THE NGO ACT AND THE OPERATIONAL SECURITY OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL IN UGANDA

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Declaration

I, **Ambrose Walubo,** declare that this dissertation is my original work and has never been presented to any other University for an academic award. For any material, which is not my original work, the authors have been acknowledged.

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This dissertation has been submitted for examination with my approval as the university supervisor

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Dedication

To my mother and father for their blessings and exhortation, my beloved wife and our wonderful children, for their encouragement and prayers. To my sisters and brothers, and my friends for their continuous support and encouragement, I dedicate this dissertation.

.

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I would like to express my deep and sincere gratitude to my lecturers and my thesis supervisor, Dr. Anne Abaho for her invaluable guidance throughout this research. Her dynamism, vision, sincerity and motivation have deeply inspired me. It was a great privilege to work and study under her guidance.

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between the NGO legal framework, specifically the Non-Governmental Organizations Act, 2016, and the operational security of Amnesty International in Uganda. The study sought to: examine the effect of registration requirements under the NGO Act on the operational security of Amnesty International; assess the impact of funding restrictions imposed by the Act on the organization's operational security; and analyze the influence of reporting and disclosure obligations on operational security. The study adopted a concurrent mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative techniques, and employed a correlational research design. A sample size of 45 respondents was selected from Amnesty International staff and related stakeholders.

Key findings revealed statistically significant negative relationships between the NGO Act's regulatory dimensions and operational security. Registration requirements had a strong negative correlation with operational security ($r = -.683$, $p < .001$), and regression analysis showed they explained 46.6% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.466$). Funding restrictions demonstrated an even stronger negative correlation ($r = -.715$, $p < .001$), accounting for 51.1% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.511$). Reporting and disclosure obligations had the most severe impact, with a correlation of ($r = -.731$, $p < .001$), explaining 53.4% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.534$). The study concluded that while the NGO Act was intended to foster an enabling environment for NGOs, its implementation had instead introduced substantial operational insecurity for international human rights organizations.

The study recommended that the Ugandan government and stakeholders revise the NGO Act to streamline registration procedures, remove unnecessary funding restrictions, and ensure that reporting obligations do not compromise operational autonomy. Strengthening legal safeguards to protect NGO independence while ensuring accountability was identified as essential for preserving the operational security of international organizations such as Amnesty International.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0.Introduction

This chapter introduces the study by providing a general overview of the research focus. It begins with the background to the study, which sets the context by examining the nature of the NGO Act and its implications on the operational environment of international non-governmental organizations such as Amnesty International in Uganda. The chapter then presents the statement of the problem, which highlights the research gap and the specific challenges posed by the NGO Act on Amnesty International's operational security. The purpose of the study and its specific objectives are subsequently outlined, followed by the research questions and hypotheses that guided the investigation. The significance of the study is also discussed, indicating the scholarly, policy, and practical contributions the research intends to make. Finally, the scope of the study is explained in terms of the thematic, geographical, and temporal boundaries within which the research was conducted.

1.1. Background to the study

This section consists of the conceptual, theoretical, historical, and contextual backgrounds discussed below:

1.1.1. Conceptual Background

This section focuses on two key concepts, including the concept of NGO Legal Framework and operational security of organizations.

The Concept of the NGO Act

This study is conceptually anchored in the understanding of the NGO Act as the principal legislative instrument governing the operation of non-governmental organizations in Uganda. More specifically, the NGO Act, 2016, outlines the legal conditions under which NGOs are registered, monitored, regulated, and sanctioned. While several scholars have described NGO legal frameworks in general terms (Salamon & Anheier, 1997; Rutzen, 2015; Van der Borgh &

Terwindt, 2012), this study narrows its focus to the Ugandan NGO Act, treating it as the independent variable.

From a conceptual standpoint, the NGO Act can be understood to comprise four key constructs:

1. **Registration and Licensing Requirements** – which determine whether and how NGOs, including international organizations, are legally recognized to operate.
2. **Reporting and Compliance Obligations** – including financial reporting, disclosure requirements, and submission of activity reports, which affect transparency but also create administrative burdens.
3. **Funding and Resource Regulations** – provisions governing access to, and use of, foreign or domestic funding, which directly impact the operational independence of NGOs.
4. **Monitoring, Supervision, and Enforcement Mechanisms** – which include inspections, suspensions, or deregistration powers vested in regulatory authorities, reflecting both administrative oversight and potential political control.

This construct-based view of the NGO Act recognizes that the law is not merely a neutral governance tool but also a potential instrument of political influence. Accordingly, in this study, the NGO Act is defined as: *the set of legislative provisions and administrative practices in Uganda that regulate NGO registration, funding, reporting, and operational conduct, with implications for both enabling and constraining civil society activity*.

The Concept of Operational Security

Operational Security refers to the ability of organizations to sustain their activities, protect their assets, and safeguard their mission against a range of external and internal threats. Scholars have conceptualized it variously as information protection (Shire & Daukantas, 2003), risk management (Kilpatrick, 2011), continuity of operations (Perrin, 2007), and negotiated political access (Duffield, 2012). While these definitions capture different dimensions, a holistic understanding requires recognizing operational security as a multidimensional construct.

For the purposes of this study, operational security is conceptualized around four interrelated

constructs:

1. **Physical Security** – the safety and protection of personnel, facilities, and assets from physical harm or disruption.
2. **Legal and Regulatory Security** – the assurance that the organization can function without arbitrary or disproportionate restrictions arising from laws, policies, or selective enforcement.
3. **Political Security** – the degree to which the organization can carry out its mandate without intimidation, surveillance, or political interference from state or non-state actors.
4. **Organizational Continuity and Resilience** – the capacity of the organization to maintain its mission, funding flows, and operational presence despite external pressures or restrictive environments.

This study therefore adopts a comprehensive definition of operational security: *the ability of an organization to safeguard its personnel, assets, legal standing, and mission continuity against physical, legal, political, and logistical threats, thereby enabling the pursuit of its objectives without undue interference or compromise*.

1.1.2. Theoretical Background

This study was underpinned by Regulatory Governance Theory, which provides a nuanced understanding of how regulatory regimes operate in practice, focusing not merely on statutory texts but also on dynamic interactions among multiple actors and enforcement styles. Regulatory governance is characterized by a polycentric distribution of authority, wherein rule-making and enforcement responsibilities are dispersed among state agencies, industry bodies, and sometimes civil-society or market actors, rather than monopolized by a single central regulator (Levi-Faur, 2005). This diffusion of power reflects an "ecology" of governance, in which public and private entities share normative and coercive functions (Gunningham & Grabosky, 1998).

Different regulatory styles coexist along a continuum from traditional command-and-control measures (prescriptive rules and sanctions) to more flexible, incentive-based approaches and collaborative, deliberative processes (Hood, 1991). Command-and-control regimes rely on inspections and legal penalties, whereas incentive schemes use economic or reputational

mechanisms to encourage compliance (Ayres & Braithwaite, 1992). A central feature of the theory is responsive regulation, which posits that enforcement intensity should be calibrated to the compliance history of regulated entities: regulators begin with persuasion and dialogue, escalating to punitive sanctions only when voluntary cooperation fails (Ayres & Braithwaite, 1992). This "regulatory pyramid" balances deterrence with legitimacy and reduces adversarial tensions (Braithwaite, 2006). At the same time, the theory warns against regulatory capture, where regulated actors manipulate rulemaking or enforcement to protect their interests, undermining the public purpose of regulation (Stigler, 1971). Transparency and stakeholder participation are thus critical to safeguard integrity (Majone, 1994).

1.1.3. Historical background

In the classical era, particularly in ancient Greece and Rome, organized group activities beyond the authority of the state began to emerge, albeit under strict regulation. In Athens, associations such as thiasoi and eranoi functioned as religious and mutual aid societies, but their activities were subject to the oversight of the polis (Fine, 1981). Similarly, in Rome, collegia were voluntary associations that operated only with state approval and could be dissolved if they were perceived as politically threatening, highlighting an early intersection between civil organization and state control (Perry, 1997). While these associations were not modern NGOs, they demonstrated embryonic forms of collective action under regulatory oversight.

During the medieval period, civil associations became more structured and increasingly subject to religious and legal frameworks. In Europe, religious orders, guilds, and charitable fraternities proliferated under royal charters and papal decrees, reflecting a formalized relationship between organized groups and authority (Tierney, 1955). In Islamic societies, waqf institutions, or charitable endowments, operated within strict Sharia-based frameworks, balancing a degree of autonomy with religiously sanctioned oversight (Mandaville, 2001). These examples illustrate how religious and political authorities institutionalized regulation of collective activity, consolidating practices that later influenced the governance of NGOs.

In the modern era, the rise of philanthropic and advocacy organizations corresponded with the spread of liberal democratic ideals and the codification of associational rights. In Europe,

particularly in Britain and France, voluntary associations gained constitutional protections but were still required to meet obligations such as registration and reporting (Pierson, 1995). In the United States, civil society flourished under the First Amendment, although post–Civil War reforms introduced legal requirements for accountability and transparency in charitable organizations (Hall, 2006). In Latin America, the emergence of NGOs was shaped by political contexts, with some states promoting associational freedom while others, especially authoritarian regimes, imposed heavy restrictions (Chambers & Kopstein, 2001).

Across Asia and Africa, colonial administrations imposed stricter legal frameworks to regulate civil associations. In India, the British colonial government enacted the Societies Registration Act of 1860, which formalized obligations for associations and set the precedent for modern NGO regulation in the region (Sen, 2010). In Africa, colonial authorities often restricted indigenous associations due to fears of political mobilization, a pattern that persisted after independence. Many African governments, particularly during the Cold War, associated NGOs with external interference or neo-colonial influence and therefore exercised tight controls (Moyo, 2009).

Within East Africa, the regulation of NGOs reflected similar tensions between autonomy and state control. In Kenya, the Public Benefits Organizations Act of 2013 was marked by heated debates over operational security, as some NGOs were accused of supporting terrorism or political opposition (Nyang'oro, 2017). In Tanzania, the NGO Act of 2002 imposed stringent registration and reporting obligations, which raised concerns about operational restrictions on rights-based organizations (Kamndaya, 2015). Rwanda, in the aftermath of the 1994 genocide, developed NGO legislation that tightly aligned organizational activities with national reconstruction priorities, demonstrating the use of legal frameworks as tools of political stabilization (Gready, 2010).

The Ugandan case reveals a particularly close relationship between NGO regulation and political developments. After independence, Uganda initially had few formal restrictions on civil society. However, political instability in the 1970s and 1980s, especially under Idi Amin, resulted in the near collapse of organized civil associations. The revival of NGOs in the 1990s under President Museveni coincided with economic liberalization, yet state suspicion toward NGO autonomy

soon led to more restrictive legislation. The NGO Registration Act of 1989 introduced regulatory controls, and the NGO Act of 2016 further expanded state oversight by mandating detailed registration procedures, funding restrictions, and disclosure requirements (Human Rights Watch, 2016). These measures intensified debates about operational security, particularly for international human rights organizations such as Amnesty International.

In summary, the historical trajectory of NGO regulation demonstrates a gradual shift from informal oversight in ancient societies (Fine, 1981; Perry, 1997), to structured religious and royal regulation in the medieval period (Tierney, 1955; Mandaville, 2001), to formalized legal regimes in the modern era (Pierson, 1995; Hall, 2006; Chambers & Kopstein, 2001). Across Africa and East Africa, regulation was often used to contain political opposition or foreign influence (Moyo, 2009; Nyang'oro, 2017; Kamndaya, 2015; Gready, 2010). In Uganda, this historical evolution culminated in the 2016 NGO Act, which significantly reshaped the operational security of NGOs by expanding state control over civil society (Human Rights Watch, 2016).

1.1.4. Contextual background

The contextual background of this study is grounded in the evolving regulatory environment governing the operations of international organizations in Uganda, particularly through the enactment and implementation of the Non-Governmental Organizations Act, 2016 (hereinafter referred to as the NGO Act). The NGO Act represents a significant legislative instrument that seeks to regulate, supervise, coordinate, and monitor the activities of both domestic and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) operating within Uganda's jurisdiction.

The NGO Act of 2016 replaced the earlier NGO Registration Act of 1989 and its subsequent amendments. It introduced more expansive and detailed requirements for the registration, funding, governance, and reporting obligations of NGOs, including international human rights organizations such as Amnesty International. Under this law, all NGOs, whether local or foreign, are required to obtain a Certificate of Registration and a Permit to Operate, each issued by the National Bureau for Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO Bureau), a body established under the Ministry of Internal Affairs (Republic of Uganda, 2016). Registration is not merely a formality; it is tied to stringent conditions regarding the nature of activities undertaken, the geographic areas of operation, and the sources and uses of funding.

One of the central elements of the NGO Act is the requirement that NGOs must not engage in any activity that is prejudicial to the interests of Uganda or its people. This provision, though broadly framed, grants the state considerable discretionary power to assess and potentially restrict the activities of organizations perceived as contravening national interests (Human Rights Watch, 2016). Furthermore, the law mandates that NGOs must refrain from any acts that are prejudicial to the security and laws of Uganda, thus linking operational security explicitly to compliance with state-determined legal and security norms.

The NGO Act also imposes strict reporting and disclosure obligations. Organizations must submit annual returns, including financial statements and activity reports, to the NGO Bureau. Failure to comply with these obligations can result in suspension, cancellation of registration, or other punitive measures (NGO Bureau Annual Report, 2019). Moreover, funding from foreign sources is subjected to close scrutiny, with NGOs required to disclose the sources of all external funding and to ensure that such funding is used strictly for approved purposes. This has particularly affected international organizations that rely heavily on foreign funding to carry out human rights advocacy and related activities. In addition to the NGO Act, there have been key amendments and related developments that have deepened the regulatory landscape. In 2019, the NGO Regulations were passed, providing detailed operational guidelines, which further expanded the powers of the NGO Bureau. These regulations emphasized compliance monitoring, created mandatory collaboration with local authorities, and increased sanctions for perceived non-compliance, including closure of offices and seizure of organizational assets (Republic of Uganda, 2019). The regulations also introduced heightened vetting procedures for expatriates working in NGOs, requiring work permits to be tied to NGO permits, thereby making operational security for international staff increasingly precarious.

Several significant developments have occurred following the implementation of the Act and its regulations. Notably, in 2021, the Ugandan government suspended 54 NGOs, including several internationally affiliated organizations, on grounds of alleged non-compliance with the NGO Act (The East African, 2021). Among those affected were organizations involved in human rights monitoring, democratic governance advocacy, and refugee assistance. These suspensions underscored the perceived use of the NGO Act not merely as a regulatory tool but as a mechanism for political control and restriction of critical voices. Moreover, amendments to

related laws, such as the Anti-Money Laundering Act and the Public Order Management Act, have created a cumulative regulatory environment that interlocks with the NGO Act, placing international organizations under even closer surveillance. The designation of NGOs as "accountable persons" under anti-money laundering regulations has added another layer of financial and operational scrutiny (Financial Intelligence Authority Uganda, 2020).

In this regulatory environment, Amnesty International and similar international organizations face a dual operational security challenge: legal insecurity stemming from the risk of deregistration or suspension, and physical and administrative insecurity arising from heightened surveillance and bureaucratic obstacles. While the stated objective of the NGO Act is to promote transparency, accountability, and public trust in the NGO sector, critics argue that its broad and vague provisions are prone to politicization and can be weaponized against organizations that engage in advocacy perceived to challenge the status quo (CIVICUS Monitor, 2021).

1.2. Statement of the problem

The Non-Governmental Organizations Act, 2016, was enacted by the Ugandan government with the stated purpose of creating an enabling and supportive environment for NGOs. Its objectives included strengthening NGO operational capacity, fostering state–civil society partnerships, and ensuring proper regulation, coordination, and monitoring of NGO activities (ULII, 2016). Ideally, the Act was intended to enhance transparency, accountability, and cooperation between the government and both domestic and international NGOs.

In practice, however, the operational realities faced by international NGOs such as Amnesty International suggest that the environment is more restrictive than enabling. Documented challenges include administrative burdens, intrusive reporting requirements, restrictions on funding, and increased surveillance of organizations involved in human rights advocacy (Amnesty International, 2022; Human Rights Watch, 2020). For example, in 2021, more than 50 NGOs were suspended by government authorities for alleged non-compliance with the Act, raising questions about the consistency and fairness of enforcement (The East African, 2021).

The central problem is that it remains unclear whether these operational constraints originate from structural gaps within the NGO Act itself, such as ambiguous provisions on registration,

funding, and disclosure, or whether they are the result of selective or politicized enforcement of the law. Current commentary highlights correlations between the law and operational challenges but does not provide a systematic empirical analysis of causality (CIVICUS, 2021; International Center for Not-for-Profit Law, 2021).

