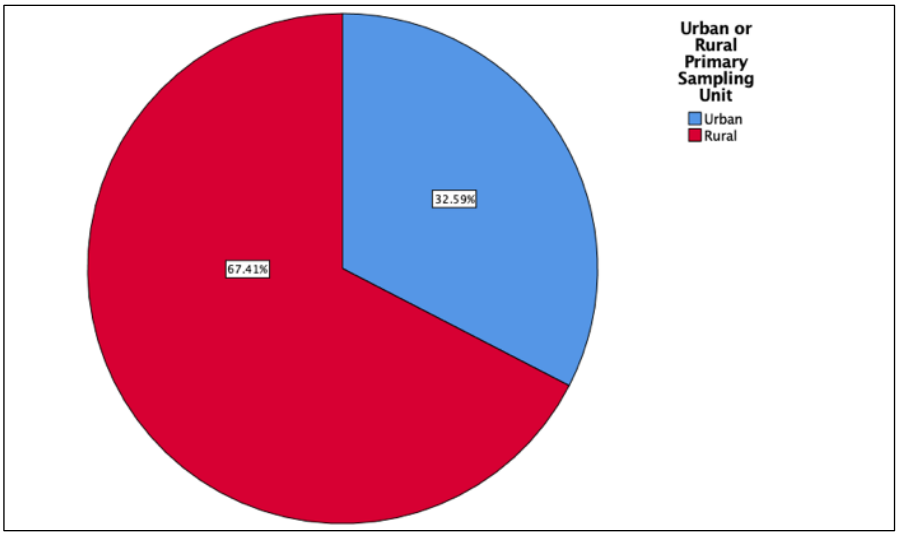


Figure 5.5: Urban or rural primary sampling unit

The last category in this survey was the level of education of the respondents. This too was not divided equally amongst the sampled cases, as Figure 5.6 illustrates that more than half of the respondents (1383 or 64%) were those with primary education alone. Respondents with a university education were the least represented in the survey (48 respondents or 2.2%). The findings of the survey that would be based on a person's level of education would without a doubt have a great impact, with the opinions of those who were less educated overruling the views of the more educated respondents.

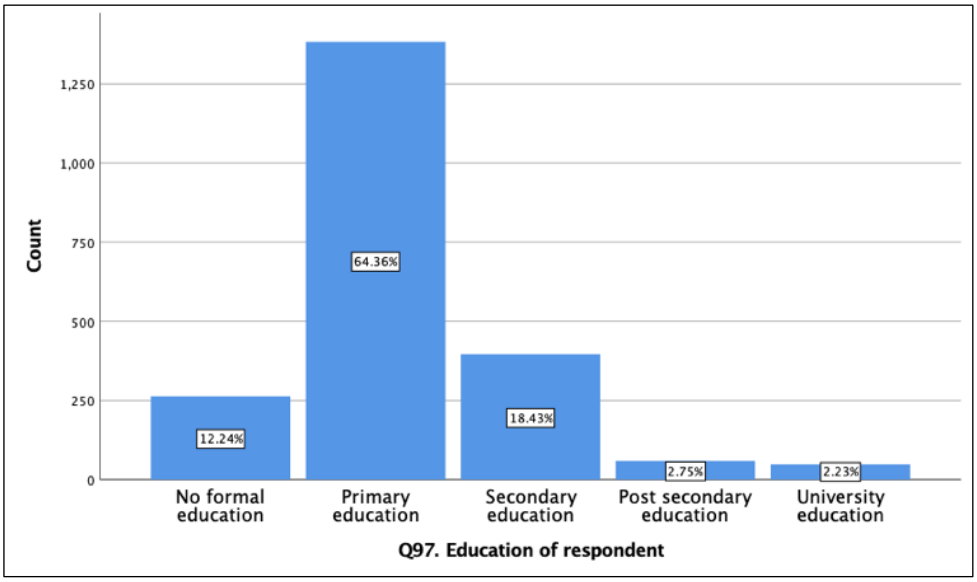


Figure 5.6: Education of respondents

Another important aspect that I decided to investigate was the political party membership of the respondents. Examining party affiliation was important as at times people tend to respond to questions due to their belief in leaders who belong to their own political parties. In Tanzania, for example, Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) was the ruling party since independence. In 1977, TANU united with Zanzibar's Afro Shiraz Party (ASP), forming Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM), which has been the ruling party ever since. In other words, Tanzania has never had a president from the opposition. At the same time, the president is also the chairperson of the ruling party. Figure 5.7 indicates that more than half of the survey respondents (51%) declared being members of the ruling CCM. While 33.5% claimed not to belong to any party, those with declared membership of opposition parties were only about 14%. If the respondents answered the survey questions based on their political affiliation, this had a great impact on the findings of the survey.

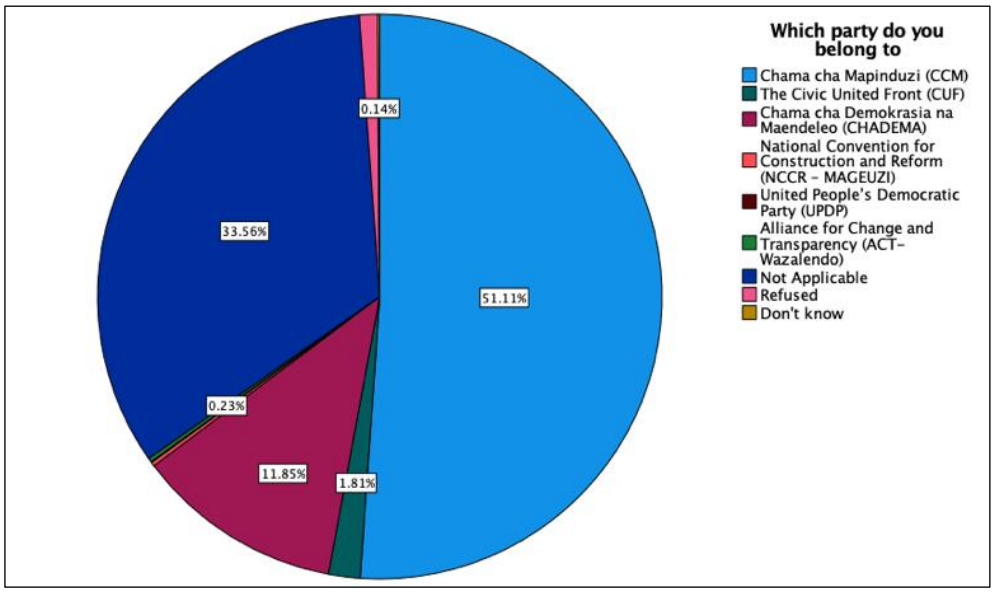


Figure 5.7: Respondents' political party affiliation

As the previous table and figures have shown, there was no equal representation in terms of the categories, except for the gender category. In this case, it was sometimes possible that a tested variable could show an overall acceptance or rejection from the sampled population in general, but different results could occur if the same variable were to be tested against a sampled category. In other words, this is where the bivariate analysis was executed.

5.4.2 Comparing relationships between variables

Denis (2015) explains that for a simple bivariate analysis, the Chi-square (X^2) is the best test for statistical significance. This compares the patterns to establish the relationship between the two variables; if there is a big difference in relation to the sample size, those results lead to rejection of the null hypothesis of no association between the variables (Denis, 2015). Bryman & Cramer (2005) also posit that this test of statistical significance helps a researcher to establish the probability of the relationship between the two measured variables having arisen by chance. If there is relationship, they explain, the null hypothesis will have to be rejected. If the null hypothesis is confirmed, the suggestion of the presence of a relationship has to be rejected (Bryman & Cramer, 2005: 207-208). While agreeing that the Chi-square test (X^2) is the one to be used to reflect a statistical association between the independent and dependent variables for the whole population, Antonius (2012) points out that in order for the value of X^2 to prove unlikely under the null hypothesis, the probability should be less than 0.05. Where this meant that the null hypothesis was rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis if a test proved a no statistical association, this would mean $X^2 = 0$.

From the findings of the survey on Tanzanians' perspective on good governance practices in the country, the major finding is that even though people preferred a democratically run government that respected transparency and freedom of expression, there were different views when it came to the president. Though they wanted people and the media to be free to say and publish, they also wanted those who criticised the president to be arrested for insulting the president. A bivariate analysis on this finding could give a clearer picture as to whether this was the feeling of the whole population, or the feeling of a group within the sampled population.

For instance, while more people claimed that there was more freedom to say what one thought compared to previous years (Table 5.1), comparing this to different groups of respondents, such as the residency, age, level of education and gender, created a different picture (Table 5.5). More people living in the urban setting (49%) felt that there was less freedom to say what one thought compared to the 53.1% living in the rural setting who felt that there was more freedom to do that. Similarly, slightly more of the younger generation (44.3% and 43.3%) felt the freedom had got worse, compared to the older ones (58.5%, 56.9% and 50.5%) who felt that there was more freedom to say what one thought, compared to a few years before. The same difference is with people with different levels of education. While most of those with university and post-secondary education (56.3% and 47.5%) say that the freedom to say what one thought had got worse compared to previous years, a majority of those with no formal education (50.2%) and with primary education only (51.1%) feel that the freedom is better compared to a few years before.

The statistical significance shows that the findings were highly significant ($p<0.01$) in the association between the freedom to say what one thought and the residential setting (.000*), the association between the freedom to say what one thought and the age (.005*) as well as the freedom to say what one thought and the education of the respondent (.000*). This suggests that even though while measuring the general population's feelings the findings showed that the majority of Tanzanians felt that the freedom to say what one thought had got better compared to a few years before, it wasn't the case. The actual groups that felt that way were those who lived in the rural areas, the older respondents, and those with no formal education together with the ones with only a primary education. According to the sampled size, those groups were the most represented in the survey.

Table 5.5: Freedom to say what you think vs sampled groups

		Better or worse: freedom to say what you think							
		More freedom		Same		Less freedom		Don't know	
		Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %
Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	Urban	261	37.2%	72	10.3%	344	49.0%	25	3.6%
	Rural	771	53.1%	144	9.9%	497	34.2%	41	2.8%
Age	18-24 years	187	44.1%	37	8.7%	188	44.3%	12	2.8%
	25-34 years	257	43.0%	60	10.0%	259	43.3%	22	3.7%
	35-44 years	252	49.2%	52	10.2%	195	38.1%	13	2.5%
	45-54 years	154	50.5%	30	9.8%	112	36.7%	9	3.0%
	55-64 years	99	56.9%	18	10.3%	52	29.9%	5	2.9%
	65+ years	83	58.5%	19	13.4%	35	24.6%	5	3.5%
Education of respondent	No formal education	131	50.2%	35	13.4%	79	30.3%	16	6.1%
	Primary education	709	51.4%	133	9.6%	506	36.7%	32	2.3%
	Secondary education	157	39.6%	36	9.1%	188	47.5%	15	3.8%
	Post secondary education	19	32.2%	5	8.5%	34	57.6%	1	1.7%
	University education	12	25.0%	7	14.6%	27	56.3%	2	4.2%
	Refused	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Don't know	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Gender of respondent	Male	528	49.0%	93	8.6%	429	39.8%	27	2.5%
	Female	504	46.8%	123	11.4%	412	38.2%	39	3.6%

Another interesting finding was on the freedom of the media to investigate and report. While Table 5.3 shows that 45.2% of the general population felt that there was less freedom of the media compared to the 36.5% who felt that there was more freedom, the comparison of this to different groups of the sampled population showed how the findings varied.

Table 5.6 shows that while 56.2% of those living in the urban setting felt that the media was less free, only 39.9% of those living in the rural setting felt the same way. In terms of the age of the respondents, while 51.5% of those aged between 18 to 24 felt that there was less freedom for the media, only 33.1% of those aged 65 and over felt the same way. With the education of the respondents, while 70.8% of those with a university education agreed that there was less media freedom, only 31.4% of respondents with no formal education felt the same way. While both genders felt that there was less freedom, 13.1% of females said that they did not know.

These findings on comparing the freedom of the media to report and investigate with the sampled groups are highly significant ($p<0.01$), with all groups showing a statistical significance of .000*. Apart from the gender category, which was equally divided in the sampled population, the other groups that had the majority of people agreeing that there was less media freedom compared to a few years before, were the less represented in the survey.

Table 5.6: Media freedom to investigate, report vs sampled groups

		Better or worse: media freedom to investigate, report							
		More freedom		Same		Less freedom		Don't know	
		Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %
Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	Urban	214	30.5%	51	7.3%	394	56.2%	42	6.0%
	Rural	572	39.4%	116	8.0%	578	39.9%	184	12.7%
Age	18-24 years	144	33.9%	25	5.9%	219	51.5%	37	8.7%
	25-34 years	221	37.0%	48	8.0%	263	44.0%	66	11.0%
	35-44 years	170	33.3%	46	9.0%	250	48.9%	45	8.8%
	45-54 years	118	39.1%	20	6.6%	136	45.0%	28	9.3%
	55-64 years	77	44.5%	19	11.0%	57	32.9%	20	11.6%
	65+ years	56	39.4%	9	6.3%	47	33.1%	30	21.1%
Education of respondent	No formal education	90	34.5%	32	12.3%	82	31.4%	57	21.8%
	Primary education	530	38.5%	100	7.3%	597	43.4%	150	10.9%
	Secondary education	139	35.2%	26	6.6%	216	54.7%	14	3.5%
	Post secondary education	15	25.4%	3	5.1%	38	64.4%	3	5.1%
	University education	8	16.7%	5	10.4%	34	70.8%	1	2.1%
	Refused	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Don't know	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Gender of respondent	Male	387	35.9%	70	6.5%	535	49.7%	85	7.9%
	Female	399	37.2%	97	9.0%	437	40.7%	141	13.1%

On the question of whether people who criticise the president should be arrested for insulting the president under the 2015 Cybercrimes Act, Table 5.3 showed an agreement by most respondents that there should be arrests. There were also interesting results when measuring this to the different groups of the sampled population.

Even though the percentage differs, Table 5.7 shows those who lived in both the urban and rural settings (49.1% and 56.5%) agreed that people who criticise the president should be arrested. Not only this, but also all age groups – from the youngest to the eldest – agreed on the same. This was the same with the gender group. It was only those with different levels of education who disagreed with each other. While the majority of those with no formal education (62%), primary education (55.1%), secondary education (48.6%) and post-secondary education (49.2%) all agreed that the president should not be criticised, it was only those with university education (60.4%) who disagreed. However, those with university education were the least represented amongst the respondents.

Table 5.7: Criticising the president vs sampled groups

		People who criticise the president should be arrested							
		Agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree		Don't know	
		Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %
Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	Urban	346	49.1%	16	2.3%	282	40.1%	60	8.5%
	Rural	822	56.5%	19	1.3%	450	30.9%	164	11.3%
Age	18-24 years	213	50.1%	9	2.1%	157	36.9%	46	10.8%
	25-34 years	323	53.8%	12	2.0%	198	33.0%	67	11.2%
	35-44 years	275	53.6%	2	0.4%	190	37.0%	46	9.0%
	45-54 years	169	55.2%	6	2.0%	100	32.7%	31	10.1%
	55-64 years	99	56.9%	2	1.1%	53	30.5%	20	11.5%
	65+ years	89	63.1%	4	2.8%	34	24.1%	14	9.9%
Education of respondent	No formal education	163	62.0%	3	1.1%	55	20.9%	42	16.0%
	Primary education	762	55.1%	25	1.8%	463	33.5%	133	9.6%
	Secondary education	192	48.6%	6	1.5%	153	38.7%	44	11.1%
	Post secondary education	29	49.2%	1	1.7%	28	47.5%	1	1.7%
	University education	17	35.4%	0	0.0%	29	60.4%	2	4.2%
	Refused	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Don't know	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Gender of respondent	Male	555	51.4%	20	1.9%	394	36.5%	110	10.2%
	Female	613	56.8%	15	1.4%	338	31.3%	114	10.6%

The membership of a political party was also a factor that affected some of the findings of the survey. For example, on the same question about whether people who criticised the president should be arrested, generally the respondents agreed. While the previous table has shown that only those with a higher level of education disagreed with this statement, the findings from people belonging to different political parties were also interesting, as illustrated in Table 5.8. CCM is the ruling party in Tanzania and 62.4% of the respondents who claimed that they were members of the party, agreed that people who criticised the president should be arrested. At the same time, Chadema, which is the main opposition party in mainland Tanzania, had 53.1% of respondents disagreeing on people who criticised the president being arrested. However, while Figure 5.7 showed a small representation of respondents who belonged to opposition parties (14%), Table 5.8 shows that only those from Chadema did not agree with people being arrested for criticising the president. Members from ACT-Wazalendo were equally divided, while members from all other opposition parties agreed that people who criticised the president should be arrested.

These findings are very interesting, as they suggest that when it came to the president, most people felt that criticisms should be avoided. For Tanzanians, it did not matter whether you were old or young, living in the city or in a village, educated or not (apart from those with university education), from the ruling party or from the opposition – they all felt that the president should be immune from criticism. This raises questions as to the understanding of Tanzanians on issues related to good governance, specifically to freedom of expression.

Table 5.8: Criticising the president vs political parties

Which party do you belong to * People who criticise the president should be arrested Crosstabulation

			People who criticise the president should be arrested				
			Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Don't know	Total
Which party do you belong to	Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM)	Count	688	16	303	96	1103
		% within Which party do you belong to	62.4%	1.5%	27.5%	8.7%	100.0%
	The Civic United Front (CUF)	Count	17	0	16	6	39
		% within Which party do you belong to	43.6%	0.0%	41.0%	15.4%	100.0%
	Chama cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo (CHADEMA)	Count	92	5	136	23	256
		% within Which party do you belong to	35.9%	2.0%	53.1%	9.0%	100.0%
	National Convention for Construction and Reform (NCCR - MAGEUZI)	Count	3	0	0	2	5
		% within Which party do you belong to	60.0%	0.0%	0.0%	40.0%	100.0%
	United People's Democratic Party (UPDP)	Count	1	0	0	0	1
		% within Which party do you belong to	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	Alliance for Change and Transparency (ACT-Wazalendo)	Count	2	1	2	0	5
		% within Which party do you belong to	40.0%	20.0%	40.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	Not Applicable	Count	352	12	265	96	725
		% within Which party do you belong to	48.6%	1.7%	36.6%	13.2%	100.0%
	Refused	Count	11	1	9	1	22
		% within Which party do you belong to	50.0%	4.5%	40.9%	4.5%	100.0%
	Don't know	Count	2	0	1	0	3
		% within Which party do you belong to	66.7%	0.0%	33.3%	0.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	1168	35	732	224	2159
		% within Which party do you belong to	54.1%	1.6%	33.9%	10.4%	100.0%

Despite the outcome of the survey, literature has it that countries with semi-autonomic regimes are biased when responding to surveys due to a large degree of the existence of self-censoring, with respondents tending to give 'safe' questions in a standard survey. Instead, Randomized Response Technique (RRT) as well as list experiments are more ideal as they produce totally different results (Weghorst, 2015). The author further gives an example of Afrobarometer's 2008 survey, claiming that 59.9% of Tanzanians believe the survey was conducted by government agencies, hence leading to inaccuracies of public opinion estimates. Similarly, Croke (2017) argues that in Tanzania, most citizens practice self-censorship when it comes to political views due to the existence of institutions that act to ensure the government's sustained control. This, he claims, is due to the country's political system being dominated by a single-party rule since its independence, a common custom in the developing world. Unlike Weghorst (2015) who calls Tanzania a semi-democratic regime, Croke (2017) uses the term "hybrid regime" meaning a country with formal democratic rules but dominated completely by a single party. Tanzania has been governed by a single party since its independence in 1961. It was first the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) that later changed

its name to Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) after merging it with Zanzibar's Afro Shiraz Party (ASP) in 1977.

Sentiments of the two authors could be a major reason why the survey showed that even though more people preferred a democratic country, they did not want the president to be criticised. This could be due to the self-censorship that is practiced when conducting standard surveys such as the Afrobarometer one. Moreover, it is common practice for data collectors to be accompanied by government officials to "ensure their safety", leading to respondents not feeling free to express their true feelings as they are being observed. For instance, Croke (2017) gives an example of how local representatives of the ruling party (the ten-cell network) are normally present and observe how participants respond to survey questions, which include political questions. For a standard survey to be conducted during the reign of President John Magufuli, this was especially concerning, because he was feared due to his leadership style of resenting criticism.

Another thing to consider is how much most Tanzanians living in rural areas and also those who are less educated are affiliated with the ruling party CCM, tending to vote for it and therefore being pro-Magufuli during 2015-2020. It should be remembered that these respondents are the ones who are most represented in the survey. For example, Table 5.9 shows 57.4% and 55.7% of those with no formal education and only a primary education, declared to being members of the ruling party CCM. Most of those with a university education (41.7%), a post-secondary education (55.9%) and secondary education (41.2%) claimed not to be affiliated to any political party. This suggests that more respondents were those belonging to the ruling party, and therefore would tend to favour their party in their responses.

Table 5.9: Education of respondent vs political party membership

Which party do you belong to * Education of respondent Crosstabulation

			Education of respondent					
			No formal education	Primary education	Secondary education	Post secondary education	University education	Total
Which party do you belong to	Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM)	Count	151	771	148	15	17	1102
		% within Education of respondent	57.4%	55.7%	37.4%	25.4%	35.4%	51.3%
	The Civic United Front (CUF)	Count	3	30	6	0	0	39
		% within Education of respondent	1.1%	2.2%	1.5%	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%
	Chama cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo (CHADEMA)	Count	22	142	71	10	10	255
		% within Education of respondent	8.4%	10.3%	17.9%	16.9%	20.8%	11.9%
	National Convention for Construction and Reform (NCCR – MAGEUZI)	Count	1	3	1	0	0	5
		% within Education of respondent	0.4%	0.2%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%
	United People's Democratic Party (UPDP)	Count	0	1	0	0	0	1
		% within Education of respondent	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Alliance for Change and Transparency (ACT–Wazalendo)	Count	1	3	1	0	0	5
		% within Education of respondent	0.4%	0.2%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%
	Not Applicable	Count	82	419	163	33	20	717
		% within Education of respondent	31.2%	30.3%	41.2%	55.9%	41.7%	33.4%
	Refused	Count	3	11	6	1	1	22
		% within Education of respondent	1.1%	0.8%	1.5%	1.7%	2.1%	1.0%
	Don't know	Count	0	3	0	0	0	3
		% within Education of respondent	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
Total		Count	263	1383	396	59	48	2149
		% within Education of respondent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

On the case of the residential status of the respondents, Table 5.10 shows 40% of those living in the urban and 56.2% of those living in the rural claimed that they were members of the ruling party CCM. The opposition parties had more members from the urban setting than the rural, and those with no affiliation to any political party were 41.8% from the urban, and 29.6% from the rural. This means that those from the rural area, which is the most represented category in the survey, belonged to the ruling party and would therefore give their political views in favour of the party.

Table 5.10: Residential status of respondent vs political party membership

Which party do you belong to * Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit Crosstabulation

			Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit		
			Urban	Rural	Total
Which party do you belong to	Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM)	Count	286	818	1104
		% within Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	40.6%	56.2%	51.1%
	The Civic United Front (CUF)	Count	8	31	39
		% within Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	1.1%	2.1%	1.8%
	Chama cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo (CHADEMA)	Count	99	157	256
		% within Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	14.1%	10.8%	11.9%
	National Convention for Construction and Reform (NCCR – MAGEUZI)	Count	1	4	5
		% within Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	0.1%	0.3%	0.2%
	United People's Democratic Party (UPDP)	Count	1	0	1
		% within Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%
	Alliance for Change and Transparency (ACT–Wazalendo)	Count	3	2	5
		% within Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	0.4%	0.1%	0.2%
	Not Applicable	Count	294	431	725
		% within Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	41.8%	29.6%	33.6%
	Refused	Count	10	12	22
		% within Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	1.4%	0.8%	1.0%
	Don't know	Count	2	1	3
		% within Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	0.3%	0.1%	0.1%
Total		Count	704	1456	2160
		% within Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Before I continue with this discussion, however, I find it prudent to review the categories of Tanzania's population according to the country's National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). This is to ascertain whether the representation of the sampled population was fair. The reason for doing this is because the sampled population for this survey had more representation of those living in the rural area, more of the younger generation, more of those with a primary education, and an equal representation of both male and female. The question is whether the representation of those groups in Tanzania is the same.

5.4.3 The categories of Tanzania's population

Generally, results from the bivariate analysis that was conducted show a different picture as to how different groups of the population perceived good governance practices. Even though there were a lot of different responses in terms of the population groups, all of them were representative of the Tanzanian population itself. For instance, males and females had been equally represented in the survey due to the fact that females were only slightly more than males in Tanzania. The younger population (under 15 years) represented 43.9% of the entire mainland population, followed by the

youth (15-24 years) representing 34.6%, whereas the working age population (15-64 years) comprised of 52.2% and the elderly (65+ years) represented only 3.9% of the entire population. Geographically, 29.1% of the mainland Tanzania population live in the urban areas while 70.9% of them live in the rural areas (NBS, 2020: 21). Due to this, it is reasonable why the survey sample consisted of more people from the rural, more of those from the younger age group and an equal distribution in terms of gender representation.

Regarding the level of education of the respondents, Figure 5.6 had shown that those with only a primary education were over 64.3% of all the respondents, with only 2.2% of the respondents being university graduates. This too was a correct representation of the population since according to the 2019 Tanzania in Figures report, student enrolment in primary schools leads all the other education levels in the country. For instance, a total of 10,605,430 students in mainland Tanzania enrolled for primary school in 2019 while 2,185,037 enrolled for secondary school and 153,420 enrolled for 'A' levels. Those who enrolled for non-degrees for the academic year 2017/18 were 22,094, those enrolled for a bachelor's degree were 176,119 and postgraduates were 10,931. This shows that there was a significant difference between the number of those enrolling for primary education and those enrolling for university education, as illustrated in Figure 5.8.

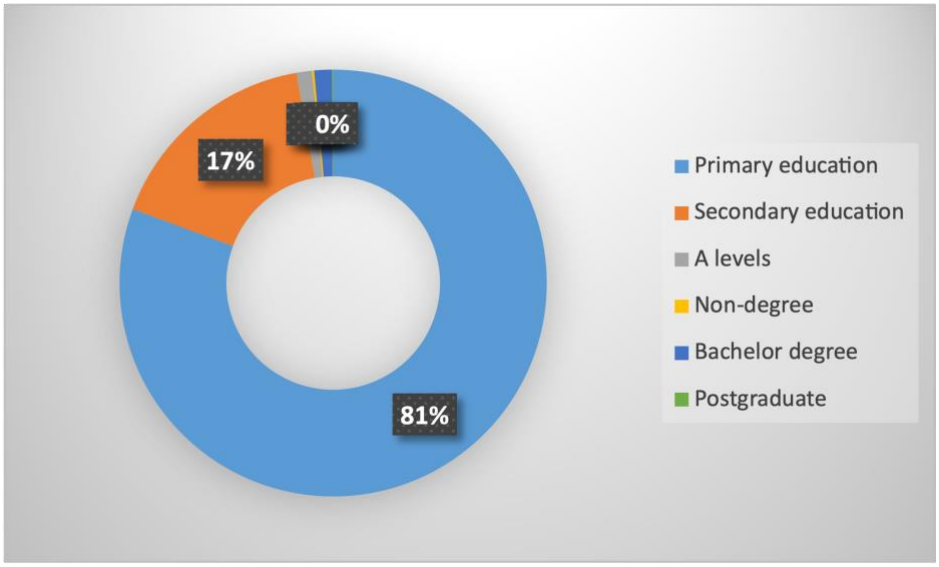


Figure 5.8: Number of students enrolled in educational settings in mainland Tanzania in 2019

Concerning representation, the survey on Tanzanians' perspectives on good governance practices found that even though some of the general findings indicate that citizens favoured transparency and freedom of expression, that however depended on the groups within the population. If one were to generalise the findings, views of those living in rural areas would have overruled the views

of those living in urban areas, since most of the population was from the rural setting. Likewise, Tanzanians with only a primary education were the ones who could influence general decisions since they were the most representative in the country.

