Research Article

Social Media Penetration, Elections and Democratic Consolidation in Tanzania : What Are the Emerging Practices and Challenges?

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Abstract

Tanzania witnessed an increase in the use of social media in political party campaigning over the last decade. Use of social media was nonetheless curtailed by a changing techno-political framework regulated by changing Cybersecurity and Statistical Acts. The study was guided by two hypotheses namely; despite restrictive cybersecurity laws enacted social media was already effectively institutionalized as a new civic-cyber space to organize political party campaigns during elections in recent years (H1). Increasing use of social media in elections had a transformative effect on the way party structure was organized to conduct political mobilization, promotion of party ideology, promoting both inter-party and intra-party interaction, and fundraising (H2). The study interviewed party members and leaders from 5 political parties which participated in the 2015 and 2020 general elections and showed social media had a transformative effect on core political party campaign activities.

Keywords: Social media; Elections; Political Parties; Election Campaigns; Cybersecurity Laws

Introduction

Mobile phone technology use such as Mobile Money Services (MMS) transactions now account for nearly US$ 1.6 billion in Tanzania, representing 2 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) [1-3]. 87 percent of urban residents in Tanzania reported using a mobile phone every day. In addition, 34 percent now have access to the internet reports. An increasing number of subscribers used prepaid bundles offered by service providers which made data more affordable. They sometimes included free access to social media platforms for subscribers [4]. 2]These factors contributed to increase in social media penetration.

These factors contributed to increase in social media penetration. Political parties and party activities were not spared from Tanzania's leapfrogging into the digital age. Political parties both ruling and opposition made widespread use of social media (especially WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) as well as websites for conducting political mobilization, promotion of party ideology, promoting both inter-party and intra-party interaction, and fundraising during election campaigns [5].

Participation of Political Parties in Elections

Tanzania re-introduced political pluralism in in 1992 after being banned for 27 years since 1965 [6]. The first multiparty election was held in 1995 (three years after the ban on political parties was lifted). Ever since, the ruling CCM has maintained the Presidency and majority in Parliament although until September, 2020 it witnessed a gradual decline in both Presidential votes and proportion of MPs. All political parties in Tanzania are driven by pragmatic developmental ideals that aim at articulating best approaches to promote human development [7-9].

A careful study of party election manifestos showeds they contained few ideological differences [10-12]. The ruling CCM professes to be an African Socialist party. It follows a Fabian Socialist approach as opposed to Marx/Leninist socialism. This professed position has been challenged even within the ranks and file of CCM due to established liberal market approach in its economic policy. CHADEMA on the other hand identify themselves as Social Democrats and sometimes conservative. They embrace

market liberalization with strict ethical code and consideration for issues such as social justice and human rights. The same can be said of other main opposition parties. None oppose market liberalization but emphasis is placed on enforcing ethics and social justice to market reforms.

Tanzania's 2015 elections experienced the most competitive Presidential election since the founding of multiparty elections. The opposition formed the UKAWA Coalition and fronted a single Presidential candidate [13]. The CCM presidential candidate won the elections with 58.46 percent followed by CHADEMA (UKAWA) who garnered 38.97 percent. None of the other candidates from smaller political parties attracted significant votes with the highest fetching 0.6 percent and lowest 0.05 percent (http://www.nec.go.tz/). After 2015 election, 252 MPs were from CCM (68.8 percent) and the balance 31.1 percent from opposition parties. Within the opposition, CHADEMA had 61.4 percent, CUF (36.8 percent), NCCR and ACT 0.87 percent respectively [14-15].

Social media use Restrictions in Political Party Activities

The foregoing political developments did not take root without challenges. The legal environment surrounding social media use soured following the enactment of the Cyber Security Act of 2015 passed by Parliament in February 2015 - a few months before the 2015 general elections [16-17]. In practice, according to, [18-19], implementation of the Act had unintended consequences. As a result, political parties campaign activities including open discussion on alternative development policy options during elections were curtailed [18]. According to [20],[17] dissemination of research activity through social media also became increasingly regulated under the Statistics Act initially amended in 2015 which introduced the concept of and criminalized the publication of "false official statistics," and "distortion of facts," as well as questioning official government statistics as shown by Table 1 below. There were numerous instances where the new laws contravened online free speech. In October 2015, Benedict Angelo Ngonyani, a 24-year-old student at Dar es Salaam Institute of Technology, was charged for publishing information which was "false or not verified by relevant authorities." In November 2015, Leila Sinare and three others were charged under Section 16 of Cyber Security Act for disseminating false, election-related information via WhatsApp. Public prosecutors alleged the accused published audio information on a WhatsApp group called the "Soka Group," intended to mislead the public during the October 2015 general elections. Isaac Abakuki Emily and Bob Chacha Wangwe were also found guilty of similar charges. Isaac Abakuki Emily was convicted in June 2016 by the Arusha Resident Magistrate's Court for insulting the President on his Facebook page and sentenced to three years in jail or a TSh. 7 million ($3,190) fine payable in two instalments [21]. Bob Chacha Wangwe, a law graduate from the University of Dar-es-Salaam was on 17 November 2017 sentenced by the Kisutu Resident Magistrate's Court to a one year and six months jail term or to pay a fine of TSh 5 million ($ 2,278) for publishing his views on political affairs in Zanzibar and the state of the Union through his Facebook account. Later, the High Court in March 2019 quashed the

