

**THE CHALLENGES FACING THE NEWSPAPER
INDUSTRY IN TANZANIA**

**CASE STUDY: MEDIA SOLUTIONS LTD
DAR ES SALAAM, TANZANIA**

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DECLARATION

I, **Zephania Robert**, declare that this work is original and that it has not been submitted to any college or university for the award of a degree or any other related award. The necessary information from other sources has been fully cited.

Signature:

Date:

..........

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APPROVAL

This work has been submitted for examination with my approval as the University supervisor.

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Metta -

13th Oct, 08
.....

MS DOREEN METTA

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to all print media houses striving to save the future of newspapers from the danger of extinction. I also devote this work to press freedom fighters and media activists around the world, and particularly in Tanzania.

Furthermore, dedication goes to my family and friends who have helped me in different ways to complete this effort.

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LIST OF ACRONYMNS & ABBREVIATIONS

FM.....Frequency Modulation

GDP.....Gross Domestic Profit

MSL.....Media Solutions Ltd

Ltd.....Limited

PR.....Public Relations

TV.....Television

U.S.A.....United States of America

USSR.....Union of Soviet Society Republics

ABSTRACT

The future of newspapers is in danger of extinction from the face of the planet unless instant and effective measures are undertaken to save it from disappearance. There are a number of challenges facing the newspaper industry globally, particularly in the developing world.

One of the major challenges facing the newspaper industry in Tanzania is unskilled human labour. In addition, inadequate finances is another serious challenge hindering the development of the newspaper industry in Tanzania.

However, these challenges are not limited to the operation of the media houses. There is poor readership culture among the population who don't have interest in reading newspapers. Also poverty is another confrontation facing the newspaper industry in Tanzania. Many people can not afford a newspaper copy due to high levels of poverty.

The main objective of this study was to find out the challenges facing the newspaper industry in Tanzania. Findings also revealed that illiteracy is a contributing factor in low readership of newspapers in Tanzania.

The study has also recommended a number of solutions and measures to be adopted to save the newspaper industry from extinction. One of the major recommendations is the training of manpower in the print media industry in Tanzania. The newspaper industry is as important as any other mass medium therefore it should be maintained by all efforts.

CHAPTER 1

1.1 Introduction

The newspaper industry is one of the oldest mass media which has served our societies for many centuries up to today. The importance of this medium in developing countries is vibrant and necessary for communicating and bridging the gap between the authorities and the population.

However, the media industry in developing countries is still grappling with a number of challenges. These challenges include high levels of poverty among the wide population in Africa, including Tanzania. Also high illiteracy levels are rampant in the developing world. In addition, poor economic base among Africans who can't run big media industries including newspapers is one of the problems facing the newspaper industry.

Therefore, this study aims to contribute to the efforts towards handling these challenges and developing the newspaper industry in Tanzania.

This chapter presents the background to the study, statement of the problem, general objectives; specific objectives, research questions, significance and scope of the study.

1.2 Background to the Study

Tanzanian journalism has come a long way. What we have today is an incarnate of a long history. Once, there was no modern media through which to pass information on to a larger community. There was only the traditional media which were contextually relevant and effective at the time. There was the horn-hooting to inform the community that there would be a ceremony for annual harvest the following day; the horn-blowing to inform the small community that at the traditional King's home, a prince was born (Kidanka, 2006).

There was also the drum beating to inform the community soldiers and other members that their empire had been invaded by aggressors (Kidanka, 2006). This kind of communication was most prevalent in the pre-colonial and during the "Scramble for Africa" age by the Europeans who divided the African continent among themselves at the Berlin conference in 1885.

1.2.1 The New Media

According to records (Kidaka, 2006), the first news sheet called *Msimulizi* (story-teller) was established in Zanzibar Island in 1888. *Habari za Mwezi* (Monthly News) followed in 1894.

These news sheets were adequately funded and were sold at 5 to 10 cents. (Today a newspaper in Tanzania costs between 150/- shillings and 400/- shillings. One shilling equals 100 cents). Contents of the news included items like, German

Kaiser's birthday, construction of a modern hospital, road or bridge, a note on Chief Mirambo of the Nyamwezi tribe, etc (Rioba, 2007).

During the British colonial rule, a number of tribal as well as national newspapers sprung up. A few African elites, who had benefited from a doze of colonial education, started these papers to shout their grievances. Some of these newspapers include; *Komkya* (In Kilimanjaro region), *Lumuli* and *Mbegete* (In Lake Victoria region) and *Arumeru* (In Arusha region).

Later in the 1950s *Mwafrika* (The African) was established to become the first nation-wide newspaper that advocated for more representation of Africans in the Legislative council, then self-government and independence. The colonial regime started *Mamboleo* newspaper as a counter-critic of *Mwafrika*. The paper contained a lot of poetry, singing litanies of praise to the colonial regime. The aim was to lure the people away from the struggle for independence. (Ng'wanakilala, 1994))

1.2.2 The Current State of Newspapers in Tanzania

Today in Tanzania, it is difficult for an average person to count how many newspapers – dailies, weeklies and even bi-monthlies there are; the titles ranging from yellow press to serious newspapers.

The major media houses are IPP Media, which owns nine titles of newspapers, two radio stations, and two TV stations; Business Times, which owns four newspaper titles, and an FM radio station; Habari Corporation that owns four newspaper

titles and Mwananchi Communication that owns three newspaper titles. Here we don't mention a number of yellow newspapers that publish gossip and porn-related stories (Rioba, 2007).