5.4.4 Criticising the president vs respect in African culture

This study seeks to identify the ways that could promote transparency and freedom of expression in Tanzania. This chapter, on the other hand, is focused on investigating Tanzanians' understanding of the good governance prerequisites, and whether they favoured them for the development of their country. The results from the Afrobarometer survey established that there was a good understanding of good governance practices in the country and that people wanted the country to be governed democratically. However, despite understanding and seeing the need for transparency and freedom of expression, the results suggest that Tanzanians were against criticising the president.

While Chapter 4 has detailed an in-depth analysis of Tanzania's journey of freedom of expression from the colonial days to date, one of the major factors that was highlighted in the chapter was how the period 2015-2020 had seen a significant decline in terms of freedom of expression. This was especially due to the media, NGOs, politicians as well as individuals being harassed for criticising the government as well as criticising the president. The Cybercrimes Act, for instance, has had people arrested for what was termed as insulting the president. However, from the findings of this survey, the majority of people still felt that those who criticised the president should be arrested. This, therefore, leads to a discussion on why most Tanzanians felt that the president should not be criticised. One of the reasons could be the issue of respect that is highly regarded in the African culture.

According to Booty (2017), respecting elders is ingrained in different African cultures, with people, even opposition leaders using respectful tones against their bitter rivals. She explains that people are taught at a young age how to use a particular manner when greeting, speaking and interacting with elders. Failure to do so is regarded as lack of respect or even poor upbringing. Sesanti (2010), however, argues that there has been a distorted interpretation of the concept of 'respect' in the context of African culture. He comments that this distorted interpretation suggests that it is disrespectful to criticise those with authority. He adds that the belief has led to some journalism students claiming that it is un-African to criticise heads of state. On the other hand, those who are already journalism practitioners and academics dismiss this claim, arguing that it is undemocratic and hinders journalists' role as protectors of democracy.

For the case of Tanzania, the 2015 Cybercrimes Act has been used to arrest those who criticise the president. Even though the law was passed to curb online crimes such as child pornography, hate speech and terrorism, it has instead been viewed by many as being enforced to target government critics. The Media Council of Tanzania argues that this Act has mostly been used against those critical of the government of former President John Magufuli and its policies (MCT, 2019: 72). Similarly, Cross (2019) cites an example of the Tanzania Police Force (TPF) that has close ties to the ruling Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) party, pointing out that the Inspector General of Police (IGP) is a presidential appointee, along with Regional Commissioners (RCs) who have the power to order police to arrest anyone deemed to commit a breach of peace (p. 197).

There have been examples of such arrests in Tanzania, as analysed in chapter 4. Such arrests have raised questions within the community as to why people that criticise the president face arrest. And this brings us to the question of respect, suggesting that in most people's understanding, criticising and insulting are the same thing. For instance, in an interview with Cross in January 2018, a Mwanza region senior police officer explained to her about the online policing they conduct, asserting "if you insult the President, it is a matter of security" (Cross, 2019: 202). Even though the 2015 Cybercrimes Act does not declare that a criticism is similar to an insult, it also does not define what an insult is, leading law enforcement officers to conclude their own definition.

The debate of respect in African culture has gained momentum over the years (Kasoma, 1996; Sesanti, 2010; Hamzat, 2013; Awoniyi, 2015). This debate has led to academicians arguing about the concept of respect, and how this concept has been misunderstood and abused. One of the fierce critics of those who tend to expose leaders' flaws in the name of freedom of expression and freedom of the press is Kasoma (1996). He argues that the African press has turned itself into the accuser, the judge and jury, due to their own selfish motives of profit and politics. He underscores that the press does this in the name of democracy and press freedom. Kasoma contends that the African society has for a long time had its own ethical checks and balances, but the continent's journalists are instead imitating what is being practised in the West. He alleges that they refuse to follow suggestions on how African ethical roots can still apply to journalism.

However, Sesanti (2010) disagrees with these allegations, arguing that there is a distorted interpretation on what respect in African culture entails. He explains that this distortion has people believe that it is disrespectful to criticise leaders, with some claiming that doing so in un-African. He notes that because of this, the concept of respect in African culture has been used and misused to "immunise the powerful from scrutiny and criticism" (Sesanti, 2010: 344).

One important aspect to scrutinise is how African culture is defined. Culture itself has been defined differently by different authors. wa Thiong'o (1993) defines it as a way in which people view themselves, with a whole set of values embodied from their history. Asante (2001) defines it as the "totalisation of the historical, artistic, economic, and spiritual aspects of people's lifestyle." Maathai (2009) has a longer definition of culture, explaining that it is the way people express themselves through different ways. These ways include symbols, festivities, language, religion, traditional wisdom and ethics. All these are the collective identities that describe a people's culture. Adding the word African to culture, therefore, means that it is the values and norms that represent the indigenous people of the African continent.

Taking this into consideration, one of the issues that have been discussed as a characteristic of African culture, is what is known as *Ubuntu*. This is what Dandala (1996) defines as a "statement about being, about fundamental things that qualify a person to be a person" (Nussbaum, 2003). In African culture, *ubuntu* is a concept that represents the core values of it, including respect. Even though some people attribute the term to the Zulus, Sesanti (2010) explains that it does not belong to one ethnic group, rather it is a pan-African concept. While the Zulus call it *ubuntu*, those from Lesotho, Botswana and South Africa who speak Sesotho and Setswana call it *botho.* Similarly, people from Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda where Kiswahili is spoken, call it *utu*. At the same time, the Shona of Zimbabwe call it *hunu*.

Ubuntu as in the core values of African culture have been passed on to generations, with children being taught the values of respect, and especially respect for elders. A good example of this is young people never calling those older than them by their first names. In Tanzania, for instance, where Kiswahili is the national language, people from all walks of life – neighbours, friends, co-workers, include a salutation of respect before the person's first name. A woman called Leah would be referred to as "Dada Leah" (Sister Leah); a man called Francis would be referred to as "Kaka Francis" (Brother Francis). Similarly, children would still call other parents "mother" or "father", even though they are not their biological parents. This is taught from a young age, as calling your elders by their first names is considered disrespectful.

The effects of this kind of respect that we have been taught since we were children is what leads most people to believe that leaders, such as the president should not be criticised. The results from the survey are a good example of this. The majority of Tanzanians felt that people who criticised the president should be arrested. Even when measuring this to the age of the respondents, still everyone – from the youngest respondents to the oldest ones – agreed that the president should

not be criticised. Surprisingly, even those who were members of opposition parties also felt the same way. The *ubuntu* concept that has been ingrained in their minds since childhood seems to have had an effect on the concept of freedom of expression. Even though freedom of expression is a citizen's right, the misunderstanding of African respect deems this right un-African.

While Kasoma (1996) cautions that he should not be misunderstood and accused of being against democratic values such as freedom of expression and freedom of the press, he still claims that a noteworthy African ethical point is that wrongdoers in a community are supposed to be advised and counselled. This advising and counselling is supposed to be done by the elders due to their life experiences, which make them wiser than the younger ones. In a case where there are no elders or agemates to do the advising and counselling, then the younger members of the community can do so, but by following proper etiquette (p. 104). What Kasoma fails to elaborate is this "proper etiquette" that the younger members of the community are to follow. Moreover, his dismissal of those of a younger age could be viewed as discrimination, since it is not necessarily true that older people are wiser than the younger ones. Furthermore, sentiments like this are what have caused some governments to enact laws punishing those who criticise their policies or their leaders, believing that those in power should not be condemned by those who are not.

Whilst the concept of *ubuntu* and respect for elders in African culture is a continuous debate amongst different members of society, Sachs and Warner (1997) argue that ancient African culture has never discouraged criticisms or disagreements. What it does encourage, they say, is "to acknowledge the right of the person you are going to criticise to express their point of view, to acknowledge the good points of what they have to say, and only then to continue with the critique". On the other hand, Owusu-Ansah (2004) points out that freedom of expression is actually recognised as a fundamental right in traditional African society. Prah, (2006) notes that in ancient Africa, respect was a two-way requisite; ordinary people were expected to show respect, and the authorities were supposed to respect the laws and regulations as well. He adds that failure to respect the ancestors' wisdom, which was basically the Africans' constitution, resulted into the chief being dethroned or even killed.

Sesanti (2010) points out that while African traditions and culture used to embrace freedom of expression, this started changing after attaining independence from colonialism. He reveals that historically, respect in Africa's culture never meant that citizens should always comply with whatever their leaders suggested. This kind of submission was only turned into a falsified version of African culture by those postcolonial leaders who were authoritarian and power-hungry,

distorting African culture for their own self-serving purposes. Sesanti admits that even though African culture is vital for preservation of the community, it is never meant that it should constitute to "blind respect". This is complemented by Hamzat (2013) who explains that the acceptance of such a distorted culture has led to a situation that when an elderly person is doing things wrongly that are destroying both the old and the young in society, they are not to be questioned. He puts it succinctly:

> "The "respect for elders" is an African culture that has its negative effects and has been over abused by African elders to do injustice, a situation that has led to Africa remaining backward. The current backward situation in Africa where leaders continuously do things wrongly and youths are expected to remain silent about it can destroy both the present and future generations. While the young are expected to remain silent, they would be affected in the consequences of the wrong actions of the elder" (Hamzat, 2013).

Notwithstanding, there are even some African proverbs that are used to misinterpret the meaning of respect, one of them being an isiXhosa idiom *akukho ziinkunzi zimbini esibayeni esinye*, which could be translated as there are no two bulls in one kraal. There is also a Kiswahili idiom with the same meaning that goes *mafahali wawili hawakai zizi moja*. Authorities have wrongly interpreted these proverbs as one setting cannot have two authorities. Sesanti (2010: 353) also provides an example of Zaire's (now Democratic Republic of Congo) former president Mobutu Sese Seko who normally used the proverb "there are no two chiefs in an African village" to his advantage. Prah (2006) recalls Ghana's former president Jerry Rawlings' suggestion that African culture has it that all discussions should come to an end when the chief has had his final word. This suggests that the concept of 'respect' in the context of African culture is being misinterpreted, and its consequences are denying citizens the right to freedom of expression.

Looking back at responses of the survey in which most people agreed that those criticising the president should be arrested for insulting the president, it is apparent that even Tanzanians themselves believed that leaders should not be criticised, as this shows disrespect, which is also un-African. However, Tomaselli (2003) argues that when people critiqued leaders for incompetence and non-delivery, it was when democratic dialectic worked best. For journalists, for instance, such reporting should not be seen as disrespectful since a leader might command respect but their behaviour in that position might not, hence calling for criticism and debate (p. 431). Musalika (1994) asserts: "Probably one of the worst practices of African culture is the excessive respect without questioning bestowed on elders and those holding power" (Musalika, 1994: 155, as cited in Idang 2018).

While views of the public are to be respected, it is also imperative to note that from this survey on Tanzanians' perspectives on good governance practices, the public needs to be educated on their right to freedom of expression. This includes the right to criticise the president. Moreover, there is a need for clarification on what constitutes to a criticism and what constitutes to an insult. This clarification needs to be made to the general public as well as to law enforcement officers who execute arrests. Furthermore, the Cybercrimes Act should clarify the meaning of an insult so that people's constitutional right to freedom of expression would not be infringed in the name of "respecting your elders."

5.5 Data Limitations

There were several limitations to the data for this study. The first limitation was that the data was derived from the 2018 Afrobarometer survey in Tanzania. It was not possible for the researcher to conduct the survey personally due to COVID-19 restrictions; therefore, I chose Afrobarometer survey as an alternative. Blaikie (2003) mentions three major disadvantages of using secondary data: the research is done with different aims and different research questions to those of the one using the data; the secondary data might not include all the areas of interest that the researcher would want to explore; and that the data may not be current as the time between data collection, reporting of results and making available these datasets to other researchers may be long (Blaikie, 2003: 18-19).

The author's concerns on the use of secondary data are valid in regard to the survey on Tanzanians' perceptions towards good governance practices. Even though the 14 questions derived from the survey were the ones that mostly reflected the purpose of this study, I was limited to only those questions that the Afrobarometer survey had applied. Some questions that I would have liked to have included in the survey were those related directly to the use of social media in relation to transparency and freedom of expression. Questions on how much the respondents used social media to get information and communicate, and also how they felt about social media's contribution to transparency and freedom of expression would have been beneficial for this study. While these questions were not included in Afrobarometer's survey, I did apply them during the in-depth interviews, making use of the mixed-methods research approach.

As explained in the introduction, these results included data from mainland Tanzania only, since that was the focus of the research. Thus, research needs to be conducted on the media development as well as issues regarding transparency and freedom of expression in Zanzibar. This

would help portray a better picture of the study with regard to the United Republic of Tanzania as a whole.

5.6 Conclusion

This study intended to establish whether the use of social media could contribute towards good governance practices, specifically transparency and freedom of expression. The aim of this chapter was to explore the understanding and importance of good governance practices as perceived by Tanzanian citizens. This study has found that Tanzanians understand the importance of good governance practices, and that compared to a few years before, some freedoms have got worse. These include the freedom of the media to investigate and report, the freedom of the opposition political parties to function, as well as the freedom of NGOs and groups to speak and act. They also prefer a government that is run democratically and allows for criticism against government actions. On the other hand, the study has revealed that despite preferring freedom of expression, Tanzanians do not agree with criticisms aimed at the president. To them, those who criticise the president should be arrested for insulting the president under the Cybercrimes Act of 2015. This has led to the discussion of African culture and the notion of respecting your elders, with the view that while this culture is being misinterpreted, there is also a need to clarify the distinction between a criticism and an insult.

The next chapters report findings from the in-depth interviews that I conducted in Tanzania as part of my fieldwork. These are expected to accomplish the following:

- Assess the current laws and regulations guiding media and freedom of expression in Tanzania and their impact;
- Evaluate the current use of social media platforms vis-à-vis mainstream media;
- Assess social impacts of using social media platforms in promoting transparency and freedom of expression.

Chapter 6 Tanzania's Media Landscape: a Shrinking Space?

6.1 Introduction

Tanzania's media landscape has gone through a gradual development process ever since the country reintroduced multi-party politics and the free press as explored in Chapter 4. The next three chapters of this study present findings from in-depth interviews conducted with different media stakeholders. They include mainstream media practitioners and social media activists. The mainstream media practitioners are represented in four categories: publishers, representatives of media organisations, editors and reporters. The social media activists include those who are very active in social media to the point of being a source of information.

This chapter analyses views from media stakeholders on the state of Tanzania's media landscape between the year 2015 and 2020, which is the focus of this study. The chapter focuses on narrations of respondents who have worked and lived under different government administrations, comparing how it used to be before 2015 and how the media climate changed after 2015. Their responses help answer this study's main question: can social media contribute towards transparency and freedom of expression? They also answer the sub-question: why has there been a decline in good governance practices in Tanzania during 2015-2020?

6.1.1 The data

As analysed in Chapter 3, while I personally conducted interviews with 14 people, I also used narratives from interviews that were posted on a YouTube channel. One of the respondents that I had interviewed contacted me and asked me to check the Ujuzi Era TV YouTube channel that he was also involved with. He believed that the content that was there related to my study and could therefore be part of my data collection. This channel included interviews of a few media stakeholders who talked about the media landscape in Tanzania. The interviews of five senior journalists were very relevant to my study topic; therefore, I used them in line with the ones that I conducted personally.

This chapter presents data analysed using a narrative analysis approach. The aim of using this approach was to capture and include all the necessary information that was produced by the respondents. Caine, Estefan and Clandinin (2013), acknowledge the approach as a qualitative research design that uses spoken or written text to explain extended substantial accounts of aspects of lives. The approach also helps provide human experiences, empowering readers to feel involved in a personal way with its unique means of presenting feelings, emotions and life situations. The

respondents consented to reveal their names, insisting that it would make the study more authentic. Only one respondent asked for their identity to be concealed due to some past experiences. I also used my own judgement to protect the identities of some of the respondents in parts where the information they had provided needed them to be protected.

This chapter, therefore, analyses the narrations of the interviewees through themes that were identified during the coding of the data. The narrations include the journey of Tanzania's media after independence up until 2020, a journey that is narrated by journalists who had worked through those different periods. Special attention is on the narrations about the period 2015-2020, which include accounts of how the media landscape had shrunk during that period compared to any other period ever experienced. These accounts involve issues on how the government had been using laws and regulations to control the media as well as control transparency and freedom of expression. The aim of this chapter is to evaluate the media landscape in Tanzania by assessing the impact of different laws and regulations controlling the media, transparency and freedom of expression during that period of time. The finding of this chapter is that there were problems that needed to be addressed, and therefore the use of the triad: social media, transparency and freedom of expression, helped break the boundaries of communication that were continuing to increase.

6.2 The ups and downs of Tanzania's media landscape

Tanzania's media landscape has gone through different stages that have defined the level of transparency and freedom of expression in the country. First, there was the colonial era whose landscape was in two phases: the absence of African newspapers, and the introduction of African newspapers that thrived in the fight for independence. Second, there were those stages under post-colonial administrations, whereby each administration defined its own media policy either through written laws and regulations, or by word of mouth or actions of leaders in power[12].

Discussions from interviews with media stakeholders tell a tale of how the period 2015-2020 differed completely from the past. The discussions also suggest one aspect: that the president was the one who determined the media landscape and not necessarily the laws and regulations in place.

The main question to all respondents was: How do you see the media landscape of Tanzania before 2015? (With a focus on transparency and freedom of expression). This question led to respondents narrating how Tanzania's media used to function, starting with the time during the presidency of

[12] A detailed overview can be found in Chapter 4 Good Governance and Freedom of Expression: The Case of Tanzania.

Mwalimu Julius Nyerere (1961-1985), Ali Hassan Mwinyi (1985-1995), Benjamin Mkapa (1995-2005) and Jakaya Kikwete (2005-October 2015). All the respondents agreed that the media landscape was determined by the person in power and how he treated the media.

6.2.1 The freedom to debate

One of the respondents is Attilio Tagalile[13], a veteran journalist who had started work during President Nyerere's era. He talked about how the president loved debate. "During Mwalimu's[14] era there was freedom of expression, and I dare to articulate that contrary to what many people say, there was more freedom during Mwalimu than at any given time." He explained that Nyerere always encouraged publication of facts; "that is why government scandals were published a lot during his time as president compared to now." During that time there were mainly four newspapers: *Daily News* and *Sunday News* owned by the government, and *Uhuru* and *Mzalendo* owned by the ruling party. "Scandals were published, and if the numbers were adding up, the president removed those who were implicated," commented Tagalile *(A Tagalile 2020, personal communication, 23 December)*.

Another veteran journalist I spoke with is Ndimara Tegambwage. He recalled the time when he ran a series of investigative articles concerning hidden maize in Ruvuma region while the country needed the staple food. He was working for *Uhuru*, the ruling party's newspaper, and they ran the articles for several days. "Because the articles implicated regional and district officials, my editor decided not to publish the last one that was supposed to appear on a Sunday, worried that it could cause us problems." But when the article did not appear, officials who identified themselves as being from the State House went to the newspaper offices and asked why the last article of the series had not been published. They then asked for a copy of it and afterwards all regional and district leaders implicated in the scandal were removed from office. "So, you see, even though my editor was hesitant to publish the article, the government wanted the article to be published and action be taken," *(N Tegambwage 2020, personal communication, 17 December).*

Even though President Nyerere's era was a time when Tanzania was under a single-party system with no independent press, the two respondents described it as a time when transparency and

[13] Sadly, Attilio Tagalile passed away in July 2021, seven months after this interview

[14] 'Mwalimu' is the Kiswahili term for teacher. Tanzania's first president was a teacher and people continue referring the title to him until this date.

freedom of expression were respected. Journalists were able to use the same media outlets to expose and criticise, albeit those outlets being owned by the government and the ruling party.

6.2.2 The 'over-freedom' of expression

During the succeeding administration that was led by President Ali Hassan Mwinyi, Tanzania went through the democratisation process. This was a time when the country re-introduced multi-party politics, and with it, the free press[15]. The respondents who had worked during the era had different views on the presence of transparency and freedom of expression at the time. For instance, Attilio Tagalile remarked that for President Mwinyi, freedom of expression had come as an accident. "He was not a person that you could say brought the freedom deliberately. No. This was a person who was pushed by the hardliners in Zanzibar to be president, so when he became president, he just let things be." Tagalile however admitted that during President Mwinyi's era the media flourished, the independent press was introduced, and newspapers wrote everything and anything. However, he insisted, it was not a deliberate act by the president to make sure that there was freedom of expression.

Another respondent, Dr Hellen Kijo-Bisimba, also agreed that President Mwinyi's era was full of freedom. As a human rights activist, she pointed out this was a time when things had just been allowed, and a time when even Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), including the Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC) where she was Executive Director, had started to operate. "People were still getting into knowing how all this works; the President himself was a person who didn't really care about how things should go. So, President Mwinyi's era was just a start of things in the country," *(H Kijo-Bisimba 2020, personal communication, 29 December).* This concurs with Tagalile's view that it was not a deliberate act of ensuring the protection of the good governance prerequisites.

Research and Communications Expert, Dr Joyce Bazira, narrated how she had started working as a journalist for the private media during the last years of President Mwinyi's era. "It was a time when people were craving a diversity of views, a diversity of voices, and getting those things that were 'behind the curtains.' There was freedom of expression, and I must add that there was over-freedom. People were saying whatever they felt they had to say, newspapers published a lot to the point that sometimes you asked yourself: haven't they really gone overboard with this?" she remarked. Dr Bazira added: "I used to see published stories that could make a person unable to

[15] A more detailed account of the democratisation process and the free press is on Chapter 4 Good Governance and Freedom of Expression: The Case of Tanzania.

sleep. It was too much freedom. I also saw the determination and commitment of journalists at the time. And because there was a lot of freedom, there was transparency as well because leaders knew that if they weren't transparent, the media would reveal everything" *(J Bazira 2020, personal communication, 18 December).*

Another respondent, Simon Mkina, who is a publisher and managing editor of Mawio Newspapers recalled the time when he had started working as a journalist, also during the final years of President Mwinyi's administration. "During that time people could say anything and journalists could write anything without any repercussions. Newspapers would write stories that implicated the government and others that implicated the president himself, and the following day you never heard the editor being arrested or being ordered by the government to explain themselves." Mkina provided an example of the Loliondo Gate scandal that was published in a newspaper called *Mfanyakazi* by journalist Stan Katabalo. The newspaper ran a series of investigative stories on the scandal to the point that people were afraid of what might happen to the newspaper itself. "But you would never hear those journalists or editors were being harassed or arrested. There were no threats against them or anything like that" *(S Mkina 2020, personal communication, 24 December).*

Narrations of those respondents who had worked during President Mwinyi's administration suggest that even though the media landscape flourished during this time, together with the freedom to speak and expose, this freedom came with a price. As Rioba (2008) reveals, even though the private press started to concentrate on issues related to corruption, embezzlement of funds and abuse of power, it was also characterised by both structural and ethical lapses.

6.2.3 The right to transparency

While the independent media was reintroduced under President Mwinyi's administration, the 'over-freedom' lasted for a few years as a new administration came in, this time led by a former editor, Benjamin Mkapa. It was this time when whilst the media continued to flourish, the existing media laws and regulations were also put into practise. However, all the respondents agreed that this was a time when transparency also flourished. One of them, Absalom Kibanda, admitted that one could not talk about transparency in Tanzania without mentioning President Mkapa. Kibanda, who is Senior Editor and Head of Communications for Media Brain, recalled the president's "*Ukweli na Uwazi*" (truth and transparency) doctrine, and how he did his best to uphold it *(A Kibanda 2020, personal communication, 14 December)*.

Another respondent, Ansbert Ngurumo, who is Editor in Chief for *Sauti Kubwa*, also agreed with this. "Mkapa promoted transparency and he did his best. I say this because if he wasn't transparent, even I wouldn't have been able to write the articles that I used to write. He was the first president under a multi-party system, and he respected the aspect of diversity and plurality." Ngurumo explained that under Mkapa's presidency a lot of media organisations were established and a lot of people from other professions became journalists. He added: "This was a time when teachers and lawyers became journalists. They decided to become journalists because they knew that there was a future in the profession. President Mkapa made sure that he set the foundations of freedom of expression and transparency." According to Ngurumo, the only issue with Mkapa was his criticism to the media, which however, was not intimidating. "Sometimes when we wrote negatively about him, he would respond harshly and vent his feelings, but in no way was he intimidating or threatening. It just made us know that what we had reported had touched him, and as a human being it was alright for him to sometimes get angry" *(A Ngurumo 2021, personal communication, 13 February).*

Attilio Tagalile was also of the same opinion, arguing that President Mkapa had done his best in promoting transparency and freedom of expression. "And unlike his predecessor, with him this was deliberate. What I see with Mkapa is that there was a deliberate effort to ensure that the media was free, even though he had a very low opinion of the media. He used to say that we do not investigate, we do not read…which was true."

Another respondent, Deodatus Balile, also agreed with what his colleagues had said about President Mkapa. "Yes, Mkapa used to criticise us a lot," said the Managing Editor of Jamhuri Media Limited and Chairman of Tanzania Editors Forum (TEF). "Despite that, he used to also listen to us, invite journalists to the State House where we would ask him questions and he would respond. Every month end he had an address to the nation; he tried to be transparent" *(D Balile 2020, personal communication, 15 December).*

Dr Hellen Kijo-Bisimba even admitted that it was during this era that CSOs were able to talk freely, especially since it was a time when there was an independent media, all their criticisms against the government were aired and published. "Mkapa wasn't one to respond to every criticism. Sometimes he would respond through his monthly addresses, but he was not the kind of president who would issue threats or try to intimidate you," she concluded.

However, Simon Mkina reported something a bit different. He pointed out that even though President Mkapa preached transparency and promised to collaborate with the media, he did not take criticism lightly. Mkina explained that sometimes government officials would just plead with you not to attack the president too much; therefore, personal attacks against him and his government started going down. "So, it was like there were two sides of him. One was his soft side which was accommodating the media and promoting transparency, and the other was the one where he criticised the media. But it was neither threatening nor intimidating," insisted Mkina.

I personally worked as a journalist during President Mkapa's era, and the respondents' accounts match with what I too had witnessed during that period. I used to write a regular column that criticised the president and his government when I saw the need to do so, but I never received any threats. However, one day I was approached by a friend who told me that they had been asked to ask me to tone down my criticisms. Nevertheless, I never felt threatened nor intimidated and I continued writing freely.

6.2.4 The president as a friend and foe

Perhaps the only president in Tanzania who appeared to be the friend of the media in the early years of his administration is Jakaya Kikwete. Many viewed him as a friend of the media, and most Tanzanians insist that it was the media that put him into power. Most of the respondents too agreed with this notion, claiming that Kikwete knew how to use the media to his advantage, even though his approach was also destroying the media.

"Kikwete's approach was a bit more dramatic because he wanted to involve us in all his campaigns, especially editors. He wanted the media to be behind him and to help him and his *'mtandao'* (network) group," said Ansbert Ngurumo during the interview. He explained that President Kikwete did continue with his predecessor's approach towards freedom of expression, and he built this image showing that he was a friend of the media. "He actually used the media to even defeat his opponents within the ruling party and win the general elections altogether" (*A Ngurumo 2021, personal communication, 13 February).*

Deodatus Balile agreed that President Kikwete had a special relationship with the media. "He was a true friend. There were times when you could just text him about a situation that was going on and he would call you and ask for some time to check with the minister responsible, or tell you that the minister would call you; and it actually happened," he recalled *(D Balile 2020, personal communication, 15 December)*. Balile explained that Kikwete was so friendly to the point that

whenever he travelled domestically or abroad, he made sure that he was accompanied by journalists and that they had access to any information they needed.

