

CANDIDATE REPRESENTATION AND MEDIA BIASES IN TANZANIA

REPRESENTACIÓN DE LOS CANDIDATOS ELECTORALES
Y PREJUICIOS MEDIÁTICOS EN TANZANIA

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Abstract: The promises of democracy in Tanzania underscore a wide range of hopes for the nation, notably with regard to media freedom and freedom of speech. However, the intensifying privatization of the media that has characterized the last two decades of Tanzania's emerging democracy has shifted the focus of professional journalists towards high-impact coverage of known government officials (Schudson, 2008), narrowing the breadth of news and political coverage. The agenda-setting effect of this kind of journalism reflects the often biased interests of media shareholders (McCombs & Shaw, 1972) and also affects the visibility of political candidates, hindering just and fair representation in the electoral process. This study used qualitative and quantitative content analysis of the election news coverage in six Swahili mainstream newspapers to examine the relationship between newspaper election coverage and voting outcomes in Tanzania's 2010 Presidential election. The newspapers were studied during the three months just prior to the Tanzania Presidential election of 2010. The results of this analysis reveal some major shortcomings of electoral media coverage, including prevalent biases and uneven representation. In addition, there appears to be a significant relationship between newspaper election coverage and voting outcomes. **Keywords:** election news coverage; candidates' visibility; media ownership; news biases.

Resumen: Las promesas de la democracia en Tanzania subrayan una amplia gama de esperanzas para la nación, en particular en lo que respecta a la libertad de prensa y libertad de expresión. Sin embargo, la privatización de los medios de comunicación que ha caracterizado las dos últimas décadas de democracia emergente en Tanzania ha cambiado el enfoque de los periodistas hacia una cobertura de alto impacto sobre conocidos miembros del gobierno, así como la reducción en la amplitud de las noticias y la cobertura política. El efecto agenda de este tipo de periodismo refleja los intereses a menudo sesgados de los accionistas

de medios y también afecta a la visibilidad de los candidatos políticos, lo que dificulta una representación justa y equitativa en el proceso electoral. En este trabajo se aplicó análisis de contenido cualitativo y cuantitativo sobre la cobertura de noticias de las elecciones en seis de los principales periódicos escritos en Swahili, con el fin de examinar la relación entre la cobertura realizada en los periódicos y los resultados electorales de las elecciones presidenciales de Tanzania en 2010. Se analizaron los periódicos durante los tres meses anteriores a las mencionadas elecciones. Los resultados revelan algunas deficiencias importantes en la cobertura electoral de los medios analizados, incluyendo prejuicios prevalecientes y una representación desigual de los candidatos. Además, parece apuntarse una relación significativa entre el tipo de cobertura de las elecciones realizada por los periódicos y los resultados de votación. **Palabras clave:** cobertura de información electoral; visibilidad del candidato; propiedad de los medios; prejuicios en la información.

1. Introduction

The promises of democracy in Tanzania reflect the wide ranging hopes of the nation, notably with regard to media freedom and freedom of speech. However, the privatization of media, intensifying in the last two decades of this emergent democracy, has shifted the focus of the journalistic profession toward high-impact coverage of known government officials (Schudson, 2008), thus narrowing the breadth of news and political coverage. The agenda-setting effect of this shift may reflect the often biased interests of media shareholders (De Vreese & Elenbaas, 2010; Hopmann, Elmelund-Praestekaer, Albaek, Vliegthart, de Vreese, 2012; McCombs & Shaw, 1972;) but it also influences media coverage and the visibility of political candidates, thereby hindering just and fair representation in the electoral process (Hopmann, Vliegthart, De Vreese, & Albaek, 2010).

This study is an exploration of the effect of media ownership on the media's role in promoting democracy. Elections are a primary instrument of political democracy and the mass media can be the connective tissue because they can provide access to information about politics and the election process (Frere, 2011; URT, 2010). In spite the lack of academic and mainstream research on the relationship between election news coverage and voting outcomes in Sub-Saharan Africa, scholars tend to agree that these are closely related phenomena (Chiang & Knight, 2011; Enikolopov, Petrova, Zhuravskaya, 2010; Snyder & Stromberg, 2010). This study examines the relationship between media election coverage and voting outcomes. There is a global debate about whether or not the media serve democracy (Baker, 2007). If the

media were to fulfil its democratic role, it would offer balanced and reliable information on all political parties, candidates, and voting procedures, thereby providing the tools for citizens to make an informed choice on election-day (Frere, 2011; Schudson, 2008).

The primary and most important function of media in a democracy is to provide sufficient information for evaluating potential and actual leaders and their governance platforms and practices. This information allows the citizenry to make more informed decisions at the ballot box, and to gauge the performance of politicians throughout their time in office. Similarly, Schudson (2008) suggested that the most important function of the media in a democracy is ongoing surveillance of socio-political developments. Ideally, media outlets provide a platform for debate about relevant public issues as well as insight into a diverse range of views, objective accounts, commentaries, and interpretations, all of which enhance the people's ability to actively engage with the political process (Christians, Glasser, McQuail, Nordenstreng and White, 2009).

In reality, however, the free market organization of media in a society sometimes operates to limit the range of opinions present in the news (Schudson, 2008). Various studies (Baker, 2007; McChesney, 2008) show that media economy and free competition have negative impacts on the quality of news media. The reason is that the majority of print media get most or all of their income from advertisements and sponsoring, and hence seek to optimally satisfy the interests of their advertisers, which do not necessarily coincide with the democratic interests of the readers. This trend leads the media to give powerful political candidates first priority and positive news coverage (Wolfsfeld, 2011), in comparison to less influential candidates. Although some attention has been paid to the visibility of political actors and coverage biases in the media, only a few studies in sub-Saharan Africa investigate whether the mere visibility of parties and their candidates has any impact on voting (Hopmann, Vliegthart, de Vreese, & Albaek, 2010). This study considers how Tanzania's print media coverage of candidates and pre-election news relates to voting outcomes, and contributes to the discussion by examining the relationship between newspaper election coverage and voting outcomes in Tanzania's 2010 Presidential election.¹

The results of this analysis can help build a theory of agenda setting by the media, and media influence in the public sphere of a democratic society, by examining the role of media in election coverage and how the news media facili-

[01] Tanzania was formed in 1964 after the union of Tanganyika and Zanzibar. Although Zanzibar is a part of Tanzania, it possesses a semi-autonomous government. Therefore the people of Zanzibar participate in both the Presidential election of the United Republic of Tanzania (URT) and Zanzibar.

tates and forms public opinion. Mass media, such as newspapers, can significantly determine what messages the public sees, the context in which these messages are seen, and how and when they are seen.

2. Methodology

It was implemented a sequential mixed explanatory methods design strategy which allowed the collection and analysis of quantitative data, followed by the collection and analysis of qualitative data (Creswell, 2009; Hesse-Biber, 2010). This approach provided the opportunity to cross-check results pertaining to the relationship between the election news coverage and 2010 voting outcomes. The rationale for mixing quantitative and qualitative data was that neither was sufficient to capture the trends and details of the role of media in promoting democracy, or to provide a clear image of the relationship between news election coverage and voting outcomes.

Quantitative methods examine the relationship between variables and can be delivered in a numerical format amenable to statistical analyses and standardized tests of significance, reliability and validity (Berger, 2010; Creswell, 2009; Hesse-Biber, 2010; Lindlof & Taylor, 2010).