Today, Tanzania has a number of newspapers which are both in English and Kiswahili languages. The English language newspapers include *Guardian*, *Daily News*, *THISDAY*, *Express*, *Citizen*, and *Sun*. The Kiswahili regional newspapers include *Nipashe*, *Mtanzania*, *Mwananchi*, *Kulikoni*, *Rai*, *Mzalendo*, *Majira*, *Jitambue*, *Mwanahalisi*, *Alasiri*, and *DarLeo* etc.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Newspapers as a medium of communication that play an important role in the development process of any modernized society. The benefits of newspapers are such as education, entertainment, information, enlightenment, creating awareness, warning, and pervasiveness.

However, the newspaper industry is considered to be in danger of extinction from the mass media world. This danger of disappearance of newspapers on the face of the planet is contributed by several factors.

The high levels of poverty in the developing countries, including Tanzania, are central to the failure of the newspaper industry to survive in the third world. The wide population in Africa can not afford to buy a copy of a newspaper-not to mention investing in the industry as business venture.

Also high illiteracy levels in Africa and Tanzania in particular means newspapers are short of wide readership because the large part of the population can't read and write. The authorities (government) also influence the newspaper content through its regulatory organs. Many newspapers (Rioba, 2007) "have fallen victim to defamation cases which have led to eventual decline and closure of many newspaper industries in developing countries which are prone to dictatorship regimes".

The costs of gathering, processing, printing and distributing newspapers threaten the survival of most newspapers. And it is usually the owners (publishers) who determine the allocation of whatever returns from adverts and newspaper sales. They set - without any formal criteria - the salaries, allowances and other incentives for their workers (Kidanka, 2006).

Therefore, a combination of these challenges and many others threaten the existence of newspapers, hence the need for this study.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1.4.1 General Objective

The aim of this research was to examine the challenges facing the newspaper industry in Tanzania.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

1. To articulate the confrontations facing the newspaper industry
2. To look at the influence of the government to newspaper

content

3. To check the impact of illiteracy to newspaper readership

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is to be used to;

- 1 Guide newspapers and other media houses on the necessary solutions to several problems endangering the existence of the mass media industry.
- 2 Lead government authorities to understand the importance of their positive role in promoting the newspaper industry.
- 3 Provide a road-map for other researchers to use and improve on my work for the development of the newspaper industry. And
- 4 Act as a source of information and reference for other scholars doing research about newspapers and other mass media.

1.6 Research Questions

- 1 What are the challenges facing newspapers in Tanzania?
- 2 How can the relevant authorities solve these challenges?
- 3 How is the content affecting newspaper sales and readership?
- 4 Is there any need to maintain the existence of newspapers?

1.7 Scope of the Study

The study was done in Tanzania, Dar es Salaam which is the commercial capital located east at the coast of the Indian Ocean. The case study was Media Solutions Limited which acted as a fair overview of the situation of newspapers in Tanzania. Media Solutions Ltd (MSL) is home to 2 newspapers (Thisday and Kulikoni) written in both English and Kiswahili languages which are circulated countrywide. The research was conducted to articulate the challenges facing the newspaper industry in Tanzania.

CHAPTER 2

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter gives an overall view of what other scholars have written and researched about this topic field. The section is divided into a number of themes in reviewing the study on challenges facing the newspaper industry at a general scale.

These subjects include; the role of newspapers in Tanzania, market environment, audience tastes and preferences, factors of production, government influence, and the Internet.

2.2 The Role of Newspapers in Tanzania

The newspapers are an important medium which is used by many communicators, non-governmental and governmental institutions disseminate their messages to the population. Tanzania is the leading country with a lot of daily and weekly newspapers in east and central Africa, second to South Africa on the continent (Reporters Without Borders, 2007).

The newspapers play an imperative role in informing the public on different issues affecting the society. Most of the government policies are communicated to the public using the mass media including newspapers. Local and regional newspapers are used by policy makers to disseminate information to the rural areas though the wide population can

not afford these newspapers due to poverty.

Also warnings of possible disasters from different relevant centres reach the public through the mass media. Newspapers which are used for these purposes include; Majira, Nipashe, Mwananchi (Kiswahili papers) and Guardian, Thisday, and Daily News (English papers).

2.3. Market Environment in the Mass Media

The newspaper industry is facing fierce competition from within itself and other mass media. The cut-throat competition within the mass media is threatening the existence and survival of newspapers today. The electronic media such as radio, television, and the internet are posing a grave danger to the newspapers (Harshaw, 2000). This is due to the immediacy and instantaneous nature of these mass media. This means the mass media is competing for the audience, advertisers, news stories, and resources.

The price of a newspaper copy is alarmingly high in developing countries than in the developed world. This is mainly due to high production costs of the newspapers in these countries. In Tanzania, for instance, a newspaper price is as high as 500 Tshs. per copy. This price discourages the consumers whose income is too low to afford a copy even once in a week.

According to research, (Bailon & Graham, 2003) one newspaper copy in developing world, particularly in Africa, is read by an average of 15 people. This is a result of high poverty levels of the vast population in these nations. This is

clearly different from the developed nations in which an average income individual can purchase at least one newspaper per day. The purchasing power of the population in the developing world is low due to low wages or no pay at all-meaning unemployment.

