



East African Journal of Arts and Social Sciences

eajass.eanso.org

Volume 7, Issue 1, 2024

Print ISSN: 2707-4277 | Online ISSN: 2707-4285

Title DOI: <https://doi.org/10.37284/2707-4285>

EANSO

EAST AFRICAN
NATURE &
SCIENCE
ORGANIZATION

Original Article

Perspectives and Practices of Constructive Journalism in Mainland Tanzania

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Article DOI : <https://doi.org/10.37284/eajass.7.1.1907>

Date Published: **ABSTRACT**

04 May 2024

Keywords:

Constructive
Journalism,
Negativity,
Positivity.

This article offers a comprehensive examination of constructive journalism practices on the Tanzanian mainland, with the primary goal of redefining news framing. By analyzing the interplay between negativity and positivity in news coverage, the study explores its execution and its impact on news consumers. The research methodology encompasses a survey involving 169 respondents, complemented by in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with 30 participants. Furthermore, an extensive analysis of 240 news items from eight media outlets scrutinizes editorial perspectives on news framing and presentation, particularly the integration of negative and positive elements. The findings uncover a notable dissonance: while the media and journalists predominantly gravitate towards negative narratives, the audience clearly prefers positive content. These results underscore the urgency for Tanzanian media and journalists to reevaluate their approach to defining news and their portrayal of it, emphasizing the imperative for a more balanced and constructive narrative.

APA CITATION

Bulendu, D. E. & Yanqiu, Z. (2024). Perspectives and Practices of Constructive Journalism in Mainland Tanzania. *East African Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*, 7(1), 274-284. <https://doi.org/10.37284/eajass.7.1.1907>

CHICAGO CITATION

Bulendu, Dotto Emmanuel and Zhang Yanqiu. 2024. "Perspectives and Practices of Constructive Journalism in Mainland Tanzania". *East African Journal of Arts and Social Sciences* 7 (1), 274-284. <https://doi.org/10.37284/eajass.7.1.1907>.

HARVARD CITATION

Bulendu, D. E. & Yanqiu, Z. (2024) "Perspectives and Practices of Constructive Journalism in Mainland Tanzania". *East African Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*, 7(1), pp. 274-284. doi: 10.37284/eajass.7.1.1907.

IEEE CITATION

D. E., Bulendu & Z., Yanqiu "Perspectives and Practices of Constructive Journalism in Mainland Tanzania". *EAJASS*, vol. 7, no. 1, pp. 274-284, May. 2024. doi:10.37284/eajass.7.1.1907.

MLA CITATION

Bulendu, Dotto Emmanuel & Zhang Yanqiu. "Perspectives and Practices of Constructive Journalism in Mainland Tanzania". *East African Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*, Vol. 7, no. 1, May. 2024, pp. 274-284, doi:10.37284/eajass.7.1.1907.

INTRODUCTION

Tanzania's media landscape has evolved under various governmental regimes, each leaving its

distinct mark on subsystems such as economics, legal structures, culture, education, and mass communication. A system-theoretical

methodology becomes essential to compare communication performances spanning over six decades since independence effectively. Like other African nations, Tanzania has been influenced by the Western paradigm of journalism. This influence is evident in the development of college and university curricula and media philosophy and policy (Stummer, 1998). Notably, the journalism curriculum in Tanzania has traditionally emphasized watchdog journalism, wherein news is predominantly framed as negative and exceptional.

Newsroom practices in Tanzania have often been criticized for perpetuating negativity and unconventional topics, steering media consumers towards content centred on hostility, conflict, starvation, political instability, and government misconduct. Following Tanganyika's independence on December 9, 1961, President Julius Nyerere expressed dissatisfaction with private entities' dominance of major print media. Additionally, he sought greater control over broadcasting, potentially impacting the semi-autonomous status of the Tanzania Broadcasting Corporation (TBC) (Stummer, 1998).