"President Kikwete was very lucky," Simon Mkina explained to me when I interviewed him. "I cannot say the guy is very smart, but he tried to make sure that he was close to the media. He had a team of strategists, people who were monitoring the media landscape and advising on how he was to use the media to win the presidency. For ten years these people were being paid to just study the media and mould Kikwete to become president" *(S Mkina 2020, personal communication, 24 December)*. Mkina admitted that the media played a big role in Kikwete being president. Due to this, it was unlikely to see negative stories about him being published because he was a friend. He had personally helped most of the editors in one way or another, so most of the things written about him and his presidency were good.

"The downside of all this is that a lot of things were not reported during President Kikwete's era. Yes, there were scandals during his presidency, such as Richmond[16] and ESCROW[17], but there was no way that you would see the president linked directly to them. It was only those close to him that were implicated, such as the Prime Minister who was also believed to be his best friend. You would never see the president's name in these scandals, simply because he was a friend of the media," explained Mkina, adding: "So, his era was good in terms of transparency and freedom of expression, but also bad because we as journalists decided not to tell our fellow citizens the truth. Instead, we covered up information because the president was our friend."

Ansbert Ngurumo agreed to this during our interview. He was of the view that it was this friendship that slowly started killing media accountability, because even though there was freedom of expression and the media was free to report, they still could not report negative stories about their 'friend', the president. "So, even though we might think that there was freedom of expression during Kikwete's era, the truth is that there were a lot of things that journalists could not report because of this friendship. He corrupted the media in a way that made people realise that if you wanted to corrupt the media, just make sure that you are close to them. Sit down with editors and make them your friends. Full stop."

[16] The Richmond scandal involved a shell company with no power generation experience being awarded a tender to generate 120 megawatts of gas fired electricity for an investment of about GBP 87 million. This led to the resignation of the Prime Minister, as well as of the Minister for Energy and Minerals.
[17] The Tegeta ESCROW account scandal happened in 2014, where up to GBP560 million was transferred from the Central Bank and distributed illegally among some prominent figures and government officials.

However, it should be remembered that even though President Kikwete was regarded as a friend, most laws governing the media were enacted during his time. Even those acts passed into law after he had retired were processed during his time. Examples include the Media Services Act (2016) and the Cybercrimes Act (2015). Moreover, despite this friendship, there were newspapers that were banned for several days or months. Furthermore, three major incidents against journalists happened during this time. One was of a Channel Ten videographer, Daudi Mwangosi, who was killed by police using a tear gas cannister while conducting his duties. Another one was of Absalom Kibanda, at the time Managing Editor of New Habari, who was attacked outside his house upon coming home from work. There was also an attack at the *Mwanahalisi* newsroom, where the publisher Saed Kubenea and editor Ndimara Tegambwage were assaulted with pangas and acid. All these attacks were linked to the journalists' work. Even though the president himself was not personally implicated in the attacks, those journalists were critical of him and his government.

6.3 The period 2015-2020

The period 2015-2020 is the basis of this study. This is a time when Tanzania got its new president, Dr John Magufuli, who was sworn into office in November of 2015. He was voted back into office for a second term in October 2020, a term that lasted for only four months, as he died on the 17th of March 2021.

President Magufuli came into power at a time when the independent media in Tanzania had existed for more than 20 years, and people were used to speaking out their minds. This was also a time when social media had penetrated the country and about 20 million people were using the Internet. It was a time when citizens did not have to rely on the mainstream media for their voices to be heard or to get information, as social media was also highly used. Despite these technological advancements, the mainstream media was still seen as a reliable source of information.

However, the five years of John Magufuli's presidency have been described by many as the worst in terms of transparency and freedom of expression. Most of the respondents admitted that it was a time when the media felt silenced and threatened. Therefore, they resorted to not adhering to professionalism for fears that their jobs could be in jeopardy and even their lives could be in danger. All respondents were asked to describe the media landscape in Tanzania for the past five years (2015-2020). Some responses that are documented in this section are from the interviews conducted by Ujuzi Era TV and posted on their YouTube Channel.

6.3.1 The president's discontentment

When John Magufuli was campaigning to be the fifth president of Tanzania, he made a promise to the media that he would cooperate with them because they were doing a good job. However, almost one year into his presidency the media started realising that he did not really mean what he had promised. "I remember it was in Karagwe district in 2015 during his campaigns when he said that you guys are burning in the sun working hard; I will make sure that we work hand in hand. One year down the line, he threatened us at the State House and said: *'watch it; you are not all that free.'* And ever since then we have really watched it," recalled Deodatus Balile during our interview *(D Balile 2020, personal communication, 15 December).*

Balile outlined some of the things that happened during this time, such as there being a silent policy for advertisements not to appear in the private press, and government officials such as ministers not wanting to respond to queries. "You could try calling a minister the whole day and they would not pick up your call. This was not the case during the previous administrations, but it is because these ones had impunity and felt that whether they responded to you or not didn't make a difference, nothing would happen to them."

Human rights activist, Dr Hellen Kijo-Bisimba also told me that the media space had shrunk during President Magufuli's era to the point that some media houses decided to close down. "It is because if they tried to publish what really needed to be published, they were punished with fines. On the other hand, when they published what the government wanted published, no one bought their newspapers. Why would I buy a newspaper that doesn't tell me what I expect it to tell me?" She queried, adding: "Let's just say that the mainstream media's freedom had been killed" *(H Kijo-Bisimba 2020, personal communication, 29 December).*

In making a comparison of Magufuli's five years with the previous administrations, Absalom Kibanda had this to tell me: "We used to think that we had little freedom, but today when you compare, specifically starting from November 2015, with the past administrations, you will realise that there has been a drastic shrinking of media space and transparency." He added that the "watch it" that the president told media owners was the first indication of what was about to come as once he said it, all that were present just shrunk. "That was the time when we saw newspapers being banned with others such as *Mwanahalisi* and *Tanzania Daima* being deregistered altogether. And then we started seeing the government-friendly newspapers such as *Jamvi la Habari*, *Tanzanite* and some English ones," he explained *(A Kibanda 2020, personal communication, 14 December).*

Kibanda also pointed out that even though there had always been laws and regulations controlling Tanzania's media, what had happened between 2015 and 2020 was what the first president Julius Nyerere once said that if it happened that Tanzania got a certain kind of president using the current Constitution, that president could have a very different approach than what the country had been used to. Elaborated Kibanda: "So I think that the major issue has to do with the type of leader in place. The past five years in Tanzania have shown that the type of person, how they approach issues, and their opinions are stronger than even the laws and regulations in place."

Ansbert Ngurumo concurred with this during our interview: "This guy [President Magufuli] doesn't believe in something called independence. He does not believe in the rule of law. He's the kind of person who wants to lead the country using his ego and his gut. He doesn't believe in respecting the Constitution, so even the existence of the media itself irritates him if the media did not support him. He is the kind of person who wants to take Tanzania and Tanzanians back to a single-party system that we left 20 years ago. Generally, what is called freedom of expression no longer exists in Tanzania. He said it himself at the State House, 'watch it'."[18]

But when I interviewed journalist and editor Jabir Idrissa, he was of the opinion that even though the media landscape in Tanzania had begun shrinking in the beginning of 2016, it had later reached a point where it became easy. "I say it has become easy because journalists and editors seem to be satisfied with what is happening. They know what stories they can write and which ones they cannot. So, despite all the hurdles and difficulties in 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019, they have decided to give up." He added: "We cannot even practise investigative journalism. You just try looking for a newspaper and looking for an investigative story; you will never find it. Newspapers cannot sell anymore. We have reached a point where media outlets decide to ban themselves. So, in short, the major role of the mainstream media is no longer there, and this is a major blow because it means that even the government itself does not benefit from the media's contribution of revealing corruption. When you look at the situation it's as if there is no corruption anymore. But it is there and it is huge, but who will talk about it? This is where we are right now" (*J Idrissa 2020, personal communication, 18 December).*

Veteran journalist Pili Mtambalike[19] also talked about the lack of investigative journalism, arguing that what had happened in the five years between 2015 and 2020 was not journalism at all. She is

[18] The quote is written in simple present tense, as the interview took place in January 2021, before President Magufuli died in March 2021

[19] Pili Mtambalike's interview was with Ujuzi Era TV, posted on their YouTube channel on 30th April 2021

one of the respondents that I did not interview personally but were interviewed by Ujuzi Era TV. "I think what we were doing could be seen as singing praises," she said in the interview. "We were like a megaphone that only repeated what the leader said. We completely forgot about things like investigative journalism, and I think this happened mostly because of the administration in power that did not like seeing journalism being practised freely" *(Ujuzi Era TV, 2021).*

I did interview the Executive Secretary of the Media Council of Tanzania (MCT), Kajubi Mukajanga, who talked about President Magufuli's government and the media, arguing that even though the administration had come into power on the platform of transparency and fighting corruption and public waste, it started becoming clear that it was not at all transparent. He explained: "The best way to measure the transparency of an administration is to look at its relationship with the media. An administration that invests so much in silencing the media cannot in all honesty say it is promoting transparency, because we all know that the media has the mandate to actually ensure that there is transparency. So, muzzling the media is one way of assuring everybody that you are not all that transparent" *(K Mukajanga 2020, personal communication, 18 December).*

Kajubi further pointed out that the period 2015-2020 was a time when the country had started seeing massive public procurement whose processes were not open not just to the public, but also to the parliament. Then there was the shutdown of newspapers, suspension of radio and TV stations as well as the shutdown of online media. He elaborated: "So, in my opinion, this administration [Magufuli's] has been very selective with its transparency. It has been very selective on what it wants to be exposed and what it doesn't want to be exposed, and one way of assuring this is terrorising the media. If you send fear in the newsrooms, you can be sure that the gatekeepers, the watchdog itself is silenced, and so you can do a lot of things in darkness."

However, another respondent, Rosemary Mwakitwange, had a different opinion. Ms. Mwakitwange who is a media stakeholder and was once the CEO of New Habari, disagreed with the term "shrinking media space." Instead, she remarked that there was lack of professionalism in journalism. She explained that there was so much room to write other stories, but journalists tended to rely on only one part and did not look for opportunities to look for stories elsewhere (*R Mwakitwange 2020, personal communication, 19 December).*

Fausta Musokwa[20], an Interim Executive Director for Tanzania Media Foundation (TMF) at the time of the interview, concurred with Ms. Mwakitwange's stance. She argued that even though those said five years were reported to be the most challenging ones in Tanzania's media landscape, there was a need for journalists themselves to understand the situation they were in and understand how not to put themselves in trouble. In the interview conducted by Ujuzi Era TV and posted on their YouTube channel, she elaborated: "I feel that there was more fear during this time. However, some people had not even faced any threats but were just gripped with fear because of what they had heard from or seen from their colleagues. So, this led to some journalists believing that they could not perform their duties, even though nothing really had happened to them personally" *(Ujuzi Era TV, 2021).*

When I interviewed Ndimara Tegambwage who has also been a media trainer and mentor for many years, he agreed that for any journalist who loved their work and wanted to really practise it, challenges that emerged under different government administrations only gave them the opportunity to do something different than before. "It makes them think more and come up with solutions that would help them perform under those same challenging situations. Besides, in this current situation they can even get into social media where it is not easy to silence someone even if you wanted to," he explained.

6.3.2 Threats, crackdowns and fear

One of the things that kept being repeated during the interviews was the word 'fear'. This emerged in almost every conversation, with some respondents narrating how they personally had faced persecution during the period 2015-2020, and others recounting the threats that had been aimed at them personally, or through their employers.

Human Rights Activist, Dr Hellen Kijo-Bisimba recounted an incident that had happened when she was the LHRC Executive Director. It was after the councillors' elections had taken place in December of 2016 and the LHRC, who were one of the observers, produced a report and called a press conference. "What happened is that after that press conference, five main TV stations were sent letters by the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA) ordered to explain why disciplinary measures should not be taken against them for reporting an unbalanced story. But

[20] Fausta Musokwa's interview was with Ujuzi Era TV, posted on their YouTube channel on 26th April 2021. She was TMF's Interim Executive Director at the time but has since moved on to another organisation.

although that was an observation report, they were reprimanded" *(H Kijo-Bisimba 2020, personal communication, 29 December).*

Dr Kijo-Bisimba further explained that three of the media stations told TCRA that they had done nothing wrong, while two apologised. However, all five were fined, with those that had apologised ordered to each pay 7.5 million Tanzanian shillings (equivalent to GBP2,275), with those who had not apologised ordered to pay twice as much. "I was the one who spoke at the press conference, but neither I nor LHRC were told whether we had breached any law or spread any lies. Instead, the media was punished for it," she said, adding that ever since then journalists did not want to cover their activities. The downside of this, remarked the human rights activist, was that it reached a point where most of the media decided to turn into praising the president, the ruling party and the government, to the extent that most people stopped watching TV.

During my interview with Jabir Idrissa, he also recalled the time when he was editor for the weekly *Mwanahalisi* newspaper and how they used to receive phone calls from the newspaper regulator every time the newspaper was published. "Our offices were in Kinondoni, so each week after the newspaper came out, I used to move closer to the city centre because I knew that I would be called by MAELEZO to go and explain why we published a certain story" *(J Idrissa 2020, personal communication, 18 December).* Their newspaper, he claimed, used to write what others did not, something that also did not please the government.

The removal of some journalists from newsrooms was also something that the respondents mentioned when I interviewed them. For instance, Simon Mkina admitted that there were people who had been removed from the newsroom simply because the president did not want them to be there. "Some people had to leave their jobs or move to another department that had nothing to do with journalism, just so their columns could stop appearing or so that they could no longer make editorial decisions" *(S Mkina 2020, personal communication, 24 December).*

Mkina explained that the fear that had gripped newsrooms had led to some journalists being too afraid to publish a story, even if it was a very normal story with all the facts in it. He narrated of a time when he visited one newsroom and found the editors arguing over whether a story should be on the front page or inside pages, just because the president had been portrayed negatively. "It was a very simple story, and they had all the facts, but at the end of the day you had to think of how tomorrow would turn out…will I be arrested? Will the newspaper be banned?"

Absalom Kibanda was in agreement to the fear aspect. He told me that most media owners were afraid because after President Magufuli's warning that they should not think they had that kind of freedom, he had also issued another warning that there were two newspapers whose days were numbered. "He never mentioned these newspapers, but after a few days *Tanzania Daima* and *Mwanahalisi* were banned; *Mawio* was also banned. So, we just kept asking ourselves if those were among the two newspapers that he had talked about earlier." Kibanda added: "What I'm trying to say is that despite the laws and the orders being given around, actual actions that have been taken against the media have increased fear. There are things that caused journalists to stop being professional; there are those who have made the media stop being innovative; and there are things that have just got them really scared. You see the media being fined, radio and television stations being banned from airing, even online television channels have now been banned…all these have created fear" *(A Kibanda 2020, personal communication, 14 December).*

Another senior journalist I interviewed, but whose identity I have decided to protect, likened President Magufuli's approach towards the media as that of former Ugandan dictator Idi Amin. "This is the worst. I never expected that one day…you know this, you know the media situation the way it is right now is what I had been reading in the 70s and in the 80s. I thought this is something that would never happen in my own country. I was a very close follower of Uganda during Idi Amin, and this is exactly what happened during Amin's time. In fact, this guy [President Magufuli] is not coming with anything new. Somebody who had been following the Ugandan situation during that time, this is exactly what he's doing," he explained, adding: "Calling journalists and threatening them, that is what Amin used to do. Amin used to watch TV, listen to the radio and then threaten. Tanzania has never had this even during Mwalimu. Imagine, he calls people, he threatens them, and some have even disappeared, such as Azory Gwanda [21] " *(Anonymous 2020, personal communication).*

Absalom Kibanda is a good example of journalists who had to stop writing. Having been the Group Managing Editor of New Habari 2006 Limited, he was forced to stop writing his famous column '*Tuendako*' just because someone in the government was not happy with it. "I have been writing that column since 2007, but I had to stop in 2018 because it was ordered that I stop writing. Not only that, I also had to leave the newsroom because of what was claimed that I was too critical.

[21] The disappearance of journalist Azori Gwanda is explained in Chapter 4 of this thesis.

Imagine phone calls are made to the newsroom and you are being told to stop writing just because it doesn't please someone," he explained.

Veteran journalist Edda Sanga[22] who was interviewed by Ujuzi Era TV also admitted that journalism had died during the period 2015-2020. She believed that fear was the reason for this. "Journalists were afraid that maybe if they wrote things that were correcting the government, their newspapers could be shut down because that option was actually possible. So, instead of being seen as traitors, they decided to engage more in chats and comedy, things that some of us saw had nothing to do with journalism. There was no journalism during that period, and it was really annoying and embarrassing," she lamented *(Ujuzi Era TV, 2021).*

However, veteran journalist Ndimara Tegambwage insisted when I interviewed him that despite the challenges that were there, it was important for journalists to find alternatives and continue doing their job instead of complaining of fear. "I always say, there is always an alternative way to put your message across. You cannot go on doing the same things you were doing while the situation has changed, and you cannot keep on being afraid. Find a way of putting it without offending anyone and your message will be sent across. But if you go on with the old way of reporting that you are used to, you might fail." Ndimara went further to say that sometimes some people might be complaining of fear while in fact they lack the skills, and thus try to protect their own interests. He elaborated: "We have to define fear, because sometimes fear could actually mean inadequacy. It's that you don't have enough competence to take up a particular issue, and due to your inability, you decide to withdraw while claiming that there is fear" *(N Tegambwage 2020, personal communication, 17 December).*

6.3.3 Personal persecutions

One of the things that caused a general fear among the Tanzanian media was the personal experiences that some journalists had faced during the period 2015-2020. Despite their newspapers being either banned or deregistered, some also faced criminal charges and had to spend some time in custody before their cases being taken to court. Four of the respondents that I interviewed: Jabir Idrissa, Simon Mkina, Maxence Melo and Ansbert Ngurumo narrated the personal suffering that they had gone through during this time. The following are their accounts:

[22] Edda Sanga's interview was with Ujuzi Era TV, and posted on their YouTube channel on 18th April 2021

Jabir Idrissa

In 2016 when Jabir Idrissa was the editor for *Mawio* newspaper, he wrote an article quoting one of the main opposition figures who is also a prominent lawyer. The article was about the general election results that were cancelled in Zanzibar, and it demanded that Maalim Seif Shariff Hamad, who was the opposition party's presidential candidate, be named as the winner of the presidential election. Not only was the newspaper deregistered, but also the Police Force started looking for him and others involved.

He decided to present himself at the central police station where he was escorted by other journalists and editors. He was interrogated and was forced to spend a night in custody for the first time in his life. He and his publisher were later taken to court, but their case was still pending at the time of this interview. Since then, Jabir had not been able to find a job and was living a very difficult life. "I am now jobless, and I had to move back to Zanzibar. Not that I don't want to work, but because I am unemployable. I have been labelled as a stubborn person, and media companies are afraid that if they give me a job, they could be reprimanded for it," he told me, declaring: "I am a victim of suppression of freedom of expression" *(J Idrissa 2020, personal communication, 18 December).*

Simon Mkina

Simon Mkina is the publisher of *Mawio* newspaper. He remembered well how events had unfolded after the newspaper published the story about the Zanzibar elections. Mkina told me that on 17th January 2016, he heard on the radio and television that the publisher and the editor of *Mawio* newspaper were wanted by the police. He decided to go to the central police station and present himself, where he spent a night in custody and was released on bail the following day. "So, they gave me a condition that I was supposed to report to the police station every single day, from Monday to Sunday, and I did this for six months. This means that every morning at 8am I had to be there, sign in my name and leave. I wasn't even allowed to travel outside Dar es Salaam" *(S Mkina 2020, personal communication, 24 December).*

After reporting at the police station for six months, the case was finally taken to court. However, the case had been pending ever since because one of the accused – who was also the main source of information for the story – was unable to attend court hearings. "So, we go to court at least each

month where the case is mentioned, and it continues to be postponed. We don't know when it will come to an end," he said.[23]

Despite having a case against them, Mkina also decided to take the government to court since it had deregistered the newspaper while the law in place at the time was The Newspapers Act of 1976 that did not allow deregistration, rather gave the minister responsible power to ban a newspaper. The High Court ruled in their favour, and they continued publishing from January 2017. However, after only three months back in print, it was banned by the government. "This time the newspaper was banned for two years after we had written an investigative story on mining contracts that were not benefiting the country, rather benefiting only investors," he explained. Even though the story did not implicate former presidents Benjamin Mkapa and Jakaya Kikwete, their pictures had been used on the front page, citing that their governments were the ones that had entered into these contracts. "President Magufuli didn't like this. When the newspaper came out that morning, in the afternoon he said that we should let these elders [former presidents] rest. After he had said this, that same day the Minister for Information banned the newspaper for two years," recalled Mkina. They took the government to court again and won, with the court stating that the ban was unconstitutional. But while they were preparing to start publishing again, the Media Services Act was passed, and one of the requirements was for all newspapers to be registered all over again. Up until the time this interview had taken place, they had not been able to secure registration.[24]

Maxence Melo

Jamii Forums is a social media platform in Tanzania. On 13 December 2016, its Founder and Executive Director, Maxence Melo, was arrested for what was called failing to cooperate with the police. This was after he had refused to reveal the identities of the platform's members. "The police wanted to know the identities of people who were revealing misconducts. So, we asked them what these people had done, and you know police do not like being questioned since they are the ones who normally question people. We then asked them what law had our members breached and they told us that it was none of our business to know that," he explained.

[23] In September 2021, Tanzania's Director of Public Prosecution (DPP) told the court that he had no intentions of continuing with the charges against the accused, hence finally bringing an end to the case that lasted for five years.

[24] On 10 February 2022, the government lifted a ban on four newspapers and issued them with publishing licenses. The newspapers are *Mawio, Mwanahalisi, Mseto* and *Tanzania Daima*.

Melo decided to present himself to the police station after hearing on the news that he was wanted for questioning. But when he got there, he was arrested. He was even taken to Keko Prison where he spent three nights, and three cases were opened against him, all citing that he had breached the Cybercrimes Act of 2015. On 1st June 2018 he was acquitted of one of the cases. The other two went on, and in April 2020 he was convicted and sentenced to one year in prison or to pay a fine. "I paid the fine, but I am not happy because there still was a conviction," he lamented.

Melo reported that the court ruling quoted Section 32 (1) of the Cybercrimes Act, which states: "Where the disclosure of data is required for a criminal investigation or the prosecution of an offence, a police officer in charge of a police station or a law enforcement officer of a similar rank may issue an order to any person in possession of such data compelling him to disclose such data" (Cybercrimes Act, 2015). He still wants to appeal the ruling but had not been able to do so since the court had not yet given him a copy of the written judgement that would enable him to file for an appeal. During the time of his court cases, Melo appeared in court 151 times. He said to me: "I had to appear in court almost every week. So, during these four years I appeared 151 times. They make sure you go to court every week" *(M Melo 2020, personal communication, 15 December).*

Ansbert Ngurumo

Sauti Kubwa Editor in Chief, Ansbert Ngurumo's story is different from the rest. He has never been arrested but had to flee the country because he felt that his life was in grave danger. This was after he had written an article accusing the government of being involved in the assassination attempt of Tundu Lissu, an outspoken opposition politician. Lissu had been attacked by gunmen outside his house in broad daylight but luckily survived. Not only did Ngurumo write a damning article questioning the president's remarks before the assassination attempt, but he also spoke to the press and condemned the abuse of laws after his newspaper, *Mwanahalisi* and another one were banned. "I am now a refugee, according to international laws," Ngurumo commented. He now lives in Sweden after fleeing Tanzania in 2017.

"You know my column *'Maswali Magumu'* that I have been writing for years; and my focus has always been on the president and the presidency as an institution. This is because I realised that our constitution has given too much power to the presidency. Therefore, everything the country goes through has to do with the decision of the president. If a president does good, the country is in safe hands; if a president is hopeless, the country is ruined," he explained. Ngurumo recalled his first personal conversation with President Magufuli at the time when the president was still a

presidential candidate in 2015, after he had criticised him over one of his election promises. "He actually called me personally claiming that he had not really made the promise, rather some people had made it up. He spoke so softly and was not intimidating at all, even though as we finished the conversation, he said that he had forgiven me, as if I had apologised!" (*A Ngurumo 2021, personal communication, 13 February).*

However, Ngurumo's fallout with the president came when he was editor of *Mwanahalisi* newspaper. Through his same column he questioned the government's actions, specifically the president's remarks leading to and after Lissu's assassination attempt. The newspaper was banned. After this he was interviewed by some journalists, and his video went viral on social media where he condemned the media abuse. A few days later he appeared on a TV show where the subject was looking at laws governing the media. He condemned the government for banning newspapers while the Media Services Act did not allow it. "They were still operating under the Newspapers Act of 1976 that had been repealed, and I specifically explained that the current law was there to protect the media, not to supress it. I was very critical, and I also said that we must criticise the government, we must criticise the president and they need to agree that not everyone has to be pleased with the way they govern. We are not forced to love the president and we don't even have to love them. I was very critical, I didn't mince words," recalled Ngurumo. He explained that this was what had caused his refugee status, because after appearing on the TV show, he was warned that his life was in danger. He lived in hiding for some time until he was able to get out of the country and has never returned.

Recounts by the respondents I interviewed suggest that despite the laws and regulations being there ever since during the first president's administration, it was indeed the president who personally decided to implement them and to limit freedom of expression. While President Magufuli had been viewed as a person who implemented the laws in place, Rioba (1996) recalls of a time when President Ali Hassan Mwinyi was leaving office and told journalists that they would live to remember his era. President Mwinyi was quoted as saying:

> "I could not ban these newspapers simply because they had insulted me… I knew by insulting me the publishers were able to sell and by selling their children were able to get food and education" (Rioba, 2008).

According to Rioba, President Mwinyi put forward tolerance and understanding, despite the laws still being restrictive. Conversely, according to respondents that I interviewed, President Magufuli did not tolerate criticism.

6.4 Laws and regulations as a weapon of silence

As evidenced in the previous chapters, laws governing the media did not start in the period of President Magufuli's era. There was already in place the Newspapers Act of 1976 that empowered the minister responsible to ban any news outlet. This law had been in place since the first president Julius Nyerere's administration, and more were added after the independent press was allowed to operate after the democratisation process. However, critiques say that despite the existence of these laws, those who had the mandate of enforcing them were not that strict.

For this part, the respondents were asked of their opinions on the different laws and regulations that had been passed to regulate the media. The laws highlighted were: The Cybercrimes Act (2015), The Media Services Act (2016) and the Electronic and Postal (Online Content) Regulations (2020). All the respondents agreed that despite there being bad laws in the past, such as the repealed Newspapers Act (1976), those enforcing the laws prior to 2015 were a bit tolerant and did not always use them against the media.

Dr. Joyce Bazira, for instance, assured that there had always been what people called bad laws to regulate the media. "They have been there; we have lamented about them a lot and we have even broken them. But before any measures were taken against you, the regulators used to look at the merit of what you had done and then they decided against any measures because what you published was true," she explained. She added: "There was tolerance, and even if there was some kind of punishment for breaking that law, it never targeted everybody, but only those who had really broken the law" *(J Bazira 2020, personal communication, 18 December).*

This, however, changed during President Magufuli's administration, whereby the laws that were in place were really used to control the media. During the period 2015-2020, most laws were used to silence the media, even when the media was not entirely wrong.