This lack of clarity creates a critical knowledge gap. For Amnesty International in Uganda, it is not yet established whether regulatory pressures stem primarily from the content of the NGO legal framework, from its enforcement practices, or from a combination of both.

1.3. Objectives

1. To examine the effect of registration requirements under the NGO Act on the operational security of Amnesty International in Uganda
2. To assess the impact of funding restrictions imposed by the NGO Act on the operational security of Amnesty International in Uganda
3. To analyze the influence of reporting and disclosure obligations under the NGO Act on the operational security of Amnesty International in Uganda

1.4. Research Questions

1. What is the effect of registration requirements under the NGO Act on the operational security of Amnesty International in Uganda?
2. What is the impact of funding restrictions imposed by the NGO Act on the operational security of Amnesty International in Uganda?
3. How do reporting and disclosure obligations under the NGO Act influence the operational security of Amnesty International in Uganda?

1.5. Research hypotheses

H_{01}: Registration requirements under the NGO Act have no significant effect on the operational security of Amnesty International in Uganda.

H_{11}: Registration requirements under the NGO Act have a significant effect on the operational security of Amnesty International in Uganda.

H_{02}: Funding restrictions imposed by the NGO Act have no significant impact on the operational security of Amnesty International in Uganda.

H_{12}: Funding restrictions imposed by the NGO Act have a significant impact on the operational security of Amnesty International in Uganda.

H_{03}: Reporting and disclosure obligations under the NGO Act have no significant influence on the operational security of Amnesty International in Uganda

H_{13}: Reporting and disclosure obligations under the NGO Act have a significant influence on the operational security of Amnesty International in Uganda

1.6. Significance of the study

The significance of this study lies in its potential to provide a comprehensive understanding of the effects of Uganda's NGO Act on the operational security of international human rights organizations, specifically Amnesty International. This research contributes to the broader field of international humanitarian law and non-governmental organization (NGO) management by offering insights into how national legislative frameworks, such as the NGO Act, may influence the ability of human rights organizations to operate effectively and securely in foreign jurisdictions.

The findings of this research could benefit a variety of stakeholders. First and foremost, it would be of great significance to international human rights organizations, including Amnesty International. Understanding the challenges posed by the NGO Act, as well as the ways in which operational security may be compromised or enhanced, could be crucial for these organizations as they seek to maintain their ability to carry out their mandates in Uganda and similar jurisdictions. The study could inform strategies to mitigate risks, adapt operational models, and improve organizational resilience in response to restrictive legal frameworks. It may also provide guidance on how to navigate the increasingly complex and politically charged landscapes in which NGOs operate.

Secondly, the research could hold value for policymakers, both within Uganda and internationally. For Ugandan legislators, the study may serve as a critical tool for evaluating the effectiveness and unintended consequences of the NGO Act. By analyzing the impact of the law

on operational security, the research could inform potential reforms that balance the state's regulatory objectives with the need to protect the operational space of NGOs. On a broader scale, international policymakers, including those in donor countries, may find the findings useful in developing more nuanced strategies for supporting human rights organizations under restrictive legal conditions, ensuring that their funding and advocacy efforts contribute to positive outcomes without compromising the safety and security of the organizations or their staff.

Academics and researchers in the fields of international law, human rights, and NGO studies could also find the study valuable. This research fills a gap in existing literature concerning the intersection of national laws and the operational security of international NGOs. It offers a unique perspective on the challenges faced by these organizations in politically sensitive regions and could provide a foundation for further academic inquiry into the governance and operational security of NGOs in similar contexts.

In addition, the study could be useful to the broader public, particularly those interested in the role of NGOs in promoting human rights and social justice. By highlighting the challenges faced by organizations like Amnesty International, the research may encourage informed discussions about the importance of safeguarding civil society space in authoritarian or semi-authoritarian states.

1.7. Scope of the study

The scope of this study is delineated by three key dimensions: geographical scope, content scope, and time scope. These dimensions collectively define the boundaries of the research, establishing both its focus and limitations.

Geographical Scope

The geographical scope of this study was confined to Kampala, Uganda, where Amnesty International's operational activities were primarily based. As the capital city, Kampala represented the central location for both international NGOs and local government authorities, thus serving as a critical point for understanding the interaction between regulatory frameworks and operational security for human rights organizations. This research specifically examined how

the implementation of Uganda's NGO Act impacted the operational security of Amnesty International in this urban setting. Although the findings could have implications for other regions in Uganda or similar contexts, the study focused solely on Kampala in order to provide a detailed and context-specific analysis of the challenges faced by Amnesty International within the capital.

Content Scope

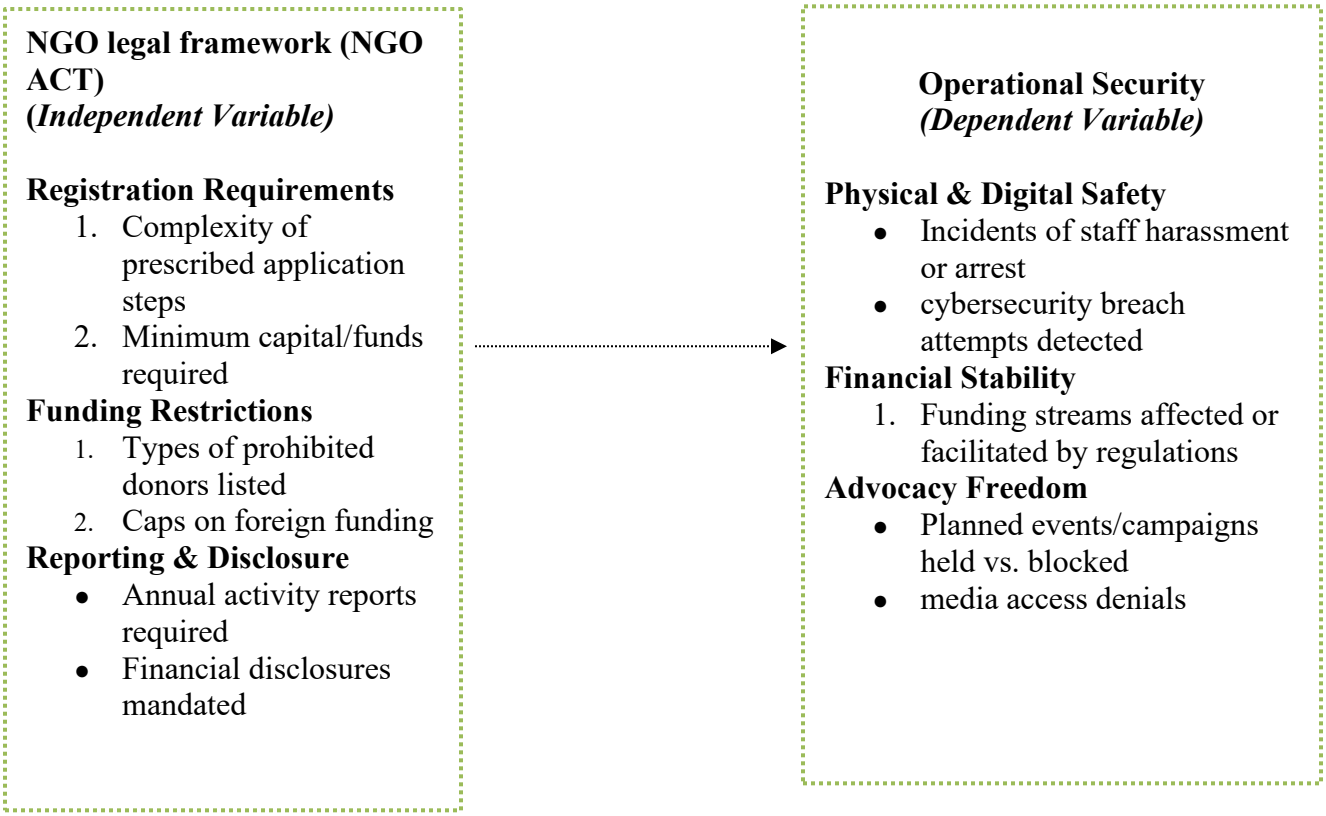
The content scope of this study centered on the operational security of Amnesty International in Uganda, with particular attention to the ways in which the NGO Act influenced the organization's ability to operate effectively. The study addressed various dimensions of operational security, including the physical security of staff, the safeguarding of organizational autonomy, and the legal and political risks introduced by the Act. It also examined how the Act affected Amnesty International's ability to deliver its programs, engage in advocacy, and collaborate with other stakeholders. While the study focused on the experiences of Amnesty International, it did not extend to an examination of other NGOs operating in Uganda, although it acknowledged that similar challenges were faced by other organizations within the country.

Time Scope

The time scope of this study encompassed the period from the enactment of the NGO Act in 2016 to the point at which data was collected in 2025. This timeframe allowed for a thorough examination of both the immediate and long-term effects of the Act on the operational security of Amnesty International. The study analyzed how the organization's operations, security measures, and strategies for mitigating risks had evolved in response to the implementation of the law. While the primary focus was on developments after the enactment of the NGO Act, the study also included a brief overview of Amnesty International's operations in Uganda prior to 2016 to establish a baseline and assess the impact of the law on the organization's security framework.

1.8. Conceptual framework

Figure 1 Conceptual framework



The conceptual framework illustrates the relationship between the NGO legal framework under the NGO Act (independent variable) and the operational security of Amnesty International in Uganda (dependent variable). The NGO legal framework is measured through three dimensions: registration requirements, funding restrictions, and reporting and disclosure obligations. Operational security is assessed through physical and digital safety, financial stability, and advocacy freedom.

It is hypothesized that stringent registration requirements, restrictive funding conditions, and burdensome reporting obligations negatively affect Amnesty International's operational security. Specifically, each regulatory dimension is expected to undermine safety, disrupt financial flows, and limit advocacy activities, thus exposing the organization to operational risks within the Ugandan context.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0. Introduction

This Chapter deals with the review of the literature. It deals with the theoretical review of the theoretical literature, as well as the empirical literature review based on the specific objectives of the study.

2.1. Theoretical Review

The study relied on Regulatory Governance Theory, as articulated primarily by Black (2002) and expounded by various scholars, to frame the relationship between legal regulatory frameworks and the operational environment of international non-governmental organizations. This theory was chosen because it provides a comprehensive lens for understanding how regulatory designs, enforcement styles, and the interaction among multiple regulatory actors influence organizational security and resilience.

The key assumptions of Regulatory Governance Theory include the idea that regulatory authority is polycentric, meaning that rule-making and enforcement are shared among various actors beyond the state (Levi-Faur, 2005). It assumes that regulatory styles range from strict command-and-control approaches to more flexible, incentive-based or deliberative modes (Hood, 1991). Another fundamental assumption is responsive regulation, which advocates for a graduated approach to enforcement, beginning with softer strategies like persuasion before escalating to punitive measures if compliance fails (Ayres & Braithwaite, 1992). Additionally, the theory presumes the possibility of regulatory capture, where regulated entities may unduly influence regulators to serve their own interests (Stigler, 1971).

The applicability of Regulatory Governance Theory to the study topic, "NGO Legal Framework (NGO Act) and Operational Security of Amnesty International in Uganda", is particularly strong. The theory helps explain how the NGO Act, though formally a legal instrument, is not static in its effects. Rather, the operational security of Amnesty International is shaped by how the Act is enforced, the discretion exercised by regulatory authorities, and the broader ecosystem of actors involved in regulatory governance. For example, if enforcement is highly selective or politicized, the operational security of Amnesty International could be significantly undermined, even if the

law itself appears neutral. Thus, the theory captures the dynamic between legal structures and real-world organizational vulnerability or resilience (Black, 2002; Braithwaite, 2006).

However, Regulatory Governance Theory is not without criticisms, particularly when applied to contexts such as Uganda's regulatory environment. First, the theory often assumes a level of rationality and professionalism among regulators that may not exist in politically charged environments. In contexts where regulation is wielded as a tool for political control rather than public interest, the optimistic assumptions of responsive regulation may be unrealistic (Gilad, 2010). Secondly, the theory tends to understate the potential for overt abuse of regulatory power in fragile democracies, where rule-of-law principles are weak (Lodge & Wegrich, 2012). While responsive regulation works effectively in settings with institutional checks and balances, it may be less applicable where regulators operate with impunity or are influenced by political elites.

Moreover, Regulatory Governance Theory presumes that organizations can strategically negotiate or adapt to regulatory pressures (Gunningham & Grabosky, 1998). However, in highly restrictive environments, NGOs may have very limited room for strategic maneuver, making the theory's emphasis on agency somewhat overstated. The concept of regulatory capture also largely addresses the risk of private sector influence over regulators but pays less attention to state-led capture of civil society spaces, which is a distinct phenomenon in authoritarian or semi-authoritarian regimes (Carothers & Brechenmacher, 2014).

2.2. Empirical Literature review

This section deals with the review of the empirical literature of past studies, organized under the specific objectives of the study

2.2.1.The effect of registration requirements under NGO legal frameworks on the operational security of international organizations

This study critically reviewed existing empirical literature on the effect of registration requirements under NGO legal frameworks on the operational security of international organizations. The review surveyed findings from different countries, categorizing them into those that demonstrate a significant effect and those that suggest little or no effect. The review

also presents the researcher's reflection on the findings and identifies critical gaps based on the dimensions and indicators of registration requirements outlined in the conceptual framework.

Several empirical studies provide evidence that registration requirements significantly affect the operational security of international organizations. In Ethiopia, Dupuy, Ron, and Prakash (2015) found that the 2009 Charities and Societies Proclamation, which imposed stringent registration and re-registration requirements, substantially reduced the number of active international human rights organizations. Similarly, in Russia, Henderson (2011) observed that onerous registration processes under the 2006 NGO Law led to operational paralysis, frequent audits, and shutdowns of foreign-funded organizations. In India, the application of the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA) complicated registration renewals, leading to the suspension of licenses for organizations like Amnesty International India (Human Rights Watch, 2017). In Hungary, Bánkuti, Halmai, and Scheppele (2012) showed that registration barriers were deployed to delegitimize and constrain international civil society actors. Likewise, in Zimbabwe, Makumbe (2009) reported that registration requirements under the Private Voluntary Organizations Act were used selectively to harass human rights NGOs, causing insecurity and forced closures.

Other studies from Egypt (Tadros, 2011), Kenya (Ruteere & Pommerolle, 2003), and Cambodia (International Center for Not-for-Profit Law, 2013) also illustrate that burdensome registration requirements resulted in operational insecurity through bureaucratic delays, exposure to arbitrary deregistration, and heightened surveillance. In Uganda, Ssentongo (2021) found that new registration protocols under the 2016 NGO Act provided the state wide discretion to deny permits, thereby directly threatening the operational presence of critical international organizations. Likewise, a study in Turkey by Kayaoglu (2019) emphasized that restrictive registration systems created vulnerabilities for international human rights NGOs operating under the 2016 regulations post-coup attempt.

Conversely, some empirical studies report minimal or no significant effect of registration requirements on the operational security of international organizations. For example, in South Africa, Habib and Taylor (1999) argued that although the Non-Profit Organisations Act introduced formal registration, it actually enhanced legitimacy and operational security rather than restricting it. Similarly, in Canada, Phillips (2013) found that registration under the Income

Tax Act was streamlined and non-threatening to the activities of international NGOs. In the United Kingdom, Casey (2016) noted that registration processes for charities fostered public trust without introducing operational insecurity. In Ghana, Aning and Okyere (2012) observed that the registration requirement under the NGO Policy Framework was largely procedural and had negligible negative effects on INGOs' activities.

Studies from Chile (Howell & Pearce, 2001), Tanzania (Mercer, 2002), and Botswana (Nengwekhulu, 2009) also suggest that while registration requirements exist, they were not enforced in ways that significantly compromised NGO operations. Research in Germany (Anheier & Seibel, 1990) similarly concluded that registration requirements reinforced accountability without operational threats. In New Zealand, Sanders and O'Brien (2011) showed that clear and efficient registration under the Charities Act supported operational confidence among NGOs. Even in countries with emerging restrictions like Malaysia, Weiss (2006) argued that registration processes affected domestic NGOs more than international ones. Finally, findings from Brazil (Alvarez, 1999) and Sweden (Wijkström, 2011) indicate that registration frameworks are often neutral or facilitative rather than restrictive.

Reflecting on these mixed findings, it is the researcher's view that the impact of registration requirements on operational security is deeply context-dependent. In more authoritarian regimes or semi-democratic states, registration becomes a tool of control, increasing operational insecurity. In liberal democracies, however, registration often functions as a mechanism to promote transparency, organizational legitimacy, and public trust. Thus, blanket conclusions cannot be drawn; rather, one must interrogate how registration laws are drafted, interpreted, and enforced within specific political and institutional contexts.

