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Implications of Media Capture on Editorial Freedom Tanzania: A Comparative Study of *Mwananchi* And *Habari Leo*

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Abstract. This study examined the implications of media capture on editorial freedom in Tanzania: a comparative study of *Mwananchi* and *Habari Leo* newspapers. The study examined how media ownership affects journalistic independence in *Mwananchi* and *Habari Leo* newspapers, assessed the regulatory implications on editorial freedom in *Mwananchi* and *Habari Leo* newspapers, assessed the political influence on editorial decision making *Mwananchi* and *Habari Leo* newspapers and analyzed framing of news by these two newspapers. A qualitative research approach with descriptive design were applied, integrating semi-structured interviews and content analysis to compare for semantic analysis of media capture between private owned (*Mwananchi*) and state-owned (*Habari Leo*) newspapers. Using purposive sampling technique this study interviewed 10 participants and analysed a total of 154 newspaper issues published from 1st June to November 30, 2024. The findings revealed that study found that ownership structure affects journalistic independence. However, *Mwananchi* was free from owners influence in decision-making comparing to *Habari Leo* which faced direct and indirect influence due to its nature of ownership. The findings discovered that laws and regulation had both positive and negative impacts to the media by ensuring adherence to media ethics, protecting individuals from harm and prohibiting non-journalists from working in media, while other laws were seen as they undermined editorial freedom. It was also indicated that political influence affected editorial freedom and independence in decision making. Lastly, the findings revealed that *Habari Leo*, that ownership structures shaped how the selected media outlets framed news. The findings are of great importance for media industry in Tanzania, policy and scholars as they portray the current state of media capture and its implications to editorial freedom in Tanzania. This study is valuable for media houses seeking to improve their editorial freedom and independence.

Keywords. Implications, Media Capture, Editorial Freedom, Comparative Study, Newspapers

Introduction

The global media landscape witnessed the undermining of freedom of expression a form of media capture. Hardening of authoritarian regimes in global countries like Poland, Hungary, and Turkey and well as in United State intimidate media organizations indicates that the media are not truly free in the world, where authoritarian regimes captured the media and persecuted non-captured media companies (Schiffrin, 2018). In Latin America governments

capture the media in two fundamental ways including prosecuting or silencing critical journalism and introduced mutual relationship with media owners and executives by offering protection, benefits, contracts, and subsidies (Márquez & Guerrero, 2017).

In the Asian continent, particularly in India media Capture is practiced in various ways including intimidations to journalists, advertising, legislature and killings of critical journalists. For example, for over five past years, the Indian government used the so-called an archaic anti-sedition law to silence critical journalists. Also, about a total of 51 journalists were killed in the Asian country in the period of 10 years before 2021, most of them were working for regional-language media organizations, with high local readerships but also under severe pressure from the ruling party, but those cases remained unsolved (International Press Institute, 2021). African continent is another part of the world with high level of media capture and mechanisms of media control demonstrates in differing forms. Regulatory systems are seen as the major component for the restriction of journalistic independence (Mabweazara, Muneri, & Ndlovu, 2022). The media in the region is also controlled through ownership of the media organizations, where government advertising are used to undermine media independence by allowing government officials to capture the media to serve their own interests (Mabweazara, Muneri, & Ndlovu, 2022 as cited Coyne and Leeson, 2009).

In Tanzania, the media history inherited a heritage of media control of the British colonial rule by adopting colonial-era regulations, followed by a post-colonial socialist view of the media as supporter of the state development agenda (Powell, 2017). Even after moving to multi-party political system in 1992 and allowing private media ownership, media continue to be considered part of nation-building (Powell, 2017; Caliskan & Waldman 2016). Powell (2017) demonstrates that media in Tanzania remained underdeveloped suffering from a multi-faceted form of capture such as regulation, clientelism, economic pressure, and intimidation. For example, in 2012, a policeman in Iringa the Southern Highland region of Tanzania, killed a photojournalist Daudi Mwangosi who was covering a political event involved opposition leaders (Powell, 2017; Greenslade 2013).

Research Objectives

The main objective for the study was the implications of media capture on the editorial freedom in Tanzania. A Comparative study of *Mwananchi* and *Habari Leo*.

The study was guided by the following specific objectives.

- i. To examine how media ownership affects journalistic independence in *Mwananchi* and *Habari Leo* newspapers.
- ii. To assess the regulatory implications on editorial freedom in *Mwananchi* and *Habari Leo* newspapers.
- iii. To assess the political influence on editorial decision making *Mwananchi* and *Habari Leo* newspapers
- iv. To analyse framing of news by *Mwananchi* and *Habari Leo* newspapers.

