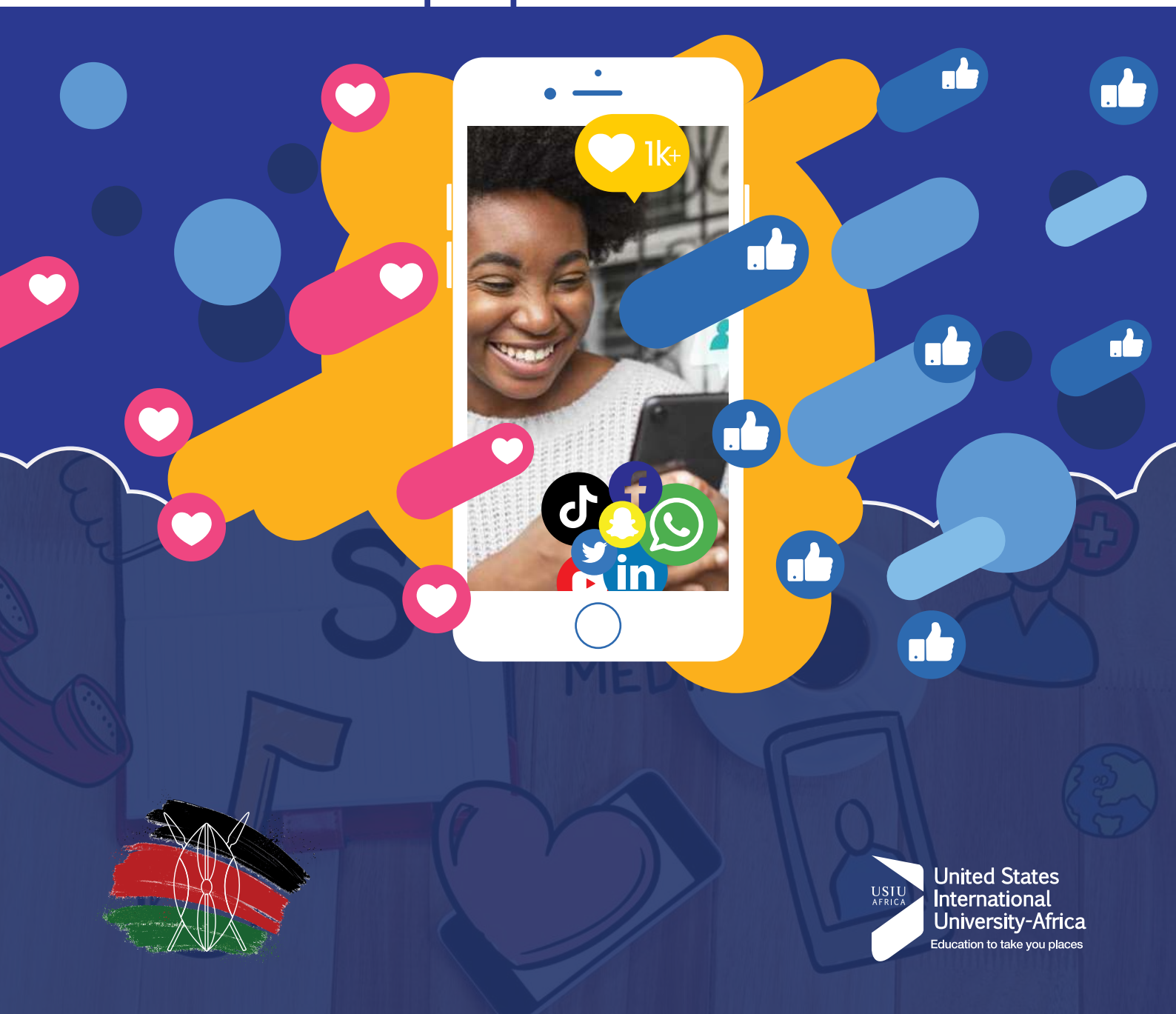
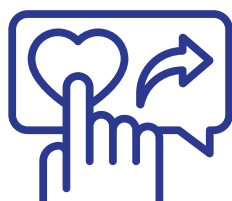


2021 Report

Social Media Use and Consumption in Kenya:

Beyond Likes and Share -
Quantifying the Quirks
and Trends of
a Nation Online



SIMELab Activities

Social Media Data Analytics Training



International Symposiums & Webinars



Social Media Use and Consumption Reports and Book Publications





About SIMELab Africa

SIMELab Africa (Social Media Lab Africa) is an interdisciplinary Center for Research in Big Data and Social Media Analytics Research Lab housed at USIU-Africa's Freida Brown Innovation Center. SIMELab Africa offers a research and development environment to USIU-Africa faculty and students, civil society and corporate businesses, and policymakers in Kenya and beyond. The founding of the SIMELab Africa was made possible by the generous financial support of the United States Embassy in Nairobi and USIU-Africa.

The Objectives of the SIMELab are to:

- Provide an annual status on social media consumption in Kenya leading to an annual report;
- Conduct quarterly training on social media analytics for academics and the private sector in Kenya;
- Develop a monthly data repository on social media consumption in Kenya; and
- Disseminate quality and reputable research through journal and conference publications.

Disclaimer

The views and opinions expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official position of any specific organization or government.

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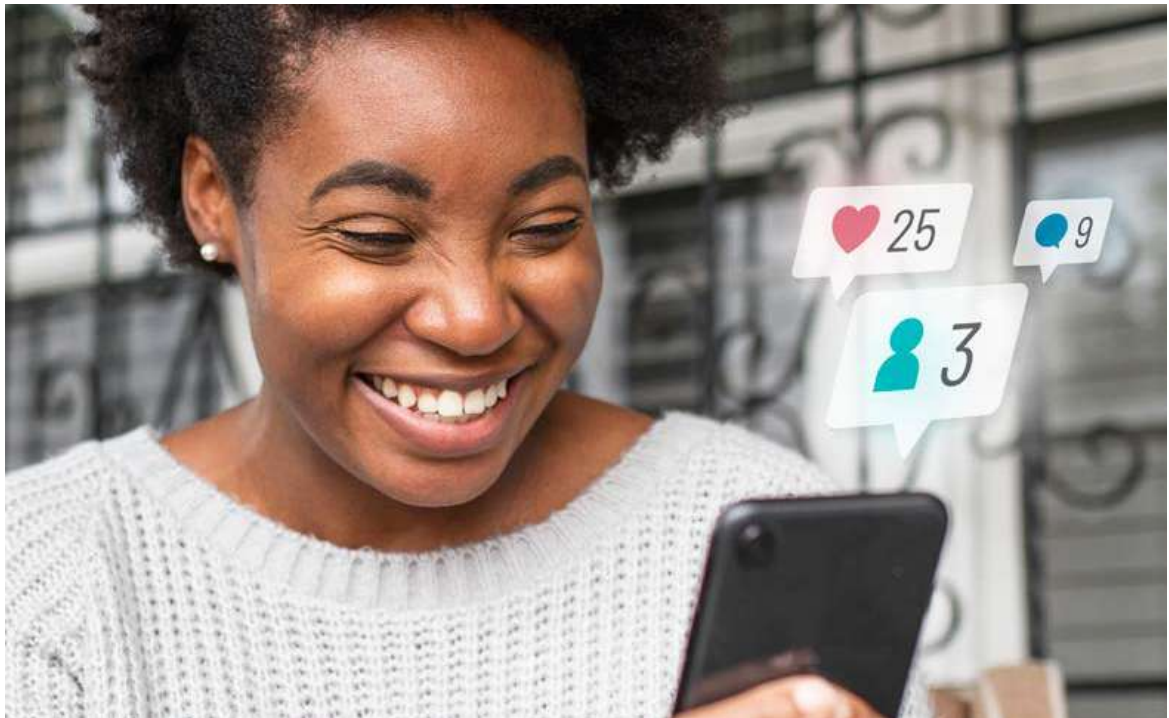
https://www.usiu.ac.ke/assets/file/SIMELab_Social_Media_Use_and_Consumption_report3.pdf

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1. Foreword



The Social Media Consumption in Kenya report highlights how Kenyans interact with social media, their behaviors, and motivations. Social media and new media have become a relevant issue in Kenya in terms of communication, media consumption and marketing in the last few years. The report is a continuation of SIMElab's desire to provide baseline data on consumption of the new media by different Kenyan communities. In an era where the digital landscape is continuously evolving, few phenomena have transformed the dynamics of communication and interaction as profoundly as social media platforms. The year 2021 witnessed an unprecedented surge in the utilization of these platforms across various demographics, reflecting a shift in the way individuals engage, share, and consume information. The insights captured in the SIMElab report provide a comprehensive understanding of the intricate tapestry of social media use and consumption in Kenya during this pivotal time.

The use of social media in Kenya has grown rapidly in recent years, with the number of active users now estimated at over 40 million. This growth is being driven by several factors, including the increasing availability of smartphones and mobile internet access, the growing youth population, and the increasing access to Wi-Fi in rural areas of the country. Social media is being used by Kenyans for a variety of purposes, including communication, entertainment, news and information, and m-commerce. It is also being used to connect with friends and family, to express oneself, and to participate in political and social discussions. Over

99% of social media users in Kenya access social media platforms through their mobile phones. This suggests that businesses should optimize their social media content and marketing strategies for mobile devices to allow seamless communication with customers, offer customer support, and promote their products and services.

The SIMElab 2021 report on social media use in Kenya provides a comprehensive overview of the state of the industry in the country. The reports cover a wide range of topics, including the demographics of social media users, the most popular platforms, the types of content that are being shared, and the impact of social media on Kenyan society. The report poignantly depicts the dark side of social media, where misinformation and cyberbullying thrive; potentially undermining the very fabric of societal harmony. The report prompts us to consider how to strike a delicate balance between the advantages of connectivity and the need to ensure ethical use, privacy, and security in an interconnected world. However, there are opportunities including the growing use of social media for businesses, the increasing use of social media for civic engagement, and the potential of social media to drive economic growth.

Social media platforms in Kenya serve various purposes, from daily communication and connection to weekly entertainment and monthly content consumption.

2. Acknowledgment

In developing the Kenya Social Media Consumption Report 2021, SIMELab received invaluable collaboration and input from key partners as listed below.



Data Collection Assistants

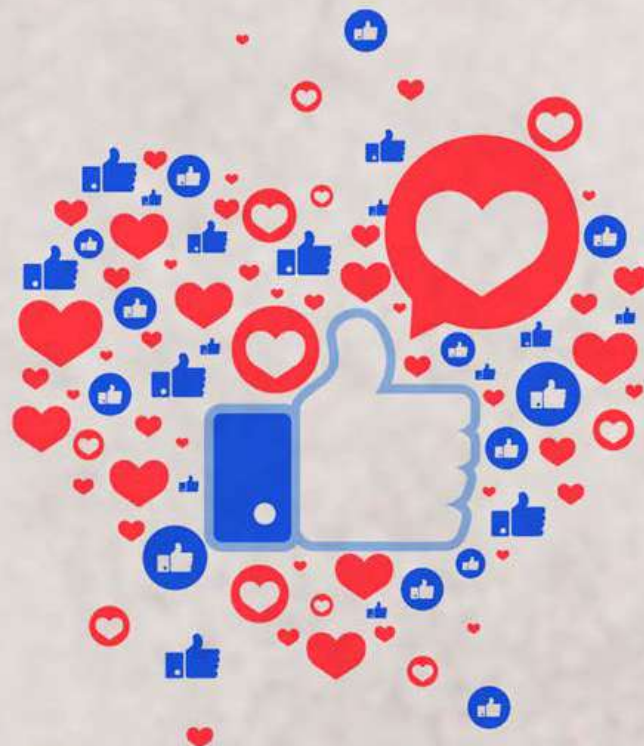
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Mr. Ibrahim Hassan Hudle
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Commentaries

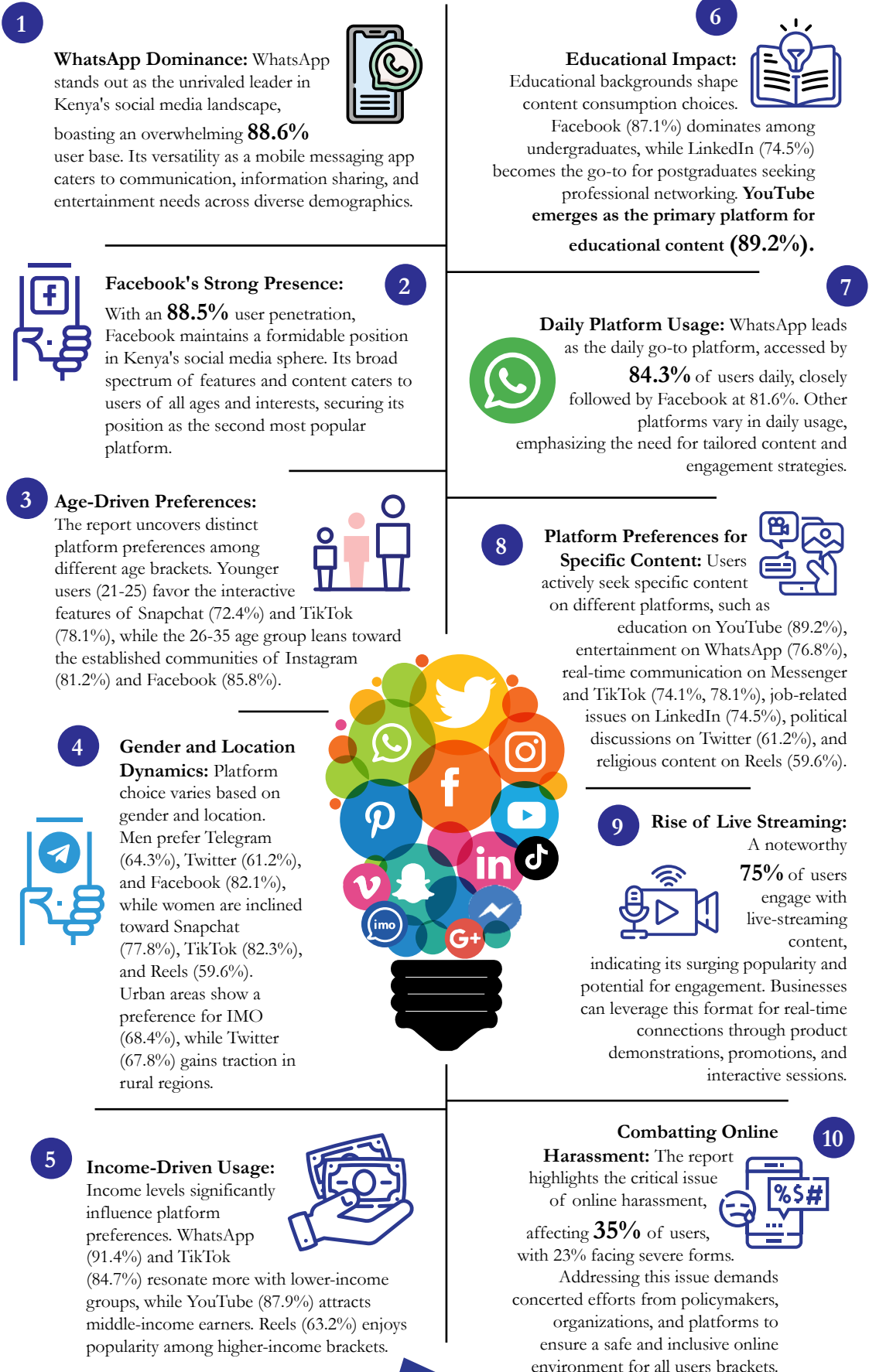
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3. Key Insights from the SIMELAB Report



4. Survey Synopsis



The report is based on a nationally representative survey conducted between September and December 2021, which explored social media usage and consumption patterns across various demographic groups. The aim of this comprehensive survey design was to provide a comprehensive and representative analysis of social media use across different regions and demographic groups in Kenya. The survey encompassed 9,765 participants aged between 14 and 55, hailing from 18 different counties across Kenya and representing the country's former eight administrative provinces.

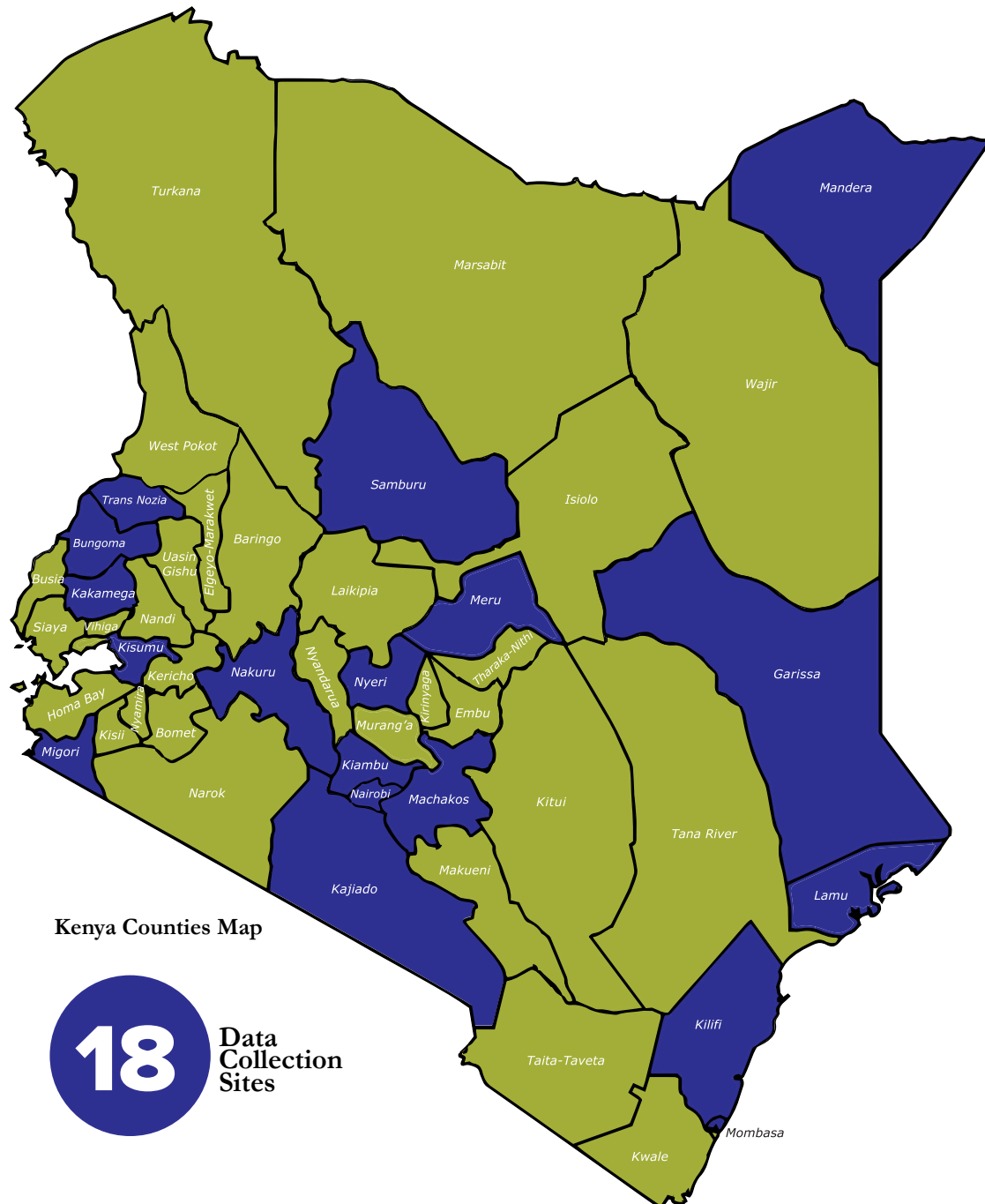
From the initial sample of 9,765 respondents, 9,685 fully completed the questionnaires, resulting in an impressive response rate of 99.18%. To ensure a balanced comparative analysis, an equitable number of counties were selected from each province. These selections were made with consideration of counties with the most internet access, as indicated by data from the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics in 2016.

Additionally, efforts were made to include counties where social media usage data had not been previously collected. The 18 counties selected were: Nairobi, Mombasa, Kilifi, Lamu, Meru, Machakos, Bungoma, Kakamega, Trans Nzoia, Nakuru, Samburu, Kajiado, Kisumu, Migori, Nyeri, Kiambu, Mandera, and Garissa. The sample size per county was as follows: Bungoma (n=599), Garissa (n=300), Kajiado (n=537), Kakamega (n=600), Kiambu (n=600), Kilifi (n=300), Kisumu (n=654), Lamu (n=300), Machakos (n=600), Mandera (n=300), Meru (n=600), Migori (n=600), Mombasa (n=610), Nairobi (n=985), Nakuru (n=599), Nyeri (n=600), Trans Nzoia (n=601), Samburu (n=300).

The report contains four exceptional and insightful commentaries that examine the effects of COVID-19 lockdown measures on social media engagement in Kenya, the use of live streaming during the pandemic, the participation of foreign cybersecurity organizations in Africa, and the change in Kenyan journalists' views on their responsibilities because of the spread of misinformation.

5. Data Collection Sites

The sites included Bungoma, Garissa, Kajiado, Kakamega, Kiambu, Kilifi, Kisumu, Lamu, Machakos, Mandera, Meru, Migori, Mombasa, Nairobi, Nakuru, Nyeri, Samburu and Trans Nzoia.



6. Social Media Use and Consumption in Kenya 2021



As of 2021, Kenya has experienced a significant surge in social media use and consumption, shaping the country's communication landscape and influencing various aspects of society. With the surge there has been key trends, challenges, and opportunities associated with social media in Kenya.

Social media has ushered in a new era of connection and communication for Kenyans, forging a vibrant and interconnected society. This digital realm has seamlessly woven itself into the fabric of daily life, empowering individuals to nurture meaningful relationships and stay abreast of current events. The versatility of social media, encompassing text, images, audio, and videos, has crafted a multifaceted tapestry of communication that transcends traditional limitations.

Social media has transcended geographical barriers, empowering Kenyans to maintain close bonds with friends and family despite physical separation. Its adoption in Kenya has witnessed remarkable growth, with platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and WhatsApp becoming integral parts of daily life for a substantial portion of the population. The proliferation of affordable smartphones and improved internet infrastructure has been a key driver of this trend. The youth demographic plays a pivotal role in shaping social media trends in Kenya. A large percentage of social media users fall within the age bracket of 18 to 35 years, contributing to the vibrant and dynamic nature of online conversations.

In the professional sphere, social media has become a powerful tool for networking, business promotion, and collaboration. Kenyan professionals leverage platforms like LinkedIn to connect with colleagues, potential employers, and industry peers. This not only facilitates career growth but also opens up avenues for knowledge

sharing and mentorship. Additionally, organizations utilize social media to enhance their visibility, engage with their audience, and disseminate information about products, services, and corporate social responsibility initiatives.

The visual nature of social media has transformed the way Kenyans share and consume information. Platforms like Instagram and Snapchat allow users to tell their stories through images and short videos, offering a more immersive and personal experience. This visual storytelling has given rise to digital influencers and content creators who use their platforms to share insights, entertain, and advocate for various causes. The widespread use of social media in Kenya has also played a crucial role in shaping public discourse. Citizens now have a platform to voice their opinions, discuss current affairs, and participate in social and political debates.

This democratization of information has contributed to a more informed and engaged citizenry. However, it is important to note that while social media brings numerous benefits, it also poses challenges such as the spread of misinformation, cyberbullying, and privacy concerns. As Kenyans navigate this digital landscape, there is a growing awareness of the need for digital literacy and responsible online behavior.

Social media has become an integral part of Kenyan society, offering both opportunities and challenges. As we move forward, it is imperative to address the associated risks, such as misinformation and privacy concerns, while leveraging the positive aspects for economic growth, political engagement, and community development. Strategic efforts should focus on promoting digital literacy, expanding internet access, and fostering responsible social media use to ensure a more inclusive and informed digital future for Kenya.

7. Social Media Usage Statistics



Figure 7.1 shows the Social Media usage statistics in Kenya in 2021. Based on the data findings, it is clear that WhatsApp, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and Twitter are the most popular social media platforms used in Kenya. WhatsApp stands out as the most widely used platform, with 88.4% of the population using it. This highlights the importance of messaging apps in Kenya, as well as the need for businesses to utilize this platform for marketing purposes. Facebook is the second most widely used platform, with 79.4% of the population using it. This underscores the importance of Facebook as a communication tool in Kenya and highlights its potential for advertising and marketing purposes.

YouTube, Instagram, and Twitter also have significant user bases in Kenya, with over 50% of the population using YouTube and over 40% using Instagram and Twitter. This suggests that these platforms can be effective for businesses looking to engage with younger audiences or those interested in visual content. Overall, the data findings suggest that social media is a key communication and marketing tool in Kenya, with WhatsApp and Facebook being the dominant platforms.

Businesses looking to engage with the Kenyan market should consider utilizing these platforms for marketing and advertising purposes, keeping in mind the potential of other platforms like YouTube, Instagram, and Twitter.