In a mixed methods approach, researchers build knowledge on pragmatic grounds (Creswell, 2009), asserting that truth is “what works” to improve understanding. They choose approaches, as well as variables and units of analysis, which are most appropriate for finding an answer to their research questions (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). A major tenet of pragmatism is that quantitative and qualitative methods are compatible. Thus, both numerical and text data, collected sequentially, can produce a better understanding of the research problem.

Quantitative analysis of news content was accomplished by using SPSS version 20. This analysis was based on a multiple linear model, Chi-square and a Pearson correlation on log10-transformed data to test to evaluate whether the number of articles, length, width, photo frequency and total number of photos was uniformly distributed among candidates. Pearson correlation on log10-transformed data was used to examine whether candidate visibility related to the number of votes received. Qualitative data also came from a questionnaire which examined voters' election knowledge regarding presidential candidates as well as their perception of each candidate's visibility. Cluster sampling was employed to randomly select 1,277 respondents in 18 regions of the country.

I divided the total population into urban areas with high, and semi-urban with low, distribution of newspapers, as well as areas with strong political and ideological histories, in order to capture the views of voters who have both high and lesser access to news information. A content analysis of 90 days of publication of

the six Swahili mainstream newspapers in Tanzania was performed. The newspapers include *Habari Leo*, *Mwananchi*, *Nipashe*, *Tanzania Daima*, *Uhuru*, and *Zanzibar Leo*, and the dates studied run from August to October 2010, covering the formal campaign period of 72 days leading up to the 31st of October elections. Swahili papers were chosen because Swahili is the official national language for Tanzania, and almost all literate Tanzanians speak Swahili.

The newspapers also differ in ownership type: two newspapers, *Habari Leo* and *Zanzibar Leo*, are owned by governments; *Habari Leo* is published by Tanzania Standards Newspapers (TSN), a government company in Tanzania Mainland, and *Zanzibar Leo* is owned by the Zanzibar Revolutionary Government. *Uhuru*, a partisan newspaper, is owned by Uhuru Publication, held by the ruling party (CCM); and three newspapers, *Mwananchi*, *Nipashe* and *Tanzania Daima*, are privately owned. *Nipashe* is published by Guardian Limited; *Mwananchi* is published by Mwananchi Communication Ltd., a part of National Media Group based in Nairobi and owned primarily by the Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development; *Tanzania Daima* is owned by Free Media, a company held by the Chairperson of the Chadema, the main opposition political party.

A total of 540 distinct newspaper publications were analyzed to examine news coverage and assess the visibility of the seven presidential candidates. The examination of news coverage for individual presidential candidates included frequency of news items, length, width, and page placement. The content news analysis examined news coverage of three presidential candidates who received substantial electoral support: Jakaya Kikwete from the Revolutionary Party known as Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM), Wilbrod Peter Slaa from the Party for Democracy and Progress known as Chama cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo (Chadema), and Ibrahim Lipumba from the Civic United Front (CUF).

The study also included another four candidates who received cumulatively less than 2% of the national vote: Peter Kuga Mziray from the African Progressive Party of Tanzania (APPT Maendeleo), Rungwe Hashim from the National Convention for Construction and Reform (NCCR-Mageuzi), Mgaywa, Muttamwega Bhatt from the Tanzania Labour Party (TLP), and Dovutwa Yahmi Nassoro Dovutwa from the United People's Democratic Party (UPDP).

3. Results

3. 1. General Coverage

In total, 1,890 news items/articles were identified, of which 1,560 covered news on campaign events, 165 were features, 62 served as editorials, 41 were columns, 36 were opinion pieces, 10 consisted of candidate profiles, 10 were cartoons, and

6 provided comparative analysis of party platforms. The news content analysis was drawn from six mainstream Swahili newspapers from August to October of 2010.

The topics of news articles were categorized into three main classifications: 1,774 equal to 94 %) were about specific political parties, 78 news articles (4%) concerned the media itself, and 38 (2%) were news about the National Electoral

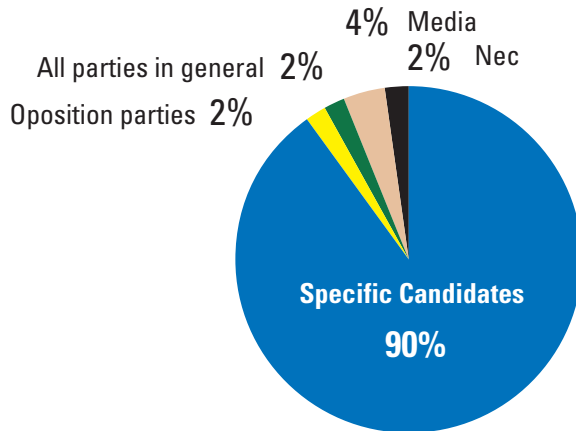


Figure 1: Election campaign coverage for a particular group.

Commission (NEC), as shown in figure 1. The news about political parties in the first topical classification was again subdivided into three categories: 1,710 equal to 96% were about specific presidential candidates, 36 equal to 2% concerned all parties in general, and 28 equal to 2% referred to all opposition's parties (figure 1).

3. 1. 1. Presidential Election Campaign News Coverage

The examination of news coverage for individual presidential candidates included frequency of news items, news tone, length, width, and page placement. Frequency analysis revealed that Kikwete (CCM) was the subject of 952 news articles out of 1,710, more than half of all election coverage about presidential candidates. Comparatively, Slaa (Chadema) was mentioned in 542 news articles and Lipumba (CUF) in only 135. The latter four candidates for Mziray (APPT-Maendeleo), Rungwe (NCCR-Mageuzi) Mgaywa (TLP) and Dovutwa (UPDP) were included in 30, 13, 26, and 12 articles respectively.

Table 1 portrays voting outcomes and news coverage including news frequencies, news size length and width in the newspaper column, as well as weight and photos. Three candidates received high exposure, whereby Kikwete (CCM) received high exposure about 55% average in all five categories and about 61% of national presidential vote results. During the election campaign Slaa (Chadema) received 32% average of all news items for news exposure and 26% vote results; Lipumba (CUF) received about 8% for both average of all five news categories for the news exposure and national vote results. Mziray (APPT - Maendeleo) received 1.6% of news categories and 1.2% of vote results. The

	Kikwete CCM	Slaa- Chadema	Lipumba- CUF	Mziray- APPT	Rungwe- NCCR	Mgaywa- TLP	Dovutwa- UPDP
Votes results	61	26	8	1	0	0	0
News	56	32	8	2	1	2	1
News length inch	53	36	7	1	0	1	1
News width CM	55	35	6	1	0	1	1
Photo frequency	53	29	11	2	2	2	1
Total photos	58	27	9	2	2	2	1

Table 1: Presidential candidates vote results and news coverage by percentage.

remainder, Rungwe (NCCR), Mgaywa (TLP) and Dovutwa (UPDP) combined included 3% average of all five categories for news exposure and less than 1% of the total national vote results.

Coverage length usually extended from one to six columns. About 1031 (54%) of news articles were located on the upper side, 489 (26%) centre side and 225 (12%) the lower side of the newspaper page. Only a few of these covered one full page (145, about 8%). The point sizes of news headline were between 60-72 points bold, and 90% of headlines for the three leading candidates crossed six columns. The four candidates who received less coverage had a point size between 30-50 for all of their coverage and those headlines crossed only three or four columns. Nine percent of the headlines were black, and 10% of headlines indicated a party's colors.