MCT Executive Secretary Kajubi Mukajanga told me of his initial thoughts when John Magufuli became president: "We have had bad laws for some time, and some were not put into use. But I told my colleagues when Magufuli came into power that those laws which were not used will now be used to the hilt. They 'll be used to the hilt. Why, because President Magufuli had shown from the past that he was ready to apply the law…and sure enough he was sworn-in in November 2015, and in January 2016 he started banning newspapers. It was just two months he started banning newspapers" *(K Mukajanga 2020, personal communication, 18 December).*

6.4.1 The Media Services Act (2016)

The Media Services Act is the current law used to regulate the media in Tanzania. It had replaced the Newspapers Act that had been in place for 40 years. Mukajanga explained that when the president met with editors at the only meeting he had with them at the State House, they asked him about the then law in making – the Media Services Act – as there were some provisions that they thought were not favourable. He told them that he would not interfere with the legislative process and that once they bring the papers before him, he would assent and sign the bill into law. "That is what happened," said Mukajanga, adding "So, there's a lot of challenges regarding freedom of expression in this country, and most of the challenges come from the laws."

Mukajanga further explained that it was not MCT's style to use courts to settle matters, mainly because of two reasons: first, because the legal process could take a very long time, and second, because court processes could be quite costly. However, they had to resort to that method because all other methods seemed not to work. MCT went to the High Court as well as to the East African Court of Justice to challenge some of the provisions of the laws and regulations. He elaborated: "Going to court has exposed another element of this administration [Magufuli's], which is not pleasant at all. Impunity. This administration has shown that it doesn't care at all about the so-called rule of law. It doesn't, and it can disregard court rulings when they do not suit them" *(K Mukajanga 2020, personal communication, 18 December).*

The MCT challenged 17 sections of the Media Services Act. The judges agreed with them and ruled that the government should either amend or strike them out, arguing that they constrained freedom of the press and freedom of expression. The Court further ruled that the provisions were against the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania as well as the values enshrined in the treaty for the formation of the East African Community. However, said Kajubi, the government refused to do so. "After declaring that it was going to appeal, the government just kept quiet. They never appealed and they just continue using the same law with the same provisions which had been struck down by the regional court. So that level of impunity shows you how far the administration can go to constrain freedom of expression and freedom of the media," he concluded.

Ansbert Ngurumo gave an example of the time when the newspaper to which he was editor, *Mwanahalisi*, was banned. He explained that when the government banned *Mwanahalisi* in 2017, the Newspapers Act that gave the minister responsible for information the power to ban any newspaper had already been repealed. In place was the Media Services Act that did not give that kind of mandate, but they were still punished using a law that was no longer in place. "But then

they continued to behave using an old law, which is not right. According to the new law, it is not possible that you, the offended, are the one taking action and ordering the ban. You are supposed to report me to another authority where we both lay down our case and whoever wins is given their due," he explained *(A Ngurumo 2021, personal communication, 13 February).*

According to Ngurumo, the Media Services Act did not give any powers to the Minister or the Information Services Director to ban a newspaper. It gave them the authority to register newspapers and any complaints should be handled by another body, something that was not being done. "The law is very clear on this, but the administration behaves as if the Newspapers Act is still operational. While former presidents Mkapa and Kikwete bullied the media by using the law that existed at the time, this one [Magufuli] bullies the media by breaking the law that exists."

The Tanzania Editors Forum Chairman and Managing Editor of Jamhuri Media Limited, Deodatus Balile, noted that there was a difference between the repealed Newspapers Act of 1976 and the current Media Services Act of 2016. Balile, who also hods a Law Degree, explained that the difference was that the powers had shifted from the Minister responsible for information to the Director of the Tanzania Information Services (Maelezo). He admitted that the current law was a good law, but the only problem was that it was not being enforced as it should.

His elaboration was that the law required the establishment of an independent media council, which, among other things, should include a complaints committee to deal with print media content complaints as stipulated in Section 26 (1). Section 27 (1) states that a person who is not satisfied with the award by the Council may appeal to the High Court. "But despite the law being very clear on this, the independent media council has not been formed yet. If the Council were there, it could not have been easy for Maelezo to just decide to ban a newspaper, because the Council would have been the one handling all complaints, with both parties also having a chance to appeal the Council's decision." While there is a Media Council of Tanzania in the country, Balile pointed out that it was not formed by the government under that particular law as it had been operational since President Mkapa's era. What should have been done, explained the journalist cum lawyer, was for another independent media council to be formed under the current law. This, however, has not been done.

Balile added that because of this discrepancy, newspapers such as *Tanzania Daima*, whose licences were withdrawn by Maelezo could not even go to court because the law required them to deal with the Council first. The only way for them to get justice, he explained, was by informing the Court that there was no Council, and this was when the court could use its inherent powers. "So even

though the law is a good one unlike the previous Newspapers Act, and it is very clear in all areas, the fact that this Council has not yet been formed is making it a bit toothless" *(D Balile 2020, personal communication, 15 December).*

For some media owners, the Media Services Act has not been friendly to them. After Simon Mkina won his case against the government's ban of his newspaper – *Mawio* – the Media Services Act became operational. According to the law, all newspapers had to be registered all over again; that meant that even those newspapers that were already in existence had to seek registration again. However, despite asking to register their newspaper and fulfilling all the requirements as the law stipulates, *Mawio* had not been registered up to the time of the interview in December 2020, meaning that it had not been published since 2017.

Mkina explained the uncertainty: "Whenever I ask for reasons as to why we have not been registered yet, all they tell me is that it is still being dealt with. Unfortunately, the law does not give a timeframe as to how long the process of registering a newspaper should take." Since it had been three years [by 2020] since they had asked for registration, their lawyers had suggested that they go to court so that a ruling could be issued forcing the government to register their newspaper.

6.4.2 The Cybercrimes Act (2015)

Most of the details concerning the Cybercrimes Act have been explained in Chapter 4. It was signed into law at a time when Tanzanians' use of the Internet as well as social media was on the rise. This was a law that was intended to curb online crime such as child pornography, but instead it had mostly been used to curb freedom of expression.

When I interviewed senior editor Absalom Kibanda, he was of the view that some laws in Tanzania, specifically the Cybercrimes Act, were implemented selectively. He explained that the bad thing about this law was that only those who criticised government leaders were arrested. On the other hand, he pointed out, those who posted insults against opposition politicians were left without even being questioned.

Kibanda explained how the law had been used against people who did not even insult the president, rather just criticised him [Magufuli], arguing that it felt as if it was there to protect only one person. "If you hear how opposition leaders such as Freeman Mbowe and Zitto Kabwe are being insulted, you wonder where the Cybercrimes Act is. Had they been fair, free and fair, cutting across a level

playing field, we would have said ah, we are good for it" *(A Kibanda 2020, personal communication, 14 December).*

The issue that Kibanda raised during our interview coincides with the analysis of Chapter 5, which suggested that most Tanzanians thought that people who criticised the president should be arrested for insulting the president. The discussions in Chapter 5, whose results originated from findings of a survey conducted in Tanzania, argue that the issue of respect in African culture could be a reason for the Cybercrimes Act being used against critics of the president.

Another issue that Kibanda raised was that even though the idea of the Cybercrimes Act was good, it was not participatory in the sense that it only controlled those who were in Tanzania, while the Internet had no boundaries. "Unless we come up with universal cybercrime laws and regulations the same way as there are with illegal drugs and child labour, the laws cannot really work. How can you control what is being posted on social media, for instance? There are some platforms that have more members than three continents put together."

Dr Joyce Bazira was of the opinion that the law had created fear among people. She explained that the passing of the Cybercrimes Act had caused people to be afraid of even making comments on online chat groups such as WhatsApp, the widely used social media platform in the country. "It has reached a point where you may receive a warning from your group members if you have commented on something that is against the government. This has caused people to decide not to make any comments or contribute in some discussions because of the warnings" *(J Bazira 2020, personal communication, 18 December).*

Perhaps the one person who has been mostly affected by the Cybercrimes Act is Jamii Forums Founder and Executive Director, Maxence Melo, who had been convicted for refusing to reveal the identities of the social media platform members. He explained that the Cybercrimes Act was actually being used to invade people's privacy. Because of this, in March of 2016 Melo had filed a case at the High Court of Tanzania challenging Section 32 and Section 38. Section 32 of the Act allows a law enforcement officer to order any person in possession to disclose data that is required for the purposes of a criminal investigation. Similarly, Section 38 of the Act allows the police to go to court for their motion to be heard while the accused is arrested and sent directly to prison. "I decided to go to court to challenge these two sections because I had already received at least 12 letters asking for personal data of our members." said Melo *(M Melo 2020, personal communication, 15 December).*

Melo explained that while law enforcement officers used Section 32 and 38 against service providers such as Jamii Forums, Section 39 of the Act states that a service provider shall not monitor the data which they are transmitting or is in store. "In this case, it is not my responsibility to go looking for facts. If members decide to discuss a certain topic, I am not responsible to go searching how factual it is. But the authorities are forcing us to check the facts, questioning us on the authenticity of something that has been posted by our members," said Melo, adding: "If there is any unlawful activity, it is not my responsibility to monitor. They wrote this law themselves."

According to the Jamii Forums[25] founder, when the Cybercrimes Act was enacted, most people knew that it was targeting their platform. However, what was happening was that even though he had personally been convicted under the law, he was not the only one who had suffered from it. "Some NGOs have suffered under this law; individuals have been arrested under this law; and even some politicians who were in the forefront of passing this law thinking that it would only hurt Jamii Forums, have also suffered from it," he pointed out. "Let me say this, there is nowhere where it has been announced that a real criminal has been arrested using the Cybercrimes Act. We only hear of those who have criticised the president, those who have criticised the government, and those accused of insulting the president…this law is not saving the Republic, it is used to curb freedom of expression."

6.4.3 Electronic and Postal (Online Content) Regulations (2020)

The Electronic and Postal (Online Content) Regulations were issued by the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA). This was the second batch of online content regulations, as there was initially the Electronics and Postal (Online Content) Regulations of 2018. The regulations apply to online service providers, internet service providers, application services licensees, online content users and any other related online content (EPOCA, 2020).

Tanzania Editors Forum (TEF) Chairman, Deodatus Balile, remarked that these regulations had been a real blow to freedom of expression. "The thing is, there are technological advances every time. So, you might make a law or regulation in the morning for either Facebook, Twitter or Instagram, but in the afternoon something new might pop up that wasn't part of the law. Different software emerges every day, and so when we see regulations being changed all the time you wonder what the purpose of all this is."

[25] The next chapter gives a more in-depth portrayal of Jamii Forums and its work

Balile noted that these regulations had made people afraid of their own shadows, especially since most did not even know what their rights were; therefore, they just waited to hear what the TCRA would say before doing their work. He observed: "People are afraid because laws and regulations are being enacted every day. Imagine right now we are being told that the use of VPN [Virtual Private Network] is criminal. Sometimes you wonder if they know what they are criminalising because that is an end-to-end user, there can't even be a third-party giving testimony that they saw you using VPN" *(D Balile 2020, personal communication, 15 December).*

Similarly, Jamii Forums Founder Maxence Melo explained how the regulations of 2018 had caused their platform to be offline for some time. He clarified that the regulations required them to be registered by the TCRA, and when they applied for registration, it took 21 days to finally get it. "I think they realised later that by not giving us registration, other Jamii Forums started to emerge. There were platforms that were just popping up, copying our style; they realised that people needed somewhere to breathe and rest. As I always say, if you don't give food to your children, they will go eat at the neighbour's" *(M Melo 2020, personal communication, 15 December).*

Melo talked about how the regulations had continued to be tightened. He cited the 2018 regulations that had a provision in which if the TCRA required some information or explanation from service providers, they had up to 12 hours to present it. Despite the international practice stipulating that service providers should be given up to 72 hours, the TCRA enacted new regulations in 2020, this time giving them up to only 2 hours to present whatever was required of them by the authority.

The Jamii Forums founder explained that the online content regulations had been enacted to control, and not to regulate. Because of the regulations, he argued, the number of bloggers in Tanzania had gone down and even people who wished to express themselves on social media platforms were practising self-censorship as they did not know what was right and what was wrong. "It's not that people are happy, not at all. They are sad but they have decided to live with it. But what I want to say is that the government's strategy of controlling like this will not last. It can work for five to ten years, but eventually it will backfire."

MCT Executive Secretary Kajubi Mukajanga also talked of the online content regulations as well as the Radio and Television Broadcasting Content Regulations: "They are all designed in a way to control, to restrain freedom of expression. We have done quite a number of analyses, we have

engaged parliamentarians, the government itself to no avail" *(K Mukajanga 2020, personal communication, 18 December).*

6.4.4 Ignorance in knowledge of the laws

Despite laws and regulations guiding the media being there for quite some time, some respondents argued that there was also a possibility that some practitioners had not familiarised themselves with these laws or were using their existence as an escape from professionalism.

Ndimara Tegambwage said that some journalists did not even know the rights that the Constitution has warranted them. He gave an example of a situation where he was a co-trainer for a journalism course and his colleague asked participants if they had ever heard of the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania. All of them raised their hands. When he asked whether any of them had seen the Constitution, there were less hands. When he asked whether anyone had read the Constitution, there were no more hands raised. When he further asked whether anyone had not only read, but also went deep into and understood the provisions of the Constitution, all eyes were staring at the floor. "So, as you can see, the lack of knowledge for things that could actually save you, deprives you even of the rudimental competency that you had. You can just end up complaining about something you don't even know," he noted *(N Tegambwage 2020, personal communication, 17 December).*

Jamii Forums founder Maxence Melo agreed to this, likening excuses of some journalists to those of people who did not want to get married. "Some married people wish they were not married, claiming that marriage is too hard because of cheating and other factors. When a person who is not married hears this, they say they don't want to get married, while in actual fact it is just an excuse," he explained. "These are the same excuses that we hear from media people as most of them do not even know the laws that regulate them, yet complain that they are bad laws. They always cite the Media Services Act. When you ask them, which provision is bad, they say there is one that requires them to at least have a Diploma in their profession…so what is bad about that? When you ask them again which other provision is not favourable, they say that they haven't read it, but they just heard that it is a bad law."

Melo narrated that as a service provider, he had made sure that he understood the Cybercrimes Act and knew that there were provisions that protected him, such as Section 39, as explained above. "But with some media people all they do is complain that the law does not protect them, while in actual fact, they haven't even read it". "Let's forget about the laws, just ask them about the

Constitution. They haven't read it. So, the fear of using these laws as an excuse is just putting too much blame on the government. I agree that the laws are not favourable, but not to the extent that people claim," he declared.

While understanding the need to educate media stakeholders of the laws affecting them, the Media Council of Tanzania has decided to go a step further. Executive Secretary Kajubi Mukajanga explained that the MCT was currently engaging with stakeholders in terms of educating them about the laws so that they knew what they said, and what provisions of the laws meant regarding their freedom to practise independent journalism. They were also engaging them to understand what the court ruling meant [the one which the MCT won against the government, as explained earlier] and how they could use the court decisions in their everyday work, and also in defending their work as they proceeded. "Because people are being punished using sections which have been declared null and void, they can't even say that this section has been struck out. This is because they don't even know what it means," he said, adding: "So, we are engaging with them so that they can know the law and make decisions on how to swim with the sharks as it is, you know, when the sharks bite them using the laws, how they can respond and what they can say."

6.5 Conclusion

The media landscape in Tanzania has gone through different development stages over the years, starting from the post-independence era under a single party government to the democratisation era that saw the emergence of the free press. During all this time, transparency and freedom of expression was handled in different ways. Respondents from the in-depth interviews that I conducted agreed that while the first president Julius Nyerere was open to debate, even at a time when the country only had government-owned and party-owned newspapers, his successor, President Ali Hassan Mwinyi, was a bit different. This is because the free press just started under his administration, causing it to be a time when the independent media wanted to prove itself to the public that it could do what the government-owned and party-owned ones could not do. However, this also led to what some respondents have termed as over-freedom, with the president himself being too lenient to those who seemed not abiding by media ethics.

Similarly, respondents agreed that President Benjamin Mkapa and Jakaya Kikwete had done their best in embracing the media and its activities, with the former being hailed as someone who really worked to make sure that his government was transparent and the media was free, despite his low opinion of the media in Tanzania. On the other hand, President Kikwete would always be

remembered as someone who knew how to use the media to his advantage, making sure that he was friends with editors and journalists, meeting with them and travelling with them inside the country and abroad. His tactic of being the media's friend was however criticised by some of the respondents as to having contributed to weakening professionalism. This is because despite the scandals that his government and close allies had been involved in, the media had never implicated the president himself, and instead had tried hard not to taint his image.

This study was entrenched on what had happened in Tanzania between the year 2015 and 2020 under the presidency of John Magufuli. During this period, as almost all respondents narrated, Tanzania's media space had shrunk to the point that journalists had started fearing their own shadows, not knowing whether they were right or wrong in publishing articles that were not favourable to the president and his government. Transparency and freedom of expression had also suffered, and this had gone beyond journalists: the laws and regulations in place had also affected politicians from the opposition, the civil society as well as individuals who had communicated through social media platforms. In a nutshell, Tanzania's media landscape as well as transparency and freedom of expression had significantly shrunk.

The next chapter is a discussion on the use of social media. It analyses how social media had emerged in Tanzania, how it was being used, and the emergence of social media political activists. The chapter also discusses the arguments surrounding social media platforms vis-à-vis the mainstream media, leading to an examination of whether social media could or could not replace mainstream media.

Chapter 7 Social Media vs Mainstream Media: the Debate

7.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the contemporary use of social media in Tanzania. It builds on previous findings [see chapter 6] that suggest that the media landscape in Tanzania had continued to be a shrinking space and that it had been almost completely silenced during the period 2015-2020. The chapter presents and discusses findings that indicate that social media has broken the barriers to freedom of expression. It describes how this study offers an important channel for the renewal and re-invigoration of the declining media landscape.

Beginning with an introduction of Tanzanians' access to and use of the Internet, this chapter interrogates statistics from official bodies such as the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA). This is followed by an analysis of how Tanzanians have been using social media over the past few years, how social media platforms have helped accommodate transparency and freedom of expression such as during the 2020 general elections, and how these platforms have also been regarded as a dumping site for untrue and unbalanced information. The chapter ends with the debate surrounding the use of social media vis-à-vis the mainstream media and how actors from both sides feel the other should be treated.

This chapter aims to answer the question: what conditions would be required for social media to replace mainstream media?

7.2 The Internet and social media use in Tanzania

Even though Tanzania installed its first computer, an ICT 1500, at the Ministry of Finance in 1965, the government's plan to use an ICL 900 to computerise its whole accounting system in the early 1970s failed and caused a heavy loss. After coming under heavy criticism from Parliamentarians and members of the public, the importation of computers and all related equipment to the country was banned through an official announcement in the Government Gazette in 1974 (Mgaya, 1994). The ban was not lifted until 1994 when the country started its democratisation process, with it, allowing the free press (Rioba, 2008). Due to this, Tanzania did not enter the digital world as early as other countries; but when it did, its internet usage continued to grow considerably.

Statistics from the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) in Figure 7.1 illustrate how Tanzania was not among the world's internet users throughout the 1990s, with the trend starting to change in the early 2000. The graph illustrates how individuals from Tanzania's closest neighbour,

Kenya, started using the Internet before 2000, with a sharper increase on the use over the years, compared to Tanzania.

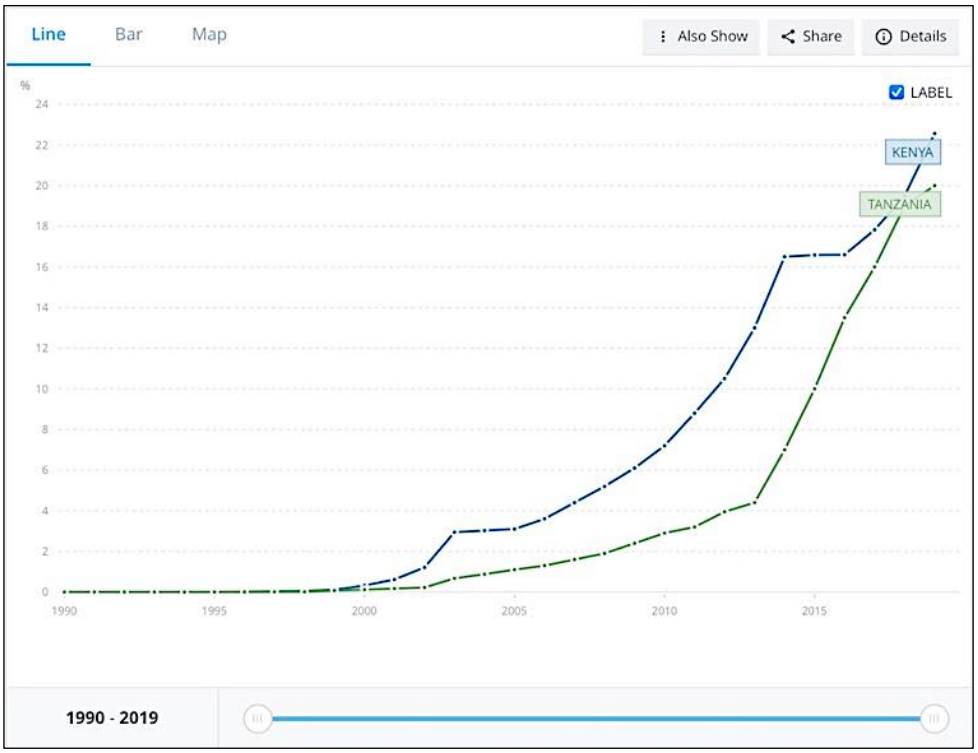


Figure 7.1: Individuals using the Internet in Tanzania and Kenya 1990-2019. Source: ITU.

From 2015 up until 2020, Internet use in Tanzania continued to grow and almost half of the population had access to it.

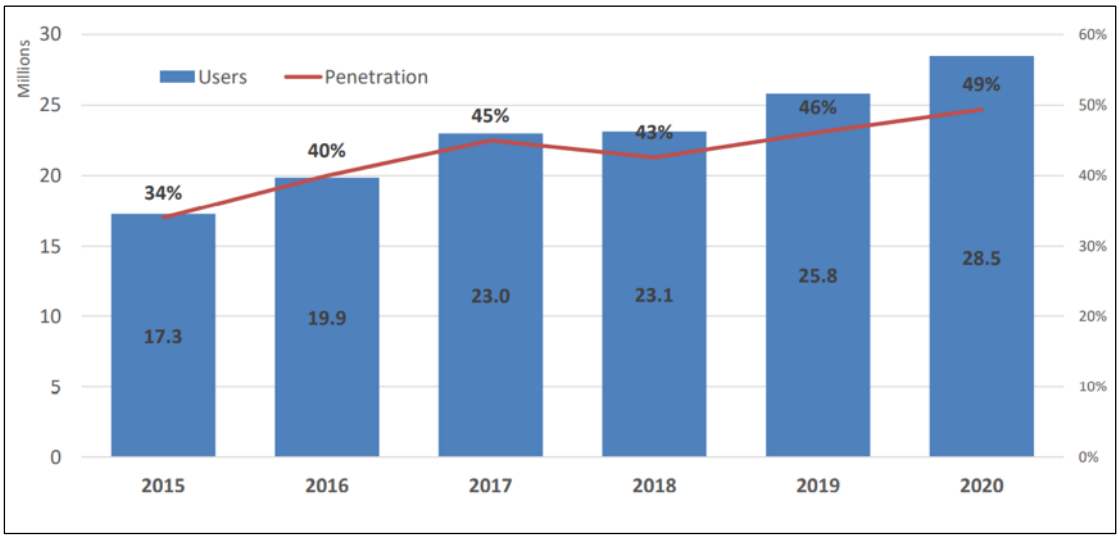


Figure 7.2: Internet penetration rate in Tanzania during 2015-2020. Source: TCRA.

Furthermore, the number of internet users has continued to rise beyond 2020, with the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA) estimating that the country had 29 million users by March 2021, an increase from the previous year, which had up to 28.5 million users by December 2020.

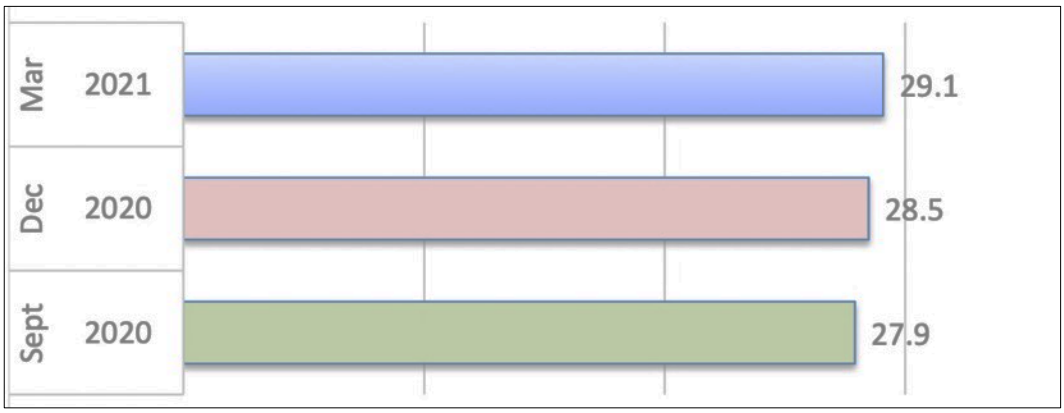


Figure 7.3: Estimate of internet users in Tanzania by March 2021. Source: TCRA.

There are no official statistics on the use of social media in Tanzania; TCRA assumes the same number of Internet users to be the same as that of the users of social media. However, statistics analysed by Statcounter Global Stats, shows Facebook as the leading social media platform in Tanzania (53.58%), followed by Twitter (18.93%), as evidenced in Figure 7.4.

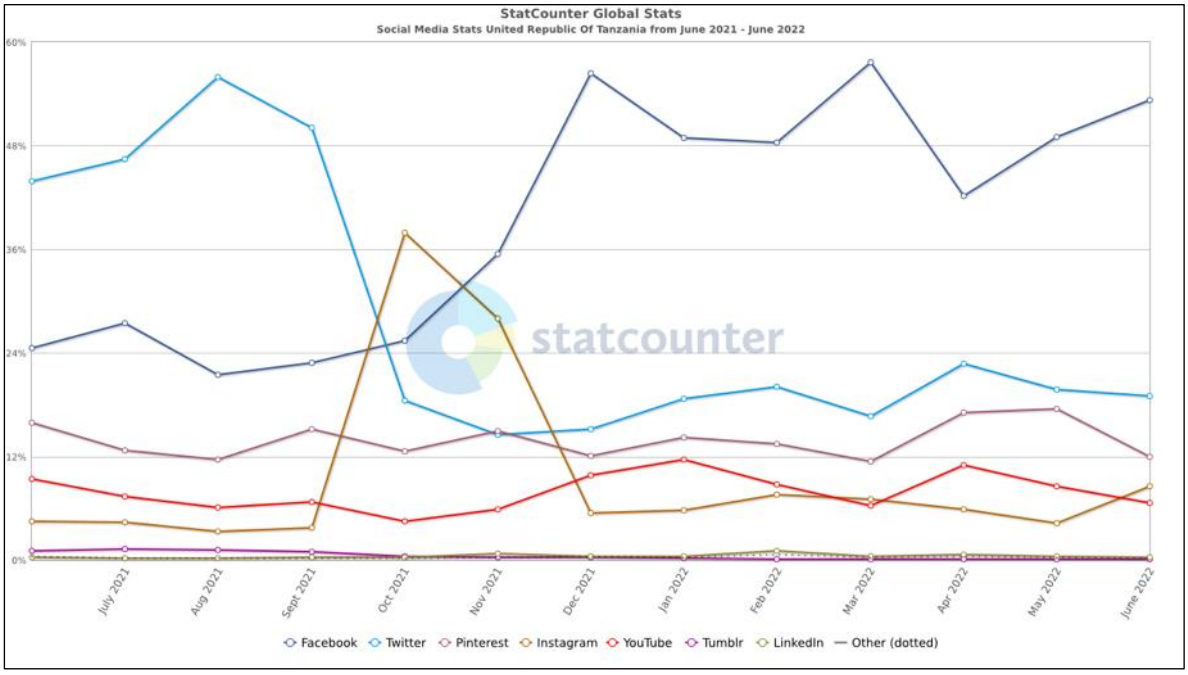


Figure 7.4: Social media statistics in Tanzania

Nevertheless, the enactment and enforcement of laws and regulations such as the Electronic and Postal Communications (Online Content) Regulations, suggest that the use of social media platforms in Tanzania is on the rise. Most Tanzanians communicate using the WhatsApp messaging app, since it provides them with the option of using both voice and video, if they have internet connection through either Wi-Fi or data bundles. The use of WhatsApp has included group chats where messages, pictures and videos circulate easily, thereby reaching a larger number of people. Even though there is the use of other platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, interesting topics from those platforms are also shared via WhatsApp group chats. Generally, most people access these through their mobile phones.

