THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF SOCIAL MEDIA AS SOURCES OF INFORMATION TO THE NEWSPAPERS IN TANZANIA

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ABSTRACT*: The attention of this study was to examine the contributions made by social media as "sources of information" to the newspapers in Tanzania. Specifically, the study examined the extent through which social media had contributed news stories for the selected newspapers in the country. The study also sought to determine the social media which had often contributed news stories to the selected newspapers. Lastly, the study, pursued to determine the contents and nature of the stories retrieved from the social media by the selected newspapers. This was a content analysis study which utilized documentary review of the three selected newspapers. Three newspapers of Mwananchi, Daily News, and the Citizen were purposefully selected for the study. A recording manual was designed and used during the documentary review and the unit of analysis included: hard news stories, soft news stories, column, editorial comment, features and sports stories. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data since the study carried qualitative data. The findings suggest that social media have played a significant contribution in providing news stories for the newspapers in Tanzania. It further suggest that, in all social media used, Twitter is the number one social media which provides more news stories to the newspapers in Tanzania. Lastly, the findings suggest that most of the news stories retrieved from social media were political stories, entertainment, and sports.*

KEYWORDS: contribution, social media, as sources of information, newspapers, tanzania

INTRODUCTION

Defining the Concept of Social Media

The term social media has been defined in diverse ways by different scholars across the world. This has made it difficult for academics to come up with a consensus on the exact definition of the concept. In other words, there is no commonality yet about the definition of social media. For example, Kietzmann (2011) and Lewis (2010) have defined social media as mobile and web-based communication technologies that are typically used to connect people and communities, as well as to share, discuss, co-produce and modify user-generated content. Boyd and Ellison (2007) classifies social media into three categories. The first category is related to the construction of a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, while the second category articulates a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and the third category is concerned with the views that traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system.

Furthermore, Kaplan and Michael (2010) explain that social media is a group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that creates

highly interactive platforms through which individuals and communities share, discuss, and modify user-generated content (information). On other hands, Rouse (2019) defines social media as the collective of online communications channels dedicated to community-based input, interaction, content-sharing and collaboration. It is applications that utilizes web technologies and allow users to create and participate in communities through functions such as communicating, interacting, sharing, collaborating, and publishing (Mauroner, 2016).

Moreover, Baruah (2012) explain that social media refers to the use of web-based and mobile technologies to turn communication into an interactive dialogue. There are mainly four categories of social media (Mao, 2014), namely: (i) social networking tools and instant messengers such as Facebook, Skype, Tumblr and so forth. ii) tools for social publishing, social sharing, bookmarking, and collaborating, including tools like blogs, wikis, Twitter, Delicious, Flickr, Youtube, Picasa, GoogleDocs, Spreadsheets, Slideshare, Dropbox, Gliffy and so on iii) social tools for content management as well as calendars, surveys, and polls such as Moodle or Edmondo iv) Virtual worlds and gaming environments such as SecondLife, WeeWorld, Webkinz and so forth.

The arrival of Social Media in Tanzania

There is no exactly date which clearly spells out the date when social media arrived in Tanzania. However, it is estimated that social media arrived in Tanzania in the late 1990s and early 2000. Trottier and Fuchs (2015) states that social media first appeared in Tanzania in late 1990s towards 2000 when people in Tanzania started to use internet due to the advancement of technology in the country. Mfumbusa (2008) adds that since the arrival of social media in Tanzania the media environment in the country has changed rapidly due to the integration of social media such as blogs, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube in the smartphones. These media have turned to be the news breakers way before the mainstream media such as newspapers, radio and television. Moreover, the social media have also turned to be the news sources for the mainstream media in Tanzania; some are used as they are found while some media outlets use them as tips or 'electronic rumors.