3. 1. 2. Page and Placement

The convention of journalism is that the front page is reserved for the most important of the day's news (McQuail, 1992). Agenda setting can also affect election campaigns, especially when news media help to decide which candidates are electable and which are not, and this means that certain candidates are either on or off the public agenda. In this regard, most news stories about presidential election campaigns were generally found on pages 1-4 of newspapers. They were located on the upper side of the papers, above the fold. Of the 746 articles on pages 1-4, Kikwete (CCM) appeared 387 times, equal to 52%. Slaa (Chadema) appeared 265, times equal to 36%. Lipumba (CUF) appeared 68 times, equal to 9%. Mziray (APPT – Maendeleo), Rungwe (NCCR-Mageuzi), Mgaywa (TLP) and Dovutwa (UPDP) each received less than 1%.

The special editions for the election campaign provided a large space for the ruling party, Kikwete (CCM), which received 50% of the 365 news items

which appeared on the front page and continued to page two, three, or page four. Slaa (Chadema) and Lipumba (CUF) were covered in 153 (41%) and 21 (8%) front page continuations, while the rest Mziray (APPT – Maendeleo), Rungwe (NCCR-Mageuzi), Mgaywa (TLP) and Dovutwa (UPDP) shared less than 1%.

Similarly, Kikwete received high exposure on the inside pages of newspapers, where Kikwete (CCM) received 350 out of 581, equivalent to 60%; Slaa (Chadema) 31%, Lipumba (CUF), 6%. The rest shared a total of 2%. Also, the lower side of the newspapers, which draws reader's attention, was provided to the leading candidates. Kikwete received 129 out of 212 items, which is 57%, Slaa 32 %, Lipumba 8%, and the rest shared 3%. Kikwete (CCM) was also given 87 full pages out of 140 (around 62 %), while Slaa (Chadema) had 31%. Lipumba (CUF) only obtained 3%, and the four marginalized parties shared a total of 4%.

3. 1. 3. News Tone

Articles concerning the candidates were generally positive, at 1410, equal to 75%. Negative coverage amounted to only 480 or 25% of stories. More in-depth analysis showed that news items/articles that had negative undertones were usually linked to underlying newspaper agendas and the interests of that newspaper's shareholders. For example the Uhuru, which is owned by the ruling party (CCM) and Habari Leo, published by Tanzania Standards Newspapers (TSN), a government sanctioned company, tended to portray Slaa (Chadema) negatively, as it is the main opposition party. Meanwhile, Tanzania Daima, which is owned by the Chairperson of Chadema, was generally critical of the CCM, with 62 % of its coverage on Kikwete-CCM (the ruling party) denoting a negative or critical portrayal. Mwananchi, Nipashe and Zanzibar Leo portrayed all candidates positively for more than 80 % of the coverage, as shown in table 2.

	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative
	'Uhuru'		'Tanzania Daima'		'Habari Leo'		'Mwananchi'		'Nipashe'		'Zanzibar Leo'	
Kikwete CCM	98	2	38	62	96	4	82	18	91	9	100	0
Slaa-Chadema	7	93	98	2	27	63	81	19	82	18	100	0
Lipumba-CUF	60	40	100	0	70	30	81	19	90	10	0	0
Opposition	0	100	0	0	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100
All parties	0	0	80	20	70	30	80	20	100	0	100	0

Table 2: News tone coverage of each individual presidential candidate by percentage

3. 2. Correlation between News Coverage and Voting Outcomes

This study also calculated the correlation between a newspaper's election campaign coverage and voting outcomes across both individual media and media that differ in how they are owned or operated. The data was analyzed to examine the research question: How is newspaper election coverage related to voting outcomes in Tanzania's 2010 Presidential election? The Pearson correlation coefficient was computed to test the following hypotheses:

▶ H1_o: There is no significant relationship between newspapers' news coverage of a candidate and voting outcomes in the 2010 Presidential election.

▶ H1_a: There is a significant relationship between news coverage of a candidate and voting outcomes in the 2010 Presidential election.

I used a simple Chi-square test to evaluate whether the number of news articles, length, width, photo frequency and total number of photos was uniformly distributed among candidates. I found that the distribution of news was not uniform among candidates and that this pattern held for all types of news.

▶ (a) Number of news: $\chi^2_{[5]} = 3284.90, p < 0.0001$

▶ (b) News length: $\chi^2_{[5]} = 18640.61, p < 0.0001$

▶ (c) News width: $\chi^2_{[5]} = 12039.32, p < 0.0001$

▶ (d) Photo frequency: $\chi^2_{[5]} = 1661.86, p < 0.0001$

▶ (e) Total number of photos: $\chi^2_{[5]} = 2532.75, p < 0.0001$

I then used a Pearson correlation on log10-transformed data to examine whether candidate visibility, as measured by news coverage, is related to number of votes. The findings showed that all measures of news coverage news were positively associated with the number of votes.

▶ (a) Number of news: $r_{p[5]} = 0.98, p < 0.0001$

▶ (b) News length: $r_{p[5]} = 0.95, p < 0.0001$

▶ (c) News width: $r_{p[5]} = 0.96, p < 0.0001$

► (d) Photo frequency: $r_{p[5]} = 0.97, p < 0.0001$

► (e) Total number of photos: $r_{p[5]} = 0.97, p < 0.0001$

After transforming the percentages as arcsine square root the study used a one-way ANOVA to examine the proportion of each news item associated with each candidate, particularly the number of articles versus news length and news width. In percentages, the mean values across all news items were: Kikwete (CCM) 55; Slaa (Chadema) 32; Lipumba (CUF) 8.3; Mziray (APPT-Maendeleo) 1.6; Rungwe (NCCR-Mageuzi) 1.4; Mgaywa (TLP) 1; and Dovutwa (UPDP) 0.7. The findings showed that each candidate received a similar number of news, news length, news width, photo frequency and total number of photos as shown in Figure 2.

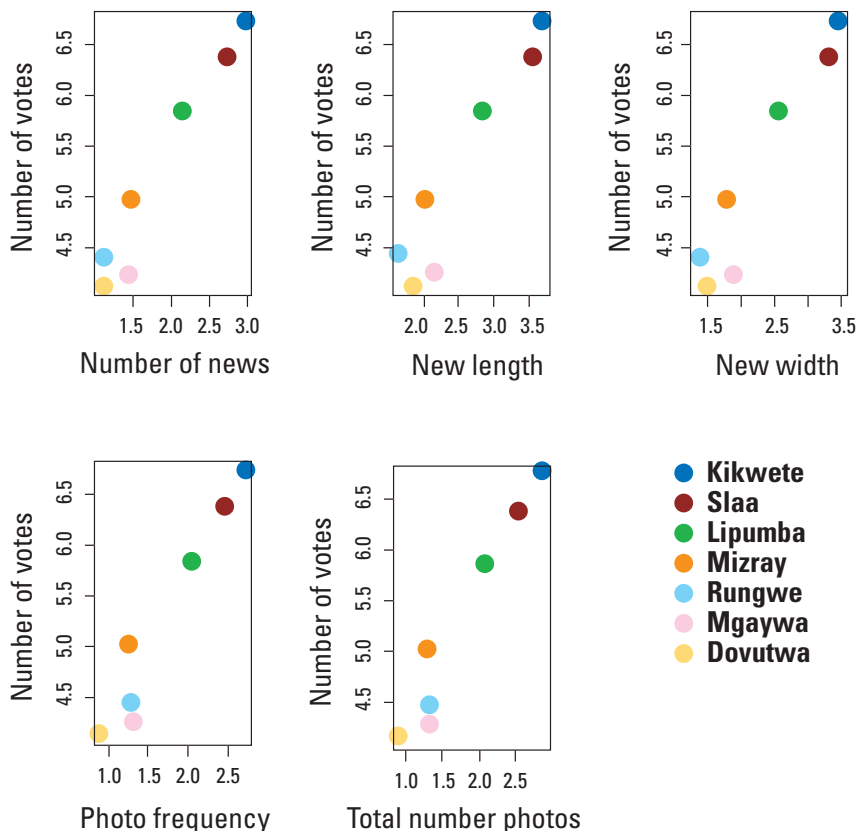


Figure 2: Proportion of the number of news exposure versus number of votes.