Furthermore, newspaper media inexperienced management does not make effective marketing strategies to increase the sales and circulation of the newspaper to the entire population. This is a result of lack of feedback which leads to evaluation of the results to measure success or failure of the newspaper industry. Any human institution, either non-profit or profit, must be a feedback-oriented organization in order to achieve its objectives and goals in specific period of time. The industry does not study the market situation to come up with successful campaigns to boost sales of the newspaper.

2.4 Audience Tastes and Preferences

The audience has been diversified as a result of communications technological development in the mass media field. This has led to what is referred to as *audience demassification*. This is commonly visible in developed nations such as United States, Canada, and Britain (Bird, 1992). This means the audience has been broken down into segments due to their preferences and desires in selecting the content and kind of media.

Media houses have decided to serve small segments of the audience instead of the whole population in the community. The segmentation of the audience has gone as far as taking

place even within the newspaper industry itself (Bird, 1992). In Tanzania, for example, the *Guardian* newspaper has got its own segment of audience that can not be integrated into the *Daily News* or *Mwananchi* and vice versa. This is a challenge to the newspaper industry.

The audience wants news that they care about and are often unwilling to appreciate news packaged, and presented by an editor on some pre-set format. They want interaction, involvement and flexibility in the development and consumption of news (Jones, 2001).

The level of illiteracy among the vast majority of the population in the third world is a major concern when looking at the challenges facing newspapers in this era (Bailon & Graham, 2003). Many people in Tanzania can not read and write, though efforts are underway by the relevant authorities to reverse the situation. This has affected the readership of newspapers in the country.

Some scholars have asserted that some societies have no reading cultures. They have supported their argument on the grounds of poor levels or lack of interest among Africans in reading newspapers, books, and magazines which do not as much like in the West. However, this theory is countered by afro-centric scholars who argue that there may be other factors that can lead to poor readership habits among Africans such as poverty and high prices of newspapers and magazines (Bailon & Graham, 2003).

Also poverty among Africans is a major challenge in the development of the newspaper industry. The Sub-Saharan Africa harbors some of the poorest countries in the world. This is a population of about 900 million people lacking daily basic needs such as food, shelter, and clothing (Bailon & Graham, 2003). To these people, reading a newspaper is luxury-not a necessity-which they can't afford to buy. The majority of Africans live on less than a dollar or not at all due to low wages and unemployment respectively.

2.5 Factors of Production in the Newspaper Industry

A newspaper industry is an expensive enterprise to engage in due to high costs of production and the need for high technological equipments to produce quality newspapers that can compete in the stiff competitive environment of mass media. The production costs in the developing world are dearly expensive because most of the equipments used are imported from abroad which are highly taxed in the home country (Harshaw, 2000).

The newspaper industry decides to use low technology equipments which are bought at low prices to maximize profits. On the other hand, the importation of high technology equipments to produce quality products causes a rise in the prices of the newspaper copies to the readers.

For instance, *Mwananchi* and the *Citizen* have embarked on using high-tech equipments while increasing the price of a newspaper copies to 400 Tshs. This price of a newspaper is too high for a common Tanzanian to afford. As a result, there has

been a decline in the respective newspapers because some people have decided to abandon buying them.

In the United States, newspaper production costs are low, compared to the developing world, due to easy access to means of production which are manufactured from within the country. This has caused low prices of newspapers as low as a penny, and other print media such as magazines. Also the industry here is more organized and operates more professionally than in the developing countries where the management is very disorganized and corrupt. The media industry in developing world has been invaded by amateurs who do not have a good background of journalism (Harshaw, 2000).

Most media houses do not contain highly skilled personnel to run the newspaper industry. This is common in the third world media houses in which there are a lot of semiskilled and unskilled labourers. The newspaper has been evaded by non-professional individuals who don't knowledge about journalism as a discipline of study. These people haven't gone through any journalistic training course to familiarize themselves how the media house operates. It should be remembered that writing is an achievement and not an inherited skill as many people think.

The newspaper houses employ many unskilled workers to avoid high wages that can be demanded by skilled professionals in the field. This has had an impact on the quality of the product of the industry. Newspapers are produced poorly making them very inferior in the competitive

atmosphere of the market from within and other mass media. Human resource is an important element in any organization's existence. These unprofessional employs are prone to attempts of corruption and bribery from influential individuals or groups within the society. This affects the content of the newspapers is one way or another because of biasness of the reporter in writing the news story. This is one of the biggest challenges facing the newspaper industry in today's media world.

Incidents of corruption and bribery among reporters in the developing are rampant than in the developed world. This fact is contributed by the low levels of wages provided to journalists in the third world. The salaries and wages are very low to sustain the life of a journalist who embarks on the alternative ways earning a living apart from the low wages. This evil practice in the newspaper industry has caused a lot of artificial deaths to a number of hot striking stories whose life has ended in rubbish tins instead of front page stories in the morning papers. The death of a news story is a death to the whole profession of journalism.

2.6 Government Influence on Newspapers

The mass media, especially newspapers, in the developing world is mostly influenced by the authorities in power. In Africa, for instance, the governments which are mostly dictatorship regimes control the media content to make sure it doesn't write negatively about the authorities. To achieve their goal of controlling the media, the authorities have put in place some regulatory bodies, censorship, and licensing systems.