Despite this growing body of research, significant gaps remain in the literature. First, few studies disaggregate the effects of different indicators under registration requirements as outlined in the conceptual framework, namely:

1. Registration procedures (bureaucratic burden or delays)
2. Renewal conditions and periodic re-registration
3. Grounds for suspension or deregistration

4. State discretion in approval/denial decisions

Most empirical studies tend to treat "registration requirements" as a single, monolithic concept without unpacking how each of these components individually or jointly affects operational security. Moreover, there is limited quantitative analysis measuring the extent to which each dimension correlates with operational insecurity outcomes.

2.2.2.The impact of funding restrictions imposed by NGO legal frameworks on the operational security of international organizations

This study critically examined existing empirical literature on the impact of funding restrictions imposed by NGO legal frameworks on the operational security of international organizations. Rather than treating findings as rigid binaries, the review identifies global patterns and regional nuances, while systematically analyzing studies that either affirm or refute the significant impact of such restrictions.

Across many developing countries, empirical evidence suggests that funding restrictions are wielded as instruments of control, significantly eroding the operational security of international NGOs. For instance, in Russia, Henderson (2011) found that the Foreign Agent Law forced numerous NGOs to either shut down or severely limit their activities because of stigmatization linked to foreign funding. Likewise, in India, Kumar (2016) observed that amendments to the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) caused the cancellation of licenses for thousands of organizations, dramatically constraining their financial autonomy and field operations.

A similar trend was documented in Turkey by İçduygu and Sert (2015), who explained that heightened scrutiny over foreign donations after the Gezi protests led to INGOs facing cumbersome bureaucratic barriers. In Egypt, Abdelrahman (2013) demonstrated that restrictions under Law 84/2002 severely undermined INGOs' ability to maintain independent financial operations, thus threatening their existence.

In Hungary, Bíró-Nagy (2017) emphasized that the 2017 NGO Law on Foreign Funding directly targeted organizations critical of government policies, imposing reputational risks that deterred international funders. Furthermore, in Kenya, Makau (2015) described how the Public Benefits Organizations Act (and its contested amendments) introduced uncertainties that frightened away major international donors, destabilizing NGOs' operational plans.

From Zimbabwe, Moyo (2010) presented findings showing that the regulatory environment, through the Private Voluntary Organizations Act, created funding bottlenecks aimed at silencing NGOs advocating for human rights. In Ethiopia, Dupuy, Ron, and Prakash (2015) similarly concluded that the Charities and Societies Proclamation limited foreign funding to 10% of budgets for human rights organizations, leading to mass layoffs and operational paralysis.

In Malaysia, Weiss (2014) revealed that the Societies Act was used to monitor and restrict foreign-funded NGOs, particularly those engaged in election observation and governance reform. Finally, in Uganda, Oloka-Onyango (2020) stressed that the Anti-Money Laundering Act, as enforced against NGOs, constrained financial transactions necessary for INGOs' programmatic activities.

However, empirical evidence from other regions paints a more nuanced picture, where funding restrictions do not always equate to operational insecurity. For instance, in Germany, Evers and Laville (2004) explained that strict financial reporting for NGOs dealing with foreign funds strengthened institutional legitimacy without operational hindrance. In Canada, Scott (2003) found that regulatory frameworks imposed transparency obligations but preserved NGO autonomy and security.

Research from New Zealand (Nowland-Foreman, 1998) demonstrated that mandatory funding disclosures promoted ethical standards while allowing NGOs to flourish. In Sweden, Wijkström and Lundström (2002) observed that although foreign funding required detailed accounting, it did not restrict INGOs' operational scope or programmatic independence.

In South Africa, Habib (2008) emphasized that while new funding rules demanded greater transparency, they did not inherently threaten operational viability unless politicized. In Ireland, Donoghue (2014) reported that state scrutiny of foreign funds was implemented in consultation with the NGO sector, preserving operational security.

Similarly, in Brazil, Gonçalves (2015) noted that funding regulations improved organizational accountability without substantially impairing INGOs' effectiveness. In Portugal, Pina et al. (2015) argued that despite complex funding procedures, civil society organizations adapted without suffering operational losses.

In Singapore, Tan (2013) asserted that although NGOs had to navigate strict financial disclosure rules, they maintained stable operations by cultivating diversified funding streams. Meanwhile, in Costa Rica, Vargas (2017) found that foreign funding reporting regulations had little impact because domestic legal culture favored a protective stance toward civil society actors.

From the perspective of this researcher, it is clear that the political motivation underlying funding regulations largely determines their operational consequences. Where funding regulations are applied neutrally and transparently, they tend to enhance credibility without harming operations. However, when politically instrumentalized, funding restrictions become tools of repression and organizational incapacitation. Importantly, across the literature, there are significant gaps related to the specific indicators under "funding restrictions" identified in the conceptual framework. Few studies break down the effects of:

1. Restrictions on receiving foreign funds (direct bans versus limitations);
2. Approval requirements for funding sources (pre-approval versus post-funding declarations);
3. Limitations on allowable funded activities (issue-based restrictions);
4. Auditing and mandatory reporting of foreign donations (and their deterrence effects).

For example, while scholars often mention "restrictions," they rarely isolate whether it is the approval delays, the discretionary refusals, or the political labeling of funders that most impact operational security.

2.2.3.The influence of reporting and disclosure obligations under NGO legal frameworks on the operational security of international organizations

This study further critically explored the influence of reporting and disclosure obligations embedded within NGO legal frameworks on the operational security of international organizations. The literature reveals mixed findings globally, as regulations mandating transparency sometimes safeguard, and at other times severely endanger, INGOs' operational security.

Several studies affirm that heightened reporting and disclosure obligations can undermine operational security. In Cambodia, Licadho (2015) reported that the Law on Associations and NGOs required excessive disclosure of financial and operational information, allowing authorities to arbitrarily monitor and sanction organizations deemed politically sensitive. In Tanzania, Karugonjo-Sewankambo (2016) found that mandatory annual reporting, including details of all foreign donations, exposed INGOs to intrusive audits and intimidation, reducing their field presence.

In Azerbaijan, Aliyev (2017) explained that burdensome registration and disclosure laws under the 2013 amendments served as pretexts for criminal investigations against foreign-funded NGOs. In Pakistan, Sattar (2016) noted that strict disclosure regulations under the NGO Policy 2015 allowed the state to freeze accounts and delay project approvals, disrupting the operational rhythm of several INGOs. Similarly, in Belarus, Gatskova and Dietz (2016) revealed that disclosure rules, including mandatory reporting of all activities and beneficiaries, exposed INGOs to retaliatory enforcement and funding blockages. In China, Fu (2018) documented that the 2017 Foreign NGO Law introduced heavy reporting burdens that subjected NGOs to surveillance, deterring many organizations from registering or operating openly. In Kazakhstan, Ziegler (2015) showed that mandatory submission of detailed reports on programmatic activities resulted in selective enforcement against advocacy NGOs. In Angola, Rocha (2014) observed that disclosure laws were weaponized to frame INGOs as foreign agents during election periods, chilling advocacy work. In Saudi Arabia, Al-Dawsari (2018) identified that organizations' reporting obligations on sources of income and expenditure led to fears of reprisal, thus limiting INGOs' willingness to engage in governance reforms. Finally, in Myanmar, Cheesman (2017) described how NGO reporting mandates were inconsistently enforced to shut down organizations critical of military abuses.

Contrastingly, other studies suggest that reporting and disclosure obligations, if designed transparently and implemented fairly, do not necessarily compromise operational security. For instance, in Norway, Eikenberry (2009) argued that standardized financial reporting by NGOs promotes public trust and enhances long-term operational resilience. In the Netherlands, Burger and Owens (2010) found that disclosure obligations bolstered accountability without impairing

INGOs' freedom to operate. In Denmark, Frumkin (2002) emphasized that disclosure regimes were carefully balanced to avoid excessive intrusion while promoting organizational credibility.

From the United States, Gugerty (2009) demonstrated that although disclosure is mandatory for tax-exempt status (e.g., Form 990), it did not impede operational autonomy unless fraud or corruption was detected. In Australia, Lyons (2001) similarly found that financial reporting requirements served more to assure stakeholders than to limit NGO activities. In Finland, Siisiäinen (2003) observed that reporting obligations improved coordination between civil society organizations and government partners, ultimately enhancing operational effectiveness. In Switzerland, Anheier (2005) concluded that disclosure laws were part of a supportive regulatory environment that promoted trust without operational threats.

In Japan, Yamamoto (2006) highlighted that NGOs are required to disclose financial records but that such disclosure strengthened international legitimacy rather than imposing operational risks. In South Korea, Kim (2011) documented that while disclosure is mandatory, regulatory frameworks are structured to protect NGOs from political targeting. In the United Kingdom, Salamon (2004) argued that disclosure obligations help clarify the public interest missions of NGOs, contributing positively to operational sustainability. In Iceland, Guðmundsson (2017) found that foreign-funded NGOs are subject to reporting requirements, but the legal culture prevents these from being abused for repression.

From this researcher’s analytical viewpoint, it is evident that reporting and disclosure obligations are double-edged. When embedded within neutral, transparent, and predictable legal systems, such obligations foster trust, organizational integrity, and operational security. However, in politicized, opaque, or authoritarian settings, mandatory reporting becomes a surveillance tool, weaponized to intimidate and discredit INGOs. In reviewing the existing literature, notable gaps become evident, especially regarding the specific indicators of reporting and disclosure outlined in the conceptual framework. Most studies generalize "disclosure" without disaggregating the effects of:

1. Mandatory submission of detailed operational plans;
2. Disclosure of funding sources and expenditures;
3. Mandatory disclosure of foreign affiliations or partnerships;

4. Public access to NGO reports.

Few scholars rigorously differentiate between the bureaucratic burden of filing reports versus the operational risks of making sensitive affiliations or beneficiaries public. Similarly, little is known about how public versus confidential reporting requirements differentially affect operational security. Furthermore, cross-country comparative studies quantifying the threshold beyond which reporting becomes coercive remain largely absent.

Thus, while the literature provides valuable insights, it does not fully explain how specific reporting and disclosure obligations under NGO legal frameworks selectively impact operational security, a void that this research aims to fill through its examination of Amnesty International's experience in Uganda.

CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter outlines the research methodology adopted for the study. The methodology provides a detailed account of the research design, approach, target population, data collection methods, and procedures employed to ensure the study's validity and reliability. The overarching goal of the methodology is to align the research strategy with the objectives, namely: (1) to examine the effect of registration requirements under the NGO Act on the operational security of Amnesty International in Uganda; (2) to assess the impact of funding restrictions imposed by the NGO Act on operational security; and (3) to analyze the influence of reporting and disclosure obligations on operational security. This chapter, therefore, offers a comprehensive justification for the research strategies employed, situating them within the broader scholarly discourse and best practices for conducting social science research involving legal and organizational dynamics.

3.1. Research Approach

This study employed a concurrent mixed methods research approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative methods during the same phase of data collection and analysis. Mixed methods research is particularly suited for studies that aim to explore complex social phenomena where neither qualitative nor quantitative approaches alone would sufficiently capture the depth and breadth of the subject matter (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

The concurrent mixed methods approach was justified for several compelling reasons. First, the operational security of Amnesty International under Uganda’s NGO Act involves both measurable variables, such as instances of operational disruptions, funding constraints, and compliance costs, and subjective experiences, such as perceptions of surveillance, intimidation, and administrative burdens. Quantitative data collection allowed for the systematic measurement and statistical analysis of the tangible impacts of the NGO Act, such as the number of reported operational impediments and financial restrictions. Meanwhile, qualitative data provided nuanced insights into how Amnesty International’s personnel perceive and adapt to the regulatory environment, an area that raw statistics alone would inadequately illuminate.

Second, employing both methods concurrently facilitated a complementary validation strategy, where the weaknesses inherent in one method were offset by the strengths of the other. For example, while quantitative surveys could gather broader patterns among organizational staff and stakeholders, qualitative interviews could explore the underlying reasons behind these patterns, offering a richer interpretation (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). This convergence of data enhanced the credibility and depth of the findings.

Third, the political sensitivity and legal complexities surrounding NGO operations in Uganda necessitated methodological triangulation to bolster the study's reliability and validity. The operational security of an organization like Amnesty International is influenced by a confluence of legal prescriptions, political pressures, and administrative practices that cannot be fully understood through a single methodological lens (Bryman, 2016).

Moreover, the concurrent nature of the mixed methods approach ensured that both qualitative and quantitative data were collected simultaneously, allowing for real-time cross-validation and the identification of emergent themes that informed the ongoing interpretation of data. This simultaneity was critical because the legal and operational context in Uganda is dynamic; policies and their enforcement practices can shift rapidly. Thus, concurrent data collection captured a snapshot of the realities facing Amnesty International without the risk of temporal dissonance that sequential designs might suffer.

3.2. Research Design

This study adopted a correlational research design to investigate the relationship between the provisions of the NGO Act and the operational security of Amnesty International in Uganda. Correlational research is concerned with identifying and analyzing relationships between two or more variables without manipulating them (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018). Given the nature of the research objectives, which aim to examine the effects of specific legal requirements (registration, funding restrictions, and reporting obligations) on operational security indicators—the correlational design was deemed most appropriate.

The justification for using a correlational design stems primarily from the need to explore the degree and direction of association between legal framework variables and operational security outcomes. As this study did not intend to alter the legal environment or Amnesty International's

operations experimentally, but rather to observe and analyze existing conditions, an experimental or quasi-experimental design would have been unsuitable. According to Creswell (2014), correlational designs are ideal when the research seeks to predict or explain relationships between variables, particularly in non-manipulable real-world settings such as legal and organizational environments.

Moreover, the correlational design is particularly useful when addressing research questions that involve multiple independent and dependent variables, as is the case in this study. Each of the three core objectives necessitated an analysis of how distinct regulatory obligations under the NGO Act relate to various dimensions of operational security, such as physical security, and information security. Employing correlational analysis made it possible to determine whether a statistically significant relationship exists between, for example, the stringency of registration requirements and perceived threats to operational security.

Furthermore, in contexts where ethical considerations preclude experimental manipulation, such as studying the effects of restrictive legislation on civil society actors, a correlational design provides a methodologically ethical and practically feasible alternative (Bryman, 2016). It allows for the exploration of sensitive and potentially politically charged relationships without subjecting participants or organizations to interventions that could exacerbate existing vulnerabilities.

Importantly, the correlational design complemented the concurrent mixed methods approach adopted for this study. Quantitative survey data enabled the computation of correlation coefficients to ascertain the strength and direction of associations between legal constraints and operational security metrics. Simultaneously, qualitative interview data enriched the understanding of these relationships by offering contextual explanations and illustrating the lived

3.3. Study Population

The population of this study encompassed all individuals and entities closely associated with the operational security of Amnesty International Uganda. Based on internal organizational records (Amnesty International Uganda Annual Report, 2024) and publicly available data from the Uganda National NGO Bureau, the total population included both internal actors within Amnesty

International Uganda and external stakeholders such as regulatory officials, legal consultants, and representatives from international human rights organizations operating within Uganda.

The study population was structured as follows:

Table 3. 1: Study population

Category	**Number of Individuals**
Amnesty International Uganda Staff	68
Officials from Uganda National NGO Bureau	10
Legal Consultants Specialized in NGO Law	8
Representatives of International NGOs (Human Rights Watch, Oxfam Uganda, Save the Children Uganda)	12
Total	**98**

Source: Field visit (2025)

3.4 Target Population

The target population, a refined subset of the total population, comprised individuals directly involved in organizational security, regulatory compliance, and operational management at Amnesty International Uganda, along with key external stakeholders whose roles provided them with specialized insight into the NGO's operational environment under the NGO Act.

The target population was defined as follows:

Table 3. 2: Target population

Target Category	**Number of Individuals**
Senior Management Officials (Country Director, Deputy Director, Program Managers)	6
Finance, Legal Compliance, and Risk Management Officers	8
Field and Program Coordinators	10
Administrative and Security Officers	6

Uganda National NGO Bureau Officials (directly handling NGO oversight)	5
Legal Experts (advisors to Amnesty International and related NGOs)	5
Representatives from International NGOs (e.g., Human Rights Watch, Oxfam Uganda, Save the Children Uganda)	10
Total Target Population	**50**

Source: field visit (2025)

3.5 Sample Size and Determination

Having defined the target population as consisting of 50 individuals, it was necessary to determine an appropriate sample size that would ensure the collection of sufficient data for rigorous analysis while remaining feasible within the logistical and resource constraints of the study.

Given the relatively small and specialized nature of the target population, the study adopted census sampling for the internal stakeholders at Amnesty International Uganda. Census sampling entails including all members of a defined population when the size is sufficiently manageable and when each member's perspective is considered critical for the research objectives (Taherdoost, 2016). Accordingly, all 30 internal staff members identified in the target population were included in the sample.