Based on the above analyses, the study examined whether the number of votes received by each candidate was correlated by the media exposure each candidate received. The question was whether there is relationship between candidate visibility in newspapers and voting outcomes in the sense that high or low candidate visibility impacted the number and level of votes received. Step one involved a principal component analyses on the correlation matrix for all news frequencies of media types. This generated a single independent variable (the PCA scores) describing the distribution of news types for each candidate. Then, the study used regression analysis to find the scores of PCA on the actual number of votes for each candidate compared to the predicted number of votes each candidate should have received given their media exposure. Finally, the study compared the prediction to the actual number of votes using a simple Chi-square test.

The first principal component explained 99.9 of the variance, which suggests that the study captured all the relevant information on the Principal component analysis (PCA) scores in just one single variable. The findings show that the regression between PCA scores and votes was also highly significant ($F_{1,5} = 103.7, p < 0.001, R^2 = 0.95$) Finally, the Chi square test was highly significant ($\chi^2_{(6)} = 605548.7, p < 0.0001$). The distribution of observed versus expected votes was not uniform; the number of votes for each candidate differed from what would be expected by media coverage. As can be seen in figure 3 (next page), Kikwete (CCM) received a much bigger number of votes than would be predicted by just media coverage. Slaa (Chadema) received much fewer votes than expected by media coverage.

3. 3. Media Ownership on Election Coverage

This section examined presidential election campaign coverage of individual candidates based on the type of media ownership: the partisan newspaper *Uhuru*, the government owned *Habari Leo* and *Zanzibar Leo* and privately owned *Mwananchi*, *Nipashe* and *Tanzania Daima*. The issue of media bias was discussed prior to the presidential election campaign. In order to avoid bias in election coverage the National Election Commission (URT, 2010) emphasized that political parties and presidential candidates were accorded opportunity to use government-owned news media to publicize their policies in compliance with the National Elections Act, 1995 Cap. 343. Meanwhile the private media uses the Code for 2010 election, which is subscribed to the media outlets under the self-regulatory Media Council of Tanzania (MCT). Thomas (2011) said during elections, a specific code of ethics on elections reporting was developed by the MCT to guide ethical and professional standards during elections. Private media through the Tanza-

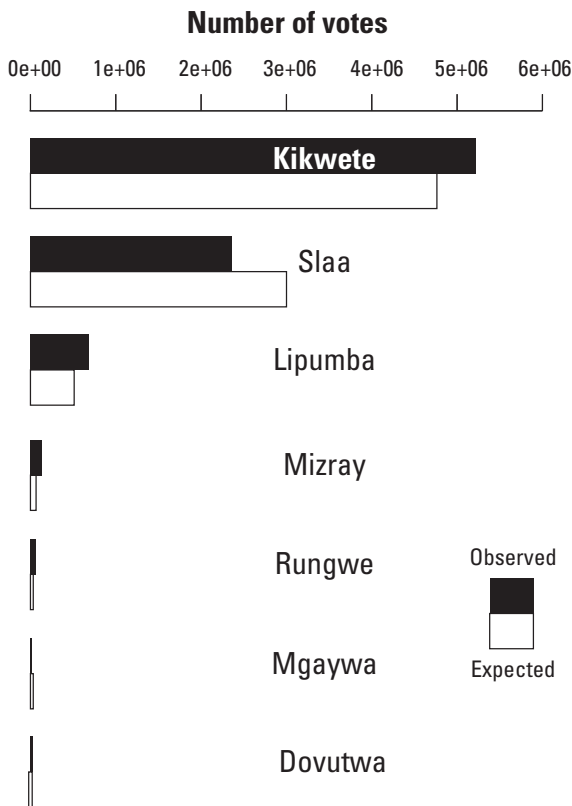


Figure 3: Number of news coverage and votes results.

per coverage, followed by Slaa (Chadema) 78 or 19%, then Lipumba (CUF), 10 equivalent to 3%. Mziray (APPT- Maendeleo) was mentioned only once. Although Slaa (Chadema) received 78 coverage articles, 93% of the stories were negative; Lipumba (CUF) received 40% of the negative stories as well. Unlike other newspapers, Uhuru put all opposition parties in one basket and use the word “opposition” in most of the stories that portrayed them in negative tones. Also, *Uhuru* gave Kikwete (CCM) 86% of the 187 photos, while slaa (Chadema) and Lipumba (CUF) received only 9% and 3% respectively. The rest of the candidates receive 1% each except Mgaywa (TLP) did not receive any photo coverage in *Uhuru*.

Tanzania Daima is a private newspaper published by Free Media Ltd. owned by the Chairperson of the opposition political party (Chadema). The

nia Editor Forum have agreed to follow media ethics, to be the voice of the voters and provide equal and fair coverage to all presidential candidates’ parties and issues.

Although many newspapers had similar amounts of news coverage, they did differ in the way they portrayed the three presidential candidates who received high coverage. However, all newspapers provided less coverage for the four candidates as shown in table 3.

Uhuru is a partisan newspaper published by Uhuru Publication, a ruling party-owned media company. The findings show that Kikwete (CCM) had 308 total frequencies out of 400, which is 77% of newspa-

findings showed that Slaa (Chadema) had 190 total frequencies out 395 which is 48%; this was followed by Kikwete (CCM) 46%, then Lipumba (CUF) 5%, and Mziray (APPT-Maendeleo). The other three received less than 1% of coverage in *Tanzania Daima*. Regarding the photos, Slaa (Chadema) had 49%, Kikwete (CCM) 40%, and Lipumba (CUF) 9%. Mziray (APPT-Maendeleo), Rungwe (NCCR-Mageuzi), and Dovutwa (UPDP) each received 1% of 245 photos published in *Tanzania Daima*. As this newspaper seems to serve the interest of the main opposition party Chadema, it portrayed the candidate from the ruling party, Kikwete (CCM) negatively in 62% of its coverage. Unlike other newspapers, *Tanzania Daima* was the only newspaper that did not utilize the term “opposition.”

Mwananchi is privately published by Mwananchi Communication Ltd., a part of National Media Group based in Nairobi, with its principal shareholder being the Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development. Results show that Kikwete (CCM) received a high 46% of total of 388 mentions about presidential candidates and 40% of 201 photos published during the 2010 election campaign; Slaa (Chadema) received 28% for both news and photos and Lipumba (CUF) 17% and 18 % for news and photos respectively. Although *Mwananchi* had mentioned all candidates, the remaining four candidates shared a total of only 9% of 388 news mentions and 12% of the 201 presidential candidates' photos published by *Mwananchi* during the election campaign. *Mwananchi* portrayed all candidates positively for more than 70%, as shown in table 3.