These regimes have also introduced laws of sedition to prevent media from writing against their will. In simple terms, there is no freedom of the press in most developing countries of the world (Hameso, 1995). In Africa, many media houses have been shut down as a result of issues such as sedition and defamation cases.

In developed countries, such as Canada, Britain, and USA, there is freedom of expression and the press. These countries have liberal democracies that allow freedom of the media and it practiced at a sound level though not fully. In United States, the Bill of Rights and the First Amendment Act articulated clearly the issue of press freedom in the federal republic (Hameso, 1995).

However, critics of freedom of the press argue that there is no country in the world that has absolute freedom of the press. They assert that even in the United States, which claims to have press freedom, there is no absolute press freedom. To support their argument, these scholars reflect on the position and role of the media during the First World War (1914-1918), Second War (1939-1945), and Vietnam War (1959-1975).

After World War I ended in 1918, many governments sought to control or crush independent newspapers. As Italy fell under the Fascist rule of Benito Mussolini, Milan's *Corriere della Sera* (Evening Courier) decried the dictator's actions and policies. The paper launched a prolonged investigation of the murder of Socialist politician Giacomo Matteoti by Fascist thugs and eventually placed blame for the killing firmly on Mussolini himself. The paper's offices were firebombed, and

newsstands that sold the paper were attacked. Advertisers received warnings of official retaliation if they advertised in *Corriere* rather than in Mussolini's newspaper *Popolo d'Italia* (The People of Italy). In 1925 Mussolini forced *Corriere's* publisher to resign (Drost, 1996).

In Germany, "Adolf Hitler, who assumed power in 1933, appointed Paul Joseph Goebbels as minister of propaganda and national enlightenment. In this capacity, Goebbels tightly controlled the dissemination of all news. The Nazi Party seized control of the once-independent Wolff news agency, renaming it the German Information Agency" (Drost, 1996).

The new model of the press as a tool of ideology and government, in direct contrast to the independent tradition established by the *Times* of London, was perfected by Vladimir Lenin in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) following the Russian Revolution of 1917. As the first leader of the USSR, Lenin argued that Soviet newspapers should be tools for social control, and he strictly controlled the information they published.

After World War II (Drost, 1996), the victorious Allies established several major papers in the occupied countries of Europe and Asia. To greater and lesser degrees, these papers became mouthpieces for opposing sides in the Cold War, the 40-year period of hostility between the United States and the USSR that followed World War II.

In the aftermath of World War II, official news agencies—such as TASS in the USSR and the German News Service in East

Germany—strictly controlled news material throughout the Communist world. The Soviet Army censored newspapers in Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Rumania, and Bulgaria. Communist governments in these countries tolerated the publication of several small, alternative papers, so long as they echoed the views of the Communist party (Harshaw, 2000).

In the 1960s Americans were divided over the wisdom of the Vietnam War (1959-1975). During this period, unquestioned loyalty to the American cause fell under criticism. The concept of press freedom expanded to assume an almost adversarial relationship between press and government. This relationship climaxed in 1971, when the *New York Times* published the *Pentagon Papers*. The U.S. government tried to prevent the publication of this material but the Supreme Court of the United States upheld the right of the newspaper to print it. In general, the American press was controlled in its content about the realities about the Vietnamese war. For instance, American citizens never got to know about the true number of casualties that America suffered in the war (Drost, 1996).

2.7 The Internet and the Mass Media

Today almost all of the world's major newspapers have online versions. Most medium to large-sized daily newspapers in the United States and Canada also publish on the Internet. These developments have led some media experts to predict that the printed newspaper will give way to fully electronic information services in the early decades of the 21st century (Jones, 2001). But whatever it's medium-electronic or print-the

newspaper will likely remain an important feature in modern society.

The number of newspapers in circulation continues the steady decline that began at the turn of 20th century. Most U.S. and Canadian cities today have only one newspaper publisher. In Canada, only 6 cities are served by two or more separately owned newspapers. In more than 170 American cities, a single publisher produces both a morning and an evening paper. Fewer than 30 U.S. cities have competing papers with different ownership (Jones, 2001).

CHAPTER 3

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter highlights the research methodology that was used in carrying out the study. It presents the process the researcher took to come up with the reliable and valid data about the challenges facing the newspaper industry in Tanzania. The sections include; research design, area and population of study, sample selection and size of study, data collection, and data analysis.

3.2 Research Design

The research used the qualitative approach because of the need for detailed information on the challenges facing the newspaper industry.

3.3 Area and Population of Study

The area of study is *Media Solutions Ltd (MSL)*, a print media company located in Dar es Salaam (capital), Tanzania. Media Solutions Ltd was established in 2005 and runs two daily investigative newspapers, THISDAY and KULIKONI, which are written in English and Kiswahili respectively. The media company is a subsidiary of IPP Media Ltd, A giant media industry that owns a chain of media outlets, both print and electronic.

The two publications (Thisday and Kulikoni) are the prime investigative newspapers in the country. While this has earned the two papers respect from the majority of Tanzanians who now see a crucial avenue to vent their frustrations against the many societal misdeeds, they are hated and castigated by a few fraudsters, corruption-ridden bureaucrat, embezzlers and tainted business-persons who are nothing but swindlers of national resources. The reason for the hatred is obvious-it is the fear that they might be the next target of the papers' investigations team.