Use of Social Media 2021

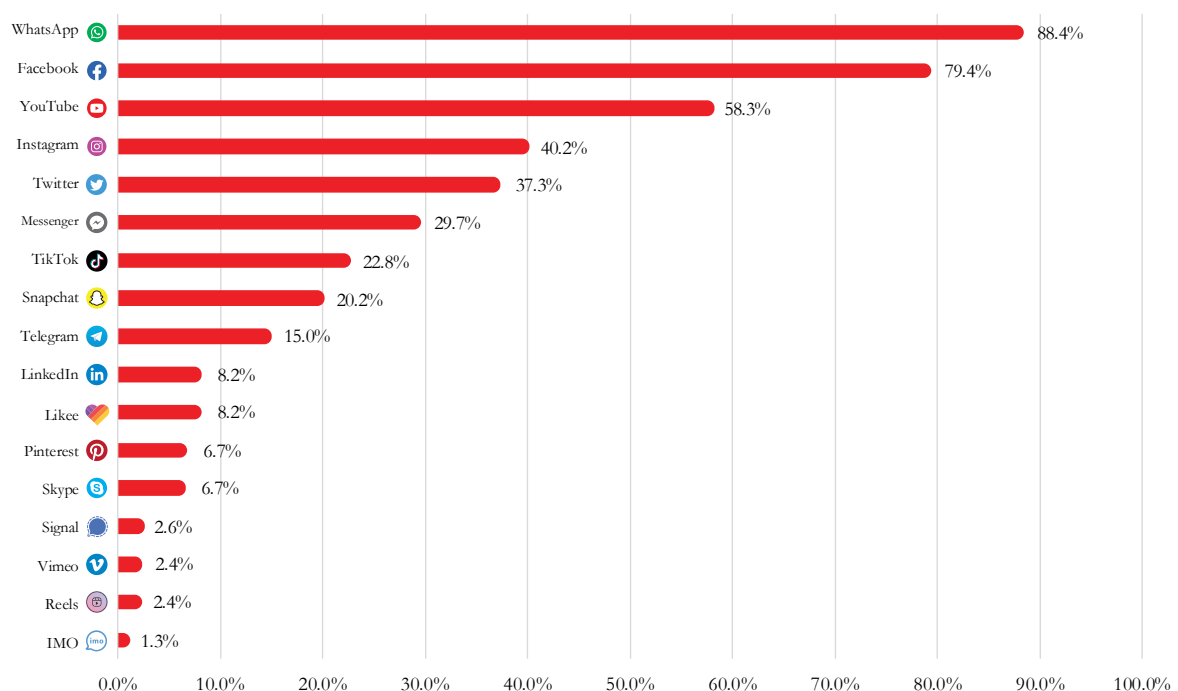


Fig 7.1: Use of Social Media

7.1. Use of Social Media by Age



Figure 7.2 suggests that social media usage varies by age group in Kenya. The most dominant age group using social media is 21–25-year-olds, who preferred WhatsApp followed by Snapchat and YouTube. This highlights the importance of messaging apps and video content for younger users in Kenya. For the 26–35 age group, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Facebook were the dominant platforms. This group may be more interested in visual content and professional networking opportunities.

TikTok was popular among the 14 to 20 age group, which suggests that this platform is an effective way to reach a younger audience in Kenya. The popularity of TikTok in this age group may also indicate a preference for short-form video content.

Reels and LinkedIn were more commonly used among the 36 to 45 age group, suggesting that this group may be interested in short-form video content and professional networking opportunities. Finally, the above-45 age group preferred Instagram and Vimeo. This group may be interested in visual content and video sharing, but may also be more selective in their choice of social media platforms.

21 to 25 year olds: This age group primarily favored WhatsApp, Snapchat, and YouTube. Messaging apps like WhatsApp and video content platforms like YouTube were the top choices, indicating a preference for direct communication and visual content among younger users.

26 to 35 age group: Instagram, LinkedIn, and Facebook were the dominant platforms for this demographic. Instagram likely appeals to those interested in visual content, while LinkedIn is used for professional networking and Facebook remains a versatile platform for various purposes. The popularity of Instagram, LinkedIn, and Facebook among the 26–35 age group aligns with the vibrancy of this age bracket and desire

to try new technologies. This group is more likely to be in the workforce and may be interested in using social media for professional networking purposes. They may also be interested in visual content and staying up-to-date on the latest news and trends.

14 to 20 age group: TikTok stood out as the popular choice among teenagers and young adults. This finding highlights the effectiveness of short-form video content in capturing the attention of a younger audience. The popularity of TikTok among the 14–20 age group is also not surprising. TikTok has become very popular among younger users in recent years. It is known for its short-form video content, which is often creative and engaging.

36 to 45 age group: This age group was more inclined towards using Reels and LinkedIn. Reels suggest an interest in short-form video content, while LinkedIn is preferred for professional networking. The popularity of Reels and LinkedIn among the 36–45 age group is also understandable. This group is likely to be in the workforce and may be interested in using social media for professional networking purposes. They may also be interested in short-form video content, but may also be more selective in their choice of social media platforms.

Above 45 age group: Instagram and Vimeo were favored among this age group. They seem to have an interest in visual content and video sharing, but they may also be more selective in their choice of social media platforms, possibly opting for platforms they find more user-friendly or aligned with their interests. The fact that the above 45 age group preferred Instagram and Vimeo is also understandable. This group may be interested in visual content and video sharing, but may also be more selective in their choice of social media platforms. They may be more likely to use platforms that are known for their high-quality content and professional users.

Overall, the findings suggest that businesses should tailor their social media strategies to specific age groups. By understanding the preferences of different age groups, businesses can choose the right platforms and create content that is more likely to resonate with their target audience. The fact that messaging apps

and video content are popular among younger users in Kenya is not surprising. Younger users are often more tech-savvy and more likely to adopt new technologies. They are also more likely to be interested in visual content and short-form videos.

Social Media Use By Age Group

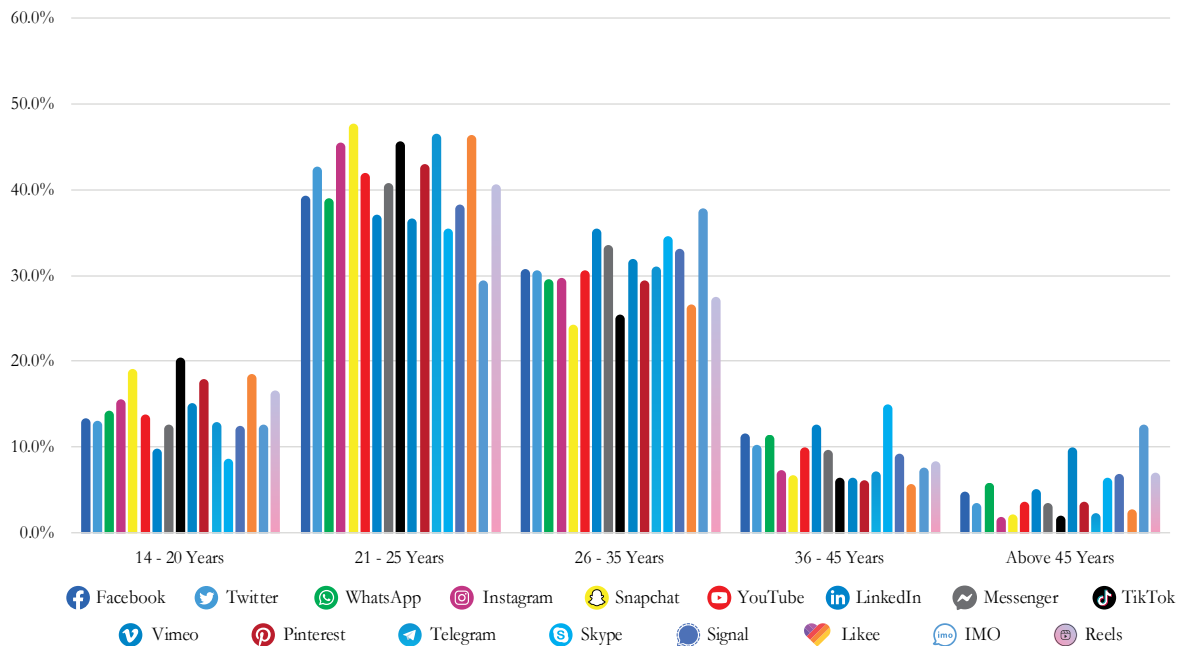


Fig 7.2: Social Media Use by Age Group

7.2. Use of Social Media by Gender

Figure 7.3 suggests that social media usage in Kenya also varies by gender and sexual orientation. Telegram was popular among the male gender, with 56% of male users reporting using the platform. This was followed by Twitter and Facebook, which were also more popular among men. This highlights the importance of understanding gender-based social media preferences when developing social media marketing strategies in Kenya. In contrast, Snapchat was more popular among females, followed by TikTok and Reels. This suggests that short-form video content and image sharing may be more appealing to female users in Kenya.

Finally, Vimeo was more commonly used among the LGBTQ community in Kenya. This highlights the potential for social media to be used as a tool for community building and communication among marginalized groups. Therefore, targeting men on Telegram or LGBTQ individuals on Vimeo may be an effective way to reach these audiences. Understanding these demographic-based social media preferences can help businesses to better target their marketing efforts and increase engagement.

The fact that Telegram is popular among men in Kenya is not surprising. Telegram is a messaging app that is known for its security and privacy features. It is also popular among businesses and professional users. This suggests that men in Kenya may be more interested in messaging apps that offer security and privacy features. The popularity of Twitter and Facebook among men in Kenya is also understandable. Twitter and Facebook are platforms that are known for their news and information-sharing capabilities. This suggests that men in Kenya may be more interested in keeping up with the latest news and trends. To reach men in Kenya, businesses should consider using platforms like Telegram, Twitter, and Facebook to create content that is relevant to the interests of men in Kenya, such as news, sports, and technology.

The popularity of Snapchat, TikTok, and Reels among women in Kenya is also not surprising. These platforms are known for their short-form video content and image-sharing capabilities. This suggests that women in Kenya may be more interested in visual content and self-expression. To reach women in Kenya, businesses

should consider using platforms like Snapchat, TikTok, and Reels to create content that is relevant to the interests of women in Kenya, such as fashion, beauty, and lifestyle.

The popularity of Vimeo among the LGBTQ community in Kenya is also understandable. Vimeo is a video-sharing platform that is known for its high-quality content and professional users. This suggests that the LGBTQ community in Kenya may be interested in a platform that allows them to share their stories and experiences with others in a safe and supportive environment. To reach the community in Kenya

businesses should consider using platforms like Vimeo to create content that is relevant to the interests of the community in Kenya, such as stories and experiences of LGBTQ individuals.

The findings suggest that businesses should tailor their social media strategies to specific demographic groups. By understanding the preferences of different demographic groups, businesses can choose the right platforms and create content that is more likely to resonate with their target audience.

Social Media Use By Gender

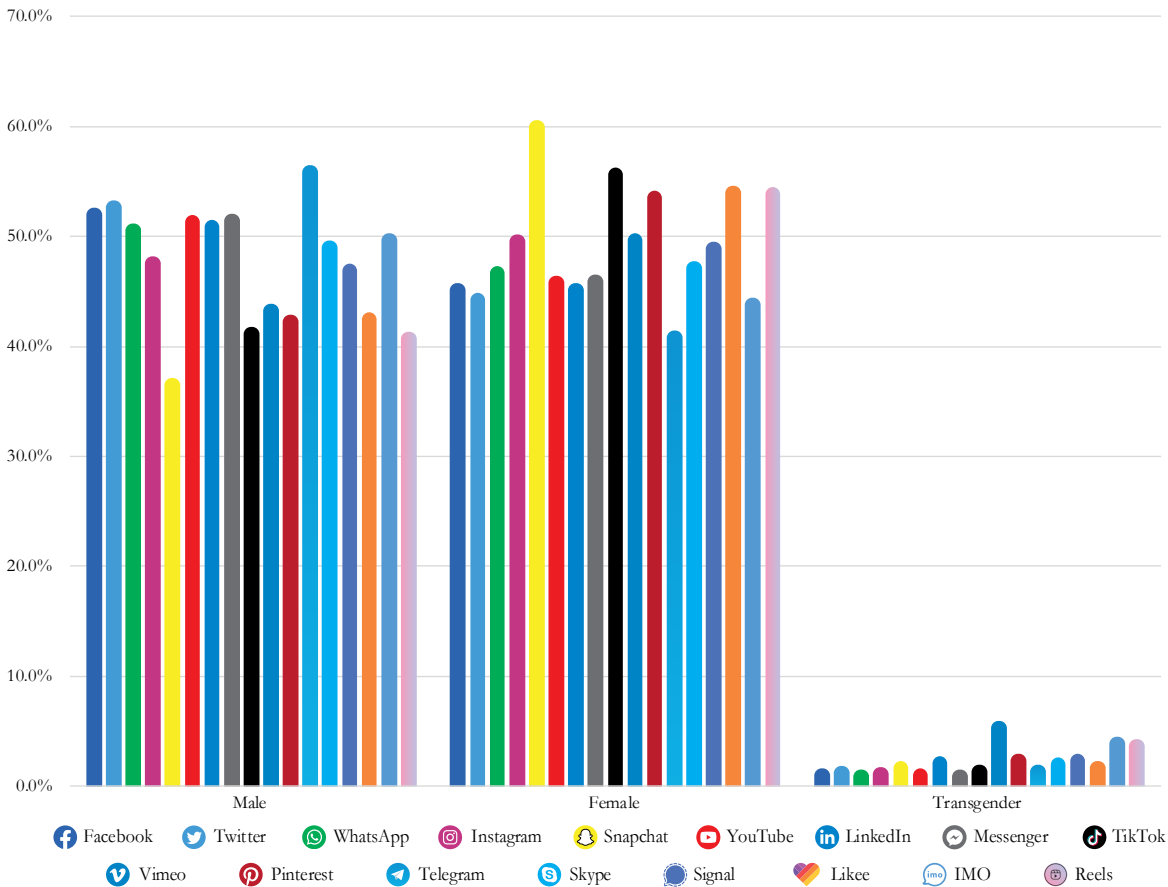


Fig 7.3: Use of Social Media by Gender

7.3. Use of Social Media by Geolocation

Figure 7.4 suggests that social media usage in Kenya also varies significantly by geolocation. Imo was dominant in urban areas, with 78% of urban social media users reporting using the platform. This was followed by Reels and Snapchat, which were also more popular among urban users. This highlights the importance of understanding social media preferences in urban areas when developing marketing strategies in Kenya.

In contrast, Twitter was more popular among social media users in rural areas, with 35% of rural users reporting using the platform. This was followed by LinkedIn and Facebook, which were also more popular among rural users. This suggests that social media usage in rural areas may be more focused on professional networking and communication.

Overall, the data findings suggest that businesses looking to engage with audiences in urban or rural areas in Kenya should consider tailoring their social media marketing strategies to these regions. For example, targeting urban audiences on Imo or Reels may be an effective way to reach urban users, while targeting rural audiences on Twitter or LinkedIn may be more effective in rural areas. The popularity of Reels and Snapchat among urban users in Kenya is also understandable. These platforms are known for their short-form video content and image sharing capabilities. This suggests

that urban users in Kenya may be more interested in visual content and self-expression. The popularity of Twitter among social media users in rural areas in Kenya is also not surprising. Twitter is a platform that is known for its news and information sharing capabilities. This suggests that rural users in Kenya may be more interested in using social media to keep up with the latest news and trends. The popularity of LinkedIn and Facebook among rural users in Kenya is also understandable. LinkedIn is a platform that is known for its professional networking capabilities, while Facebook is a platform that is known for its communication and entertainment capabilities. This suggests that rural users in Kenya may be using social media for a variety of purposes, including professional networking, staying connected with friends and family, and consuming entertainment content.

To reach urban audiences in Kenya businesses should consider using platforms like Reels, and Snapchat to create content that is relevant to the interests of urban users in Kenya, such as fashion, beauty, lifestyle, and entertainment. To reach rural audiences in Kenya businesses should consider using platforms like Facebook to create content that is relevant to the interests of rural users in Kenya, such as news, agriculture, and education.

Social Media Use By Geolocation

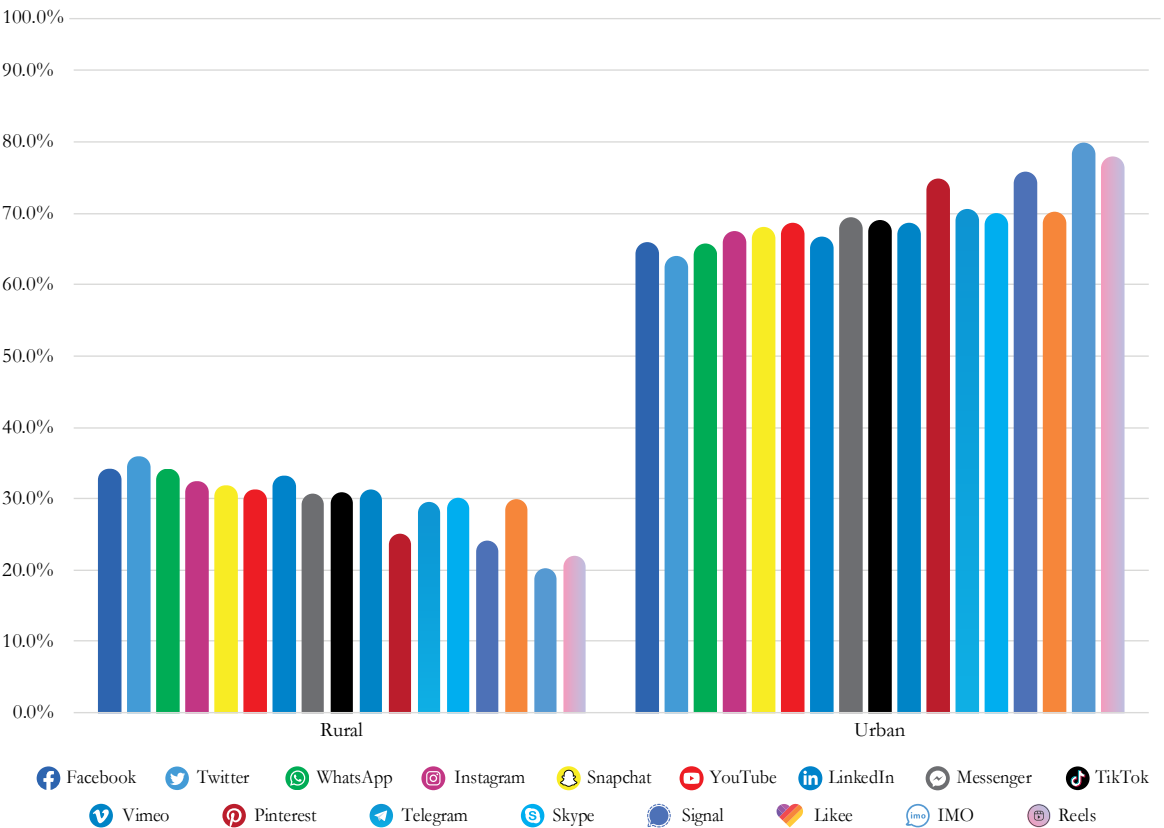


Fig 7.4: Use of Social Media by Geolocation

7.4. Use of Social Media by Income Levels in Nairobi

Figure 7.5 shows that social media usage in Kenya also varies significantly by income level. WhatsApp and TikTok were popular among low-income levels in Nairobi, with 50% and 40% of users from this income group reporting using the platforms, respectively. This may be due to the popularity of messaging apps and short-form video content in this demographic.

In contrast, YouTube was more popular among middle-income levels, followed by WhatsApp. This may be because middle-income users in Kenya may have more access to high-quality video content and may be more likely to use messaging apps for communication.

Reels were more popular among high-income levels, with 85% of high-income users reporting using the platform. This was followed by Instagram, which was also popular among this income group. This suggests that high-income users in Kenya may be more interested in short-form video content and visual storytelling. The fact that WhatsApp and TikTok are popular among low-income levels in Nairobi is not surprising. WhatsApp is a messaging app that is known for its affordability and accessibility, while TikTok is a short-form video-sharing app that is also known for its affordability and accessibility. This suggests that low-income users in Kenya may be more interested in social media platforms that are affordable and accessible.

The popularity of YouTube among middle-income levels in Kenya is also understandable. YouTube is a video-sharing platform that offers a wide variety of content, including educational content, entertainment content, and news content. This suggests that middle-income users in Kenya may be interested in using social media for a variety of purposes, including learning, entertainment, and staying informed.

The popularity of Reels among high-income levels in Kenya is also not surprising. Reels is a short-form video-sharing platform that is known for its high-quality content and its popularity among younger users. This suggests that high-income users in Kenya may be more interested in short-form video content and may be more likely to use social media platforms that are popular among younger users.

The findings suggest that businesses should tailor their social media strategies to specific income groups. By understanding the preferences of different income groups, businesses can choose the right platforms and create content that is more likely to resonate with their target audience. To reach low-income levels in Kenya businesses should consider using platforms like WhatsApp and TikTok to create content that is relevant to the interests of low-income users in Kenya, such as affordable products and services, educational content, and entertainment content. To reach middle-income levels in Kenya businesses should consider using platforms like YouTube and WhatsApp to create content that is relevant to the interests of middle-income users in Kenya, such as educational content, entertainment content, and news content.

Businesses targeting low-income users in Nairobi may benefit from marketing strategies that leverage WhatsApp for communication and TikTok for short-form video content while the Middle-income users may respond well to marketing efforts on YouTube and WhatsApp, focusing on high-quality video content and communication. High-income users in Kenya may be most effectively engaged through platforms like Reels and Instagram, emphasizing short-form video content and visual storytelling.

Social Media Use By Income in Nairobi

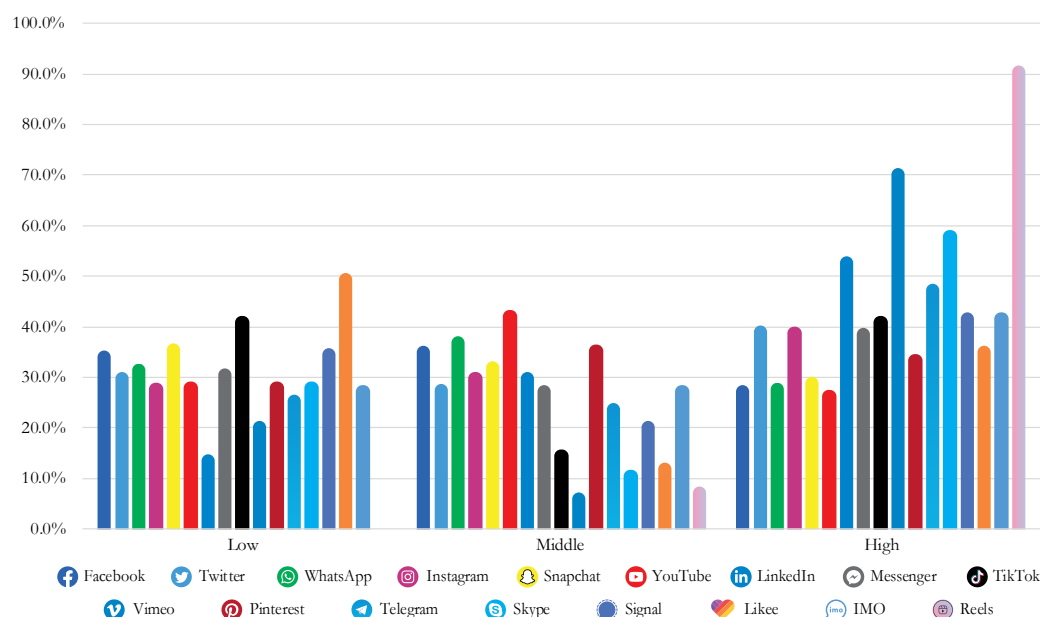


Fig 7.5: Social Media Use by Income in Nairobi

7.5. Social Media Use by Level of Education

As shown in Figure 7.6, it is clear that Facebook remains the dominant social media platform in Kenya, especially among individuals with an undergraduate level of education. This may be attributed to the fact that Facebook has been around for a long time and has had the opportunity to establish itself as a trusted platform for social networking.

Secondly, the fact that LinkedIn is the second most popular platform among this demographic suggests that there is a growing interest in professional networking and job seeking in Kenya. LinkedIn is a platform that is specifically designed for professionals, and its popularity among individuals with an undergraduate level of education indicates that they recognize the value of building their professional networks online.

The popularity of LinkedIn among individuals with undergraduate-level education indicates a growing interest in professional networking and career development in Kenya. LinkedIn is specifically designed for professionals, offering tools for job searching, building a professional brand, and connecting with

peers and potential employers. The fact that individuals with undergraduate degrees are embracing LinkedIn suggests that they recognize the value of online professional networking. They may view LinkedIn as a platform that can enhance their career prospects and provide opportunities for growth and development.

Facebook's continued popularity in Kenya can be attributed to its longevity and the trust it has built over the years. Being one of the earliest social media platforms, it has had ample time to establish itself as a trusted and reliable platform for social networking. Facebook's versatility, offering a wide range of features from personal connections to groups and pages, appeals to a broad spectrum of users.

It provides a space for both personal and professional networking, making it attractive to individuals with various goals and interests. Facebook is relatively affordable and accessible. It is available on a variety of devices and data plans, making it accessible to people even with limited financial resources.