Habari Leo is a government newspaper published by Tanzania Standards Newspapers (TSN), a government-owned company. *Habari Leo* provided high coverage for the ruling party; Kikwete (CCM) received 57 mentions of its 296

	News	Photos	News	Photos	News	Photos	News	Photos	News	Photos	News	Photos
	'Uhuru'		'Tanzania Daima'		'Mwananchi'		'Habari Leo'		'Nipashe'		'Zanzibar Leo'	
Kikwete CCM	308	161	182	97	180	80	170	92	94	84	18	15
Slaa-Chadema	78	16	190	119	110	56	79	42	80	55	5	4
Lipumba-CUF	10	5	18	23	65	36	22	19	20	25	0	1
Mziray-APPT	3	2	3	2	9	6	8	5	7	2	0	1
Rungwe-NCCR	0	2	1	2	7	9	3	3	2	2	0	1
Mgaywa-TLP	0	0	0	1	10	11	12	4	4	2	0	1
Dovutwa-UPDP	1	1	1	1	7	3	2	1	1	2	0	1

Table 3: Newspaper's presidential campaign coverage.

election news coverage and 55% of 166 photos. Slaa (Chadema) received about 27% for both news and photos, Lipumba (CUF) 7% and 12% of news and photos respectively, Mgaywa (TLP) 4% news, Mziray 3% for both news and photo, and finally Rungwe (NCCR) and Dovutwa (UPDP) each less than 3% for news and photos. The findings show that candidates from the ruling party Kikwete (CCM) received 96% positive mentions of this total coverage; in contrast, candidates from the main opposition party Slaa (Chadema), obtained 63% negative references; Mgaywa TLP 88% negative; and other candidates Lipumba (CUF), Rungwe (NCCR-Mageuzi), Mziray (APPT-Maendeleo) and Dovutwa (UPDP) received 30% negative mentions.

Nipashe is a private newspaper published by Guardian Limited, which is owned by businessmen; results show that Kikwete (CCM) received 45% out of 208 news frequencies and 49% the 172 presidential candidates photos, followed by Slaa (Chadema) who received about 38% of news and 32% photos, Lipumba (CUF) 10% for news and 15% for photos, and the four remaining shared a total of 7% of news coverage and 2% of the photos each. *Nipashe* had portrayed Kikwete (CCM), Slaa (Chadema), and Lipumba (CUF) positively for more than 80% as shown in table 3.

Zanzibar Leo is owned by the Zanzibar Revolutionary Government. The study showed that *Zanzibar Leo* had the lowest coverage of the election with 23 items, which is only 1% of a total of 1,710 news stories about the presidential candidates' campaigns. It offered coverage for only two candidates; Kikwete (CCM) received 78% of 23 news articles and Slaa (CHADEMA) received 22%. Both candidates received positive coverage. The other five candidates, Lipumba (CUF), Mziray (APPT Maendeleo), Rungwe (NCCR), Mgaywa (TLP), and Dovutwa (UPDP) did not received any news coverage. Regarding the photos, Kikwete (CCM) received 63% of 24 presidential candidates' photos published by this newspaper; Slaa (Chadema) received 17% and the other five candidates received 4% each.

These results demonstrated that neither a government-owned newspaper nor the private media provided fair coverage to all of the presidential candidates, parties and issues. Except for *Tanzania Daima*, all the newspapers favored the ruling party, CCM. Generally, all newspapers provided high coverage for the top three candidates and less coverage for the other four candidates.

3. 4. The 2010 URT Presidential Political Campaign

Elections are the core of democracy, and political campaign communication is the epistemological base of the campaign. Since only a small proportion of the public has the opportunity to meet candidates in person through the election

campaign, media coverage of electoral contests is the primary mechanism for informing voters about political candidates and issues. The type of coverage provided to each candidate may play an important role in shaping voters' perceptions (Mhina & Ndumbaro, 2010; Stanyer, 2007). There was a wide disparity between media coverage among the presidential candidates in the Tanzania 2010 presidential campaign. To explore this, I examined the number of election events for each presidential candidate and found big differences.

The National Electoral Commission report (URT, 2010) stated that election campaigns are important for democratic elections because they facilitate political parties reaching out to voters and the public in general through public meetings and door to door canvassing. In this regard, NEC and the political parties prepared tentative schedules for their public meeting campaign. The Presidential campaign for the United Republic of Tanzania was scheduled for 72 days, commencing the 20th of August to the 30th of October 2010. The tentative schedules were prepared with the intention of enabling each individual political party and candidate to reach 239 constituencies in 26 regions. However, each presidential candidate prepared its campaign schedule according to the financial status of its political party.

According to the last version of the NEC schedule dated August 14, 2010, the ruling party Kikwete (CCM) planned to conduct a total of 318 campaign meetings, Slaa (Chadema) 206, CUF 106 meetings, Mziray (APPT Maendeleo) 58, Rungwe (NCCR Mageuzi) 71, Mgaywa (TLP) 70, and Dovutwa (UPDP) 22 meetings. As the campaign actually unfolded, the first three parties managed to achieve their goals by following the tentative schedule and having additional small meetings in between. In this regard, CCM end up with a total of 700 meetings, Chadema 365, and CUF 369. In contrast, four candidates failed to achieve their expectation because of lack of funds, and ended up with fewer meetings. Mziray (APPT Maendeleo) conducted 36 meetings, Rungwe (NCCR- Mageuzi) 15 meetings, Mgaywa (TLP) 21 meetings, and Dovutwa

	Kikwete CCM	Slaa- Chadema	Lipumba- CUF	Mziray- APPT	Rungwe- NCCR	Mgaywa- TLP	Dovutwa- UPDP
Tentative schedule	318	206	106	58	71	70	22
Actual meeting	700	365	369	36	15	21	10
News coverage	952	542	135	30	13	26	12
Photos	529	292	109	18	19	21	8

Table 4: Correlation of news coverage and presidential campaign meetings.

(UPDP) only 10 meetings. Financial constraint was reported to be the main factor that made four parties conduct fewer campaign meetings; not reaching the intended 239 election constituencies hinders the ability of voters to be informed about all presidential candidates.

I used a Simple Chi-square to test if the number of tentative meetings was equally distributed among all candidates. The findings showed that the tentative meetings were not equally distributed ($\chi^2_{(6)} = 535.72, p < 0.0001$). Of the 851 agreed tentative meetings, Kikwete was assigned 37.4 (N = 318), Slaa 24.2 (N = 206), Lipumba 12.5 (N = 106), Rungwe 8.3 (N = 71), Mgaywa 8.2 (N = 70), Mziray 6.8 (N = 58) and Dovutwa 2.6 (N = 22).

Second, I examined whether candidates held more or fewer meetings than they had agreed to with the National Electoral Commission. Figure 4 shows the relationship:

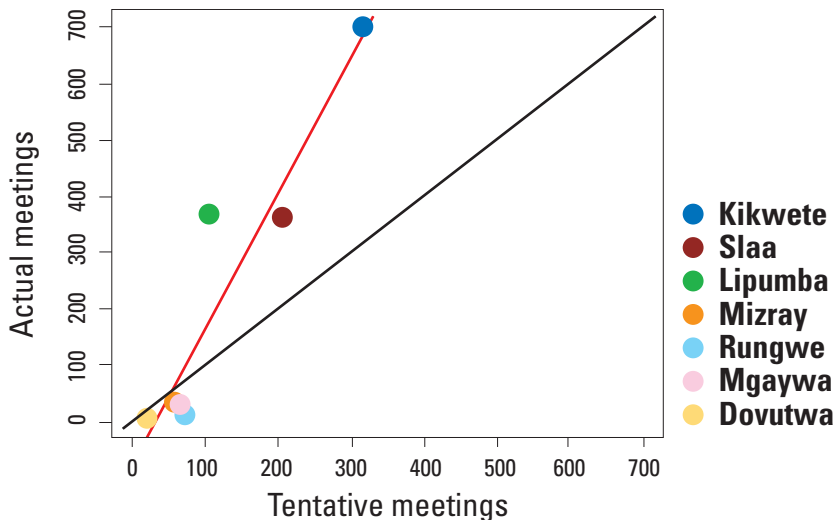


Figure 4: Tentative schedule and actual presidential campaign meetings.