The population of the study involved different groups of people in the process of data collection. These people (respondents) included; reporters (10), section editors (5), chief news editors (2), subeditors (4), chief managing editor (1), and heads of departments (4). The study also collected data from newspaper readers (40) and advertisers (15).

3.4 Sample Selection and Size

The study used both purposive and random sampling techniques to select the sample for the study. The sample was selected according to position and responsibility of the individuals in connection to the study.

The size of the sample of the study involved 70-100 respondents. This sample was used to collect the required and relevant information for the study.

3.5 Data Collection

The study used both primary and secondary data collection methods to gather information about the study. The research also used the assistance of an interview guide to collect data from relevant sources. The use of questionnaire technique was necessary to collect data from the selected sample.

The interview technique was used to gather information from various professionals within the Media Solutions Ltd. The questionnaire technique was used to seek information from different individuals search as; journalists, audience and other stakeholders.

3.6 Data Analysis

The results were recorded under their themes and relevant categories. The qualitative analysis method was used to collect views and comments from different sources on the challenges facing the news papers industries in Tanzania.

All the collected data was recorded and analyzed manually within twenty four hours after the study to avoid forgetting the information provided by correspondents during the study.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter entails the discussion and analysis of the findings of the study as collected from the field. These findings are based on the objectives of the study. The thesis of the study was to find out the challenges facing the newspaper industry in Tanzania using *Media Solutions Ltd* as a case study.

The findings evidently express the challenges that the newspaper industry is facing in its struggle to survive the fate of extinction. This presentation is based on the research done as far as the objectives of the study are concerned.

The data was collected using both quantitative and qualitative methods, which was then analyzed and processed to make it useful and understandable.

4.1 The Challenges Facing the Newspaper Industry.

The findings of the study revealed that the newspaper industry in Tanzania is handicapped by a number of challenges in its struggle for survival in this competitive environment ignited by the advanced developments in communications technology. Some questions have been raised whether newspapers have a future or not.

4.1.1 Poor Content

The content of the newspaper is an important element that needs attention and accuracy. The study revealed that there is competition between news and advertisements that fight for space in the limited pages of the newspaper. *THISDAY* newspaper reporter Joseph Kayombo had this to say:

“There is dilemma when selecting news over adverts especially when the advert comes from a regular advertiser of our newspaper...” (Interview with Joseph Kayombo, 25th July, 2008)

Findings also stated this competition has led to newspapers presenting adverts in form of news. This means the content consumers can read advertorial content in form of news stories.

Also about 72% out of thirty respondents of *THISDAY* and *KULIKONI* readers interviewed noted with concern the low quality of the content in the papers. The respondents blame poor content on the under-qualification of the news determinants which they doubted not to be experienced enough to trap the interests of the readers through tight and attractive captions and headlines.

4.1.2 Ownership Control

Findings have also revealed that newspapers are normally controlled by their owners who may be individuals or organizations that influence the policy and principles of the newspaper industry operation. This was supported by 78% out of hundred respondents of the study who said

that this happens especially when the owner has other business ventures apart from the media industry.

This study discovered that the owner of *Media Solutions Ltd*, Reginald Mengi, also owns another media giant company in Tanzania, *The Guardian Ltd*. *The guardian Ltd* produces about 10 newspapers some of which are metropolitan and others are regional newspapers. According to an employee of the media house, the owner is a businessman who has many companies dealing in different products and services. Another *KULIKONI* reporter had this to say:

“I am a reporter who is a professional in my field knowing what ‘news’ is and what’s newsworthy. But what disappoints me is when my news articles are thrown away just because they are not in line with the policies of the media house” (Interview with Faith Mushi, 25th July, 2008)

This control also goes for the business partners of the owner whereby no incriminating stories can be published by his enterprise, *Media Solutions Ltd*. For instance, according to one *THISDAY* reporter (name withheld), a story was brought in about an owner of one of the biggest hotels in Dar es Salaam who was involved in a grand corruption scandal.

4.1.3 Inadequate Finances

The study found out that *Media Solutions Ltd* lacks enough resources, a factor that affects the operation of the whole media house. About 55 % out of thirty respondents who were mainly news editors said that running a newspaper especially dailies is very costly and needs enough resources to run things smoothly and, more importantly, timely.

One news editor noted that:

“The newspaper sales have not been doing well recently due to problems such as newspaper delays in distribution to the news stands, lack of enough reporters and few computers considering we have only 12 computers for reporters to type their stories” (Interview with Francis Lyimo, 25th July, 2008)

The study revealed that the low pay may be a result of immature nature of the print media profession which is operated by poorly trained personnel. Most of the reporters are not professional journalists but some flukes that are recruited and roughly trained by the media house to do news reporting.

4.1.4 Lack of Skilled Labour

This, according to the research, is a capital confrontation in the underdevelopment of the newspaper industry in Tanzania. About 38.8 % of the respondents noted that Tanzania still has poorly and even untrained reporters who are posing as journalists in the field of news reporting. Speaking during an interview, Eliakimu Mwakapiso, a media analyst, had this to say:

“This culture of news reporting has not developed roots yet in Tanzania because many news reporters are not professional journalists but poorly trained workers who have evaded the field due to life difficulties and these poorly trained flukes have painted a negative picture to our great profession that people look at journalists as people who are trying to make a living by evading their privacies” (Interview with Eliakimu Mwakapiso, 25th July 2008).