Social Media Use By Level of Education

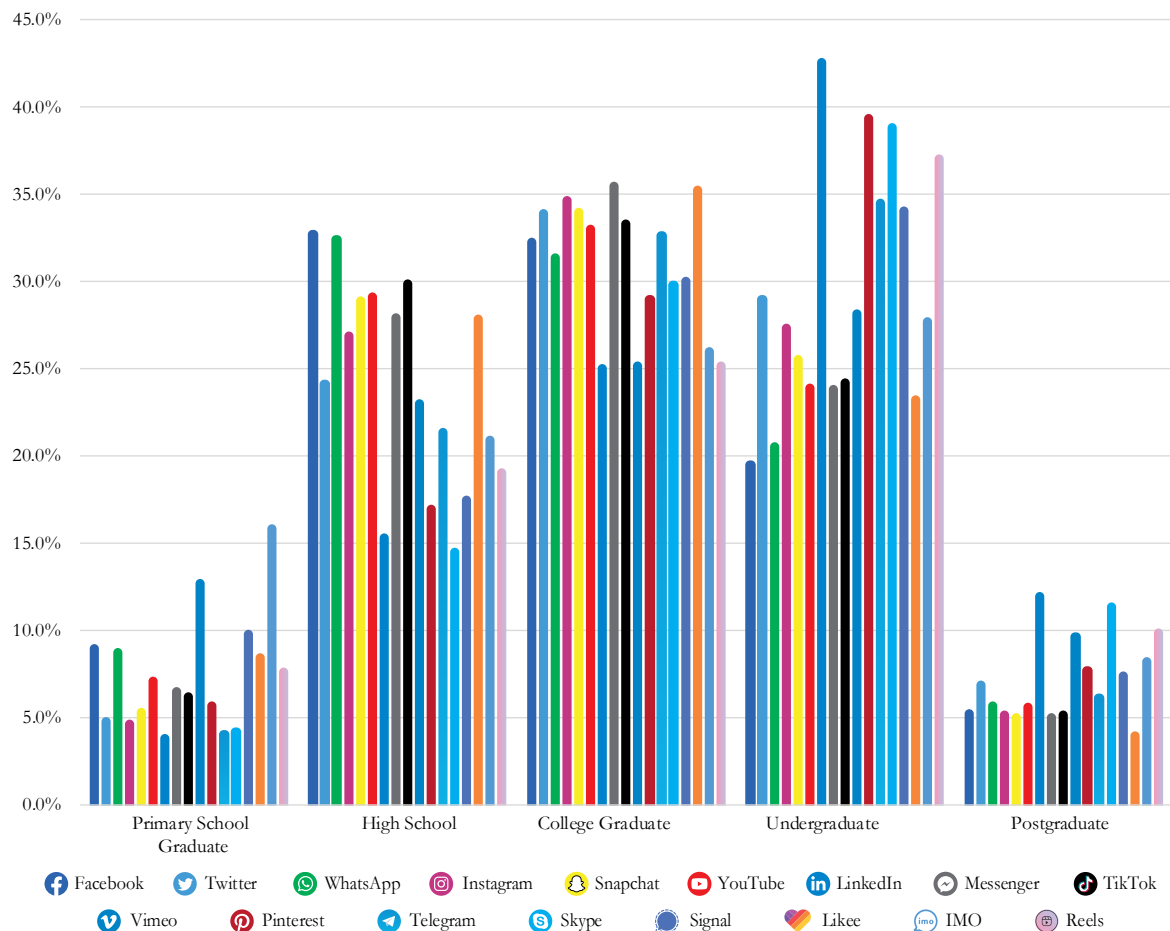


Fig 7.6: Use of Social Media By Level of Education

7.6. Frequency of Accessing Social Media

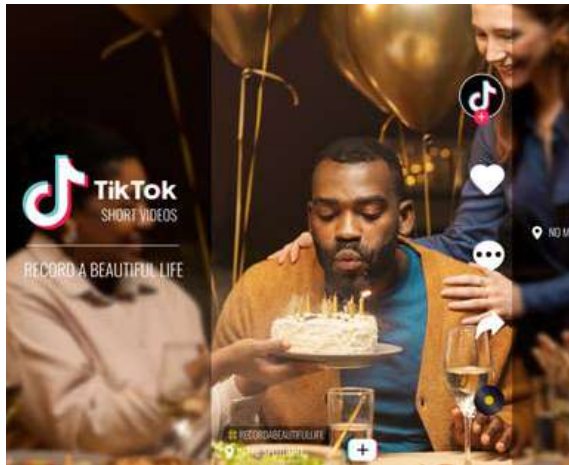


Figure 7.7 illustrates that WhatsApp is the most commonly accessed platform daily, with 90% of users frequently using the app. This suggests that WhatsApp is an essential tool for communication and social networking in the country.

Facebook is the second most commonly accessed platform daily, indicating its continued popularity and relevance for Kenyan social media users. Twitter and Instagram are equally popular, with users accessing these platforms daily.

Week on week findings show that Facebook is the most commonly accessed platform, followed by YouTube. This suggests that Facebook remains a crucial platform for engagement and communication with friends and family, while YouTube is gaining popularity as a source of entertainment and information.

Finally, every month, Reels and Instagram are frequently accessed, indicating the growing popularity of short-form video content and visual-based social media platforms in Kenya.

The everyday prevalence of WhatsApp as the most accessed platform comes as no surprise. Acknowledged for its cost-effectiveness, user-friendly interface, and robust security measures, WhatsApp has established itself as a prominent messaging application. Additionally, it enjoys widespread popularity as a communication and social networking platform in numerous countries across the globe.

The continued popularity of Facebook in Kenya is a testament to its versatility, established presence, and extensive user base. Its ability to cater to diverse needs, from social networking and communication to entertainment and information consumption, has made it an indispensable tool for Kenyans across the country. Facebook's ability to cater to diverse needs has propelled it to the forefront of digital engagement in Kenya. Its comprehensive platform seamlessly integrates social networking features, enabling Kenyans to connect with friends and family, share updates, and

engage in online communities. Additionally, Facebook's robust communication tools, including messaging, video calls, and group chats, have transformed the way Kenyans interact, both personally and professionally.

Twitter and Instagram have established themselves as prominent social media platforms in Kenya, particularly among younger users. Their emphasis on real-time updates and visual content aligns with the preferences and interests of this demographic, providing engaging and dynamic platforms for communication, information consumption, and self-expression. Twitter's microblogging format, characterized by short, concise messages, provides a real-time pulse of current events, news, and popular culture.

Kenyans flock to Twitter to stay abreast of the latest happenings, share their opinions, and engage in online discussions. The platform's fast-paced nature and ability to connect users with diverse perspectives have made it an indispensable tool for staying informed and engaged. Similarly, Instagram has captivated Kenyan users with its focus on visual storytelling. The platform's emphasis on high-quality photos and videos has transformed the way Kenyans share their experiences, showcase their creativity, and connect with others. Instagram's aesthetically driven approach has resonated particularly with younger users, who gravitate towards the platform's ability to express emotions and share personal moments in a visually appealing manner.

YouTube's weekly dominance as the most accessed social media platform reflects its versatility and its appeal to a wide range of Kenyan users. Its educational content, entertainment offerings, and news coverage have made it an indispensable tool for learning, leisure, and staying informed. Its vast library of video content, encompassing educational materials, entertainment options, and current affairs coverage, has captivated audiences across all generations in Kenya. From students seeking knowledge to individuals seeking leisure and news updates,

YouTube caters to a diverse range of interests and needs, making it an indispensable tool for learning, entertainment, and staying informed. YouTube's educational offerings have revolutionized the way Kenyans learn and access information. Its vast collection of educational videos, covering subjects ranging from science and mathematics to history and language, has democratized knowledge, providing Kenyans with a wealth of learning resources at their fingertips. This has proven particularly beneficial for students in rural areas with limited access to traditional educational resources.

Beyond its educational value, YouTube also serves as a hub for entertainment and leisure. Its vast repository of movies, music videos, and user-generated content provides Kenyans with an endless supply of entertainment options. From catching up on the latest movie trailers to discovering new musical talents,

YouTube has become an integral part of Kenyan leisure time, catering to diverse tastes and preferences. News consumption has also found a home on YouTube. Channels dedicated to news and current affairs provide Kenyans with an alternative source of information, offering in-depth analyses, insightful commentary, and visual coverage of global events. YouTube's ability to present news in an engaging and accessible format has made it a popular platform for staying informed, particularly among younger generations.

The growing popularity of Reels and Instagram underscores a fundamental shift in Kenyan social media preferences, with short-form video content and visually driven platforms taking center stage. This trend is expected to continue its upward trajectory, shaping the future of social media engagement and content consumption in Kenya. The rise of Reels and Instagram reflects a shift in content consumption preferences among Kenyans. These platforms cater to the desire for quick, engaging, and visually stimulating content, aligning with the fast-paced lifestyles and evolving media habits of Kenyan users. The ability to consume and create short-form videos within a familiar and accessible platform has made Reels and Instagram particularly appealing to this demographic.

As the demand for visually appealing and easily digestible content continues to grow, Reels and Instagram are well-positioned to capture an even larger share of the Kenyan social media landscape. Their ability to adapt to evolving user preferences and incorporate new features will further solidify their dominance in this dynamic market.

WhatsApp is the most frequently accessed platform daily by 90% of users; it stands out as an essential tool for communication and social networking in Kenya. Its high daily usage reflects its widespread adoption for personal and possibly business-related communication. Facebook's strong daily usage underscores its continued popularity and relevance among Kenyan social media users. It remains a go-to platform for staying connected with friends and family. Twitter and Instagram are equally popular for daily access, indicating their significance in providing real-time updates and visual content to Kenyan users.

Weekly access to Facebook suggests its importance for more extended engagement and communication with friends and family, beyond just daily updates. YouTube's popularity every week highlights its role as a source of entertainment and information for Kenyan users. Many may turn to YouTube for educational content, music, and video streaming.

Monthly access to Reels and Instagram indicates the growing popularity of short-form video content and visually oriented social media platforms in Kenya. Users are likely engaging with these platforms for entertainment and creative expression.

These findings suggest that social media platforms in Kenya serve various purposes, from daily communication and connection to weekly entertainment and monthly content consumption. Businesses and content creators in Kenya should consider the frequency of platform usage when planning their engagement and marketing strategies to effectively reach and engage with their target audience.

Frequency of Accessing Social Media

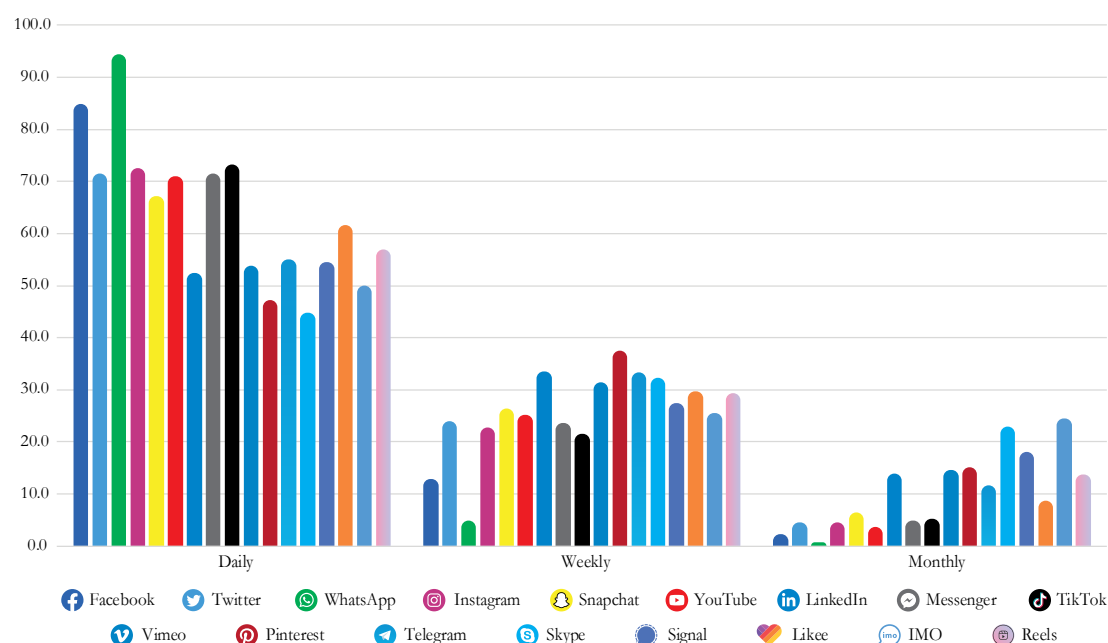


Fig 7.7: Frequency of Accessing Social Media

7.7. Issues of Focus in The Use of Social Media



Understanding the interests and preferences of Kenyan social media users is crucial for businesses, content creators, and organizations to effectively engage with them. By aligning content and engagement strategies with these interests, they can create relevant and engaging content that resonates with their target audience and meets their needs and desires. This can lead to more successful and impactful social media campaigns and initiatives. By strategically using social media platforms, businesses and organizations can build relationships with Kenyan consumers, promote their brands, and achieve their marketing goals.

Diverse topical issues are commonly discussed on different social media platforms in Kenya. This highlights the diverse interests and preferences of Kenyan social media users. Figure 3.8 shows that Various topical issues that are commonly discussed on different social media platforms in Kenya focuses attention on the diverse interests and preferences of Kenyan social media users.

YouTube is a popular platform for accessing content related to education. This indicates that Kenyan users turn to YouTube for educational content and information, highlighting the platform's role as an educational resource. YouTube is a video-sharing platform that offers a wide variety of educational content, including tutorials, lectures, and educational documentaries. This makes it a popular platform for Kenyan users who are interested in learning new things or furthering their education.

WhatsApp is a common platform for accessing content related to entertainment. Users share and consume entertaining content like videos, memes, and jokes, demonstrating It is also a popular platform for communication and social networking in many other countries around the world. Kenyans use WhatsApp to share and consume entertaining content such as videos, memes, and jokes with their friends and family.

Messenger and TikTok are both social media platforms that are known for their visual content and real-time communication features. Kenyans use these platforms to communicate with their close friends and family members and to share their thoughts and experiences with them.

Job-related issues are commonly discussed on LinkedIn, which is a professional networking platform used for job searching and career development. LinkedIn is a professional networking platform that is used for job searching and career development. Kenyans use

LinkedIn to connect with other professionals, find job opportunities, and learn about new industries and trends. Kenyan users also use LinkedIn for career development and professional networking.

Political issues are commonly discussed on Twitter, indicating that this platform is used for discussions on political issues, reflecting its role as a platform for political discourse and activism in Kenya. Twitter is a social media platform that is known for its real-time updates and its use by celebrities, politicians, and other public figures. Kenyans use Twitter to follow the latest news and developments in Kenyan politics and to share their own opinions and views on political issues.

Religious issues are commonly expressed on Reels, which suggests that this platform is used for sharing and consuming content related to religious practices and beliefs. Reels is a short-form video-sharing platform that is known for its creative content and its popularity among younger users. Kenyans use Reels to share and consume content related to their religious practices and beliefs, such as Bible verses, prayer videos, and sermons.

YouTube is a popular platform for sports. Kenyan users use YouTube to consume sports-related content such as highlights, interviews, and analysis. YouTube is a video-sharing platform that offers a wide variety of sports-related content, including highlights, interviews, and analysis. Kenyans use YouTube to consume sports content from both local and international leagues and competitions.

This thus highlights the importance of understanding the interests and preferences of Kenyan social media users to effectively engage with them and create relevant content that meets their needs and desires.

Issues of Focus in The Use of Social Media

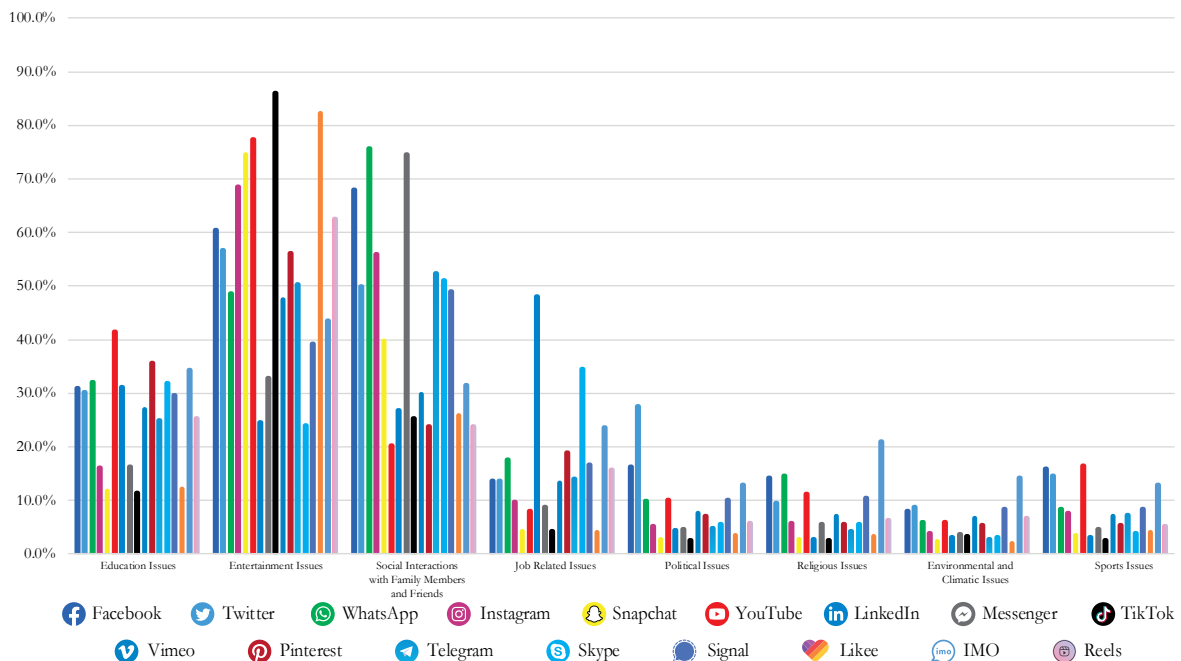


Fig 7.8: Issues of Focus in The Use of Social Media

7.8. Devices Used to Access Social Media

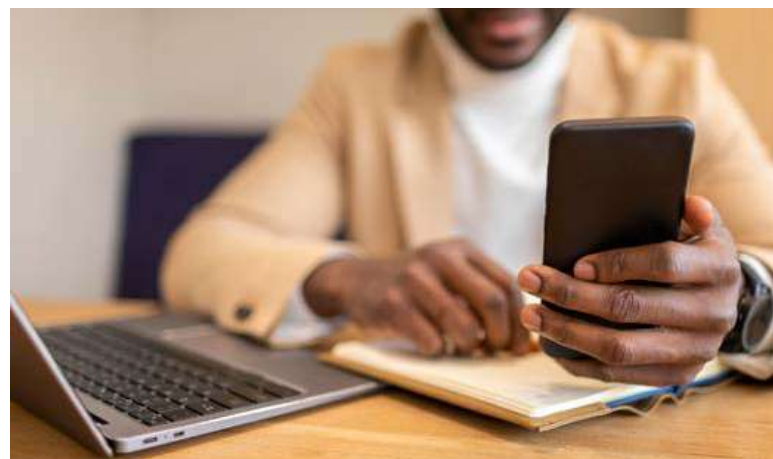
Recognizing the device-specific preferences of Kenyan social media users, is crucial for individuals and businesses aiming to engage with their audiences effectively. Content creators and marketers should consider the platform and device on which their target audience is most active to optimize content delivery. The popularity of visual-based platforms like Snapchat and Instagram on both mobile phones and laptops suggests a strong appetite for visual content in Kenya. Businesses and content creators should consider incorporating visual elements into their strategies to engage with this audience effectively. Tailoring the user experience to the specific device can enhance engagement. For instance, optimizing content for mobile-friendly viewing and considering the desktop experience for content creation and editing can improve overall audience engagement.

In regards to common devices used to access social media; the findings highlight the different preferences of Kenyan users when accessing social media on different devices. WhatsApp was found to be the most common social media channel used on mobile phones, which is not surprising given the popularity of this messaging app in Kenya. WhatsApp is widely used for communication and social networking, and its availability on mobile devices makes it a convenient tool for staying connected with friends and family.

Snapchat and Instagram were also commonly used on mobile phones, which suggests that Kenyan users are interested in visual-based social media platforms that

allow them to share and consume photos and videos.

The preference for using Snapchat and Instagram on laptops highlights the desire for a more comfortable and functional platform, particularly for users actively engaged in visual content creation and editing. Laptops offer a larger workspace, enhanced input devices, and more powerful hardware, making them a more suitable choice for these activities catering to the needs of both casual users and content professionals. The larger screen size of laptops allows users to view and interact with content in a more immersive and detailed manner. This can be particularly beneficial for activities such as watching videos, viewing photos, and editing visual content. Additionally, the enhanced functionality





of laptops, such as the ability to use a keyboard and mouse, can significantly improve the efficiency and precision of content creation tasks. Content creators often find laptops to be more suitable for their needs due to the availability of dedicated software and tools. For instance, video editing software and graphic design programs are typically more powerful and user-friendly when used on laptops. This allows creators to produce higher quality content with greater ease.

The distinct usage patterns of social media platforms on mobile phones and laptops among Kenyan users underscore the importance of understanding these preferences for effective engagement. Tailoring strategies to align with these preferences can significantly enhance the reach and effectiveness of social media campaigns and enhance user engagement. Individuals seeking to connect with friends and family on social

media may primarily utilize mobile phones due to their convenience and portability. The ability to access social media on the go facilitates spontaneous interactions and real-time engagement. Businesses, on the other hand, may find laptops more suitable for creating and managing social media content. The larger screen size and enhanced functionality of laptops provide a more conducive environment for crafting compelling content, scheduling posts, and analyzing social media performance. Understanding these preferences allows individuals and businesses to optimize their social media strategies, ensuring that their content reaches the right audience at the right time and in the most impactful manner. By catering to the distinct usage patterns of mobile and laptop users, social media engagement can be maximized, fostering stronger connections and achieving desired outcomes.

Devices Used to Access Social Media

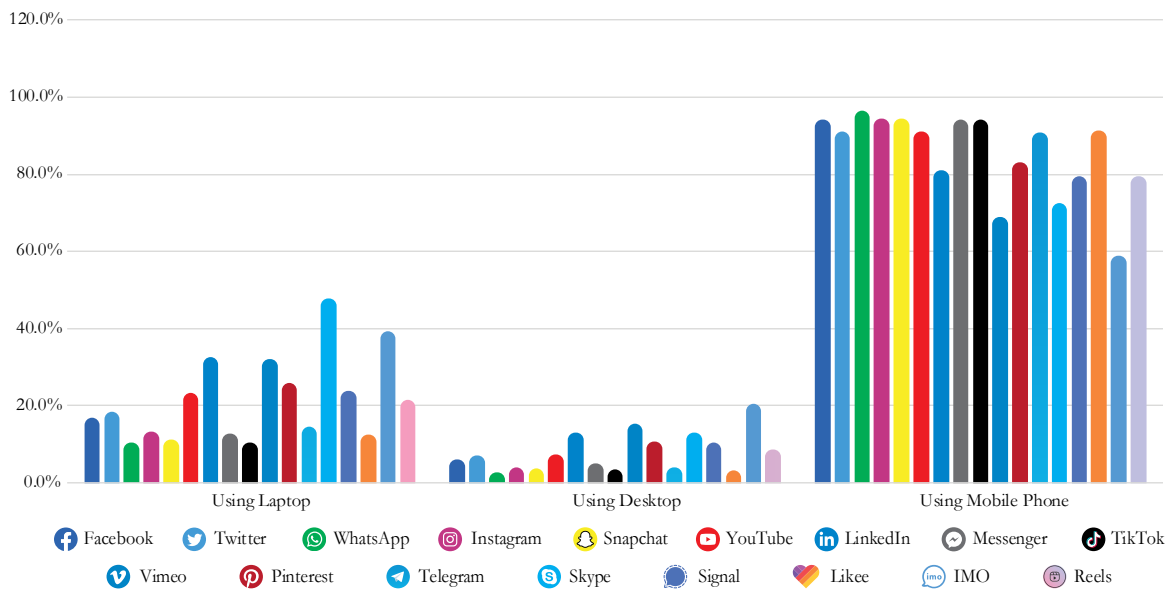


Fig 7.9: Devices Used to Access Social Media

7.9. Physical Location of Accessing Social Media

Figure 7.10 shows that the majority of social media is accessed from home, with 91.2% of users accessing social media from their homes. This suggests that social media is primarily used for personal and leisure purposes, rather than for work or professional networking. This is likely due to several factors, including the affordability and accessibility of smartphones and mobile data plans in Kenya, as well as the country's young and growing population.

Public Wi-Fi was the second most common location for accessing social media, with 29.2% of users accessing social media from public Wi-Fi hotspots. These findings highlight the importance of understanding the physical location of social media access in Kenya to effectively reach and engage with social media users. For businesses and organizations looking to leverage social media for marketing and communication purposes, understanding where users access social media can help them target their content and advertising to the most relevant audiences.

Public Wi-Fi provides users with a cost-effective way to access the internet and social media, especially in areas where reliable home internet connections may be less common. Recognizing that many users access social media from home suggests that creating content that aligns with personal and leisure interests can resonate well with the majority of Kenyan social media users. Understanding the context in which users engage with social media can inform content strategies and engagement efforts. Given the significance of public Wi-Fi hotspots as a social media access point, businesses, and authorities may consider initiatives to expand public Wi-Fi availability in urban and rural areas to promote internet access and digital engagement.

Understanding the urban-rural divide in social media access locations is crucial for businesses and organizations. In urban areas, where social media is used for professional networking, creating content and engagement strategies that cater to professional interests can be effective. In rural areas, where access to reliable internet may be a challenge, businesses should consider how to make their online content accessible in cyber cafes and homes.

In urban areas, public Wi-Fi and offices were found to be the dominant places for accessing social media. This suggests that social media is used more for work and professional networking purposes in urban areas, in addition to personal and leisure purposes.

On the other hand, in rural areas, cybercafés and homes were found to be the most popular locations for accessing social media. This may be due to a lack of reliable or affordable internet access in rural areas, which makes it difficult for individuals to access social media from their homes.

The findings highlight the importance of addressing infrastructure and accessibility challenges, especially in rural areas. Initiatives aimed at expanding internet access, improving affordability, and providing training for digital literacy can help bridge the digital divide between urban and rural areas.



Urban users are more likely to have access to public Wi-Fi. The dominance of public Wi-Fi as a location for accessing social media in urban areas suggests that social media serves a multifaceted role. While it is used for personal and leisure purposes, it is also employed for work and professional networking.

Physical Location of Accessing Social Media

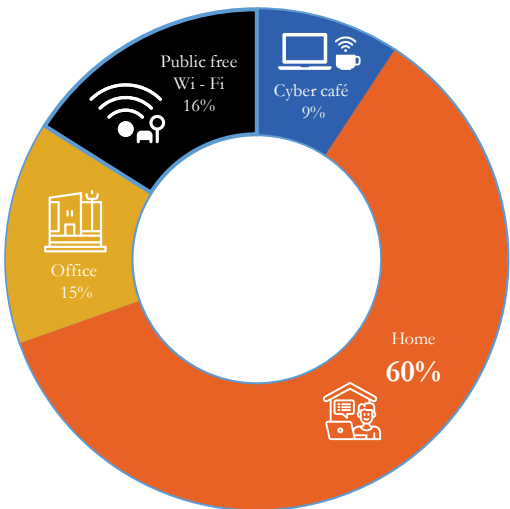


Fig 7.10: Physical Location of Accessing Social Media

In rural areas, the popularity of cyber cafes and homes as social media access points reflects distinct challenges and realities. Rural users may have limited access to reliable or affordable internet connections at home, leading them to rely on cybercafés. Accessing social media from home is also common in rural areas, but this could be due to more limited options for public Wi-Fi.