judgement and Bob has since awaited to have his paid fine refunded. In January 2021 Mbusuyo Aninanine Mwakihaba, a resident of Kigamboni was convicted to also pay a fine of TSh 5 million- or 3-Months imprisonment for writing in his WhatsApp account that security operatives were reported to be seen in Nairobi where the chief opposition whip was hospitalized following a shooting incidence while attending Parliament sessions in Dodoma (https://pratiloma53.rssing.com/chan-23711956/article25438.html). Cross (2016) reports that the effects of Tanzania's Cyber Security Act on general elections became evident during the election day in 2015 where the opposition CHADEMA coalition's exit-polling centre was raided by police in the late hours on election night, and 38 people were detained [22]. During the arrests, police confiscated the opposition coalition's laptops and intimidated members of the media. As a result, CHADEMA staff were charged under Section 16 of the Cyber Security Act. Prosecutors accused them of publishing "inaccurate and unverified data" over Facebook, Twitter, and the party's election management system There as also internet restrictions including the blocking of many social media and messaging platforms in the days leading to the November 2020 elections where election-related content was restricted. In another instance, on September 2016, Dennis Mtegwa and four others were arrested for sharing offensive content targeting the President in social media under Section 118 (a) of the Electronic and Postal Communications Act No. 3 of 2010. This Section imposed a criminal penalty on "any person who knowingly makes, creates, solicits or initiates the transmission of any comment, request, suggestion or other communication which is obscene, indecent, false, menacing or offensive in character with intent to annoy, abuse, threaten or harass another person." Prosecutors alleged Mr. Mtegwa posted an abusive and offensive comment on a WhatsApp group called DSM 114U Movement. In yet another case, Dr. Oscar Magava, a lecturer at Mkwawa University College of Education in Iringa Region, was arrested for allegedly insulting the President through social media . 14 people had already been arrested between September, 2015 and September, 2017 for insulting the President on social media. Leonard Mulokozi was charged on June 22, 2015 under Tanzania's Electronic and Postal Communications Act over a WhatsApp message that authorities said was "abusive" to the President. The eagerness of members of various social media groups to protect their online free speech was already expressed in their reaction to social media users who were found guilty of cybercrime charges because of posting their political views on social media. Their fines were quickly raised and paid through crowd-funding on social media. This was demonstrative that a restrictive approach that considered political discussion including sharing satire of political leaders in cyberspace was a cybercrime will be highly opposed by social media users. The study was guided by two hypotheses. Despite restrictive cybersecurity laws enacted social media has been effectively institutionalized as a new civic-cyber space to organize political party campaigns during elections (H1). Increasing use of social media in election campaign had a transformative effect on the way party structure was organized to conduct political mobilization, promotion of party ideology, promoting both inter-party and intra-party interaction, and fundraising (H2). Guided by [23] as a conceptual framework, the study investigated specific functions

of political parties in election campaigns for which technology can be used in political mobilization, promotion, interaction, and fundraising. The two study hypotheses are significant in that they will provide information on the extent to which social media is being used in political party campaign activities in Tanzania. A determination of the first hypothesis will provide information on the extent to social media penetration in political party activities and elections in particular. The second hypothesis is equally significant since it will show which areas social media is penetrating most in elections in line with main party use of new technologies (mobilisation of general citizens and voters, promotion of party

ideology including key messages and election manifesto, interaction with voters on key alternative policy issues, and fundraising). The second hypothesis will determine the extent which social media penetration is transforming traditional approaches to elections including organisation, structure, decision-making, fundraising and logistics. Both hypotheses have significance in informing us on the effects of social media penetration in elections in the wake of restrictive techno-political environment driven by changing cyber-security laws table.

Dimension	Description
Mobilization	Mobilize citizens to take action; e.g., rallies, protests, vote
Promotion	Promote policy platform to the public
Interaction	Voters shape party platform through direct consultations, web or phone-based surveys; party is receptive to voters' wants and needs
Fundraising	Raise money to support party, campaigns, candidates

Source: CEPPS and IRI (2017)
Typology of Party Use of Technology (Dimension & Description).

Table 1: Key Offences and Restrictions under Cybersecurity, Statistics and Electronic and Postal Communications Acts.

Cybersecurity Act No. 14 of 2015	
Section 16: Publication of false information	Any person who publishes information or data presented in a picture, text, symbol or any other form in a computer system knowing that such information or data is false, deceptive, misleading or inaccurate, and with intent to defame, threaten, abuse, insult, or otherwise deceive or mislead the public or counselling commission of an offence, commits an offence, and shall on conviction be liable to a fine of not less than five million shillings or to imprisonment for a term of not less than three years or to both
Section 20: Unsolicited messages	(1) A person shall not, with intent to commit an offence under this Act -
	(a) initiate the transmission of unsolicited messages;
	(b) relay or retransmit unsolicited messages, or
	(c) falsify header information in unsolicited messages;
	(2) A person who contravenes subsection (1) commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of not less than three million shillings or three times the value of undue advantage received, whichever is greater or to imprisonment for a term of not less than one year or to both
Statistical Act No. 9 of 2015	
Section 5 and 6	(5) An agency or person who publishes or communicates official statistical information which may result in the distortion of facts, commits an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine of not less titan ten million shillings or to imprisonment for a term of not less than three years or to both.
	(6) Any person who is authorized by the Bureau to process any official statistical information, shall before publishing or communicating such information to the public ensure that such person procures an authorisation from the Bureau.
	(7) For the purposes of this section, "communication media" includes radio station, television station, newspaper or magazine, website or any other
Electronic and Postal Communications Act No. 3 of 2010	
Section 118 Penalty for transmission of obscene communication.	Any person who-
	(a) by means of any network facilities, network services, applications services or content services, knowingly makes, creates, or solicits or initiates the transmission of any comment, request, suggestion or other communication which is obscene, indecent, false, menacing or offensive in character with intent to annoy, abuse, threaten or harass another person;
	(b) initiates a communication using any applications services, whether continuously, repeatedly or otherwise, during which communication may or may not ensue, with or without disclosing his identity and with intent to annoy, abuse, threatens or harass any person at any number or electronic address; (c)by means of any network services or applications service provides any obscene communication to any person; or
	permits any network services or application services under the person's control to be used for an activity described in section 117 (3), commits an offence and shall, on conviction, be liable to a fine not less than five million Tanzanian shillings or to imprisonment for a term not less than twelve months, or to both and shall also be liable to fine of seven hundred and fifty thousand Tanzanian shillings for every day during which the offence is continued after conviction