The red line in figure 4 depicts the actual relationship, while black depicts the 1:1 relationship if the number of meetings held was equal to the number of tentative meetings.

My study used an analysis of covariance, basically comparing both slopes (analysis was based on log10-transformed data). The findings showed that the number of actual meetings was higher than the number of tentative (i.e. agree-

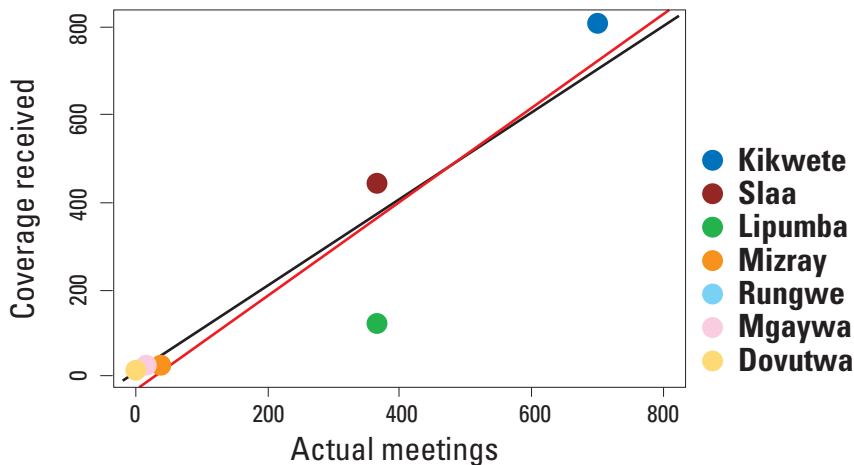


Figure 5: Correlation of news coverage and presidential campaign meetings held.

ed)($F_{1,10} = 11.82, p < 0.01$). This pattern was mainly produced by the three candidates with more meetings: Kikwete, Slaa, and Lipumba had respectively, 120%, 77%, and 248% more meetings than originally scheduled with the NEC. However, other parties had fewer meetings than originally scheduled. In particular, Mziray (APPT-Maendeleo) had 1.6 times less (161%), Rungwe (NCCR-Mageuzi) had almost 5 times fewer (473%), Mgaywa (TLP) almost 3.5 times fewer (333%), and Dovutwa (UPDP) 2.2 times fewer (220%) than the meetings scheduled.

Figure 5 shows a positive significance: the red line depicts the line for the actual relationship, while the black one depicts the 1:1 relationship that is if the number of actual meetings held was equal to the coverage received.

Third, I examined whether there was a relationship between the number of actual meetings and coverage received by individual candidates, evaluating this relationship with an analysis of covariance, basically comparing both slopes. The figure shows that the number of actual meetings is closely related with news coverage for each individual candidate ($F_{1,10} = 0.02, p = 0.881$). Analysis was based on log₁₀-transformed data. This means that the number of meetings each candidate had was pretty much in direct proportion to the coverage they got. This clearly indicates that what appears in the press is associated with the number of times a candidate has a public meeting.

Also I examined whether the number of votes was related to the coverage received. I answered this question with a simple regression on log₁₀-transformed

data. Figure 6 presented as log10 shows that there is a positive association between both variables slope = 1.4 ± 0.14 SE, $F_{1,5} = 91.4$, $p < 0.01$). This means that there is positive and significant relationship between the coverage a candidate received and voting outcome.

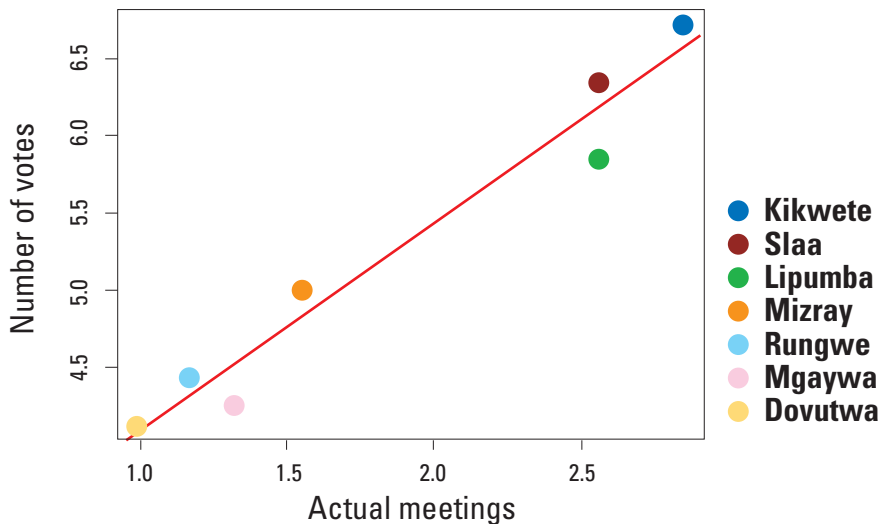


Figure 6: Correlation of presidential campaign meetings held and votes result.

I used simple regression on log10-transformed to examine the relationship between actual campaign meetings and 2010 presidential results.

The findings show that there is positive and significant relationship between the number of meetings a candidate holds and election result; more campaigning equals more votes obtained (slope = 1.4 ± 0.13 SE, $F_{1,5} = 113.6$, $p < 0.01$).

3. 5. Survey Results

Qualitative research approach was used to examine the perception of people taking part in the 2010 Tanzania election and to examine the relationship between media coverage and voting outcomes of this election. This analysis was based on the survey of 1,277 people in Tanzania who voted in the 2010 election. Respondents also were asked some questions about their general knowledge of, and their perception regarding, the role of media in election coverage. The study used a rating scale that allowed respondents to express both the direction and strength of their opinion about newspaper election coverage and candidate visibility.

More than a half of the respondents, or 53%, were between 18 and 35 years; 47% were over 35 year old. The majority were male (63%) and 37% were female. Of the respondents, 36% had formal employment while 53% were active in the informal sector; 11% were students. The data showed that 98% of respondents had high access to newspapers during the election campaign and they read at least one newspaper every day about the presidential candidates before voting.

Still there is some question about the political knowledge of newspaper readers. The research showed that only 144 respondents, equal to 11%, knew the exact number of candidates who participated in the 2010 election when they voted. About 64% said three candidates, Kikwete (CCM), Slaa (Chadema) and Lipumba (CUF), had participated in the election, while 9% of respondents said 6 candidates, and 16% mentioned different numbers ranging from three to 13. This indicates that about 89% voted without full information about presidential candidates.

Respondents were also asked about “how often presidential candidates received newspaper coverage during the 2010 election campaign?” Overall, 93% of 1,277 respondents said Kikwete (CCM) had received high media news coverage (more than 10 times as much), followed by Slaa (Chadema) 78%, and Lipumba (CUF) 40%. In contrast, about 90 % of respondents said they did not see news coverage about Mziray (APPT-Maendeleo), Rungwe (NCCR), Mgaywa (UPDP) and Dovutwa –(UPDP) during election campaign.

