# Dominant Reporting Angles on Presidential Candidates in the 2020 Zanzibar General Election: A Comparative Analysis of Mwananchi and Zanzibar Leo Newspapers

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**Abstract: Media influence plays a key role in shaping voter perceptions, especially during elections. It is for this reason that the researcher set out to examine how two major Tanzanian newspapers, *Mwananchi* and *Zanzibar Leo*, framed presidential candidates during the 2020 Zanzibar General Election. Guided by three objectives— identifying dominant reporting angles, analyzing candidate-specific frames, and assessing the prominence given to each candidate—the study applied Framing Theory to explore media influence on the electorate. A total of 160 newspaper issues, split evenly between *Mwananchi* and *Zanzibar Leo*, covering the election period from August 26 to October 28, 2020, were analyzed using thematic and content analysis. The findings revealed distinct patterns: *Mwananchi* focused heavily on Dr. Hussein Ali Mwinyi, the Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) candidate, presenting him positively through narratives of success and governance confidence, while opposition candidates were framed negatively or received less attention. In contrast, *Zanzibar Leo* offered a broader critique of the electoral process but maintained a favourable bias towards CCM candidates, particularly Mwinyi. Despite these differences, both newspapers framed CCM and its candidates dominantly, influencing political discourse in their favour. The study concluded that the framing choices of these newspapers significantly impacted voter perceptions and the democratic process in Zanzibar. It recommends more balanced and ethical reporting to ensure fair representation of all candidates in future elections.**

Keywords: Media Framing, Media Coverage, Political Reporting, Political Narrative, and Election Coverage

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Media framing has become a critical aspect in influencing elections globally, particularly in shaping public perceptions of presidential candidates. In election cycles, the framing of candidates through media narratives can deeply affect voters' opinions and ultimately sway electoral outcomes (Abdalla, 2020). This holds for both established democracies and emerging ones, where media coverage often reflects deeper political dynamics. In Africa, where the media landscape is often influenced by political and historical contexts, the intersection between media and politics presents unique challenges and opportunities for democratic governance. The 2020 presidential election in Zanzibar provides a significant case to examine how media framing impacted public perceptions in a politically charged environment characterized by deep-rooted tensions and media biases.

The 2020 Zanzibar General Election took place against the backdrop of long-standing political tensions, with the country's political landscape shaped by historical grievances and a fragile peace agreement following the contested 2015 election. The presence of 17 candidates, including key figures like Dr Hussein Mwinyi of the ruling Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) and Malim Seif Hamad of the opposition ACT-Wazalendo, made the election highly competitive. Zanzibar's electoral politics, often marked by disputes over fairness, received widespread media coverage, particularly in the state-controlled *Zanzibar Leo* newspaper and the privately-owned *Mwananchi* newspaper, each shaping the narrative in different ways.

As scholars such as Adiguzel, Romero, and Wibbels (2022) have noted, the global trend of media repression and censorship, especially in politically volatile regions, impacts the integrity of elections. In many Sub-Saharan African countries, including Zanzibar, journalists face significant obstacles such as censorship, legal persecution, and threats to their safety, undermining the role of the press in supporting transparent electoral processes (Abdalla, 2020). This dynamic plays out during election campaigns, where the media's role in shaping political discourse becomes both pivotal and precarious. In Zanzibar, the state-controlled media's influence—through selective

reporting, framing of candidates, and editorial biases—raises critical questions about its role in promoting fair and democratic elections.

The 2020 election was particularly significant due to the deepened public mistrust that followed the flawed 2015 election. With the creation of a Government of National Unity (GNU) as a response to the 2015 crisis, there was considerable pressure on both the Zanzibar Electoral Commission (ZEC) and the media to ensure transparency and fairness in the 2020 electoral process. Yet, concerns about bias persisted, especially in the coverage by state media. According to Kapilima (2023), *Zanzibar Leo*'s reporting favoured the ruling CCM, often marginalizing opposition voices. The newspaper's framing of the ruling party as the harbinger of stability and progress contrasted with its portrayal of opposition figures, reinforcing existing political divides and shaping voter perceptions.