Despite these developments, there are still challenges on accessing the Internet in the country. While almost 70% of the population lives in rural areas (NBS, 2021), the cost of internet services in Tanzania is higher than in urban areas where most Internet Service Providers (ISPs) are based. Due to this, prices remain relatively high for end users (Sheriff, 2007). Sedoyeka (2012) lists six reasons as the cause for ICT problems in Tanzania: availability of service, poor or lack of public infrastructure, government policies, low IT literacy, cost, and lack of interest.

A 2014 TCRA report that sought to establish the impact of internet exchange point (IXPs) on enhancing data and internet services in Tanzania, found that the IXP deployment helped to improve the quality of data and internet services significantly, making them reliable for content destined to Tanzania. The study revealed an increase in traffic exchanged at the ISPs, signifying that local content was being exchanged locally. Another major finding of the study was on the user experience having a positive impact towards electronic services. However, these benefits have also been coupled with challenges, the biggest one being on power stability, causing operation to have long outages at times (TCRA, 2014: 61-62). Nevertheless, the use of Internet among Tanzanians has continued to increase significantly, and as explored from interviews analysed in this chapter, the use of social media supported transparency and freedom of expression during the period 2015-2020.

7.2.1 Social media and politics in Tanzania

The last decade has witnessed a change in the use of social media platforms. Unver (2017) argues that while these platforms have now become inherently political governance systems, they only used to be seen as a place where friends could meet and catch-up. Moreover, the nature of the initial use of the platforms is completely changing, as it now connects politicians, voters and large businesses, hence offering more ground to political participation (Unver, 2017: 127).

In Tanzania, the use of social media has gained popularity over the years as it is perceived as an easier way of interaction among people, helping them to keep abreast with what is happening all over the world without having to wait for the evening news or the following day's newspapers. Political discussions are what seem to attract most of the users of social media in the country. This was especially evident during the time leading to the 2015 general elections when the opposition had a strong presidential candidate, a former Prime Minister who had defected from the ruling party. It was the first time when the country saw huge interactions and political discussions through social media, with groups of different fractions being created specifically to support their candidate of choice.

Political discussion continued to gain momentum through social media in Tanzania even after the 2015 elections, and platforms were used by different people to interact and discuss various issues being addressed by government leaders, especially by the president at the time, John Magufuli. This was the case especially after his government had banned all political activities in 2016, making politicians from the opposition parties fail to hold rallies or meetings outside of their own constituencies. At the same time, those who spoke within their constituencies were sometimes arrested for not having sought for and obtained permission from the police.

Even though campaigns leading to the year 2020 general elections were allowed and the opposition candidates participated fully, it was still not easy for them to get enough coverage from the mainstream media because of the fear that the media had. However, social media can be credited as the one place where people knew about their candidates and about what was going on leading to the elections. The platforms provided the opportunity for transparency and freedom of expression, one that had suffered immensely during the period 2015-2020.

During the in-depth interviews I conducted for the purpose of this study, I asked respondents whether they felt that the use of social media had contributed to transparency and freedom of expression; one of the areas they mentioned was its use during the 2020 general elections.

Human Rights Activist Dr Hellen Kijo-Bisimba explained how social media had helped the opposition parties even though they had been barred from political activities since 2016. The opposition managed to convince people to attend their meetings by giving them updates through social media platforms, a result that saw a large number of individuals showing up at campaigns as well as by the roadside where the main opposition presidential candidate drove past. "So, what happened is that most people got the information through social media, and those who did not use social media got

it by word of mouth from those who used social media," she narrated, adding: "Social media played a very big role in reviving political activities in this country" *(H Kijo-Bisimba 2020, personal communication, 29 December).*

Media Council of Tanzania (MCT) Executive Secretary, Kajubi Mukajanga, also agreed that social media had played a big part in reviving political activities in Tanzania. He explained how the 2020 general elections were a good example of how social media came to the rescue. "Because after terror was sent into the minds of editors and journalists, the only open space where people could now discuss with a lot more freedom was with social media. So, in WhatsApp groups, Facebook, and so forth, there was a lot of discussion which was unconstrained; without social media we wouldn't have known a lot of things," he commented *(K Mukajanga 2020, personal communication, 18 December).*

Mukajanga gave an example of how, leading up to the elections, the opposition was denied airtime and column inches in newspapers because the mainstream media did not want to be shut down. Despite that, all the public meetings called by the main opposition presidential candidate were very well attended. This, explained Mukajanga, was because people were informing each other and getting messages through social media. He further pointed out that even though the ruling party was said to have offered transport to people from diverse places and forced public servants and students to attend their meetings, the opposition did not do that and did not have media space, but their meetings were successful because of social media. "So, that gives you a picture of how social media has been. This space is so important for freedom of expression, and that is why there was this shutdown of the Internet during and around election time because the state could see that space was really being used by Tanzanians," he concluded. The MCT Executive Secretary was referring to the disruption of social media and the Internet just before the 2020 general elections, with anonymous reports confirming that it had been sanctioned by the government (Ssessanga, 2020). An internet services watchdog, NetBlocks, confirmed via a tweet of the widespread disruption, as illustrated in Figure 7.5.

Figure 7.5: Screenshot of a tweet from NetBlocks confirming internet disruptions in Tanzania

Senior editor Absalom Kibanda added to the notion of political discussion via social media, arguing that the Tanzanian opposition had to use it to their advantage as it was the easiest way for them to communicate with people. He explained that the only thing you could operate freely with was Instagram, Facebook and Twitter, which were mostly used by Tanzania's politicians. He gave an example of opposition politician Tundu Lissu who had survived an assassination attempt in 2016 and was then living in exile in Belgium, utilising social media to its fullest by communicating with Tanzanians mostly through his Twitter account.

Kibanda further explained how social media had managed to expand freedom of expression for Tanzanians, because through platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube, people had been able to interact with politicians, have access to their interviews, and understand what was going on in the world of politics. The mainstream media, he pointed out, does not have that kind of capability *(A Kibanda 2020, personal communication, 14 December).*

7.2.2 Social media and the easy flow of information

Apart from being used for political discussion, the use of social media is also credited for easing the flow of information from one source to the other, as well as providing immediate feedback. Social media has gained most of its popularity over the past decade, but according to Newman (2011), the seeds of its effect were sown right at the beginning of the Internet revolution. He quotes the World Wide Web inventor, Tim Berners-Lee, who in 1991 said that the WWW had been created to enable physicists to share data and news (Newman, 2011: 10). The easy flow of information and the ability to provide an immediate sender and receiver feedback could be credited as social media's most powerful feature. Despite some challenges, such as the digital divide between the developed and the underdeveloped places, the ability to provide an immediate sender and receiver feedback has played a critical role for allowing users to exchange crucial information without having to wait for the mainstream media, in countries such as Tanzania.

Media researcher Dr Joyce Bazira, narrated that in Tanzania social media had been able to highlight those things that had been "under the carpet" and bring them to light. She gave an example of the Escrow scandal that led to the resignation of the Prime Minister and the whole Cabinet to be dissolved, arguing that it had not started in the mainstream media, but in social media[26]. According to Dr Bazira, people who used social media and posted information on the platforms were not afraid to do so. At the same time, even if they did post information that did not have all the details, it allowed the mainstream media to make a follow-up and apply professionalism.

One example of this highlighted by Dr Bazira related to information about Covid-19, whereby a lot of it was flowing in from different platforms. The focus of the discussions on social media platforms in Tanzania was on the number of infected people and deaths. This was because Tanzania had stopped giving updates on those statistics, claiming at one point that the country was free from Covid (Mwainyekule and Frimpong, 2020). Instead, it was individuals who were posting information online about their relatives who had died of the virus, with most of the posted information being shared in multiple groups and platforms and going viral. Not only did this make people aware of the disease, but it also helped them to understand the precautions they were supposed to take and not wait for guidance from the government, since none was forthcoming. Dr Bazira further narrated how people used to post information and pictures of their relatives being buried hurriedly or during

[26] See Chapter 6 for more details on the Escrow scandal

the dark under government supervision. These pictures helped people know that Covid was real and that it was spreading in the country *(J Bazira 2020, personal communication, 18 December).*

Another area where the power of social media has been observed is by allowing people to share their ideas without any direct restrictions or government regulations. For Tanzania, for instance, when freedom of expression suffered during the period 2015-2020, it was through social media where interactions on political and non-political topics took place. This was helpful even for journalists as it enabled them to post some stories on the platforms at a time when they could not publish these in the mainstream media.

Veteran journalist and mentor Ndimara Tegambwage observed that for those journalists who had not been able to publish some things due to the situation not allowing it, social media was an alternative. Not only was there room to reach more people, he pointed out, but also there was room to get feedback that had not been filtered. However, Ndimara disagreed to the argument that social media provided freedom. Instead, he argued that social media allowed people to say what was already in their minds and hearts.

There is also the issue of news versus information, where issues posted on social media platforms tend to be regarded as news, especially when the mainstream media seems to be unable to operate freely, causing platforms to become the place where most people get information from. This was also the case in Tanzania during the period 2015-2020. However, Ndimara contended that the information posted on social media was not news. Instead, he explained, what was posted on those platforms was information and views, with people arguing what was already on their minds. Some of these views might be true and some might not. "It's generally a mixture of things," he explained, adding: "and no one should say that social media is what caused all the talking and venting. No, people have been having these things on their minds every day but did not have a place to transmit them. Right now, they have the opportunity and the medium to pass on what they have always wanted to say, and so they are saying it" *(N Tegambwage 2020, personal communication, 17 December).*

7.2.3 Social media and the concept of citizen journalism

While Ndimara argues that information posted on social media is not news, the concept of Citizen Journalism comes to mind. The platforms have allowed ordinary people to act as journalists, posting information and pictures online for everyone to see and share. The fact that there is the term "journalism" in Citizen Journalism makes it sound like it is real journalism, while however, some

people involved in citizen journalism neither know nor follow the ethics that guide the profession. This is precisely why Ndimara insists that information shared on social media is not news. At the same time, this could lead to a debate on whether it should continue to be termed as 'citizen journalism' while there could be no real journalism in it.

Journalism itself is a contested concept, with journalists claiming that it is a profession of gatekeepers, and other non-professionals arguing that anyone who knows how to read and write can be a journalist. Journalism scholars have different insights into journalism, with most of them agreeing on one major value: credibility.

Rudin and Ibbotson (2013) argue that journalism is recognised by almost every country in the world as a form a communication, covering a vast range of output across all media. Most people, they say, rely on journalism for information, with radio remaining the major source of news. They add that while this profession has attracted a lot of people to join it over the years, journalists themselves are both loved and loathed by society. When they uncover wrongdoings, they are hailed and regarded as the voice of the people; but at the same time, they are sometimes condemned and accused of invasion of privacy. However, they explain, they are still regarded highly in society because of their credibility, which is the basis of the journalism world. Deuze (2005) argues that journalism is an ideology with five typical values, which are: i). Providing a public service; ii). Being credible by being neutral, objective and fair; iii). Enjoying editorial autonomy, freedom and independence; iv). Having a sense of immediacy; and v). Having a sense of ethics and legitimacy.

Even though some people claim that anyone can be a journalist, (Rudin and Ibbotson, 2002) argue that this is a misconception, as the ability to relay information or events does not constitute to journalism. This is untrue, they insist, since no editing or critiquing is involved. Journalism, they posit, is not about reporting everything as it is, but about selection and presentation. This selection and presentation include "the assessment of the validity, truthfulness or representativeness of actions or comments" (p.5). The authors also explore the watchdog role of journalists, saying that this is specifically important as it makes them the "eyes and ears of the public" (p.7), ensuring that people, especially those who hold authority, are held accountable to their actions.

Similarly, Vos and Perreault (2020) argue that journalists as gatekeepers have the responsibility to "selectively gather, sort, write, edit, position, schedule, repeat, and otherwise massage information to become news" (p.90). They however contend that the gatekeeping does not end with journalists as it used to in the past, since technology advancements have enabled the consumer of news to also

be part of the gatekeeping. This, they say, can be done by readers, listeners and watchers of news writing comments that lead to a journalist reframing a news story. This claim is seconded by Deuze (2019) who says he used to believe that journalism was a set of values that included providing a public service by uncovering the truth. However, he argues, journalism is not, and has never been as seamless and as organized as most professionals claim it to be. The wide range of communication channels has enabled other actors to be involved in the production of news, most of them being identified as citizen journalists.

While citizen journalism is still a contested subject, Owen (2007) posits that it means different things depending on the context in which it is used, and has even been labelled differently, such as peer-group journalism, do-it-yourself journalism and grassroots journalism. She also admits that even though citizen journalism shares some characteristics with professional journalism, there still are significant differences. She points out that while some people claim anyone can be a journalist in today's environment, a distinction has to be made in relation to the terms journalists, news gatherers, and/or witnesses. Owen further describes citizen journalism as information produced by amateurs who create their own mini news organisations with the aid of digital technology. She clarifies that they mostly deal with local news rather than national issues. Bentley (2011) insists that citizen journalism is not a replacement for professional journalism. He argues that even though the two can perform comfortably separately, they could produce something more meaningful when combined.

Another scholar who has interrogated the concept of citizen journalism is Barnes (2012) who argues that technology has enabled citizen journalism to become a reality whereby people with no journalism background are now able to set up their own networks and share information with the whole world, something that could not have been done before the spread of new media technology (Barnes, 2012: 18). He recalls a time when the mainstream media – newspapers, radio and television – were the primary source of news, with people having to wait for what journalists representing these media had to tell the nation and believe whatever they chose to report (Barnes, 2012: 25). Today, however, with the rise of social media complemented by the Internet, the world no longer needs to rely on journalists to get information. This is because anyone who comes across anything interesting decides to share it online, regardless of the implications that might arise from the sharing of anything considered to be of interest. Indeed, most people who post and share things online consider themselves correct, even more than professional journalists themselves.

Senior editor Absalom Kibanda also talked about citizen journalism during our interview and cautioned that even though there was freedom to get a lot of information, the danger was that it was unprofessional. "It is the death of professionalism and the rise of fake news syndrome," he insisted. With this, he cited principles of journalism, which include impartiality, fairness and balancing of a story to give a person the right to respond. But the kind of information that was being posted on social media in Tanzania was mostly one-sided. Kibanda cited the most outspoken social media actors who had been generating discussion on Twitter in Tanzania: Fatma Karume and Maria Sarungi (also known as *Mashangazi*, the Kiswahili term for aunts) as well as Ansbert Ngurumo and a person only known as Kigogo[27]. Kibanda pointed out that when those four people posted on their Twitter accounts, people tended to believe what they said because it seemed as if they had inside information. The disadvantage was that the information they posted did not have room to be balanced *(A Kibanda 2020, personal communication, 14 December).*

Jabir Idrissa also talked about citizen journalism and how it could be put to good use. The citizen journalism being done in social media, he said, helped reveal some malpractices, but then it should be the duty of the police to follow these up, investigate and take the necessary action against those accused of misconduct. He explained that citizen journalism was the best alternative in Tanzania due to the obstruction of the free press faced in the period 2015-2020, but it needed some improvement, such as those who posted information making sure that it was accurate and balanced. Like Kibanda, Idrissa talked about the ethics of journalism that include balancing of a story, and explained that if people practising citizen journalism could go beyond posting accusations and give room for the other side to respond, that would be more ethical. "When you read what is posted on social media you realise that the issues lack serious editing, but it is true that it increases transparency and freedom of expression. However, it needs some improvement," he suggested *(J Idrissa, personal communication, 18 December).*

When social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook were created, they were meant to specifically allow people the freedom to interact without restriction or rules, and therefore what Jabir Idrissa is proposing seems to be wishing for people who post on social media as citizen journalists to do actual journalism. In a world where the Internet is neither controlled nor regulated, this is impractical because these platforms give power to anybody to post whatever they like, regardless of whether it is true, false, balanced or not. In essence, ethical journalism practices such

[27] I held interviews with both Ansbert Nurumo and Kigogo, and their experiences are shared in depth in the next chapter: The power of social media political influencers in a mummed society.

as fairness and balancing of stories could only work in the regulated mainstream media, but not on unregulated social media platforms.

Another media stakeholder, Rosemary Mwakitwange, was of the opinion that what social media has done is retain and reduce people to breaking news and press releases. "There is no aspect of investigation in it, no fact-finding, and no detail. It has actually completely shifted us from all we knew about journalism. There is simply no journalism in social media in Tanzania," she exclaimed.

Ms Mwakitange pointed out that social media was simply citizen journalism and there was a downside to that because the people who posted information there and call themselves citizen journalists had no capacity because they had not been trained. "Social media has become a dumping platform," she insisted, explaining that posting things such as breaking news and press releases did not require any brainpower. She however pointed the blame to the mainstream media for this, arguing that it had failed to shape the society in a positive way. Instead, it had allowed other people to use social media to post things quickly without even verifying the truth of the information.

Nonetheless, Ms Mwakitwange agreed that despite the missed opportunity with social media, it still had its benefits, the biggest one being speed. She explained that its ability to let users get immediate information from around the globe was exceptional, but there would still be a disconnect between the demand and supply side if the latter had no capacity to go in deep, and the former did not demand for more. Citing Twitter as, in her words, "the most respected platform for information sharing," Ms Mwakitwange delivered her verdict on citizen journalism: "for every tweet of every social media topic, it is the responsibility of an effective mainstream media to expand. In fact, the mainstream media is more significant today than social media" *(R Mwakitwange 2020, personal communication, 19 December).*

Despite acknowledging its efficacy in speed and delivering a two-way communication with immediate feedback, most journalists and media stakeholders either still confuse the functions of social media or wish for it to be used as another form of professional media. Suggestions such as those wanting people posting on social media to follow media ethics are impractical as the use of social media is not confined to journalists alone, but to every individual in society who has access to the Internet. What is more is that a person only needs a smartphone to be able to post anything they want from any place they are. This then brings us to the question of trust among information providers, leading to the debate as to which actor should be trusted between those delivering

information through social media and those conveying news through the mainstream media. The next section analyses this debate.

7.3 Social media vs mainstream media: who to trust

When television news started in the 1950s, print journalists were hostile towards it claiming that it would be vulgar and sensational, with fewer words in a thirty-minute news bulletin compared to half a page of a newspaper. However, when this undermining did not work, newspapers realised that they needed to reinvent themselves, and they did so by introducing investigative stories and feature articles and by providing more background information to their readers (Naughton, 2010). The same thing seems to be happening with the Internet whereby journalists have found themselves in a peculiar situation while at the moment speed and awareness of what is happening around the world are not the only things that the Internet provides. The fact that through the Internet, specifically through social media, unprofessional individuals can report things that are happening as they are happening, could be threatening for the mainstream media. This has been the same discussion for both sides in Tanzania as well. Whereas social media is acclaimed for its contribution in transparency and freedom of expression during the 2015-2020 period, it has also received as much criticism for allowing non-professionals to take over and spread information without caring about the ethics that guide professional journalism.

The debate on social media versus the mainstream media was also one of the main discussions during the in-depth interviews that I had with the respondents for this study. The opinion of most of them was that even though social media had made a great contribution towards transparency and freedom of expression, this contribution had come with a price of sensationalism. On the one hand, the journalists that I interviewed did not blame it on the social media actors; instead, they admitted that they as journalists had to rise up to the challenge of the existence of social media and find a way to accommodate it in their professional duty. On the other hand, the social media actors that I interviewed claimed that Tanzania had gone through a difficult period in 2015-2020, and such a period had not given room to journalistic ethics.

7.3.1 In the eyes of professional journalists

The Media Council of Tanzania (MCT) is the only media organisation in the country that compiles different publications addressing the media situation. One of its publications, *State of the Media in Tanzania*, is often used by media researchers to analyse the state of both the mainstream and social media in the country. MCT's Executive Secretary, Kajubi Mukajanga, explained that what was

happening in social media concerned them a lot because they would like to see a more responsible cyberspace, even though that was very hard to enforce.

Mukajanga explained that the argument that people believed what was said on social media more than that on the mainstream media was up for discussion, especially since a lot of media literate people knew that a lot of things said on social media "should be taken with a pinch of salt." He argued that they knew that there was a lot of fake news on social media because it was generally not run by professionals. Therefore, people were still of the belief that mainstream media had credible news, "if and when." In elaborating the "if and when", Mukajanga explained that in a situation where certain kind of media was suppressed, people also looked at the mainstream media with some doubts, especially when it was political news. He further explained that people in Tanzania knew that political news was more often skewed towards favouring the administration because they had also seen what had befallen those who had dared to challenge or dared to air views that were not to the liking of the establishment. In this case, he noted, people had their own suspicions about mainstream media or sections of it, but also those who were media literate had some doubts about some of the pieces appearing on social media. Mukajanga also agreed that there were things posted on social media that were credible: "For a journalist or for somebody who is media literate, there is a lot of space on social media which is credible just as there are a lot of information which are fake, which are absolute disinformation" *(K Mukajanga 2020, personal communication, 18 December).*

Another professional journalist, Absalom Kibanda, was of the view that the citizen journalism practised by non-professionals through social media could be the beginning of the end of professionalism in journalism. He claimed that the fourth estate would diminish because people no longer knew what to trust and what not to trust. His view was that the problem was that while the mainstream media tried to be professional and withhold some information due to ethical reasons, those who reported on social media did it so negatively. This led to readers feeling that journalists were withholding information for no reason. This made them tend to trust the non-professionals reporting through social media, feeling that they were giving them what they wanted to know. "This has even caused some mainstream media to start acting unprofessionally just to attract readers because they feel like social media is taking over their job," he pointed out *(A Kibanda 2020, personal communication, 14 December).*

Another professional journalist who started work during first president Mwalimu Julius Nyerere's era, Attilio Tagalile, articulated that the mainstream media needed to look at social media as a good

challenge and step up their game. "You cannot stop technology, so let them do it," he said of citizen journalism, adding that it is for professional journalists to use what they see on social media as a source of information. "But they have to be very fast because social media is very fast." Tagalile explained that he believed social media had made journalism easier, reflecting on the past where they had to think of news ideas that would form stories for the next day's newspaper. "During our time we had to go to bars; we had to talk to people in order to get tips. Nowadays you don't. You just need to have a smartphone and get into social media groups and listen to what they say. Between the lines of what they are saying, there is always a good story hidden," he observed. What professional journalists have to do, explained Tagalile, was go and investigate, and give the story that has appeared in the social media a sense of authority *(A Tagaglile 2020, personal communication, 23 December).*

What Tagalile argued concerning journalists getting news ideas through social media, is not far from what transpired during my interview with Deodatus Balile, publisher, editor and chairperson of Tanzania Editors Forum (TEF). He observed that the presence of social media and citizen journalism was a good challenge because it had reached a point where professional journalists had stopped working and those on social media had decided to take over. According to Balile, the information seen on social media was the same kind of information that used to go around in pubs or among coffee drinkers. The only difference was that the information was now posted online for a wider audience to access. The TEF chairperson argued that what professional journalists ought to do was make sure that their content was good and trustworthy to the point that if a person read something on social media, they still wanted to look at the mainstream media to verify whether the information was true or not. "We need to go back to our professionalism. We need to have briefing meetings and post-mortems of our newspapers. We need to really work on what we publish so that when a person reads it, they know that this news item has really been worked on," advised Balile (*D Balile 2020, personal communication, 15 December)*.

While some professional journalists welcome social media and citizen journalism as a good challenge, others feel that social media administrators should train people on how to report so that the information they post could be authentic. This suggestion was given by journalist Jabir Idrissa during our interview. He insisted that it was possible for social media platforms to have correspondents that could be stationed in regions, such as two in East Africa, another two in the Southern part of Africa, and so on. He explained that these correspondents could then team up

with professional journalists and come up with stories that were balanced and observe professional ethics, even if the authors had to conceal their identities.

Even though Idrissa's suggestion might be good, it is also an impossible one in the world of the Internet and social media. With social media, anyone can write anything without seeking permission. In short, social media provides a free platform that empowers ordinary people to post as much as they want and in whatever form they want. Reaching out to such a person and asking them to be correspondents and work with professional journalists does not guarantee that others would not come up and start posting unprofessionally as well. In fact, the idea might even give rise to more people deciding to post what they want on social media, with the idea that the correspondents are withholding information the same way that professional journalists have been accused of doing.

Another interviewee who responded to the question on the debate between social media and the mainstream media is Rosemary Mwakitwange. Even though she is not a professional journalist, she has worked in the media industry for many years and was once the Chief Executive Officer of New Habari Ltd, publishers of four private newspapers in Tanzania. She did not agree to some arguments that social media had killed the mainstream media, at least not in Tanzania. She pointed out that the mainstream media was the one trying to compete with social media while they were not supposed to be competitors. She gave an example of the country's mainstream media having social media pages as well, but explained that to them, it was just about the market instead of the depth of analysis. She explained that it was surprising how the mainstream media was trying to compete with social media while social media practised citizen journalism, which had neither the ability nor the capacity of delving into in-depth analysis that had to be done by the mainstream media *(R Mwakitwange 2020, personal communication, 19 December).*

But while some professional journalists were worried that social media had provided a platform for all sorts of information to be shared, including fake news, veteran journalist Ndimara Tegambwage had a different opinion. First of all, he agreed that social media had contributed to freedom of expression, and that it still was not enough as more was needed. He also agreed that a lot of things, true and untrue, were shared through social media. However, he did not agree with the concept of fake news. "When it is fake it is no longer news. If people have lies that they want to spread through social media, that does not become news. I do not understand why people associate fake with news; that is wrong. These two terms should not be associated just because the information has

been transmitted through a medium of communication, no thank you," he lamented *(N Tegambwage 2020, personal communication, 17 December).*

The professional journalists and media stakeholders that I interviewed had different opinions about trusting information shared on social media. Generally, they were of the opinion that even though information on social media could be true or untrue, it was up to them, professional journalists, to make a follow-up and apply journalistic ethics when reporting in the mainstream media. They did not deny the importance of information shared on social media, but they challenged themselves to use that information to seek the truth and report it professionally.

7.3.2 In the eyes of social media political influencers

The introduction of social media has brought with it a lot of actors, such as political influencers. These influencers, according to Casero-Ripollés (2020), are also known as 'digital' opinion leaders and they attempt to guide public agenda and public opinion through their online personal influence (p. 171). Similarly, Soares, Recuero and Zago (2018) reveal that even though there is enough literature discussing social media influencers in general, only a few of them have indulged in the role these influencers play in manipulating political conversation and the effects of this. They add that the influencers play a critical role that may impact democracy and democratic practices, requiring more research to address how their role shapes the public sphere through social media (Soares, et al., 2018: 168-170).