Moreover, it is augured that the mushrooming of social media in Tanzania can be traced back in 1999 when blog first arrived in the country; followed by LinkedIn in 2003, Facebook in 2004, YouTube in 2005, Twitter in 2006, WhatsApp in 2009, Pinterest in 2010, Instagram 2010, and Google+ in 2011(Stelzner, 2014). Since then, the use of social media in schools, business, homes, offices, and meetings have often been very common among Tanzanians. This confirms what many (Borders, 2009; Lankshear & Knobel, 2007; Kotler and Keller, 2006) scholars have said about the power of social media and how they have changed business around the world.

Likewise, users of social media in Tanzania have been party of other users across the world whereby the numbers have been increasing tremendously in. According to Bennett (2013), there were about 1.41 billion users in 2012, in 2013 there were about 1.61 billion users, in 2014 there were 1.82 billion users, and in 2015 there were about 1.99 billion users in worldwide. Country-wide, a number of local social media forums are already in boom. For example, in Tanzania, apart from Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, Blogs, WhatsApp and Instagram, local popular social media platforms include Jamii Forum, Michuzi blog, Mabadiliko forum, Milard Ayo blog, Mpekuzi blog, Bongo 5, Bongo-Lob and others. Other sites with added social media features include newspaper sites such as the Citizen,

Daily News, Global Publishers and This Day (Stelzner, 2014).

However, the growth and expansion of social media in Tanzania has been accelerated by a number of factors and efforts. Just to highlight a few, the development of Internet sustained by Web 2.0 and growth of mobile phones technology especially smart-phones is one of those factors (Southwood, 2014; Grewal and Levy, 2014). Likewise, heavy infrastructural investment in regard to fibre optic technology has made Internet service highly affordable and speedy in Tanzania (Mtweve, 2014; BongoToday, 2014; Tanzaniainvest, 2014). Besides, Tanzania already had seven mobile service providers by December 2016 including Airtel, Tigo, Vodacom Tanzania, Zantel, Smart, TTCL, and Halotel (TCRA, 2016), serving more than 32 million subscribers with mobile phone usage projected to be 20 times by 2019 (Ubwani, 2015). These are driving social media use through their competitive data bundle packages and affordable smart-phone campaigns to increase sales.

Research Questions

i. *To what extent have social media in Tanzania contributed to the selected newspapers as sources of information between January 2019 and March 2019*?

ii. What kind of social media which are used frequently by newspapers in Tanzania as sources of information?

iii. What are the nature (contents) of stories often retrieved from social media by the selected newspapers in Tanzania?

The Use of Social Media Globally

Social media has gained popularity all over the world. Almost everyone uses Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and other forms of social media both for social and professional purposes. Although not everyone has gotten on board with the social media giant, it has shaped how people around the world communicate with one another (Nyamboga 2014).Social media takes on many different forms including magazines, internet forums, weblogs, social blogs, microblogging, wikis, podcasts, photographs or pictures, video, rating and social bookmarking. With the world in the midst of a social media revolution, it is more than obvious that social media like Facebook, Twitter, Orkut, Myspace, Skype etc., are used extensively for the purpose of communication. This form of communication can be with a person or a group of persons (Eberhardt, 2007).   Though there is no clear date when social media arrived in the United States of America but it is estimated that social media first arrived in USA around 1990s when social network site like Facebook were said to have arrived and used (Zuckerberg, 2003). It is noted that such social media were mainly used to share announcements, seek for feedbacks, ask questions, as well linking with citizens. Hallin (2019) argues that the United States "media landscape has been characterized by the centrality of large-scale cultural industries since the development of the penny press in the 1830s.

In recent years many important elements of the stable system of the late twentieth century have been disrupted by economic, technological and political change. Stable boundaries that once separated markets have been disrupted by digital convergence and deregulation; and the landscape is increasingly dominated by cross-media conglomerates, including Google and Facebook. Likewise, newspapers, broadcast networks, and magazines that were the main institutional home for journalism have faced the economic crisis and have downsized their newsrooms, often drastically.

