

Infusing media with data

Twaweza in the news



Highlights:

- Twaweza is contributing significantly to improved public dialogue in the areas of education and governance: articles and clips (print and broadcast) which are based on Twaweza or use Twaweza as a reference are **three times more likely to include data**, as compared to articles which do not reference Twaweza.
- Twaweza-related articles and clips also perform better across other indicators of quality data journalism, although overall, the quality is low: most articles or clips cite only one source of data, few discuss the data, and there are very few visualizations.



1. Introduction

Twaweza aims to contribute to improved public debate, particularly on education and governance. One way in which we do this is by generating and disseminating data and evidence through the media. Twaweza does not train journalists, but in line with quality journalistic standards, we generate, package and help to interpret evidence for public discourse. This write-up presents a brief analysis of Tanzanian print and broadcast media coverage on the topics of education and governance in 2016. It compares the presence and use of data in pieces featuring Twaweza with other media content on education and governance.

2. Methodology

Twaweza receives a daily media monitoring log from an independent source (Ipsos Tanzania), comprising a corporate log (mentions of Twaweza, our programs and products), and a topic-based synthesis on education and governance. The articles included in this analysis were drawn from this media log. In the period 1 January to 31 December 2016, there were a total of 3,109 print articles and 3,344 broadcast pieces covering education and governance issues. In the same period, there were 171 print articles and 121 broadcast clips (radio and television) that directly cited Twaweza – the corporate log.

For this analysis, we selected half (91) of the corporate log print articles, and 24 broadcast clips (2 per month). For comparison, we randomly selected 10 print articles for each month from the general education and governance categories (for a total of 120 comparison print articles), and 2 broadcast clips per month (for a total of 24 comparison clips). Articles and broadcast clips are either labeled as ‘Twaweza’ in this brief denote the corporate log; comparison articles did not reference Twaweza. Each article was analyzed and coded along the following lines: source, language (Kiswahili or English), number of pages, whether the article or clip contained any data, the source of data (and whether there was more than one source), the level of explanation of data (simply stated, explained, or discussed), and whether there was any visualization of the data (i.e. was the data shown in graph, chart or similar) to aid understanding. Data are available at info@twaweza.org.





3. Key Findings

(A) Twaweza articles and broadcast clips on education include data at a much higher rate than general articles

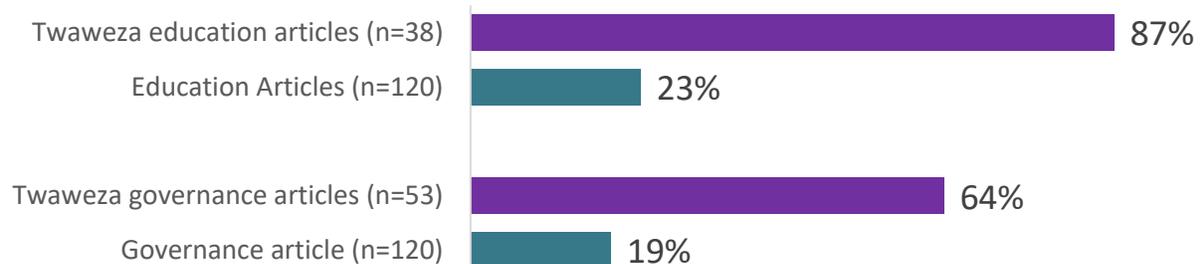
In the sample of 120 education-related general articles, 27 of them (or 23%) included some kind of data. In comparison, in the sample of 38 education-related Twaweza articles, 33 of them (or 87%) included data (Figure 1).

There were 13¹ different publications citing Twaweza, most of them Kiswahili-language newspapers. The publications with most Twaweza articles were Habari Leo (5), Mwananchi (5) and Mtanzania (5).

In terms of broadcast media, out of 24 education-related general clips, 6 of them (or 25%) included data. In comparison, in the sample of 12 education-related Twaweza broadcast clips, all of them included data (Figure 2).

There were seven² different broadcast media outlets citing Twaweza, all of them in Kiswahili on both television and radio. The channels with the most Twaweza content were ITV (4), TBC TAIFA (2), and E_FM (2).

Proportion of print articles which include data, comparing Twaweza and general



¹ Full list and number of Twaweza citations: Habari Leo (5), Mwananchi and Mtanzania (5 each), Jambo Leo, the Citizen and Tanzania Daim (4 each), Raia Tanzania and Majira (3 each), and one citation each from Nipashe, Uhuru, the Guardian and Zanzibar Leo.