In Tanzania, social media political influencers have gained popularity over the past few years. Their popularity emerged during the era of President John Magufuli's administration, and their opinions have not only been welcomed with both commendation and condemnation, but also with threats from authorities who view their agenda as unpatriotic.[28]

The social media political influencers that I interviewed for the purpose of this study see themselves as a necessity to society, and they even consider themselves as having an obligation to inform the public about what was going on in society, even if it meant not adhering to the ethics that guide professional journalists. They agreed that what they were mostly doing was citizen journalism, and that in a country such as Tanzania where the mainstream media seemed to be supressed, they had the responsibility of filling up that void and providing people with what they needed.

[28] The next chapter 'The power of social media political influencers in a mummed society' has an in-depth analysis of the most outspoken influencers in Tanzania, as a result from in-depth interviews I had with them.

One of the influencers that I interviewed is a man only known as Kigogo. He was the most famous social media political influencer on Twitter during the period 2015-2020, and the Tanzania police even announced several times that they were looking for him so that he could be arrested for inciting hatred. He has never been found and his real identity is unknown.

When I asked him during a telephone interview about his activism on Twitter that did not follow journalistic ethics, Kigogo argued that he was doing it because the media in Tanzania was not free. "We have reached a point where we have a country in which a journalist cannot report, because if they do, they know they would be banned the next day. We have reached a point where we have journalists and editors who cannot publish because they know that Maelezo [Tanzania Information Services] would ban them. We have reached a point where we have a media fraternity in our country where journalists can no longer write investigative stories because the government doesn't want its people to know. We have reached a point where we have journalists who have been terrorised in the sense that they are no longer active, are too afraid, and those who still have the guts to do so have ended up suffering," he explained.

During the period 2015-2020, Kigogo posted a lot of information on his Twitter account that suggested he had sources within the government. Like most people who practise citizen journalism, he posted them without verifying with officials who could be quoted, and most of the time even added his own narrative to the information to encourage discussion. He was aware of journalistic ethics but claimed that it was impossible to practise it at that moment. Kigogo, who admitted that he was not a professional journalist but loved practising citizen journalism through his Twitter account, explained: "The balancing of a story was only possible in a country that we had prior to the year 2015. That one was very possible. However, each time I decide to post crucial information online that I get from my sources, I confirm with at least three different sources to make sure that the information is accurate. So, I might not have balanced the story in the sense of how it has to be done in journalism practices, but I make sure my information is correct" *(Kigogo 2021, personal communication, 15 February).*

Another social media political influencer is Ansbert Ngurumo. Unlike most social media political influencers, he is actually someone who had worked in the newsroom before as a journalist and as an editor in Tanzania, until he was exiled in 2017. Even though he still runs a website that publishes articles in a journalistic manner, Ngurumo is also very active on Twitter where he too posts a lot of information without following journalistic ethics.

In a telephone interview with him, Ngurumo explained that despite being a journalist, he had realised that waiting to be professional does not save lives. "I have realised that while we wait to be professionals *per se*, there are people that end up dying while we are waiting to balance our stories and to be seen as real professionals," he explained. Ngurumo does not term what he is doing as citizen journalism, but "pre-emptive journalism" where he posts unbalanced information in order to save lives. "So, with the little information that I have, I am pre-empting some misfortunes from happening because the current situation does not allow us to be professional journalists," he insisted. He added that he trusted his sources and never waited to be sure of his information by 100 percent. "All I need is a 51 percent assurance, and my readers will deal with the remaining 49," he explained.

Ngurumo still believes in journalism ethics, but he also believes that if everyone were to follow those ethics, people might suffer. He asserted that for the Tanzania we witnessed during the period 2015-2020, leaders were trying to use journalistic ethics to limit journalists from doing their work. He explained that the leaders were not transparent, did not want to answer questions, hid information, and in the end made sure that journalists did not get the sources they needed to comment on their stories, leading to the stories not being written. Ngurumo also argued that he had a duty to protect his sources by never revealing who they were. All he needed to do was trust them and bring the information to the public through social media. In the end, the public would decide whether the information he had presented should be taken seriously or not. "And this is what takes me out of the official line of professional journalistic ethics which I am supposed to adhere to. I will not follow these ethics because my agenda is to save lives," insisted Ngurumo.

The journalist-turned social media political influencer was aware of the arguments about social media overtaking the mainstream media. He talked about how citizen journalism had changed the way people received news, and was aware of the fact that social media influencers in some places were trusted even more than professional journalists. "This shows that we have been grabbed of our profession as journalists. But it is also because journalism does not have to be owned by journalists. Ours is a very unique profession that everybody is born with. Nobody is born a doctor, nobody is born a lawyer, nobody is born a banker, but everybody is born a communicator," he narrated, adding: "these other titles such as copywriter, creative writer, journalist… are just given to acknowledge what we do, but everybody is essentially a communicator. If we fail to communicate because of the system in place, this same system will create other communicators, even if they are not professionals."

Ngurumo also talked about other social media political influencers in Tanzania, acknowledging their role in informing the public and creating discussions about the political landscape in the country. While he claimed that reporting and communicating did not have to be owned by professional journalists, he also pointed out that the mainstream media in Tanzania had not been able to function freely. This, he argued, made people to turn to social media instead of the newspapers that did not give them the kind of information they wanted. Social media has widened communication practices and enabled non-professionals to take over, he said, insisting that if journalists could not perform their duties, the public will do it for them. When the public did it for them, it did not care about journalistic ethics; therefore no one could blame the public for that. In the end, he pointed out, professional journalists would find themselves being readers of social media posts, because they [journalists] were still operating under the shadow of professionalism instead of reading the mind of the market and understanding what it wanted. "Let us just agree that communication is not a monopoly for journalists," he insisted *(A Ngurumo 2021, personal communication, 13 February).*

While Kigogo and Ngurumo defended their use of social media to report and generate political discussion without the need to follow journalistic ethics, there were other people who were not social media influencers but used social media platforms once in a while to report on an issue and even to engage in discussions online. In Tanzania this is mostly done on Jamii Forums, a social media platform created in the country in March 2006, previously known as Jambo Forums. Jamii Forums had over the years facilitated different discussions, and especially political discussions with known politicians, including government officials, engaging in trending conversations and responding to different claims. I had an in-depth interview with the Jamii Forums Founder and Executive Director, Maxence Melo, who had a very different opinion when I asked him to comment on the argument of social media overtaking the duties of the mainstream media. Melo, who is not a professional journalist, put it succinctly: "Social media is not media."

According to the Jamii Forums founder, people confused the functions of social media with mainstream media because of the term "media" in it. However, he clarified that social media was not media because of one main reason: lack of an editor. He explained his surprise by the way some people claimed that with social media everyone was a journalist, simply because they could post information on different platforms. "But being on WhatsApp, for instance, doesn't make you a journalist. Information is not news, but news can be information," he said, elaborating that a person who posted information on Jamii Forums, Twitter, Instagram or Facebook had not written news, but had posted information *(M Melo 2020, personal communication, 15 December).*

What Melo argued was similar to what veteran journalist Ndimara Tegambwage had said about information being posted on social media. Ndimara had specifically explained that there was a difference between news and information, and that things posted on social media were information and should not be confused for news. He had also pointed out that journalists normally looked for information and then they changed that information into news by doing more, such as by verifying the information, balancing the story and conducting an in-depth analysis. Those were what qualified the information to become news. He had gone further by providing an example, arguing that if the president went to the Ports Authority and found a faulty machine that had not been functioning for three years and mentioned it, that was not news, but information – a tip for journalists to follow up and conduct investigation. Journalists need to qualify that information and come up with an in-depth analysis after conducting other interviews and investigation.

This was also agreed to by another senior journalist I interviewed, who preferred anonymity. He explained that the work of a journalist was not to report that the president had done one, two, and three. A journalist, he argued, had to investigate, do a background check, explain what was there before, how it was done, and what the outcome was. But if a journalist did not do that, they would not be different from those who posted information on social media, whereby in the end, people would feel that they had no need to read newspapers that reported the same thing they could read on social media. "A journalist must qualify the information into news," he reiterated *(Anonymous 2020, personal communication).*

Going back to my interview with the Jamii Forums founder, he drew my attention to another issue, which was mainstream media trying to compete with social media. He said that this was one of the main mistakes being done by mainstream media, while social media was not their equal. Melo argued that social media was mainstream media's clients, and therefore the moment one started competing with their clients, they were also starting to lose them. What was needed, he noted, was for the media to create the agenda for social media, even though what was seen was that social media was the one creating the agenda for the mainstream media.

In Tanzania, a number of media outlets had ceased publication due to what they had reported as business decisions. Whereas some people had related this to government's control over media and the restraint of freedom of expression, Melo had a different theory. While he agreed that the mainstream media had suffered during the period 2015-2020, he pointed out that he had once cautioned the mainstream media during world press freedom day in 2016 that they might cease to exist not due to government restrictions, but because of technology. "I told them that if you do not

innovate around; if you continue doing things the way you are used to, the Internet will exclude you. I told them that the top selling newspaper would find itself selling only half or a quarter of what they had used to sell, and that even some of the most popular blogs would die because they would not have any agenda," he concluded. Just as he had prophesied, some newspapers in Tanzania were shutting down, others were continuing to reduce the number of their staff, and the once popular blogs were not popular anymore. To this, Melo declared: "You have to advance as technology advances; but you also have to understand the public's demand. If you do not understand the public's demand and continue working the same way you are used to, you will disappear." Furthermore, even though almost all newspapers had social media pages, Melo saw this is a mistake, since the news that was published in the newspapers was exactly the same one that had appeared on their social media pages. "Do not treat the Internet as an extension of the newspaper; never, ever," he warned.

7.4 Conclusion

The main aim of this chapter was to analyse the debate surrounding the use of social media as opposed to the mainstream media. The chapter started with an overview on the use of social media in Tanzania, referring to official statistics compiled by the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) and the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA). The statistics showed how even though Tanzania had been late to enter the world of technology due to a ban on imported informatics imposed by the government in 1974, the country's Internet penetration continued to grow year after year. Despite there not being any official statistics on the use of social media in Tanzania, the people interviewed in this study established how powerful social media had been in the country over the past few years, and how it had assisted in easing the flow of communication between people, especially during the time when freedom of expression was suppressed.

The second part of this chapter involved an analysis surrounding the arguments related to the use of social media vis-à-vis the mainstream media. This analysis involved actors from both sides: journalists on one side and social media influencers on the other. The analysis critically revealed that both journalists and social media influencers acknowledged the use of social media and its great importance to a society that needs to communicate. While the journalists pointed out that social media platforms had become a dumping site for true and untrue information, they also acknowledged the fact that they needed to be more innovative and use information on social media as a way to investigate and come up with credible stories. At the same time, the social media political influencers admitted that they were not following journalistic ethics. They pointed out that

Tanzania had become a country where journalistic ethics could no longer function, forcing them to post information that they believed was true, since they trusted their sources. There was also a discussion on the difference between news and information, with some respondents emphasising that what was posted on social media was information, not news, and that it was the duty of journalists to take that information and qualify it into news.

The next chapter is the last one presenting findings from the in-depth interviews that I conducted. It is a chapter focusing solely on the works of social media actors in Tanzania, how they emerged and what drove them to do what they did. The chapter aims to assess social impacts of using social media platforms in promoting transparency and freedom of expression, answering the question on whether social media could contribute towards these good governance practices in Tanzania.

Chapter 8 The Power of Social Media Political Influencers in a Silenced Society

8.1 Introduction

This is the last of the three chapters that present the findings of this study derived from in-depth interviews. While the previous two chapters interrogated the shrinking space of the media landscape in Tanzania and the debate comparing the use of social media and mainstream media, this chapter analyses the works of social media political influencers. It aims at demonstrating social media's contribution to transparency and freedom of expression in Tanzania at a time when the country seemed to have been silenced.

The first part of the chapter explores the concept of social media influencers as well as the beginnings of social media political influencers in Tanzania, drawing into examples of the very first political activism through social media and the aftermath. The chapter also focuses on the in-depth interview I conducted with one of the most outspoken social media political influencers in Tanzania, a person only known as Kigogo. The analysis on Kigogo includes narrations on why he started his online political activism, how it has helped contribute towards transparency and freedom of expression, and the challenges he and those close to him have encountered due to his work. The final section of this chapter examines a case study involving the coverage of President John Magufuli's illness by both the mainstream media and social media platforms. This case study demonstrates how freedom of expression and transparency were so controlled during 2015-2020, to a point that the country had to rely on rumours spreading on social media about the president's health. During this time people were forced to keep quiet, to neither question nor criticise, and the fear that had gripped the nation caused most of its citizens to decide to remain silent when it came to matters concerning the government or the president.

This chapter, therefore, intends to answer the question: what conditions would be required for social media to replace mainstream media?

8.2 Social media influencers: what are they?

Social media influencers have become vital in the recent years. In the past it was famous people such as leaders, politicians, sportsmen and women and artists who had influence over others, and they gained their prominence through the mainstream media, that is, newspapers, radio and television. With the introduction and advancement of the use of social media, influencers are no

longer the rich and famous, rather are individuals with the ability to garner attention and persuade others to follow and trust what they believe in.

Whilst studies on social media have continued to gain momentum over the years, studies on the concept of social media influencers have also been part of it. Glucksman (2017) defines social media influencers as third-party endorsers, using their social media presence to shape an audience's attitude. Freberg *et al.* (2011) argue that social media influencers are independent third-party endorsers who manage to do so through different social media platforms, such as Instagram, Facebook, YouTube and Twitter. Nouri (2018) calls them "micro-celebrities" who have found fame from their use of social media. He argues that with them, their thousands or millions of followers on their social media platforms feel more connected, more engaged and more relatable. Juliadi and Ardani (2019) liken social media influencers to offline opinion leaders whose opinions have a strong impact to their followers.

However, research on social media influencers seems to be skewed towards the ability of these individuals in the field of marketing, with different brands using them to market their products. Szczurski (2017) explains how the influencers treat their skills as an extra job, spending most of their time creating content meant to engage with their audiences, persuading them on what products they should buy. Freberg *et al.* (2011) point out how companies use technology to identify the influencers by relying on things such as how much their posts are shared and the number of their followers, believing that it would help give more visibility to their brands. Of late, it is very common to hear someone being introduced as a YouTuber or an Instagram icon, due to their ability to boast many followers who share what they post through their social media accounts. They have the power to convince masses of what to purchase as well as what they perceive as an ideal way of living. Nonetheless, most of them seem to be younger people being paid by brands that understand how the younger generation is more invested into social media platforms than others.

8.2.1 Social media's political influencers

While most research on social media influencers is based on those individuals involved in promoting business brands online, another type of influencers has emerged in recent years. These are individuals who shape public opinion online and have a good number of people who not only follow them, but also believe in their cause, although not much has been written about them.

Casero-Ripollés (2020) probes how social media has presented some changes in political communication. He argues that the emergence of political influencers, or digital opinion leaders on

social media platforms is contributing to changing the landscape of political communication. They use technology and their personal influence to construct public agenda and public opinion, leading to change in people's political opinions. Casero-Ripollés further explains that the role played by these digital opinion leaders is very significant in changing the attitudes and political opinions of people, making them political influencers of the digital age. Dubois and Gaffney (2014) argue that political influencers hold a position of trust in the view of the public, allowing them to send messages to a wider audience that favours them as politicians themselves. Four factors make them stand out: they have followers, they seem to be experts, are knowledgeable of the issues surrounding them, and have the ability to call for social support and put pressure on authorities (p. 1262).

Whereas social media has brought with it opportunities on ways to use the platforms, the emergence of social media influencers in recent years has demonstrated the depths of the use of social media in persuading targeted people. Moreover, the use of social media platforms to generate political participation has created individuals who could lure others into believing what they say, whether true or untrue. In some places these influencers have also been functioning as whistle-blowers, helping to expose misconduct and generate discussions out of it. In places such as Tanzania where transparency and freedom expression suffered during the period 2015-2020, these influencers can be credited as to have used social media platforms to contribute to the democratic practices.

There are different names used to identify these influencers, such as social media influencers, digital influencers, digital opinion leaders, online influencers, political influencers, whistle-blowers, and social media activists. For the purpose of this study, however, I will refer to them as social media political influencers.

8.3 The birth of Tanzania's social media political influencers

Social media political influencers in Tanzania have gained popularity over the past few years. The first notable one is Mange Kimambi, a Tanzanian living in the United States. She first came under the spotlight before 2015 as an Instagram influencer who posted gossip about prominent people and celebrities in Tanzania. During the time leading to the 2015 general elections, she went back to Tanzania in a bid to run for a parliamentary seat but lost the race within her party at the time (the ruling CCM). She then used her Instagram account to campaign for the presidential candidate, Dr John Magufuli, while at the same time ridiculing the main opposition presidential candidate, Edward Lowassa.

However, Ms. Kimambi's popularity grew more when she started criticising President Magufuli's government as well exposing some malpractices within his administration (Awami, 2018). The information she posted on Instagram suggested that officials within the administration were the ones leaking data to her so that she would share it with the public. In 2018 Ms. Kimambi called for nationwide demonstrations on April 26 through her Instagram page. The day coincided with the national holiday celebrating the union between Tanganyika and Zanzibar. Ms. Kimambi called on nation-wide demonstrations as an approach to criticise President Magufuli's administration for curtailing freedom of expression, including halting the broadcast of live parliamentary proceedings. Her call was received with excitement by a large number of Tanzanians who vowed to heed it and hold the demonstrations. At the same time, the Police Force announced that the demonstrations were forbidden and that whoever participated would be "beaten like stray dogs" (Ng'wanakilala, 2018). Very few people showed up for the demonstrations due to fear of being arrested. This frustrated Ms. Kimambi and she pledged to never continue advocating for the political rights of Tanzanians.

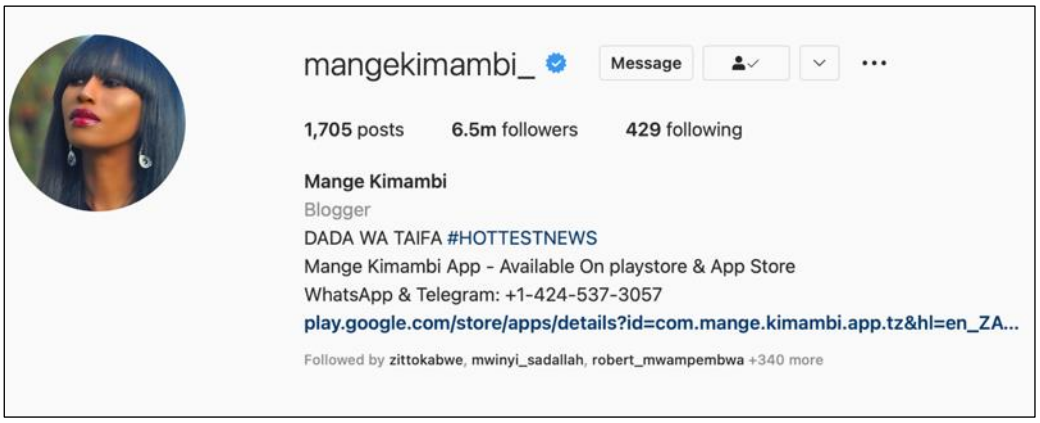


Figure 8.1: Screenshot of Mange Kimambi's Instagram account as of April 14, 2022

Even though Ms. Kimambi no longer practices the activism that she used to through her Instagram page, the effect of what she had done influenced the emergence of other social media political influencers. There were three who were most outspoken in Tanzania during 2015-2020: Maria Sarungi Tsehai and Fatma Karume (also known as *Mashangazi* – the Kiswahili for aunts) and a man only known as Kigogo. All three of them were famous for being social media political influencers through their Twitter accounts. Since 2019 I had been following their tweets and the discussions they created on the platform. This section is an account to what I have observed over the years.

Maria Sarungi Tsehai is the daughter of former minister Prof Philemon Sarungi. She uses her Twitter account to communicate with her 1.1 million[29] followers about Tanzania politics, mostly criticising what she saw as government abuse and restrictions to freedom of expression, while including the hashtag #ChangeTanzania in most of her tweets. From 2021 she started hosting political discussions on Twitter's new function 'Spaces' that allowed people with more than 600 followers to host live audio conversations. Maria's Space included conversations about democratic practices in Tanzania, such as demanding for a new constitution and non-violent protests.

Figure 8.2: Screenshot of Maria Sarungi Tsehai's Twitter account as of 8 August 2022

Another social media political influencer, Fatma Karume, is a lawyer by profession who was raised in the homes of the ruling party cadres. Her grandfather, Abeid Amani Karume was the first president of Zanzibar, which is a semi-autonomous island that united with Tanganyika in 1964 to form the United Republic of Tanzania. Likewise, her father, Amani Abeid Karume is a former president of Zanzibar. However, this had not stopped Ms Karume from using her Twitter account for political communication purposes, influencing her more than 939,000[30] followers on why they should demand for democratic practices to be upheld. Ms Karume and Ms Tsehai are known to be close friends, and together they have been tweeting and retweeting about issues on democracy and the rule of law. Ms Karume was similarly a fierce critic of former president John Magufuli and

[29] The number of Ms Tsehai's followers on Twitter as of 8 August 2022
[30] The number of Ms Karume's followers on Twitter as of 8 August 2022

continued to raise concern on government misconducts, especially those that dealt with human rights abuse. She also is a frequent speaker on Maria Spaces.

Figure 8.3: Screenshot of Fatma Karume's Twitter account as of 8 August 2022

The third notable social media political influencer in Tanzania is someone only known as Kigogo. Even though he has just over 1 million[31] followers, unlike others, Kigogo's tweets received the most retweets and were always shared on other social media platforms, specifically WhatsApp, which is the most used social media platform in Tanzania. Furthermore, other people had opened Twitter accounts in support of Kigogo, retweeting and commenting almost everything he posted. Their accounts had resembling names, such as Son of Kigogo, Wife of Kigogo, Kigogo's Grandfather, and Kigogo's in-law. His fame had come during the period 2015-2020 where he had used his Twitter account to expose government misconducts. He was a fierce critic of former president John Magufuli, mostly tweeting about the president's deeds that were not made public, or even about the president's actions that were yet to happen and indeed happened. Kigogo's tweets had always suggested that he had informers inside the government that were very close to the presidency, leaking information to him so that he could share it with the public. During the period 2015-2020, Kigogo was seen as someone who had risen at a very important time when transparency and freedom of expression were restricted. His use of Twitter led for most people to label him as the liberator of transparency and freedom of expression.

[31] The number of Kigogo's followers on Twitter as of 14 April 2022

Figure 8.4: Screenshot of Kigogo's Twitter account as of 8 August 2022

My efforts to find Ms Tsehai and Ms Karume to interview them for the purpose of this study were unsuccessful. Nevertheless, I managed to interview the man only known as Kigogo, who gave me an in-depth account of why he had started his Twitter revolution against the government of President Magufuli, and whether social media contributed to transparency and freedom of expression. Even though I do not know his real identity, I refer to Kigogo as him/he/his as he had given me his consent to do so. Kigogo was also a good contributor to Maria Spaces where he had been speaking openly about democratic practices in Tanzania, identifying himself as a man.

8.3.1 Tanzania's 'Twitter Republic'

The use of Twitter in Tanzania has been highly regarded as a more inclusive public sphere in terms of political discussion, and this space has been dubbed 'Twitter Republic' by its users. In recent years this space has been used not only amongst private citizens, but also companies and politicians who engage into discussions with ordinary people. A good example of senior politicians who have been engaging directly into political discussions with the public on Twitter are January Makamba, Prof Kitila Mkumbo and Dr Hamis Kigwangallah, who have served in different ministerial positions and sometimes responded to discussions on Twitter related to their portfolios. Another one is Ummy Mwalimu, who during her tenure as Minister for Health gave updates on the Covid status, and sometimes responded to queries via Twitter.

Perhaps Tanzania has borrowed a leaf from its closest neighbour – Kenya – whose use of Twitter has also been on the rise, with Ogola and Owuor (2016) claiming that Kenya has "arguably one of the most active online communities on the continent." According to the scholars, most of these conversations take place on Twitter, hence what is known commonly as Kenyans on Twitter (KOT). While they admit that the conversations taking place on Twitter are mostly not covered by the mainstream media due to being controversial, topics in this largely unmoderated online community are mostly initiated or popularized by an elite group of known bloggers and activists, hence creating its own hierarchies. Similarly, Okoth (2020) points out that Twitter is the platform that is being utilized the most in Kenya by producing political conversations. Not only have the citizens being discussing the political development of their country, but the platform has also been a channel of communication between the government and the public. The elite group that engages in Kenyan social and political issues focuses their participation by covering topics related to politics, reported corruption and media misrepresentations. They do this in different methods, such as the use of hashtags, memes, as well as visuals (p.2).

Kenyan's approach is similar to that of Tanzania, in which most of the people who stir up discussions are Maria Sarungi-Tsehai, Fatma Karume and Kigogo, as well as others like Ansbert Ngurumo and some well-known politicians. This is mostly due to the increased accessibility and ownership of mobile phones that has enabled the public to access online communication platforms in Africa (Ogola, 2019). In Kenya, for instance, this has particularly led to two developments: the emergence of citizen journalists and political activists, and the broadening of the public sphere that encourages the public to engage in political communication (p.67). Likewise, this is also the case in Tanzania, where citizens have been engaging in social and political discussions through Twitter to the extent that the well-known "activists" have received threats and reprimands from government authorities, as explored in this chapter.

There are also similarities into how Kenyans on Twitter (KOT) became so popular, the same way Tanzania's Twitter Republic became popular. A good account of KOT's case is analysed by Okoth (2020), who explains that Kenyans' engagement in digital political communication emerged after the December 2007 to February 2008 ethnic violence that was triggered with the announcement of incumbent President Mwai Kibaki's presidential win over the opposition favourite Raila Odinga. Following the disputed election that caused nation-wide protests, the government announced a ban on protests as well as on live broadcasts, with police deployed to deal with those that defied the order. This prompted Kenyans to look for alternative ways to receive and impart information due

to the mainstream media news blackout, and they started with short message services through mobile phones. It was Kenyans in the Diaspora who teamed up with family and friends to use social media sites to share information on what was going on, as well as to promote peace and unity. This was the start of political engagement for Kenyans on social media platforms.

The Twitter Republic, on the other hand, started gaining momentum especially leading up to the 2015 elections that saw John Magufuli become Tanzania's president. Even those people who currently stir up discussions in the Twitter Republic did not join until during that time, with the exception of Maria Sarungi-Tsehai who joined the platform since 2009. Others like Kigogo joined in 2014 and Fatma Karume joined in 2018. What caused the Twitter Republic to gain popularity, however, was that during 2015-2020 the mainstream media in Tanzania was mostly not free to report, and therefore these and other actors started acting like both citizen journalists as well as digital activists in order to bring information that most Tanzanians thrived to hear but could not. This was due to what MCT Executive Secretary Kajubi Mukajanga (interview in chapter 6) termed as "fear that had gripped the newsrooms", and also the laws and regulations that were being used against those that criticised the president or his government. Social media platforms were the alternative, and Twitter was the selected choice because it was viewed as a more dignified platform, taking into consideration that even different world leaders and organisations utilize it.

The use of the hashtag symbol described by Okoth (2020) is also another area that has similarities between Kenya and Tanzania. For Kenyans on Twitter, for instance, this is what has made Twitter to stand out amongst the likes of Facebook, Pinterest, Instagram and YouTube. The hashtag symbol, argue Yang *et al.* (2012), "serves as both bookmarks and community membership, connecting a virtual community of users." In Kenya, these hashtags mainly originate from ordinary citizens as well as activists and the media, and have managed to direct public debate on different national issues (p.7).