The prevalence of public Wi-Fi and office settings as primary locations for social media access in urban areas suggests a stronger emphasis on professional networking and work-related social media activities in these regions. This trend is likely driven by a convergence of factors, including the high concentration of businesses and organizations in urban centers, the greater availability of reliable and affordable internet access to urban residents, and potentially higher disposable income levels. The abundance of public Wi-Fi hotspots in urban areas provides a convenient and accessible platform for individuals to engage in professional networking and work-related social media activities. This ease of access allows individuals to connect with colleagues, clients, and potential collaborators while on the go, fostering professional connections and facilitating work-related communication. Similarly, the concentration of businesses and organizations in urban areas creates an environment where social media serves as an integral tool for professional networking and work-related activities.

Companies utilize social media platforms to promote their services, connect with potential clients, and engage with industry peers, while employees leverage social media to expand their professional networks, stay abreast of industry trends, and enhance their personal brand. Additionally, the greater availability of reliable and affordable internet access in urban areas compared to rural regions plays a significant role in shaping social media usage patterns. With consistent and high-speed internet connectivity, urban residents are more likely to engage in work-related social media activities, such as

participating in online conferences, accessing industry resources, and collaborating with colleagues remotely. Furthermore, higher disposable income levels among urban residents may also contribute to the increased use of social media for professional purposes. With greater financial resources, urban individuals are more likely to invest in devices and data plans that facilitate seamless social media access, enabling them to effectively utilize social media for professional networking and work-related activities.

The predominance of cyber cafes and homes as primary locations for social media access in rural areas highlights the inclination towards personal and leisure-oriented social media activities in these regions. This trend likely stems from a combination of factors, including the scarcity of reliable or affordable internet access in rural settings, as well as the reduced likelihood of rural residents having access to public Wi-Fi or working in traditional office environments. The prevalence of cyber cafes in rural areas provides an economical and accessible means for individuals to engage in personal and leisure-related social media activities. These cafes offer a shared internet connection, enabling individuals to connect with loved ones, stay abreast of current events, and immerse themselves in entertainment-oriented social media pursuits.

The absence of public Wi-Fi hotspots in many rural areas further reinforces the dependence on cyber cafes for social media access. Without the convenience of free or readily available Wi-Fi, rural residents often turn to cyber cafes as their primary source of internet connectivity for social media engagement. Moreover, the higher prevalence of home-based employment or farming activities in rural areas suggests that social media access frequently occurs within the confines of the home. With limited opportunities for face-to-face interactions outside of the home, social media serves as a valuable tool for staying connected with loved ones, seeking entertainment, and staying informed about the wider world.



Physical Location of Accessing Social Media by Geolocation

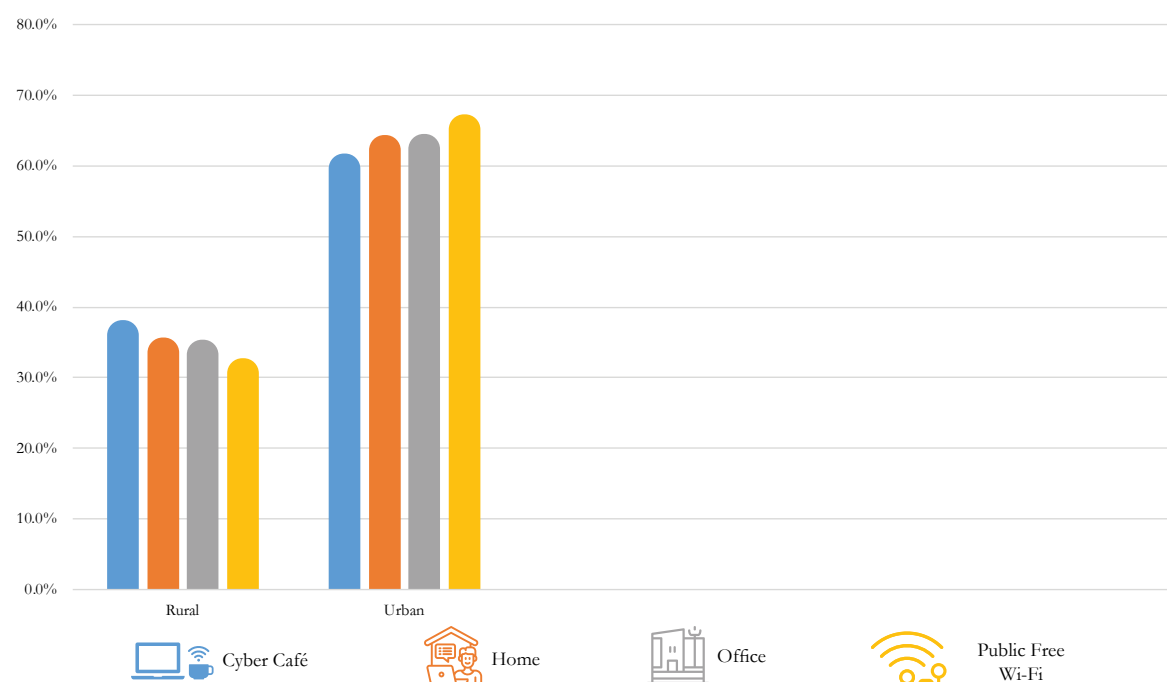


Fig 7.11: Physical Location of Accessing Social Media by Geolocation

Over the years, there have been socioeconomic disparities in internet access, internet usage habits, and the integration of social media into daily life for different income groups in Kenya. It is important to note that these are general trends and individual circumstances can vary widely within each income group. Low-income earners were found to commonly access social media from cyber cafes, which suggests that these individuals may not have reliable or affordable internet access at home and must rely on shared public resources to access social media. Low-income earners may be less likely to afford internet access at home, or they may live in areas with poor internet infrastructure. They rely on shared public resources like cyber cafes to access social media, possibly due to economic constraints.

Middle-income earners were found to commonly access social media from public Wi-Fi, which suggests that these individuals may have access to internet infrastructure but may choose to use public Wi-Fi to save costs or for convenience. Middle-income earners accessing social media from public Wi-Fi also suggest they likely have access to internet infrastructure at home or work. Middle-income earners may be more likely to work in jobs that require them to travel or work outside of their homes, which makes public Wi-Fi a convenient option for accessing social media. They choose public Wi-Fi for cost-saving or convenience, indicating a preference for using free resources when available.

High-income earners were found to commonly access social media from their offices, which suggests that social media may be used more for work and professional networking purposes among this group. High-income

earners accessing social media from their offices may indicate that social media is used more for work and professional networking purposes among this group. It could also imply that high-income individuals have the privilege of accessing social media during work hours without significant consequences. High-income earners are more likely to work in jobs that require them to use social media for work or professional networking purposes. They may also have access to social media at their offices, which makes it convenient for them to access these platforms during work hours. It could also imply that high-income individuals have the privilege of accessing social media during work hours without significant consequences.

The varied social media access patterns observed across different income groups carry significant implications. Low-income earners may face the risk of missing out on crucial information, employment opportunities, or social connections that are disseminated through social media platforms. This digital divide can exacerbate existing socioeconomic disparities and limit the potential benefits of social media for individuals from low-income backgrounds. Advertisers seeking to reach a wider audience through social media marketing campaigns may encounter challenges in effectively targeting low-income earners. The limited access to social media among this demographic may restrict the reach and effectiveness of social media advertising, potentially hindering the ability of businesses to connect with a significant portion of the population. On the other hand, advertisers may prioritize targeting individuals with higher purchasing power, assuming that they are more likely to engage with advertisements.

and make purchasing decisions. This approach may lead to a concentration of advertising efforts on higher-income groups, further widening the digital divide and limiting the opportunities for businesses to connect with a broader audience.

It is important to address the digital divide and ensure that everyone has access to reliable and affordable internet access. This would help to ensure that everyone can benefit from the opportunities that social media

has to offer. Addressing the digital divide and ensuring affordable and reliable internet access for all income groups is essential in promoting digital inclusion and reducing disparities in access to online resources and opportunities. Additionally, understanding how different income groups use social media can have implications for marketing strategies, communication campaigns, and policy decisions.

Physical Location of Accessing Social Media by Income Levels in Nairobi

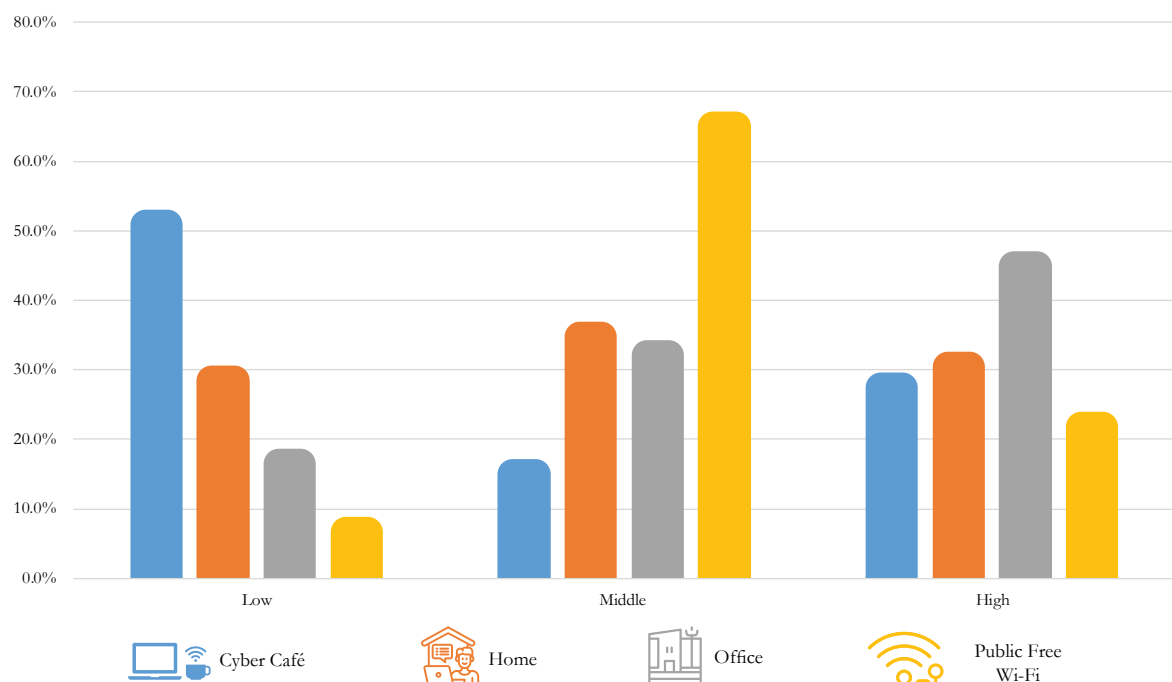


Fig 7.12: Physical Location of Accessing Social Media by Income Levels in Nairobi

7.10. Physical Location of Accessing Social Media by Age

Based on Figure 7.13, there were age-related differences in the physical locations where people access social media.

For the age group of 14 to 20, 15% access social media from home and 14% from public Wi-Fi. This suggests that young people in this age group may have more access to personal devices or Wi-Fi at home. For the age group of 21 to 25, a higher percentage (43%) access social media from public Wi-Fi, and 42% use cybercafés. This could indicate that this age group may have less access to personal devices or private Wi-Fi, or they may prefer to access social media outside of their homes.

For the age group of 26 to 35, the majority (38%) access social media from their office, which could suggest that they use social media for work-related purposes or have jobs that allow them to use social media during work hours or have jobs that give them more flexibility to use social media during work hours. For the age group of 36 to 45, a smaller percentage (16%) access social media from their office, which could suggest that they

may have jobs that restrict or discourage social media use during work hours, or they may prefer to use social media outside of work.

The different social media access patterns of different age groups have several implications. For example, it means that advertisers may need to target their social media marketing campaigns differently depending on the age group they are trying to reach. It also means that it is important to be aware of the different ways that people of different ages use social media so that we can communicate and interact with them in the most effective way. These observations provide insights into how different age groups utilize social media and where they are likely to access it. Understanding these patterns can be valuable for tailoring marketing strategies, designing user experiences, and considering workplace policies related to social media usage. Additionally, it reflects how social media has become integrated into various aspects of life, including work, socializing, and personal entertainment, for people of different age groups.

Physical Location of Accessing Social Media by Age

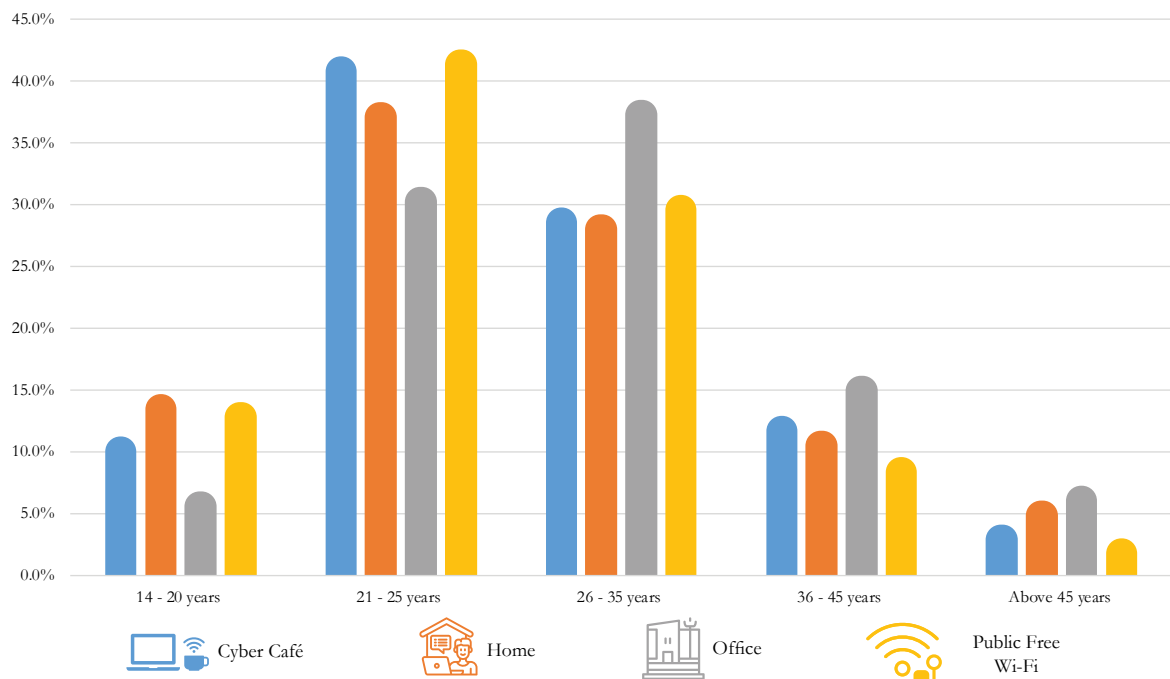


Fig 7.13: Physical Location of Accessing Social Media by Age

7.11. Accessing Social Media Using Web Browsers or Mobile Apps

These statistics reflect the diverse ways in which people access social media platforms, with many users choosing to use both web browsers and mobile applications based on their preferences, devices, and specific needs. A person might use a web browser to access social media on their desktop computer at work, and then use a mobile app to access social media on their smartphone on the go.

25.8% of social media users access it primarily through web browsers on desktop or laptop computers. This method of access is typically associated with a more comprehensive and feature-rich user experience compared to mobile applications. Some users may prefer using web browsers for various reasons, including the convenience of a larger screen and keyboard for typing. 94.3% of social media users access it primarily through mobile applications on smartphones or tablets. Mobile applications are designed for on-the-go access, and they often provide a more streamlined and user-friendly experience optimized for touchscreens. The convenience and portability of mobile devices make them a popular choice for accessing social media platforms.

While it is common for social media posts to be designed primarily for mobile platforms, this does not necessarily mean that all posts are optimized for mobile viewing. Advertisers and social media marketers often consider a range of factors when creating and distributing content, including the target audience's preferences, the nature of the post's content, and the overall campaign objectives. In some cases, it may be more effective to prioritize desktop viewing, particularly for posts that involve detailed information,

complex visuals, or interactive elements. Additionally, the decision to boost a post with ads does not automatically translate into mobile optimization. Ad targeting strategies encompass various factors beyond device usage, such as demographics, interests, and online behavior. The fact that some people use both web browsers and mobile applications to access social media has a number of implications for businesses and marketers. For example, it means that businesses need to make sure that their social media websites are mobile-friendly and that their social media apps are well-designed and easy to use. It is important for businesses and marketers to be aware of this trend, as it means that they need to develop social media strategies that reach users on both web browsers and mobile apps. This could involve creating different types of content for each platform or targeting users with different ads depending on the device they are using. Businesses that have social media websites should make sure that their websites are responsive. This will help to ensure that they are reaching their target audiences and providing them with a good user experience, regardless of the device they are using.

Additionally, marketers need to consider the different ways that people use social media on web browsers and mobile devices when developing their social media marketing campaigns. The fact that some people use both web browsers and mobile applications to access social media also highlights the importance of responsive design. Responsive design is a technique that allows websites to adapt to different screen sizes and devices. This is important because it ensures that users have a good experience accessing social media on any device they are using.

Web Browser or Mobile App

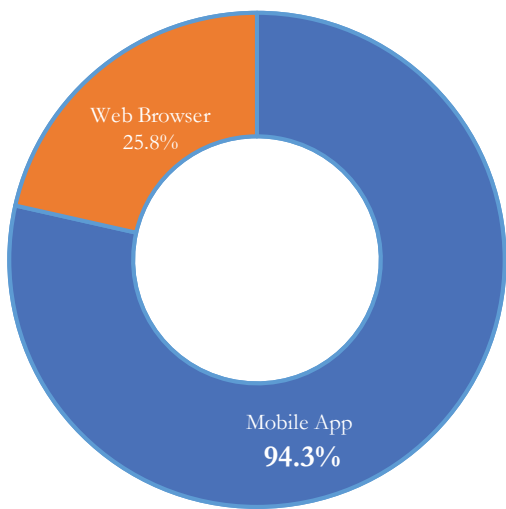


Fig 7.14: Accessing Social Media Using Mobile Apps or Web Browsers

7.12. Daily Time Spent On Social Media

Daily Time Spent on Social Media The amount of time users spent on social media varied significantly, with 17% spending 1-2 hours per day, 11% spending between 2 to 3 hours per day, and another 17% spending more than 3 hours per day. People have different preferences when it comes to social media use. Some people may simply prefer to spend more time on certain platforms than others. Figure 7.16 shows the daily time spent on

different social media platforms in Kenya, and it was found that 51% of users spend more time on Instagram, estimated at 30 minutes per day. This suggests that Instagram is often used for quick browsing, scrolling through images and short videos, or checking updates, indicating a preference for brief and visually engaging content.

Daily Time Spent on Social Media

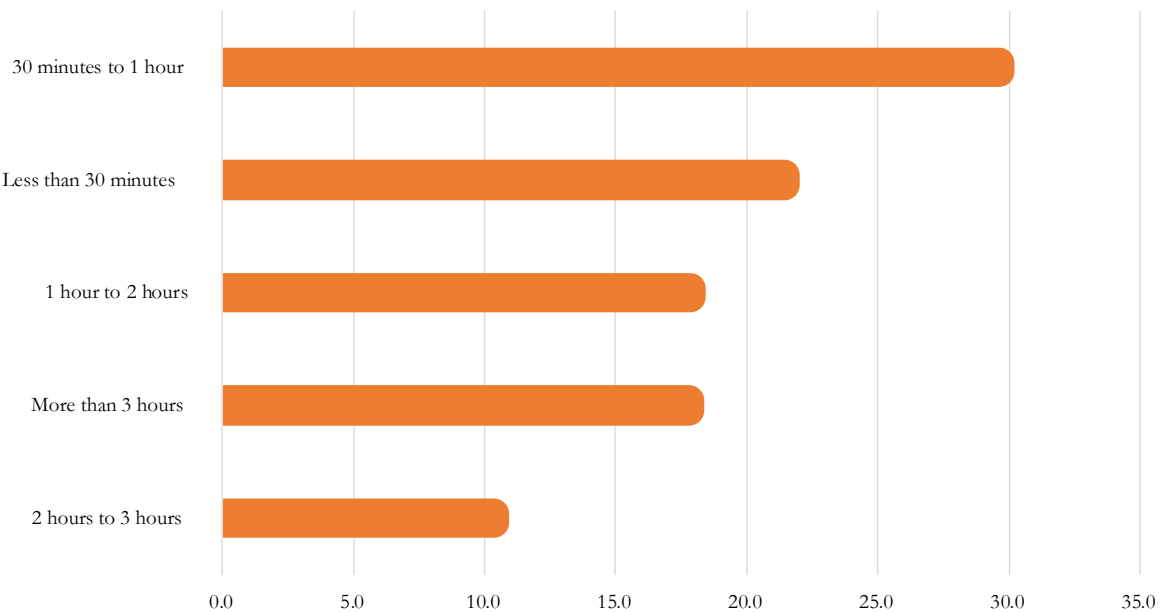


Fig 7.15: Daily Time Spent On Social Media



Daily Time Spent On Specific Social Media Platforms

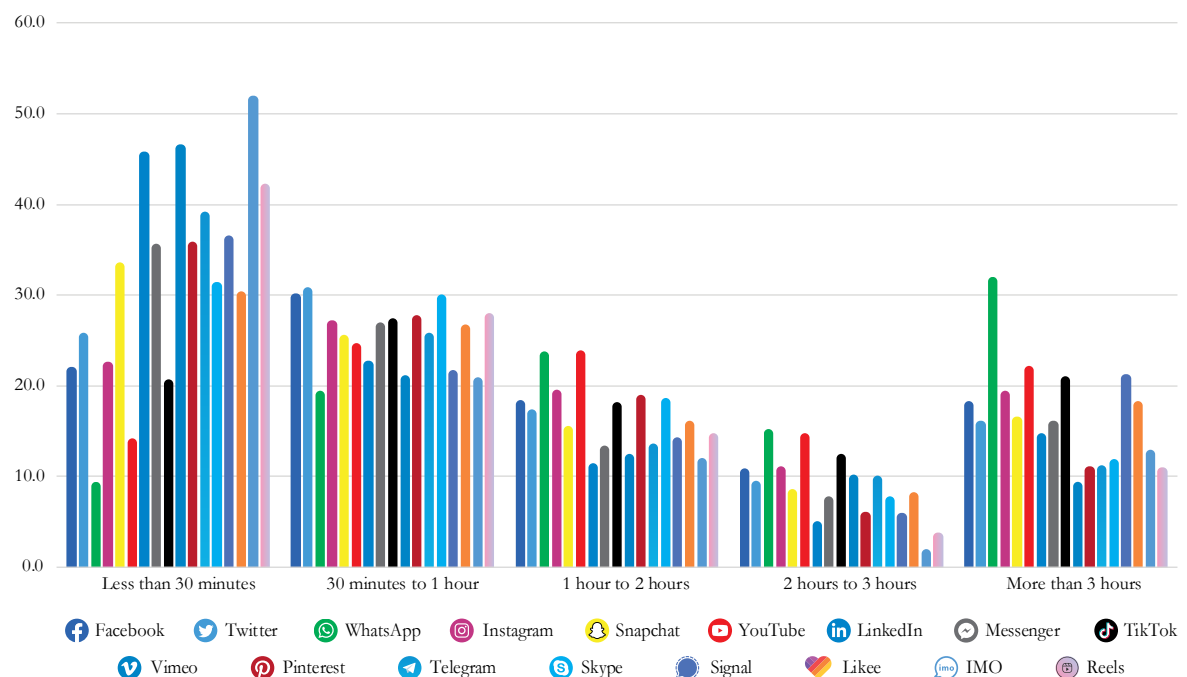


Fig 7.16: Daily Time Spent on Social Media

Twitter has 30% of users spending 30 minutes to 1 hour daily, while 23% of users spend 1 to 2 hours on YouTube and WhatsApp. This indicates that Twitter users may engage more in reading and composing tweets, following news and trends, and possibly participating in discussions that require some time investment.

Both YouTube and WhatsApp have a notable percentage of users who spend 1 to 2 hours daily. YouTube and WhatsApp are platforms that offer a wider variety of content, including videos, text, and images. This type of content may require more time to consume and engage with, which may explain why people tend to spend more time on these platforms. These platforms are favored for more immersive and interactive experiences. Users on YouTube may be watching longer videos, and WhatsApp users could be engaging in extended conversations or group chats. These findings underscore the diversity of social media usage patterns among Kenyan users. Different

platforms cater to varying content preferences and engagement levels, with some platforms being used for quick interactions, while others offer opportunities for more extended and immersive experiences.

From these findings, it can be concluded that Kenyan social media users have varying patterns of social media usage. Instagram seems to be a platform where people spend a shorter time, perhaps scrolling through posts quickly. On the other hand, YouTube and WhatsApp are platforms where users spend more time, possibly watching videos or engaging in conversations.

Women spend more time on social media than men, with most women (over 51%) spending more than two hours per day on social media, while most men spend less than one hour per day on these platforms as shown in Figure 7.17. Perhaps women are more likely to use social media so that they stay connected with friends and family or use it to keep themselves updated on news and current trends.