The problem of skilled labour in Tanzania is evident as many of news editors in many media houses are foreigners, especially Kenyans and Ugandans leading such departments. Lack of skilled manpower has affected the style, production and even the content of the newspapers in the country. This is because many papers do not have unique identities that define them from other newspapers on the news stand.

4.2 The Influence of the Government on Newspaper Content

The study also disclosed that the government normally has influence on the media, especially the newspaper, content in Tanzania. Results collected from about 65 % of the respondents suggested that Tanzanian media just like in other developing countries faces severe interferences from government bodies thus hindering press freedom in the country.

4.2.1 Press Freedom

The study has revealed that it was only in 1990 that the Tanzanian government allowed a free press. The Newspaper Registration Act of 1976 deemed that every paper had to be registered with the government in order to be legal, but only government media were allowed to register. Anthony Mandevu, a veteran journalist of the 1990's stated:

“However, pressure from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank forced Tanzania into embracing multipartyism and a free press in 1990. The government eased restrictions on newsprint and private printing presses developed” (Interview with Anthony Mandevu, 25th July, 2008)

About 55 % out of sixty respondents declared that there is no press freedom in Tanzania while 40 % were contrary arguing that Tanzania, compared to its neighbours such as Uganda and Kenya, is doing far better in maintaining press freedom. About 5 % don't know whether there is press freedom or not. One news editor for *KULIKONI* commented:

“The issue of press freedom in Tanzania is very unhealthy at all especially considering recent incidents where journalists have been arrested and harassed by the police for serving the public interest as the profession demands”
(Interview with Richard Mapesa, 26th July, 2008)

Moreover, the study shows that Freedom of Expression is however, subject to the laws of the land -the National Security Act, the Official Secrets Act, the Restricted Areas Act, and the Newspaper Registration Act. The National Security Act, Official Secrets Act, and Restricted Areas Act make acquiring government information very difficult for journalists. The constitution does not include the Right of Access to Information. Nevertheless, if a journalist comes across any information of governmental corruption or a scandal they could print the story without fearing for their jobs or their lives.

The government has always tried to justify its strong arm on the media by using the excuse of national security. The constitution of Tanzania clearly states that the media shall not be allowed to publish information that can incite public violence and disorder in the community.

4.2.2 Government Control and Licensing

Findings have indicated that Tanzanian ministry of Information, Culture and Sports has the Information Services Division which has three sections; Press Service, Media Coordination and Newspaper Registration section. The newspaper registration section carries out activities such as registering newspapers, grant media accreditation, and monitor local and foreign newspapers.

The government also issues licenses to media companies in Tanzania. Before receiving the license, the media industry should meet the principles of the licensing body of the government. This license is renewable annually to observe whether the media house is following its principles as articulated in the council. Alex Ndovu, an investigative reporter for *KULIKONI* stated:

“Most of these principles are pro government in the sense that they protect the government from being exposed when they do wrong. A media house contrary to the principles may loose its license of operation the following year” (Interview with Alex Ndovu, 26th July, 2008)

I also discovered that the government is the biggest advertiser in most of the media, however, and could pressurise the media agency by withdrawing advertising revenue if it did not like what the media agency was publishing.

The government also has the power to close down any newspaper, under the Newspaper Registration Act of 1976. Under this law, every newspaper has to be registered with the government in order to legally publish. Four

newspapers were banned in 1998 for claims of sensationalism and pornography - Micapo, Mwamama, Heko, and Kasheshe.

Tanzania is part of the Media Development Association (MDA) which is an association of journalists in east Africa, namely Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. The purpose of the association is to allow newspapers to circulate freely between the three countries, and for stories to flow freely between the different newspapers. Dr. Anna Burure, chairperson of the Association of Journalists and Media Workers (AJM) had the following to say:

“This means that if a Tanzanian journalist thinks they have a story that is too sensitive to publish in their own paper, they can leak the story to a Kenyan or Ugandan paper who will print the story, and the Tanzanian citizen then reads the story in a Kenyan or Ugandan paper the next day” (Interview with Dr. Anna Burure, 26th July, 2008)

4.2.3 Access to Information

Further, the findings also showed that government departments or officials are not cooperative with the media in giving them access to information they require. The journalists face difficulties in trying to access government sources when it comes to stories involving the authorities or government dignitaries.

This accounts for about 40 % according to the study findings. They dodge interviews that may talk about mismanagement of funds on a number of ways.

One investigative reporter for THISDAY said:

“Government departments are normally reluctant and it takes time for a reporter to get an interview with a dignitary especially on issues pertained to misuse of funds or corruption. And it’s different when you want to make their profiles when he or she talks about achievements and carrier” (Interview with Felix Ngwaya, 26th July, 2008)

The study revealed that in all jurisdictions the ability of journalists to utilize Freedom of Information and legislation to obtain material that would shed light on government activity is being steadily eroded by the imposition of excessive fees, extensive delays, unreasonable refusal of access, and lengthy lists of exemptions. And when all these hurdles have been overcome the applicant can still be confronted with "conclusive certificates" issued by the relevant Ministry or department. Research indicates that, while requests for personal information are likely to be dealt with speedily, requests for non-personal information, the material generally sought by journalists, is far less likely to be dealt with immediately, is more expensive, and less likely to result in a positive outcome.