*Zanzibar Leo*, as the government's primary news outlet, holds significant sway in framing the political narrative. By favouring certain candidates and downplaying the activities of others, it played a role in how the public viewed the legitimacy of the election and the suitability of candidates. In contrast, *Mwananchi*, a private outlet with a broader reach across Tanzania, offered alternative framing. Its coverage of the 2020 election provided a more diverse set of perspectives, highlighting opposition voices and scrutinizing the ruling party's record. This comparative analysis of the two newspapers offers insights into how different media outlets shape political narratives and public perceptions.

The role of the media in shaping electoral outcomes cannot be overstated, as elections are not only about political candidates but also about how voters perceive those candidates through the lenses of the media. As Gondwe and White (2022) observed, political rallies and media appearances are opportunities for candidates to strategically frame their narratives, portraying themselves as champions of public interest while casting their opponents in a negative light. This strategic use of media further complicates its role as an impartial platform for political discourse.

The objective of this study is to compare how *Mwananchi* and *Zanzibar Leo* framed the presidential candidates during the 2020 Zanzibar General Election. By analyzing the coverage and identifying dominant reporting angles, this research aims to uncover the extent to which media biases influence public perceptions and the broader democratic process. The

study will contribute to the understanding of the media's role in elections, particularly in emerging democracies like Zanzibar, where media ownership and political interests often intersect.

In conclusion, the 2020 Zanzibar General Election was more than a political contest; it was a reflection of the complex dynamics between media, politics, and public trust. The media's role in framing candidates and shaping electoral narratives is central to understanding the broader challenges facing Zanzibar's democracy. Through a comparative analysis of *Mwananchi* and *Zanzibar Leo*, this study seeks to explore how media framing influenced public perceptions and what this reveals about the relationship between media and politics in Zanzibar. Ultimately, the findings will contribute to a deeper understanding of the media's impact on democratic processes in Zanzibar and provide valuable insights as the country prepares for the 2025 elections.

## 2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Theoretical Framework

The Framing Theory, originally developed by sociologist Erving Goffman (1974), asserts that the media does not simply present facts but actively shapes reality by emphasizing certain aspects of an issue or event. This theory suggests that individuals perceive and interpret the world around them through the "frames" that the media constructs. Frames help organize and structure information, influencing how audiences understand and respond to it (Entman, 1993). The theory posited that the way media presents a story—by highlighting specific elements—guides public perception and decision-making, often without the audience's awareness.

Key assumptions of the theory include the idea that frames determine the salience of issues by focusing attention on specific aspects while downplaying others. This shaping process affects how the audience interprets information, assigns meaning, and forms opinions. In the context of elections, media framing can influence public perceptions of candidates by emphasizing particular traits or controversies (Chong & Druckman, 2007).

However, Framing Theory has faced criticism for its lack of a clear definition and measurement tools, making empirical studies challenging. Some scholars argue that it overlooks the agency of audiences, who can interpret media messages in diverse ways based on

their backgrounds and prior beliefs (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007).

In the case of the 2020 Zanzibar General Election, this theory is relevant as it provides a framework for analyzing how *Mwananchi* and *Zanzibar Leo* newspapers framed the presidential candidates. By examining the tone, narrative structures, and language used, this study uncovers the media's role in shaping public perceptions, influencing voter attitudes, and potentially affecting the election outcome.

2.2 Empirical Literature Review

Sakti and Meindrasari (2023) analyzed the framing of Indonesia's 2019 presidential election by comparing *Republika* and *Media Indonesia*. Their qualitative study, using the Zhong Dang and Pan Kosicki framing model, revealed significant ideological differences, even though *Republika* maintained a consistent editorial stance. They found that media ownership and political affiliations influenced the portrayal of Joko Widodo's campaign. This research highlights the broader global context of media framing, but the geopolitical environment of Indonesia is different from Zanzibar, as are the electoral dynamics. The current study, therefore, seeks to provide a more localized perspective on Zanzibar's media landscape during the 2020 elections, focusing specifically on *Mwananchi* and *Zanzibar Leo*.

M'Cormack-Hale and Dome (2021) surveyed perceptions of media fairness in African elections. They found that nearly half of the respondents believed media coverage to be biased or only occasionally fair. While this study offers valuable insights into public sentiment toward media coverage across Africa, it did not delve into specific framing techniques or media outlets. The current research addresses this gap by analyzing the framing of Zanzibar's 2020 elections through a focused examination of two prominent newspapers.