Daily Time Spent on Social Media By Gender

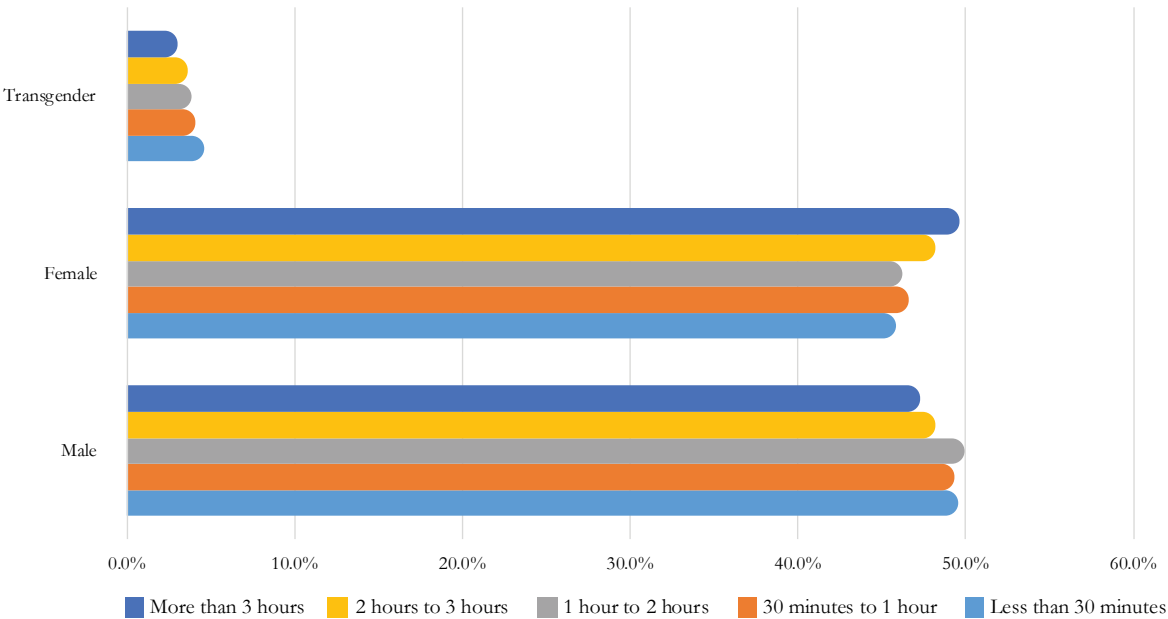


Fig 7.17: Daily Time Spent on Social Media By Gender

7.13. Following Brands Online

Social media platforms provide businesses with a number of ways to connect with their target audiences build relationships, and promote their products or services. Social media can be a powerful tool for building brand loyalty and fostering long-term relationships with customers. Brands can use these platforms to provide value, share engaging content, offer promotions, and address customer inquiries and concerns promptly. Brands can use social media to create a sense of community around their products or services. This community can be a place for customers to connect, share experiences, and even advocate for

the brand, thereby strengthening brand identity and trust.

The proportion of people who follow brands online in Kenya was 75%, while 25% do not as indicated in Figure 7.18. This suggests that there may be opportunities for brands to connect with their audiences and build relationships through social media channels. The high proportion of people in Kenya who follow brands online represents a significant opportunity for businesses to use social media as a key part of their marketing and customer engagement strategies.

Following Brands Online

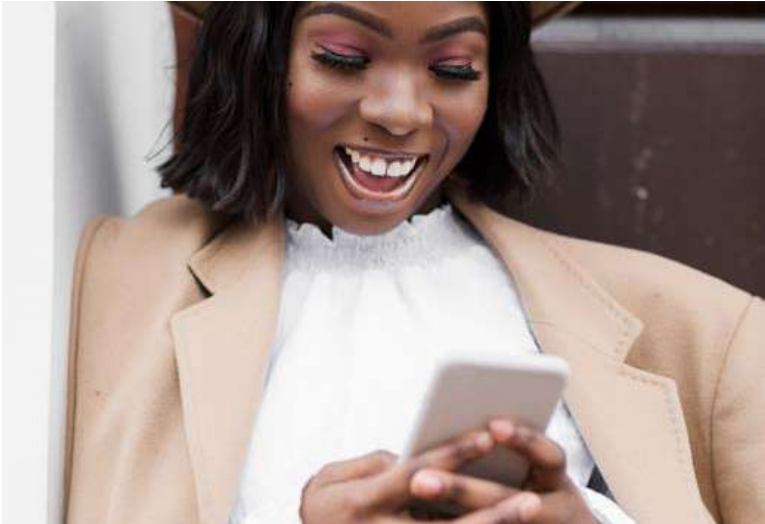
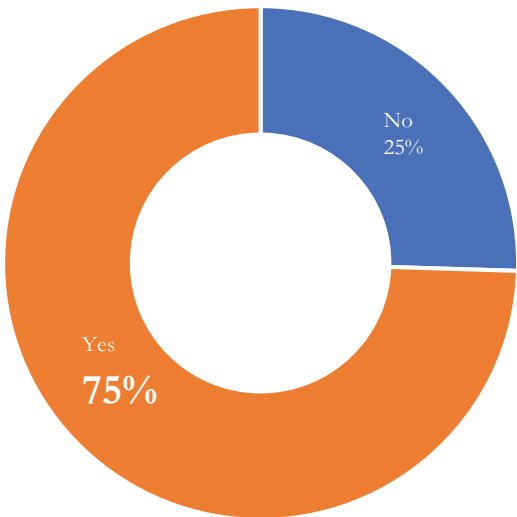


Fig 7.18: Following Brands Online

7.14. Live Streaming Content

Live streaming on social media offers a wide range of content opportunities, from live events and product launches to Q&A sessions and behind-the-scenes glimpses. The popularity of live-streaming content among social media users in Kenya underscores its significance as a dynamic and engaging medium for communication, entertainment, and marketing as 75% of the social media users watch live-streaming content on social media in Kenya as indicated in Figure 7.19.

Live streaming content is more engaging than traditional video content because it is interactive and

allows viewers to interact with the broadcaster in real-time. This can make it more enjoyable and informative for viewers. Live streaming content is often seen as more authentic than traditional video content because it is not as heavily edited or produced. This can make it more appealing to viewers who are looking for genuine and relatable content. Businesses and marketers can use live streaming as a powerful tool for product demonstrations, promotions, and engaging with their customer base. It can be an effective means of showcasing products, answering customer questions, and generating excitement around new offerings

Watch Live Streaming Content

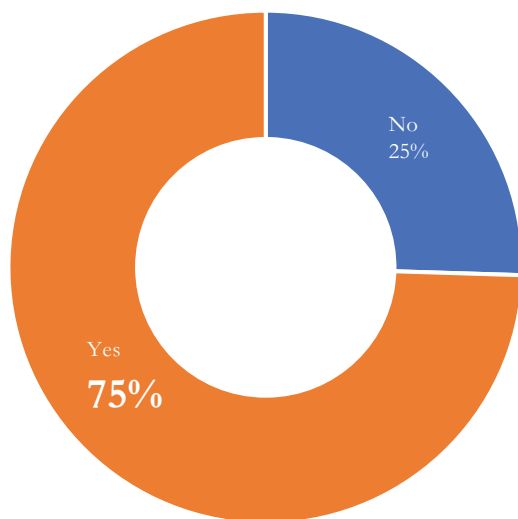


Fig 7.19: Watch Live Streaming Content



7.15. Time of Day When Kenyans Access Social Media

The statistics suggest that social media usage in Kenya is concentrated during the later hours of the day, particularly at night and in the evening. A significant portion of social media usage occurs during the night, with 46.2% of users accessing social media at this time as shown in Figure 7.20. The fact that a significant portion of users (46.2%) access social media at night implies that social media is often used as a leisure activity or a form of entertainment during free time. Users turn to social media for relaxation, social interaction, and content consumption after their daily activities.

The evening hours are the second most popular time for social media usage, with 35.2% of users accessing social media during this time. In contrast, social media usage is less common during the morning and afternoon hours, with 16.4% and 24% of users accessing social media during these times, respectively. From these findings, it can be concluded that Kenyans tend to access social media primarily during the later hours of the day, particularly during the night and evening hours.

This suggests that social media usage in Kenya may be more of an activity for leisure and entertainment rather than for work or productivity. It may also suggest that social media serves as a means of staying connected with friends, family, and online communities during the evening. Therefore, social media usage in Kenya is primarily a leisure and entertainment activity concentrated during the later hours of the day. This information can inform content scheduling, advertising strategies, and engagement tactics for businesses and content creators seeking to connect with Kenyan audiences effectively.

The data shows that low-income users tend to access social media in the afternoon, while middle-income users tend to access it in the evening, and high-income users tend to access it in the morning as depicted on Figure 7.21. Low-income users may be more likely to have work schedules that require them to work during the day. This means that they may have less time to access social media during the morning and evening

Time Spent On Social Media

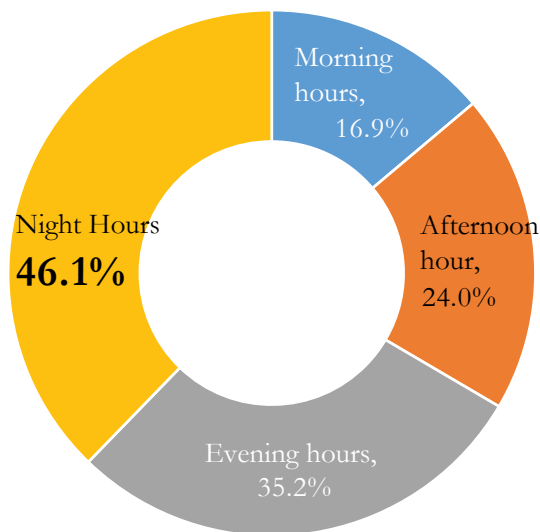


Fig 7.20: Time of Day When Kenyans Access Social Media

hours. Low-income users may also be less likely to have access to personal devices or reliable internet connectivity at home. This means that they may need to rely on public Wi-Fi or internet cafes to access social media. These options may be more accessible during the afternoon hours, when there is less congestion.

For businesses and marketers targeting social media users in Nairobi, it is important to be aware of these

differences and to tailor their social media strategies accordingly. For example, businesses may want to post more content during the afternoon hours to reach low-income users, or they may want to post more content during the evening hours to reach middle-income and high-income users. Additionally, businesses may want to consider targeting their social media ads to specific income groups based on the times of day that they are most likely to be active on social media.

Time of Day Spent on Social Media by Income in Nairobi

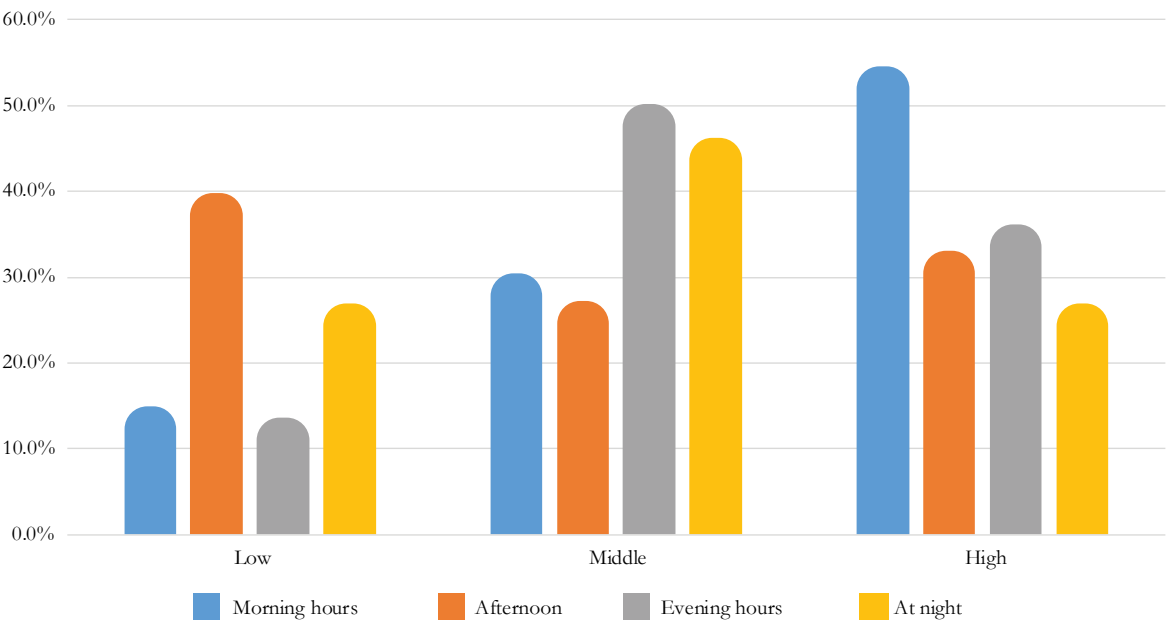


Fig 7.21: Time of Day Spent on Social Media By Income in Nairobi

7.16. Online Harassment – Less Severe Forms

Online harassment is a problem for a significant portion of social media users in Kenya. Figure 7.22 and 7.23 shows that 35% of users have experienced less severe forms of online harassment including offensive comments, trolling, or cyberbullying, while 23% have experienced severe forms of online harassment respectively. The prevalence of severe online harassment is also significantly higher among residents of urban areas compared to those in rural areas.

Severe forms of harassment might involve threats, hate speech, doxing, or stalking. The fact that more users have experienced less severe forms of harassment than severe forms suggests that online harassment may be underreported. There are a number of reasons why

people may not report online harassment. Some people may be afraid of retaliation from the harasser. Others may not feel like their experience is serious enough to report; others may not know how to report online harassment.

It is important for policymakers and civil society organizations to work together to create safer online environments, raise awareness about the issue, and provide resources and support for those affected by online harassment. Additionally, promoting responsible online behavior and digital literacy can play a role in mitigating the online harassment problem.

Online harassment can have a profound impact

Experienced Online Harrassment

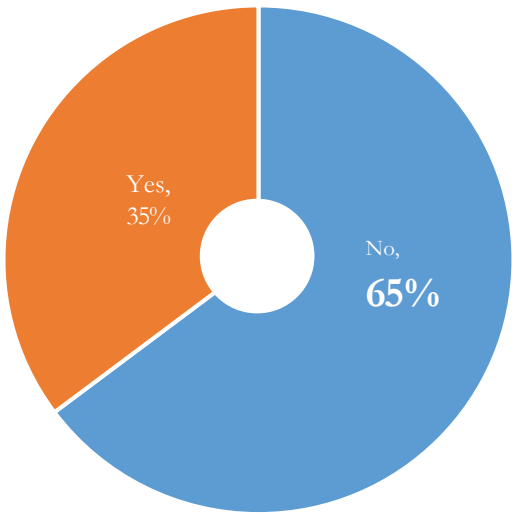


Fig 7.22: Experienced Online Harrassment

Severe Behavior

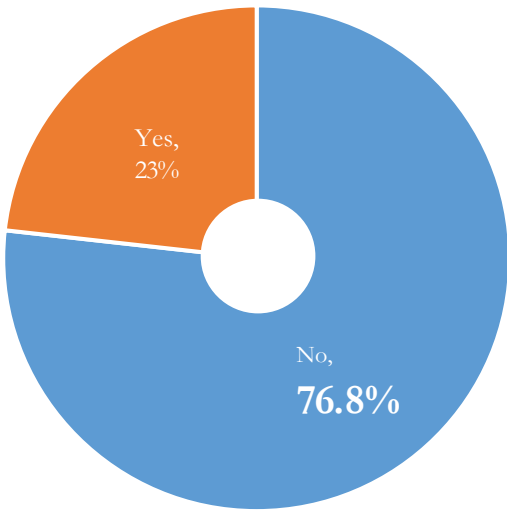
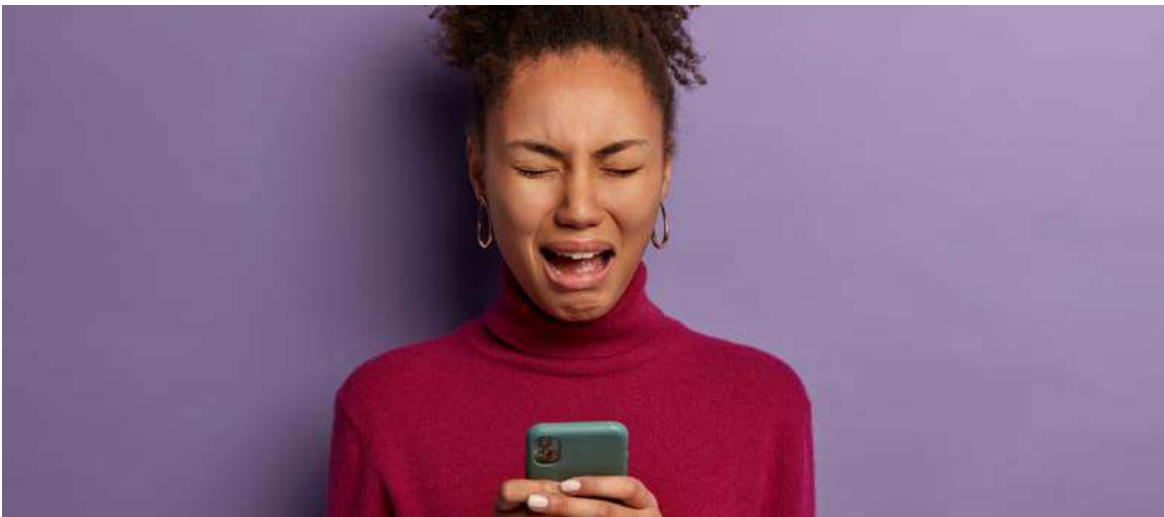


Fig 7.23: Experienced Severe Forms of Online Harrassment



on individuals. The negative effects, including psychological distress, social withdrawal, and physical harm, emphasize the urgency of addressing this issue and providing support for those affected. Figure 7.24 reveals a stark disparity in online harassment rates

in Nairobi, with low-income residents experiencing significantly higher prevalence compared to their middle- and high-income counterparts.

Experienced Severe Forms of Online Harrassment by Income Level in Nairobi

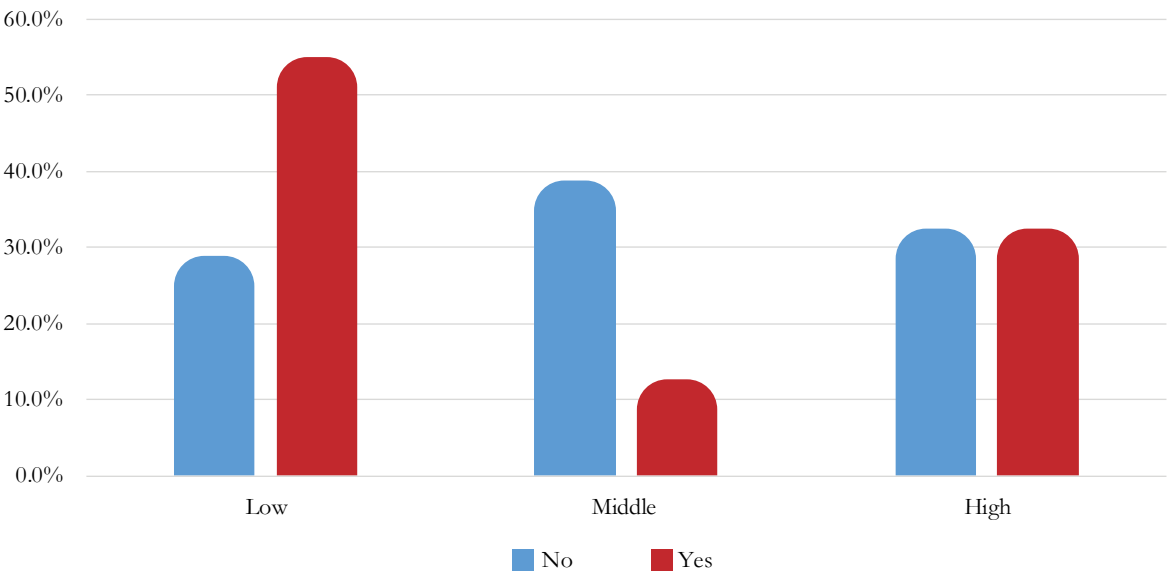


Fig 7.24: Experienced Severe Forms of Online Harrassment By Income Levels In Nairobi

Online harassment is a problem for a significant proportion of social media users in Kenya, with 47.10% of males and 52.85% of females reporting experiencing severe forms of online harassment as shown in 7.25. The slightly higher proportion of females reporting severe online harassment aligns with global trends where women and marginalized groups are disproportionately targeted. This is consistent with

broader trends in online harassment, where women and other marginalized groups are often targeted disproportionately. There is a need for targeted interventions and support for these groups. This could be achieved by raising awareness about the issue and to encourage victims to speak out. It is also important to hold perpetrators accountable for their actions and to create a culture of respect and civility online.

Severe Behaviours

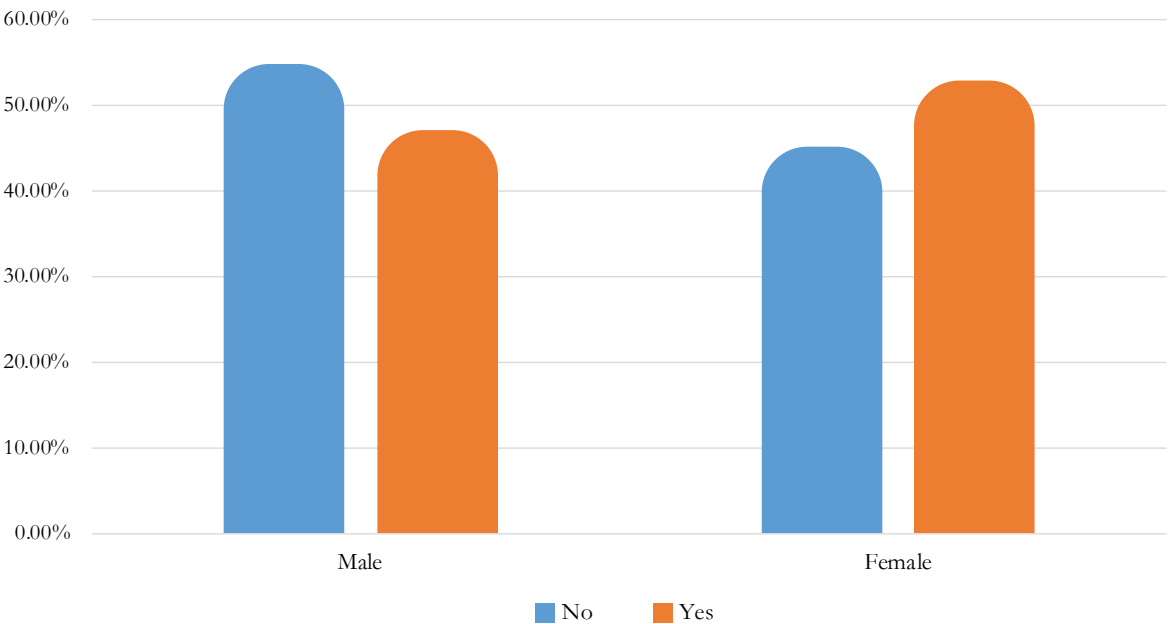


Fig 7.25: Experienced Severe Forms of Online Harrassment by Gender

7.17. Participation in Online Debate

A significant portion of respondents, 56%, reported having participated in an online debate at least one time. This suggests that a substantial number of individuals do engage in online debates or are active participants in such discussions. Among those who do participate in online debates, there is a range of engagement levels. This includes 26% who have participated 1-5 times, 15% who have participated 6 to 10 times, and another 15% who have participated in more than 10 online debates as shown in Figure 7.26. This demonstrates that some individuals are more actively involved in online debating than others. The frequency of online

debate participation is influenced by a number of factors, including individuals' interest in specific topics, their level of engagement with online communities, and their comfort level with expressing their opinions in a public forum. A majority of men (54.7%) are habitual online debaters, participating 10 or more times, compared to 40.8% of women who participate with similar frequency. While a substantial majority (61.4%) of urban dwellers participate in online debates 10 or more times, only 38.6% of rural dwellers do the same, highlighting a stark disparity.

Participated in Online Debate

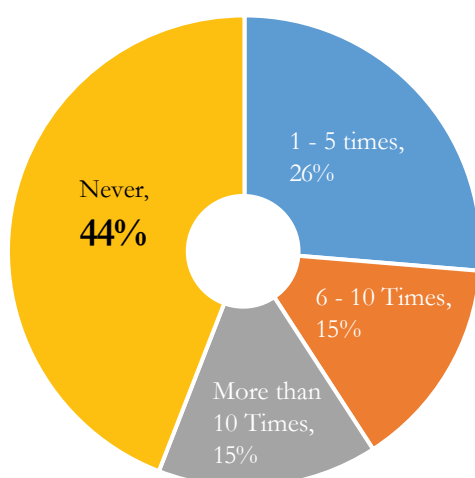


Fig 7.26: Participation in Online Debate



7.18. Use of Pseudonyms When Participating in Online Debates

The use of pseudonyms in online debates can have both positive and negative implications. There are a number of reasons why people might choose to use pseudonyms in online debates. Some people may feel more comfortable expressing their opinions freely if they know that they are anonymous. Others may want to protect their privacy or avoid being targeted by harassment. Additionally, some people may use pseudonyms to avoid being associated with their employer or other organizations.

It is important to weigh the pros and cons before deciding whether or not to use a pseudonym in an online debate. There are both positive and negative implications of using pseudonyms in online debates. On the one hand, pseudonyms can provide a sense of safety and security for individuals who hold minority or unpopular views. They can also allow people to express their opinions without fear of judgment or retribution. Additionally, pseudonyms can help to create a more inclusive and welcoming environment for online debates.

On the other hand, the use of pseudonyms can also make it difficult to verify the authenticity of users and their opinions. This can make it easier for people to spread misinformation and engage in online

harassment. Additionally, the use of pseudonyms can make it more difficult to build trust and establish relationships with other users.

Figure 7.27 suggests that 44% of respondents reported using pseudonyms when participating in online debates. While pseudonyms can protect some individuals, they can also be used by others to engage in online harassment or bullying, as perpetrators may feel emboldened by the anonymity. Some users may also exploit pseudonyms to spread misinformation, engage in trolling, or conduct malicious activities without accountability. This can harm the quality of online debates and discussions.

The use of pseudonyms can have both positive and negative implications for online debates. On the one hand, pseudonyms can provide a sense of privacy and anonymity, allowing individuals to express their opinions without fear of retribution or harassment. This can be particularly important for individuals who hold minority or unpopular views. On the other hand, the use of pseudonyms can also create challenges in terms of verifying the authenticity of users and their opinions and can contribute to the spread of misinformation and online harassment.