Furthermore, Smith and Anderson (2018) explain that in a Pew Research Center survey of U.S. adults it was found that social media landscape in early 2018 was defined by a mix of long-standing trends and newly emerging narratives. Facebook and YouTube dominated this landscape; as notable majorities of U.S. adults use each of these sites. At the same time, younger Americans (especially those ages 18 to 24) stand out for embracing a variety of platforms and using them frequently. It was further discovered that about 78% of 18- to 24-year-olds use Snapchat and a sizeable majority of these users (71%) visit the platform multiple times in a day.   Moreover, the use of social media is reported to be high among Chinese community. It is reported (Stadd, 2013) that China is becoming a big user of social media, even though some kinds of social media like Facebook and YouTube are unavailable in China. It is estimated that by 2018 there were about 513 million internet users in China, and 84 percent of online users contributed respectively to social media such as social networking, video uploading, photo sharing, and microblogging, which was the highest rate in the world.

Likewise, in Arabic nations the use of social media has brought some tangible changes. For example, in Saudi Arabia; the internet has revolutionized development in newspaper publishing. The presence of online newspapers has helped in increasing frequency for sharing information more quickly across the globe. It has also helped to bring the people together in more dynamic interactive manner1. Social media is based upon the software that facilitates people to connect, collaborate, and form virtual communities via the internet.

In Germany, the usage and impacts of social media in Germany is said to be threatening the so called traditional basis, role, and funding of journalists. It is reported that the arrival of social media in the country has caused many journalists lose jobs due to the expanding behavior of citizens to get fresh news directly from social media and within shortest period of time. They production of newspapers has also gone down, leading to the close-ups of many newspapers and printing press and news organizations. They have led to newsroom convergence and reorganizations of newsrooms, such as replacing editorial departments by news desks (or newsrooms) where journalists produce content that is "media-neutral" and for different outlets. The fact that many newsrooms have integrated print and online production in Germany suggests that fewer journalists are providing greater output for more outlets (Schröder, 2011). The German print market is the largest in Europe and the fifth largest in the world, since the early 1990s, the numbers and circulation of newspapers in Germany have shown signs of decline due to the presence of social media. Likewise, the number of readers on the Internet is increasing, with about 63 percent or 44.7 million Germans reading an online newspaper. Furthermore, mobile apps are used by 9.6 million users, i.e. to get informed by a publishing house on mobile devices in real time (Thomaß and Horz, 2019).

In Sub-Saharan Africa, it is reported (Mkono, 2018) that in late 1990s and early 2000 there were about 4,514,400 users of social media in the region and by the year 2017 the number was said to increase to

about 453,329,534, giving Africa an internet penetration of 35.2%. Furthermore, with the exception of South Africa and Kenya, the African Affluent spends more time visiting websites and apps on their mobile phone than using their desktops or laptops. Practically all (96%) African Affluent now owns a smartphone, with the highest penetration in Kenya and the lowest in Morocco (Willems, 2016).

Ghana is among the prominent users of social media in the region whereby it is estimated by the Global Digital Agencies (2018) that until 2018 there were around 10,110,000 Ghanaians who were using the internet. The figure represents 35% of the total 29,150,000 population of the West African country and is an increase of two million on the figure recorded in January 2017. Additionally, the report by Balancing ACT (2014) shows that by 2019 Ghana has experienced mobile phone ownership rising and becoming broadly comparable to radio ownership. Television ownership has now extended to 76%, computer ownership has increased from 5% to 19% and smartphones which barely existed in 2009 are now owned by 6%."Due to the rising ownership of mobile phones, computer and smartphones it has led as well to the rise of social media uses in the country. On the other hand, since the arrival of social media in Ghana it has witnessed majority of the main stream media joining the wagon. Most of the magazines, newspaper, television, corporate organization, and radio stations have all joined the bandwagon in ensuring that they don't lose their audiences who have embraced the phenomena. And some of the media houses and personalities are also using social media to broadcast their news items apart from normal radio broadcasting (Degadjor, 2010).