4.2.4 Access to Courts and Documents

According to the study, there are an increasing number of laws that have the effect of closing courts, or making it more difficult for the media to get information on what has transpired. Some of these arise out of treason cases and grand corruption scandals, referred to separately. Others relate to the everyday cases with no national security implications.

Bernard Munde, a legal advisor of *Media Solutions Ltd* who is also a journalist had the following to comment:

“Journalists face a number of challenges whenever they try to access courts and documents especially in sensitive cases that involve influential figures in the government and this means the media can not make a close follow up of the case and its proceedings” (Interview with Bernard Munde, 26th July, 2008)

In the *Criminal Procedure Further Amendment (Evidence) Bill 2005* and amendments to the *Children (Criminal Proceedings) Act 1987* have had an impact on the ability of the media to report. The former would, among other things, automatically close courts when victims of sexual assaults were giving evidence; the latter would prohibit the publication of identifying details of minors involved in criminal proceedings as witnesses, victims and, broadly, in any other way, even after their death.

The resulting restriction on information flow is aggravated by the increased use of hand-up documents in hearings: material that was formerly spoken of in the court is now routinely passed from the prosecutor or defence lawyer to the bench, without oral reference to it. The only way of accessing this material is through application to the court registry. Registrars are limiting its availability.

4.2.5 Media Council and Associations

The Media Council of Tanzania was registered in May 1997 after being formed at a mass media general convention in June 1995. This is an independent NGO established by journalists, publishers and media service-oriented organisations to foster and maintain freedom of the media. The Media Council rather than the courts polices or monitors the

media. Furthermore, journalists in Tanzania thus practice self-censorship. Tanzania is also part of the Media Development Association (MDA) which is an association of journalists in east Africa, namely Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. The purpose of the association is to allow newspapers to circulate freely between the three countries, and for stories to flow freely between the different newspapers.

Other media associations include; Media Development Association (MDA) which is an association of journalists in East Africa, The Association of Journalists and Media Workers (AJM) previously known as the Tanzanian Journalists Association (TAJA), and The Tanzanian Media Women's Association (TAMWA).

I also found out that the government uses the media council and other media associations to control the content of newspapers. The study found out that despite the fact that the media council and other associations are non governmental associations, the government still manages to exercise its powers on them through its media laws.

4.3 The Impact of Illiteracy to Newspaper Readership

Findings have shown that newspaper sales depend on the financial capabilities and most importantly, literacy levels of the consumers of the product. Illiteracy is a common term in the developing world including Tanzania. Newspaper readership is very low due to high illiteracy levels among the population in the country. According to the research conducted by the Ministry of Education 2005, it was revealed that illiteracy rate was at 38 % among women and 34 % among the men in Tanzania, the highest in the region. This study revealed that the illiteracy levels have dropped to 23 % among women and 15 % among men in

Tanzania. Speaking during an exclusive interview, Professor Burure Nyirenda, a political analyst, had to the following to say:

“The newspaper readership culture has no base among the population and this is due to illiteracy, leave alone other factors such as poverty and unemployment in the country. An illiterate person can listen to the radio transmitting in Kiswahili and understand it clearly rather than reading a newspaper which demands special knowledge to understand it” (Interview with Prof. Burure Nyirenda, 29th July, 2008)

The study further disclosed that readership decline among the population is a result of other challenges facing Tanzanians. Some of these confrontations include poverty, unemployment, competition from other mass media, culture etc. Newspapers are facing stiff competition from other mass media such as electronic media that can cater for the illiterates whereby they just watch or listen to get the message and understand. Findings also state that most newspapers circulation rates are as low as 10,000 copies pa day. The study as well realized that the circulation levels of THISDAY (English) and KULIKONI (Kiswahili) newspapers of MSL are 20,000 and 25,000 copies respectively pa day (2007).

However, according to the study, the government has taken drastic measure to reduce high illiteracy levels. These measures include building many primary and secondary schools throughout the country. Also there has been an increase in the number of higher learning institutions i.e. colleges and universities. Both public and private institutions have increased in recent years from 9 universities in 2000 to 23 institutions including both public and private which are located in different parts of the country.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.0 Introduction

The focus of this chapter is to present the summary of the findings of the study, give recommendations based on the findings, and finally make conclusions as far as the research is concerned. This will be presented in form of sub-sections.

5.1 Summary

The major objective of the study was to research the challenges facing the newspaper industry in Tanzania. This study was conducted in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and *Media Solutions Ltd* was used as the case study.

The researcher used respondents from different backgrounds including news-reporters, sub-editors, managing-editors, media-specialists (veterans), media content consumers (readers), and different professionals on issues associated with the media.

The research was based on three specific objectives; the challenges facing the newspaper industry, the influence of the government to newspaper content, and the impact of illiteracy to newspaper readership.

The first objective that hunted to unearth the challenges facing the newspaper industry came up with a number of findings. The study

discovered several confrontations that included poor content in the newspapers, ownership control, inadequate finances to run the industry, and lack of skilled labour (professionalism). The respondents articulated that these challenges endanger the existence of newspapers unless some measures are put in place to counter the situation.

The second objective aimed at looking at the influence of the government to newspaper content. Most respondents about 65 % agreed that the government has control over the newspaper content in Tanzania. The question of press freedom in Tanzania raised different reactions from numerous respondents whereby 55 % respondents declared that there isn't press freedom, 40 % claiming existence of press freedom, and 5 % don't know whether there is or no press freedom.