Regarding photos as a measure of a candidate’s visibility during the 2010 election campaign, the findings are similar. In 100% of the surveys (1,277 respondents) said photos of Kikwete (CCM) appeared many times. Slaa (Chadema) was mentioned by 95% of respondents, and Lipumba (CUF) by 35% of the respondents. Regarding the remaining candidates, 78% of respondents did not see any photos of Mziray (APPT-Maendeleo), 80% did not see photos of Rungwe (NCCR-Mageuzi), 86% of Mgaywa (TLP), or 92% of Dovutwa (UPDP).

Respondents were asked “why they had chosen the candidate they voted for?” Twenty-eight percent of the respondents said it was because they had adequate information about the candidates, 24% were convinced by the candidate’s credentials, 20% because the candidate belonged to their political party, 15% were convinced of the candidate’s credibility, and 13% of respondents were convinced by public talks. The respondents were asked to mention the names of 2010 presidential candidates. All 100% of 1,277 respondents could name Kikwete (CCM) and Slaa (Chadema); also 82% could name Lipumba (CUF). In contrast, only 3% mentioned Mziray (APPT-Maendeleo), and less than 1% Rungwe (NCCR-Mageuzi), Mgaywa (TLP), or Dovutwa (UPDP). The findings showed that media exposure does increase political knowledge and awareness and is used by voters to make a decision in the ballot box.

Table 5. Voter's Perception Regarding Media and Candidate News Coverage.

Question	1. Strongly Disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neutral	4. Agree	5. Strongly Agree
I read newspapers about the presidential candidates before voting.	5	5	3	33	54
Some presidential candidates did not get enough newspaper coverage, which limited by ability to get enough information about them and their parties.	4	8	5	21	62
Information presented in newspapers about presidential candidates gave me a wide knowledge about the election campaign.	2	4	3	19	72
Information from the newspapers about the political candidate influenced my decision on the presidential candidate I voted for, during 2010 election	3	7	4	21	65
If each Presidential candidates' information was fully covered in the newspaper could influence my decision on the candidate I had to vote for	4	6	4	16	70
Newspapers provided reliable source of information on presidential candidates.	2	1	1	26	70
The wider the accessibility of news about the candidates the greater the community political debate.	0	2	2	28	68
Many candidates' photos in the newspapers enable voters to recognize the photo on the ballot paper and raise the vote for that candidate.	1	4	9	27	59
Many stories about the individual candidate make him popular and influence voters to choose him.	1	4	6	23	66
The frequency of newspaper coverage of individual presidential candidates creates an image of whether or not they will win.	1	4	8	22	65
Negative stories about individual presidential candidates discourage voters from choosing them.	2	2	9	19	68

Although I did not intensively study about electronic media, respondents were asked if they received information about election news from newspapers through other media channels, especially TV and Radio. About 90% of respondents listened to radio and watched TV about news headlines from the newspapers. Also, the findings show that 80% of 1,277 respondents participated in public discussion regarding Kikwete and Slaa, 55% participated in public discuss about Lipumba. The rest of the candidates, Mziray, Rungwe, Mgaywa and Dovutwa received less than 10% in the public discussion. In response to the question, “when did you decide to vote for the candidate you chose?” 31% of respondents decided before the campaign began, 36% decided between August and September, and 33% decided in the final week before Election Day. This indicates the possibility that 69% waited for news information about the candidates before deciding for whom to vote.

As table 5 shows, 1,277 respondents were asked to provide their opinion regarding the role of media, the trend of newspapers’ 2010 presidential election coverage, and candidate visibility in relation to the voter’s knowledge about the political election. The results show that 87% of respondents read newspapers before they voted in the 2010 presidential election. Regarding candidate visibility, 83% of respondents said that some presidential candidates did not get enough newspaper coverage, which limited their ability to get enough information about them and their parties.

About 91% of respondent agreed that information presented in newspapers about presidential candidates gave readers a wide knowledge about the election. Also 86% of respondents said that newspapers provided a reliable source of information on presidential candidates. About 86% of respondents said that information from the newspapers about the presidential candidate influenced their decision of how to vote during 2010 election. Similarly, 86% of respondents said if each presidential candidate received full coverage by newspapers, the information could possibly influence their decision on the candidate they voted for. This indicates that voters would like to receive equal coverage about all presidential candidates.

Regarding the issue of candidate visibility, 86% of respondents agreed that candidate photos in newspapers enabled voters to recognize them on the ballot paper and could raise the vote for the candidate whose photos appeared many times. Similarly, 89% of respondents said high newspaper coverage about individual presidential candidates made them popular and influenced voters to choose them. About 87% of respondents agreed that high frequency of newspaper coverage of individual presidential candidates created an image of whether or not they were likely to win the election. Regarding the issue of news tones,

about 87% of respondents said negative news stories about individual presidential candidates discourage voters from choosing them.

Another issue explored was whether newspaper coverage stimulated additional community discussion about the candidates in the election and what they stood for. About 96% agreed that the high accessibility of election news about the candidates increased the public debate regarding particular candidates. In this regard, low coverage of some candidates rendered them much less debatable in a public sphere, than those who received high coverage.

4. Conclusion and Discussion

The main objective of this study was to examine the relationship between newspaper election coverage and voting outcomes in the Tanzanian 2010 Presidential election. It also examined the relationship between media coverage and the 2010 presidential election campaigns. This study opted for a mixed research approach by conducting news content analysis and an administrative questionnaire among newspaper readers who voted in the 2010 presidential election.

The results showed that there is a significant relationship between news election coverage and voting outcomes. Overall, the study showed that greater news coverage was associated with higher voting outcomes. The findings are consistent with previous research findings conducted by Chiang & Knight (2011), Enikolopov, Petrova & Zhuravskaya (2010) and Hopmann, Vliegthart, de Vreese, & Albaek, (2010) which stated that greater media visibility of party leaders increased the likelihood of people voting for that party's candidate. Similar results were found in a study by Boomgaarden, Vliegthart, & de Vreese, (2012), that media favor increased positive coverage, and influenced voting decisions, as well as having a positive impact on election results.

The data demonstrates that all measures of news coverage are positively associated with the number of presidential meetings for campaign and vote results. Similarly, quantitative analysis was carried out to examine voters' knowledge regarding presidential candidates as well as their perception regarding each candidate's visibility, the findings of which showed that there is a positive relationship. The results showed that only 11% of voters had full information about all candidates. In contrast, 64% of voters thought that the three candidates, Kikwete, Slaa and Lipumba, who received large amounts of media coverage, were the only candidates who participated in the 2010 presidential election in Tanzania. This means that the political knowledge that voters acquire from the media is subject to the political information available to them. These results are consistent with previous theoretical and empirical studies (Buttice & Stone, 2012; Fridkin & Kenney, 2011) which demonstrated that the slant and

bias in media news coverage affects citizens' participation in the general election. Media can affect voters in different ways as campaigns and media messages can mobilize or demobilize them, reinforcing partisans' vote intentions.

The trend of the 2010 Presidential campaign coverage shows that the Tanzanian media are not fulfilling their democratic role due to the tremendous number of challenges and constraints which have already been highlighted by previous scholars, including factors such as interest media ownership (Kilimwiko, 2009), and lack of editorial freedom and responsibility (Ugangu, 2011). Corruption and unethical journalism (Mfumbusa, 2008) and self-censorship is one of the most prevalent enemies of press freedom because media owners want to safeguard their interests, and journalists and editors want to keep their jobs. Self-censorship is based on fear of losing public advertising revenue (White, 2012). Matumaini (2010) claimed that lack of a comprehensive communication policy that incorporates major changes in the socio-political scenario, the economy, and the development of information and communication technology (ICT), has become a major obstacle for the media to fulfil its role in promoting democracy by providing fair coverage to all presidential candidates.