In Kenya, just like in other parts of the world, social media has gained popularity. The usage of Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, YouTube, Instagram and Reddit and other forms of social media are used for both social and professional purposes (Baecker, 2011). According to the Willems (2016) the usage of social media in Kenya as of 2017 stood at 73% Facebook users, Twitter users were 7%, Pinterest users were 13.42%, YouTube user were 3.51% Instagram users were 2.11% and Reddit users were 0.49. This is a significant number of social media users to have been reported amongst East African countries. Mainly social media usage in Kenya is often been used as tools to share information from one person to another. They are also used as sources of information to the mainstream media (Nyamboga, 2014).

The Potentiality of Social Media

The arrival of social media across the world has caused diverse effects; including positive and negative effects. As a matter of facts, this study will only present part of the positive side of the social media. Social media has simplified the communication process amongst social media users. It has made it easy for individuals to get firsthand information within a twinkle of an eye. Since the arrival of social media, journalism industry across the world has been transformed by the emergence of numerous Internet-enabled technologies such as social media for news-gathering and dissemination news outlets (Stassen, (2010).

Likewise, Websites, blogs, instant messaging systems, e-mail, social networking sites, and other Internet-based communication systems have made it much easier for journalists to rapidly connect, exchange information, and collaborate with each other (Stassen,2010). For example, blogs make it possible for everyone with basic computer skills to access the internet easily, fast and publish onto the

web. Blogging has also impacted journalism in that regular citizens are increasingly performing, random acts of journalism. Tremblay (2010) adds that social media as a tool to disseminate information has gotten the potentiality of becoming a watchdog, citizen journalist and photojournalist. In addition, social networking websites have succeeded in attracting investors, advertisers, journalists, and many more participants. It was not long ago that social media made big news when it overtook email in terms of online activity. These activities are expressed by (#) tag in order to feature online as trending activity.

In Tanzania, politicians as main sources of information/news have not been left behind either, realizing the value of social media. Many politicians in the country are main users of social media platforms and very interesting it is estimated that every Member of Parliament in Tanzania has an official page on Twitter and/or Facebook which they use to receive and disseminate various information. They also use such webpage to propagate their political activities and to mobilize their followers on various issues (Baecker, 2011). To confirm this, most of the renowned people in the country; including the head of states, chairpersons of the dominant political parties in the country are among the principal users of social media.

The Challenges of Social Media
Before embarking on the challenges of social media, it is prudent to note that social media have caused numerous side effects to the users across the world. Tanzania is one amongst the countries which has been struck by the side effects of social media. The prominent side effects of social media in Tanzania includes the posting of nude pictures, propagation and posting of hatred clips, defamation of people, posting of false and misleading information, just a few to mention. However, these abuses on the social media have not gone unnoticed by the government of Tanzania. The Tanzania Communication Regulation Authority was established to curb the usage of social media in the country. Additionally, in 2016 the Cyber Crime Act was also established to cement the control of the usage of social media in the country (Nyamboga, 2014).

On the other hand, one of the challenge facing social media users especially journalists who often use social media as sources of information has been the problem of compiling and retrieving stories from the numerous social media platforms. There are thousands of stories which worthy for news stories from the various social media. Similarly, the authenticity of news stories retrieved from the social media has been a major challenge especially on the trustworthiness of those stories because they are neither gotten from an authorized sources nor unknown sources (Baecker, 2011).

Furthermore, with social media, it is very difficult to differentiate fake news from real news stories. It is also very challenging to differentiate between trained journalists from a citizen journalist or untrained journalists. In other words, the usage of social media has brought about lots of dilemmas and confusions in the media industry because at the moment it appears that every person who owns either a smartphone or computer he is a journalist and audience at the same time because he can read stories from various social media but he can as well write and post his own news stories.