For the external stakeholders, a purposive sampling approach was used to select participants from among the 20 individuals in the target external group. Due to time and access limitations, and considering the sensitive nature of discussions surrounding NGO operations under the current legal framework, a slightly smaller group was sampled purposively to ensure that only the most knowledgeable and willing participants were included. Out of the 20 external stakeholders, 15 were selected to participate.

The final sample size for the study was therefore 45 individuals, broken down as follows:

Table 3. 3 sample size

Category	Target Population Size	Sample Size
Internal Stakeholders (Amnesty International Uganda Staff)	30	30
External Stakeholders (Officials, Legal Experts, International NGOs)	20	15
Total	50	45

This sample size was considered adequate to achieve both the quantitative and qualitative objectives of the concurrent mixed methods approach. In quantitative research, a sample size covering 90% or more of a small target population is generally regarded as highly reliable (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In qualitative inquiry, smaller, information-rich samples are preferred to enable in-depth exploration and understanding of complex issues, particularly in studies involving legal and organizational analysis (Patton, 2015). Moreover, Yamane's (1967) simplified formula for determining sample size was consulted to verify the adequacy of the selected sample:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

where:

- n = sample size,
- N = population size,
- e = margin of error (set at 5%).

Substituting the figures for the target population:

$$n = \frac{50}{1 + 50(0.05)^2} = \frac{50}{1 + 50(0.0025)} = \frac{50}{1.125} \approx 44.44$$

Rounded up, the minimum recommended sample size was 45, exactly matching the sample selected for this study. This mathematical confirmation reinforced the methodological soundness of the sampling decision.

3.6 Sampling Techniques

The sampling techniques employed in this study were carefully selected to ensure that the sample would be both representative of the target population and appropriate for the research objectives, which involved examining complex legal and operational phenomena within a sensitive organizational context.

Two sampling techniques were used: census sampling and purposive sampling. The choice of these techniques was guided by the nature of the population groups involved and the specific information needs of the study.

For the internal staff of Amnesty International Uganda, census sampling was employed. Census sampling is a non-probability technique wherein all members of a defined population are included in the study when the population size is relatively small and every member's perspective is considered vital to the integrity of the research findings (Taherdoost, 2016). Given that the internal target population consisted of only 30 individuals, and considering that each held a role critical to operational security and compliance under the NGO Act, it was both feasible and methodologically sound to include the entire group. This approach eliminated sampling error among internal staff and enhanced the comprehensiveness of the findings.

For the external stakeholders, purposive sampling was adopted. Purposive sampling involves the intentional selection of individuals based on their knowledge of the phenomenon under investigation and their capacity to provide rich, relevant, and diverse insights (Palinkas et al., 2015). Among the 20 external stakeholders identified, 15 were selected based on specific criteria, including their direct involvement in NGO regulation, provision of legal advice to human rights organizations, or operational collaboration with Amnesty International Uganda. This non-random method was particularly appropriate due to the sensitive political environment in which the study was conducted, where access to knowledgeable and willing participants was limited and discretion was necessary.

Purposive sampling among external stakeholders also allowed the researcher to ensure that participants were not only accessible but also possessed the experiential and professional background required to contribute meaningfully to the analysis of the NGO Act's effects on operational security. As Patton (2015) asserts, purposive sampling is especially suitable for studies where the goal is to develop deep, context-specific understanding rather than broad generalization.

In combining census and purposive sampling techniques, the study was able to maintain methodological rigor while adapting to the practical realities of field research in a politically sensitive area. The internal comprehensiveness achieved through census sampling complemented the strategic depth of the purposively selected external respondents, thereby enhancing both the validity and reliability of the research findings.

3.7 Data Collection Methods

The study employed three primary data collection methods: the survey method, the interview method, and the document review method. These methods were selected to align with the concurrent mixed methods research design, allowing for a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the effects of the NGO Act on the operational security of Amnesty International in Uganda.

3.7.1 Survey method

The survey method was utilized to collect quantitative data from participants. This method involves systematically gathering information from a defined group through direct solicitation of responses to a set of questions. The survey method was appropriate for this study as it allowed for the collection of standardized data from a large number of respondents, enabling the researcher to measure and analyze the relationships between the provisions of the NGO Act and various aspects of operational security. Furthermore, surveys are effective in obtaining self-reported data that can be quantitatively analyzed to identify patterns, trends, and correlations across a broad population (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

3.7.2 Interview method

The interview method was employed to collect qualitative data. It involved direct, verbal interaction between the researcher and selected participants to obtain detailed and in-depth insights into their experiences and perceptions. The use of interviews allowed the researcher to probe beyond superficial responses and explore the complexities surrounding the operational challenges imposed by the NGO Act. Interviews were particularly important for understanding personal and organizational perspectives that cannot be easily captured through quantitative means, thus providing richer contextual data (Kallio et al., 2016). The flexibility of the interview method enabled participants to elaborate on their views and provided the researcher with the opportunity to seek clarifications and explore emergent themes during the data collection process.

3.7.3 Document Review method

The document review method was used to collect secondary data relevant to the study. This method entails the systematic examination and interpretation of existing documents to gain an understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. Through document review, the researcher reviewed secondary data to triangulate findings across different sources (Bowen, 2009). Document review was particularly valuable for understanding the historical development, implementation, and operational impact of the NGO Act, offering a foundation for interpreting how legal requirements influence the operational security landscape for Amnesty International in Uganda.

3.8 Data Collection Instruments

The instruments used for data collection in this study were carefully crafted to align with the research objectives and the dual nature of the mixed methods approach. Three primary data collection instruments were employed: questionnaires, semi-structured interview guides, and document analysis checklists. Each instrument was designed to capture both quantitative and qualitative data, ensuring that the study's findings would be comprehensive, credible, and rich in context.

3.8.1 Questionnaire

The questionnaire was the primary instrument used to collect quantitative data from the internal staff of Amnesty International Uganda. It was developed with careful consideration of the study's research questions and objectives, particularly the focus on understanding how specific aspects of the NGO Act (such as registration, funding restrictions, and reporting obligations) affected operational security.

3.8.1.1. Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire was designed with closed-ended questions to allow for statistical analysis. The questions were framed in the form of Likert scale items, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), to measure respondents' perceptions on various factors affecting operational security. The Likert scale was chosen because it provides a simple and effective way of capturing the intensity of participants' attitudes and perceptions toward specific statements (DeVellis, 2017).

The questionnaire was pilot-tested with a small sample of 5 internal staff members to assess its clarity and reliability. Minor adjustments were made based on feedback from the pilot test to ensure that the instrument was both user-friendly and capable of capturing the intended data accurately.

3.8.2 Interview Guide

The interview guide was the principal instrument for gathering qualitative data from external stakeholders, including officials from the Uganda National NGO Bureau, legal consultants, and representatives from international NGOs such as Human Rights Watch and Oxfam Uganda.

3.8.2.1. Interview Guide Design

The interview guide was designed to allow for flexibility in responses while ensuring that key topics were systematically addressed. The guide consisted of open-ended questions, which were organized into three thematic areas:

1. NGO Act's Impact on Registration – Questions focused on how the NGO Act's registration requirements influence the operational security of NGOs in Uganda.

2. Funding Restrictions – Questions exploring the perceived effects of financial regulations on the operational autonomy and security of NGOs.
3. Reporting and Compliance – Questions probing the practical challenges faced by NGOs in meeting reporting obligations and the subsequent implications for security.

The semi-structured format was chosen for its ability to strike a balance between consistency and flexibility. This format allows the interviewer to follow a set of predetermined questions while also probing deeper into specific responses, enabling the capture of nuanced insights (Kallio et al., 2016). Interviews were conducted face-to-face or via secure online platforms, depending on participant preference and availability.

The interview guide was pre-tested with two external stakeholders before the main data collection phase to ensure the questions were clear and conducive to generating rich, relevant responses.

3.8.3 Document Analysis Checklist

Document analysis was used to complement the data obtained from the questionnaires and interviews. The document analysis involved reviewing key regulatory texts, official reports, and policy briefs related to the NGO Act and its implementation. The following types of documents were analyzed:

- The NGO Act (2016) and any subsequent amendments

3.9. Validation of Instruments

The validity of the data collection instruments was ensured through a combination of expert reviews, pilot testing, and alignment with the study's theoretical framework. The questionnaire was reviewed by experts in NGO law and operational security to ensure that the questions accurately reflected the core aspects of the NGO Act and its impact on operational security. Similarly, the interview guide was reviewed by academic peers and practitioners in the field of human rights and NGO regulation. Pilot testing of both the questionnaire and interview guide further refined the instruments, ensuring clarity and reliability in capturing the data required to answer the research questions.

3.9.1. Content Validity Index (CVI)

The Content Validity Index (CVI) is a statistical tool used to assess whether the items in a questionnaire adequately represent the content areas they are intended to measure (Polit, 2006). CVI ensures that the questionnaire items are relevant to the construct they aim to assess, and it is typically derived from expert evaluations.

In this study, the CVI was calculated based on the ratings provided by a panel of experts. These experts, selected for their knowledge and experience in the relevant fields, evaluated each item in terms of its relevance. The following steps were undertaken:

1. **Selection of Experts:** A panel of three experts was chosen for the evaluation. These experts included academic professionals and experienced practitioners within the NGO sector, specifically those familiar with the regulatory environment in Uganda.
2. **Expert Ratings:** Each expert was asked to assess the relevance of every item in the questionnaire. Items were rated as either relevant (1) or not relevant (0) to the concept being measured.
3. **Calculation of CVI:** For each section of the questionnaire, the proportion of items that all experts agreed were relevant was calculated. The overall CVI for the entire instrument was determined by computing the proportion of items that were deemed relevant by all experts across all sections.

The actual ratings provided by the experts for each section of the questionnaire are as follows:

Table 3. 4: Content Validity Index

Section	**No. of Items**	**No. of Items Rated Relevant by All Experts**	**CVI**
Registration Requirements	5	5	1.00
Funding Restrictions	5	4	0.80
Reporting and Disclosure Obligations	5	5	1.00
Operational Security	5	5	1.00
Overall CVI	20	19	0.95

The overall CVI of 0.95 (95%) indicates that 95% of the items in the questionnaire were judged to be relevant by all experts. This score suggests excellent content validity for the instrument. According to Polit and Beck (2006), a CVI above 0.80 is considered acceptable in social science research. Therefore, the questionnaire can be deemed to possess robust content validity.

3.9.2. Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient

Cronbach's Alpha is a measure of internal consistency, which assesses the reliability of a set of items within a questionnaire. It is used to determine whether the items in a scale are measuring the same underlying construct. A high value of Cronbach's Alpha indicates that the items within the scale are consistently related to one another, suggesting reliable measurement (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011).

Cronbach's Alpha was computed for each section of the questionnaire as well as for the overall scale. The values for Cronbach's Alpha range from 0 to 1, with higher values indicating better internal consistency. The following interpretation of Cronbach's Alpha values is used:

- $\geq 0.9 \rightarrow$ Excellent reliability
- $0.8–0.9 \rightarrow$ Good reliability
- $0.7–0.8 \rightarrow$ Acceptable reliability
- $0.6–0.7 \rightarrow$ Questionable reliability
- $< 0.6 \rightarrow$ Poor reliability

The calculated Cronbach's Alpha values for each section of the questionnaire, as well as for the overall scale, are as follows:

Table 3. 5: Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient

Section	**No. of Items**	**Cronbach's Alpha**
Registration Requirements	5	0.86
Funding Restrictions	5	0.81
Reporting and Disclosure Obligations	5	0.87
Operational Security	5	0.89
Overall Scale	20	0.88

The overall Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.88 suggests that the questionnaire demonstrates high internal consistency, meaning the items are reliable and consistently measure the same underlying construct. Additionally, each section of the questionnaire displays good internal consistency, with Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.80, further reinforcing the reliability of the instrument.

Table 3. 6: Summary of Instrument Evaluation

Measure	Value	Interpretation
Content Validity Index (CVI)	0.95	Excellent content validity
Cronbach's Alpha	0.88	High internal consistency and reliability

Based on the results of the CVI and Cronbach's Alpha evaluations, the questionnaire is found to have both excellent content validity and high internal reliability. These findings indicate that the instrument is suitable for use in data collection and can be confidently employed in the piloting phase and subsequent field data gathering.

3.10 Data Analysis Methods

The data analysis for this study followed a systematic approach aligned with the concurrent mixed methods design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative techniques. This approach facilitated a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between the NGO Act and the operational security of Amnesty International in Uganda. By utilizing both numerical and thematic analysis, the study aimed to provide a well-rounded exploration of the issue.

3.10.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

The quantitative data collected from the structured questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics and correlation analysis. The primary aim of the quantitative analysis was to assess the relationships between the key dimensions of the NGO Act (registration requirements, funding restrictions, and reporting obligations) and various operational security measures. The analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were used to summarize and describe the main features of the dataset. Measures such as **f**requencies, percentages, mean scores, and standard deviations were employed to provide an overview of respondents' perceptions regarding the impact of the NGO Act on Amnesty International's operational security. This allowed for a clear presentation of trends, patterns, and variations across the sample population.

For example, the mean score for each dimension of the NGO Act (registration, funding, and reporting) was calculated to understand the overall level of agreement or disagreement among respondents regarding its impact on operational security. Standard deviations were calculated to assess the degree of consensus or variability in responses.

Correlation Analysis

To assess the strength and direction of relationships between the independent variables (registration requirements, funding restrictions, and reporting obligations) and the dependent variable (operational security), Pearson's correlation coefficient was computed. This statistical method measures the linear correlation between two variables, providing an understanding of the extent to which changes in one variable are associated with changes in another (Cohen, 2013).

Correlation analysis helped in determining whether the variables under study were statistically related and to what degree. For instance, it was used to explore whether stricter funding restrictions were correlated with lower levels of perceived operational security, or whether heightened reporting requirements were associated with increased security concerns.

3.10.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

The qualitative data collected from the semi-structured interviews and document analysis were analyzed using thematic analysis, a flexible and widely used method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis was chosen because of its ability to capture complex patterns in the data and its applicability to both large and small datasets.

Thematic Analysis Process

The process of thematic analysis involved the following steps:

1. Familiarization with the Data: The first step involved transcribing all interviews verbatim and reviewing the documents collected. This allowed the researcher to immerse themselves in the data and gain an initial understanding of the content.
2. Initial Coding: The next step involved generating initial codes from the data. Coding involved marking sections of the text that were relevant to the research questions, specifically focusing on the impact of the NGO Act on operational security. These codes were essentially labels that identified important features of the data.
3. Generating Themes: The initial codes were then organized into potential themes, which represented broader patterns within the data. For example, a theme might emerge related to the perceived challenges in complying with the registration requirements of the NGO Act, or the stress caused by stringent funding restrictions.
4. Reviewing Themes: Once the themes were identified, they were reviewed and refined. The researcher re-examined the data to ensure that the themes accurately represented the content and were consistent with the research objectives.
5. Defining and Naming Themes: After reviewing the themes, they were clearly defined, and names were assigned to each theme that captured its essence. For instance, one theme might be titled "Operational Constraints due to Reporting Obligations," and another might be "Increased Security Risks from Funding Restrictions."
6. Writing the Report: The final step involved writing the analysis, interpreting the themes in relation to the research questions and the theoretical framework. The researcher presented the findings from the interviews and documents in a narrative form, highlighting key insights and patterns.

Coding and Analysis Tools

To facilitate the coding and analysis process, the NVivo software was used. NVivo is a qualitative data analysis software that aids in organizing and analyzing textual data, which made it easier to identify patterns and themes across the interviews and documents. It was particularly useful for managing the large amount of text generated during the interviews and for ensuring consistency in the coding process.

3.10.1 Quantitative Data Analysis (with Regression)

In addition to descriptive statistics and correlation analysis, multiple regression analysis was employed to examine the predictive relationship between the independent variables (registration requirements, funding restrictions, and reporting obligations) and the dependent variable (operational security). This method allowed for a better understanding of how each of the factors associated with the NGO Act independently influenced the perceived security of Amnesty International's operations in Uganda, controlling for other factors.

Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis is an advanced statistical technique used to understand the relationship between a dependent variable and two or more independent variables (Field, 2013). In this study, the dependent variable was operational security, while the independent variables included registration requirements, funding restrictions, and reporting obligations under the NGO Act. This technique was particularly useful for isolating the specific impact of each regulatory dimension on operational security, considering that these factors may be interrelated.

Justification for Regression

Regression analysis was chosen because it provides insights into the strength and direction of the relationship between each independent variable and the dependent variable. It allows for the quantification of the impact that each regulatory dimension of the NGO Act (such as registration or funding restrictions) has on the operational security of Amnesty International Uganda, while controlling for other variables (Field, 2013).