Literature

Literature indicate that media ownership has continued to have significant influence on the editorial policies of media organizations where some media organizations ethics of journalism are exchanged with the opinions and decisions of the proprietors of the organization (Ali, 2015; McQuail, 2010). The influence of media ownership is felt more by government owned media organizations especially in Africa (Ali, 2015; McQuail, 2010). Mabweazara, Muneri, &Ndlovu, 2022; Stiglitz, 2017) cite that media capture in most sub-Saharan Africa is

persistent and closely connected to the legal and legislative, while print and broadcast media are regularly captured in terms of ownership of powerful figures allied with political elites who limit the scope of political debate.

Media freedom is a cornerstone of democratic societies and cannot be separated, encompasses the unlimited ability of media organizations to work independently, cover and report news without censorship, and express varied viewpoints without fear of retaliation or interference (McQuail, 2016). Media freedom ensures transparency, accountability, and protection of fundamental human rights, like freedom of expression and access to information (Moyo & Ogwezi, 2019). Although, media freedom alone does not ensure democracy, but it is an important pillar for democracy, and no democracy can be achieved without protection of media freedom (Nord, Lundstedt & Lindberg, 2024).

Governments capture media by turning public broadcasters into government mouthpieces, capturing and instrumentalizing media regulatory bodies with political appointees; abusing state resources to distort the media market in favor of pro-government media; and creating a circle of loyal oligarchs to run private media in the government's interest (International Press Institute, 2025). Economic liberalization has presented a new class of corporate elites, who can impose a third form of capture on journalism. For instance, in India, media liberalization has placed power in the hands of corporations who fund print and television news through advertising (Atal, 2017). In Tanzania, while fear of losing job and ideological affiliation were identified among journalists working with government media, private media organizations seem to face corporate capture through fear of losing advertisements which are the main goal of many private media owners who seeks to generate profit than serving public interest (Manara, 2011).

Media in Tanzania are guided by laws and regulations. These legal frameworks include the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania of (1977) under Article 18 (a) (b) (c) and (d). Other laws include the Media Services Act, 2016 and Media Services Regulations of 2017, the Statistics Act, 2015 and its Regulations, 2017, the Electronic and Postal Communications Act, 2010 and Its Related Regulations of 2018, the Access to Information Act, 2016 and the Access to Information Regulations of 2017, the Broadcasting Services Act, 1993, the Newspaper Act of 1976 and the Cyber-Crime Act 2015 (Media Council of Tanzania, 2018).

The Cybercrimes Act of 2015 significantly limits the scope for digital publication and encourages heightened self-censorship (John, 2016; Powell, 2017). Maniou (2023) argues that both statutory and self-regulatory frameworks undermine media freedom. Media Service Act posed challenges in Tanzanian media landscape including self-censorship among others (Holmén, 2023). The law imposed up to twenty million or a maximum of five years imprisonment or both fine and imprisonment for publication of any statement considered to be false or not believed to be true, publication of information which threaten the interest of defense, public safety, public order, economic interests of the country or reputations, rights and freedom of others (Powell, 2017; Media Council of Tanzania, 2018; Yahaya, 2023; Holmén, 2023).

Media have been significant in enhancing political communication. As political actor media are used in disseminating political information, shaping public opinion, and influencing political processes and outcomes, it links politician and the public in exchange of political information, ideas. However, the length in which the media agendas are constructed are influence conditioned upon the interests of politicians by giving them more attention rather than setting its own agenda (Serapşah & Sevgihan, 2023; Green-Pedersen & Stubager, 2010). Despite, Tanzanian political reforms from single party to multiparty political system in 1992 (Abdalla, 2015), this shift has settled media in the political practices gently than before. Media

coverage in Tanzania continually submitted to general election reports when it comes around, where news bulletins and articles are complementary manipulated than ever before. Journalists face challenges on political reports some are either assaulted, detained, losing their jobs or dealing with legal charges rained down on them by politicians and government officials (Abdalla, 2015). Also, (Backlund, 2019) reveals that Tanzanian journalists working with state-owned media experience some limitations to what they could report, which could be interpreted as the people in charge want the journalists to do development journalism.