The use of the hashtag symbol in Tanzania has also been utilized by the Twitter Republic. One of the most famous hashtags is used every October 14 in commemoration of Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, Tanzania's first president, who died on October 14, 1999. During this day hashtags are used by the Twitter Republic to 'send messages' to Mwalimu, explaining to him what was happening in the country. The hashtag #DearNyerere includes issues related to the political landscape of Tanzania, or even more social and personal matters that are written in a humorous way.

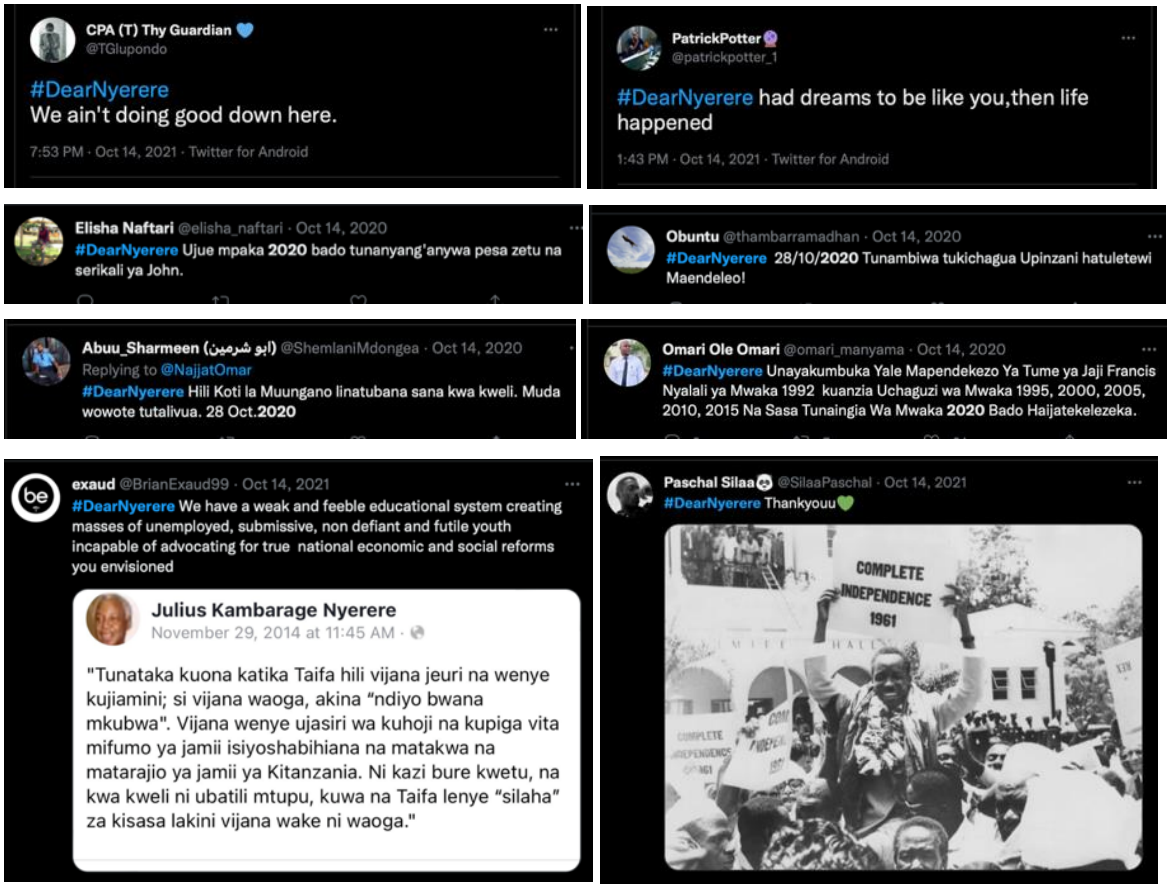


Figure 8.5: Screenshots of tweets from the Twitter Republic with the hashtag #DearNyerere

Despite the success of both Kenyans on Twitter and the Twitter Republic, these two spaces have also had their share of challenges. According to Kaigwa (2017), despite the effectiveness of most KOT campaigns, such as political mobilization, governance and civil awareness, there have also been reported instances of misinformation and cyber-bullying, often connected to a trending topic and involving a diversity of victims – from celebrities and those in powerful positions, to ordinary people. This has caused some of them to deactivate their accounts, with some more serious cases of victims taking their own lives due to the threats and hate they face (Tomer *et al.*, 2014; Eveminet, 2019). Similarly, on the Twitter Republic there have been incidences of bullying caused by, for instance, a clash in political ideology. For example, one active member who makes his living producing and selling soap was bullied when he sided with the ruling party, with prominent members such as Kigogo claiming that the soap contained dangerous chemicals that were not good for the skin. This bullying caused the victim to lose customers that were the main source of his income. Additionally, a lot of misinformation, disinformation and fake news has been reported on the Twitter Republic, an example being during the illness of President Magufuli, as examined later in this chapter.

8.4 The rise of Kigogo2014

Kigogo is a popular name within Tanzania, mainly because of one man who used the Twitter account @kigogo2014. While his identity is not public knowledge, his profile picture is a caricature of a zoomed-in face of America's top rapper and producer, Jay Z. The profile name 'Kigogo' used to be accompanied by the flag of Kenya, but he changed it with the flag of Tanzania in 2021. Kigogo himself during the interview clarified that he was not Kenyan, rather Tanzanian, and that the flag of Kenya only depicted his love for the country's democratic practices, compared to others in Eastern Africa.

One person who gave me a good description of Kigogo is editor and publisher Simon Mkina, whom I had interviewed for the purpose of this study. According to Mkina, Kigogo had multiplied the use of Twitter among Tanzanians, whereby some people had joined Twitter for the sole purpose of following him. While there were those who were silent followers and just read his tweets without making any comments or even retweeting, there were others who engaged in discussions based on what he had tweeted. "People normally ask each other if they have read what Kigogo has tweeted because he is viewed as a source of information more than the mainstream media," explained Mkina.

Social media users in Tanzania had labelled the Twitter space by citizens as "Twitter Republic". Within the Twitter Republic, Kigogo had been labelled a couple of nicknames, all in the Kiswahili language. They were: *Mpwa* (Cousin), *Shemasi* (Deacon) and *Rais wa Twitter* (Twitter President). To this, Mkina queried: "Yes, he is called the Twitter president. Now tell me, have you ever heard of any journalist in this country being called president of the people? None, but there is a Twitter president. And this is a mere person that we don't even know; but he writes, he uncovers issues, the people have accepted him and view him as being more than the prominent journalists that we know" *(S Mkina 2020, personal communication, 24 December).*

In Tanzania, however, people had mixed feelings about Kigogo. There were those who did not agree with his actions because he did not follow journalistic ethics, such as showing readers that he had verified the information he was sharing. There were also those who argued that the country needed him because it had reached a point where not only freedom of expression had been supressed, but journalists from the mainstream media too had been silenced. Nevertheless, despite Kigogo receiving both acclaim and criticism for the work that he did through his Twitter account, whatever he tweeted received a lot of attention, with comments, likes and retweets. Furthermore, with most

of his tweets being shared on other social media platforms, such as WhatsApp, it could be argued that during the period 2015-2020, most people saw him as a replacement of the mainstream media that was at the time blamed for reporting in favour of the government and the ruling party.

Among the things that I observed while researching the use of social media platforms in Tanzania, was that Kigogo's popularity during the period 2015-2020 had led to people turning to him for any kind of important information. If there were rumours about something big, such as the illness of the president, they would go searching on his Twitter account. If they did not find the information they were looking for, they would comment on his tweets and ask him to make a follow-up on the issue so that he could inform the public. Due to this, images depicting him were drawn by different artists showing how much he had become the source of information in Tanzania and how people found themselves turning to him for important information.

Figure 8.6: Kigogo cartoon-1

Cartoon drawn by Yohana Mwenda and shared on social media depicting people listening to and reading 'Kigogo news' while the mainstream media is locked up.

Figure 8.7: Kigogo cartoon-2

Cartoon drawn by Yohana Mwenda and shared on social media showing the mainstream media being cut down while at the same time the face of Kigogo (Jay Z caricature he uses on his Twitter profile) emerging from the chopped plant.

8.4.1 From the horse's mouth: who is Kigogo?

My interview with Kigogo was very interesting because in my mind I had a vision of someone with whom I had to tread carefully. This was because some of Kigogo's tweets used harsh words, lashing at those he claimed were misusing their position of power and lashing out even more to those who criticised his tweets, sometimes even blocking them from following him. Most of his followers would remember the war of words that he had with a former minister, Dr Hamisi Kigwangallah who was a defender of President Magufuli. It reached a point that Kigogo accused the minister of using witchcraft. The war of words was so fierce on Twitter, the two eventually blocked each other, with Kigogo seen by his fans as the victor.

However, upon starting our conversation he explained that there were two sides of him: one was of the guy on Twitter and the other was of a man who was very gentle and God-fearing. This was how he started describing himself when I asked him the first question: "Who is Kigogo?"

One of the things that social media influencers make sure of, is having a name that attracts their audience. Even though some use their real names, most of them have a spiced-up version to their identities. Kigogo is one of them, as he explained that he had decided on the unique name with the intention of attracting people. As it is in the Kiswahili language, which is the national language in

Tanzania, kigogo has two meanings. First, it could mean a tiny log, coming from the root word "gogo" which means log. Once you add "ki" at the beginning, it represents something tiny. The other meaning is that the term kigogo has for many years been used as a slang for someone in a high position. The man Kigogo explained during the interview that he had chosen the name based on the second meaning, which is an influential person who has held high positions in the government, or in politics, or society at large. "You need to personalise your identity and out stage others in order to be unique. I picked that name purposely to give weight to what I was going to be tweeting. You cannot have a name of that weight and talk rubbish. So, the name distinguished itself and people used to think maybe I worked for the government, or I used to be a famous member of the ruling party with grievances towards the government," he explained, confirming that he had never worked for the government nor the ruling party *(Kigogo 2021, personal communication, 15 February).*

Followers of Kigogo would have also noticed that he also had created a special name for former president John Magufuli – the man he always attacked through his Twitter account. The name 'Meko' is what he used to describe the former president, and it reached a point that people started referring to the president as Meko, even in normal conversations. On this, Kigogo clarified: "I chose the name for him because it sounds funny, and I knew it would irritate him. This is how I sent my messages, referring to him as Meko in a very poetic style. Even his own ministers and other people in the government started calling him Meko behind his back." This suggests that Kigogo's effect went beyond the normal citizens who followed him on Twitter and evidences how social media influencers could attract people to imitate what they did.

And then there was the issue of using the caricature of Jay Z as his profile picture, to which Kigogo said he had decided to use it because he could not use his own picture as he did not want his identity revealed. He wanted to use a picture that would be unique and different, and he believed he had chosen well.

Kigogo admitted that his Twitter activism had started during the presidency of Magufuli because he himself was a victim of the former president's oppressive acts. He had mentioned this many times in his tweets, and he also confirmed it to me that he was one of those whose houses were demolished by the government in 2017 for the expansion of Morogoro Road. More than 1,300 houses were demolished, including religious and government buildings. The demolitions happened at a time when there was a court injunction against the government, but the president still ordered the demolitions to go ahead. Kigogo said that this is what had "radicalised" him, seeing that while

he had spent his savings to build a house, it was demolished just because one person did not want to respect the court's order. According to him, this was when he knew that people would suffer under Magufuli's leadership, and he vowed to be the voice of the oppressed. "When it comes to Magufuli's oppressions, I don't need to be told about it by someone else. I am a victim of his actions. I knew that he was the president and had all the powers he needed, but I vowed to use the power of Twitter to make sure the public knew the kind of person he was and how they ought to fight for their rights," explained Kigogo.

For Kigogo, tweeting was his way of using his right to freedom of expression and talk about what was going on in the government of Tanzania and other institutions. Sometimes he tweeted more than fifty times a day, something that made people think that the account was probably ran by several people. He insisted during the interview that he was the only one who owned the @kigogo2014 account and there was no one else who tweeted through it but him. Dedication is one of the attributes of social media influencers, and Kigogo seems to abide by that. He asserted that while he received a lot of information from the different sources that he had, he chose to tweet them at different times, making people unsure of whether the account was run by a single person or not. "I am the only person running this account," he maintained.

The question as to who Kigogo was had been enquired by people in Tanzania ever since he had started gaining popularity from uncovering affairs within the government that were rather not meant to be made public, and also for confronting President Magufuli. Even though he had been branded several names by his fans and fouls alike, Kigogo wanted to be identified as a social media human rights activist. "Freedom of expression is part of human rights," he said, and since his tweets also focused on the right to assemble, democratic values, the right to inform and to be informed as well as the right to question, he would like to be described as such, as they all fall under the umbrella of human rights.

Activism, according to Cammaerts (2015), is when actors get involved in voicing grievances and critiquing for the purpose of proposing solutions to identified problems. While what Kigogo was doing could be identified as activism, the amount of response and attention that he gained made him not only an activist, but someone that people grieved with, wanted to follow, wanted to imitate and sought for answers. The work he did is what made him a social media political influencer who had achieved to create a common place for people to interact and hold political discussions, despite restrictions on freedom of expression that the country experienced in the period 2015-2020.

8.5 Social media political influencers and the challenges they encounter

Being a social media political influencer does not come easy. The most notable social media influencers in Tanzania had all faced either backlash, threats or intimidation from security organs. Mange Kimambi, for instance, notably the first Tanzanian social media political influencer had her Instagram account suspended several times, after the company received complaints about the account breaching its policies. Moreover, in October 2017, the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Simon Sirro was quoted as saying that the Police Force was aware of what he called cybercrime offences committed by Ms. Kimambi, and that it was dealing with the issue (Nipashe, 2017). However, it was not easy for Tanzanian authorities to take any actions against Ms. Kimambi as she was living in the United States and had not been back to Tanzania ever since she had started criticising President Magufuli through her Instagram account.

Challenges encountered by Maria Sarungi Tsehai and Fatma Karume were different from Ms. Kimambi's because they were using their influence to tweet while they were in Tanzania. Despite being intimidated online by people claiming to have been sent by the government, Ms Tsehai's Kwanza Online TV was banned twice. In September 2019 the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA) suspended the online TV for six months for failing to publish user policies and guidelines, hence contravening regulations. While two other online TV stations were found guilty of the same crime, they were only fined USD 2,175 each. Kwanza Online TV was additionally accused of airing misleading information, and when they appealed the suspension to the country's Fair Competition Tribunal, it was rejected (Zacharia, 2019). Similarly, in July 2020 TCRA suspended the broadcaster for 11 months, alleging that its Instagram account had featured a post that was "unpatriotic and could negatively affect the security, unity and economy of the country" (CPJ, 2020). This was after Kwanza Online TV's Instagram account had reposted a health alert that was shared from the US Embassy in Tanzania warning of the risk of Covid in the country, accurately stating that the government had not released statistics related to Covid infections or deaths since April 29, 2020. Discussions on Twitter after the suspensions accused the government of using the Regulations to punish Ms Tsehai over her influence and online political activism that had always been against President Magufuli.

Fatma Karume also faced similar challenges. In September 2019 the High Court of Tanzania suspended her from practising law in mainland Tanzania and ordered the Advocates' Disciplinary Committee to hold a disciplinary hearing to determine whether she should be allowed to continue practising law. This was after Ms Karume had submitted a constitutional challenge over the

president's appointment choice for Attorney General. She was accused of misconduct, with the State's counsel claiming that she had used unprofessional and disrespectful language against the Attorney General (ICJ, 2020). In September 2020, one year after her suspension, Ms Karume was permanently disbarred from practising law by the Advocates' Disciplinary Committee. At the same time, IMMMA Advocates, where Ms. Karume was a partner, sacked her due to her involvement in "political activism, making politically motivated statements and communication on the social media and other platforms" (Hur, 2020).

Figure 8.8: Screenshot of Fatma Karume's tweet criticising her colleagues after she was fired from the law firm she had helped create

8.5.1 Kigogo and his encounters with the law

While Mange Kimambi, Maria Sarungi Tsehai and Fatma Karume were social media political influencers whose identities were known to everyone, this was different with Kigogo. Since he was unknown, the government had tried to get his account suspended and had made open attempts to look for him and bring him to justice for what he was doing through Twitter.

The government had announced in the past that it was looking for Kigogo so that he could be charged for inciting hatred, leaking government's secrets, criticising the president and the government. Former Minister for Home Affairs, Kangi Lugola, in November 2019 had told a press

conference that it was only a matter of time before they arrested him. The former ruling party's Secretary General, Dr Bashiru Ali, also had announced that he would make sure that Kigogo was arrested as he was a problem to the country. However, the government had never mentioned Kigogo's real name despite vowing to arrest him. Instead, they always only referred to him as Kigogo of Twitter.

Figure 8.9: News reports of the government's search for Kigogo

On the left, Home Affairs Minister Kangi Lugola speaking at a press conference, and on the right, CCM's Dr Bashiru Ali's vow to find Kigogo

Kigogo explained that his Twitter account had been suspended three times, and that the last time he had to have a direct conversation with Twitter and explain to them that his account was being flagged because of his political activism. "It took almost three hours of conversation between me and the Twitter people in San Francisco to explain to them that my account did not breach any of their policies, rather the Tanzanian government was setting me up so that it could be suspended," explained Kigogo. He claimed that the government had hired companies in Bulgaria and Spain that created three different websites and copied his tweets from 2014, placed them in a secure server and gained copyright. After they had registered those three websites, they reported Kigogo's account to Twitter, claiming that he was using the information and posting tweets that belonged to them. When Twitter received the report and used an algorithm, it confirmed that Kigogo's tweets

came from the websites, and they suspended his account. This actually prompted other Twitter accounts to be created, with people posing as Kigogo and posting information as he used to do, even though it was not him. These actions correspond with what Jamii Forums Founder Max Melo pointed out during the interview I had with him, that "if you do not give food to your children, they will go and eat at the neighbour's" [See Chapter 7].

During the times when Kigogo's account was suspended, news spread about it on Twitter as well as other social media platforms. I observed his fans tweeting asking of his whereabouts, claiming that his accounts were suspended due to the work he was doing of uncovering government misconduct through the platform. Some even used the hashtag #BringBackKigogo in their discussions.

Figure 8.10: Screenshot of one of the tweets that appeared during the suspension of Kigogo's account, with #BringBackKigogo

"Imagine the government using a lot of money to go through all that trouble to suspend my account just because I am using my right to freedom of expression," he lamented. His account has since been restored and officially verified by Twitter *(Kigogo 2021, personal communication, 15 February).*

8.5.2 Does it really make a difference?

One of the questions that I asked Kigogo during the interview was if the work he did as a political activist and influencer did make any difference, to which he replied: "it does in a very serious and big way." He gave an example of the series of tweets he had posted regarding the June 2019 abduction of Kenyan businessman Raphael Ongangi who used to be the Executive Assistant to an opposition leader named Zitto Kabwe. Using his sources within the government, Kigogo had posted a series of tweets about the abduction and about where Ongangi was being held. He also tweeted

a photo with the name, vehicle registration number and home address of the person he accused to being the leader of the abduction team. These tweets were retweeted and shared in other social media sites with the hashtag #BringBackRaphaelOngangi. Kigogo continued tweeting updates regarding the abduction and informed his followers that Ongangi was going to be dumped in Mombasa, Kenya and set free under the condition that he should never return to Tanzania or talk about the abduction to anyone. Just as Kigogo had tweeted, Ongangi's wife confirmed that her husband had been found in Mombasa and that he was alright. The Dar es Salaam Regional Police Commander, Lazaro Mambosasa, announced to the press that Ongangi was safe in Mombasa and he was never abducted, rather had gone there on his own will. Ongangi himself has never spoken of the incident ever since.

The case of Raphael Ongangi's abduction was one of several cases that Kigogo argues were solved due to his tweets. Because of the updates he was tweeting on the situation as he received them from his sources, Ongangi's life was saved. "So yes, what we do does make a difference," he insisted. "If it had no impact, do you know how much time and money CCM [the ruling party] have invested in order to place young people in social media platforms just so they could compete with us? Do you know how much money they have out there? It's a lot of money. They are creating a propaganda machinery to counter everything I say." Kigogo explained that while the propagandists were being paid to counter everything he tweeted, he had a cause and objective to achieve, that is, to make sure that he unveils government's misconducts and encourages people to exercise their right to freedom of expression. "I am doing this on my own. Nobody has sent me, and nobody is paying me to do what I do," he asserted.

On the other hand, Kigogo admitted that there were people who had suffered because of the work that he had been doing. He claimed some had lost their jobs and others had even been killed, because they had been suspected of either being his informers, or of being his allies and relatives. When I asked how the suffering of those suspected of being close to him had affected him and whether he had ever thought of ending his activism, he acknowledged that as a human being he had been greatly affected, but he also believed that he should continue doing it.

"In order for us to cross from where we are, people will die, people will get hurt and people will suffer. I have a strong belief that their blood will nourish what we believe we need to achieve in terms of freedom of expression. They will go into record that they helped in what I believe we are supposed to do for Tanzanians," he said. Kigogo even quoted the Bible's story of the Israelites leaving Egypt and traveling in the wilderness for 40 years, and that only two who had originally

travelled from Egypt – Joshua and Caleb – were the ones to reach Canaan. Even their leader, Moses, died on the way. He pointed out: "So, some people might feel like what we are doing is not producing any fruits, but I believe that we are laying a beacon where they will one day say Kigogo and his associates passed here and ended here, so we can take it from there" *(Kigogo 2021, personal communication, 15 February).*

While my analysis in Chapter 5 suggested that most Tanzanians felt that people who criticised the president should be arrested, Kigogo remarked that the work of people like him had given more Tanzanians the courage to speak up. Even though the number of those who were courageous enough to talk openly was still small, at least people had the courage to engage in political conversations. He emphasised: "But not only that; right now, we are at a point where people have realised that criticising the president is not a sin. He is not a king, and this is why I always say that if they do not want to be criticised, they should remove Article 18 in the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania that talks of freedom of expression. As long as that Article is still there, it is our right to talk."

The point raised by Kigogo about the right to criticise the president is an interesting one, as the analysis of Chapter 5 where the survey conducted on Tanzanians revealed that most people, regardless of their age, were of the view that those who criticised the president should be arrested for insulting the president. Moreover, while Chapter 5 also included a discussion on the respect of elders according to African culture, it also concluded that this respect is being abused by authoritarian governments with the intent of silencing people, while in reality restricting freedom of expression. Perhaps encouraging people to be involved in political discussions and utilising technology-aided platforms could help more citizens feel free to practise their right to freedom of expression. It could also encourage law makers to realise that criticising and insulting are not the same, and the law should not be used to restrict peaceful debate.

8.6 Delivering information where the mainstream media cannot

As explored in depth in Chapter 7, the mainstream media in Tanzania had received blame for reporting in favour of the government and the ruling party during the period 2015-2020. This happened due to what was seen as a crackdown on the media after President Magufuli had issued a warning to media owners not to think they had so much freedom. Punitive measures taken against the mainstream media, such as banning of newspapers and fines issued to radio and TV stations caused a shrinking space, denying them the ability to function freely, as examined in Chapter 6.

In March 2021, questions over President Magufuli's whereabouts started circling on social media. This was after the president had been absent from the public scene for about two weeks and people started questioning where he was, especially since he was fond of appearing in public and in the news. When rumours about his ill health started spreading on social media, I monitored the platforms, specifically Twitter, to see how the discussion was going, and I also monitored the local newspapers to see how they would report what was going on. This period showed vividly how there was lack of transparency within the government to the point that it could not give an official response as to the whereabouts of the president. It also demonstrated how the Tanzania mainstream media was too afraid to question the disappearance of the president, making people to rely on rumours being spread through social media.

8.6.1 The case of President Magufuli's illness: social media vs the mainstream media

The fear of Tanzania's mainstream media was apparent in March of 2021 when rumours about the health of President John Magufuli started. Clues about the president's whereabouts were first broken on Twitter by exiled journalist Ansbert Ngurumo [read more about him on Chapter 6 and 7]. Over the years during his presidency, Magufuli had been known for attending mass at different churches, including the Roman Catholic Church to which he belonged. Not only would he attend mass, but also use the pulpit to speak, where he would talk about his government and about matters going on in the country. The last time he had attended mass was at the St Peter's Church in Dar es Salaam, where he had warned that imported face masks were not safe and instead said people should use locally made masks to prevent themselves from Covid (Kamagi, 2021).

Due to his style of leadership and his use of the Church pulpit from time to time, questions started emerging when the president had not attended Church for two consecutive weeks. On March 6, 2021, Ngurumo posted a picture of President Magufuli kneeling in Church, to which he tweeted:

> "Where is President Magufuli? Last Sunday he was scheduled to attend the first mass at ELCT Azania Front. He didn't go after he was stopped at the last minute. He hasn't been seen or heard of for a whole week now. Taking into consideration what we are used to, if he won't be seen this Sunday as well, that will be NEWS. Where is he? How is he?"

Even though Ngurumo's tweet did not say explicitly that the president was ill, Kigogo's response to that tweet suggested that President Magufuli's health might have been of concern. He responded that people should not say anything, since if they talked about the president he might wake up. This response prompted other responses querying whether the president was ill.

Figure 8.11: Screenshot of Ansbert Ngurumo's tweet questioning the whereabouts of President Magufuli

While the rumours started spreading with others joining in with different versions of the president's whereabouts, on 8 March 2021 Kigogo tweeted, addressing the newly appointed Chief Secretary, Dr Bashiru Ali. He told Dr Bashiru that he had information about the president postponing commissioning new military officers at an event planned for 10 March 2021. He then questioned his whereabouts, mocking that he [President Magufuli] had once said that he was a rock.

Figure 8.12: Screenshot of Kigogo's first tweet alerting the public of the president's ill health

For followers of Kigogo, the tweet was an indication that something was not right. Some members of political opposition parties and other individuals also started speculating that the president was ill, and on 9 March 2021, Kigogo posted several updates, arguing openly that the president was ill.

Figure 8.13: Screenshot of tweet by Kigogo declaring openly that President Magufuli was ill

While the country was uncertain about the president's whereabouts and his health, people started questioning the silence of the mainstream media. This was because rumours continued to spread on social media. The government remained silent even after the "Twitter Republic" started the hashtag #WhereIsMagufuli. Furthermore, while most people seemed too afraid to comment on the tweets posted by Kigogo or to retweet them, they however took screenshots of those tweets and shared them widely through WhatsApp, which is the most used social media platform in Tanzania. *Sauti Kubwa*, a website owned and operated by exiled journalist Ansbert Ngurumo, was at least giving full stories concerning the president, despite not having verified the information with official sources. Ngurumo remarked during the interview we had that *Sauti Kubwa* was forced to go against all ethics guiding journalism because the government was not ready to give out information and people had the right of being informed. He relied on his sources and felt it right to publish the articles on the president's health.

Figure 8.14: Screenshot of Sauti Kubwa's story on 9 March 2021 on the president's ill health

While the information being tweeted by Kigogo and others kept being retweeted and shared through other platforms, other mainstream media outside of Tanzania started reporting it as well. However, all this time, the mainstream media in Tanzania remained silent. While it could be argued that they were abiding by media ethics because they had not received any official information from the government that was supposed to confirm or deny rumours of the president's health, media ethics do allow for other news organisations to be quoted. Since the whereabouts of the president were no longer being questioned only on social media platforms, the mainstream media in Tanzania could have easily quoted their counterparts in Kenya and around the world, while at the same time addressing the fact that the government was reluctant to make any comment. This also takes us back to some of the interviews, in which Atilio Tagalile as well as Deodatus Balile agreed that social media could be a place for gathering tips about what was going on, allowing the professional journalist to make follow-up and qualify it into news. The Tanzanian journalists, however, seemed

to not have done that *(A Tagalile 2020, personal communication, 23 December; D Balile 2020, personal communication, 15 December).*

However, it could be debated that the silence of Tanzania's media at that time was due to fear that had engulfed them, worried that they could be penalised using the laws put in place to regulate them. For example, when speculations on social media and news carried by the mainstream media outside of Tanzania continued, the Minister responsible for Information, Innocent Bashungwa, tweeted a warning urging journalists and citizens not to trust the rumours, rather rely on information from official sources. Otherwise, he warned, they could be held accountable for breaking the law.