² Full list and number of Twaweza citations: ITV (4), E_FM and TBC TAIFA (2 each), and one citation each AZAM2_TV, CHANNEL TEN, RADIO ONE and TIMES FM. Radio media are: E_FM, TBC TAIFA, RADIO ONE and TIMES FM. TV broadcasts are: ITV, AZAM2_TV and CHANNEL TEN.

(B) Twaweza articles and broadcast clips on governance include data at a much higher rate than general articles

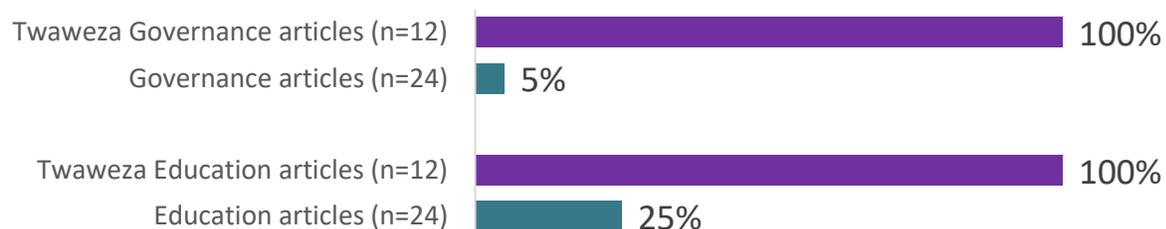
In the sample of 120 governance-related general articles, 23 of them (or 19%) included some kind of data. In comparison, in the sample of 53 governance-related Twaweza articles, 34 of them (or 64%) included data (Figure 1).

There were 13³ different publications citing Twaweza, most of them Kiswahili-language newspapers. The publications with most Twaweza articles were The Guardian (7), followed by Tanzania Daima (4) and Habari Leo (4).

In the sample of 24 governance-related general broadcast clips, 5 of them (21%) include data. In comparison, in the sample of 12 governance-related Twaweza broadcast clips, all of them included data (Figure 2).

There were eight⁴ different channels citing Twaweza, all of them Kiswahili-language media. The media with most Twaweza broadcasts were RFA (3), followed by AZAM2 TV (2) and TV1 (2).

Figure 2: Proportion of broadcast clips which include data, comparing Twaweza and general



(C) Interpretation of data is low overall – most media pieces include only one source of data, tend not to discuss it, and do not provide visualizations to aid understanding.

Most articles include only one source of data. This is true for general media content as well as for the Twaweza corporate log. In the general media clips and articles (print and broadcast), all of the 61 articles or clips which referenced any data only made use of a single source. Of these, 53 cited government data. In the 91 Twaweza articles and clips (print and broadcast), only 8 cited more than one source.

When data features in the article it is usually explained, not merely stated; however, few media pieces discuss the data. In both general print and broadcast coverage of education and open government, as well as in the Twaweza media content, the data tend to be explained – that is, some interpretation or context was provided for the data. The Twaweza corporate log included several pieces with more than one source of data, and in these cases, the data were not only explained but also discussed (for example, comparing

³ Full list and number of Twaweza citations: The Guardian (7), Tanzania Daima) and Habari Leo (each 4), Majira, the Citizen and Uhuru (each 3) Jambo Leo, Mwananchi and Mtanzania (2 each), Raia Tanzania and (3 each), and one citation each from Nipashe, Sunday News and Mwanahalisi.

⁴ Full list and number of Twaweza citations: RFA (3), AZAM2TV and TV1 (each 2), and one citation each from CLOUDS TV, EAST AFRICA, MAGIC FM, STAR TV and TIMES FM. Radio broadcast are: RFA, EAST AFRICA, MAGIC FM and TIMES FM. TV broadcasts are : AZAM2TV ,TV1, CLOUDS TV and STAR TV

and contrasting one data point or data source with another).

In the articles reviewed, data was almost never visualized (i.e. presented in a graph or chart). Only four pieces in the Twaweza corporate log included data visualization, and there were none in any of the general articles or broadcast clips.

4. Concluding thoughts

This brief analysis suggests that Twaweza contributes data and evidence to public discourse and debate in the education and governance domains. Articles which do not reference Twaweza use data and evidence much less. Other dimensions of quality journalism measured in this exercise – namely, citing more than one source of data, discussing the data, and using visualizations (such as graphs and charts) to better explain the data – are generally lacking in all articles reviewed.