A notable deficiency in state and public media is their failure to adequately represent the interests and voices of the community they serve. Instead of prioritizing the populace's needs, these media outlets often function as government propaganda tools. Their operation heavily relies on tax funding, which can influence their editorial independence. Information dissemination within these outlets typically follows a hierarchical structure, with directives flowing from higher authorities to lower levels. On the other hand, commercial media outlets are primarily driven by profit motives (Herman et al., 1988). Approximately 90% of their content revolves around entertainment, such as music, sports, and celebrity gossip. This focus often marginalizes the voices of underprivileged populations, as they are given limited space and time within commercial media. Additionally, commercial ads significantly influence news programs on electronic media platforms like TV and radio.

Conceptualizing Constructive Journalism

For over a decade, journalism scholars and industry professionals have recognized a 'crisis' within journalism, signalling the imperative for change in the media landscape (Hermans & Drok, 2018). However, pinpointing the precise nature of this change and its implementation is not a straightforward task. While scholars have advocated for a fundamental 'rethinking' of journalism as both a field and a profession (Peters & Broersma, 2013), the industry has predominantly addressed the crisis through a financial lens (Hermans & Drok, 2018). Nevertheless, the decline in viewership and readership numbers, coupled with decreasing trust in the media, inevitably prompts questions regarding journalism's role in society and how news should be presented (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2001). It is within this context that constructive journalism has emerged. This approach, seen as a news philosophy and practice, aims to combat growing audience disengagement by rectifying what is perceived as an overly negative and sensationalized news environment (Mast et al., 2019).

In an effort to understand the varied interpretations of constructive journalism across different historical and political landscapes, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands were selected due to their similar cultural backgrounds yet distinct contextual differences, providing a broader scope for comparative analysis. Both nations have witnessed the emergence of constructive journalism or solutions journalism movements, with news outlets adopting principles aligned with this approach (McIntyre & Sobel, 2018).

Despite the evident appreciation among news consumers for constructive elements in news coverage (Herman & Gyldensted, 2019), the adoption of constructive journalism has been relatively sluggish, partly due to its elusive conceptual nature. However, insights from Haagerup's experience (2008) suggest that editorial decisions may also significantly shape this adoption rate. To date, scholarly attention has

primarily been directed toward defining constructive journalism and delineating the complexities of the debates surrounding the concept. Within this framework, scholars have predominantly employed constructive journalism as a conceptual framework to interpret their findings (McIntyre & Sobel, 2018).

The Perspective of Constructive Journalism

The realm of news value literature has extensively scrutinized the specific types of events and narratives chosen for inclusion in news coverage (Galtung & Ruge, 1965). Numerous studies have confirmed a prevailing bias toward negativity within the news industry, with media outlets disproportionately focusing on negative stories over positive ones (Van der Meer et al., 2019). Similarly, audiences tend to gravitate towards negative information when consuming news (Knobloch-Westerwick et al., 2020). This predilection for negativity not only captures more attention and wields a stronger influence on individuals but also manifests in a bias towards negativity in evaluating the credibility of statements, such as urban legends and supernatural beliefs (Fessler et al., 2014).

This negativity bias permeates the demand side of news consumption, driven by socio-psychological motivations wherein audiences perceive fear-inducing negative news as more relevant and significant. Diverse research and expert opinions offer varying perspectives on news content's positive and negative aspects and consumer preferences. A fundamental question arises: who bears responsibility for disseminating negative news, which may evoke fear, intolerance, stress, and other adverse effects, and is this phenomenon conducive to individual well-being?

Psychological research on news content prompts inquiries into whether news consumers or journalists drive this phenomenon. Does the potential for positive news to instil optimism and foster development extend to economically disadvantaged countries like Tanzania? To what extent and in what manner do journalists on the Tanzanian mainland utilize constructive journalism? Is development achievable?

The delineation between journalism and advocacy remains a contentious issue in journalism studies, with proponents of objectivity contending that journalism's impartiality distinguishes it from advocacy, while critical scholars argue that journalism is inherently linked to strategic communication (Fisher, 2016). Advocacy in journalism is deemed unavoidable, as even inadvertently including a comment or perspective from a source may introduce a degree of advocacy into a story (Fisher, 2016). In response to these concerns, solutions-oriented approaches in journalism have garnered renewed attention in recent years.

