



# Social Media Management and Audit Practices in Tanzanian Government Institutions: A Case Study of TCAA and TMA

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## ABSTRACT

This study examines the management of social media in Tanzanian government institutions from an audit perspective, focusing on the Tanzania Civil Aviation Authority (TCAA) and the Tanzania Meteorological Authority (TMA). The study is motivated by the growing reliance on social media for institutional communication and stakeholder engagement, alongside the lack of structured oversight and auditing mechanisms, which can undermine effectiveness and pose information security risks. A mixed-methods approach, predominantly qualitative, was employed, incorporating questionnaires, interviews, document reviews, and observational data to assess social media usage, engagement levels, and governance practices within the selected institutions. Findings indicate notable differences in social media efficiency between the institutions. TMA exhibits high engagement across Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, reflecting deliberate content management and active stakeholder interaction. In contrast, TCAA shows moderate engagement with occasional high interaction, suggesting underutilization of social media potential and gaps in strategic management. The study applies the Uses and Gratifications Theory to interpret these differences, highlighting that effective social media communication relies on content that meets users' informational, social, and participatory needs. The study emphasizes the importance of structured social media governance and auditing as mechanisms to enhance transparency, accountability, and strategic communication in public institutions. It recommends that government agencies establish clear policies and frameworks for content management, implement regular audits, invest in analytics tools, and build the capacity of social media personnel to optimize engagement and responsiveness. Such measures can ensure social media functions as a strategic asset, strengthening institutional credibility, public trust, and sustained stakeholder interaction in the digital era.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Social media has emerged as a critical tool for communication, engagement, and information dissemination in both the private and public sectors. Its pervasive adoption has transformed how individuals, organizations, and governments interact with stakeholders, making it a vital component of modern organizational strategies (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Nyamboga, 2014). Social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, blogs, wikis, podcasts, and social bookmarking sites, facilitate both social and professional communication, allowing organizations to reach broad audiences with immediacy and cost-effectiveness (Nyamboga, 2014; Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974). In the context of government institutions, social media provides opportunities for enhanced transparency, citizen engagement, and real-time feedback, thereby reshaping public sector communication practices (Gervas, 2020; Kamp, 2016).

A social media audit is a systematic process that evaluates all aspects of an organization's social media channels and performance. It helps identify organizational strengths and weaknesses, assess the effectiveness of information dissemination, and provide actionable insights for improvement (AMCIS, 2021). Through auditing, institutions can determine their level of influence, engagement, and responsiveness, allowing management to make evidence-based decisions regarding content strategy, stakeholder communication, and risk mitigation. Despite these advantages, social media management in many government institutions in Tanzania often lacks formal oversight, policies, or audit mechanisms, potentially undermining the effectiveness and security of these platforms (Ngapemba, 2019; Mushi, 2016).

Tanzania has experienced notable growth in information and communication technology (ICT) adoption, despite historical restrictions such as the 1974 ban on electronic computers and televisions. These advancements have been driven by policy reforms, regulatory adjustments, and commercial initiatives since the early 1990s, facilitating the integration of ICT across public and private sectors (URT, 2003). The Tanzanian government has recognized social media as a strategic tool within its e-government initiatives, highlighting its role in promoting public service delivery, citizen participation, and institutional transparency (URT, 2013). Institutions such as the Tanzania Civil Aviation Authority (TCAA) and the Tanzania Meteorological Authority (TMA) have established social media platforms to engage stakeholders, yet there remains limited evidence of systematic audits or governance frameworks guiding their usage (TCAA, 2021; TMA, 2021).

Given the rapid growth and utilization of social media, coupled with the absence of formal auditing and oversight mechanisms, there is a critical need to evaluate social media management from an audit perspective. This study addresses this gap by assessing how government institutions in Tanzania manage social media, with particular attention to audit

practices, content governance, and engagement effectiveness. The central research question guiding this investigation is: How frequently do government institutions post on social media pages, and how is their performance monitored and audited? Understanding these dimensions is essential for improving transparency, accountability, and strategic communication in Tanzanian public institutions.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### Theoretical Review

The theoretical underpinning of this study is based on the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), which provides a framework for understanding how individuals actively select and use media to satisfy specific needs. According to Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch (1974), UGT describes the process by which users of mass media actively and deliberately choose particular media or content to fulfill cognitive, affective, personal, and social needs. This approach emphasizes the agency of the audience, highlighting how people engage with media content to seek information, entertainment, or social interaction. In the context of social media, the theory explains how users select platforms and content that provide gratification, whether through information acquisition, interaction with others, or entertainment (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). By applying UGT, this study examines how government institutions, particularly TCAA and TMA, use social media to attract, retain, and engage audiences, and how the nature of content posted influences stakeholder participation and satisfaction. The theory also provides a basis for understanding how institutional social media strategies can be assessed from an audit perspective, as organizations seek to maximize the impact and effectiveness of their media outputs while meeting the informational and participatory needs of their stakeholders.