Moreover, another challenge facing social media users especially in the developing countries is the issue of coverage and reachability. It is obvious that the reachability and coverage of social media has a challenge. Many people especially those who do not own smartphones or computers have appeared to be neglected by social media (Baecker, 2011). This is because for one to get access to the news stories or post any news story in the social media, such a person needs to have a smartphone or computer. Likewise, apart from having a smartphone or computer, a person also has to have some credits in the smartphones or computers. In other words, the usages of social media still have a role to play in order to make them user's friendly.

In nutshell, the arrival of social media across the world has brought not only positive effects but they have also brought negative effects. However, many governments across the world seem to all realize the negativity brought about by social media. As such, various measures have been taken to get rid of the problems. One of those measures includes the enactments of various rules and regulations aimed at controlling the performance of the social media. Other countries opt to ban some of the social media as a step ahead to control their usages.

Newspapers Ownership in Tanzania

Before presenting the state of newspaper ownership in Tanzania it is credible for this study to highlight an overview of the current newspapers present in the country. According Tanzania Information Service (2019), it was suggested that as of December, 2018 the number of registered newspapers in Tanzania stood at 175. These include newspapers, journals, newsletters, and magazines which are published daily, weekly, monthly and year. It further explained the medium of communication amongst those registered newspapers was Kiswahili and English whereby Kiswahili newspapers covered the large portion of English newspapers, they were about 67% while the English newspapers only covered about 33%. The common Swahili newspapers available in Tanzania include; '*Tanzania Daima', 'Mwananchi', 'Uhuru', 'Mtanzania' , Mzalendo, Majira, Nipashe, Habari Leo, just a few to mention.* However, the common English newspapers published in the country includes: The Citizen, The Guardian, Daily News, Arusha Times, just a few to mention.

Newspaper ownership in Tanzania can be traced back in during the colonial period where most of the newspapers were owned and controlled by the colonialists and missionaries. The main purpose of newspapers publication during that time was to serve the interests of the colonialists and the missionaries. The second phase of newspaper ownership can be traced back in early 1960s specifically after independence in 1961 when uhruru newspaper was introduced by the ruling part Chama Cha Mapinduzi. They were still very little newspapers such as Lumuli which were owned and controlled by the church. The third ownership of newspapers in the country can be traced in early 1990s during the introduction of multiparty politics in the country. It was during that time when the country witnessed the mushrooming of many private newspapers established by private individuals and religious institutions. Thus, newspapers were mainly owned by the state, political parties, private individuals and religious institutions. Moreover, the current and genuine stance on the state of newspapers ownership in Tanzania, it can be summarized that there are about five ownership of newspapers in the country (Kilimwiko, 2012; Rioba, 2008). The first type of ownership is private

partisan party newspapers. These are the newspapers are hundred percent owned and controlled by political parties; they include Mzalendo and Uhuru which are owned by the ruling party Chama Cha Mapinduzi. The second type of newspapers ownership is private sectarian religious. They cover newspapers which are owned and controlled by religious institutions such as Lumulu and Kiongozi newspapers published by the Catholics and An-Nuur newspaper published by the Muslims. The third newspapers ownership is political affiliated newspapers. These are the newspapers which are owned and controlled by politicians or their families. They include: Msanii Africa (owned by CCM Chairperson in Mwanza), Tanzania Daima (owned by the main opposition leader), just a few to mention. The fourth newspapers ownership is private commercial newspapers. These are the newspapers owned and controlled by businessmen. They include: Nipashe (IPP Media), Mwanachi newspaper (by Mwananchi Publications), just a few to mention. The last newspaper ownership in the country are the state owned newspapers, they include: The Daily newspaper and Habari Leo. In nutshell, all the above mentioned newspaper ownership in Tanzania are not free from the interaction with the social media. Thus, this study selected some of those newspapers to see how they have been interacting with the social media especially in retrieving news stories from the various social media platforms.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This is a qualitative research which utilized a content analysis of three newspapers. A documentary review was used to collect the data from the newspapers. A recording manual was designed and used to record the stories retrieved from the social media by the selected newspapers. The units of analysis during the review of newspapers were: *hard news stories, soft news stories, column, editorial comment, features and sports stories.* Three newspapers were purposefully selected and used in this study. The selected newspapers were *Mwananchi newspapers, Daily news, and the Citizen newspaper.* The Mwananch newspaper represented other Swahili newspapers, the Daily newspapers represented state owned newspapers, and the Citizen newspaper was selected to represent other commercial newspapers. The data were analyzed based on the thematic analysis approach whereby after recording all stories retrieved from newspapers, the coding, and other cleaning processes were done before the analysis.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Research Question 1