Constructive journalism, also called "solutions journalism," has emerged as a form of journalism aiming to effect positive social change (Gyldensted, 2011, 2015; Haagerup, 2014; McIntyre, 2015). Grounded in the belief in the possibility and desirability of social progress, constructive journalism spotlights initiatives to address societal challenges.

The social and political system, a legacy of colonialism, shapes Tanzania's media and journalism landscape. Two distinct categories emerge: those aligned with the state, often advocating its ideals even in error, and those independent of the state, inclined to critique and oppose it even when the state is correct. However, the journalism code of ethics emphasizes impartiality and objectivity. Both factions have employed agenda-setting theories of mass communication, with the state predominantly embracing authoritarian and bulletin theories to regulate information dissemination (McIntyre, 2015). Despite its significance, the concept of constructive journalism is inadequately understood due to its omission from media and journalism studies and training programs in Tanzania. Some respondents view refraining from covering stories about accidents, starvation, poverty, corruption, conflict, and unemployment as beneficial.

Statement of the Problem

Communication is universally recognized as a crucial element for the existence and progress of

any society. The effectiveness of issues communicated through media hinges greatly on their production and presentation, which should involve diverse segments of society.

It's not surprising that the news media often prioritizes negativity and conflict. News serves numerous conventional functions, which necessitate a frequent adoption of a negative and conflict-oriented approach in storytelling. The prevalence of conflict and negativity in the news isn't arbitrary or individualistic; rather, it's part of a structured and anticipated pattern ingrained into journalists' habits. Conflict and negativity are recognized as essential news values, alongside other criteria like proximity, impact, and timeliness, which journalists are trained to use in identifying newsworthy information (Harcup & O'Neill, 2001). However, Schudson (2011) argues that the adversarial and contentious journalism commonly seen in traditional media often falls short of effectively evaluating the efficacy of policies, which he identifies as another crucial role of news.

By incorporating diverse ideas, mass communication can alleviate various problems stemming from a lack of information. Several information theories and models exist to support public awareness initiatives. However, the proliferation of bad news comes with its costs, as scholars have found that while it may offer certain benefits, its overall impact on consumers tends to be negative.

Research on the role of constructive journalism has predominantly focused on developed and democratic countries, with fewer studies exploring this concept in less developed nations grappling with political and social challenges. This study underscores the importance of examining the role of constructive journalism beyond Western democracies. Grounded in the notion that constructive journalism aims to elevate society's well-being by fostering quality journalism, the research aimed to assess the perception, application, and direction of constructive journalism on the Tanzanian mainland. To achieve this objective, surveys and

content analyses were conducted to analyze lead stories from eight news outlets.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The current study is grounded in Framing theory, which defines news as a product of social construction shaped by various influences, including individuals' beliefs and ideas (Chong & Druckman, 2007). Framing, a concept within mass communication theory, refers to how the media packages and presents information to the public. This theory posits that the media emphasizes specific events and places them within particular contexts to either encourage or discourage specific interpretations. As a result, the media holds a selective influence over individuals' perceptions of reality. Anthropologist Gregory Bateson introduced this theory in 1972, and it is often associated with second-level agenda-setting due to its close ties with agenda-setting theory.

Various studies on media quality in Africa, including those focused on the Tanzanian mainland, have revealed a tendency among journalists to frame stories in a negative light, potentially fostering fear, disappointment, stress, and depression within the community. To analyze these findings, researchers have opted to utilize framing theory. During data analysis, this theory facilitates an examination of various elements within the story's content, including the selected sources and their qualifications, the format utilized, the intended message, and client feedback.

The theoretical underpinnings of framing theory stem from interpretive sociology, which emphasizes interpretation, reality, and situational interaction (Ardèvol-Abreu, 2015). Within the media landscape, framing often arises due to constraints such as time and resources, which dictate what can be reported. Journalists are compelled to decide which events to cover and which to disregard. Additionally, they must determine which facts, values, and perspectives will be included or given prominence in their coverage.