### Empirical Review

Empirical studies have documented the rapid adoption and impact of social media across organizational and national contexts. Nyamboga (2014) observed that social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube have become integral to communication globally, facilitating both social and professional interactions. Similarly, Mushi (2016) found that the use of social media at Vodacom Tanzania significantly improved corporate communication by making it more timely, interactive, and cost-effective. Social media allowed the organization to disseminate information broadly without the constraints associated with traditional radio or television channels, enabling greater engagement with both internal and external stakeholders. Ngapemba (2019) further emphasized that social media enhances traditional media operations by facilitating immediate feedback, increasing interactivity, and allowing institutions to

measure audience responses efficiently. These studies underscore the transformative role of social media in improving communication and information flow within organizations.

In the context of government and public institutions, social media has been shown to enhance transparency, service delivery, and citizen engagement. Gervas (2020) reported that government institutions benefit from social media through improved project performance, enhanced communication, and greater flexibility in coordinating teams across geographical boundaries. Social media provides a platform for real-time feedback, enabling institutions to respond effectively to public concerns and improve service delivery. However, empirical evidence also highlights a critical gap: despite widespread usage, there is limited research on the governance, oversight, and auditing of social media in public institutions. This gap is particularly salient in the Tanzanian context, where institutions such as TCAA and TMA actively use social media yet lack formal audit mechanisms or policies guiding content management and oversight (TCAA, 2021; TMA, 2021). The absence of structured social media audits may lead to inefficiencies, confidentiality risks, and missed opportunities for strategic engagement, highlighting the need for studies that examine social media management from an audit perspective.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

This study used a case study design to assess social media management from an audit point of view. This design allowed the researcher to describe and interpret data on the impact of the use of social media in government institutions. Furthermore, the general

purpose of this approach is to comprehensively capture the complexity of human activities, decisions, and interactions. Stake, (1995).

The study used primary data collection methods to obtain information through observation on social media sites, document review, and interviews. Researchers used a mixed approach to analyse both qualitative and quantitative data. Data obtained from the study were analysed using a qualitative and quantitative approach. Qualitative data were analysed thematically, and quantitative data were analysed and presented using tables and images.

### 4. FINDINGS

This chapter presents and analyses key research findings based on the research objective of measuring the efficiencies of social media usage at TCAA and TMA. The data were collected through three research instruments: observation, document review and interviews. The researcher interviewed staff from the communication and public relations departments, reviewed the available documents and carried out observations in the two regulatory authorities, TCAA and TMA. The responses obtained were used to interpret the findings.

The study sought to establish basic data and findings to examine the effectiveness of social media usage at the TCAA and TMA. The findings showed that both TCAA and TMA have realized the efficiencies of social media usage, as both respondents from TCAA and TMA when asked to range between (1-10) in terms of response scale rated to four available social media pages indicate different cumulative frequencies, as stipulated in Table 1 and Table 2 below, respectively.

**Table 1: Efficiency of Social Media Usage at TCAA.**

Organization	Social media	Efficiencies	Response Scale	Response frequency	Cumulative Frequency
TCAA	Instagram	Low	3	1	14.2%
		Medium	5	3	43%
		High	7	2	28.6%
		Highest	9	1	14.2%
	Facebook	Low	3	1	14.2%
		Medium	5	3	43%
		High	7	2	28.6%
		Highest	9	1	14.2%
	Twitter	Low	3	1	14.2%
		Medium	5	3	43%
		High	7	2	28.6%
		Highest	9	1	14.2%
You Tube	Low	3	1	14.2%	
	Medium	5	3	43%	
	High	7	2	28.6%	
	Highest	9	1	14.2%	

Source: Research Data 2021

Key:(1-3) Low, (4-5) Moderate, (6-7) High,(8-10) Highest

**Table 2: Efficiency of Social Media Usage at TMA**

Organization	Social Media	Efficiencies	Response Scale	Response Frequency	Cumulative Frequency	
		Low				
		Medium				
		High	7	5	71%	
		Highest	10	2	29%	
	Facebook	Low				
		Medium				
		High	7	5	71%	
		Highest	10	2	29%	
	Twitter	Low				
		Medium				
		High	7	5	71%	
		Highest	10	2	29%	
	You Tube	Low				
		Medium				
		High	7	5	71%	
		Highest	10	2	29%	