That lack of a proper political communication system, which leads to wide disparity in the number of media campaigns, also creates a challenge for media to provide equal coverage. While presidential winner Kikwete from CCM conducted 700 meetings during the 2010 presidential campaign, the number of meetings conducted by other candidates numbered far less: Slaa (Chadema) 365, Lipumba (CUF) 369, Mziray (APPT-Maendeleo) 36, Rungwe (NCCR-Mageuzi) 15, Mgaywa (TLP) 21, and Dovutwa (UPDP) 10. This is contrary to a multiparty democratic political system which requires institutionalisation of free, fair, and competitive elections (Lilleker, 2006) and it has led journalists to provide low coverage for some candidates. However, there was also a lack of news analysis in 2010 presidential election coverage. This indicates that the presidential coverage was based on episodic framing which makes journalists presenting stories as individual events without putting what happened into a more general perspective. In order to avoid bias, the journalists have to apply Iyenger's (1991) news coverage approach and shift from episodic frames to thematic frames which provide broader context and link the event to the root causes in a wider perception, the impact, and to suggest possible solutions.

Lack of security is among the major obstacles which hinder journalists in performing their duty. During the 2010 general election campaign, MCT established the Media Code of Conduct for Elections Reporting, which requires journalists to report objectively, seek the truth, encourage free speech, respond to the needs of the voters, avoid hate speeches, and promote democratic values.

The code pinned obligation on media owners to ensure impartial, fair, and balanced election coverage. Furthermore, political parties were required by the Code to allow journalists to operate freely in any part of the country without fear or intimidation (Thomas, 2011, White, 2012). Yet in spite of the election code, election coverage was biased (Mzee, 2011) and some journalists from *Mwananchi*, *Mtanzania*, *Nipashe* and *Tanzania Daima* were harassed by political members, police, and political leaders during election campaign (Mihayo, 2011).

Media laws (Ogbondah, 2003) especially the Newspaper Act 1976 are still a major constraint for the media coverage to make leaders accountable. For example, in 2010, the Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Information threatened to ban any media house that published articles that he viewed as damaging to the reputation of the government. Also the Registrar of Newspapers issued some letters to newspapers, warning against any negative coverage of the government. Three private weeklies, *Mwanahalisi*, *Raia Mwena*, and *Tanzania Daima* received stern warnings from the Registrar telling them to avoid publishing stories that were deemed harmful to the government (Mzee, 2011). According to Mzee (2011), *Mwananchi*, received two letters from the Registrar threatening to suspend it for alleged "negative government coverage." Without citing any particular instance, the Registrar's letters accused the paper of having "denigrated the government." Furthermore, in 2010, the Minister for Information, Culture, and Sports, without any clear explanation, suspended the registration of newspapers as the country approached the general election set for October 2010. The suspension hindered the operation of seasonal newspapers, which rose during the campaign for the general election to support certain candidates or character-assassinate real, expected, or even imagined political opponents.

This study uncovers a major problem in the relationship between political democracy and economic capitalism; democracy requires equal opportunity for entry into the public sphere of political discussion, elections, and the like; however, capitalism distributes opportunity via an economic marketplace where money rules. In this so-called "free market," privately owned or government media outlets can afford to, in a sense, buy the coverage that they need; however, less wealthy and less powerful actors often cannot afford media coverage and therefore are denied equal political opportunity. In this situation, some reforms must be passed that provide a better balance between the logic of capitalism and the needs of democracy; i.e., the marketplace must be regulated so that it operates in ways more conducive to democracy.

The quality and direction of the coverage received by a candidate in a newspaper is conditioned by the ownership of the paper and that ownership's

political ideology and interests. The results support the view that when wealthier parties hold more events, they get more coverage and as a result get more votes as well (Mmuya, 2010; Stanyer, 2007; Wolfsfeld, 2011). This argues for reforms of the election rules such as public funding for parties or other ways of empowering smaller and opposition parties vis-à-vis the ruling party.

Despite journalists' election coverage training, the media code governing election coverage and the National Elections Act, 1995 Cap. 343, that promotes equal presidential coverage, Tanzania's media had failed to fulfil its obligation to provide equal coverage to all presidential candidates. In this regard there is a need to recall the MacBride (1980) recommendations, especially the issue of protection of journalists, reducing the commercialization of communication, providing more training and enhancing journalism education to enable journalists and media organizations to perform their roles in promoting democracy and national development.

Some other possible reforms could include the following. Firstly, adopt media-centered democracy policies and laws that open up the system to more alternative publications. Secondly, there is a need to pass legislation that creates a national media outlet that is funded by a combination of subscriptions and public funds, but also has complete editorial independence from any political party or ownership group. Thirdly, to pass media laws and regulations that require all media to give fair, balanced, and equal coverage to all official parties and candidates with consideration of the minimum number of meetings for campaign and media coverage.

Poverty also hinders the participation of poor citizens in elections because most of the media in Africa cannot afford to provide a wide range of information and educate people to participate in democratic elections. Mihayo (2011) claimed that poor infrastructure hinders circulation of newspapers to rural areas hence cause newspapers to become urban-based. In 2010, the Internet was available to only 1% of Tanzania's 40 million residents. Television was accessible by only 5% of the population, while about 15 million Tanzanians owned radio sets. He added that women have limited access to radio in rural areas as men move around with their portable radio sets. However, the low purchasing power of most citizens, the high cost of batteries for radio sets, the dearth of electricity provision to rural dwellers, and the high costs of owning television sets or accessing Internet remain large challenges for Tanzanians wishing to access political news through media.

In the context of the 2010 Presidential elections in Tanzania, print media newspapers dominate the news market at this time. As such, the print media has a larger influence approaching a monopoly on the distribution of news. As either

state owned and operated entities or private businesses, they naturally follow their own business and policy interests. Media will need a stronger policy to serve the role of providing more equitable coverage both in frequency and tone of all candidates.

One of the major strengths of this study is that the data was collected by different methods and was triangulated during analysis to increase the validity of its findings. However, the study has some limitations. The study examines the relationship between newspaper election coverage and voting outcomes in the 2010 Tanzania presidential election and not that of the Member of Parliament representatives, which ran parallel to the presidential election. Therefore, a study about the representative elections might portray a clearer picture of uneven media bias towards the candidates with less power, taking into consideration the media coverage of women, youth, and people with disabilities in political arenas.

This study highlights some of the major shortcomings of electoral media coverage of the 2010 Tanzanian Presidential election in terms of prevalent biases and uneven representation. While the media is supposed to play a pivotal role in the democratic process, media outlets in Tanzania have not lived up to their responsibilities in providing just and fair representation for all running candidates and their platforms. As such, the policy relevance of this research focuses on the need to reform the policies and regulations behind electoral and political coverage, to ensure objective and balanced portrayals of candidates, the values they stand for, and the political actions to which they are committed. The importance of independent media outlets cannot be understated in the democratic process, not only around the time of elections but also on an ongoing basis throughout a government's mandate. Media integrity is at stake here; it is a basic tool for the public to make well-informed decisions during elections, and in turn demand greater accountability throughout a government's political mandates.

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