



**MASS MEDIA TRANSITION IN RURAL TANZANIA;
TRADITIONAL MEDIA VERSUS NEW MEDIA**

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ABSTRACT

This article examined the modifications made to Tanzanian mass media by new and social media, as conventional media continued to experience pressure. The problem of rising social media usage has resulted in a sharp fall in newspaper readership; casting doubt on the latter's future and as focus shifts to digital media, reading newspapers and listening to/watching the news on radio or television are increasingly becoming obsolete. This has gained popularity not just in affluent nations but even in developing ones like Tanzania. And therefore, both media-morphosis and technological determinism served as the study's theoretical foundation. Although technological determinism argues that a societal shift is dictated by technology and media-morphosis promotes the relationship between the existing situation and changes brought about by new technologies.

KEYWORDS; Newspaper, Radio, Television, Broadcasting, Rural area/community, Internet, New media, Information

INTRODUCTION

The audience's attention switched to online news as a result of the internet-based transition of television broadcasts and publications. Since the advent of the internet and its widespread availability, conventional media consumption has been on the wane, feeding the unstoppable global trend of people choosing to get their news and information from the internet. Because of this, the conventional media has been negatively impacted by this new approach, while e-news and internet journalism continue to be positively promoted. In developing countries like Tanzania, where the advent of internet media is rapidly eradicating the existence of print media, this new media style is also clearly being developed and practiced (**Nnanyelogo and Nwafor 2013**).

Furthermore, the newspaper, which is sent just once a day, can never hope to compete with the vast amount of information and news offered by the internet, which is updated every few minutes. Without having to try to put the stack of newspapers on a rack, which sounds quite exhausting, one can return to the same news or any other piece of information. As an alternative, searching for information on the Internet may be done quickly and anywhere, at any time. Currently, about 90% of Tanzania's daily newspapers have actively used online technology to find articles, and the majority of them also have their own news websites and social media profiles to quickly access new markets and audiences. in **Garrison (2001)**. Press

gives readers domestically and internationally the opportunity to obtain online news as well as engage with the press and the information's source via social networks, where readers may even comment on news using their mobile devices. The majority of these websites that provide news allow viewers to post stories, reports, or events that are taking place in their particular locations and it is offering comments on published material as well.

The Traditional Media: Before the internet, when rapid access to newspaper news was not possible for the average person to obtain, the print media paradigm thrived. Since the advent of smartphones, which are now used by more than 15 million people in Tanzania, or 25% of the country's population, the dynamics of information access have changed substantially. A lot of steps are involved and the process is passive when compared to new media, which is instantaneous and participatory, making any attempt to transmit news to the present- technology generation of Tanzanians look obsolete. The future print circulation is expected to decline, according to information from the Capstone report for the year 2011.

Unlike the conventional press, which broadcasts information via paper printing, the digital media (online journalism) employs internet technology to distribute news and information from the source or sender to the receiver or audience, editorial topics. According to **Deuze M (2013)**, Interactivity, which Deuze defined as the ability of online-content readers to comment and interact with the provided news items, is linked to the strength and hope of online journalism. There is no denying that the widespread use of the internet and online media has aided in the conception and digitization of this twenty-first century media and greased its wheels for quick action.

When magazines, newspapers, and journals employ word processing and desktop publishing tools like Page Maker, they become more engaging and facilitate commerce (**Agba P C 2001**). Similar to how electronic and print media have been united by technology, news and messages from online sources have been translated into print by means of electronic gadgets. **Felix U T (2011)** emphasized the capabilities of teletex, but today, teletex employs computers to convey text between teleprompter and teleprinter, and media outlets and private residences use suitable decoders to receive data.

For instance, a media company with branches all across the nation and a headquarters in Dar es Salaam may typeset content in other areas while also printing hard copies in Dar es Salaam. This advanced mechanism is proof that we are currently in a new technological era. Additionally, this new era of journalism reflects the World Wide Web's ground-breaking capability, which gives media organizations, governments, non-governmental organizations, and individuals' opportunities to access, manipulate, and download a vast amount of hypertext-linked files/materials via the internet; advertisements can be made, and messages can be sent and received anytime, anywhere with ease using the internet. This may have been the inspiration for **Ende S and Udende P (2001)** claim that the world is becoming a global village only due to the proliferation of internet media and its constant generation of knowledge. This demonstrates that, in terms of media production, the internet continues to be the most prominent tool.