Methodology

The study interviewed political party leaders and party members at ward and branch levels. The interviews focused on the transformative effect experienced by political parties as institutions, their leaders, and members, in the use of various social media during political party campaigns. The study used a multi-staged stratified sampling procedure. The first sample stratum was selected through purposive judgmental sampling criteria. Two districts were selected from the main metropolitan city of Dar-es-Salaam. Selected districts were Ilala and Kigamboni. The main criterion used was their political pluralist nature, mixed population and being peri-urban. Hai district in Kilimanjaro was purposively chosen because it was an opposition stronghold. Participating wards in the second stratum were chosen through simple random sampling. Gongo la Mboto ward was identified in Ilala, Magogoni in Kigamboni and Kikavu Chini in Hai. Party branches which participated in the interviews were recommended by party leaders at ward level or in some instances key informants knowledgeable about party politics in case-study communities. The study administered two types of interviews. The first was a semi-structured quantitative questionnaire survey and the second open-ended qualitative key informant interviews (KIIs). The study targeted to interview 100 party leaders and members at ward and branch levels. The second type of interviews were open-ended qualitative KIIs. Under this category 20 KIIs with party leaders at ward, zonal and national-level were conducted. A main limitation faced by the study was reluctance of study respondents to discuss party politics and political campaign issues. Their main concern was the possibility the information they provided could be used against their party interest. Secondly the respondents had concerns over exposing their party campaign strategies to competing parties. As a result, 39 percent of study respondents who were approached declined to participate. The study mitigated the above limitations by informing study respondents the interviews would be anonymous, and all individual responses kept confidential. The study questionnaires and interview guide transcripts did not record individual names or identities.

Ethical Considerations

The study was submitted to the Directorate of Research and Publications at Open University of Tanzania (OUT) for ethical review. An ethical clearance was provided in accordance with OUT ethical review policy for research and publication. All standard ethical practices were observed including to read out loudly the study objectives to respondents before interviews were conducted. Informed consent was obtained from study respondents before commencement of interviews. All published data and information used have been properly cited and acknowledged in accordance with OUT ethical review policy for research and publication. The Article findings have been sourced from various studies conducted by the Author most notably an assessment of social media use in Tanzanian elections with the International Republican Institute (IRI), contents of an international conference paper presented by the Author at American Evaluation Association (AEA) International Conference at Cleveland Ohio USA in October, 2018, and review of secondary data sources. The Article was first published in the African Journal of Elections (JAE). It was then reviewed, updated and published again with full permission from JAE.

Findings and Discussion

According to [24] social media provides ease, speed, convenience, and inclusivity in conducting political party campaign activities. Despite impending legal and regulatory issues which had the net effect of limiting, by criminalizing, some aspects related to utilization of social media in political party activities including political "small-talk"; the study findings established social media nonetheless continued to be widely used by all political parties for conducting political campaign activities. A ward-level youth secretary from the ruling CCM said: "we used mobile phones to send instructions to implement party directives." This was echoed by a ward chairman from the opposition CUF who said "we used mobile phones to send invitations to party meetings." Likewise, a branch treasurer from CHADEMA said "we used mobile phones to conduct quick online meetings and reach decision on a matter." The above responses attest to the fact that phone-based technologies were already used in election campaign activities. More complex and diverse social media platforms were likewise in circulation. A ward treasurer from CHADEMA said: "all party members in our area had social media." A young branch member of CHADEMA said "I preferred to use Telegram because I can share documents with youth members, and Instagram and snapchat for sharing pictures. This helped me to share various types of information to our social media group in a timely manner." The general benefits derived by political parties from social media included "cutting down the number and time spent in meetings, could hold emergency meetings with limited agenda for discussion (party member CHADEMA), easy to share tasks and actions across different levels (Ward Chairman, CCM), get results from different polling stations in a timely, and accurate manner including through photos of declaration forms, reduced electoral fraud by competing political parties (party member, CUF), and communicate party position or that of their candidate in a way that could not be intercepted by another person so as to smear them (Ward Chairman, CCM)."