Use of Pseudonyms When Participating in Online Debates

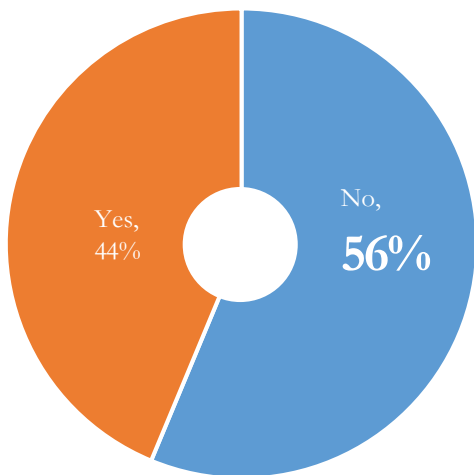


Fig 7.27: Use of Pseudonyms When Participating in Online Debate

7.19. Use of Pseudonyms on Specific Social Media Channels

Facebook reveals the highest rate of pseudonym use among the listed platforms – citing 70% pseudonym use. This suggests that a significant portion of Facebook users prefer to use pseudonyms or nicknames rather than their real names when engaging with the platform. The reasons for this choice can vary, including privacy concerns or a desire to maintain a level of anonymity.

Instagram (30% Pseudonym Use) has a lower rate of pseudonym use compared to Facebook. Instagram is primarily a visual platform, and users often use their real names or easily identifiable usernames to build a personal brand or connect with others through their content.

Twitter (30% Pseudonym Use) also has a similar rate of

pseudonym use to Instagram. Twitter users can choose their usernames (handles) and display names, and while some opt for real names, others use pseudonyms to express their online identity.

The variations in pseudonym use across these platforms can be influenced by their respective purposes, features, and user demographics. Additionally, user attitudes toward privacy, anonymity, and personal branding may also play a role in these differences. It's worth noting that social media platforms often have their own policies regarding the use of real names, and they may encourage or require users to use their real identities. However, these policies are not always strictly enforced, and many users continue to use pseudonyms or variations of their names for various reasons.

Use of Pseudonyms on Specific Social Media Channels

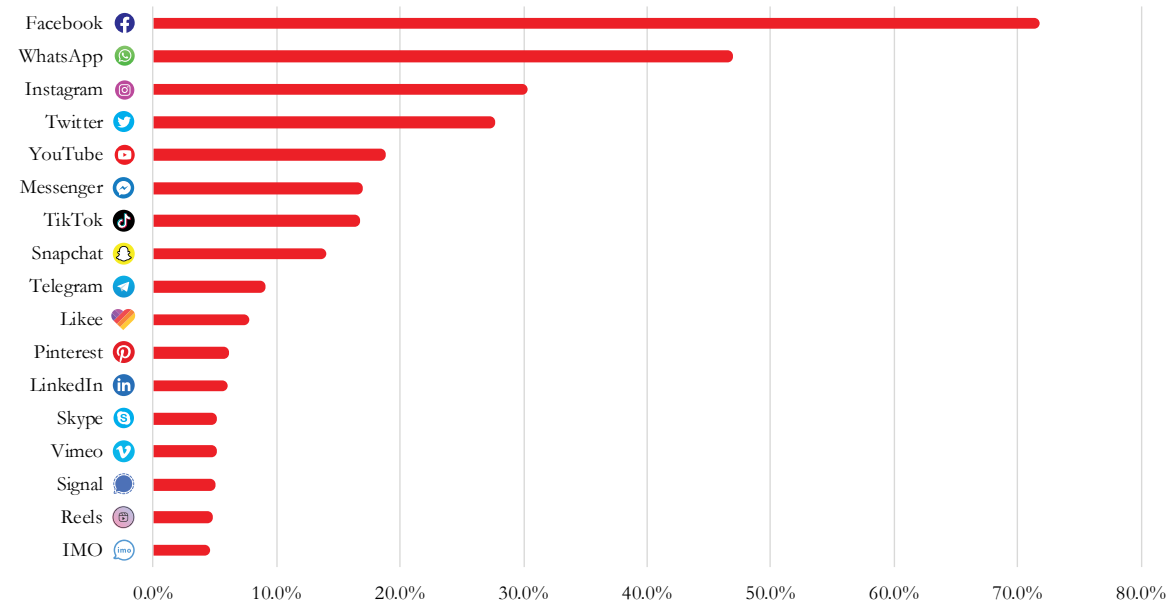


Fig 7.28: Participation in Online Debate

7.20. Motivation for Using Social Media

People use social media for a variety of reasons, including to acquire information, connect with others, express themselves, be entertained, and relieve stress. The motivation for using social media vary amongst various social media users. As shown in Figure 7.29, a majority of users (65% of users) on YouTube use the platform to acquire information. YouTube is a popular platform for educational content, tutorials, news, and a wide range of informational videos. 30% of users of WhatsApp primarily use it as a messaging app, some users may use it for self-expression through

text messages, status updates, or sharing multimedia content with close contacts. 48% of TikTok and Instagram users routinely use the platforms to engage in creative expression, including sharing entertaining and stress-relieving content, such as memes, funny videos, or artistic creations. Snapchat is known for its emphasis on personal connections and communication with close friends. Users often share temporary images and videos with their contacts, making it a platform for staying connected with peers. 40% use Snapchat for connections.

Motivations for Using Social Media

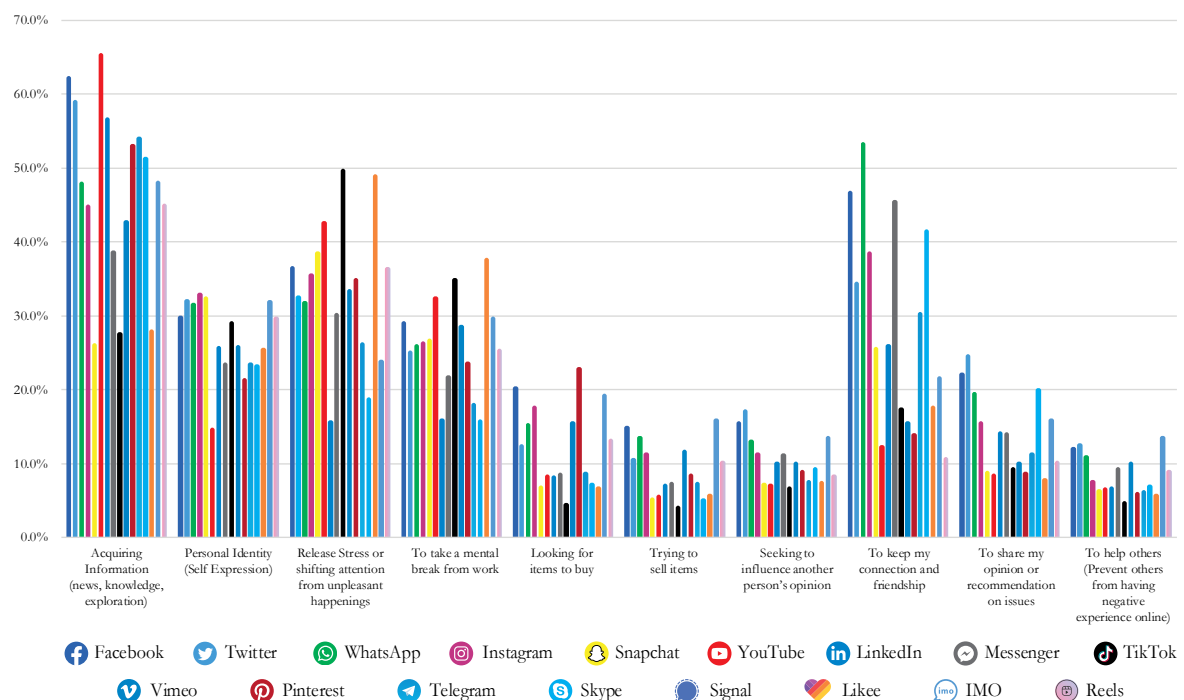


Fig 7.29: Motivation for Using Social Media

7.21. Motivation for Using Specific Social Media

Figure 7.30 shows that social media users use specific social media platforms, such as YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook, to acquire information, release stress, or shift their attention from current happenings. This highlights the different motivations behind social media use in the country. This observation suggests that social media use in Kenya is driven by a variety of reasons. Businesses and organizations that take the time to understand these reasons and tailor their content and messaging accordingly can effectively engage with their audiences and achieve success in their social media efforts.

On average, every social media platform is used for entertainment and taking break from mental work. However, the data indicates that WhatsApp and Messenger are mostly used “To keep connection and friendship” while Likee and TikTok are used to “Release Stress or shifting attention from unpleasant happenings”. Twitter is mostly used by individuals “Seeking to influence another person’s opinion” or those wanting “To share opinion or recommendation on issues”.

Motivation for Using Specific Social Media

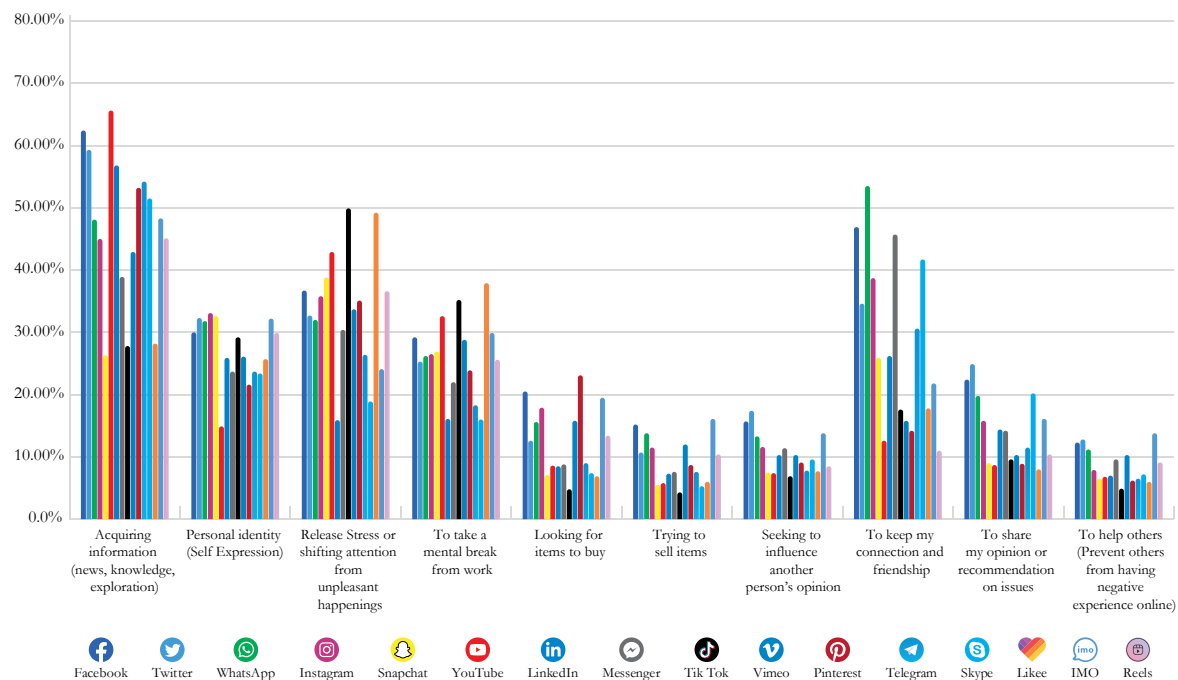


Fig 7.30: Motivation For Using Specific Social Media

7.22. Reading of Online Blogs Among Kenyans

Organizations can use online blogs and news to disseminate important information, updates, and announcements to their audience. This can be particularly useful for sharing news about products, events, promotions, and changes in business operations. As shown in Figure 7:31, 82% of Kenyan social media users read online blogs or news highlighting the importance of digital media in the country.

This also suggests that businesses and organizations in Kenya can reach a large portion of the population through online content and social media channels. Content marketing, including blogs, articles, and news updates, can be a powerful strategy for organizations in Kenya. By producing high-quality, informative content that resonates with their target audience, businesses can establish themselves as authorities in their respective industries and build trust among consumers.

Read Online Blogs or News

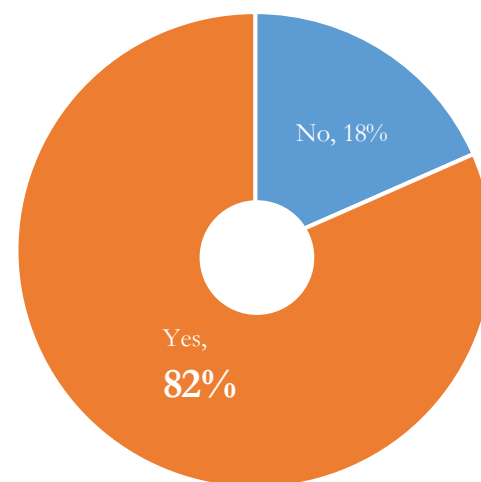


Fig 7.31: Read Online Blogs or News

7.23. Types of Online Blogs Kenyans are Reading

Understanding the preferences of online readers is vital for content creators and marketers to tailor their strategies effectively. Figure 7.32 shows that 70% of users are reading blogs related to entertainment which underscores the strong appeal of entertainment content in Kenya. 52% are reading blogs related to business and education, and only 12% are reading blogs related to agriculture.

While not as popular as entertainment, blogs related to business and education still have a substantial readership, with 52% of users interested in these topics. This indicates a significant interest in educational and business-related content. The low readership (12%) of blogs related to agriculture is a clear concern, especially in a country like Kenya, where agriculture plays a vital role in the economy. Producers of agricultural

or limiting individuals based on their gender. Blogs content should empower and include all individuals, regardless of their gender, and not pigeonhole them into specific categories.

Businesses and organizations that use social media for marketing and communication purposes should consider tailoring their content and messaging to specific gender groups in order to effectively engage with their target audiences. For instance, a sports brand may want to create blog content that is targeted towards males, such as articles on the latest sports news or highlights of recent games, while a fashion brand may want to create content that is more focused on female interests, such as outfit ideas or beauty tips.

Similarly, a health and wellness brand may want to

Types of Online Blogs

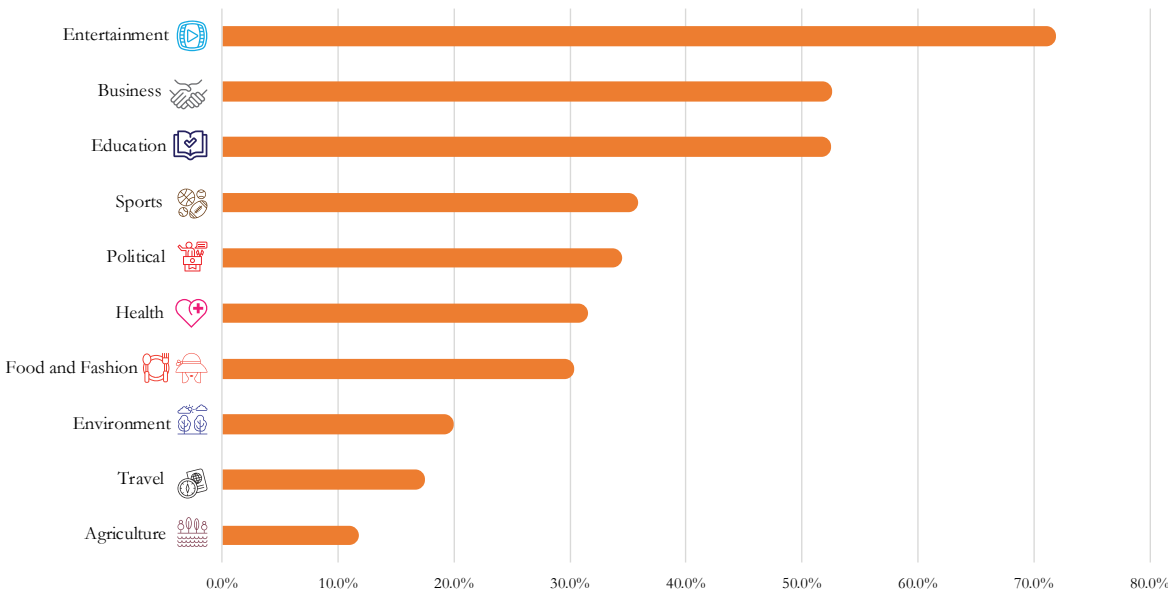


Fig 7.32: Types of Online Blogs Kenyans are Reading

content should indeed consider strategies to increase awareness and engagement. This might include creating more compelling and informative content, promoting it through various channels, and collaborating with organizations that focus on agricultural education and development. content creators in the agriculture sector can focus on educating the public about the importance of agriculture, modern farming techniques, sustainability, and the economic significance of the agricultural sector in Kenya. Figure 7.33 on the next page shows males in Kenya tend to read about sports, politics, and agriculture, while females tend to read about food and fashion, health, and travel, highlights the importance of gender-specific content in social media marketing and communication efforts. While it is important to tailor content to specific interests, it is equally important to avoid reinforcing stereotypes

create content that is more targeted towards female audiences, such as articles on women's health issues or tips for staying fit and healthy, while a travel brand may want to create content that is more focused on female travel interests, such as travel guides or reviews of female-friendly destinations. While it is important to cater to specific interests, it is also beneficial to provide a diverse range of content to appeal to a broader audience.

This can help expand reach and engagement with individuals who may have multiple interests. Audience segmentation and tailored content when it comes to social media use by age is very important. Different age groups have varying interests, preferences, and concerns. Tailoring content to specific age groups ensures that it resonates with the intended audience.

From Figure 7.34, different age groups in Kenya tend to read different types of online blogs suggests that businesses and organizations that use social media for marketing and communication purposes should consider tailoring their content and messaging to specific age groups in order to effectively engage with their target audiences.

The finding that people in the 21 to 25 age group tend to read about food and fashion suggests that businesses in these industries may want to create blog content that is targeted towards this age group, such as fashion trends or food recipes that appeal to younger tastes.

Similarly, the finding that people in the 26-35 age group tend to read about business suggests that businesses in this sector may want to create content that is more focused on industry news and trends, or provide tips and insights that are relevant to this age group's career and financial goals.

Urban and rural areas often have distinct cultural and economic contexts. Blogs content should be sensitive to these differences and reflect an understanding of the unique challenges, values, and traditions of each group.

Urban social media users in Kenya commonly read about food and fashion, sports, and politics, while rural social media users commonly read about agriculture and business, suggesting that there are significant differences in the types of information and content that people are interested in depending on their geographic location. Blogs content that resonates with urban users may not necessarily be relevant or appealing to rural users and vice versa. Tailoring content to the specific interests and needs of each group enhances its impact and engagement.

This has important implications for businesses and organizations that use social media for marketing and communication purposes, as it highlights the need to tailor content and messaging to the specific interests and needs of different audiences. For example, a company that sells agricultural products may want to focus on creating content that is relevant to rural social media users, such as tips for improving crop yields or information on the latest farming technologies. Conversely, a fashion brand may want to create content that is more targeted towards urban social media users, such as outfit ideas or fashion trends.