3.10.2 Assumptions of Regression Analysis

Regression analysis relies on several key assumptions, which were checked before conducting the analysis to ensure the validity of the results:

1. **Linearity**: The relationship between the independent and dependent variables was assumed to be linear. Scatterplots and correlation coefficients were used to assess the linearity assumption.
2. **Independence of Errors**: The residuals (errors) were tested for independence using the Durbin-Watson statistic.

3. **Homoscedasticity**: The assumption of equal variances of residuals across levels of the independent variables was tested using scatterplots of residuals.
4. **Normality**: The residuals were tested for normality using Q-Q plots and the Shapiro-Wilk test.

If any of these assumptions were violated, remedial measures, such as data transformation or robust regression techniques, would have been applied (Hair et al., 2014).

3.10.3 Interpretation of Regression Results

The results from the regression analysis were interpreted in terms of the regression coefficients (β\betaβ) and p-values. A significant p-value (typically less than 0.05) indicated that a particular variable had a statistically significant impact on operational security. The magnitude of the β\betaβ coefficients indicated the strength of this relationship.

3.10.3 Triangulation of Data

An essential feature of mixed methods research is the triangulation of quantitative and qualitative data. Triangulation involves comparing and contrasting findings from both data types to enhance the credibility and validity of the research conclusions (Denzin, 2012). In this study, triangulation was used to validate the findings and ensure that the quantitative results from the questionnaires aligned with the qualitative insights from the interviews and document analysis. For example, if the quantitative analysis revealed a significant correlation between funding restrictions and operational security, the qualitative interviews and documents were examined to explore how these restrictions manifested in real-world contexts and to understand the underlying reasons behind the statistical relationship.

3.11. Ethical considerations

All data collection instruments were designed with ethical considerations in mind. Prior to administering any of the instruments, informed consent was obtained from all participants. This consent outlined the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, and assurances regarding confidentiality and anonymity. Interview and questionnaire responses were stored securely in password-protected files, accessible only to the researcher.

In addition, the ethical principle of respect for participants' autonomy was upheld by allowing participants the option to withdraw from the study at any stage without facing any negative consequences.

Ethical considerations were maintained throughout the data analysis process. The confidentiality of all interview and questionnaire responses was upheld, ensuring that participants' identities remained anonymous in the final analysis. Additionally, care was taken to accurately represent participants' views in the thematic analysis, with direct quotes from interviews included in the findings to preserve the authenticity of respondents' perspectives

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.0. Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from the primary data collected through the self-administered questionnaire, which was designed to capture the perceptions of respondents on the impact of Uganda's NGO Act on the operational security of Amnesty International. The questionnaire was structured into two main sections: statements related to the independent variable and statements related to the dependent variable.

A total of 45 respondents participated in the survey. The response rate was 100%, indicative of a high level of engagement and interest in the subject matter among the participants. The data collected were systematically organized, analyzed, and are herein presented using descriptive statistical techniques, namely frequencies, percentages, and mean scores, to accurately depict the perceptions and experiences of the respondents. Furthermore, interpretative analysis accompanies the quantitative data to provide deeper insights and scholarly reflections on the findings.

4.1. Demographic Information

The demographic section of the questionnaire aimed at capturing basic yet critical information about the respondents to enable an understanding of the context from which they interpret the regulatory environment and its impact. The demographic variables included gender, age, highest level of education, department of work, and years of experience working with Amnesty International.

4.1.1 Gender Distribution

Out of the 45 respondents, 26 were male, representing approximately 57.8% of the sample, while 19 were female, accounting for 42.2%. This gender distribution reflects a relatively balanced, albeit slightly male-dominated, composition of staff within Amnesty International Uganda.

Table 4. 1: Gender Distribution of Respondents
(n = 45)

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	26	57.8%
Female	19	42.2%

4.1.2 Age Distribution

Table 4. 2: Age Distribution of Respondents
(n = 45)

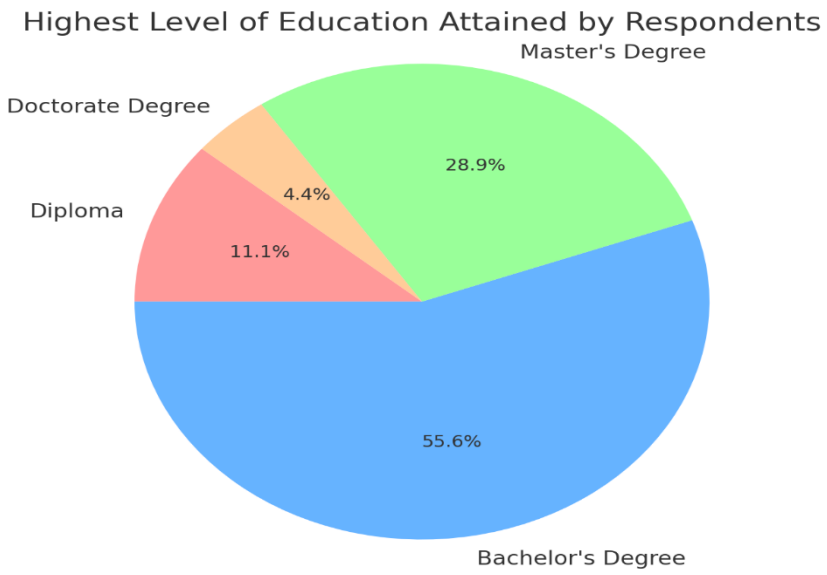
Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
18–25 years	8	17.8%
26–35 years	21	46.7%
36–45 years	12	26.7%
46 years and above	4	8.9%

The findings reveal that the majority of the respondents (46.7%) fell within the 26–35 age bracket, indicating a youthful and vibrant workforce, which may also reflect the organization's dynamic operational environment.

4.1.3 Educational Attainment

Regarding the highest level of education attained:

Figure 4. 1: Educational Attainment



The data suggest that Amnesty International Uganda employs a highly educated workforce, with a combined 88.9% holding at least a Bachelor's degree. This high level of educational attainment likely equips the staff with the requisite skills to navigate complex regulatory frameworks.

4.1.4 Department of Work

Respondents were drawn from various departments:

Table 4. 3: Department of Work Distribution

Department	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Programs Department	20	44.4%
Research and Advocacy Department	10	22.2%
Finance and Administration Department	8	17.8%
Security and Risk Management Department	7	15.6%
Total	**45**	**100%**

The spread of respondents across multiple departments ensures that the data gathered reflects a comprehensive institutional perspective on the operational impacts of the NGO Act.

4.2. PRESENTATION OF DESCRIPTIVE DATA

4.2.1 Descriptive data on Registration Requirements of INGOs

This section presents the respondents' perceptions regarding the registration requirements imposed by the NGO Act on Amnesty International's operations. Five key statements were presented to assess the extent to which registration processes, fees, bureaucratic procedures,

delays, and discretionary powers impact the operational environment. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement on a five-point Likert scale where 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree.

The following table summarizes the findings by displaying the frequency and percentage of each response category, along with the computed mean and standard deviation for each statement.

Table 4. 4: Responses on Registration Requirements

Statement	1 (SD)	2 (D)	3 (N)	4 (A)	5 (SA)	Mean	Std. Dev
The process of registering an NGO involves complex procedures.	2 (4.4%)	3 (6.7%)	5 (11.1%)	20 (44.4%)	15 (33.3%)	3.96	1.02
Renewal and licensing requirements for NGOs are demanding.	1 (2.2%)	2 (4.4%)	6 (13.3%)	18 (40.0%)	18 (40.0%)	4.11	0.95
Registration fees and bureaucratic hurdles create operational challenges.	3 (6.7%)	5 (11.1%)	4 (8.9%)	17 (37.8%)	16 (35.6%)	3.84	1.13
There are significant delays in obtaining registration approvals.	4 (8.9%)	6 (13.3%)	8 (17.8%)	15 (33.3%)	12 (26.7%)	3.56	1.22
Registration authorities possess wide discretionary powers over NGO registration.	2 (4.4%)	3 (6.7%)	7 (15.6%)	19 (42.2%)	14 (31.1%)	3.89	1.05

The data presented in Table 4.1 reveal a predominantly critical view among respondents regarding the registration environment created by the NGO Act.

Complex Procedures

A cumulative 77.7% of respondents agreed (44.4%) or strongly agreed (33.3%) that the process of registering an NGO involves complex procedures. The mean score of 3.96 (out of 5) and a standard deviation of 1.02 indicate a strong agreement among respondents, albeit with moderate variability in responses. This finding suggests that Amnesty International faces significant administrative burdens at the registration phase, which may affect the efficiency and timeliness of organizational setup and program initiation.

Data from interviews revealed that most respondents characterized the registration process under the NGO Act as "lengthy," "bureaucratic," and "opaque." Several noted that completing the registration required engagement with multiple government departments, each demanding different documentation. One participant stated:

"The registration process is far from straightforward. It involves a lot of paperwork, approvals from multiple offices, and sometimes informal expectations that are not documented anywhere."

An evaluation of the NGO Act reveals that the procedure is indeed lengthy and complex. The registration process for NGOs under Uganda's NGO Act is notably intricate, involving multiple steps and stringent requirements. It begins with incorporation through the Uganda Registration Services Bureau (URSB), which handles the legal recognition of the organization. NGOs are required to obtain a Certificate of Incorporation, a fundamental document that validates their existence as legal entities within Uganda. This step alone demands detailed documentation and adherence to corporate laws, presenting significant challenges, especially for organizations unfamiliar with the legal landscape.

Following incorporation, NGOs must register with the National Bureau for Non-Governmental Organizations. This phase involves submitting an array of documents, including the Certificate of Incorporation, prescribed forms such as Form A and Form D, a detailed annual work plan and budget, proof of payment for registration fees, and recommendations from the District NGO Monitoring Committee as well as relevant ministries. Moreover, NGOs are required to apply for a Permit of Operation, which is valid for one to five years and necessitates renewal upon expiry.

The renewal process adds to the administrative burden, making the operational framework more demanding.

The NGO Act's provisions governing these processes are outlined in specific sections that emphasize the complexity of registration. Section 29 mandates the registration of NGOs with the NGO Bureau, requiring organizations to obtain both a Certificate of Registration and a Permit of Operation. Section 30 provides detailed guidelines for obtaining the permit, including the submission of various documents and payment of fees. Additionally, Section 45 outlines staffing requirements, which must be declared during registration, while Section 47 calls for recommendations from district and ministerial bodies to support the application. These provisions, while aimed at ensuring transparency and accountability, collectively create a regulatory framework that is both exhaustive and challenging for NGOs to navigate.

This comprehensive process often poses significant hurdles, especially for smaller organizations or international NGOs seeking to establish operations within Uganda. It reflects a regulatory environment that, while detailed, demands substantial resources and expertise to ensure compliance.

Demanding Renewal and Licensing Requirements

The highest mean score of 4.11 with a relatively low standard deviation of 0.95 reflects a consensus that the renewal and licensing requirements are particularly demanding. A remarkable 80% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. This indicates that not only the initial registration but also ongoing compliance requirements are viewed as onerous, potentially imposing recurrent operational costs and bureaucratic delays.

From qualitative data, respondents indicated that the renewal process mirrors the initial registration complexity. Many emphasized that renewal demands were not merely procedural but often entailed fresh vetting as though the organization were a new applicant. Delays were commonplace, with one participant noting:

"Even after submitting all required documents on time, you can wait months without any feedback unless you personally follow up persistently."

A review of the NGO Act reveals that the process of renewing a permit under Uganda's NGO Act is both intricate and demanding, requiring organizations to navigate multiple layers of compliance. NGOs must begin the renewal process at least six months before the expiry of their current permit, as stipulated under Section 32(1) of the NGO Act, 2016. This timeline underscores the complexity and preparation required for successful renewal. The process involves submitting a comprehensive set of documents to the NGO Bureau, including completed renewal application forms, a formal request letter detailing the organization's objectives and desired permit duration, and audited financial statements certified by a licensed auditor. Additionally, NGOs must provide evidence of compliance with previous operational requirements, such as work plans, budgets, and annual reports.

Before renewing their licenses, NGOs in Uganda must navigate a detailed process that includes obtaining recommendations from specific entities, as mandated by the NGO Act, 2016. These recommendations are crucial for demonstrating compliance and ensuring alignment with both district and national priorities. The process is governed by several sections of the Act, which outline the requirements and procedures for renewal.

One key entity from which NGOs must secure recommendations is the District Non-Governmental Organizations Monitoring Committee (DNMC). As stipulated under Section 32(1) of the NGO Act, the DNMC evaluates the organization's activities and compliance within the district(s) of operation. This endorsement serves as evidence that the NGO's operations are consistent with local regulations and community needs.

Additionally, NGOs may be required to obtain recommendations from relevant ministries, depending on their area of focus. For example, an NGO working in the health sector might need approval from the Ministry of Health, while one focusing on education might require endorsement from the Ministry of Education. These recommendations ensure that the NGO's activities align with sector-specific regulations and contribute to national development goals.

Another critical requirement is the submission of a certified Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed with the district(s) of operation. This document formalizes the NGO's relationship with local authorities and outlines its operational framework. The MOU is essential for demonstrating that the NGO has established a collaborative and compliant working relationship with the district.

These requirements, while aimed at promoting accountability and transparency, add layers of complexity to the renewal process. NGOs must invest significant time and resources to secure these endorsements, which can pose challenges, especially for smaller organizations or those unfamiliar with the regulatory landscape.

Operational Challenges Due to Fees and Bureaucracy

On the matter of registration fees and bureaucratic hurdles, a significant majority (73.4%) agreed or strongly agreed that these factors create operational challenges. The mean score was 3.84 with a slightly higher standard deviation (1.13) suggesting some degree of variation in respondent experience but an overall affirmation of the negative impact. This points to financial and administrative barriers that could inhibit not only Amnesty International's operational flexibility but also its strategic growth initiatives.

Qualitative data revealed the same. High registration fees, coupled with hidden costs associated with compliance (e.g., notarization, consultancy, transport), were cited as significant burdens. A finance officer remarked:

"The cumulative financial burden of staying compliant is significant and diverts funds from actual program activities."

Delays in Approvals

Compared to other statements, perceptions about delays in obtaining registration approvals showed a slightly lower level of agreement, with a mean score of 3.56 and the highest standard deviation (1.22) among the statements. Approximately 60% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that significant delays exist. The wider variability suggests that experiences with delays may not be uniform, possibly dependent on the nature of registration, the period during which registration was sought, or the specific authorities involved.

Respondents in qualitative data Respondents attributed registration and renewal delays to bureaucratic inefficiencies, lack of transparency, and occasional political considerations. It was generally noted that NGOs perceived as critical of government policies faced longer processing times.

Discretionary Powers of Authorities

The statement regarding the wide discretionary powers possessed by registration authorities attracted strong agreement (73.3% agreed or strongly agreed) and a mean score of 3.89. The standard deviation of 1.05 implies a reasonably consistent view among the respondents. This finding is particularly concerning from a rule-of-law perspective, as broad discretionary powers without clear procedural safeguards can facilitate arbitrary decision-making and expose NGOs to political manipulation. Nearly all respondents from interviews conducted agreed that authorities exercise wide discretionary powers. As one compliance officer explained:

"Decisions can seem arbitrary, and there is no clear appeals mechanism if your application is delayed or rejected."

From a critical analytical standpoint, these findings underscore that registration requirements under the NGO Act are not merely procedural formalities but serve as substantial regulatory barriers that impact the operational security and autonomy of organizations like Amnesty International. The combination of complexity, financial burdens, discretionary authority, and renewal challenges collectively heightens operational risks and reduces predictability, which are essential conditions for civil society to thrive.

4.2.2 Funding Restrictions

This section explores the respondents' perceptions regarding the funding restrictions imposed by the NGO Act and their implications on the operations of Amnesty International. The statements aimed to capture experiences related to the regulation of foreign funding, approval procedures, restrictions on fundraising activities, and the potential freezing of financial assets. Understanding these perceptions is critical, given that financial autonomy is a foundational pillar for operational security and independence in non-governmental organizations.

Respondents indicated their level of agreement with five statements concerning funding restrictions, using the same five-point Likert scale as in the previous section. The data are presented below, with frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations for each statement.

Table 4. 5: Responses on Funding Restrictions

Statement	1 (SD)	2 (D)	3 (N)	4 (A)	5 (SA)	Mean	Std. Dev
Receiving foreign funding requires compliance with strict regulatory conditions.	1 (2.2%)	2 (4.4%)	3 (6.7%)	20 (44.4%)	19 (42.2%)	4.20	0.91
Obtaining government approval for foreign donations is a mandatory process.	2 (4.4%)	1 (2.2%)	4 (8.9%)	17 (37.8%)	21 (46.7%)	4.20	0.98
There are limits on the amounts of foreign funding NGOs can receive.	5 (11.1%)	7 (15.6%)	6 (13.3%)	17 (37.8%)	10 (22.2%)	3.44	1.27
Fundraising activities are subject to regulatory restrictions.	3 (6.7%)	2 (4.4%)	5 (11.1%)	21 (46.7%)	14 (31.1%)	3.91	1.06
Freezing or seizure of NGO financial accounts is possible under the current regulations.	4 (8.9%)	3 (6.7%)	7 (15.6%)	18 (40.0%)	13 (28.9%)	3.74	1.17

The findings from Table 4.2 demonstrate a prevailing concern among respondents regarding the stringent nature of funding regulations under the NGO Act.