Table 2 below presents the proportion to which main types of social media were used by different political parties during the election campaigns. Table 2 shows all main types of social media platforms were used by all political parties, regardless whether ruling CCM or opposition. This suggests there was an increasing shift towards political cyberspace activity. Table 2 however shows the use of social media platforms was not even across all political parties. Inequalities in skills to operate social media platforms in elections meant it could be applied "only in pockets," leading to exclusion of others. This was confirmed by a ward Women's Wing Chairperson of CHADEMA who said "the problem of using social media was many people in rural areas did not have smartphones." This is indicative of existential inequality levels in access to social

media in different parts of the country (Social.ogilvy.com). The effects of this "digital divide" imposed by widening social media use by political parties was clearly put across by a Ward chairman from CHADEMA who said "social media was very good as it increased the ability to communicate messages especially to the youth – but only those who are educated." All this is suggestive of underlying levels of inequality according to access to technology index [25-26]. The access to technology index measures two auxiliary dimensions

gradually becoming more influential voters as an increasing number of them have attained a certain level of education and are active users of social media. Political party members who did not own phones which supported social media or did not own social media accounts said they used simpler platforms to conduct party

of namely location and age are important to pay attention when it comes to the social media effects of political exclusion. Accessibility to social media service varies from one location (rural) to another (urban); and between more fervent users, youth; and adults. The youth are increasingly presenting themselves as an important electoral demographic in Tanzania. According to [27] 50 percent of voters in the 2020 general elections for President, Members of Parliament and Ward Councillors were youth. The youth are

campaign activities such as making direct phone calls, used phone SMS (short message service), posters, and public meetings. Some among those who owned smartphones reported to use more sophisticated platforms such as viber, linkedin, IMO, snapchat and the jamii forum blog.

Table 2: Proportion of Main social media Used by Political Parties (%).

Type of social media	CCM	CHADEMA	CUF	NCCR	ACT	Total
Facebook	19.05	23.81	28.57	2.38	26.19	100
Twitter	22.22	16.67	27.78	5.56	27.78	100
WhatsApp	20.93	25.58	25.58	2.33	25.58	100
Instagram	21.43	25	17.86	3.57	32.14	100
E-mail	17.39	26.09	17.39	4.35	34.78	100

*Based on questionnaire survey to party members from across 5 political parties.

Restrictions imposed by the Cyber Security Act 2015 were found to impinge on core functions of political parties during 2015 and 2020 general elections. According to core functions of political party campaigning are political mobilization, promotion of party ideology, promoting both inter-party and intra-party interaction, and fundraising. It was already evident that members of social-media groups from both opposition and the ruling party had taken one step or another to overcome restrictions in the use of social media as shown by Table 3 below. It can be seen that users of social media were not passive, but active in transforming the technopolitical environment. Table 3 shows political party officials and activists had not been complacent to infringements in their online free speech in cyberspace. It can also be seen that members of both parties, the ruling CCM and opposition were constrained by restrictions in the use of social media in election campaigning. A branch youth secretary from the ruling CCM summed this up as saying "community members did not dare to participate in online discussions because they feared the new law regulating communicating over social media." A Ward Chairperson from the opposition CUF added "there was some information that we had as a political party, and we felt it was within the confines of our constitutional mandate to criticize and hold the Government accountable, but we could not just put it into social media." The majority of political party officials from both sides of the aisle said these experiences led to tightening and limitation in the use of social media for interaction with both political party members and voters; thus, not making effective use of social media in promoting political dialogue during elections. This

was well summarized by an academician who said "negative effects of the law regulating social media affected all political parties, but mostly the opposition." It was further learned that opposition parties had found ways to circumvent the "grip of fear" surrounding their party members and voter-base to use social media in political discourse during elections. Opposition parties created positions of "social-media coordinators." A social media Coordinator from CHADEMA said "those who feared to expose evidence of information that was critical to Government policy were told to post the information to the Coordinator of social media at party headquarters and it would be posted by the party while they remained anonymous." A member of CHADEMA national secretariat alluded that the control measures were meant to curtail political opposition far beyond the Cyber Security Act. By extension the Government had suspended live coverage of Parliament proceedings, and opposition political rallies." However, to the contrary, suspension of Parliament proceedings and opposition political rallies through mainstream media had in effect, a counterfactual effect leading to an increased reliance on social media as a tool for political communication especially Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp and Instagram. The same source from CHADEMA said that: "there was no other way available than to use social media given the position that had been taken by Government through the police force to suspend public rallies and internal meetings of political parties." Table 4 below shows the majority of party members who completed the questionnaire were severely affected by the new laws. Accordingly, CHADEMA and ACT members reported using social media to get news out in instances

where official media channels remained largely silent. Table 4 below shows the area most severely affected by restrictions were intra-party communication, and ability of political parties to conduct campaigns. Other areas affected were long-term party strengthening, dialogue with voters and fundraising. Key areas where social media was most influential in political party election campaigns were in political mobilization, promotion of party ideology, promoting both inter-party and intra-party interaction, and fundraising.

Table 3: Extent which Restrictions on Social Media Users were Overcome (%).

Degree	CCM	CHADEMA	CUF	SAU	ACT	Total
Very Big Extent	16.67	16.67	66.67	0	0	100
	33.33	11.11	28.57	0	0	16.22
Average	5.88	17.65	41.18	0	35.29	100
	33.33	33.33	50	0	60	45.95
Small Extent	25	0	50	0	25	100
	33.33	0	14.29	0	10	10.81
Have not been able	0	50	10	10	30	100
	0	55.59	7.14	100	30	27.03
Total	8.11	24.32	37.84	2.7 100	27.03	100
	100	100	100		100	100

*Based on questionnaire of 61 party members from across 5 political parties.

Table 4: Extent to which Political Parties were affected by Cyber Security Act.

Core Party Functions	%	
	Very Big Extent	Average
Intra party communication in previous election	54	20
Ability to conduct campaigns in previous election	52	27
Party strengthening	39	28
Online dialogue with voters	38	24
Fundraising	37	28
Promotion of political ideology and priorities	30	30
Political mobilisation	27	14

*Based on questionnaire of 61 party members from across 5 political parties.