Reading Online Blogs by Gender

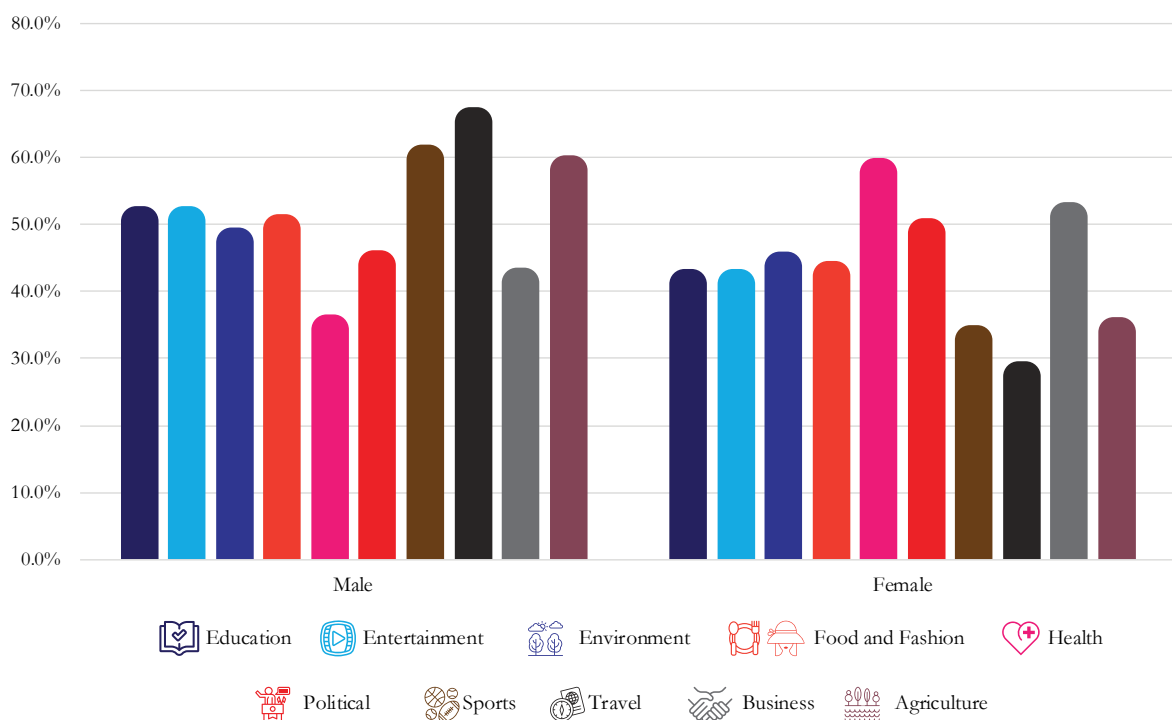


Fig 7.33: Reading Online Blogs by Gender

Reading Online Blogs By Age

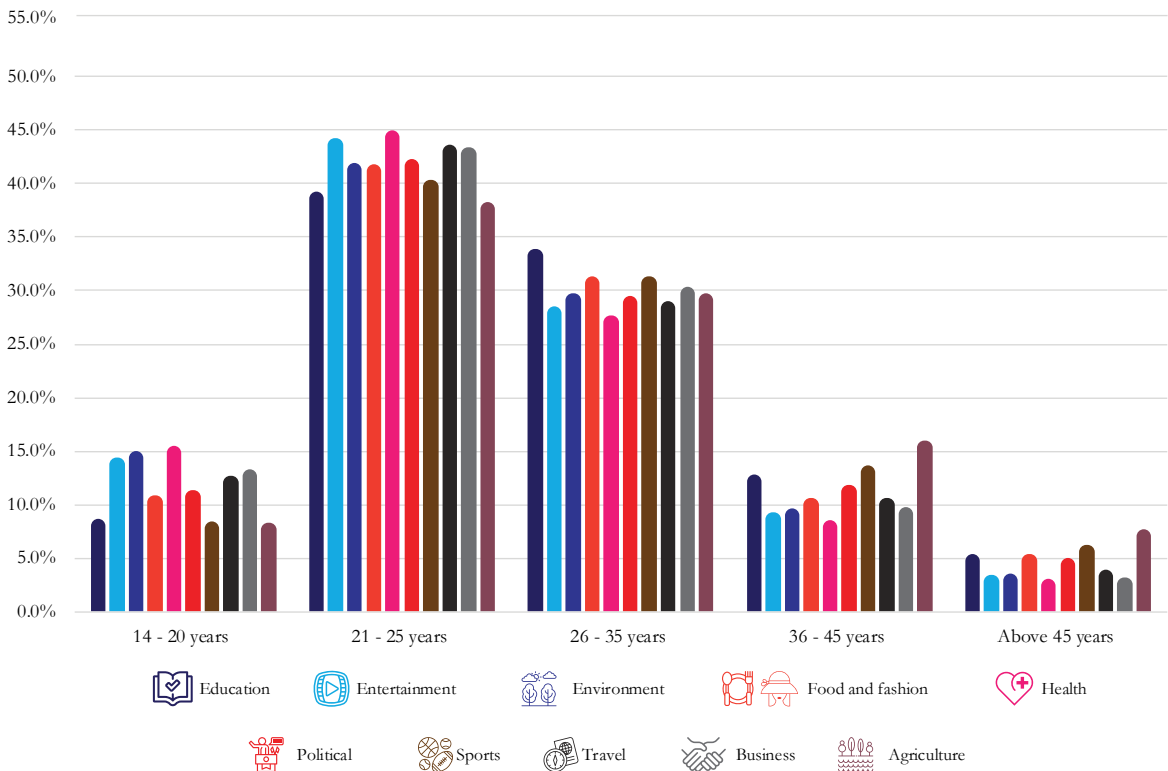


Fig 7.34: Reading Online Blogs by Age

Reading Online Blogs by Income Levels in Nairobi

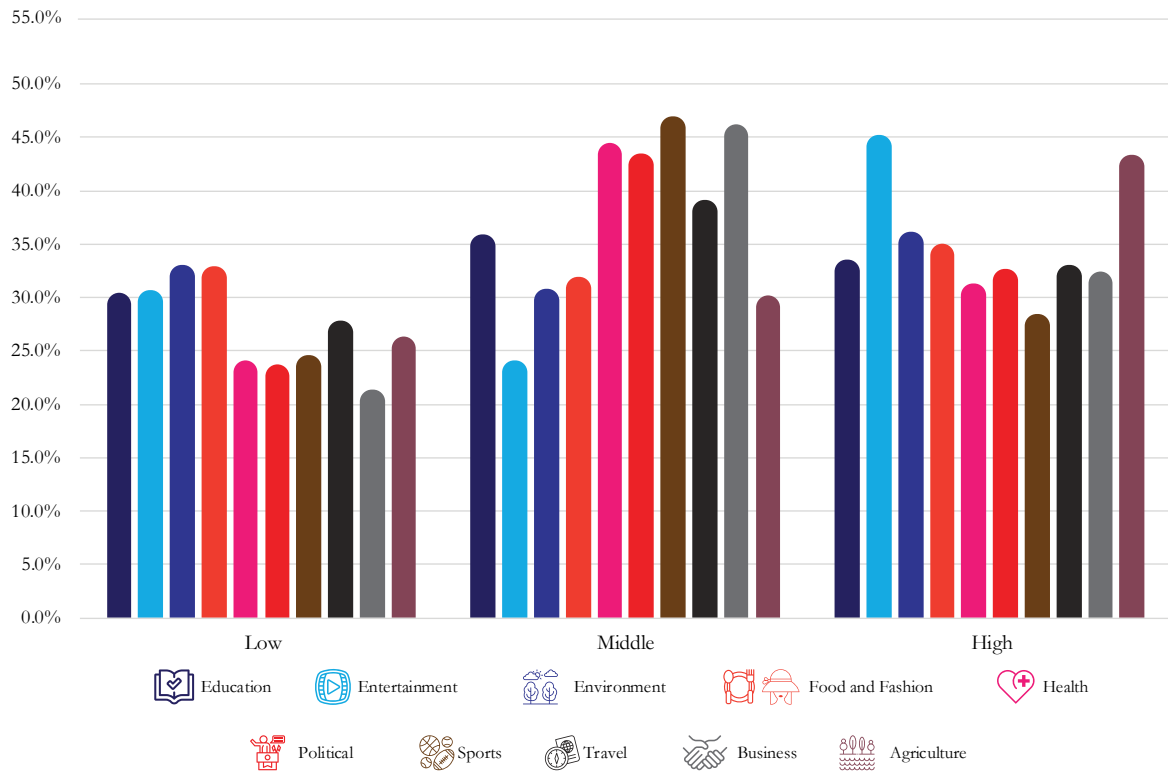


Fig 7.35: Reading Online Blogs by Income Levels in Nairobi

Reading Online Blogs by Geolocation

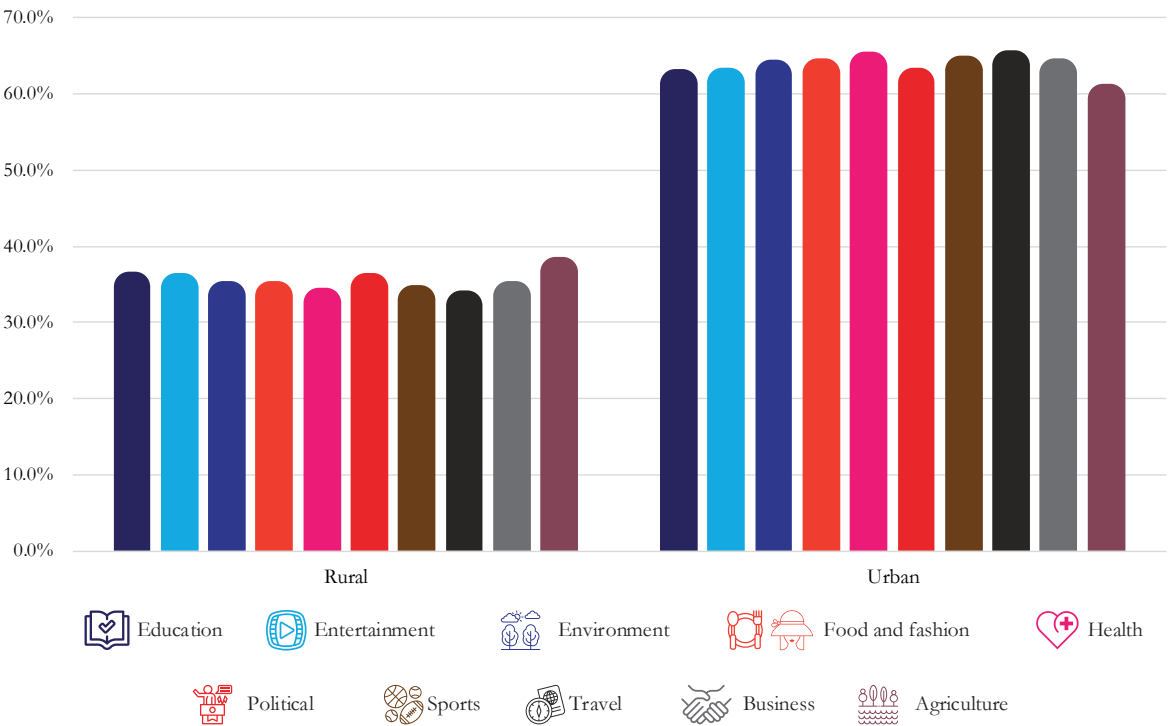


Fig 7.36: Reading Online Blogs by Geolocation



7.24. Frequency of Reading Online Blogs

Blogs are a highly popular and influential source of information and entertainment among social media users in Kenya. Figure 7.37 shows that 67 % of social media users in Kenya read online blogs on a daily basis, while 26% read them weekly, which suggests that blogs are a popular source of information and entertainment among social media users in the country.

Blogs can cover a wide range of topics, from news and current events to lifestyle, fashion, and travel. They often provide a more personal and in-depth perspective than traditional news media and can be a valuable source of information for people with specific interests and hobbies.

For businesses and organizations that use social media for marketing and communication purposes, blogs can be an effective way to engage with and build brand awareness. By creating and promoting their blogs, businesses can establish themselves as field experts, share valuable information with customers, and drive traffic to their websites.

How Often Do You Read Online Blogs

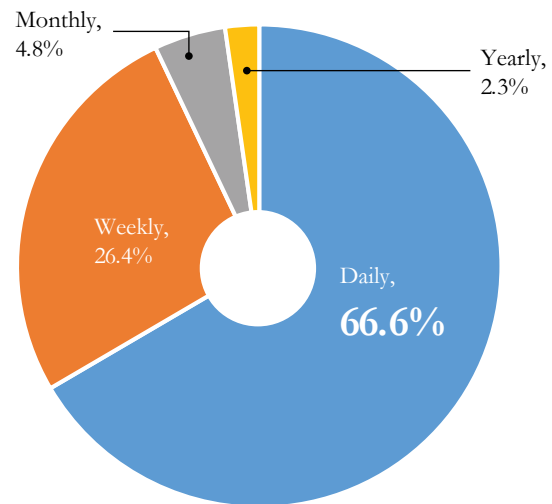


Fig 7.37: Frequency of Reading Online Blogs

7.25. Types of Online Information

A substantial majority of social media users in Kenya encounter a variety of information types online, with a notable presence of misinformation and negativity alongside positive content. A prevalent 46.7% of users are exposed to false or inaccurate information, followed by biased or misleading information (37.8%) and fake news (44.1%). While 42.2% encounter negative information, it is important to highlight that a higher proportion (73.2%) also engage with positive information on social media platforms as shown in Figure 7.38a.

Types of Information in Kenyan Social Media

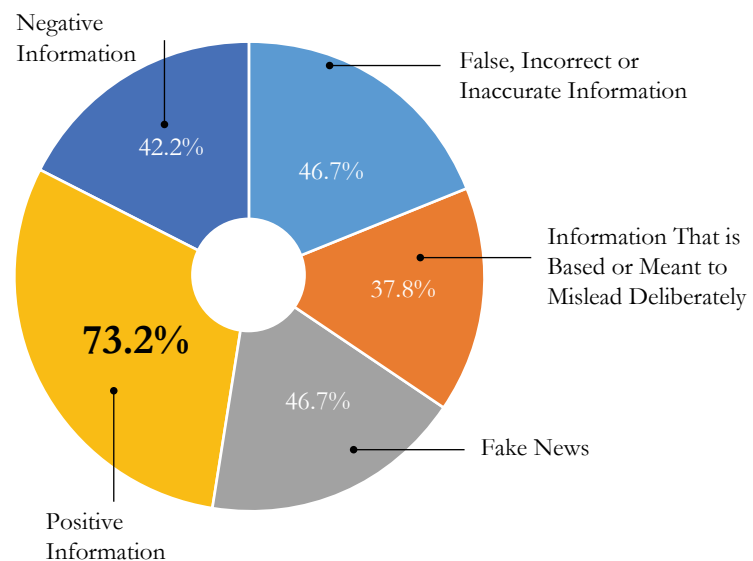


Fig 7.38a: Types of Information Found Online

The proportion of social media users in Kenya who encounter false, incorrect or inaccurate information online, is 46% of users encountered such information occasionally, 40% frequently, and 14% never encounter it as shown in Figure 7.38b. From these findings, it can be concluded that encountering false, incorrect or inaccurate information is a common experience for a significant proportion of social media users in Kenya.

This suggests that there may be a need for greater efforts to promote digital literacy and critical thinking skills among social media users in order to help them better navigate the information landscape online.

False, Incorrect, or Inaccurate Information

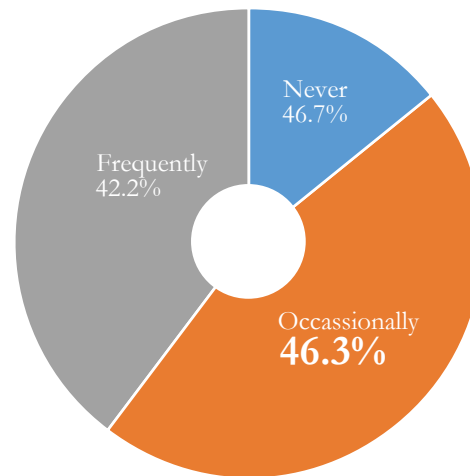


Fig 7.38b: False, Incorrect or Inaccurate Information

7.26. Types of Online Information

Figure 7.39 shows that 45% of social media users in Kenya occasionally access fake news, 37% frequently access fake news, and 18% never access fake news, this is concerning as it suggests that a significant portion of social media users in the country may be vulnerable to misinformation and propaganda.

Fake news, defined as intentionally misleading or fabricated information presented as if it were real news, can have serious consequences for individuals and society as a whole. It can lead to public confusion,

undermine trust in institutions, and even contribute to violence and conflict in extreme cases.

The fact that a majority of social media users in Kenya report accessing fake news at least occasionally highlights the need for greater media literacy and critical thinking skills among the population. It is important for individuals to be able to distinguish between real and fake news and to understand how to verify information before sharing it with others.

Fake News

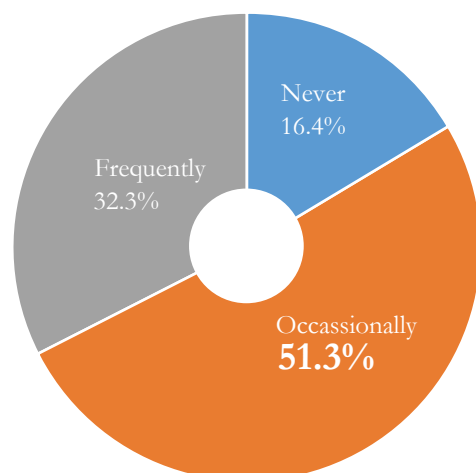


Fig 7.39: Fake News

Negative Information

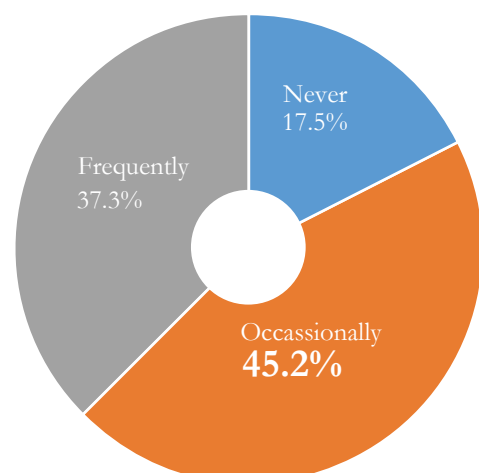


Figure 7.40 shows that 36% of social media users in Kenya frequently access fake news, 47% access fake news occasionally, and 17% have not come across negative.

7.27. Data Privacy Concerns

Blogs are a popular source of information and entertainment among social media users in Kenya. This is likely due to several factors, including the fact that blogs are a convenient and accessible way to consume information and entertainment. Blogs are also often written in a conversational style, which can make them more engaging and relatable than other types of media. From Figure 7.41, 65% of social media users in Kenya are worried about personal data privacy.

This suggests that many Kenyans are aware of the risks associated with using social media, but they may not know how to protect their privacy. This finding is particularly relevant in the context of increasing concerns about data privacy and security worldwide. Social media platforms collect and store vast amounts of personal data, and users may be concerned about how their data is being used, who has access to it, and how it is being protected from hackers and other malicious actors.

Kenyan social media users are taking their privacy seriously, with a remarkable 62.8% reviewing app privacy policies before installation. This statistic highlights a commendable level of awareness and concern among Kenyan social media users regarding their privacy and the potential implications of app permissions. It

suggests that a significant majority of users are actively taking steps to safeguard their personal information within the digital landscape.

Worried About Personal Data Privacy

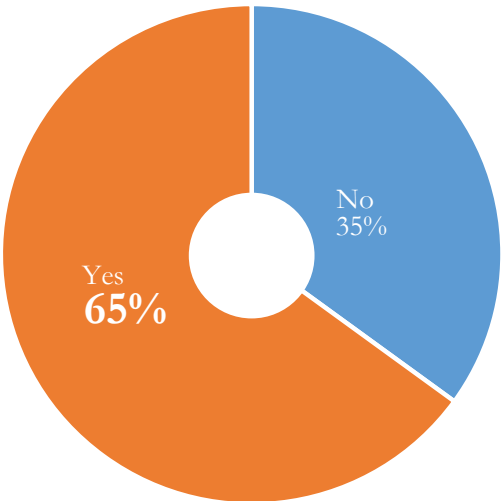


Fig 7.41: Worried about Personal Data Privacy

7.28. Collection & Use of Personal Data by Social Media Apps

Many users may not fully understand how social media apps collect and use their personal data, and efforts should be made to inform them. This lack of awareness is a concern, as it means that many people may not be taking steps to protect their privacy on social media. The study found that only 59% of users are aware of the fact that social media apps collect personal data as shown in Figure 7.42. This awareness gap is important to consider in the context of data privacy and online

behaviors. It is important to educate people about the risks associated with using social media and how to protect their privacy. Social media platforms should prioritize transparency in their data collection and usage practices and should adhere to ethical data handling practices, by ensuring that data is used for legitimate and transparent purposes.

Know That Social Media Apps Collect Personal Data

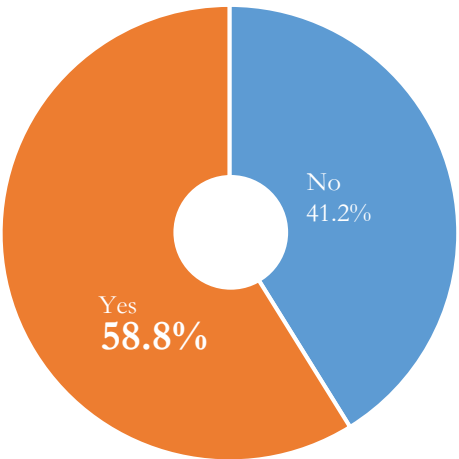


Fig 7.42: Know That Social Media Apps Collect Personal Data

7.29. Selling on Social Media

There is an untapped opportunity for organizations to explore and expand their presence in the online marketplace using social media. From Figure 7.43, data indicates that a significant portion of social media users in Kenya have not yet engaged in selling products on these platforms. Only 37% of social media users have ever sold something on social media.

This suggests the existence of an opportunity to tap into the online marketplace by companies as it is not a particularly common behavior among social media users in Kenya in terms of selling products or services. The relatively low percentage of social media users in Kenya who have engaged in selling products or services on social media platforms presents an opportunity for companies to expand their online presence and tap into this growing market.

Sold Something on Social Media

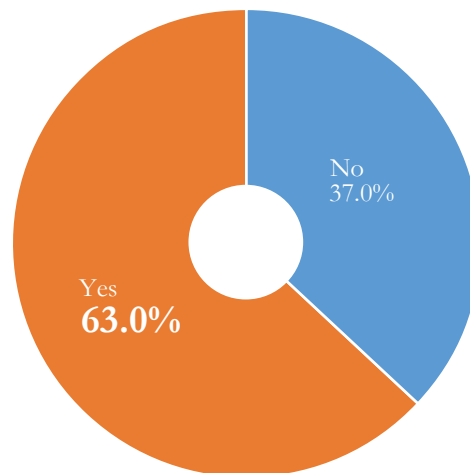


Fig 7.43: Sold Something on Social Media

7.30. Buying on Social Media

Figure 7.44 indicates that 51% of social media users in Kenya have purchased items and services through social media. This shows that social media commerce is a moderately popular behavior among social media users in Kenya, with just over half of users having purchased through a social media platform. The fact that over half of users have made purchases through social media platforms indicates a growing market for social commerce in Kenya. This trend aligns with the global shift toward online shopping and e-commerce.

Bought Something on Social Media

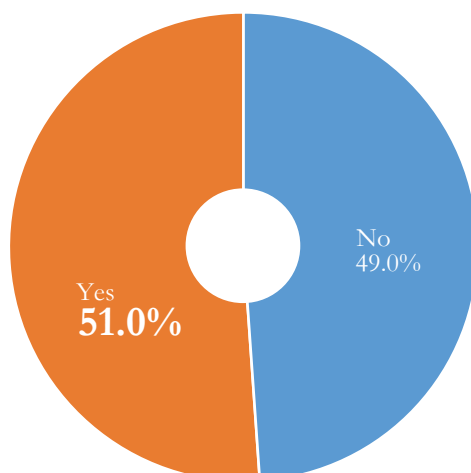


Fig 7.44: Bought Something Through Social Media



8. Social Media Use and Consumption In Kenya 2019-2021

Social Media Use



The data shows that the social media landscape is constantly evolving, with new platforms emerging and existing platforms changing their popularity. The popularity of social media platforms can continue to change over time due to factors such as evolving user preferences, new platform features, and market dynamics. Some platforms have been introduced or gained popularity over time (e.g TikTok), while others may have declined in popularity as shown in Figure 8.1. It will be interesting to see how these trends continue to develop in the coming years.

TikTok saw the most significant growth of any social media platform during this period, with its usage increasing from 8.8% of social media users in Kenya in 2019 to 22.8% in 2021. This growth is likely due to the platform's popularity among younger users and its focus on short-form video content.

Facebook saw its usage decline slightly from 89.3% of social media users in Kenya in 2019 to 79.4% in 2021. This decline is likely due to several factors, including

privacy concerns and the growing popularity of other social media platforms.

YouTube remained the most popular social media platform overall, with 58.3% of social media users in Kenya using the platform in 2021. This is likely due to YouTube's broad range of content, which includes everything from music videos to educational videos to vlogs.

In 2021, Snapchat was the third most popular social media platform among social media users in Kenya. The popularity of messaging apps like Messenger, Telegram, and WhatsApp remains high, but there has been some fluctuation.

Other notable trends in the data include the decline of LinkedIn (up from 9.1% of social media users in Kenya in 2019 to 8.2% in 2021) and the decline in use of Messenger (down from 37.4% of users in 2019 to 29.7% in 2021).

Social Media Use Among Kenyans (2019-2021)

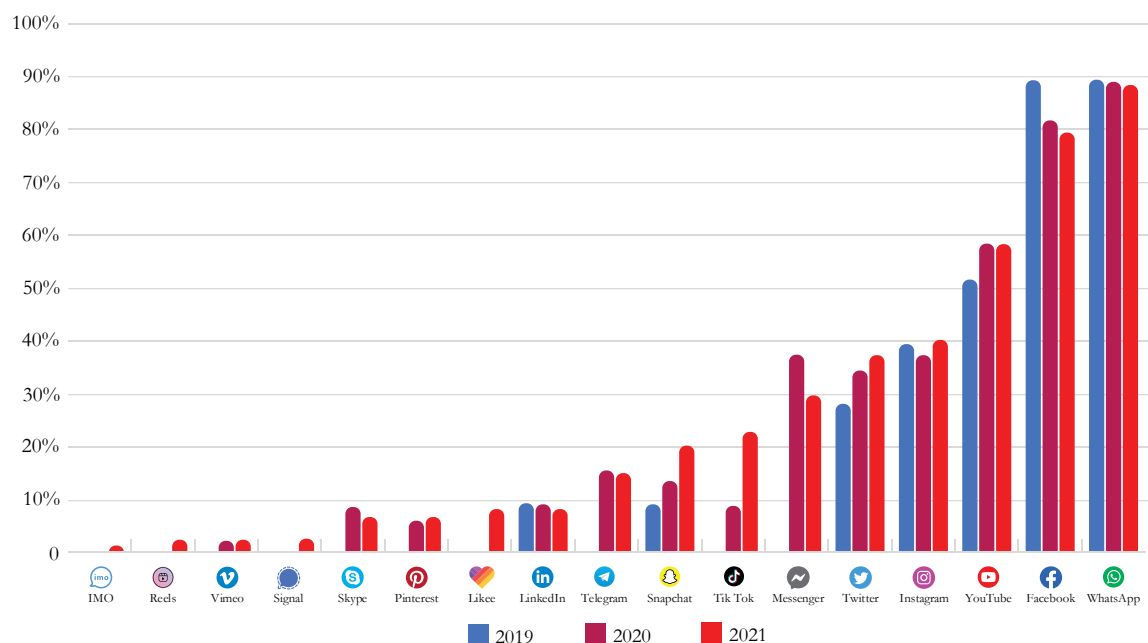
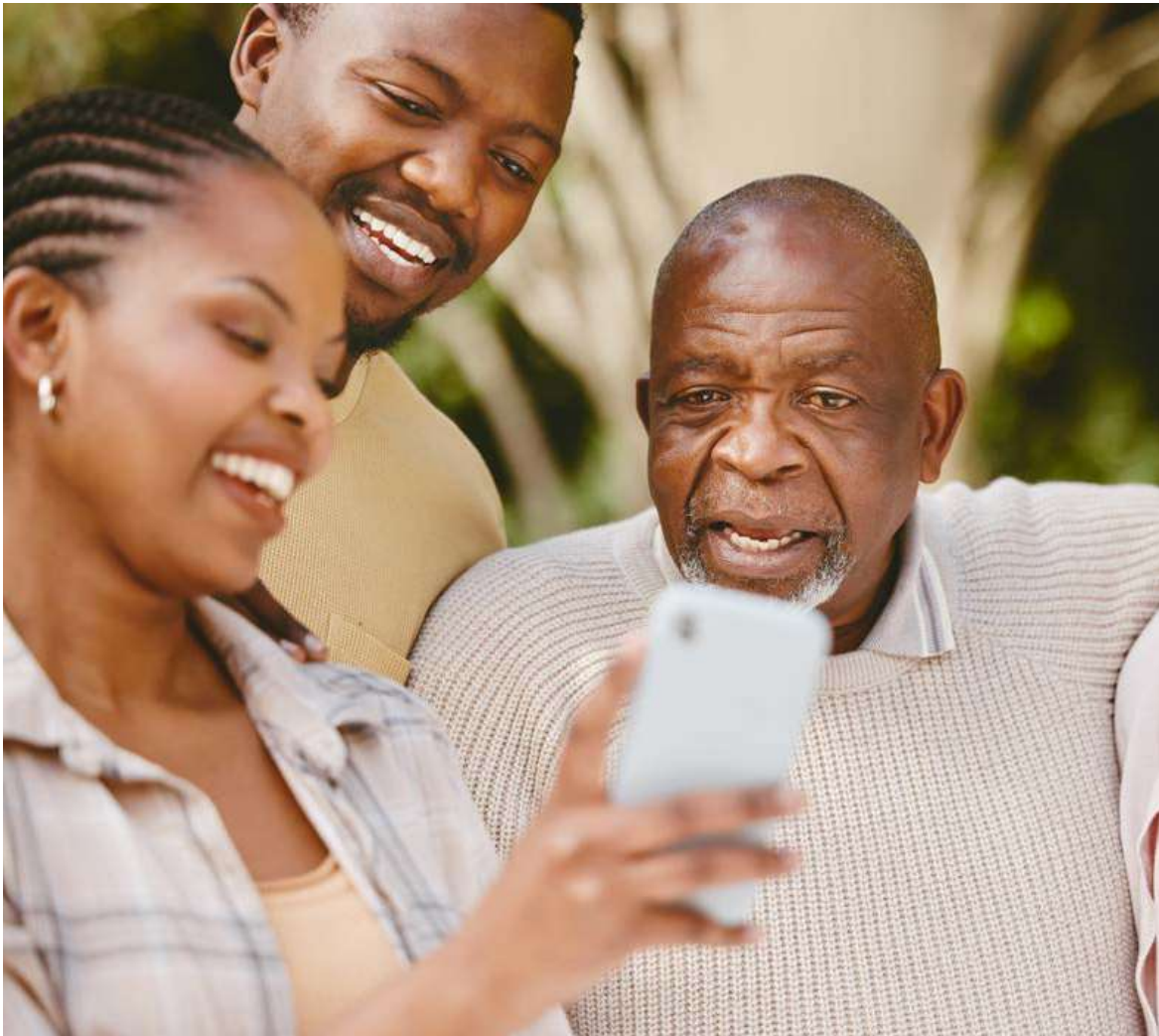


Fig 8.1: Social Media Use Among Kenyans (2019-2021)

8.1. Social Media Use by Age



Younger people are more likely to use social media than older people, and the most popular social media platforms among younger people are different from the most popular social media platforms among older people. The most popular social media platforms among younger people are Snapchat and Instagram while the most popular social media platforms among older people are Facebook and LinkedIn. Snapchat has seen steady growth in usage over the past two years. Snapchat is more popular among younger people than older people, but it is still used by a significant number of people in all age groups.

Younger people are more likely to use social media to stay connected with friends and family, while older people are more likely to use social media for news and information. Also, younger people are more likely to be interested in new and emerging social media platforms, while older people are more likely to stick with the platforms that they are familiar with.

9. Commentaries

9.1. How Lockdowns Changed Social Media Usage in Kenya

By Egline Samoei

In recent years, we have been accustomed to using social media to connect with friends, family and meet new people. Well, there have been notable changes in how people and brands are using social media accelerated by the pandemic. Users are trying to use social media in innovative ways to connect, get informed, and entertained. Brands are hopping on the bandwagon and continuing to use social media for customer service and engagements. Here is how Kenyans and brands have been using social media in the age of social distancing and unprecedented lockdowns.