During elections in Africa, the predominant focus in news coverage tends to be on negative stories, such as conflicts, misunderstandings between opposing sides, and instances of violence like the use of tear gas, hate speeches, and personal attacks. (Nwabueze, 2011). Conversely, positive occurrences during elections often receive minimal attention if any at all. Consequently, much of the news presented during African elections tends to be overly pessimistic lacking in uplifting narratives.

Journalists bring their own interpretative frameworks to the table when presenting news stories. Influences such as societal norms, pressure from interest groups, adherence to journalistic standards, and ideological or political perspectives shape reporters' approaches (Shoemaker & Reese, 2014). As a result, particular definitions, judgments, and suggestions within news stories are prioritized over others, profoundly impacting audience perceptions and interpretations of events.

In his research on framing, communication professor Shanto Iyengar delineated two forms of media news coverage: episodic and thematic (Iyengar, 1991). Episodic coverage presents topics as separate incidents, while thematic coverage connects events within a case-study framework. When news consumers are exposed to episodic frames, they struggle to make logical connections between the various issues being covered, such as crime and poverty, and the roles of elected officials or underlying economic realities. Iyengar's findings indicate that in reporting on poverty, the media is more than twice as likely to frame the issue episodically rather than thematically (Iyengar, 1991). Consequently, audiences tend to attribute responsibility for poverty to the affected individuals and may be hesitant to support government initiatives to address the issue.

Framing is argued to have significant applicability as it can shape the opinion-formation process in the audience's minds (Zhou & Moy, 2007). Described as a "bridging concept" in cultural cognition within society, framing influences the

construction of narrated reality and cultural processes (Gamson & Modigliani, 1987; Van Gorp, 2007). Journalists, editors, and the public perceive the world through interpretive lenses, much like everyone else. They interpret information using similar frameworks, leading to the inevitability of specific frames and patterns of selection in determining newsworthiness (Draper et al., 1977).

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted on the Tanzanian mainland to examine the quality and quantity of news related to constructive journalism. The researcher engaged with journalists, both in-person and virtually, to gather insights from their practical expertise. A comprehensive evaluation was undertaken, analysing various aspects such as news content, perspective, presentation, source selection, newsroom guidelines, and media regulations. This critical examination sought to assess constructive journalism's concept, approach, and practice in promoting development communication in Tanzania.

Data collection involved a multi-faceted approach, including surveys, interviews, focus group discussions, and content analysis. A total of 169 respondents participated, and 240 news stories from both print and electronic media were analyzed. Additionally, input was sought from the audience, journalism students, and academics in Mwanza and Dar es Salaam to evaluate the perspective and application of constructive journalism on the Tanzanian mainland. Content analysis was employed as the primary method, focusing on lead stories from eight prominent and credible media outlets in Tanzania.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

During the initial phase of interviews and subsequent focus group discussions, constructive journalism was introduced. This introduction sparked discussions among participants, revealing that a substantial number of respondents held viewpoints and critiques of the journalism model that aligned with the perspectives advocated by proponents of constructive journalism.

Table 1: Respondent's awareness of constructive journalism

	Frequency	Percent
No	39	24.2
Yes	122	75.8
Total	161	100.0

Source: Survey Data: 2023

Most respondents indicated a preference for a journalistic approach characterized by increased activity and engagement, focusing on exploring answers and explanations within news articles. However, they also demonstrated caution regarding disseminating information related to potential resolutions. Furthermore, participants in the survey, interview, and focus group discussions broadly expressed their perception that certain aspects of the Tanzanian mainland media tend to exaggerate the severity of specific issues.

This study reveals that many survey participants were already familiar with the concepts under consideration. Specifically, 122 respondents (75.8% of the total) were acquainted with the notion of constructive journalism, while 39 respondents (24.2% of the total) had not been exposed to the idea of constructive journalism and communication development.