Political Mobilization

The study findings showed 62 percent of political party officials, activists and members from across the political divide used social media to conduct their political activities including political mobilization as shown by Table 5. A party branch leader from the ruling CCM party said "we used social media for political mobilization during elections to mobilise our party members to get-out and vote, to ask for votes from voters through our phones, to remind voters the election date, and remind them to vote." This was also mentioned by a voter who said: "you would find yourself receiving several messages saying we should go and vote."

Likewise, a branch youth leader from the opposition CHADEMA said "we used social media to mobilise our members to attend political party campaign meetings/rallies, especially those addressed by national party leaders." He also added "social media was very useful for us to communicate to each other when we had to convene a quick meeting at short notice. We also used social media to post events and party news in our party members WhatsApp group." A branch chairperson from CHADEMA said "we used social media to canvass for votes by sending messages, video clips, and art clips." "Social media enabled us to motivate different people to join our party campaign and add those who had recently joined our party as members." Others said "to mobilise voters to get-out and vote, appeal for votes through phone (CCM member), remind voters about the voting date (CCM branch youth secretary), broadcast news about impending meetings (CUF ward youth secretary), quickly share news about emergency meetings (CHADEMA ward

treasurer).

Despite the foregoing, Table 5 shows a small number of political party officials and activists used social media to a small extent in political mobilisation. This indicates there were some political party officials and members who had reservations regarding social media use. This dilemma was confirmed by a CCM member who said "our main media for election campaigns was and remains party rallies." A Ward Secretary from CUF said "when discussing some sensitive issues, we preferred to meet face-to-face." A member of ACT said "I do not know about those social media" while a ward treasurer from CHADEMA said "we mainly gave ourselves information through statutory party meetings."

Table 5: Key Areas Transformed by Intensification of social media in Political Campaigning.

Degree	Mobilise to attend party meetings	Political mobilizati on and campaigns	Attend meeting s/ public rallies	Obtain feedback from public	Fundraising	Implement Campaigns
Very Big Extent	62	54	48	37	30	44
Average	20	33	31	37	22	23
Small Extent	5	4	5	5	12	6
Very Small Extent	5	2	9	11	18	11
Never used	7	7	7	9	18	15
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

* Based on questionnaire survey to party members from across 5 political parties.

Promotion of Party Ideology

According to Table 5 above, the study findings established social media was instrumental as a platform for party members to disseminate, obtain feedback, and have dialogue on political party ideology and quickly disseminate campaign "catch-phrases." Political parties increasingly adapted to social media in-order to quickly disseminate their agenda including party ideologies, campaign manifesto, and articulation of party position on various issues during elections. A CUF ward secretary said "we preferred to use social media to disseminate information on various ongoing party activities by sharing pictures of events, activities, and quotes from party leaders including video clips." "We also used social-media to promote our party candidates (A ward youth Secretary from CUF)." A member of CCM said "we used social media to widely disseminate the main slogan of our presidential candidate." More than half of political party organisers and activists said "we preferred to use social media to promote party ideology (CCM party member). We found WhatsApp and Facebook very useful to spread information about party meetings (CHADEMA member). We found WhatsApp as very useful to share agreed actions after internal meetings (ward secretary CUF), and to pass information especially when party rallies/meetings were cancelled at short notice for one reason or another, including failure to obtain permission/permit from the police to hold rallies (CHADEMA party member)."

This being said, there were some political party leaders who refrained from using social media to promote party ideology. A ward-level party parents-wing Chairperson from CCM said: "I do not know whether there was a party directive to use social-media in elections." Another, also from CCM said: "we refrained to use social-media to share sensitive party information as social media are not safe/secure." A member of CHADEMA national secretariat said "some members of our party had been hijacked, disappeared, and several had cases opened against them because of posting messages in social media during elections." He also said: "the problem is many people in villages in the rural areas do not have a smartphone." Overall, the use of social medial platforms for promotion of political ideology and election manifesto was more widespread in CUF and CHADEMA, followed by CCM, according to the study findings.

Interaction with Voters

According to Table 5 above, political parties continued to use SMS and traditional platforms such as posters and public rallies despite the benefits presented by social media. The full potential of leveraging social media when interacting with voters was not optimized due to limitations imposed, and uncertainties regarding compliance with Cyber Security Act. Whereas social media was used to a very big extent in conducting political mobilization activities, it was less for interaction with voters. This is an indication social media was less used as a platform for impromptu (interactive) political discourse compared to one-way dissemination [28-29]. A Ward Chairperson from CHADEMA said the main reason why political parties shied away from using social media for active political interaction with voters were uncertainties on the position of the law imposed by the Cyber Crime Act of 2015 which was wrongly interpreted to cover restrictions against "any form of political opinion critical to Government policy." "You see it is no longer safe to communicate political messages through social media." A party member from CHADEMA said: "our members were threatened for belonging to politically oriented social media groups, and to receive messages that were political in nature." He further said: "after voters received such threats "they simply "left" from party social media groups." A ward secretary from CUF also said: "community members were not free to use social media for interactions in politics because of the law that has been passed to regulate social media." As further testimony that social media

was disproportionately used for dissemination as opposed to interaction with voters; a ward-level treasurer from CHADEMA said "we used social media to send instantaneous information to those who had not attended our political rally to give them instant updates especially pictures on events which had happened. We also used social media to inform those who could not attend campaign meetings such as the disabled. We also used social media to disseminate party announcements, and party priorities during the elections." A branch secretary from CCM said "we used social media to promote dialogue with different sections of the society/ communities; disseminate the priorities of our party and party candidates in the elections." Despite restrictive conditions, there was evidence of interaction between party leaders across various levels through social media. "We had interactive discussions, and sometime even had "fights" [serious disagreements] through social media," a member of the CUF opposition party said.