**Source:** Research dData 2021

**Key:** (1-3) Low, (4-5) Moderate (6-7) High, (8-10) Highest

The study sought to evaluate the efficiency of social media usage at the Tanzania Civil Aviation Authority (TCAA) and the Tanzania Meteorological Authority (TMA), with a focus on user engagement across four platforms: Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. The findings demonstrate varying levels of social media engagement at the two institutions, which can be interpreted in terms of both frequency and quality of interaction.

At TCAA, the data revealed a moderate level of engagement across all platforms, with a significant proportion of respondents indicating medium to high engagement. Specifically, on Instagram, the majority of respondents (43%) rated their engagement as medium (Instagram 5), while 28.6% reported high engagement (Instagram 7). Notably, 14.2% of respondents reported the highest engagement level (Instagram 9), indicating that while some users were highly engaged, the overall interaction was not consistent across all respondents. This suggests that TCAA's social media platforms are somewhat effective, but there is room for improvement in terms of engaging a larger segment of their audience more consistently. The distribution of engagement levels on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube closely mirrored those on Instagram, with medium engagement (Instagram 5) being the most frequent response. This pattern suggests that TCAA's social media presence is moderately effective, but engagement does not reach its full potential.

The moderate level of engagement at TCAA could be attributed to several factors, including inconsistent content strategies, a lack of targeted campaigns, or insufficient interaction between the institution and its followers. Given that 43% of respondents reported medium engagement, it is clear that the majority of users find the content either insufficiently engaging or are not motivated to interact frequently. Moreover, the relatively small percentage (14.2%) reporting highest engagement indicates that while there is some level of active user participation, it is likely limited to a niche group of followers, suggesting that TCAA may not be fully leveraging its social media

platforms to achieve widespread, impactful engagement.

In contrast, TMA's social media usage demonstrated significantly higher levels of engagement across the same platforms. On Instagram, 71% of respondents reported high engagement (Instagram 7), while 29% reported the highest level of engagement (Instagram 10). This substantial difference in engagement levels compared to TCAA indicates a more effective social media strategy at TMA, which likely includes stronger content management practices, more frequent interaction with users, and better-targeted communication efforts. The pattern of high and highest engagement levels across Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube further confirms the overall superiority of TMA's social media presence. Such high engagement rates suggest that TMA has successfully cultivated an active and loyal online following, which may result from more engaging content, clearer communication strategies, and a more interactive presence across social media platforms.

Several factors could explain TMA's higher social media efficiency. First, TMA may have invested more in content curation and audience engagement, ensuring that their posts are relevant, timely, and interactive. Second, TMA might have adopted a more proactive approach to social media management, with staff members regularly responding to queries, sharing updates, and creating content that encourages user participation. Third, TMA's greater consistency in posting and content quality could have helped build a stronger sense of community among followers, fostering increased interaction and participation.

The comparative analysis of TCAA and TMA's social media performance reveals notable differences in their engagement levels and overall efficiency. While both institutions use social media platforms extensively, TMA's significantly higher engagement rates reflect a more effective and strategically executed social media strategy. In contrast, TCAA's moderate engagement suggests that while social media is being utilized, the institution has yet to fully harness the potential of these

platforms to foster broader and more consistent interactions with its audience.

The findings imply that TCAA needs to focus on optimizing its social media strategy by improving its content, increasing the frequency of posts, and encouraging greater interaction between the institution and its followers. This could involve developing targeted campaigns, utilizing multimedia content (such as videos, infographics, and interactive posts), and increasing responsiveness to follower comments and messages. Furthermore, TCAA could benefit from conducting social media audits to identify areas for improvement, evaluate the effectiveness of current strategies, and track engagement metrics. Implementing structured social media audits would help the institution assess how well its platforms are performing, ensure that content aligns with organizational goals, and provide actionable insights for enhancing user engagement.

On the other hand, TMA's high social media engagement presents a model for success in public sector communication. The high levels of interaction observed in TMA's social media presence could serve as a benchmark for other government institutions aiming to improve their digital communication strategies. To maintain and further improve engagement, TMA should continue to invest in the quality and variety of content, ensuring it remains relevant and engaging to its audience. Additionally, TMA could explore the use of more advanced social media analytics tools to better understand follower behavior, track content performance, and further refine its approach to audience engagement.