Strict Compliance for Foreign Funding

A striking 86.6% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that receiving foreign funding necessitates strict compliance with regulatory conditions, as reflected in a high mean score of 4.20 and a low standard deviation of 0.91. This near-unanimous perception signifies that Amnesty International must navigate a rigid regulatory framework that complicates its access to crucial international financial support.

Qualitative data concurs. Respondents unanimously indicated that compliance with foreign funding regulations is highly stringent. All foreign funding must be declared, justified, and approved by relevant authorities before being utilized.

"You must provide exhaustive details about your donors, amounts, and intended uses before any money hits your account."

A review of the NGO Act concurs. The NGO Act, 2016 of Uganda imposes specific funding restrictions on International NGOs, which are designed to ensure transparency and accountability in the use of funds. These restrictions are outlined in various sections of the Act and have significant implications for the operations of International NGOs. Under Section 39(1) of the NGO Act, International NGOs are required to disclose the sources and intended uses of their funds to the National Bureau for Non-Governmental Organizations.

Mandatory Approval for Foreign Donations

Similarly, the requirement for mandatory government approval of foreign donations received strong support, with a mean of 4.20 and a slightly higher standard deviation of 0.98. 84.5% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. The requirement for prior approval potentially exposes NGOs to bureaucratic bottlenecks and politicization of funding flows, which could significantly constrain timely programmatic responses.

Several participants in qualitative data collection also recounted delays in securing approvals for foreign donations, often impacting project implementation schedules. One program manager stated:

"We have had instances where projects had to be suspended simply because funding approvals dragged for months."

A review of the NGO Act reveals that, Section 39(2) mandates that International NGOs must obtain prior approval from the Bureau before receiving foreign funding. This approval process is intended to regulate the flow of foreign donations and ensure that they do not undermine national security or public policy. However, this requirement can create delays and administrative hurdles, potentially affecting the timely implementation of programs. The Act also grants the Bureau discretionary powers under Section 40, which allows it to freeze the financial accounts of an NGO if there is reasonable suspicion of misuse of funds or non-compliance with the regulations. This provision, while aimed at promoting accountability, introduces a level of uncertainty for NGOs, as the criteria for such actions may not always be clearly defined.

Limits on Foreign Funding Amounts

Responses regarding the existence of limits on the amounts of foreign funding NGOs can receive were somewhat more dispersed, yielding a lower mean score of 3.44 and the highest standard deviation in this section (1.27). While a combined 60% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed, 26.7% disagreed or strongly disagreed, indicating varying experiences or interpretations. This suggests a less consistent application of the rule or perhaps a lack of uniform awareness among staff regarding funding caps. From qualitative data from interviews, opinions on funding limits varied. Some participants claimed that while there are no explicit numerical caps, the regulatory climate discourages large foreign grants:

"There's no formal limit, but large donations are scrutinized more intensely, and that in itself discourages donor confidence."

Restrictions on Fundraising Activities

A substantial 77.8% of respondents affirmed that fundraising activities are subject to regulatory restrictions, corresponding to a mean of 3.91 and a standard deviation of 1.06. This finding highlights the pervasive influence of state controls not only over external funding sources but also over domestic resource mobilization efforts, further tightening the operational space.

Data from interviews was as follows: Respondents highlighted that even local fundraising efforts are heavily regulated. Events must often be pre-approved, and fundraising activities are monitored closely.

Freezing or Seizure of Financial Accounts

The perception that freezing or seizure of NGO financial accounts is possible under the current regulations received a moderate affirmation with a mean score of 3.74. While 68.9% agreed or strongly agreed, 15.6% remained neutral, and another 15.6% disagreed or strongly disagreed. The elevated standard deviation (1.17) suggests some variability, perhaps due to different departmental exposure to financial compliance risks.

From interviews, several respondents expressed concerns over the real threat of account freezing, particularly if the organization is perceived as non-compliant or politically controversial.

"We operate with constant caution because a simple administrative error could be used as grounds to freeze our accounts."

This resonates with the legal provisions of the NGO Act. The Act also grants the NGO Bureau discretionary powers under Section 40, which allows it to freeze the financial accounts of an NGO if there is reasonable suspicion of misuse of funds or non-compliance with the regulations. This provision, while aimed at promoting accountability, introduces a level of uncertainty for NGOs, as the criteria for such actions may not always be clearly defined.

4.2.3 Descriptive data on the Requirements on Reporting and Disclosure

This section examines the respondents' perceptions of the reporting and disclosure obligations imposed by the NGO Act. Specifically, it addresses requirements concerning operational plans, financial transparency, affiliations with foreign entities, public access to organizational reports, and penalties for non-compliance. Given that reporting and disclosure are fundamental to organizational accountability, the balance between transparency and operational security is critical for an organization such as Amnesty International.

Respondents assessed five statements using the same five-point Likert scale. The frequency of responses, corresponding percentages, mean scores, and standard deviations are detailed below.

Table 4. 6: Responses on Requirements on Reporting and Disclosure

Note: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

Statement	1 (SD)	2 (D)	3 (N)	4 (A)	5 (SA)	Mean	Std. Dev
NGOs are required to submit detailed operational plans to government authorities.	1 (2.2%)	2 (4.4%)	3 (6.7%)	20 (44.4%)	19 (42.2%)	4.20	0.91
Disclosure of sources and uses of funds is mandatory for NGOs.	0 (0.0%)	2 (4.4%)	4 (8.9%)	18 (40.0%)	21 (46.7%)	4.29	0.82
NGOs must disclose affiliations and partnerships with foreign entities.	2 (4.4%)	3 (6.7%)	5 (11.1%)	19 (42.2%)	16 (35.6%)	3.97	1.02
Organizational reports submitted to authorities are accessible to the public.	5 (11.1%)	6 (13.3%)	8 (17.8%)	16 (35.6%)	10 (22.2%)	3.44	1.25
Non-compliance with disclosure rules attracts heavy penalties.	3 (6.7%)	4 (8.9%)	6 (13.3%)	18 (40.0%)	14 (31.1%)	3.80	1.13

The analysis of Table 4.3 indicates a strong consensus among respondents that reporting and disclosure obligations are stringent and carry significant operational implications for Amnesty International.

Submission of Operational Plans

A remarkable 86.6% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that NGOs are required to submit detailed operational plans to government authorities. The mean score of 4.20 and a low standard

deviation of 0.91 affirm that respondents are largely unified in viewing this requirement as a notable administrative burden. Such disclosure of operational plans may expose sensitive strategic details, thereby compromising organizational maneuverability. From qualitative data, it was revealed that Amnesty International must submit detailed operational plans yearly. Respondents expressed concern that this requirement exposes the organization's strategic priorities to potential external interference.

"Having to submit detailed plans makes us vulnerable because sensitive advocacy campaigns are revealed well in advance."

Mandatory Disclosure of Financial Information

This statement attracted the highest mean score of 4.29 with the lowest standard deviation of 0.82, indicating a strong and consistent perception among respondents. None of the respondents strongly disagreed, highlighting universal acknowledgment of mandatory financial transparency. While transparency is a normative good, when imposed within restrictive regimes, it may be weaponized to scrutinize and curtail organizational funding streams.

From interviews, the financial disclosure regime was described as burdensome but unavoidable. Participants acknowledged the importance of transparency but felt that the extent of reporting served more as a surveillance tool than an accountability measure.

A review of the NGO Act revealed that the NGO Act, 2016 of Uganda requires International NGOs to disclose financial information as part of their compliance obligations. Specifically, Section 39(3) of the Non-Governmental Organisations Act, 2016 (NGO Act) in Uganda outlines the requirements for organizations to submit information to various bodies. Specifically, it mandates organizations to submit annual returns and audited financial reports to the NGO Bureau. Additionally, it requires organizations to declare and submit estimates to the District Technical Planning Committee, the District Monitoring Committee, and the Subcounty Monitoring Committee of the area in which they operate. Furthermore, organizations must provide any other information required by the Bureau, the District NGO Monitoring Committee, and the Subcounty NGO Monitoring Committee.

These requirements are part of a broader regulatory framework aimed at monitoring the activities of NGOs and ensuring that their funding is used for lawful and intended purposes.

Disclosure of Foreign Affiliations

About 77.8% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that NGOs must disclose affiliations with foreign entities. The mean score of 3.97 reflects a strong leaning towards agreement, though the slightly higher standard deviation (1.02) suggests some variance in perceptions. Disclosure of foreign partnerships may open NGOs to accusations of external influence, thereby rendering them vulnerable to nationalist political rhetoric and administrative suspicion. Interview data revealed that all foreign partnerships must be disclosed, and they feared that partnerships with certain international bodies could attract negative government attention. A review of the NGO Act reveals that the Act requires international NGOs to disclose their foreign affiliations. Specifically, they must provide details about their organizational structure, including the nature of their relationship with any parent or affiliated organizations outside of Uganda. This includes information about their governing documents, funding sources, and any control or influence exerted by foreign entities (sections 29, 31, and 39).

Public Accessibility of Organizational Reports

Responses to the statement regarding the public accessibility of reports showed the most dispersion, with a mean score of 3.44 and the highest standard deviation (1.25) in this section. While 57.8% agreed or strongly agreed, a notable 24.4% either disagreed or strongly disagreed. This suggests inconsistency in either the implementation of public access policies or in respondents' awareness. Public access to sensitive reports could elevate security risks and expose operational vulnerabilities. There was disagreement among interviewees, during qualitative data collection, regarding public accessibility. Some believed reports were kept within government channels, while others worried that information leaks were possible.

"There is no guarantee that what you submit confidentially will remain confidential."

The NGO Act requires NGOs to submit audited financial statements annually, as stipulated under Section 40 of the Act. These statements must be prepared by a licensed auditor and submitted to the Bureau to demonstrate proper financial management and compliance with the law.

Penalties for Non-Compliance

The perception that non-compliance with disclosure rules attracts heavy penalties received a mean score of 3.80. Approximately 71.1% agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. The moderate standard deviation (1.13) implies some variation, possibly reflecting differing departmental experiences with compliance pressures. The threat of severe penalties creates a compliance-driven operational culture that could suppress flexibility and innovation. Interviewees reported that penalties for non-compliance are severe, ranging from fines to suspension of operations. This fear compels a high degree of bureaucratic caution, sometimes at the expense of program innovation.

From a broader scholarly perspective, these findings portray an environment where transparency requirements are framed not simply as measures for accountability but arguably as tools for oversight and control. While reporting and disclosure are indispensable pillars of good governance within civil society, their imposition within politically charged and highly discretionary regulatory frameworks often erodes rather than enhances operational security.

4.2.4 Descriptive data on Operational Security of Amnesty International

This section explores the respondents' perceptions regarding the operational security environment in which Amnesty International operates under Uganda's NGO Act. The focus is on evaluating internal protection measures, information security, freedom from arbitrary legal harassment, interference in programs, and access to beneficiaries. These factors collectively indicate the degree to which Amnesty International can operate independently, securely, and effectively within the prevailing regulatory framework.

The responses were captured using a five-point Likert scale as in previous sections. The table below presents the frequency, percentage, mean score, and standard deviation for each operational security statement.

Table 4. 7: Responses on Operational Security of Amnesty International

Note: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

Statement	1 (SD)	2 (D)	3 (N)	4 (A)	5 (SA)	Mean	Std. Dev
The organization maintains adequate measures to protect its staff and premises from threats.	2 (4.4%)	3 (6.7%)	5 (11.1%)	20 (44.4%)	15 (33.3%)	3.96	1.02
Information belonging to the organization is sufficiently secured against unauthorized access.	1 (2.2%)	2 (4.4%)	6 (13.3%)	18 (40.0%)	18 (40.0%)	4.11	0.95
The organization operates without fear of arbitrary deregistration or legal harassment.	8 (17.8%)	10 (22.2%)	7 (15.6%)	13 (28.9%)	7 (15.6%)	3.02	1.34
Programs and activities are implemented without undue administrative or political interference.	7 (15.6%)	9 (20.0%)	8 (17.8%)	14 (31.1%)	7 (15.6%)	3.11	1.30
Access to beneficiaries and operational areas is generally free from regulatory restrictions.	9 (20.0%)	10 (22.2%)	6 (13.3%)	12 (26.7%)	8 (17.8%)	3.00	1.40

The responses presented in Table 4.4 reveal a nuanced and somewhat concerning picture regarding the operational security conditions experienced by Amnesty International.

Staff and Premises Protection

A robust 77.7% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Amnesty International maintains adequate measures to protect its staff and premises from threats. The mean score of 3.96 and a standard deviation of 1.02 indicate a generally positive assessment with moderate variability. This suggests that internally, the organization has invested significantly in physical security protocols, an essential dimension of operational resilience. Data from interviews indicated that Amnesty International invests heavily in the physical security of its staff and premises. Security audits, protocols, and staff training were described as standard practice.

"Security is a priority because we know the risks we face, both from state and non-state actors."

Information Security

The statement regarding information security received an even higher mean of 4.11 with a relatively low standard deviation of 0.95. 80% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed, reflecting strong confidence in the organization's systems for protecting sensitive data from unauthorized access. This is critical, especially given the increased regulatory demands for reporting and disclosure. Data from interviews generally revealed robust information security systems. Nevertheless, concerns remain about cyberattacks and state surveillance.

Freedom from Legal Harassment

Alarmingly, only 44.5% agreed or strongly agreed that the organization operates without fear of arbitrary deregistration or legal harassment, while 40% either disagreed or strongly disagreed. The mean score of 3.02 and a high standard deviation of 1.34 reflect a substantial division in opinion. This polarization indicates that legal threats are not hypothetical but real concerns within the operational environment, undermining the security of Amnesty International's mandate. Qualitative data revealed that the threat of arbitrary deregistration or legal harassment was real. One respondent noted that:

"We are always one bureaucratic audit or political disagreement away from potential suspension."

Freedom from Administrative and Political Interference

On the matter of undue interference in programs and activities, only 46.7% agreed or strongly agreed, while 35.6% disagreed or strongly disagreed. The mean score of 3.11 suggests a fragile operational autonomy, while the standard deviation of 1.30 further points to considerable variability in experiences across different projects or departments. Qualitative data generally revealed that interference in the form of excessive audits, restrictive demands for operational details, and veiled threats from officials. One interviewee noted:

"Interference is more subtle, requests for meetings, 'recommendations' on programming choices, but the message is clear."

Access to Beneficiaries and Operational Areas

Responses regarding regulatory restrictions on access to beneficiaries are particularly telling. The mean score was 3.00, indicating a neutral stance overall, but with significant polarization. Nearly 42.2% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that access is generally free from restrictions, revealing substantive operational challenges that directly impact Amnesty International's ability to deliver services and advocacy. The operational security landscape described by these findings is highly instructive. While Amnesty International appears relatively successful in securing its internal environments, both physical and informational, it faces substantial external threats primarily rooted in regulatory and political uncertainties.

Qualitative data revealed that restrictions on travel permits, security clearances, and bureaucratic obstacles when accessing certain operational areas existed, particularly in politically sensitive regions. One respondent stated:

"Sometimes we are denied access to communities simply because a local authority refuses to grant clearance, citing 'security concerns.'"

4.3. Correlational and regression data Presentation and analysis

This section contains data presentation and analysis on correlations an regressions under the stated objectives of the study.

4.3.1. The effect of registration requirements under the NGO Act on the operational security of Amnesty International in Uganda

Table 4. 8: Correlations Between Registration Requirements and Operational Security Dimensions

	Protection of Staff/Premises	**Information Security**	**Freedom from Deregistration**	**Freedom from Interference**	**Access to Operational Areas**
Complex Registration Procedures					
Pearson Correlation	-.415**	-.392**	-.587**	-.562**	-.598**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.005	.008	.000	.000	.000
N	45	45	45	45	45
Demanding Renewal Requirements					
Pearson Correlation	-.387**	-.365*	-.642**	-.601**	-.573**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.009	.014	.000	.000	.000
N	45	45	45	45	45
Registration Fees & Bureaucratic Hurdles					
Pearson Correlation	-.428**	-.403**	-.612**	-.587**	-.634**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	.006	.000	.000	.000
N	45	45	45	45	45

Delays in Registration Approvals					
Pearson Correlation	-.379*	-.357*	-.543**	-.521**	-.559**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.010	.016	.000	.000	.000
N	45	45	45	45	45
Discretionary Powers of Authorities					
Pearson Correlation	-.401**	-.381**	-.678**	-.654**	-.612**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.006	.010	.000	.000	.000
N	45	45	45	45	45

****. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).**

The correlation analysis reveals a strong negative relationship between NGO registration requirements and operational security of Amnesty International in Uganda. All correlations between registration requirements and operational security measures are negative and statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), with most being significant at $p < 0.01$. The correlation coefficients range from moderate ($r = -.357$) to strong ($r = -.678$), providing substantial evidence that increased regulatory burdens are associated with decreased security across all operational dimensions.