The respondents exhibited diversity in their educational backgrounds, with individuals holding bachelor's degrees demonstrating some understanding of constructive journalism, while most of those with diplomas lacked familiarity with the term. The inquiry aimed to gauge participants' levels of familiarity and knowledge of the issues at hand. Respondents who had completed a master's degree or higher education indicated awareness of the concept, whereas most of those unaware had completed diplomas or lower levels of education. Among individuals with degrees from educational institutions, there was a degree of familiarity with the relationship between constructive journalism and communication.

According to the findings, the concept of constructive journalism is well-known among young people, particularly those aged between 18 and 35, despite not being included in the curriculum of their institutions. While news

consumers appreciate constructive elements in the news coverage, the spread of constructive journalism has been relatively slow, partly due to its conceptual complexity. However, experiences described by Haagerup (2008) suggest that editorial decisions may also influence this trend.

Respondents from the media industry perceive their roles as journalists as proactive, aiming to pursue stories that engage their audiences. In 1982, Teresa Amabile and Ann Glasebrook proposed a prevalent "bias towards negativity in evaluations of individuals or their work," supported by prior studies reflecting a similar trend. They referenced various earlier research affirming this assertion. Presently, indications suggest a burgeoning market for positive news in mainland Tanzania. Media outlets can establish distinct identities by offering content with less emphasis on negativity while retaining their customer base. Experts' analyses propose that certain aspects of evolutionary psychology could elucidate the existence of this negativity bias. Notably, it might be considerably riskier to disregard negative information, such as impending storms, compared to positive news, like heartwarming rescues. As per the study's findings, surviving efficiently entails prioritizing attention toward unfavorable news. One explanation put forth by academics for this inclination is that:

"Journalists, being sceptical and often critical individuals, tend to generate a significant amount of negative content, which is detrimental both to democracy and to news consumers."

Joanitha, a journalism lecturer at SAUT, contends that the interest in negative news isn't solely driven by journalists' perspectives but instead by audiences' responses.

A study published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences in September 2019 revealed that human inclination towards negative news substantially drives negative news coverage. However, the research also found that not everyone exhibits this negative bias; some individuals display a positive bias, indicating a potential market for positive news. The study was conducted with over 1,000 respondents across 17 countries spanning every continent except Antarctica, and it suggests that, on average, people tend to pay more attention to negative news than positive news (Soroka et al., 2019).

Journalism often leans towards the negative due to the immediacy and newsworthiness of bad events like shootings, wars, or epidemics, while positive developments such as declines in crime rates, spreading peace, or increases in longevity are seen as gradual and less attention-grabbing. This bias towards negativity is exacerbated by the journalistic culture, which tends to dismiss positive news as trivial human-interest stories, corporate public relations, or government propaganda. This cynical outlook is reinforced by the scepticism prevalent among many intellectuals. The impact of negative news on cognition is influenced by various mechanisms, with its interaction with cognitive biases being particularly significant. These biases focus on negative events while overshadowing the positive aspects of one's surroundings. People who regularly consume news are often exposed to sensationalized pessimism and negativity. As they engage with news sources through various mediums, they may develop a perception that the world is rapidly descending into chaos and disorder. However, it's crucial to recognize that numerous aspects of life have witnessed significant progress in recent decades.

In discussions with journalists, a range of interpretations of these concepts emerged, primarily influenced by their professional experiences in the field of journalism. Those practicing investigative journalism aim to uphold

the principles of watchdog journalism, focusing on uncovering negative aspects through their reporting and writing techniques. This emphasis often stems from the belief that highlighting societal problems can lead to positive change.

This approach seeks to promote accountability and improve the effectiveness and efficient allocation of resources. The editor at Magic FM described constructive journalism as embodying a heightened sense of seriousness, while the editor at SAUT FM characterized it as a journalistic approach focused on highlighting problems along with potential solutions. Another editor from Sahara Media proposed increasing airtime during prime-time broadcasts or dedicating one to two newspaper pages for longer articles, allowing for more in-depth coverage of news topics.