This being said, the study findings show political parties used social media platforms as a medium to conduct research to assess political opinion on certain agenda which they wished to take-up, or obtain feedback from party members, voters, or general citizens. This was aptly communicated across by a ward chairperson of CUF who said "we used social media as a crafty means to informally interact with our friends to know what voter's expectations from our candidates were." A branch youth secretary from CCM said "we used social media to "collect data"." This is an important interactive function involving collection of feedback including data and information from both within and outside political parties. Interestingly, there seemed not to be controls, within the context of the Cyber Security Act, on research and opinion polling as a way of interaction between political parties, party members, and general public. Table 6 below presents channels which were most preferred by political parties to receive feedback from party members, citizens, and voters. It can be seen from Table 6 that political parties were by far most likely to interact through mobile phone SMS services, followed by public rallies/meetings. The reason why these platforms were preferred was well communicated across by a branch secretary from CUF who said "many party members did not have social-media. No party wants to exclude anyone." As

a result, party leaders, especially in rural settings preferred to use tried, and tested means of communication media such as SMS'. This was a less risky means of communication. It required less expensive phone sets, and did not need internet to operate. Phone SMS' had over the years become very affordable and could then be bought as bulk SMS bundles. SMS' were found to be convenient as they did not require sophisticated technology, internet bundle, and did not fall within the ambit of cybercrime laws. It can be well summarized by a Chairperson of a CCM branch that "we used SMS because many people now own a phone." The study findings indicated that public rallies closely followed SMS' as the most preferred media for interaction with voters. A ward-level party official from the ruling CCM said: "no matter what technology comes it cannot totally replace political rallies/public meetings." As mentioned above, political parties sometimes, to a lesser extent, issued questionnaires in hardcopies including in public rallies to obtain feedback from voters. A member of CCM said "we used questionnaires to obtain feedback from party members, general citizens, and voters. We asked them to give feedback if our candidate was accepted (conduct opinion polls)." This was collaborated by a citizen who did not belong to any political party said "there were public rallies in our area and there was freedom for those who attended to ask questions." Another citizen said: "political party officials welcomed questions during campaign meetings or sometimes gave phone numbers where voters can send their questions by SMS/WhatsApp message." A CCM ward-level secretary said "e-mails were usually used to receive and send district-level party reports to higher levels at Region and national level, and to receive documents from national headquarters."

A party member from CHADEMA said "jamii forum had been very useful to obtain information on political affairs including news of political activities during campaigns. I got information directly and instantaneously from jamii forum through my mobile phone." This was confirmed by who reported CCM, CHADEMA and CUF employed various campaign methods such as public rallies, indoor campaigns, mobile campaigns, social media campaign, open discussion forums, e-mails, website, the use of posters and banners and performing arts in communicating campaign messages.

Table 6: Preferred Channels for Obtaining Feedback from Political Party Members, Voters, and Citizens.

Degree	Public Rallies/ Meetings	Survey Questionnaires	Website	E-mail	Mobile Phone SMS
Very Big Extent	55.36	38.89	12	14.29	63.64
Average	21.43	22.22	30	32.65	21.82
Small Extent	10.71	22.22	12	16.33	7.27
Very Small Extent	5.36	11.11	14	14.29	3.64
Never used	7.14	5.56	32	22.45	3.64
Total	100	100	100	100	100

* Based on questionnaire survey to party members from across 5 political parties.

Fundraising

Table 5 above show social media channels were least used for fundraising. The main reason was donors preferred to make clandestine contributions to elections, and past misuse of campaign funds.

Fundraising has been a difficult and controversial area in financing political parties in Tanzania [30-31]. A CCM branch youth secretary said "there was no enthusiasm for the public to contribute to political activities." A ward treasurer from CHADEMA said "for many people social media was not a preferred channel to make contributions to political parties." The study findings show there was a lack of enthusiasm for making contributions to political activities as a whole, and particularly through the use of social media. This was confirmed by a member of CUF who said "because of the 2010 Elections Act, some sponsors to opposition parties preferred to remain anonymous and give their contributions in cash as opposed to sending money through mobile phones." The Elections Act of 2010 was enacted to control financing to political parties during party nominations and elections [32]. There have been concerns both domestically and internationally over the connection between party fundraising, politically sponsored corruption, lobbying, and influencing [33-34]. Political parties in Tanzania were receiving subsidies or operational grants based on proportion of Presidential votes and Members of Parliament obtained from an election. There had been genuine concerns raised by the Controller and Auditor General (CAG) regarding accountability measures concerning almost all major political parties receiving the subsidies over handling contributions such as issuing receipts, or whether funds provided to party officials particularly at sub-national and party branch levels were used for intended purposes. It was therefore no wonder social media was least used for conducting fundraising activities. Table 7 below presents the extent to which political parties used social media for fundraising, according to our questionnaire survey. It shows a comparatively small number of respondents indicated they used social media for fundraising online. Our data suggests opposition parties were leading under the category of political party organisers who had never used social media for conducting fundraising activities or used it to a very small extent. Among those who did fundraise through mobile phones, MMS (Mobile Money Services) and social media were leading platforms for online fundraising. A member of CUF party said "we used M-Pesa (MMS) to receive contributions from our party supporters. Even those who could not come to the office they could now send their contribution through M-Pesa." A treasurer at a CCM branch added "we identified rich people and community members," and "party sponsors and appealed for them to make contributions by M-Pesa." A branch executive committee member from CHADEMA said: "It (a special money transfer mechanism known as USSD) was a safer way for the party headquarters to raise funds from its members. It goes straight into the party headquarters account instead of passing as cash through different hands. The party headquarters preferred this type of contribution." Table 8 below presents a distribution