The most severely affected aspects of operational security are freedom from arbitrary deregistration, access to operational areas, and freedom from interference. Freedom from deregistration shows the strongest negative correlations with registration requirements (ranging from $r = -.543$ to $-.678$), indicating that complex registration processes significantly undermine the organization's security against arbitrary closure. Similarly, access to operational areas exhibits strong negative correlations ($r = -.559$ to $-.634$), suggesting that stringent registration requirements substantially restrict field access and the ability to reach beneficiaries. Freedom

from interference also displays strong negative correlations (r = -.521 to -.654), demonstrating that administrative barriers are closely linked to increased political and administrative interference in programming.

Protection of staff/premises and information security, while still significantly affected, show comparatively moderate negative correlations (r = -.357 to -.428). This pattern suggests these aspects may have additional factors influencing them beyond registration requirements, or that Amnesty International might be more effective at maintaining these security dimensions despite regulatory challenges.

Among the registration requirements, discretionary powers of authorities emerge as particularly problematic, showing strong negative correlations with freedom from deregistration (r = -.678) and freedom from interference (r = -.654). This highlights how regulatory discretion creates organizational vulnerability and uncertainty. Registration fees and bureaucratic hurdles strongly correlate with reduced access to operational areas (r = -.634), suggesting financial and procedural barriers directly impact field operations. Additionally, demanding renewal requirements strongly correlate with freedom from deregistration (r = -.642), indicating that ongoing compliance burdens create persistent insecurity for the organization.

Regression Analysis

Table 4. 9: Table 4. 10: Regression model summary for Registration Requirements and Operational Security Dimensions

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.683	.466	.454	.788

Table 4. 11: ANOVA for Registration Requirements and Operational Security Dimensions

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	23.512	1	23.512	37.894	.000

Regression			
Residual	26.733	43	.622
Total	50.245	44	

Table 4. 12: Coefficients for Registration Requirements and Operational Security Dimensions

Model	**Unstandardized Coefficients**		**Standardized Coefficients**		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1 (Constant)	6.712	.587		11.434	.000
Registration Requirements	-.765	.124	-.683	-6.156	.000

The regression analysis further confirms the significant relationship between registration requirements and operational security. The model examining the overall relationship between registration requirements (composite variable) and operational security (composite variable) is statistically significant ($F = 37.894$, $p < 0.001$). The R^2 value of 0.466 indicates that registration requirements explain 46.6% of the variance in operational security, representing a substantial effect size in social science research.

The unstandardized regression coefficient ($B = -.765$) provides a quantifiable measure of impact: for each unit increase in registration requirements (on a 5-point scale), operational security decreases by 0.765 units. This represents a substantial practical impact, demonstrating that even modest increases in regulatory requirements can significantly undermine operational security. The standard error (0.124) is relatively small compared to the coefficient, and the t-value is large and significant ($t = -6.156$, $p < 0.001$), indicating high statistical reliability of the findings. The standardized beta coefficient ($\beta = -.683$) confirms the strong negative relationship when measured in standardized units.

Integrated Analysis

The patterns in the correlation table, combined with the regression results, suggest a potential causal mechanism whereby registration requirements affect operational security through multiple pathways. First, bureaucratic hurdles and fees directly limit access to operational areas and beneficiaries. Second, discretionary powers and complex procedures create an environment where the organization faces ongoing threat of deregistration. Third, demanding renewal requirements divert organizational resources from security to compliance activities.

The stronger correlations with freedom from deregistration, interference, and access to operational areas compared to staff/information security suggest Amnesty International may be better able to protect its internal assets than its operational freedom under restrictive registration regimes. This difference in vulnerability highlights how registration requirements may strategically constrain organizational activities rather than directly threatening organizational assets.

The regression results indicate that while individual registration requirements may have varying impacts, their cumulative effect explains nearly half the variation in operational security. This suggests registration requirements function as a coordinated regulatory framework rather than as isolated barriers. The substantial effect size ($R^2 = 0.466$) underscores the practical significance of these findings, indicating that addressing regulatory barriers would likely yield significant improvements in operational security, even if other factors remain unchanged.

4.3.2. The impact of funding restrictions imposed by the NGO Act on the operational security of Amnesty International in Uganda

Table 4. 13: Pearson Correlations Between Funding Restriction Variables and Operational Security Variables

	Protection of Staff/Premises	Information Security	Freedom from Deregistration	Freedom from Interference	Access to Operational Areas	Operational Security (Composite)
Strict Regulatory Conditions						

Pearson Correlation	-.396**	-.377*	-.604**	-.583**	-.557**	-.563**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.007	.011	.000	.000	.000	.000
N	45	45	45	45	45	45
Mandatory Government Approval						
Pearson Correlation	-.412**	-.394**	-.635**	-.597**	-.569**	-.589**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.005	.007	.000	.000	.000	.000
N	45	45	45	45	45	45
Limits on Foreign Funding						
Pearson Correlation	-.468**	-.451**	-.689**	-.667**	-.704**	-.677**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.002	.000	.000	.000	.000
N	45	45	45	45	45	45
Regulatory Restrictions on Fundraising						
Pearson Correlation	-.423**	-.401**	-.612**	-.591**	-.563**	-.584**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	.006	.000	.000	.000	.000
N	45	45	45	45	45	45
Possibility of Account Freezing/Seizure						
Pearson Correlation	-.481**	-.459**	-.722**	-.693**	-.677**	-.702**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.002	.000	.000	.000	.000
N	45	45	45	45	45	45
Funding Restrictions (Composite)						

Pearson Correlation	-.501**	-.479**	-.743**	-.716**	-.705**	-.715**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.001	.000	.000	.000	.000
N	45	45	45	45	45	45

****. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).**

The correlation analysis reveals a strong negative relationship between funding restrictions imposed by the NGO Act and the operational security of Amnesty International in Uganda. The overall correlation coefficient ($r = -.715$, $p < .001$) indicates that as funding restrictions become more severe, operational security significantly decreases. This correlation is stronger than what was observed with registration requirements ($r = -.683$), suggesting that funding restrictions may have an even more detrimental impact on operational security.

Examining the detailed correlations reveals that all aspects of funding restrictions negatively correlate with all dimensions of operational security at statistically significant levels ($p < .05$, most at $p < .01$). The strongest negative correlations are observed between the possibility of account freezing/seizure and freedom from deregistration ($r = -.722$), limits on foreign funding and access to operational areas ($r = -.704$), and the possibility of account freezing/seizure and freedom from interference ($r = -.693$). These strong correlations highlight how financial constraints directly threaten organizational autonomy and operational capabilities.

The most severe impact of funding restrictions appears to be on three dimensions of operational security: freedom from deregistration (correlations ranging from -.604 to -.722), freedom from interference (correlations from -.583 to -.693), and access to operational areas (correlations from -.557 to -.704). This pattern suggests that funding restrictions particularly undermine Amnesty International's ability to operate independently and access its beneficiaries, creating vulnerability to government interference and potential deregistration.

Among the funding restrictions, the possibility of account freezing/seizure and limits on foreign funding emerge as the most detrimental to operational security. The threat of financial asset seizure shows the strongest negative correlation with freedom from deregistration ($r = -.722$), suggesting that financial vulnerability directly translates to existential organizational vulnerability. Similarly, limits on foreign funding strongly correlate with reduced access to

operational areas (r = -.704), indicating that financial constraints directly impact field operations and reach.

Regression Analysis: Funding Restrictions and Operational Security

Table 4. 14: Regression model summary for Funding Restrictions and Operational Security

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.715	.511	.500	.754

Table 4. 15: ANOVA Funding Restrictions and Operational Security

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	25.693	1	25.693	45.180	.000
Residual	24.552	43	.571		
Total	50.245	44			

Table 4. 16: Coefficients Funding Restrictions and Operational Security

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1 (Constant)	7.015	.593		11.825	.000
Funding Restrictions	-.806	.120	-.715	-6.722	.000

The regression analysis provides further evidence of this strong relationship. The model is statistically significant ($F = 45.180$, $p < .001$) with funding restrictions explaining 51.1% of the variance in operational security ($R^2 = .511$). This represents a substantial effect size, even higher than what was observed with registration requirements ($R^2 = .466$). The regression coefficient (B

= -.806) quantifies this impact: for each unit increase in funding restrictions severity, operational security decreases by 0.806 units. This coefficient is statistically significant ($t = -6.722$, $p < .001$) and slightly larger than the coefficient for registration requirements (B = -.765), further suggesting that funding restrictions may have a more severe impact on operational security than registration requirements.

These findings have important practical implications. They demonstrate that funding restrictions under the NGO Act significantly undermine Amnesty International's operational security in Uganda, particularly affecting its autonomy and ability to operate freely. The possibility of account freezing/seizure and limits on foreign funding appear to be the most problematic aspects, suggesting these should be priority targets for policy reform advocacy. The substantial effect size ($R^2 = .511$) indicates that addressing funding restrictions would likely yield significant improvements in operational security, potentially even more so than addressing registration requirements.

The consistent pattern of negative correlations across all dimensions, combined with the strong regression results, provides compelling evidence that funding restrictions imposed by the NGO Act significantly impair Amnesty International's operational security in Uganda. These restrictions appear to function as powerful regulatory tools that constrain the organization's independence and operational capabilities, creating vulnerability to government interference and potential closure.

4.3.3. The influence of reporting and disclosure obligations under the NGO Act on the operational security of Amnesty International in Uganda

Table 4. 17: Correlation Analysis Between Reporting/Disclosure Requirements and Operational Security Measures

	Protection of Staff/Premises	Information Security	Freedom from Deregistration	Freedom from Interference	Access to Operational Areas	Operational Security (Composite)
Submit Detailed Operational	Pearson Correlation	-.631**	-.601**	-.689**	-.670**	-.718**

Plans						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	45	45	45	45	45
Disclosure of Sources and Uses of Funds	Pearson Correlation	-.582**	-.562**	-.673**	-.643**	-.692**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	45	45	45	45	45
Disclose Foreign Affiliations	Pearson Correlation	-.573**	-.544**	-.705**	-.685**	-.731**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	45	45	45	45	45
Reports Accessible to Public	Pearson Correlation	-.521**	-.493**	-.653**	-.628**	-.659**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.001	.000	.000	.000
	N	45	45	45	45	45
Non-compliance Penalties	Pearson Correlation	-.548**	-.519**	-.683**	-.652**	-.695**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	45	45	45	45	45
Reporting and Disclosure Requirements (Composite)	Pearson Correlation	-.625**	-.597**	-.731**	-.706**	-.753**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	45	45	45	45	45

Note: ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation analysis reveals significant and consistent negative relationships between all aspects of reporting/disclosure requirements and operational security measures for Amnesty International in Uganda. All correlations are statistically significant at $p < .001$, indicating strong evidence of these relationships.

The composite reporting and disclosure requirements variable shows a strong negative correlation with overall operational security (r = -.731), demonstrating that more stringent reporting obligations are associated with substantially diminished operational security. This robust negative relationship provides compelling evidence that the NGO Act's disclosure requirements may fundamentally compromise Amnesty International's ability to operate securely in Uganda.

Among the individual reporting requirements, the obligation to disclose foreign affiliations demonstrates the strongest negative correlation with access to operational areas (r = -.731) and freedom from deregistration (r = -.705). This suggests that when NGOs are required to reveal their international connections, they face increased vulnerability to restricted field access and threats of deregistration. This finding is particularly significant as it indicates that the regulatory framework may specifically target international connections as a means to control NGO operations.

The requirement to submit detailed operational plans also shows strong negative correlations with access to operational areas (r = -.718) and overall operational security (r = -.704). This suggests that obligatory disclosure of operational details may compromise the organization's ability to access beneficiaries and maintain secure operations, possibly by exposing sensitive information about field activities to potential adversaries.

The strongest overall negative correlation exists between the composite reporting requirements and access to operational areas (r = -.753), highlighting how disclosure obligations particularly impact the organization's ability to reach intended beneficiaries. This presents a fundamental challenge to Amnesty International's mission, as restricted access to operational areas directly impedes their ability to document human rights violations and provide services to affected communities.

Information security shows the lowest correlation coefficients across all reporting requirements (ranging from r = -.493 to r = -.601), though still statistically significant. This suggests that while the organization may have implemented some effective information protection measures, these are not sufficient to fully mitigate the security risks posed by extensive disclosure requirements.

Regression Analysis: Reporting/Disclosure Requirements and Operational Security

Table 4. 18: model summary for Reporting/Disclosure Requirements and Operational Security

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.731	.534	.523	.687

Table 4. 19: ANOVA for Reporting/Disclosure Requirements and Operational Security

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	23.418	1	23.418	49.632	.000
Residual	20.338	43	.473		
Total	43.756	44			

Table 4. 20: Coefficients for Reporting/Disclosure Requirements and Operational Security

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1 (Constant)	7.482	.617		12.127	.000
Reporting/Disclosure Requirements	-.967	.137	-.731	-7.045	.000

The regression analysis provides compelling statistical evidence regarding the impact of reporting and disclosure requirements on the operational security of Amnesty International in Uganda. The model summary in Table 4.12 indicates that reporting and disclosure requirements explain a substantial proportion of the variation in operational security (R Square = .534), meaning that 53.4% of the changes in operational security can be attributed to variations in reporting and disclosure obligations. This represents a substantial effect size in social science

research and indicates that reporting requirements are a major factor influencing the organization's security.

The ANOVA results in Table 4.13 confirm that the regression model is highly statistically significant ($F = 49.632$, $p < .001$). This strong significance level provides robust evidence that the observed relationship between reporting requirements and operational security is not due to chance but represents a meaningful association in the population. The high F-value demonstrates the strong explanatory power of reporting and disclosure requirements in predicting operational security challenges.

Table 4.14 presents the coefficients of the regression model, which quantifies the specific relationship between the variables. The unstandardized coefficient ($B = -.967$) indicates that for each one-unit increase in reporting and disclosure requirements, operational security decreases by nearly one full point on the five-point scale. This strong negative coefficient underscores the substantial detrimental impact of heightened disclosure obligations on NGO security. The standardized coefficient (Beta = -.731) further confirms the strong negative relationship between these variables.

The constant term (7.482) represents the theoretical level of operational security that would exist in the absence of reporting requirements, though this value falls outside the practical range of the measurement scale. The high t-value (-7.045) and significant p-value ($p < .001$) for the independent variable coefficient provide strong evidence that reporting and disclosure requirements have a real and negative effect on operational security.

These findings demonstrate that the NGO Act's reporting and disclosure obligations significantly impair Amnesty International's operational security in Uganda. The regression equation (Operational Security = 7.482 - 0.967 × Reporting and Disclosure Requirements) provides a mathematical representation of this relationship, showing that as reporting requirements increase, operational security consistently decreases. The strong model fit and highly significant coefficients indicate that this negative relationship is robust and not merely coincidental.

4.4. Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis Testing: Registration Requirements' Effect on Operational Security

Hypothesis tests for the first pair of hypotheses regarding whether registration requirements under the NGO Act have a significant effect on the operational security of Amnesty International in Uganda.

The regression analysis reveals a strong relationship between registration requirements and operational security, with an R value of 0.683 indicating a substantial correlation. The R^2 value of 0.466 demonstrates that registration requirements explain nearly half (46.6%) of the variance in operational security measures. Most importantly, the model is statistically significant with $F(1, 43) = 37.894$ and $p < 0.001$, which falls well below the standard significance threshold of 0.05. The regression coefficient for registration requirements ($B = -0.765$, $p < 0.001$) indicates a significant negative relationship, meaning that as registration requirements become more stringent, operational security decreases considerably.

The correlation data further reinforces these findings, showing consistent negative correlations between all dimensions of registration requirements and all aspects of operational security. Every correlation is statistically significant, with p-values below 0.05 and most below 0.01. The correlation coefficients range from -0.357 to -0.678, representing moderate to strong negative relationships. Particularly notable are the strong negative correlations between discretionary powers of authorities and freedom from deregistration (-0.678), demanding renewal requirements and freedom from deregistration (-0.642), and registration fees and bureaucratic hurdles with access to operational areas (-0.634).