To what extent have social media in Tanzania contributed to the selected newspapers as sources of information between January 2019 and March 2019?

The findings show that social media had some noticeable contributions to the selected newspapers in Tanzania. They often helped to provide news stories which most of the selected newspapers in Tanzania retrieved and used them for their audiences. However, their contributions varied according to newspapers. For example, out of the 93 reviewed articles from the Mwananchi newspaper only 35 publications obtained information from social media as source of information. In comparing the social media with high rate of contributions to the newspapers, it was discovered that Twitter had high contribution with high donation to the newspapers. It covered about 39% contributions; it was followed by Instagram with 31%, Facebook with about 15% only and YouTube with 3%. The findings also

revealed that the Citizen newspaper uses more social media as sources of information compared to other newspapers. The newspaper had used about 61% of news stories retrieved from social media. It was followed by Mwananchi newspaper with about 31% of the recorded stories.

Research Question 2

What kind of social media which are used frequently by newspapers in Tanzania as sources of information?

The findings reveal that Twitter is the most used social media to be used by the selected newspapers as their favorite sources of information. It ranked the first social media being used as sources of information compared to other social media. It covered about 25.2% of the retrieved news stories from the social media. However, the findings show that Facebook is the second social media being used by the selected newspapers in Tanzania as sources of information after Twitter. It was revealed that about 8.15 % (25 news stories) of the news stories retrieved from the social media were done so from the Facebook accounts. Likewise, the findings indicate that Instagram ranked the third social media to be used by the selected newspapers in Tanzania as sources of their information, it covered about 6.7% (18 news stories). Furthermore, the findings inform us that Youtube ranked the fourth social media to be used as sources of information by the Tanzanian selected newspapers. It covered about 1.5% of the total news stories retrieved from the social media by the selected newspapers.

Research Question 3

What is the nature (contents) of stories often being retrieved from social media by the selected newspapers in Tanzania?

The findings reveal that political stories, entertainment, sports, and other social related stories dominated the coverage of the selected newspapers though their frequencies of coverage varied. The entertainment stories ranked at the top amongst all other stories, it covered about 22% of the total news stories. It was followed by political stories which ranked second after entrainment; it covered about 19.8% of news stories obtained from the studied newspapers. It was also noted that sports stories are third in the nature of stories which were retrieved from social media, they covered about 12.1%. It was discovered that stories covering musicians, modeling, and other the like entertainments mostly from western countries were often retrieved from the social media. Furthermore, the findings show that political issues such as political instabilities, elections, referendums, and the like stories were given more space in the selected newspapers. Likewise, sports stories retrieved from the social media covered mostly the progress of different leagues across the world including the Tanzanian Premium league. They also focused on the highlights of prominent players such as Christian Ronaldo, Messy, Lukaku, just a few to mention.

DISCUSSION

Just a soft reminder, this study focused at answering three research questions which were posed in the previous chapters. The first research question aimed at exploring the contributions played by the social media as sources of information to the selected newspapers in Tanzania. The second research question

was directed towards determining the most used social media as sources of information by the selected newspapers. In other words, which social media had more contributions as sources of information to the selected newspapers in Tanzania? The last research question examined the contents or nature of the stories which were retrieved from the social media by the selected newspapers.