Media ownership by bishops and prophets is a news and alarming form of media capture in Tanzania. Most of these media spend most of their time airing praising and worship content as well as gospel music what can limit information circulation among citizens. About 30 broadcasting media owned by bishops and prophets are registered by Tanzania Communication Regulatory Authority by 2025. The role of media owned by bishops and prophets in disseminating current news and pressing public issues remains limited (Tanzania Digest, 2025).

Theoretical Framework

The Media Capture and Framing Theory was integrated guided this study in understanding the implications of media capture on editorial freedom between private and state-owned newspapers in Tanzania. Media capture theory was the main theory and it was used to guide the first three specific objectives while framing theory was applied to guide the fourth objective.

Media Capture Theory

The theory was introduced by economist [George Stigler](#) (1971), after he discovered that most of government units were increasingly captured with corporate they were obligated to regulate, resulted into operating in the situation which favor those corporate instead of the public interests. Later the concept of capture was adapted in media profession industry to explore both media capture and its consequences (Schiffrin, 2021). The theory indicated that media are captured through three key principles including ownership, regulatory systems and political influence. In support of the theory ([Dyck et al, 2013](#)) and ([Prat and Strömberg, 2013](#)) indicate a considerable political influence on the media.

Framing Theory

Framing theory was adopted to complement media capture theory. Framing theory was proposed by psychologist Gregory Bateson (1972) who viewed psychological frames as a spatial and temporary bounding of set of interactive messages that works as a form of meta communication (Arowolo, 2017). The agenda-setting theory tradition; but, it puts much on essence of the issue at hand instead of the particular topic. It views the media focuses more attention on certain events and then places them within a ground of meaning (Mass Communication Theory, 2017). In media context frame means words, images, phrases, and presentation styles that a reporter uses when communicating information about an issue or event to an audience to influence decision making among audiences (Arowolo, 2017).

Empirical Literature Review

Ownership influences how journalists make decisions in the process of gathering, processing and framing media content. Media owners dedicate power to senior editors to manage business to meet business goals on their behalf, hence affect the independence of the

media (Mbeke, et al., 2010). Press independence in both programming and dissemination of news is largely affected by ownership structure of the media company, whereas, media organizations are operated by individuals' loyalty, political and tribe relationships of journalists and media houses (Kimumwe et al., 2022). Private media ownership has great chance to providing the media opportunity or freedom to question evils seen in the government unlike the ones owned by the government (Baptister, 2022). Diversity is at risk due to trends in media ownership and majority of the Kenyan perceived bias and partisanship in the media content during the 2013 general election which was influenced by ownership concentration (Simiyu, 2014). Legal and regulatory systems have significant influence over media freedom. Legal implications were among challenges posed threats to press freedom (Maniou & Papadopoulou, 2024). Regulatory inconsistencies and government censorship practices posed huge challenges to media freedom and democratic governance in Nigeria (Oyinloye, et al., 2024). Shows the Cybercrimes Act of 2015 undermining media freedom in Tanzania by enabling the government to arrest anyone publishing information considered false, deceptive, misleading, or inaccurate, and to levy heavy penalties against individuals involved in a host of criminalized cyberactivity's (Powell, 2017).

Media houses which are politically owned have resulted in a lack of balance and objectivity in journalism, since most of these media aim to facilitate the political agenda of their owners and are used as tools political propaganda, what undermines media operation largely (Otieno & Ndonye, 2020). Media owners' political affiliations significantly influence editorial decisions, with journalists working in politically affiliated media feeling pressured to align their reporting with the owner's interests (Danso, 2025). Political control over media on journalistic independence, leading to biased reporting, suppression of dissent, and the deterioration of democratic values (Vasanth and Goverdhan, 2025).

Frame-building are those factors that influence the structural qualities of news frames, which may be internal to the practice of journalism and determine how journalists and news organizations frame issues (Simiyu, 2013). Media ownership largely influences which stories are reported, how they are reported, and what issues are given priority, and impacts how media content is framed and the tone they take (Namonje & Ndhlovu (2025). Newspaper articles with the personalized, political, or policy frame will likely be accompanied by media attribution of blame (Briggs, 2012).

Methodology

This study employed a qualitative research approach. Qualitative research approach is an approach for qualitative studies aiming at understanding phenomena in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpreting phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Khanday & Khanam, 2019). The study adopted a qualitative descriptive design which is suitable for presenting straightforward accounts of a situation based on the language and experience of participants (Khanday & Khanam, 2019; Akhtar, 2016). The population for this study was all journalists (editors and reporters) in Tanzania and all *Mwananchi* and *Habari Leo* newspaper issues published between 1st January and 31st December, 2024. The study adopted a purposive sampling technique. A non-probability sampling technique is suitable qualitative questions where respondents have specific knowledge or experience relevant to the research goal (Palinkas et al., 2015).