of the extent to which different types of social media were used for fundraising during general elections. It can be seen in Table 8 above that MMS led as the most preferred media for fundraising by political parties with 21.08 percent who used this service did so to a very big extent. MMS was used in different ways as put across by a ward Secretary from CUF who said "we used mobile phone money services to receive operating funds/grants from our party district headquarters [35]." A ward secretary from CHADEMA said: "we use our mobile phone to send our cost estimate to implement quarterly activities." Social media such as WhatsApp, Instagram and Facebook very closely followed MMS as a digital media platform that was used for fundraising to a very big extent. Several political party officials from both the CCM and opposition said they found social media as an important facilitatory platform for fundraising. Their views can be summarized by what a ward-level party organization secretary from CHADEMA who said that "WhatsApp made it easy for us to create special groups of our sponsors, and contributors. We could then make appeals for funds through sending video and voice clips. Those who wished we acknowledged their contributions in the same WhatsApp group so they can see they were mentioned, acknowledged, and as an assurance through transparency that their contributions had been received and everyone knew about it. Members applause contributors through sending emogi icons". A proper interpretation though is, in practice, these two platforms were linked when it came to fundraising. Political parties appealed for funds through social media; however actual money was transferred through MMS. "When you receive funding through the phone it is safer than social media, as the phone number would be the first obvious point of contact for follow-up said a ward treasurer from CHADEMA." According to Table 8, websites again lead as the least preferred for fundraising with over half of party officials and members in the questionnaire survey said they had never used it for fundraising, even for posting appeal of funds. Although fewer, there were some who used the donation tab in political party websites as said by a ward treasurer from CHADEMA that "party members and sponsors used the party website to make party contributions." Despite the fact most funds were eventually received through MMS, party officials said they never evaluated which media reached the highest number of people with information about fund-raising. This was because people receive appeals for funds from different media than those used for donation.

Other channels which were mentioned to have been used for political fundraising were using loudspeakers mounted on cars, posters, announcements during public rallies [36], private member blogs, during internal party strategizing meetings attended by party leaders, appeals through traditional print and electronic media (radio and newspapers), using party leaders to motivate party members to contribute to a cause, and appeal to community interest groups. This was well said by a branch youth secretary from CCM who said "we used party conferences, meetings, or sent a group of party members to visit a certain area with a specific message about fundraising."

Table 7: Proportion of Political Parties who Used social media in conducting Fundraising.

Degree	CCM	CHADEMA	CUF	Overall (All Respondents)
Very Big Extent	14	9	48	37
Average	19	19	25	28
Small Extent	71	14	0	12
Very Small Extent	0	40	40	9
Never used	0	50	25	14
Total	19	21	31	100

* Based on questionnaire survey to party members from across 5 political parties.

Table 8: Type of Social Media Used for Fundraising.

Degree	Social Media	Mobile Money Services	Website Portal	Other Platforms
Very Big Extent	26	27.08	8.51	15.79
Average	28	29.17	8.51	28.95
Small Extent	8	6.25	17.02	5.26
Very Small Extent	18	18.75	10.64	13.16
Never used	20	18.75	55.32	36.84
Total	100	100	100	100

* Based on questionnaire survey to party members from across 5 political parties.

Transformative Effect of social media

The study findings showed increasing use of social media had a transformative effect on previously exiting party structures. Social media facilitated new forms of virtual meetings through cyberspace involving people who were not statutory members of certain party structures. The majority of party officials and members in the questionnaire survey acknowledged social media had transformed the way they had been organized in conducting political campaign activities by creating new, virtual structures which did not previously exist to emerge. It was mentioned by a CUF Ward chairperson that instead of issues to be decided in formal meetings and committees as it had been the practice, they now "used social media to conduct online meetings and reach real-time decisions when a quick decision had to be made." Such virtual meetings were a clear transformation and departure from statutory party structures. More than three quarters of party officials and members in the questionnaire survey said social media transformed the way their parties organized in implementing political campaigns. Organisation was now more informal, and involved non-statutory auxiliary staff and different levels. Important to note though is the changes were more of an extension of statutory structures rather than their replacement [37]. This connection between new social media structures and extension, not replacement of formal structures was expressed by a CCM ward-level party secretary who said "what structures can you change when the party has a constitution?" However, many political party officials, activists and organisers acknowledged social media

gave rise to informal structures which allowed more inclusive, flexible participation, incorporation of other non-statutory cadres and deviation from formal structures and rules. A ward secretary from CHADEMA said "WhatsApp has really transformed the way we conduct our fundraising activities. We created WhatsApp groups of our party sponsors and frequent contributors. It has made it easier than ever before to send appeal for funds in an instantaneous manner, including through video and voice clips. When contributors sent in their money, they were immediately acknowledged in the WhatsApp group to ensure transparency and as a confirmation the funds had been received and was known to all who were in office. Other members of the group could applause contributors by sending WhatsApp clip art showing clapping of hands." More than half of the study respondents said the use of social media had strengthened party structures from branch to national level. A member of CHADEMA national secretariat said "social media has strengthened our party structure by bringing us closer together in conducting our political activities. It made it possible for us to reach many more people. We were able to plan and execute our campaign activities in a more transparent, participatory, inclusive manner, and quicker." "This was especially true in the case of youth" This proportion rose if those who said it strengthened party structures to an average level are taken into account. This was confirmed by a member of a branch campaign team of ACT who said "it made it easy for party members including party agents in polling stations to work for long hours. We used mobile phones to send them payments, and to receive payments for them from district level."