Most journalists who participated in interviews and surveys expressed a positive view of the concept of constructive journalism, framing it as aligned with fundamental principles of journalism. Despite being unfamiliar with the term, they were inclined toward the idea. However, only a few perceived it as entirely new or untried. One respondent, with over a decade of experience, summed up the sentiments of many: "It's more like going back to traditional journalism." Notably, none of the course outlines or curricula examined included a module on constructive journalism, whether in certificate, diploma, or degree programs. Instead, the training curriculum primarily focuses on conventional Western journalistic practices.

The survey responses from journalism students indicate that many had not been exposed to the principles of constructive journalism during their academic tenure at universities and colleges. Lecturers interviewed confirmed that the curricula of institutions such as TCU and NACTEVET do not incorporate constructive journalism. The survey results further reveal that some participants preferred positive news over negative news, as illustrated in the accompanying table.

Table 2: Producers and consumers' preference on negativity and positivity in news

	Frequency	Percent
Negative	31	19.3
Positive	130	80.7
Total	161	100.0

Source: Survey Data

While media and journalists often prioritize the coverage of negative news such as conflict, death, poverty, starvation, and war, both journalists and media consumers ultimately gravitate towards uplifting stories. The data indicates that 80.7% of participants expressed a desire for optimistic narratives, while only twenty percent showed a preference for negative narratives.

Across all demographics and socioeconomic statuses, most respondents emphasized their desire to be exposed to opportunities beyond tragic tales; they sought a balanced approach from journalists and the media. This question was posed universally to ascertain whether journalists require negativity or optimism and vice versa. According to the data presented, most respondents lean towards optimism.

Over the years and across various countries, communication scholars have consistently found that coverage of political topics tends to adopt a negative or cynical tone rather than a positive one. A study conducted in the mid-2000s revealed that approximately half of campaign coverage in the US, Germany, Italy, and Austria conveyed negative news, while only 6% conveyed positive news. Recent research indicates that this trend may be intensifying, with a significant increase in the proportion of headlines expressing anger, fear, disgust, and sadness observed in the United States between 2000 and 2019, as reported by Dylan Matthews in 2023.

In a 2022 international poll conducted by Oxford's Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, findings indicated a decline in confidence in the media across virtually every country surveyed, with more people actively avoiding news consumption. The primary reason cited by respondents was the negative impact on their mood. Their sense of professional duty influenced journalists' tendency to lean towards reporting

positive stories, akin to their responsibility in seeking solutions. However, some journalists expressed reservations about reporting positive occurrences, citing a conflict with their professional obligation to hold those in power accountable.

According to Aloyce Mchungu, a Journalist and Editor at Ebony FM in Iringa, Tanzania: "I believe it is not our role to make such decisions or alter the equilibrium. We must address the essence of the world." The emphasis on factual accuracy and impartiality often portrays journalism as a neutral conveyor of information, seemingly unaffected by its impact on news structure or style. Anikazi Kumbemba, a senior journalist at Radio FARAJA in Shinyanga, Tanzania, rejected the idea of solely featuring positive stories but stressed the importance of maintaining a balanced or mixed coverage of various narratives. Furthermore, Mr. Samweli John, a journalist at Radio SAUT, suggested, "If positive events occur, it is indeed necessary to cover them in news reporting," indicating a call for journalists to maintain a neutral and objective stance, serving as mere conveyors of information, even when reporting on negative events. However, other respondents proposed a more proactive approach. For instance, one survey participant initially echoed sentiments similar to those expressed by the aforementioned journalists:

One respondent in the survey emphasized the importance of presenting information as it is, without bias towards either positive or negative angles, without inducing fear, and without attempting to lighten the mood artificially. Their statement acknowledges the influence journalists wield in shaping the coverage of events while maintaining factual accuracy. Rather than seeing constructive journalism as a rigid set of guidelines to be followed, the concept of "tone" suggests that

it may be more aptly viewed as an attitude journalists can adopt in their approach to journalism. This perspective highlights the importance of maintaining integrity and neutrality in reporting while recognizing the potential impact of the journalist's tone on the audience's perception of the news.