Academic Framework

An academic framework, also known as a theoretical framework, is essentially the intellectual base upon which research is constructed. Two theories were used in this study: the notion of technological determinism and the media-morphosis hypothesis.

According to **Fidler R (1997)**, media-morphosis is a technique for integrating the development of technology in communication media. Fidler created his media-morphosis principle in the ampoules of complexity, convergence, and co-evolution. Moreover his ideas, when new media arise, grow, and their impacts gradually become obvious to a certain extent, it is vital to combine them for operation enhancement rather than utilizing the latter to replace the former. According to the media-morphosis idea, media systems respond impulsively to outside stimulus much like other systems do.

While social organizations are also influenced by technology, according to the philosophy of the technological determinism hypothesis, societal change and growth are made possible by technical advancement (**Chandler D 1995**). Technological determinists believe that communication is the foundation of all societies, whether they exist today or in the future. For instance, technological innovations like computers, radio, television, and printers have revolutionized the globe. If new technologies are critically analyzed, it is possible to agree that the world has undergone significant change. This change may occur at several levels, including those of social interaction, institutions, and organizations, as well as inside or among individuals. Technology has a major influence on a wide range of cultural and social phenomena, with social context and human factors playing a more minor impact (**Chandler D 1995**). The two ideas were deemed relevant for this work by the researcher since they clarified how the everyday operations of traditional media have been impacted by internet media.

Many researchers discussed on how new media overcomes traditional media and the comparative studies between traditional and new media, though rarely talked about how the rural community are transformed on the process of accessing news and information through different media, and this research particularly concentrated on this particular area of how the mass media transition in rural Tanzania with the respect of traditional versus new media, how rural community have the information preference through which type of the source of information as a media.

OBJECTIVES

- i. To investigate the sources of mass media uses by rural community in accessing information
- ii. To find out if the demographic characteristics can affect the media information preference

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Explanatory research designs were used for this research study with which the developed research questions were formed a valid conclusion regarding to the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The qualitative data collected with, through Observation, survey and interview in a deductive approach- testing the hypothesis from general to specific for this study, by identifying the different sources of media used by rural community/society to access news and information

In this study, both random and non-random sampling techniques were used from the sample size of 120 respondents, stratified sampling also were used on identifying the demographic characteristics of the respondents, along with Purposive sampling was used to pick the region and district to be included in the study. **Johnson and Christensen (2014)** argue that purposive sampling relies on the decision of the researcher, centered on some well-known criteria. In this regard, the Morogoro region of Tanzania and one district, which is Gairo were selected purposively because Morogoro is the second highest in population of Tanzania and 80% - 90% of its population are living in rural areas. (**Tanzania country profile, 2022**).

The respondents were asked about their sources of information and the relevance of the information that the rural society was receiving from various media. Observations from this study included some media houses' reports as evidence of how online media has claimed a vast record against the traditional news despite the latter's continued existence.

Currently, Tanzania has the population of 62.39 Million populations', whereby 51% of the population is female and the 49% of the population is male. Among that population; 36.6% are living in urban areas and 63.4% are living in rural areas, and on the side of the digital media, 25% of the populations are the internet users and 9.8% of the populations are the social media users (**United Republic of Tanzania, 2022**). Although the population of Tanzania's rural areas (63.4%) is higher than that of its urban areas (36.6%), only 25% of the country's population uses the internet, and the majority of those users are from the country's urban areas, these high statistics may indicate that Tanzania's online media forum is primarily dominated by both rural and urban areas. (**URT 2022**).