The study used a total of 154 newspapers issues (77 from each media organization) as a sample size for content analysis. The study also used a sample size of 10 participants five from each media for semi-structured interview. The sample were appropriate for this qualitative

study and they enabled the research to gain meaningful data that can be generalized to those findings gathered from a larger population (Coursera, 2024). A well-chosen sample size can give data representative of the target population from which it is taken (Polit et al. (2001). A total of 10 respondents, five (5) from each media company, including 2 editors and 3 reporters, these respondents were selected as key informants involved in media content production. Data for this study were manually analyzed using thematic analysis. The data analysis method was appropriate for identifying, analyzing and communicating data qualitatively (Elo, 2014; Mayring, 2015; Kuckartz, 2019).

Findings

Objective one: To Examine How Media Ownership Affects Journalistic Independence in *Mwananchi* and *Habari Leo* Newspapers

The researcher investigated the implications of media capture of editorial freedom: a comparative study of *Mwananchi* and *Habari Leo* newspapers. Findings indicated that while *Habari Leo* faces direct and indirect influence due to its nature of ownership, *Mwananchi* was free in decision-making and they relied on professionalism without owner's intervention. However, both editors and reporters at *Mwananchi* acknowledged indirect pressure from external actors particularly government agencies on sensitive topics related to political issues as well as economic pressure due to dependence to advertising revenues.

In an interviews with the first respondent from *Mwananchi* said that Mw E explained that "we are free since, I am doing my work based on professionalism and I cooperate with other workers in deciding what should be published and what should not. After deciding no one can intervene maybe for advice only (Interview, MwE 1).

These views were supported by another participant from the same media house who said that...

"*Mwananchi* made the newspaper to be owned by the public since we report based on what the public need and we are not reporting because of owners' needs or because certain politician wants his stories to be covered. We focuses on what is supposed to be reported to the public since the owner does not intervene the operation, that's why every time we have our slogans, for instance, currently we have Tunaliwezesha Taifa (We are Empowering the Nation) which is aiming at promoting community development. (Interview, respondents 5)

Their views demonstrates a sense of editorial freedom in decision making. However, the fourth respondent from *Mwananchi* revealed that the newspaper had been dropping stories due to directives from unspecified authorities.

In contrast respondents from *Habari Leo* explained the newspaper as directly tied with government agendas, and they are often shaping their stories to meet public and government interests. During an interview respondents 1 from *Habari Leo* said that..."as state-owned media our priority is to check what the public interests are. Is a media that act as a bridge between the government and citizens? So, when I am preparing news, I must consider the public and government interests" (Interview, *Habari Leo* respondent 1).

These views were supported with the third participant from the same newspaper who agreed that media ownership affects editorial freedom, who said that..."ownership has significant influence depending on owner's needs, which in turn affects employee's performance since everything you write should consider owners' needs" (Interview, *Habari Leo* participant 3).

Majority of respondent from both two newspapers reported to free in reporting various issues. However, they some of them said that they had to practice self-censorship while

reporting controversial and critical issues especially those involving opposition political leaders or those need clarification from senior government leaders. For example, participant 2 from *Habari Leo* revealed in an interview that...“we are covering all issues including investigative stories, but there some issues are above our...capacity, especially those involving the government. Mostly they need clarification from top leaders, hence limit our ability to investigate” (Interview, HL 2). These views related to the reactions from the second respondents at *Mwananchi* who said that...

Sometime opposition leaders can speak using critical words, and you may find what they are speaking is news worth but you will need to treat their words in a different way to what they have said. So, those events are sensitive, you may find them are newsworthy but you cannot publish them in the way they were presented because everyone will interpret them in his way (Interview, respondent 3 from *Mwananchi*).

These views indicated the presence of fear of reporting critical matters among journalists in both *Mwananchi* as well as in *Habari Leo* showing presence of self-censorship.