To start with the findings from the first research question that the social media in Tanzania have significant contributions to the newspapers in the country. This is a good progress to have occurred in the country because with the presence of convergence between social media and newspapers it would help audiences to get information from various sources of news stories, including human sources as well as social media. The findings confirm that journalists in Tanzania are not static but rather they are dynamic and move with the wind of technological changes happening in the media industry. Unlike in the previous days when journalists would carry-up cameras and note books and move around different places searching for news stories, but now they can sit in the newsrooms and use their computers or smartphones to retrieve news stories for their newspapers from the various media across the world within a shortest period of time.

Moreover, these findings may be translated that citizen journalism in Tanzania appears to have established some visible roots within the media industry in the country. This is due to the fact that by the nature of the stories retrieved by the selected newspapers it is obvious to conclude that journalists in Tanzania have established teamwork with citizen journalists who are now the main newsmakers across the social media. This can also be confirmed by various events in the country where the citizen journalists have been posting in the various social media about different events especially in areas where journalists cannot reach on time. In other words, citizen journalists through social media have appeared to report various socio-economic and political issues more and faster than journalists do.

Furthermore, what can be interpreted from these findings is that Twitter has gained prominent reputations in Tanzania amongst other social media because it has been used by most of the prominent figures across the world. Thus, it is not surprising from these findings to witness Twitter being ranked at the top as the most contributor of news stories to the newspapers in Tanzania. However, these findings confirms about the popularity of Twitter across the world. Apart from the newspapers, most of the mainstream media in Tanzania such as radios and televisions have established special programs and airtime to retrieve and broadcast all major events across the world. Because Twitter has been used frequently by prominent people like the US President Donald Trump who has always been using twiting different information on his page. Thus, it is not surprising to see Twitter being ranked as the most used social media by the newspapers in Tanzania.

In summary, what can be interpreted from these findings is that the pace and trust of social media in society appear now to be very vibrant. This is because, social media now has changed the world, apart from playing as medium or channels of communications where audiences communicate and channel their interactions through the diverse social media but there is a new development on the potentiality of social media whereby they are now becoming as one of the sources of information to the mainstream media. This is perhaps because of their being available almost everywhere at every second where the mainstream media cannot reach. Thus, with these findings, it is just an indicator that in the coming few

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years one should not be surprised to witness for the first time that social media are becoming the mainstream media while the current mainstream media are awaiting to for their burials.

The findings from the second objective showed that Twitter, Facebook, Youtube, and Instagram have been the most frequent used social media by the mainstream media in Tanzania. They have been one of the key sources of information to the newspapers. One of the practical explanations about these findings could be that communication convergence and conglomerates has started gaining new momentum in the country. In the previous days, newspapers, radio, televisions, and other media outlets appeared to work separately and independently, but with the arrival of social media in the country it has led most of these media outlets work more closely than before. There is a great push now where social media are getting information from the mainstream media and post them to their users likewise the mainstream media are as well getting information from the social media. Thus, these transactions of news stories from mainstream media to social media and vice versa seem to have been so constructive and essential towards the distribution of information to the audiences.

However, despite this credible move happening in the media industry in Tanzania, it should be cautioned that apart from jubilating the available media convergence and conglomerates in the country, we should also take into account the dangerous of embracing this media convergence. With the presence of the intermarriage between social media and mainstream media in the country is so risking for a young country like Tanzania. It has been witnessed several times in the country where citizen journalists have been apprehended because of posting false information, defamatory and hatred information, just a few to mention. Thus, if this intermarriage between social media and mainstream media is let free without setting some guidelines or principles to follow, there is a great possibility of transferring the false, exaggerated, hatred and defamatory stories from the social media to penetrate more into the society.