Jing and Zha (2020) compared election reporting in *The Straits Times* and *Le Monde*, uncovering differences in framing strategies. The *Le Monde*'s greater focus on issue-based reporting contrasts with the commonly used horse-race frame in election coverage. This study is relevant to understanding the broader theoretical framework of media framing but differs from the current study's emphasis on local media in Zanzibar.

Behnke (2019) explored international news frames of presidential elections in Nigeria, Kenya, and Zimbabwe, highlighting how recurring themes like corruption and violence perpetuate negative stereotypes of African democracies. While this study contributes to understanding how global media frames African elections, the focus on international outlets contrasts with the current study's investigation of local media frames within the specific context of Zanzibar.

Adiguzel et al. (2022) examined how African newspapers often align their editorial tone with government preferences, reducing critical coverage of ruling parties. This study's focus on media independence and bias provides important context, but it does not specifically explore how the media frames presidential candidates, which is the key focus of the current research.

In summary, while previous studies provide valuable insights into media framing in global and African elections, there is limited research specifically focusing on Zanzibar's media landscape and its coverage of the 2020 general elections. The current study addresses this gap by conducting a comparative analysis of *Mwananchi* and *Zanzibar Leo*, examining how each newspaper framed presidential candidates, and how this might reflect broader trends in media behavior during Zanzibar's electoral process.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a qualitative approach, which was well-suited for analyzing media framing in newspaper articles. The qualitative method enabled an in-depth exploration of how the newspapers constructed narratives around the presidential candidates in the 2020 Zanzibar general election. This approach allowed for a nuanced understanding of the underlying messages and perspectives that shaped public perceptions.

A case study design was employed, focusing on two newspapers, *Mwananchi* and *Zanzibar Leo*. This design facilitated a thorough analysis of the specific ways these newspapers framed the candidates. By examining these two publications, the study identified dominant reporting angles, contributing to a comparative understanding of media coverage during the election period.

A purposive sampling technique was used to select a sample of 180 newspaper copies, 90 from each

publication, covering the period from August 26 to October 28, 2020. The unit of analysis was individual articles, including editorials, news reports, and feature stories, as these were key to identifying the dominant framing techniques employed by each newspaper.

Data was collected through a documentary review of the selected newspaper articles. Thematic analysis was employed to analyze the data, allowing for the identification of recurring themes and patterns in the portrayal of presidential candidates. This method provided insights into the framing strategies used by *Mwananchi* and *Zanzibar Leo* and how these influenced public narratives during the 2020 Zanzibar general election.

## 4.0 FINDINGS

This section provides a comparative analysis of the dominant reporting angles on presidential candidates in the 2020 Zanzibar General Election as presented by two major newspapers, *Mwananchi* and *Zanzibar Leo*. Both publications covered a variety of topics related to the election, but each focused on different aspects of the candidates, particularly in terms of their political affiliations and electoral promises.

### 4.2.1 *Mwananchi* Reporting Trends

*Mwananchi* predominantly focused on the successes and declarations of Dr. Hussein Ali Mwinyi, the presidential candidate from the ruling Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) party. The newspaper frequently highlighted Mwinyi's programs, promises to key sectors like small-scale mining, and his confidence in continuing the party's achievements. Reporting on opposition candidates was comparatively minimal, with most coverage centring on challenges they faced, including health-related issues.

*Analysis of Reporting Angles in Mwananchi*

| Date | Headline | Reporting Angle |
|---|---|---|
| July 1, 2020 | "Dr. Hussein Ali Mwinyi the sole CCM presidential candidate; Warns presidential candidates in Zanzibar" | Emphasis on Mwinyi's dominance and caution to opposition candidates |
| July 1, 2020 | "Mwinyi returns the form; boasts of implementing various projects" | Highlighting Mwinyi's achievements and confidence |
| September 9, 2020 | "NEC yaliamsha" | Focus on the National Electoral Commission (NEC) and the electoral process |
| September 9, 2020 | "Bado ngoma mbichi ACT kumwachia Lissu Urais" | Reporting on the opposition's challenges |
| September 15, 2020 | "Hussein Mwinyi aahidi neema kwa wachimbaji wadogo wa madini" | Mwinyi's promises to small-scale miners |
| October 8, 2020 | "Wiki ya kucheka, kununa CCM" | Commentary on CCM's internal dynamics |
| October 8, 2020 | "Nguzo nne nyuma ya mafanikio ya Mwinyi" | Focus on the factors behind Mwinyi's success |
| October 20, 2020 | "Seif: Nitaunganisha Zanzibar" | Opposition leader Maalim Seif Sharif Hamad's unification promise |
| October 27, 2020 | "ACT wazungmzia afya ya Maalim Seif Sharif Hamad" | Reporting on Maalim Seif's health status |