It was also revealed that the government controls the media content through a number of media laws that are specifically designed to control the mass media. These laws include the laws of the land -the National Security Act, the Official Secrets Act, the Restricted Areas Act, and the Newspaper Registration Act. I also found out that newspapers are further controlled by licensing system of the government. Finally, the government controls the media through the media council and other media associations.

The third objective sought to find out the impact of illiteracy to newspaper readership. The findings of the study disclosed that illiteracy is a serious setback causing the decline in the newspaper readership in Tanzania. It was further revealed that illiteracy rate was at 23 % among women and 15 % among the men in Tanzania which is the highest in the region.

However, besides illiteracy there are factors that were discovered to bring about low readership. These included high poverty levels, unemployment, and rigid competition from other mass media such as radio and television.

5.2 Recommendations

The newspaper is an important medium that is necessary and must be kept active by all means. I clearly understand that the special attributes of newspapers, their immediacy, involvement, credibility, creativity, consistency and flexibility of use will continue to ensure their longevity. Newspapers are also the most flexible of all news products and the role of editors and journalists in bringing the news together for readers is uniquely valuable.

Therefore, immediate measures should be adapted to come up with solutions to these pressing issues in the media industry. I therefore propose the following recommendations:

5.2.1 Training of Human Resource

The newspaper industry should be operated professionally by true media professionals. This means that fully qualified personnel must run the media house and not some flukes who have ambushed the industry. I join hands with some respondents in demanding that instead of importing skilled manpower to run much of Tanzania's print media it is quite necessary and advisable to have the country train its own manpower.

The government should ensure that appropriate schools of journalism are established so as to have independent national human resource to run the media in Tanzania. This will even raise national GDP because the manpower will be nationals who will contribute to national income.

5.2.2 Ensure Press Freedom

The government should spear-head the struggle to achieve press freedom in the country. This means reviewing its laws that hinder freedom of expression and the press because these laws put the media in a difficult environment. Also media owners must let the media operate on its own instead of influencing the content of the newspapers. The editors ought to be given a chance to practice their profession by determining what news is and what isn't news.

5.2.3 Editorial Independence from Advertisements

In most newspapers today, it's hard to differentiate news from adverts. This is because adverts are taken for news and some of them make the front pages because of the influence from advertisers. There should be a clear line between news and adverts to maintain the status and codes of the profession. Also most adverts come from PR departments of different companies and organizations. A media house operated by professionals will be able to isolate adverts from news and this can happen only if the media house operates independently.

5.2.4 Self-regulation of Mass Media

The media should self-regulate itself through its associations without government interference. There are a number of associations as indicated

by the study. They include Media Council of Tanzania, The Association of Journalists and Media Workers (AJM), and The Tanzanian Media Women's Association (TAMWA). These associations should be fully utilized to play their role of regulating the mass media.

5.2.5 Advocacy of News Accuracy and Fairness

The news should be fair and accurate so that the readers are left to judge for themselves and not the news writers to judge for them. The failure to present news in a balanced and fair way has affected the readership of the newspapers because many of the readers are tired of reading personal opinions. This is against the ethics of news making which states that news ought to be fair and balanced and the judgment is the work of the readers.

News balance and accuracy is therefore necessary for the news writers and I clearly recommend that personal views should not fill up spaces for news that are to be sold to the readers because it undermines the confidence of the readers.

5.2.6 Across-the-boarder Newspaper Sales

Another recommendation that I came up with is the sale of the newspapers outside the borders of Tanzania. The government is recommended to promote the sale of local newspapers to other neighboring countries such as Uganda, Kenya, Burundi, and Rwanda because there are Tanzanians in these areas. This will also serve a purpose of informing other nations about Tanzania.

This is necessary for profit maximization and increase of the newspaper sales which will still be of economic importance to the newspaper sellers. Thousands of newspapers can be sold per day and the media houses will have wide readership coverage of the newspapers.

5.3 Conclusions

The newspaper industry is as important as any other mass medium therefore it should be maintained by all efforts. The features of newspapers, immediacy, involvement, credibility, creativity, consistency and flexibility of use will continue to exist. The traditionalist argument makes many good points about newspapers, including that newspapers are the most flexible of all news products and the role of editors and journalists in bringing the news together for readers is uniquely valuable.

The study has presented several challenges that face the newspaper industry looking at different aspects. These challenges were analyzed basing on three specific objectives of the study. Moreover, I have put forward some recommendations to be implemented by stakeholders and shareholders in the media industry. I also hope this work will be used for good purposes to develop the mass media industry in the developing world and Tanzania in particular.

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APPENDIX I

QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire has been prepared by Robert Zephania, a student at Kampala International University, Kampala, Uganda in accordance with the academic requirements of the university. The aim of this study is to find out the Challenges Facing the Newspaper Industry in Tanzania. Therefore, I kindly request you to answer the following questions objectively;

1. What your position in the industry?.....
2. How long have you worked in this media house?.....
- 3 What problems do you face in your duties?.....
- 4 How does the government influence the content of your newspapers?.....
- 5 Do you think the newspaper industry in danger of extinction and why?.....
- 6 How do you balance the pressure between advertisements and news stories?
- 7 How do you handle issues of corruption and bribery in you daily activities?
- 9 How do you counter the cut-throat competition from your rivals?
.....