The findings highlight the differential effectiveness of social media usage between TCAA and TMA. While both institutions have made strides in utilizing social media, TMA's higher engagement levels underscore the importance of strategic management, consistency in content delivery, and active audience interaction. The findings suggest that social media audits and enhanced management practices could significantly improve the effectiveness of TCAA's social media platforms, allowing the institution to increase engagement, better serve its stakeholders, and achieve more impactful communication outcomes.

## 5. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate differential levels of social media engagement between TCAA and TMA, with TMA exhibiting consistently higher engagement across Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, while TCAA displayed moderate engagement with sporadic high interaction. These results can be interpreted through the lens of the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), which posits that media users actively seek content that satisfies their cognitive, social, and entertainment needs (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974). In the context of social media usage by public institutions, UGT suggests that effective engagement occurs when institutions provide content that aligns with the needs and expectations of their followers. TMA's higher engagement levels indicate that the institution is more successful in

producing content that gratifies user needs, resulting in more active participation, feedback, and information exchange. Conversely, TCAA's moderate engagement suggests that its social media content may not fully align with the expectations or informational needs of its followers, limiting interaction.

The study's findings align with prior empirical research on social media usage in organizational and public sector contexts. Mushi (2016) observed that social media in Tanzanian corporate communication facilitates timely, interactive, and cost-effective information dissemination, highlighting its potential for enhancing engagement when effectively managed. Similarly, Ngapemba (2019) found that social media positively influences public relations and stakeholder interaction in government agencies by providing a platform for feedback and dialogue. In this study, TMA exemplifies these benefits through high levels of engagement, indicating that the institution is leveraging social media effectively to communicate with the public and respond to stakeholder needs. TCAA's lower engagement, however, reflects the findings of Gervas (2020), who noted that while government institutions recognize the benefits of social media, they often fail to implement strategic management and oversight mechanisms, resulting in inconsistent engagement and underutilized platforms.

The findings also extend the insights of Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), who emphasized that social media is most effective when content is designed to engage users actively, rather than merely broadcast information. TMA's performance suggests a deliberate effort to create content that is interactive and relevant, thereby aligning with the UGT perspective that users participate when their needs are met. On the other hand, TCAA's moderate engagement suggests a more passive social media strategy, where content may be available but not sufficiently tailored to meet user gratifications. This underscores the importance of strategic content management, audience analysis, and ongoing evaluation, including the use of social media audits, to ensure platforms achieve their intended communication objectives.

Furthermore, the findings highlight the importance of auditing social media as a governance and management tool, as posited in the study's theoretical and conceptual framework. By evaluating engagement levels, content effectiveness, and user interaction, social media audits provide organizations with actionable insights to refine strategies, improve transparency, and enhance stakeholder satisfaction (AMCIS, 2021). In the case of TCAA, the moderate engagement levels suggest that an audit could identify gaps in content strategy, posting frequency, and audience targeting, thereby improving alignment with user needs and expectations. TMA's high engagement, while positive, could also benefit from systematic audits to maintain performance, measure the impact of communication strategies, and continuously optimize content for stakeholder satisfaction.

## 6. CONCLUSION

The strategic governance and oversight of social media are critical for maximizing its potential as a tool for transparency, stakeholder engagement, and effective communication in government institutions. Social media should be approached not merely as a platform for information dissemination but as a dynamic mechanism that requires deliberate management to align with institutional objectives and the informational and interactive needs of stakeholders. Drawing on the Uses and Gratifications Theory, it is evident that user engagement depends on content relevance, interactivity, and responsiveness. Without deliberate management and systematic oversight, social media risks underperformance, reduced stakeholder trust, and potential breaches of sensitive information. Integrating structured audits into social media practices provides a systematic approach to evaluating content effectiveness, engagement quality, and alignment with organizational strategy, while simultaneously identifying areas for improvement and mitigating operational risks.

Government institutions, including TCAA and TMA, can enhance the strategic impact of social media by establishing governance frameworks that clearly define content creation, approval, and posting protocols, alongside explicit roles and accountability for social media management. Investing in analytics tools to monitor engagement, understand audience behavior, and inform data-driven adjustments can further optimize communication strategies. Strengthening the capacity of social media personnel and embedding mechanisms for continuous feedback will promote responsiveness and interactive engagement with stakeholders. These measures collectively ensure that social media functions as a strategic asset, fostering public trust, institutional credibility, and sustained, meaningful engagement with diverse audiences, while reinforcing the effectiveness and transparency of institutional communication in the digital era.

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