Even journalists who believed they could influence the tone and approach of news coverage acknowledged that news inherently tends to focus on negative aspects. Consequently, their interpretation of news appeared to be closely linked to their role as watchdogs. "We often find ourselves reporting on individuals who are homeless and sleeping outdoors," remarked one participant, who works as a journalist for a privately-owned news outlet. While acknowledging the importance of such reporting, he also recognized the fine line between capturing audience attention and sensationalizing events. This perspective stems from journalists' conditioning to perceive negativity as central to news coverage.

One survey respondent, a journalist, noted that "our minds are inherently programmed to expect negative news," illustrating how journalists' understanding of "news" is closely linked to their professional responsibilities. The specific newsrooms and the type of news coverage in which the interviewees were involved further influenced these perceptions.

Many journalists tend to focus on negative news, neglecting opportunities to educate readers on utilizing the abundant resources available in Tanzania. Political events and the activities of prominent figures often dominate the front pages of Tanzanian daily newspapers, while sports, entertainment, life events, and love stories occupy a significant portion of airtime on radio, television, and digital platforms.

"Our historical background shapes our journalism model in mainland Tanzania (Tanganyika). Following independence, Tanzania inherited a journalism model from the socialist bloc, where the state tightly

controlled the media and journalists. During that period, the media and journalists were expected to align with the government's agenda."

Since 1992, journalism in mainland Tanzania has transitioned towards a Western model, where journalists are trained to adopt a watchdog role and prioritize reporting negative stories. "If you examine our curriculum, coursework, and training materials, you will find that we are training journalists to be watchdogs who primarily focus on uncovering negative stories such as accidents, hunger, conflicts, and misconduct by government officials," clarified Ms. Gertrude John, a program officer with International Media Support (IMS).

Respondents also highlighted another aspect of the Tanzanian mindset: the majority's tendency to focus on what is wrong. During the interview, the editor of a visiting radio station emphasized...

"During our editorial meetings, most story ideas, from our team members to the reporters, tend to lean towards negativity. They justify this by asserting that the audience demands and prefers negative stories. It's challenging to dismiss this perspective as a flaw because our content is based on findings from audience research studies, which consistently show that negative stories often attract more attention than positive ones."

Despite significant changes in media technology and operations in recent years, Tanzanian mainland society continues to rely on the media to fulfill its traditional roles of informing, educating, and entertaining.

"Media holds a crucial position in shaping an enlightened society. Citizens must access reliable information through a media platform capable of adeptly facilitating discourse and stimulating meaningful conversations. Such engagements can catalyze positive transformation within our nation and empower individuals to utilize the resources at their disposal effectively," emphasizes Ms. Gertrude John, a media and communication expert affiliated with IMS.

"In order to fulfill its role effectively," Ms. Gertrude asserts, "the media must view itself as instrumental in ensuring and enhancing the quality of life within society, embodying the concept of 'media for development.'"

"Journalists often perceive themselves as watchdogs," she continues, "but I view the media as a leader. While watchdogs merely observe, a leader takes action. It's not enough to simply watch; you must step forward and actively engage in the work," Ms. Gertrude emphasized during the interview.

CONCLUSION

There is a glaring disparity between the ideals and principles espoused by numerous media community members in mainland Tanzania regarding the role of journalists and the practical constraints imposed by their daily news routines. How they perceive their profession and navigate their responsibilities often paints a picture of a work environment lacking optimism and resistance to change. The prevalent characteristics of the imbalanced depiction of the world in news media were underscored, notably the overwhelming prevalence of negative news and the relentless pursuit of sensational and exclusive stories to capture the audience's attention. This underscores the pressing need for ongoing research in Tanzania and across Africa to explore the African model of communication and journalism, particularly in addressing the delicate balance between negativity and positivity in news coverage and programs and leveraging the media for developmental purposes.

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