Figure 8.15: Screenshot of a tweet by Information Minister, Innocent Bashungwa, warning against trusting and spreading rumours

Below the minister's tweet is a response from someone telling him that when official sources do not provide information, it gives a chance for unofficial sources to thrive.

This warning did not stop the rumours. Moreover, Mwigulu Nchemba who was Minister for Justice and Constitutional Affairs wrote on his Instagram page and Twitter account, also rebuking those who were questioning the whereabouts of the president. He even claimed that the president was

not a parish worker or church elder or even a TV anchor who was supposed to be seen in public. Minister Nchemba quoted Article 89 of the Penal Code and Article 16 of the Cybercrimes Act, warning that the government was at work and actions would be taken against those breaking the law. The threats and intimidation by government ministers suggest that the government was not transparent and did not want people to question the whereabouts of their leader, even though they had the right to do so. Furthermore, the threats and intimidation also imply that while the Constitution is clear about the presidency and handing over of power if the president is incapacitated[32], those within the government could not implement the constitution due to reasons not clearly known, but possibly fear.

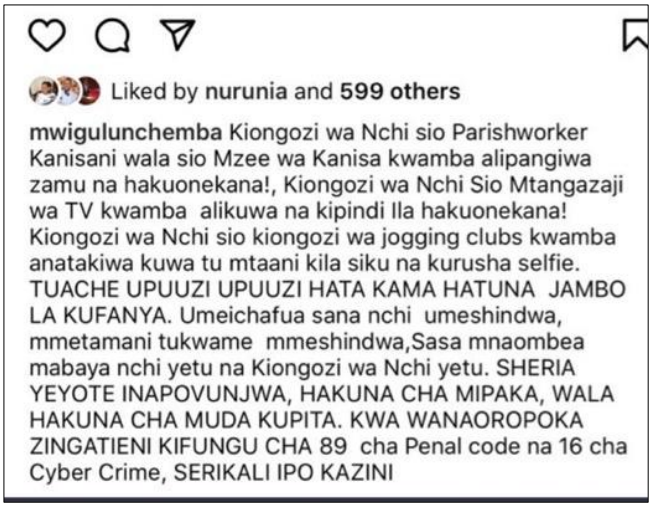


Figure 8.16: Screenshot of Minister Mwigulu Nchemba's Instagram post warning against the spread of rumours about President Magufuli's whereabouts

The threats issued by the two ministers did not help to stop the rumours, rather they were received with backlash from the public and only fuelled the speculations to continue, with people asking if the Cabinet itself knew where the president was. This time, people started spreading information that the president was flown from a Kenyan hospital to India, and some other rumours claiming that the flight was diverted to China. It reached a point where people started arguing that the president had died of Covid, and that the government was trying to cover it up because he used to mock those who wore masks and had vowed never to allow Tanzania to receive Covid vaccines. With all this happening, the mainstream media in Tanzania was still silent, not daring to even question the warnings by the ministers. In the midst of all this uncertainty, the mainstream media focused on reporting other stories that were not related to the president or his whereabouts.

[32] Article 37 of the URT Constitution, 1977

While the silence of the mainstream media in Tanzania suggested that the laws governing them were prohibiting them to deliver the correct information to the people, threats and warnings by government officials were never the answer to controlling freedom of expression. The two Tanzanian ministers seemed to forget that social media broke boundaries, and that if the mainstream media was silenced, there were alternatives. It only takes one social media political influencer to share something, and all their followers and others would continue to spread it and add their own version to the story. Had the Tanzanian government decided to be forthcoming and transparent, the rumours could have been controlled and the right information would have prevailed. This complements what Kigogo said during our interview, that the Tanzania we had was not one where you could wait to balance your story, as it would never happen *(Kigogo 2021, personal communication, 15 February)*.

The first time the government finally decided to talk about the president's health was through the Prime Minister, Kassim Majaliwa, on 13 March 2021, one week after the rumours had started. However, the Prime Minister claimed that the rumours were false, and that the president was well and healthy, working hard from his office. This was also the first time that Tanzania's mainstream media reported about the issue, with all the outlets quoting the prime minister. The media did not even ask the prime minister why the president had not appeared in public to refute the rumours himself and did not even question the prime minister's claim.

Figure 8.17: A section of Tanzania's daily newspapers reporting about the president's whereabouts for the first time

The newspapers only quoted the Prime Minister who claimed that the president was fine. The ruling party's paper – *Uhuru* – even went further with the banner headline 'President Magufuli Roars'.

The case of how Tanzania's mainstream media handled the news about President Magufuli's illness is a good example of how the media landscape in the country had become a shrinking space, as explored in Chapter 6. It is also a good example of how social media facilitated breaking the news of the president's illness to the public, and the public reacting by demanding to know his whereabouts. However, threats and intimidation tactics by government ministers proved to work on the Tanzanian mainstream media, but not the public. The power of social media and social media political influencers made it possible for people to get information, despite the government not wanting to give information through its official channels. While the power of social media and social media political influencers demonstrated their contribution to transparency and freedom of expression at that moment, it also allowed for misinformation to spread rapidly and beyond the borders. This is because journalists, who are regarded as gatekeepers, were not allowed to do their work.

8.7 Conclusion

Despite the work of social media political influencers gaining attention in recent years, there is a dearth of literature on the subject and there isn't even an agreed terminology on what they should be called. This chapter has scrutinised the concept of social media influencers, highlighting on those who do political activism through different online platforms and how their work has contributed to creation of political discussions, thereby contributing to transparency and freedom of expression. The chapter has provided a brief history on the birth of social media political influencers in Tanzania,

noting how Mange Kimambi even used her Instagram account to call for nationwide protests against the deteriorating right to speak and right to be informed. The chapter then probed the work of Kigogo, a social media political influencer whose identity is unknown, but whose work has led to revelations of misconducts within the government and its institutions. The interview with Kigogo underlined how social media platforms had not only encouraged people to speak up, but also had been a beacon of hope at a time when freedom of expression was at stake. The chapter ends with an example of how social media platforms faired compared to the mainstream media in Tanzania during reports of President John Magufuli's illness.

The next chapter is the last one of this study. It will present a discussion based on the objectives of the study vis-à-vis the findings, and end with recommendations on what should be done next for Tanzania to be able to uphold transparency and freedom of expression. The chapter will further explore how social media could continue providing space to advocate for democratic practices.

Chapter 9 Where Do We Go From Here: A Conclusion

9.1 Introduction and Summary

Methods of communication have been changing around the world as technological advancements continue to evolve. In Africa, these means of communication started with the rhythm of drums, which indicated that the availability of information formed a critical component of societal development (Akpabio, 2021). While the world has witnessed different means of communication, the most pervasive one at the moment is aided by technology, whereby the Internet has enabled the easy flow of information from one place to another. The introduction of social media, in particular, has been a turning point for methods of communication. Social media has not only made it possible for people to interact instantly but has also assisted in social and political changes in different parts of the world, such as the events of 2011, which Fuchs (2014) described as "a year of revolutions, major protests, riots and the emergence of various social movements" (Fuchs, 2014: 83).

This study investigated social media's contribution to transparency and freedom of expression, looking at how the use of the three as a triad could be the answer. It based its study investigating the events that happened in Tanzania during the period 2015-2020. The purpose of focusing on that specific period was due to the fact that Tanzania had gone through a difficult time in terms of transparency and freedom of expression as interrogated in Chapters 6, 7 and 8, through accounts of people I interviewed. Laws and regulations guiding methods of communication were enacted and used to the fullest, and they did not only affect the mainstream media, but also ordinary people. The research problem for this study, therefore, was an investigation of the shrinking media space and the apparent lack of transparency and freedom of expression in Tanzania.

This study was guided by five objectives, which were:

i. To explore the understanding and importance of good governance practices as perceived by Tanzanian citizens;
ii. To assess the current laws and regulations guiding media and freedom of expression in Tanzania and their impacts;
iii. To evaluate the current use of social media platforms vis-à-vis mainstream media;
iv. To assess social impacts of using social media platforms in promoting transparency and freedom of expression; and
v. To envision what needs to be done to uphold good governance practices.

Different chapters of this study have provided an in-depth account of what transpired in Tanzania from the colonial era, until the period 2015-2020, which was the focus of this study. This study adopted a mixed-methods research approach used to collect data. Chapter 4, for instance, gave a historical perspective on transparency and freedom of expression from 1891 during the colonial rule in what was known as German East Africa and later Tanganyika. It probed how the colonial masters controlled the flow of information through sedition laws, but also how African newspapers supported the call for independence. The chapter further examined how leaders of post-colonial Tanganyika and later Tanzania, used the same tactics that were utilised by colonial administrators to curb transparency and freedom of expression. This included nationalisation of the private media and the socialist media under the Arusha Declaration as spearheaded by the first President Julius Nyerere. The democratisation process that brought with it the re-introduction of the private press and multi-party politics in the early 1990s made it possible for people to have other channels where they could air their opinions, albeit the laws and regulations that were enacted to restrict that freedom.

Good governance practices had proven to plunge during the period 2015-2020, and this was described in Chapter 5 based on opinions of how people perceive good governance practices in Tanzania. According to the survey, most people felt that freedom of the press, freedom of political parties and freedom of civil society organisations to function was worse than it had been a few years before. With more technological advancements taking place around the globe, more laws that regulate the flow of information were enacted as described in Chapter 6. This chapter was based on empirical evidence as narrated by the interviewees, and showed how laws, regulations, threats and intimidation were used to control the media, causing it to become a shrinking space. Chapters 7 and 8 investigated the use of social media in Tanzania and how it contributed to transparency and freedom of expression at a time described as the worst of all periods in terms of good governance practices. The chapters, also based on in-depth interviews, probed the debate between the use of social media vis-à-vis the mainstream media, as well as the importance of social media political influencers at a dire time.

9.2 Major findings: Social media's contribution to Tanzania's governance practices

The main question for this study was: Can social media contribute to transparency and freedom of expression? This question was complemented by three sub questions, which are explained here together with the answers found by this study:

i. *What factors influence perceptions of good governance in Tanzania* – as evidenced in Chapter 5, the main factors that influence perceptions of good governance in Tanzania are the freedom to say what you think, as well as the freedom of the media, the opposition political parties and Civil Society Organisations. While these freedoms are the most important ones with more Tanzanians declaring that they have gotten worse in the past few years, the freedom to criticise the president is not among them. Even though this freedom has been debated for some time due to some arrests of those who criticise the president under provisions of the Cybercrimes Act of 2015, Tanzanians are still not comfortable to criticise the president. Much of this has been analysed in the chapter, where even the issue of respect in African culture is discussed as to being the main reason for not wanting to criticise the president.

ii. *Why has there been a decline in good governance practices in Tanzania during 2015-2020* – the narrative analysis derived from accounts of media stakeholders in Chapter 6 states how the media and political landscape in the country changed after John Magufuli was elected president in 2015. While the previous presidents tried to encourage transparency and freedom of expression, Magufuli banned political activities, banned the live streaming of Parliamentary proceedings, and warned media owners not to think that they have that kind of freedom. While it is true that laws and regulations have been in existent for many years, such as the Newspapers Act of 1976 which was later repealed and replaced by the Media Services Act of 2016, narrations have proved that the person in power is the one who determines what should be done. In this case, there was a decline in good governance practices in Tanzania during 2015-2020 because President Magufuli first decided to implement the laws in place, but also because he did not like to be criticised, accusing those who criticised him as being "sent by imperialists." This in turn caused law enforcement officers to arrest or warn those criticising the president or the government. The person in power was the major cause of all this.

iii. *What conditions would be required for social media to replace mainstream media* – while mainstream media is still regarded as reliable and trustworthy, there are extreme instances where social media could come in to replace it. This is, for instance, evidenced in Chapters 7 and 8 where in the former, social media political influencers have expressed how they have used the platforms to prevent calamities. For instance, Ansbert Ngurumo spoke of how he had to practice what he termed "pre-emptive journalism" through his Twitter

account because he realised that state organs used the excuse of journalism ethics to act as they wanted. Ngurumo elaborated that since he had reliable sources within the government, all he did was use the Twitter platform to address ongoing issues, while knowing only too well that he was going against journalism ethics by not confirming the information with the official spokespersons. Similarly, the man known as Kigogo declared that he understood he was not following any journalism ethics but defended his actions explaining that the Tanzania of 2015-2020 was not one where you could wait to balance your story. Instead, he decided to post information on his Twitter account, knowing that the mainstream media would not dare do it. In Chapter 8, a vivid example is given on how social media replaced the mainstream media for a while to break the news about President Magufuli's ill health. This is a good example of how social media was able to do more than the mainstream media, because the mainstream media was following ethics by waiting for government officials to confirm the whereabouts and health of the president. Since none of the government officials were straightforward about the issue, social media platforms were used to break the news as well as provide updates. That, however, came with the price of misinformation, disinformation and fake news. In reality, social media cannot replace mainstream media, but can complement the work of mainstream media at times, such as when the mainstream media is restricted to operate freely and independently.

It is imperative to remember that social media's contribution to governance practices in Tanzania started being evident with the launch of Jamii Forums in March 2006 when it used to be called Jambo Forums. This was Tanzania's first social media platform. Whereas the forum created spaces that aided the interaction between people about different topics, it was the political space of the forum that was the most popular one. While this forum sometimes included heated discussions about the political landscape of the country, it also saw different top-level politicians, such as ministers and leaders of opposition parties responding to some of the issues being raised. The use of social media in Tanzania increased gradually after the year 2005, and as explored in chapter 7, Jamii Forums was credited for being the platform that first broke the Richmond scandal. This scandal led to the resignation of the prime minister and two other ministers who were implicated, as well as to President Jakaya Kikwete dissolving the whole Cabinet later.

Perceptions of good governance practices among Tanzanians have also demonstrated how citizens prefer a democratic country that follows democratic practices. While the survey analysed in chapter 5 exhibits this point, it also showed the other side of Tanzanians that dwelt under the shadow of

respect under African culture. This culture had led people to believe that it was disrespectful to criticise elders, and in this case, heads of state. For instance, while the chapter clearly demonstrated that good governance practices were preferred, it also demonstrated that Tanzanians of all ages were approving of disciplinary measures to be taken against people who criticised the president, as it constituted to insulting the president. This study has outlined examples of people who were arrested under the Cybercrimes Act of 2015 for committing such acts. However, with the use of social media on the increase and political discussions going on online, more people felt at ease to criticise the government and the president. As noted by Max Melo in chapter 7 and by Kigogo in chapter 8, Article 18 of the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania outlines the right to freedom of opinion and expression.

Another notable achievement in the use of social media had been during elections. While Dwyer and Molony (2019) describe how voters across Africa use social media platforms to keep abreast of latest developments during elections, Tanzania's 2010 general elections were a good test of how social media was used during political campaigns. While the politicians were still fixed to their normal ways of live campaigning from one place to another, it was the voters who were interacting the most on social media, divided on who they should choose as their president. Even though the 2010 elections were just a start of the use of social media during campaigns in Tanzania, it was the 2015 general elections that escalated the use, this time not only among voters, but also politicians who appealed to voters through various platforms. The 2020 general elections, however, could be credited as to have passed the test of social media contributing towards transparency and freedom of expression in Tanzania. This is because the elections came at a time when the government of President John Magufuli had for four years banned political activities. Even though the opposition parties were allowed to campaign, the media coverage was still not favourable to them. This led the opposition to rely on social media, updating voters on the campaigns and their manifesto. Chapter 6 has done an in-depth analysis of that, with interviewed respondents explaining how, without social media, they would have not been able to follow the campaigns of the main opposition presidential candidate.

However as examined in chapters 4 and 6, the media landscape in Tanzania started shrinking during the period 2015-2020, leading to a point where some outlets banned themselves and apologised to the president after they thought that they had committed an offence in their reporting. This was also a period when some journalists experienced personal threats, some were abducted, one was charged for money laundering and organised crime, and another one sought refuge in another

country. During this time, the country saw the emergence of social media political influencers who have been discussed in chapters 7 and 8. The four notable influencers featured: Mange Kimambi, Maria Sarungi Tsehai, Fatma Karume and a man only known as Kigogo, used social media to call for change and to advocate the importance of transparency and freedom of expression. It could be argued that social media's contribution to transparency and freedom of expression has been reflected substantially during this time, and the work of the social media political influencers swayed people to move their attention to social media as they were able to understand their right to ask questions as well as their right to get information. Even though this was also a period that was filled with misinformation through social media, the level of information that citizens had access to, outweighed the misinformation. A good example was demonstrated in chapter 8 where information about President Magufuli's whereabouts started spreading on social media. Even though Tanzania's mainstream media was silent about the issue, the government itself was not forthcoming and instead threatened people who were spreading the rumours. Social media broke the boundaries of government's threats and intimidation and continued reporting the "developments" of the president's health, even though this also led to non-verified information and misinformation.

The major finding of this study, therefore, is that while there is a lot of misinformation, disinformation and fake news on social media, its contribution to transparency and freedom of expression is significant and outweighs the disadvantages. This is especially for countries that experience issues in implementing good governance practices, the same way Tanzanians' right to transparency and freedom of expression was restricted during the period 2015-2020. This means that the triad: social media, transparency and freedom of expression, can work together in the promotion of good governance.

9.3 Beyond 2020 and policy recommendations

On 17 March 2021, Tanzania's fifth president, John Magufuli, passed away while in office. The Vice-President, Samia Suluhu Hassan was sworn in as the sixth president of the United Republic of Tanzania. According to the Constitution, Ms. Hassan, who is popularly referred to as Mama Samia, will serve the remainder of her predecessor's term, that is, until the next general elections in 2025.

The demise of President Magufuli brought with it an end to an era where people had to be cautious with what they said in public or online, fearing that they might be arrested for insulting the government, or even insulting the president, as explored in chapters 4 and 6. While the laws and

regulations that had been guiding the media and communication among Tanzanians during the previous administrations are still in place, the early days of Mama Samia's reign suggest some changes.

One of the noticeable changes as soon as she was sworn in as president, was the resumption of live parliamentary proceedings. As analysed in chapter 4, In January 2016, just two months after Magufuli became president, the government had announced its decision to limit live coverage of parliamentary proceedings by the Tanzania Broadcasting Corporation (TBC), a move that sparked debate. However, a few days after President Magufuli's death, live parliamentary proceedings resumed on TV, albeit with no official announcement from the government. Furthermore, during the swearing-in of newly appointed Permanent Secretaries in April 2021, Mama Samia ordered the Ministry responsible for Information to lift the ban on online TV stations, arguing the government should not give people a reason to claim that there was no freedom of expression. Moreover, she hosted a meeting with editors while marking 100 days in office in June 2021, and one of the requests by the editors was for the government to lift the ban on all media outlets so that the mainstream media could start afresh under her administration. To this, the president directed the Ministry responsible for Information to meet with those whose outlets were banned and discuss a way forward. While this is a good development, it takes us back to the discussion in chapter 4 about how the person in power could determine the implementation of laws and regulations. For instance, while Tanzania's second president, Ali Hassan Mwinyi is credited for being lenient towards media outlets that wrote negatively about him, President Magufuli vowed to implement the laws that were in place. Mama Samia's directive of lifting the ban on online TVs did not follow any law but just her word as the head of state. If another president were to come and overturn all of these directives, the country would find itself going backward all over again.

Another noticeable change is the fact that while President Magufuli started banning private newspapers immediately after getting into power, this time it was the ruling party's newspaper, *Uhuru*, that was banned for two weeks by the government after publishing a false headline claiming Mama Samia had no plans to run for presidency in 2025. This was the first time in Tanzania's history that the government had banned one of its own newspapers using provisions from the Media Services Act of 2016, indicating that perhaps the law had started to affect not only private newspapers, but also those affiliated with the government. On the other hand, however, it could be argued that *Uhuru* fell victim only because it was an untrue story aimed directly at the president. This argument emanates from the fact that when the same newspapers affiliated with the

government published unethical stories aimed at members of the opposition, no actions were taken against them. Moreover, almost all the newspapers that faced punishment in Tanzania have fell victim to the law only because they wrote stories that were not in favour of the president, or the government. Another important note is that newspapers used to be banned for up to six months or indefinitely, whereas *Uhuru* was banned for only two weeks. Nevertheless, it was the first of its kind and worthy to be noted.

However, while Tanzania under Mama Samia seems to be experiencing a change of policy in matters concerning transparency and freedom of expression, not everything has been addressed. The ban on political activities imposed by President Magufuli in 2016 is yet to be lifted, and when the president was questioned about it, she claimed that she needed to be given more time to rebuild the economy first. This response raises concern as to whether the intentions of the president are to allow freedom of expression only when it suits her and her government while still restricting activities by other opposition parties. Due to this, opposition parties still have to rely largely on social media to get their messages across.

Considering these developments, this study discusses the following recommendations:

9.3.1 On the laws and regulations

There are several laws enacted to regulate the media and the flow of information in Tanzania. These include the Cybercrimes Act (2015), the Media Services Act (2016), and the Electronic and Postal Communications (Online Content) Regulations (2020). All these laws have provisions that have been pointed out by stakeholders as to being oppressive and curtailing freedom of expression, as examined in chapters 6 and 7. The country should not rely on the sympathy of the president in power not to use these laws against those thought to be offenders. Instead, provisions of these laws and regulations that are repressive should be repealed. If these laws continue to exist and Tanzania gets another president who wants to abide by them as repressive as they may be, all efforts advocating for transparency and freedom of expression will be lost. Absalom Kibanda noted this during our interview, that the implementation of laws and regulations depends on the attitude and mercy of the person in power *(A Kibanda 2020, personal communication, 14 December).*

9.3.2 On leaders and what they ought to do

The 1977 Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania has granted many powers to the president. Because of these powers, over the years Tanzanians have witnessed a remark by the president being regarded as an order, even if they were breaking the law. Such has happened, for instance, when

President Magufuli warned media owners not to think they were that free, a remark that saw a start to a turbulent period ever witnessed by the media in post-independence Tanzania. As noted in chapter 5, respect in African culture should continue to be upheld, but not abused. Leaders should know that it is the right of citizens to criticise them and to criticise their policies. The leaders, therefore, should not take these criticisms as insults or disrespect, but should take on the criticism to address the issues raised by their voters. This also calls for an interpretation of "insulting" in the Cybercrimes Act, whereby some people have been charged for insulting the president while they were actually criticising him.

Another issue is on the use of threats and intimidation by leaders as cited in chapter 8. Leaders need to understand that threats and intimidation only prove their weakness in addressing issues and delivering results. The government is required to be transparent, and the people have the right to ask questions and to be informed. Social media has provided a platform that has eased the flow of communication, and Tanzanians have witnessed how these social media platforms, coordinated by social media political influencers, have aided online political discussions. Leaders should be called out for issuing threats where they could simply practise transparency and should also be charged and punished for abuse of power.

Similarly, Article 18 of the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania stipulates the right to freedom of opinion and expression and the right to be informed. Leaders need to practise transparency and understand that the right to speak is guaranteed by the Constitution. When they deny the people that right, it means that they are disregarding the Constitution, which is the mother of all laws.

Furthermore, as explained in chapter 5 and noted by Deodatus Balile during our interview, Tanzania's third President Benjamin Mkapa established a routine of addressing the nation every month end. This was continued by his successor, President Jakaya Kikwete, but ended after President Magufuli came into power. It is essential for the president to speak to their people. When a president is mum on critical matters going on in the country and is only heard when it is convenient for them, that raises alarm as to whether they are afraid to address matters, or they are just ignoring the fact that the people have the right to know. Addresses to the nation should be re-established.

9.3.3 On the media and what is expected of them

The media in Tanzania has gone through a tumultuous period during the period 2015-2020 as evidenced in chapter 6. This was a period where even the private media skewed its reporting

towards favouring the government and the ruling party, causing people to turn to social media for information. The mainstream media needs to respect their vital role as gatekeepers. Their lack of gatekeeping caused social media platforms to flow with misinformation, disinformation and fake news, with ordinary people not knowing where to turn to for the right information. Being the fourth estate does not mean that one will not encounter any hurdles, as there will be times when restrictions will be put in place to stop your efforts, as evidenced during the period 2015-2020. This should be taken as a lesson by the Tanzania media that even though they want to sell their newspapers and receive adverts, their number one priority should always be delivering the right information to the people, despite the difficulties. The Tanzania media has in the past agreed to unite and not report any news about a former Minister for Home Affairs as well as a former Dar es Salaam Regional Commissioner. If that kind of solidarity were to be shown during the period 2015-2020, perhaps the government would have changed its mind on how it was handling the media. This is because the government and all its leaders need the media, but the media does not necessarily need them.

While the mainstream media in Tanzania are still healing from the suffering they went through during the period 2015-2020, they should also take it as a lesson and start working on what to do in order to preserve their status as the fourth estate. This work should start now, as they should not let the situation of them being caught off-guard happen again. The laws and regulations restricting them are still in place, and one day another president might come and want to use those laws against them. It is their responsibility to learn from what happened and initiate discussions with the authorities right now. These discussions should lead to the repeal of what are seen as "bad laws" and they must work together to make sure that their unified agenda bears fruits. Delaying this matter on the excuse that the current government has not yet used any of these laws against them will be a mistake. They must act now.

Another important issue is about the veteran journalists that Tanzania has. There is a good number of journalists who worked under different administrations of government that Tanzania has gone through. When the mainstream media are faced with a crisis as it was during the period 2015-2020, seeking advice from those with more experience could help. These veterans should be seen as mentors and should be sought for help, as I am sure they are willing to help whenever needed. Their advice could assist the mainstream media into understanding how they are supposed to handle a situation that seems not to be favourable to them. As the Kiswahili saying goes, "*uzee dawa*" [old age is cure]. This was noted by both Attilio Tagalile and Ndimara Tegambwage, who insisted that it

was possible for journalists to find a new way of working and reporting. As veteran journalists, they could have advised the mainstream media on how to do this, if they were asked to help.

Additionally, the introduction of social media has brought with it citizen journalists as well as social media political influencers. As analysed in chapter 7, the debate on who to trust between the mainstream media and social media is ongoing not only in Tanzania, but all over the world. The mainstream media, however, need to know that social media is not their enemy. Social media is a great opportunity for people to interact and get information immediately, but this benefit has led to a lot of misinformation, disinformation and fake news. Instead of competing with social media on who breaks the story first, the mainstream media that is run by professional journalists must uphold professionalism. By acting as the real gatekeepers of information, people will always wait to hear from the mainstream media in order to verify what they heard on social media. They should not lose that position by withholding information because of being scared that the laws will work against them, but they should also not go against the ethics that guide professionalism. The trust that the people of Tanzania once had in the mainstream media prior to the year 2015 should be restored.

9.4 Recommendations for future research

This study on social media's contribution to transparency and freedom of expression has contributed to existing social media studies by identifying social media's strength in places where the prerequisites to good governance practices are supressed. While the findings have shown social media's contribution in Tanzania, this is not necessarily a general conclusion for other parts of the world. There are those, for example, who have experienced internet shutdowns, making it impossible for social media to aid their efforts. More research needs to be done on this as it could shed more light onto social media's strengths as well as weaknesses, and other ways in which transparency and freedom of expression could be upheld, despite the challenges.

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