What surprises more from these findings is the silence of the regulatory authorities in the country particularly the government Information Department, and the Tanzania Communication Regulatory Authority. It appears that the government Information Department which is the regulator of the newspapers in Tanzania has neither designed any modalities nor put any guidelines to spell out the dos and donts through which journalists should adhere to before or when they are retrieving news stories from the social media. The Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority also seems to sideline the possible dangers of the transaction between social media and mainstream media in the country. They have put too much energy to control and regulate citizen journalists but they have closed up their mouths on what is taking place between information transfers from social media to the mainstream media.

Looking at the themes or contents of the stories retrieved from the social media as suggested by the findings. It may be interpreted that majority of citizen journalists in Tanzania are more enticed by entertainment stories than any other issues in the social media. One of the practical implications in these findings could be that majority of the people hereby called citizen journalists in Tanzania who post clips, stories, and other information in the social media are the youths or young generation compared to the adults. This is because, by nature, the young stars or youths across the world are more

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into entertainment issues or topics compared to other genuine issues such as dress codes or education matters. Thus, it can be ruled out that the youths in Tanzania who uses or posts information in the social media are the main sources of information to the mainstream media in the country.

However, what surprises more from these findings is the absence of agricultural and industrialization in the stories retrieved from the social media. It is also astonishing in these findings to discover that health issues, education, and peace buildings are all missing in the contents of retrieved stories from the social media. The absence of agricultural and industrialization stories in the stories being retrieved from the social media is not a good indicator for the survival of the country. Agriculture being referred to as the backbone of the economy of Tanzania which employs about 80% of the entire population was expected by this study to dominate the contents of the stories retrieved by the selected newspapers from the social media. Likewise, industrialization story which is part and parcel of agricultural affairs was also expected to rank at the top. Additionally, the major focus of the current regime in the country is directed towards building a "*Tanzania ya Viwanda"* [industrialized Tanzania], thus, a lot of efforts have been done by the government to attract the attention of citizens as well as investors to enable Tanzania become as one of the industrialized countries in the Sub-Saharan African countries but it is very unfortunately that it appears majority of the citizens; including journalists have not paid much attention on this.

Furthermore, it is very shocking to find in these findings that there were no any health related stories nor peace building stories in the contents of the news stories retrieved from social media by the selected newspapers despite Tanzania being faced with a number of health related problems as well as conflicts between peasants and pastoralists. Malaria, diabetes, HIV/AIDS, bareness, and many other health related issues are just among the stories which were expected to be given priorities in the contents of the stories. The frequency outbreak of Dangue in the country, and Ebola in the neighboring countries of DR Congo and Rwanda were not seen in any of the stories retrieved from the social media. The implications of these findings could be that Tanzania will continue suffering from the above mentioned diseases if journalists and social media users do not take immediate steps of realizing the potentiality and the credible roles that they can play in their country.

Overall, what can be said about these findings is that the roles and contributions of social media in terms of tangible issues affecting the country have not been so significant. There are so many pressing issues in the country which have not been published by the social media and journalists but much focus seem to be put on entertainment and sports news stories which are not so important to the development of the country.

CONCLUSION

Basing on the findings from this study, there are basically a number of things that can be leant from these findings. One, these findings have informed us on the growing and expanding power of the social media use in the country which has led to the presence of media convergence. That is, the social media and mainstream media are now working together or are working very closely whereby the mainstream media are using the social media as their sources of information and vice versa. The second lesson

learnt from these findings lies on the weakness of the regulatory authorities in the country. The findings suggest that the Tanzania Information Agency (TIA) and Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA) as regulatory bodies of both print and electronic media in the country appear to have failed to design a working modality which would have been tasked to lay out some guidelines and principles through which the present convergence of social media and print media is done according to the established guidelines or principles. Lastly, what can be highlighted more about these findings is the contribution of the findings to the existing body of knowledge. It is also expected that these findings have been able to shade light and enlighten the government and other media stakeholders in the country about the areas which call for immediate attentions and those which needs to be accredited.

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