Objective two: To Assess the Regulatory Implications on Editorial Freedom in *Mwananchi* and *Habari Leo* Newspapers

Legal Influence on Editorial Freedom

Findings indicated that laws and regulation had both positive and negative impacts to media freedom, while some sections of these laws such as the Media Service Act of 2016 ensured adherence to media ethical principle, protecting individuals from harm and prohibiting non-journalists from working, other laws like the Statistics Act of 2015, the Online Content Regulation Act, and the Cyber-Crime Act of 2015 were listed among legal frameworks that hinder journalistic freedom from covering, framing to publication of news. However, findings indicated that these laws affected journalists differently between *Mwananchi* and *Habari Leo* and between journalists. However, the above mentioned laws were blamed by journalists from both newspapers. During an interview with participant 5 from *Habari Leo* said that media laws just like laws in other professions they aimed to benefit the society just like other laws in other field and not to limit media and journalists from carrying out their work... “I do not believe that, the Personal Data Protection Act, 2022 and the Online Content Regulation Act enacted recently, intending to destruct, but I believe that they were enacted ensure that things are in a good order, and are of beneficial for me and you (Interview, participant 5 *Habari Leo*). These views were supported by respondent 1 from *Mwananchi* who viewed the current legal frameworks as friendly comparing to previously after some amendment of some sections, however there are some sections limiting the media from being free.

But participant from *Mwananchi* viewed media most of laws in Tanzania as they were enacted to limit and delay journalists in performing their responsibilities. “I think all laws were enacted to limit journalists, because before 2013 *Mwananichi* newspaper was reporting statistical stories, that the amount of money that was used could have used to build five hospitals or could have helped in doing so, but after the enactment of the statistics law restricted this” (Interview, respondent 5 *Mwananchi*).

Objective 3: To assess the political influence on editorial decision making *Mwananchi* and *Habari Leo* newspapers

This objective explored how political environment influenced editorial freedom in the Tanzanian media industry. Data collected indicated that despite various reforms in the media industry there are still an indirect political influence toward media houses which in turn affects

editorial freedom and independence in decision making. For example, participant 1 from *Mwananchi* said that declining of competitive politics, especially of opposition parties brought challenges affecting negatively consumption of media content since many readers like to read stories of opposition politics, so if they are not fairly reported they assume that there is no need for them to read newspapers. In contrast, informant 2 from *Habari Leo* said that during the time when the nation was preparing for the 2025 general election, political pressure was high, and led to banning of some media outlets involved in publishing information concerning politicians.

Findings indicated mixed views from both newspapers, where some respondents disagreed that they had never dropped or avoided stories due to political influence while others agreed that it happened for them to drop or avoid certain kind of political activities. The second respondent from *Habari Leo* in an interview said that despite of dropping stories that are contrary to their media policy or avoiding to jeopardize the community, they also dropped stories due to political pressure particularly those involve opposition leaders seems to be aggressive to the government. The respondent said...“...there some people appear to be very aggressive toward the government while I am saving in the same government. In most cases when it happens someone is using a critical language or he is aggressive toward the government yes it happens for me to leave the story (Interview, respondent 2 *Habari Leo*). These views were supported by the response related with the views of respondent 5 from *Mwananchi* who said that.. “...you may wonder yesterday the newspaper was in a certain way but today is printed with another headline what leave questions, what is behind? You cannot be told what happened, or you can only be told that are directives but who you cannot be told who gave them the directives (interview, respondent 5 *Mwananchi*).

However, the fourth respondent from *Habari Leo* and the first respondent from *Mwananchi* had different views concerning story dropping, changing angles and avoiding critical issues concerning politics. For example, the first participant from *Habari Leo* said that...“to run a story or to drop is decided by the editorial team, through discussions to agree which story should be published or place in certain page”. These findings portrayed a sign of differing in perception among journalists from both *Mwananchi* and *Habari Leo* newspapers, while some of them viewed the political environment led to self-censorship others noted that omission of words or dropping stories were influenced by professional requirements.

Data indicated that majority of journalists particularly those working with the state-owned reported to be free to cover all political issues. While majority of participants at *Mwananchi* indicated that the political situation did not provide much freedom for serving the public with investigative journalisms what limits the media in performing the watchdog role of the media. However, respondents at *Habari Leo* noted that they were free to do investigative reporting. Comparatively, these findings illustrated differences in the editorial freedom between these two newspapers depending to their nature of ownership, where journalists working with the private media house viewed the political environment as not friendly for investigative reporting while journalists at state-owned newspaper expressed the political landscape as friendly for carrying out investigative journalism.