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The table below present the summary of the data collected on demographic characteristics of the respondents;

Table1: Distribution of respondents according to their demographic characteristics (N=120)

Variable		Frequency	Percentage
SEX	Female	66	55
	Male	54	45
AGE	21-30	26	21.6
	31-40	35	29.1
	41-50	39	32.6
	51-60	20	16.7
EDUCATION	NON	10	8.3
	PRIMARY	95	79.2
	SECONDARY	15	12.5
MARITAL STATUS	SINGLE	81	67.5
	MARRIED	39	32.5

Table 2: Sources of mass media uses by rural community in accessing information

Source of mass media used	N	%
Radio	118	40.1
Newspaper	45	15.3
Television	36	12.3
New media	95	32.3

Distribution of respondents according to their demographic characteristics (N=120), 66 were female and 54 were male, and on side of the Source of media used by rural community in accessing news and information, results were; radio=118, newspapers=45, television= 36 and New media=95

As it shows on the table most of the rural community obtains and accessing the information from radio mostly and followed by the new media, therefore this is the good sign for the new media that is growing fast and speedy.

Table 3: Frequency of use of mass media

Media	Frequency of use of mass media					
	Frequency		Occasionally		Never	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Radio	100	54	88	41	8	20
Newspaper	35	20	40	20	2	4
Television	10	5	35	16	5	10
New Media	40	21	52	23	36	71

Results show that; most people in rural use radio and new media for the information frequency compared to the other source of information.

DISCUSSION

The majority of people who live in rural areas most likely do not have access to the internet, and instead rely only on newspapers and radio newscasts as their primary sources of news and information. Nevertheless, few people with internet access really share the news and information they get through new media with others widely. Also, the results show that; the demographic characteristics do not affect the media information preference

The new kind of journalism is prevalent everywhere, according to a critical analysis of the relationship between the media and the internet. Even if some individuals cannot evaluate online news because they do not have access to the internet, the presence of cell phones has secured rural society's capacity to acquire news. Hence, the dominance of conventional journalism has been challenged by new competition, contemporary technology, and audience attention shifts. With their varied high-tech mobile phones and other technologically upgraded publishing devices that permit internet access, new and online media users continue to be increasingly active in sharing news and spreading information.

Due to its effectiveness, which has diminished the significance of conventional media, there is an increased demand from the public for internet news. It's fascinating how many topics have sparked national discussions thanks to ties supplied by internet journalism and the

government. Although the aforementioned results show that online media is gaining more subscribers than other traditional media, their climax has not put an end to traditional media's operations; rather, it has unified them because more people who access news via the internet still read newspapers, listen to the radio, and watch television, which was the main argument of the theory of media morphosis.

The findings are also related to the notion of technological determinism theory, which supports societal evolution and change in conjunction with technical advancement, wherein social organisations are influenced by such innovation. Because of this, social media has also proliferated through the usage of internet websites that enable easy contact between users of picture-sharing apps, video and voice chats, and other multimedia. These well-known websites have allowed for the creation of millions of online groups, content sharing, and open communication between users. Because social media has been so helpful to the general people, its users all around the world have grown to rely greatly on it. Even the government has embraced social media and has an account on Instagram to share news and information.

CONCLUSION

As a result of the increased time spent online browsing for information, newsmen may feel compelled to deliver additional details on a certain subject. Online news, in contrast to conventional media, gives information in the form of vivid images and entertaining videos in addition to legible text. Journalists can submit audio, video, and data pertaining to a topic on the internet, which provides a multimedia platform. This is due to the fact that one of the goals of internet media is to garner a more widespread and worldwide audience for its products.

Coverage in online news articles increases day by day. This report just indicates some points to show the media in rural Tanzania. Some considerations can improve the model to reflect the various aspects of the news event. The report concludes the predicting popularity of biased news media online. It has been shown that new and social media such as Instagram, Twitter, Facebook; websites like Wikipedia pages or URLs have an impact on the online news article. As the people get the same news several times, they believe the news event by nature and circulate the news on the same channel online.

RECOMMENDATION

In most areas, print and electronic media are used to get news, education, and other data. Memories are readily obtained from media and thanks to its colorful power to showcase in-depth documentaries. Likewise, the success of internet media has damaged conventional media. Online resources are incredibly engaging and widely available; as a result, they have spread throughout Tanzania and the world as informational and social gathering places.

This article advocates for the coexistence of online media and conventional media given the online media's overwhelming capabilities. And the strength of online media lies in the process of truth-validation which was lacking in the traditional media system. Therefore, the researcher suggests that, media should strive to sustain and promote their online sites; staff and journalists must be trained on the proper usage of the internet; all branches of media houses should have access to internet for carrying out efficient tasks that will place them above their competitors.

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