July 1, 2020: Hussein Mwinyi's Dominance and Cautionary Messages

On July 1, 2020, *Mwananchi* published two headlines emphasizing Dr. Hussein Ali Mwinyi's dominance in the political arena. The first headline, *"Dr. Hussein Ali Mwinyi the sole CCM presidential candidate; Warns presidential candidates in Zanzibar,"* underscored Mwinyi's leadership within CCM and his cautionary message to other candidates. This coverage stressed Mwinyi's consolidated power and positioned him as a formidable contender. The second headline, *"Mwinyi returns the form; boasts of implementing various projects,"* highlighted Mwinyi's confidence in continuing his successful track record, further cementing his image as a capable leader.

September 9, 2020: Focus on Electoral Dynamics and Opposition Challenges

The headlines on September 9, 2020, reflected *Mwananchi's* dual focus on electoral governance and opposition struggles. *"NEC yaliamsha"* emphasized the role of the National Electoral Commission (NEC) in maintaining transparency in the election. In contrast, *"Bado ngoma mbichi ACT kumwachia Lissu Urais"* shed light on the internal difficulties facing the opposition ACT party, which appeared to lack cohesion. By juxtaposing these two angles, *Mwananchi* offered a balanced view of both institutional processes and political challenges.

September 15, 2020: Promises to Small-Scale Miners

The headline *"Hussein Mwinyi aahidi neema kwa wachimbaji wadogo wa madini"* focused on Mwinyi's campaign promise to uplift small-scale miners. This angle highlighted Mwinyi's appeal to a specific economic group, thereby demonstrating his attention to voter concerns beyond his party's platform.

October 8, 2020: Internal Dynamics of CCM

On October 8, 2020, *Mwananchi* featured headlines that delved into CCM's internal workings. *"Wiki ya kucheka, kununa CCM"* provided commentary on the internal conflicts within the ruling party, while *"Nguzo nne nyuma ya mafanikio ya Mwinyi"* explored the pillars of Mwinyi's success. These reports presented a multifaceted view of CCM's internal politics, offering insights into both challenges and achievements.

October 20 and 27, 2020: Opposition Leaders and Health Status

The opposition received limited but focused coverage. On October 20, 2020, the headline *"Seif: Nitaunganisha Zanzibar"* presented Maalim Seif Sharif Hamad as a unifier with a vision for the future of Zanzibar. However, by October 27, the focus shifted to Seif's health, with the headline *"ACT wazungmzia afya ya Maalim Seif Sharif Hamad"* raising concerns about his ability to lead. This combination of positive and negative coverage reflected the mixed portrayal of opposition candidates.

In conclusion, *Mwananchi*'s reporting leaned heavily in favour of Mwinyi and CCM, with occasional critical coverage of the opposition. This approach reinforced Mwinyi's dominance while providing a selective, limited view of opposition candidates.

4.2.2 Reporting Angles in *Zanzibar Leo*

In contrast to *Mwananchi*, *Zanzibar Leo* adopted a more critical stance toward political conduct, with a significant focus on administrative issues and procedural shortcomings. This newspaper's coverage also highlighted CCM's strong position, yet offered more critical insights into the political process.