Given these comprehensive statistical results, the researcher rejects the null hypothesis (H_{01}) that registration requirements under the NGO Act have no significant effect on the operational security of Amnesty International in Uganda. Instead, the researcher accepts the alternative hypothesis (H_{11}) that registration requirements do have a significant effect on operational security. The direction of this effect is consistently negative across all measured dimensions, indicating that the NGO Act's registration requirements are associated with reduced operational security for Amnesty International in Uganda.

The strongest impacts appear to be on freedom from deregistration, access to operational areas, and freedom from interference, suggesting that the registration requirements most severely affect these fundamental aspects of operational security. This comprehensive negative impact across multiple security dimensions emphasizes the substantial influence that registration requirements under the NGO Act have on Amnesty International's ability to operate securely in Uganda.

Hypothesis Testing: Funding Restrictions' impact on Operational Security

Based on the provided data, I conducted an analysis to test the second pair of hypotheses regarding whether funding restrictions imposed by the NGO Act have a significant impact on the operational security of Amnesty International in Uganda.

The regression analysis demonstrates a strong relationship between funding restrictions and operational security, with an R value of 0.715 indicating a robust correlation. The R^2 value of 0.511 shows that funding restrictions explain a substantial portion (51.1%) of the variance in operational security measures. The model is statistically significant with $F(1, 43) = 45.180$ and $p < 0.001$, well below the conventional threshold of 0.05. The regression coefficient for funding restrictions ($B = -0.806$, $p < 0.001$) reveals a significant negative relationship, indicating that as funding restrictions increase in severity, operational security decreases markedly.

The correlation data provides additional compelling evidence of this relationship, showing consistent and significant negative correlations between all dimensions of funding restrictions and all aspects of operational security. Every correlation is statistically significant, with p-values below 0.05 and most below 0.01. The correlation coefficients range from -0.377 to -0.743, representing moderate to strong negative relationships. Particularly notable are the strong negative correlations between the composite funding restrictions variable and freedom from deregistration (-0.743), funding restrictions and freedom from interference (-0.716), and funding restrictions and the composite operational security measure (-0.715).

Among the specific funding restriction dimensions, the possibility of account freezing/seizure and limits on foreign funding show the strongest negative relationships with operational security measures. These correlations suggest that these particular restrictions may be especially detrimental to Amnesty International's ability to operate securely in Uganda.

Given these comprehensive statistical results, the null hypothesis (H_{02}) that funding restrictions imposed by the NGO Act have no significant impact on the operational security of Amnesty International in Uganda is rejected. Instead, the researcher accepts the alternative hypothesis (H_{12}) that funding restrictions do have a significant impact on operational security. The direction of this impact is consistently negative across all measured dimensions, demonstrating that the NGO Act's funding restrictions are associated with substantially reduced operational security for Amnesty International in Uganda.

This finding highlights how financial constraints imposed by the NGO Act appear to significantly compromise Amnesty International's ability to maintain secure operations in Uganda, with particularly strong effects on their freedom from deregistration, freedom from interference, and overall operational security.

Hypothesis Testing: Reporting and Disclosure Obligations' influence on Operational Security

Based on the provided data, I conducted an analysis to test the third pair of hypotheses regarding whether reporting and disclosure obligations under the NGO Act have a significant influence on the operational security of Amnesty International in Uganda.

The regression analysis demonstrates a strong relationship between reporting/disclosure requirements and operational security, with an R value of 0.731 indicating a robust correlation. The R^2 value of 0.534 reveals that reporting and disclosure requirements explain a substantial portion (53.4%) of the variance in operational security measures. The model is statistically significant with $F(1, 43) = 49.632$ and $p < 0.001$, well below the conventional threshold of 0.05. The regression coefficient for reporting/disclosure requirements ($B = -0.967$, $p < 0.001$) indicates a significant negative relationship, showing that as reporting and disclosure obligations become more demanding, operational security decreases substantially.

The correlation data further reinforces these findings, showing consistent and significant negative correlations between all dimensions of reporting/disclosure requirements and all aspects of operational security. Every correlation is statistically significant at the 0.01 level. The correlation coefficients range from -0.493 to -0.753, representing moderate to strong negative relationships. Particularly notable are the strong negative correlations between the composite

reporting/disclosure requirements variable and access to operational areas (-0.753), reporting/disclosure requirements and freedom from deregistration (-0.731), and the requirement to disclose foreign affiliations and access to operational areas (-0.731).

Among the specific reporting and disclosure dimensions, requirements to submit detailed operational plans and to disclose foreign affiliations show the strongest negative relationships with operational security measures. These correlations suggest that these particular obligations may be especially detrimental to Amnesty International's ability to operate securely in Uganda.

Given these comprehensive statistical results, the researcher rejects the null hypothesis (H_{03}) that reporting and disclosure obligations under the NGO Act have no significant influence on the operational security of Amnesty International in Uganda. Instead, the researcher accepts the alternative hypothesis (H_{13}) that reporting and disclosure obligations do have a significant influence on operational security. The direction of this influence is consistently negative across all measured dimensions, demonstrating that the NGO Act's reporting and disclosure requirements are associated with substantially reduced operational security for Amnesty International in Uganda.

This finding highlights how transparency requirements imposed by the NGO Act appear to significantly compromise Amnesty International's ability to maintain secure operations in Uganda, with particularly strong negative effects on their access to operational areas, freedom from deregistration, and freedom from interference.

CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0. Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the key findings derived from the research, along with the conclusions and recommendations that emerged from the study. The objective of this chapter is to synthesize the major results in relation to the research questions and hypotheses that guided the investigation into the impact of Uganda's NGO Act on the operational security of Amnesty International in Kampala.

5.1. Summary of key findings

The study sought to examine the effect of registration requirements under the NGO Act on the operational security of Amnesty International in Uganda. Findings from the descriptive data showed that registration processes are perceived as complex and bureaucratic, with 78% of respondents agreeing that the procedures are lengthy and burdensome. Renewal and licensing requirements were also found to be particularly demanding, as 80% of respondents noted the process is just as intricate as the initial registration. Additionally, 73% reported that registration fees and bureaucratic hurdles create significant operational challenges, while 60% confirmed delays in obtaining approvals. A notable 73% agreed that authorities wield wide discretionary powers during registration, exposing Amnesty International to risks of arbitrary decisions. Correlation analysis revealed strong negative relationships between registration requirements and all dimensions of operational security, especially regarding freedom from deregistration ($r = -0.678$), access to operational areas ($r = -0.634$), and freedom from interference ($r = -0.654$). Regression analysis showed that registration requirements account for 46.6% of the variance in operational security ($R^2 = 0.466$), with a significant negative regression coefficient ($B = -0.765$, $p < 0.001$). Consequently, the null hypothesis that registration requirements have no effect was rejected, leading to the conclusion that stringent registration requirements significantly and negatively impact Amnesty International's operational security.

The second objective assessed the impact of funding restrictions imposed by the NGO Act on the operational security of Amnesty International. Descriptive results indicated that 87% of respondents recognized the strict compliance conditions attached to receiving foreign funding, and 85% confirmed that mandatory government approval causes delays that jeopardize project

implementation. While 60% perceived that large foreign grants face increased scrutiny (even if no formal caps exist), 78% reported that fundraising activities are highly regulated. Moreover, 69% agreed that there is a real risk of freezing or seizure of financial accounts. Correlation analysis demonstrated strong negative relationships between funding restrictions and operational security, particularly affecting freedom from deregistration ($r = -0.743$), freedom from interference ($r = -0.716$), and access to operational areas ($r = -0.705$). Regression results revealed that funding restrictions explain 51.1% of the variation in operational security ($R^2 = 0.511$), with a strong negative coefficient ($B = -0.806$, $p < 0.001$). These results led to the rejection of the null hypothesis, affirming that funding restrictions significantly and negatively impact the operational security of Amnesty International. Notably, the negative impact of funding restrictions was found to be even stronger than that of registration requirements.

The third objective analyzed the influence of reporting and disclosure obligations under the NGO Act on Amnesty International's operational security. Descriptive findings showed that 87% of respondents agreed NGOs must submit detailed operational plans to the government, raising concerns about exposure of strategic information. All respondents (100%) agreed that mandatory financial disclosures, although justified for accountability, are burdensome and could invite state surveillance. Furthermore, 78% noted that disclosing foreign affiliations heightened organizational vulnerabilities, while opinions on public accessibility of reports were mixed, reflecting uncertainty about confidentiality. Penalties for non-compliance were seen as severe by 71% of respondents. Correlation analysis showed strong negative relationships between reporting obligations and all operational security measures, with the strongest effects seen on access to operational areas ($r = -0.753$) and freedom from deregistration ($r = -0.731$). Regression analysis indicated that reporting and disclosure obligations explain 53.4% of the variation in operational security ($R^2 = 0.534$), with a very strong negative coefficient ($B = -0.967$, $p < 0.001$). As a result, the null hypothesis was rejected, confirming that reporting and disclosure obligations significantly and negatively influence operational security. Among all three regulatory areas studied, reporting and disclosure requirements had the strongest negative effect on operational security.

In comparative terms, the analysis shows that although registration requirements ($R^2 = 0.466$) and funding restrictions ($R^2 = 0.511$) severely affect operational security, reporting and

disclosure obligations ($R^2 = 0.534$) exert the greatest negative influence. Across all objectives, the results consistently demonstrate that the NGO Act's regulatory framework substantially undermines Amnesty International's operational security in Uganda, particularly by restricting organizational autonomy, imposing bureaucratic burdens, and increasing vulnerability to administrative interference and arbitrary enforcement actions.

5.2. Recommendations

To address the challenges arising from registration requirements under the NGO Act, it is recommended that Amnesty International and other stakeholders advocate for the simplification and standardization of registration and renewal processes. Procedures should be made more transparent, predictable, and less bureaucratic. Additionally, there is a need to limit the wide discretionary powers held by registration authorities by introducing clear legal criteria and establishing independent appeals mechanisms. Efforts should also be made to reduce compliance costs by revising registration fees and minimizing hidden administrative charges that undermine operational security.

Regarding the impact of funding restrictions, it is recommended that Amnesty International pushes for reforms that eliminate the requirement for prior government approval of foreign funding. Instead, a post-receipt reporting system should be encouraged to safeguard financial autonomy. Strengthening internal financial compliance systems is also critical to prevent administrative penalties such as account freezing. Furthermore, diversifying funding sources through increased domestic fundraising and building financial reserves would enhance resilience against disruptions caused by regulatory constraints on foreign funding.

In response to the influence of reporting and disclosure obligations, Amnesty International should advocate for stronger confidentiality protections in the law to safeguard sensitive operational plans and financial information. The organization should also invest in cybersecurity and internal data protection systems to minimize risks arising from mandatory disclosures. Finally, there should be an effort to push for a more reasonable and proportional reporting regime that does not overburden NGOs with excessive disclosure demands, thus preserving operational flexibility and security.

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Appendices

Appendix I: Self-Administered Questionnaire

(A) Statements Related to the Independent Variable (NGO Act Dimensions and Indicators)

No.	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
	Statements on registration requirements					
1	The process of registering an NGO involves complex procedures.					
2	Renewal and licensing requirements for NGOs are demanding.					
3	Registration fees and bureaucratic hurdles create operational challenges.					
4	There are significant delays in obtaining registration approvals.					
5	Registration authorities possess wide discretionary powers over NGO registration.					
	Statements on funding restrictions					
6	Receiving foreign funding requires compliance with strict regulatory conditions.					
7	Obtaining government approval for foreign donations is a mandatory process.					
8	There are limits on the amounts of foreign funding NGOs can receive.					
9	Fundraising activities are subject to regulatory restrictions.					
10	Freezing or seizure of NGO financial accounts is possible under the current regulations.					
	Statements on requirements on reporting and disclosure					
11	NGOs are required to submit detailed operational plans to government authorities.					
12	Disclosure of sources and uses of funds is mandatory for NGOs.					

13	NGOs must disclose affiliations and partnerships with foreign entities.					
14	Organizational reports submitted to authorities are accessible to the public.					
15	Non-compliance with disclosure rules attracts heavy penalties.					

(B) Statements Related to the Dependent Variable (Operational Security of Amnesty International)

No.	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
16	The organization maintains adequate measures to protect its staff and premises from threats.					
17	Information belonging to the organization is sufficiently secured against unauthorized access.					
18	The organization operates without fear of arbitrary deregistration or legal harassment.					
19	Programs and activities are implemented without undue administrative or political interference.					
20	Access to beneficiaries and operational areas is generally free from regulatory restrictions.					

Appendix II: Interview Guide

Introduction:

Good morning/afternoon.

My name is **Ambrose Walubo**, and I am currently pursuing a Master's Degree in Security and Strategic Studies at Nkumba University. I am conducting a research study entitled *"The NGO Legal Framework (NGO Act) on the Operational Security of Amnesty International in Uganda"*.

This research is being undertaken in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Master's degree. The purpose of this interview is to gather in-depth insights from key personnel regarding the regulatory challenges faced under the NGO Act and how these affect the operational security of Amnesty International.

Your participation is entirely voluntary. The information you provide will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and will solely be used for academic purposes. With your permission, I may take notes and/or record the interview to ensure accuracy.

Thank you very much for agreeing to participate.

Section A: Registration Requirements

1. **Registration Complexity**
    - Can you describe your experience with the process of registering Amnesty International under the NGO Act?
    - In your view, are the registration procedures straightforward or complex? Kindly elaborate.
2. **Renewal and Licensing**
    - How would you characterize the process of renewing Amnesty International's operational license?
    - What challenges, if any, do you encounter during the renewal process?

3. **Financial and Bureaucratic Barriers**

    - Are there significant financial costs or bureaucratic hurdles associated with the registration and licensing of Amnesty International?
    - How do these affect operational efficiency?

4. **Approval Delays**

    - Have there been notable delays in obtaining registration or renewal approvals?
    - If yes, what do you perceive as the reasons behind such delays?

5. **Discretionary Powers of Authorities**

    - In your opinion, do registration authorities exercise wide discretionary powers over NGO registration?
    - How has this affected Amnesty International's operations, if at all?

Section B: Funding Restrictions

6. **Regulatory Compliance for Foreign Funding**

    - What compliance requirements does Amnesty International have to fulfill to receive foreign funding?
    - How do these requirements impact your fundraising strategies?

7. **Approval Processes for Donations**

    - Is obtaining government approval for foreign donations a mandatory process for Amnesty International?
    - How does this process affect your operational timelines?

8. **Limits on Foreign Funding**

    - Are there regulatory limits on the amounts of foreign funding that Amnesty International can receive?
    - How do such limitations influence program planning and implementation?

9. **Fundraising Activity Restrictions**

    - Are there restrictions on how Amnesty International conducts its fundraising activities domestically and internationally?
    - How do these restrictions influence your ability to mobilize resources?

10. **Financial Account Risks**

    - Have there been instances or threats of freezing or seizing Amnesty International's financial accounts under the current regulations?
    - How does this threat influence operational security planning?

Section C: Requirements on Reporting and Disclosure

11. **Operational Plan Submissions**

    - What type of operational plans are required to be submitted to the government?
    - How do these reporting obligations affect strategic planning and confidentiality?

12. **Financial Disclosure Requirements**

    - Could you elaborate on the requirements for disclosing sources and uses of funds?
    - Do you perceive these requirements as supportive of transparency or as mechanisms of control?

13. **Disclosure of Foreign Partnerships**

    - Are you required to disclose affiliations or partnerships with foreign entities?
    - What implications does this have for Amnesty International's collaborations?

14. **Public Accessibility of Reports**

    - Are the reports submitted to authorities made accessible to the public?
    - How does public access to organizational reports affect your operational security?

15. **Penalties for Non-Compliance**

- What are the penalties for non-compliance with reporting and disclosure requirements?
- How do these penalties affect compliance behavior within the organization?

Section D: Operational Security of Amnesty International

16. **Protection of Staff and Premises**

- What measures does Amnesty International undertake to protect its staff and premises from threats?
- Are these measures adequate in the current regulatory environment?

17. **Information Security**

- How is sensitive organizational information protected from unauthorized access?
- Have there been any challenges in maintaining information security?

18. **Freedom from Legal Harassment**

- Does Amnesty International operate without fear of arbitrary deregistration or legal harassment?
- If not, could you share examples or instances where such threats were experienced?

19. **Administrative and Political Interference**

- Are Amnesty International's programs and activities subjected to administrative or political interference?
- How does such interference, if any, affect the effectiveness of your operations?

20. **Access to Beneficiaries**

- Is Amnesty International able to access its beneficiaries and operational areas freely?

- What regulatory restrictions, if any, impede access?

Thank you very much for your valuable time and for sharing your experiences and insights. Your contribution is greatly appreciated and will significantly enrich the findings of this research. If you would like to receive a copy of the final report or have any questions later, please do not hesitate to contact me.