"We used mobile phone to strengthen implementation of our campaigns by sending them money for purchasing and receiving campaign items such as party flags, load-speakers, and public rally platforms from one geographically party level to another by using social media and mobile phones in ways that were done during implementation of previous campaigns. Procurement of campaign items in this way was not witnessed before [38]. In the past we had to travel physically and verify the items before purchase. This was slow and time consuming" Purchase and distribution of campaign items and materials within political parties was previously closely controlled. This was done to avoid vandalism in case they fell into wrong hands. Communication with party members was one area where there was a demonstrable impact of the way social media transformed party organization during general elections. This was aptly put by a member of CHADEMA's zonal secretariat who said "for the first time, through using WhatsApp, we were able to involve Tanzanian party supporters who were far away, including the USA in planning and implementing our campaign activities. They became active members of our campaign WhatsApp groups without any additional costs at all!" This shows social media had transformed party structures by imposing itself as a dominant medium of conducting political party campaign activities, especially political mobilization, promotion, interaction, and fundraising.

Conclusion

Social media is spreading fast in all aspects of society in Tanzania as in the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa. However rapid adoption of social media across society and particularly by political parties has attracted the development of a restrictive techno-political legal environment. While the restrictions have justification, and founded on international conventions on communication, there was little awareness among their framers on benefits that come with social media use in politics. The study has shown social media helped all main political parties to perform their key functions in conducting political campaign and elections thus contributing to higher goals such as achieving more effective governance, meaningful, peaceful, and informed elections, which ultimately translate to effective plans to achieve long-term and sustainable development goals. The study findings have validated the first hypothesis (H1) showing that despite restrictive cybersecurity laws enacted social media has been effectively institutionalized as a new civic-cyber space to organize political party campaigns during elections in recent years. The study findings have shown social media was appreciated by all political parties both ruling and opposition. This being said, the study findings showed opposition parties were however more restricted by the restrictive techno-political environment as their primary role is to challenge political decisions made by the incumbent with alternative policy positions. The study findings have also shown that increasing use of social media in elections had a transformative effect on the way party structure was organized to conduct political mobilization, promotion of party ideology, promoting both inter-party and intra-party interaction, and fundraising consistent with the study's second hypothesis (H2). At practical level, social media was most extensively used in dissemination of party ideology, mass mobilization during elections, and interaction with voters. It was least used in fund-raising. WhatsApp and Facebook were the most widely used social media platforms with websites and other types of new media being least used. The findings show political parties preferred a multimedia-mix approach involving traditional media such as posters, load-speakers and SMS' in-order to include voters who were digitally excluded. Income, demographics, and location were found to be barriers to ownership of smartphones which support social media. Future social media use by political parties will very much depend to a large extent on developments of the techno-political environment in Tanzania, which itself will depend on interparty, and party-state relations over the next few years. The introduction and enforcement of the Cyber Security, Electronic and Postal Communications (Online Content), and Statistical Acts will be a definitive factor in any future techno-political environmental orientation. This being said, it is likely, given its advantages and deepening use, technology will continue to be used in political activities including elections. It is likely that social media users will increasingly assert for their freedom of expression in cyber-space to an extent that a determination on what is right or wrong in a future techno-political environment will be determined on the basis of how it is demanded by social media users in Tanzania. The study definitively established social media use has been institutionalised in key party functions during election campaigns in Tanzania in accordance with the first hypothesis (H1). Social media use was widespread across party lines, and in an increasing number of campaign functions most notably mobilisation, and interaction with party members, voters, and general citizens as proven by the second hypothesis (H2). The analysis predicts social media will continue to gain traction in future political space in Tanzania. Voters will likely assert their rights for free speech in cyber-space leading to reforms against social media use in political activities. With validation of both study hypotheses in mind, the study informs us of the irreversible nature of social media use in election campaign activities by political parties and a reminder that application of cyber-security laws as they stand remains futile. Future interventions in this area should include capacity strengthening of law enforcers and the judiciary on Cyber Security issues, and direct dialogue between enforcers and political parties. Sociological analysis suggests the same benchmark should be used to evaluate freedom of speech in public social space, as in cyberspace. It is hard to find justification as to why what is safely said in one space should be criminal in another. This Article recommends future research to focus on the extent which application of new international laws in Africa contravenes on others. Further research in this subject area is also needed to conduct further examination on the changing techno-political environment in Africa, and the extent to which it limits social-media use on elections, and political discourse more generally. The Article calls for particular attention to developments on restrictive cybersecurity law in Tanzania, and the extent to which social media users are reacting to protect their freedom for online speech. Further writing should include documentation of case-studies on the extent to which international law has impugned on individual human rights among member states.

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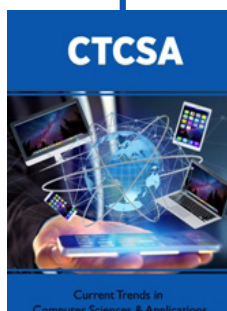
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