*Analysis of Reporting Angles in Zanzibar Leo*

| Date | Headline | Reporting Angle |
|------|----------|-----------------|
| August 26, 2020 | "Mudslinging at political forums; NEC confirms presidential candidates as two fail to return forms" | Criticism of political conduct and administrative inefficiencies |
| August 26, 2020 | "Kanuni za uchaguzi na siku 63 za mikutano ya kampeni" | Coverage of election regulations and campaign timelines |
| October 1, 2020 | "Dk. Shein atuma salamu za pongezi China" | Highlighting President Shein's international diplomacy |
| October 1, 2020 | "Utafiti wawaweka kileleni wagombea" | Survey results favoring CCM candidates |
| October 2, 2020 | "President Shein assures protection of Union; slams other candidates" | Shein's stance on the Union and criticisms of rivals |
| October 3, 2020 | "Polepole: CCM imekosa ushindani" | Commentary on CCM's lack of competition |
| October 3, 2020 | "Wananchi waeleza matumaini kwa Mwinyi" | Public expressions of hope for Hussein Mwinyi |
| October 4, 2020 | "Dk Hussein Mwinyi Atikisa Zanzibar" | Highlighting Hussein Mwinyi's impact in Zanzibar |

| October 6, 2020 | "Dkt. Mwinyi promises to address employees' challenges" | Mwinyi's promises to address workforce issues |
|---|---|---|
| October 10, 2020 | "Mwinyi Kuwainua wafanyabiashara" | Mwinyi's promises to support businesspeople |
| October 17, 2020 | "Dk Shein: Wanyimeni kura wahubiri chuki" | Shein's call to deny votes to candidates who spread hatred |

August 26, 2020: Criticism of Political Conduct and Administrative Issues

The August 26 headline *"Mudslinging at political forums; NEC confirms presidential candidates as two fail to return forms"* provided a critical assessment of the political behaviour of candidates and procedural inefficiencies. This article suggested concerns about the integrity of the electoral process and raised questions about administrative competence.

October 1, 2020: Highlighting Diplomatic Gestures

*Zanzibar Leo* also focused on the international dimension of Zanzibar's politics. On October 1, 2020, the headline *"Dk. Shein atuma salamu za pongezi China"* highlighted President Shein's diplomatic outreach, portraying him as a leader with strong international ties.

October 2, 2020: Shein's Stance on the Union

The October 2 headline *"President Shein assures protection of Union; slams other candidates"* provided insights into Shein's commitment to the Union while simultaneously criticizing rival candidates. This dual angle reinforced Shein's status as a protector of national unity while discrediting his opponents.

In summary, *Zanzibar Leo*'s coverage included more critical reflections on political conduct and administrative processes compared to *Mwananchi*. However, it also favoured CCM candidates, particularly Mwinyi, but offered a broader perspective on political dynamics.

## 5.0 DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

### 5.1 Media Ownership and Political Affiliations

Sakti and Meindrasari (2023) analyzed the framing of Indonesia's 2019 presidential election, revealing that media ownership and political affiliations played a crucial role in shaping the portrayal of candidates. Similarly, the current study observed that *Mwananchi* largely focused on Dr. Hussein Ali Mwinyi, the Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) candidate, with positive angles highlighting his achievements and electoral promises. The coverage also minimized attention on opposition candidates, primarily focusing on their challenges, such as health issues. This reflects how local media in Zanzibar aligned with government or ruling party preferences, resonating with Sakti and Meindrasari's findings on media bias due to ownership and political leanings. *Mwananchi*, like *Republika* in Indonesia, portrayed the ruling party in a favourable light, likely influenced by political factors.

However, a significant distinction arises in Zanzibar's political context. Unlike Indonesia, where media ownership had broader ideological implications, the framing of Zanzibar's 2020 general election in *Mwananchi* appeared to emphasize candidate dominance, particularly Mwinyi's, over specific ideological debates. This underscores the localized nature of media framing in Zanzibar's elections, focusing on personal leadership qualities rather than ideological divides.

### 5.2 Perception of Media Fairness and Bias

M'Cormack-Hale and Dome (2021) surveyed media fairness in African elections, revealing that nearly half of the respondents believed media coverage to be biased or occasionally fair. The findings from the current study corroborate this perception, especially in the case of *Mwananchi*. The newspaper heavily favoured Mwinyi, often depicting him as a dominant and capable leader while providing limited and mostly negative coverage of opposition candidates like Maalim Seif Sharif Hamad. This biased portrayal of political candidates aligns with M'Cormack-Hale and Dome's findings on public skepticism toward media impartiality during elections in Africa.