Objective 4: To analyze framing of news by *Mwananchi* and *Habari Leo* newspapers

The objective examined how news were framed by *Mwananchi* and *Habari Leo* newspapers. It aimed at proving what was said by respondents in interviews regarding editorial freedom in the selected newspapers. A total of 156 issues 77 of *Mwananchi* and 77 of *Habari Leo* newspapers were analyzed focusing on topics relating to governance, accountability, and

public service. Findings revealed six major themes including attribution of responsibility, conflict frame, source bias and voice distribution, human interest frame, silence and omission as well as tone and language.

Findings indicated that *Habari Leo*, consistently portrayed the government and Tanzania ruling party as a proactive and capable actor addressing national challenges. It externalized causes of problems, relating those problems to global crises while showing the government intervention as the solution. For example, *Habari Leo* 4th June, 2024, published “4R, sekta anga zampaisha Samia”. (Translation: 4R, aviation sector lifts Samia). In contrast, *Mwananchi* newspaper indicated a more balanced attribution pattern, rarely holding authorities accountable and citing independent expert and analysts to clarify policy failures. For instance *Mwananchi*, 15th June 2024 published on front page “Matobo ya Bajeti” Wadau wahofia tozo mpya kwa gesi asilia kwenye magari, mazao ya kilimo. (Translation: “Budget Holes” Stakeholders fear new levies on natural gas in vehicles, agriculture products).

Data indicated that *Habari Leo* downplayed conflicts between political actors or institutions. They applied either a neutral or consensus-building tone, showing cooperation between government and citizens or international organizations. For example, 13th July 2023 the published “Benki ya Dunia yaibeba nchi uchumi wa kati. Yaipongeza Tanzania mafanikio sekta ya maji, elimu bure, ufundi.” (Translation: World Bank promotes the country to middle income economy. Praises Tanzania achievements in water sector, free education, vocational training). *Mwananchi* openly revealed conflicts among government, policymakers and citizens, or among political actors on 5th October 2024 they published “Warioba aibua mapya. Ataja 5 yanayopaswa kufanyika uchaguzi kuwa huru” (Translation: Warioba raises new issues. Mentions 5 things that must be done to make election free).

The study discovered that *Mwananchi* had diversity of news sources ranged from government official, ruling party, opposition leaders, analysts, civil societies, academicians and ordinary citizens. For example, 31st August 2024, wrote that “LHRC, THBUB zataka hatua utekaji”. (Translation: LHRC, THBUB call for action against kidnapping). In contrast, *Habari Leo* heavily relied on government officials President, ministers and Chama cha Mapinduzi (the Tanzanian ruling party) leaders. Most of these stories were not including other voices. For instance “Samia: Wameishiwa hoja. “Ataka wakemewe wasivuruge amani. Aifananisha Tanzania na pepo, ahimiza wananchi wasirudishwe nyuma” (Translation: Samia: Oppositions have run out of ideas).

Findings indicated that *Mwananchi* covered various topics including corruption, while *Habari Leo* omitted or occasionally reported news involved allegations of corruption or human rights violations. For example, September 2024 they reported on front page “Polisi yazuia mikutano Chadema, ACT-Wazalendo”. (Translation: Police block conferences Chadema, ACT-Wazalendo), while *Habari Leo* did not covered this events entirely.

Further, this study revealed that *Mwananchi* adopted a fair (balanced) and in some cases questioning tone, irregularly including investigative language like “stakeholders questioned, analysts say. While *Habari Leo* frequently applied a positive, patriotic, and deferential tone toward government authorities. Words such as efforts, good governance and major reforms were commonly used in describing issues related to government actions.

Conclusion

This study concludes that ownership has significant influence on editorial freedom. However, this influence differs between private owned and state-owned media outlets. Findings indicated that *Mwananchi* newspaper a private owned enjoys high degree of editorial freedom

compare to *Habari Leo* which experienced both direct and indirect pressure. The study concludes that state or public media are directly and indirectly influenced with its kind of ownership what affects its ability of being objective in disseminating balanced information with diversity of voices. Both legal and political environment of the country had significantly affected the way these media covered, framed and reported news of different topics.

The study suggests legal reforms of the Cybercrime Act, Statistics Act, Information Access Act and Online Content Regulations to enable editorial freedom and independence, promoting independent ownership and increasing private investment to curb media concentration. Adopting reliable and sustainable sources of fund to reduce dependence on state and corporate advertising. It also suggests that a longitudinal study on editorial freedom is important, to expand the study to electronic, further study is required to understand media capture brought by media ownership by prophets and bishops.

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