While M'Cormack-Hale and Dome (2021) offered broad insights into African media perceptions, the current study provides a more detailed examination of media framing techniques. The coverage in *Mwananchi* displayed characteristics of biased reporting, selectively presenting stories that reinforced

the ruling party's strength, thus contributing to an uneven playing field for the opposition. This contrasts with *Zanzibar Leo*, which provided more balanced coverage, although it still leaned toward CCM candidates.

5.3 Framing Strategies: Issue-Based vs. Horse-Race Frames

Jing and Zha (2020) compared election reporting in *The Straits Times* and *Le Monde*, finding that issue-based reporting was more prominent in *Le Monde*, while horse-race framing dominated *The Straits Times*. In the current study, *Mwananchi* utilized both issue-based and horse-race frames, particularly emphasizing Mwinyi's achievements and future promises, such as his plans for small-scale miners. This suggests that *Mwananchi* adopted a mixed-framing approach, promoting Mwinyi's policies while simultaneously focusing on his assured victory. *Zanzibar Leo*, on the other hand, leaned more toward issue-based reporting, as seen in its focus on administrative matters and political conduct.

This difference in framing reflects the newspapers' editorial priorities. *Mwananchi* appeared more concerned with projecting Mwinyi's dominance, while *Zanzibar Leo* presented a broader critique of the political process. Therefore, while Jing and Zha's (2020) findings are relevant to the framing strategies identified in this study, the localized context of Zanzibar's elections influenced the extent to which each newspaper adopted issue-based versus horse-race frames.

5.4 International vs. Local Media Framing

Behnke (2019) explored international news frames of African presidential elections, highlighting recurring themes like corruption and violence that perpetuate negative stereotypes. The current study focused on local media in Zanzibar, which did not engage with these negative international narratives. Instead, both *Mwananchi* and *Zanzibar Leo* concentrated on portraying the candidates in terms of their promises, achievements, and leadership qualities. While opposition candidates were occasionally portrayed negatively, this did not extend to sensationalist frames like corruption or violence, which were prevalent in international media as noted by Behnke.

This suggests that local media in Zanzibar maintained a more neutral or constructive focus on the electoral process, despite some inherent biases. The absence of overtly negative framing, such as that seen in international media, highlights the importance of distinguishing between local and global media portrayals of African elections.

5.5 Media Independence and Critical Reporting

Adiguzel et al. (2022) examined how African newspapers often align their editorial tone with government preferences, reducing critical coverage of ruling parties. This trend was evident in the current study, particularly in *Mwananchi's* coverage, where Mwinyi and the CCM received overwhelmingly favourable treatment. This reduction in critical reporting aligns with Adiguzel et al.'s findings, suggesting a lack of media independence when it comes to reporting on ruling parties in Africa. *Zanzibar Leo* also favoured CCM candidates but provided a more critical reflection on the political process and administrative issues.

Overall, the findings from this study affirm the broader patterns of media bias and selective reporting in African elections, as highlighted by Adiguzel et al. (2022). However, the current research adds to the literature by focusing specifically on Zanzibar's media landscape and demonstrating how even critical outlets like *Zanzibar Leo* are not immune to editorial bias.

6.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the findings of this study on the framing of presidential candidates in the 2020 Zanzibar general election resonate with several empirical studies on media coverage in elections. Both *Mwananchi* and *Zanzibar Leo* reflected broader trends of media bias, influenced by political affiliations and ownership, yet their approaches differed in the framing of electoral narratives. While *Mwananchi* favoured a horse-race frame highlighting Mwinyi's dominance, *Zanzibar Leo* adopted a more issue-based and critical perspective, though still reflecting a preference for the ruling party. This localized analysis of media framing contributes to the understanding of how African media outlets cover elections, particularly in the unique context of Zanzibar's political environment.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings from the comparative analysis of *Mwananchi* and *Zanzibar Leo* newspapers'

reporting angles during the 2020 Zanzibar General Election, it is recommended that media outlets strive to maintain a balanced approach in their political coverage by providing more equitable visibility to both ruling and opposition candidates. While newspapers need to highlight key electoral promises and achievements, particularly those related to the ruling party, it is equally essential to offer comprehensive coverage of opposition candidates and critical perspectives on the electoral process. This would enhance the public's ability to make informed decisions, promote transparency, and encourage fair democratic practices. Furthermore, newspapers should critically address both positive and negative aspects of political parties and candidates to foster a more robust and inclusive political discourse.

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