Creatives are Shifting Social Platforms To Tap Into New Revenue Streams

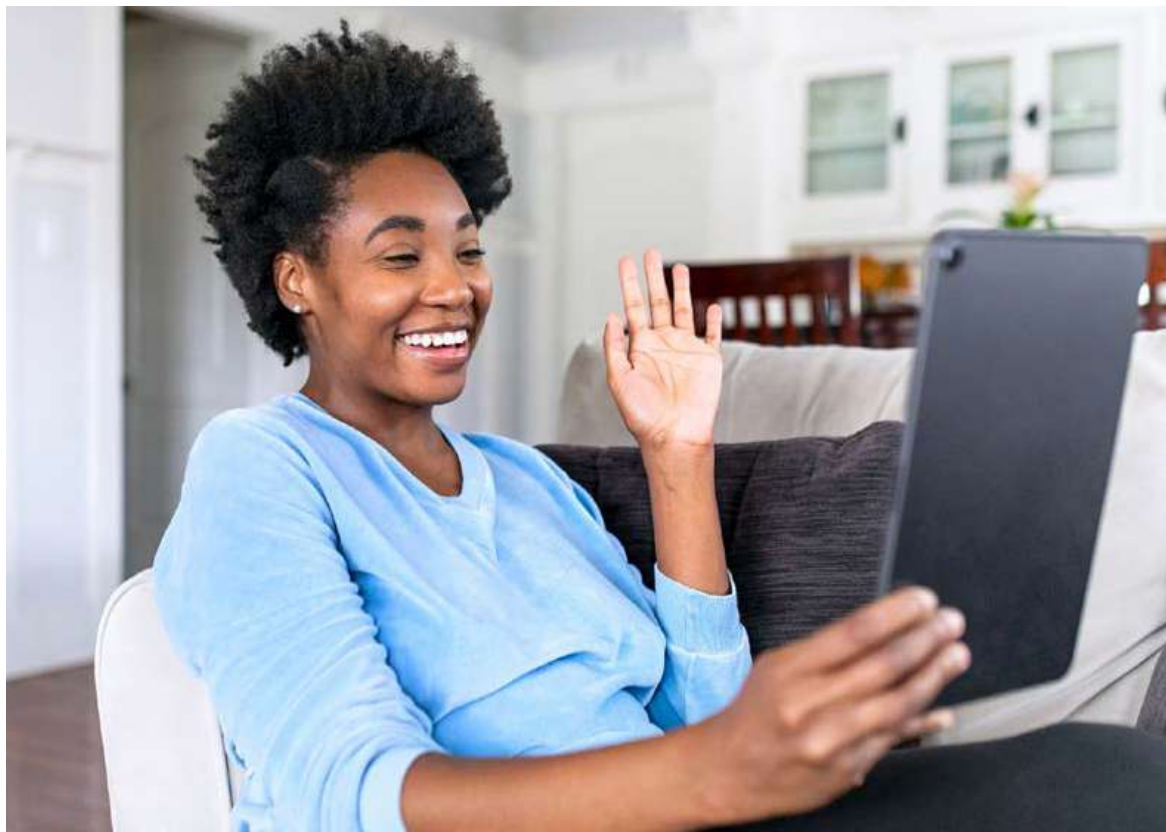
The pandemic affected entertainment greatly. Live shows and events have been paused and creatives are tapping into new revenue streams on digital platforms and outlets to build resilience. A media personality like Jalang'o shifted gears to YouTube and began an online live TV show. Content creator Abel Mutua started a storytelling platform on YouTube created for the sole purpose of Entertaining, Educating, and Informing, Sauti Sol doing live performances on YouTube.



On the other hand, during the pandemic, we have seen the rise of content creators on Social Media like the dancing queen Azziad Nasenya, international star Elsa Majimbo, the funny Cartoon Comedian and Kelvin Kwara on TikTok among others.

Social Media Maintains to Be a Tool of Customer Service

Over time, social media has proven to be a great platform for customer service. This heightened during the pandemic at a time when companies still restricted physical visits during lockdowns. For instance, Kenya's



Ministry of Health has been posting daily updates on Coronavirus cases in Kenya. The Inspector General of Police gets to engage the public on Twitter using the hashtag #EngageTheIG every Monday.

On the other hand, people are continuing to use social media to get information about product services, company updates, and launch complaints. It's on a company's social media account that users get to verify companies' information.

Social Media as a Source of News/Convergence

In the age of social distancing and frequent lockdowns, more and more people are converging to social media to get informed. A global report has shown that "Social media user numbers have surged in the past 12 months too, with 521 million new users joining social media in the year to April 2021." People want to know what is happening around them and the globe and they are always scrolling online. It was at this period when the word doom scrolling came into play. Doom scrolling is a new term that rose from the pandemic meaning endless scrolling on social media even if the news is bad and disheartening.

Another ongoing trend on social media is where social media users' posts have become news; what public figures are posting online has become news. For instance, if a public figure posts they have contracted the virus, the Tweet or Facebook post will be used as a source of news/information by media outlets and news blogs.

We have also seen emerging trends where social media users send news or information to bloggers like Edgar

Obare, Robert Alai, and Cyprian Nyakundi, just to mention a few. From there, the bloggers will amplify the information on their Stories, Blogs, Facebook, or Twitter accounts.

The Future: Social Media Trend Analysis

Conversations are moving online across different social media platforms. Users are connecting, talking about their topics of interest, engaging with brands, and using it for entertainment, news politics, etc. These conversations open a window for social media intelligence through social listening. Brands can monitor and listen to what users are saying online about their brands, services, or products. Through these, brands can get social media intelligence on ideas, interests, and possible brand influencers and ambassadors. They can also understand the current trends and predict future trends through social media analysis.

Social media will become a great platform for market research and a platform to obtain audience insights.

Conclusion

Gone are the days when social media was used for connections only. Social media is now a tool for news, customer service, a marketplace, and a place for market research. There is much data and information you can get online. When used well, social media is a game-changer!

Egline Samoei is CIM certified digital marketer and Co-founder of Brand Moran-<https://www.brandmoran.com/> - a social listening and consumer insights platform

9.2. Socially Undistanced - Through Live Streaming

By Michael Nyabera Odinga

Producer and Writer Technology and Entertainment,
Yolo Media Limited

With the world still coming to terms with the hard-hitting effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, several industries have experienced demoralizing outcomes from the safety protocols meant to counter the rising cases of COVID-19 infections. Events, entertainment, and sports are definitely among the most affected industries as social distancing remains one of the most advocated ways of minimizing the spread of the virus.

To bridge this gap, most organizers and content creators have turned to social media platforms and the variety of tools that enable them to stream their events and shows live. Live streaming platforms host videos and enable users to upload and broadcast in real-time. What once seemed like a distance practice or a 'value add' service is the new normal as we adopt to live streaming of crucial events such as weddings, funerals, and company AGMs among many others.

Music and entertainment concerts haven't been left behind as most of the organizers have switched to the social platforms and partnered with various brands to live stream concerts and shows directly to the viewers' living rooms. Among the most viewed live-streamed events include 'Sauti Sol Presents: A Sol Christmas' an online concert in which a host of brands partnered with Sauti Sol to bring Holiday Cheers to thousands of viewers on YouTube.

The Mechanics

A basic live streaming set-up would consist of a video source device such as a camera or a webcam which would be connected to a computer (mostly through a capture device) then using an encoding software installed in the computer to upload content to the platform of your choice in real-time.



For mobile devices, various apps such as Facebook and Instagram come with live-streaming functionalities through which users can go live at the tap of the screen.

The Platforms of Choice

Depending on the target audience and other factors to be considered such as duration of the livestream and required engagement with the viewers the following are among the most popular live-streaming platforms.

YouTube

With over 2 billion monthly users, YouTube Live is definitely among the leading platforms for live streaming bringing with it a host of advantages such as a Global reach which presents an opportunity to build a large community, powerful analytics on your channel and content performance thus helping you customize your content for your target audience and ways to monetize the content all these not forgetting that with the YouTube mobile app your content can be consumed on the go.

Facebook Live

Since its launch in 2016 Facebook Live has tremendously grown in popularity with more and more active users using Facebook Live. Content creators can broadcast



live from desktop and mobile devices directly to their platform page. Locally Facebook Live is being used in streaming church services, weddings, and funerals.

Instagram Live

Instagram is more than your preferred photo app. It captures a massive chunk of all livestream viewers on social media today. This makes it a powerful video platform for creators and brands that want to grow. An intriguing feature of Instagram Live that is increasingly growing in popularity is the ability to have two or more creators join up holding a collaborative livestream together.

Twitch

A gamers' paradise, Twitch is undeniably one of the fastest-growing platforms increasingly popular with gamers who want to compete or showcase their walkthrough videos. The highly interactive chat tools enable continuous engagement between creators and viewers.

What to Expect in the Future?

As we adjust to the new normal, live streaming for events, online shows, and podcasts presents exciting opportunities for content creators and event organizers to diversify their service offerings to their clients as well as tap into new revenue streams.

From the trend set by some of the entertainment industry pacesetters, we should be expecting more and more brands to partner with content creators to bring more live-streamed events around sports, entertainment, and even health and lifestyle content.

The brands will be presented with new opportunities to reach out and engage target populations as opposed to the comparatively rigid traditional media of TV, radio, and print.

9.3. Foreign Cyber Security Agencies: A Menace To The African Voiceless

By Frankline Matanji, Ph.D. Candidate

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In the last two decades, there has been a drastic development of Internet of Things (IoT) both in the Global North and South (Bayar, Gavriltea, & Păun, 2021). The growth of the internet as well as the diffusion of electronic devices such as smartphones has facilitated easier adoption of social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter, which are having a significant impact on our social lives, business environments, and internet governance among other sectors (Bayar et al., 2021). Internet and social media have made it possible for populations that did not have access to, and could not produce information to be connected, hence easy access to and production of local and global content (Graydon & Parks, 2020).

On the African continent, social media has been touted as an alternative that has given Africans a new lease of life, a voice aimed at changing the negative narrative. This access has made it possible for Africans to dispel negative coverage of the African continent by the Western media in what scholars term Afro-pessimism (de B'éri, & Louw, 2011). Due to Africa's initial lack of adequate infrastructure to sell its own image (Ekpe, 2017) as well as the West's ambition to advance its hegemonic supremacist ideologies, Africa has often received negative representation in the media. Previous studies have looked at how hashtags such as #SomeoneTellCNN and #TheAfricaTheMediaNeverShowsyou (Ekpe, 2017; Matanji, 2022; Nothias, & Cheruiyot, 2019; Tully, & Ekdale, 2014) have been used by Africans to challenge negative framing of the African continent as a homogenous, corrupt, diseases and poverty stricken, and a hotbed of terror continent by the Western media.

However, social media has also become a menace, a propaganda tool used by the West to spread disinformation, suppressing the same voices in the



public sphere. Twitter hashtags and YouTube adverts are now being used by Western agencies as a tool to manipulate as well as influence Africa's public opinion and policy formulation. Research has shown that Cambridge Analytica used Kenya and Nigeria as a testing ground for their voter manipulation malpractices (Ekdale, & Tully, 2019). Kenya's opposition leader Raila Odinga was depicted through apocalyptic campaign adverts linked to Cambridge Analytica that were run during the 2013 and 2017 presidential elections as a "devil incarnate" (Lang'at, 2020, para. 1). Similarly, according to an investigation conducted by Mozilla Foundation, Kenyan influencers were hired by a Spain-based group called CitizenGo to influence the public's opinion on two hot-button issues in parliament (Shiundu, & Jiménez, 2022). Using Twitter's trending topic algorithm to spread false information, CitizenGo played an outside role by inserting inflammatory rhetoric against the assisted reproductive technology bill in the National Assembly and the reproductive health bill in the country's Senate.

By isolating studies that have looked at how social media gives a voice to the voiceless public sphere, the role played by Cambridge Analytica to influence people's voting patterns, and CitizenGo's influence on public



policymaking in Kenya as case examples. It is critical for subsequent studies to look at the Western agencies' role in influencing Africa's political affairs through dubious cyber-attacks and threats, hence suppression of African voiceless voices, and the role that fact-checking among other social media remedies can play as a cyber-security strategy to curb cyber-attacks.

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9.4. Has The Spread of Disinformation Reconfigured Kenyan Journalists' Perception of Their Roles?

By Kevin Mudavadi, Ph.D. Student

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The proliferation of digital media platforms has promulgated the spread of disinformation more than it did in the past. Their presence is making it difficult for the public to differentiate disinformation from authentic news – this was especially so, during the August 2022 general elections. Research shows that disinformation is a global problem. In the global south where Kenya is located, it precedes the emergence of digital media. According to the Pew Research Center (2016), most Americans note that disinformation is harming the country and needs to be tackled. Portland Communications (2017) notes that about 90% of Kenyans have come across misinformation – with a majority noting a difficulty differentiating it from factual news.

When asked who is to blame for the spread of misinformation – most Kenyans point to the government and social media platforms. However, they see the mainstream media or journalists as a trusted entity to fix this problem. As much as professional fact-checking by fact-checkers (Africa Check) has taken a leading role in slowing the spread of disinformation, legacy media can play an important role due to their “reach” and “fourth estate” mandate. I am fully aware that the role of journalists is not to check the impacts of the news but to disseminate the information they gather. However, their roles may be subject to revision based on the changing times. For example, studies are now calling for the role of the media to extend beyond reporting the news to more fact-checking, verification, as well as truth-telling.

Some media houses in Kenya have already reorganized their media newsrooms – recently they have hired digital media editors equipped with fact-checking personnel. This is laudable! However, bearing in mind the stauncher spread of disinformation and the role of end-to-end encrypted apps much more is expected. Journalists are part of these media communities; they can work to debunk fake narratives on these platforms. Moreover, they can form a collaboration with social



media platforms to create awareness of the potential spread of disinformation pieces. Legacy media houses need to embrace training sessions within and without media houses to fully equip journalists with digital skills to tackle disinformation.

It is also laudable that journalists in Kenya have been using their social media platforms to keep audiences informed. For instance, they have developed a large base of digital media followers, hence, powerful personal brands. However, even they have been cuckolded with the treachery of disinformation pieces – especially during the previous 2022 general elections – emphasizing the need for personnel training. Even so, their vibrant media platforms with or without their knowledge have given them semi-professional duties. With such importance accorded to this issue, it is surprising that much is yet to be done to examine how Kenyan journalists perceive the disinformation's effect on journalism, legacy media, and Kenyan democracy.

If the legacy media do not take control, the dire consequences of disinformation will take hold of the society, hence, a distorted republic. We do not want to end up here. This will be troublesome, first, to the media as trust in it will plummet even lower by the day. More so, audiences will develop a habit of consuming media that suits their interests – hence, the growth, dominance, and effects of selective exposure. Therefore, while it is demanding to assign many more duties to media personnel than what they already have, a revised manner of how they perceive their role would be a welcome addition to gaining the public trust. For example, by posting authentic news vis-à-vis a disinformation post as done by Facebook and Twitter, they will create a fertile platform for tackling disinformation in Kenya.



9.5. Use of Pseudonyms on Social Media During The Covid-19 Period

By Patrick Wamuyu & Austin Odera

SIMELab Africa

A pseudonym is a phony name a person/ writer uses instead of their name. In the social media context, it is a fake name used by a person or a group of people to conceal their true identity to influence the behavior of the other person on social media to protect their identity or for heinous purposes (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). Over the years, pseudonymity became a norm for authors to introduce their audience to their work and recognize its origin (van der Nagel, 2017). From 2010 onwards, the rise of the 'real name web,' where most social media required a real name during signup.

However, it has not stopped the increase of pseudonymity in social media (Ellison & Boyd, 2013; Hogan, 2013). The first step in signing up for any social media platform is choosing a name. It may seem like a simple and straightforward step, but it is a decision centered on politics around identity, power online, and agency. Deciding to choose a name or not is a negotiation between an individual and the social media platform. Essentially, it marks the beginning of a social media identity and dictates who controls the content flow through that site.

Additionally, selecting a username sets the tone of communication and the content that flows through that platform (van der Nagel, 2017). By extension, in England and the United States, a pseudonymous expression is not treated as a right but rather as liberty. It exists where its exercise is not restricted by the law and is part of the free speech guarantee. Coe(2018) suggests that the privacy theory of pseudonymity unbolts the right to keep information a secret, including the speaker's identity.



Protecting their pseudonymity will inspire them and others to speak more freely and hence help disseminate more information. If permitted to communicate pseudonymously, one does not need to fear harassment.

Social media platforms encourage and discourage pseudonyms in equal measure based on their policies (Stuart & Dark, 2014). Victims of violence often use pseudonyms, victims of abuse, online bullies, whistleblowers, victims of stalking, people with contradictory or dissenting views on oppressive regimes, marginalized communities (i.e., LGBTQ), and adolescents are among many more groups of people that tend to use pseudonymity on social media.

Facebook has a real name policy for users, with its CEO Mark Zuckerberg arguing that using a real name on social media may promote accountability when users misbehave and pollute online conversations by hiding their real selves behind pseudonyms (Lovink2011). In contrast, Reddit enables users to use pseudonyms, arguing that it has put in place rules governing spamming, trolling, and, posting pornographic material, among other offenses.



Tillman (2014), argues that marginalized groups are targets of anonymous trolling and further says that social ills are committed when people are not held accountable for their actions, which include harassment, bullying, and aggressive and rude comments, which may, in turn, lead to self-harm or even suicide.

Online authors use pseudonyms to write freely and unshackle themselves from gender, and ethnicity, among other biases. As Sullivan (2020) suggests, this is to command readership and avoid being linked to cliché narratives. To this extent, they explore sensitive, scandalous, and controversial topics. The internet has been an avenue for online harassment, stalking, altering abusive languages, stolen identities, and hacked accounts.

The United Nations (2020) carried out a survey on gender-based violence, which revealed that some families had revived outdated and unlawful cultural practices like Female Genital Mutilation due to schools' closure. The UN-supported helpline for victims of gender-based violence, including rape, FGM, physical and psychological abuse in the country, has seen a rise in calls since the pandemic hit. The number of calls handled by the hotline rose from 86 in February to over 1000 in June of this year. The victims have freely called the National Gender-Based Violence helpline without their identities being blown off by using pseudonyms. The victims can call for guidance and counseling and report the perpetrators to the police freely without fear of retaliatory attacks from the heinous crime perpetrators.

In Tanzania, President John Pombe Magufuli claimed that the number of COVID-19 infections was artificially inflated. Test swabs were applied to non-human samples, including goats, sheep, pawpaw fruit, quails, and oil. The swabs were tubed and assigned human pseudonyms, including Elizabeth Anne. They were sent thus disguised to the national laboratory to be tested for COVID-19. President John Pombe Magufuli announced the results later, claiming false positives were resulting from foreign conspiracy and domestic collusion (Kwayu & Paget, 2020).

After global events like the Edward Snowden revelations from the USA National Security Agency to journalists insinuating, that the government spied on its citizens through their online posts. This has been happening by recording, archiving, linking, and surveying activities on their social media sites which was seen as an invasion of people's privacy; people resorted to anonymity to avoid surveillance, allow freedom of speech and association, and participate in political discussions or movements freely without suppression from the government(Coe,2018).

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9.6. Online Harassment and Fake News in Social Media

By Patrick Wamuyu & Austin Odera

SIMElab Africa

Online harassment is defined as using the internet to threaten or maliciously embarrass, harm an individual with relatively less power to defend themselves (Segen's Medical Dictionary, 2011). It is also referred to as cyber harassment, cyber hate, cyber victimization, cyber aggression, and cyberbullying (Mooney, 2019). Today, social media or internet use has become unavoidable, contributing to increased online harassment.

What is the Impact of Online Harassment?

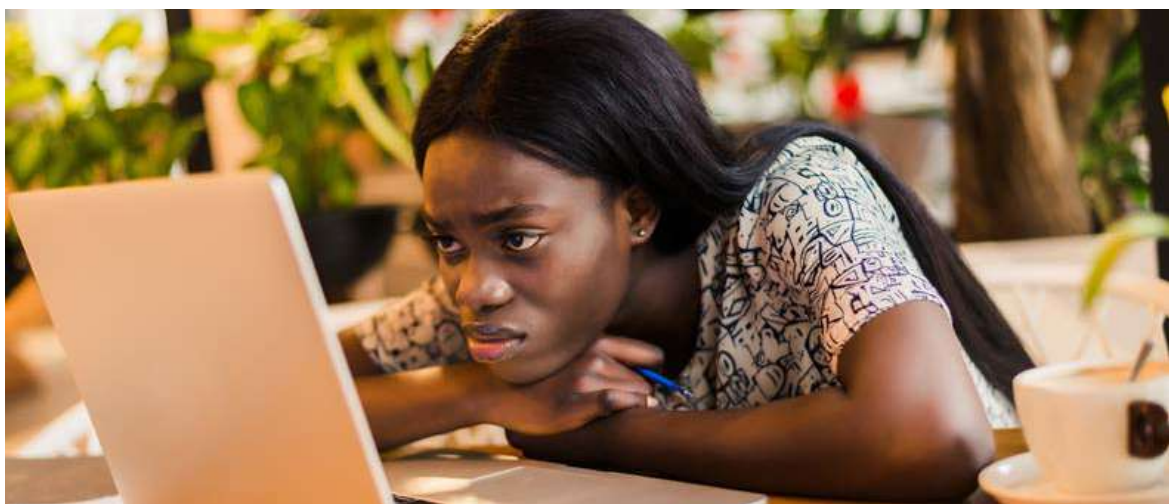
While many bloggers, authors, or writers understate the threats of online harassment, it has severe consequences for its victims. The lies that spread can stay on the internet and appear whenever someone, even the potential employers, searches the victim's name on Google. Also, online harassment contributes to emotional harm and psychological distress, which is harmful to the victim's mental health (Marshall & Wheeler, 2018). Recent studies show that online harassment victims undergo a continual state of fear that affects their quality of life and could force them to change their online and offline habits (Begotti & Acquadro Maran, 2019). These victims could range from children to adults. Children exposed to online harassment feel overwhelmed, powerless, worthless, humiliated, vengeful, isolated, depressed, physically sick, and suicidal (Gordon, 2020). A study was carried out in San Diego, California, on cyberbullying, and the results showed that adolescents who experience online harassment are aged between 13 to 16 years.

Furthermore, cyberbullying victims were more depressed, irritable, angry, and feeling like they were not themselves (Psychiatry and Behavioral Health Learning Network, 2017). Raypole (2019) posits that



41% of American adults underwent online harassment, and out of the experienced adults, 18% reported these harassments. Women are more likely than men to face online harassment by receiving sexually explicit images, especially between 18 and 29. Millions of people are moving work and social interactions online in order to protect themselves from COVID-19 and in so doing, this has led to an increase in online harassment since the existing online safety measures might not be enough to deal with a rush in harassment (Raypole, 2019).

According to Mudgway and Jones (2020), cyber violence was recognized as a specific form of violence against women. An Amnesty International survey conducted in 2017 showed that nearly a quarter of 23% of women surveyed across eight developed countries had experienced online harassment more than once. In New Zealand, a third of the surveyed women reported being online harassment victims, and almost half that is 49%, reduced their use of social media or left the online platforms (Amnesty International, 2017). Regrettably, online harassment against women is mostly persistent on social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Interviews conducted on 75 female journalists who work or have worked in Germany, India, Taiwan, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America (Chen et al., 2020) show that they face unrestrained online harassment, which influences how they do their jobs. When they aim to engage with



their audience online, and many of these females often face sexist comments that attack, criticize, threaten, and even marginalize them. Mostly, this criticism is framed as attacks and also involves sexual violence.

Additionally, online harassment of journalists has both short-term and long-term effects. Online harassment damages their confidence and self-esteem, which causes anger, stress, and anxiety. A study conducted by the National Union of Journalists in Scotland and The University of Strathclyde reported that online harassment damaged journalists' confidence and self-esteem and those who had just started their careers were considering changing their profession (Ferrier & Garud-Patkar, 2018). In Canada, up to 31% of social media users have been harassed online as of October 2016, and over a quarter of those who reportedly had some real-world effects, with some as severe as forcing them to change schools and others to change to a new job (Penza, 2018).

What are the Forms of Online Harassment?

The Common Types of Online Harassment Include:

1. Trolling - making hurtful comments meant to upset someone (Penza, 2018).
2. Message bombing – sending the maximum number of chats or texts to block access to the account. Doxing is sharing someone's personal information online like home address, and phone number with malicious intentions.
3. Revenge porn - revealing explicit photographs or videos of someone without their consent.
4. Swatting is the act of making a false report to the police about illegal activity happening at someone's home (Raypole, 2019).

According to the most recent American public consciousness study, cyberstalking and doxing are the most severe online harassment experienced (Penza, 2018).

The research also shows that many people who go through online harassment get little or no law enforcement support or community organization support. Lack of support can significantly increase the chances of having long-term mental health consequences due to online harassment.

What Can We Do to Fight Online Harassment?

Cyberbullying, which is also referred to as online harassment, can be fought without giving up access to the internet. According to (UNICEF, 2020) having



experienced cyberbullying, one may want to delete social media applications and stay offline to give oneself time to recover even though it is not a long-term solution. For online harassment to stop, we need to be thoughtful of what we post or share online that may hurt others. Internet companies are progressively paying attention to the issue of online harassment. Many have introduced ways of addressing it and how to protect their users better.

Most of the solutions for online harassment being applied currently are allowing users to block online comments from viewing on social media platforms. A good example is where Twitter offers blocking technology that allows one to remove posts from selected users from your feed. (Ferrier & Garud-Patkar, 2018) Again, determine whether to use your real name or pseudonym on social media platforms. Using your real name makes it easier for harassers to track your physical address and link you with your friends and family. Also, consider reporting direct threats to the police.

Fake News on Social Media

Fake news refers to reports, images, and videos that are deliberately false and produce tension, disharmony, and misunderstanding in our society. It has become a big problem in recent years because it can easily be spread on social media since people have become less critical in evaluating information they receive, especially during this COVID-19 pandemic era. Fake news has been rumored to have contributed to significant political and economic outcomes (Lonergan, 2020)

Fake News in the Era of COVID-19

Over the last few years, fake news has become an everyday aspect of social media, but what has been the effect of fake news in the COVID-19 era? According to Dr Greg Nyilasy, increased attention to the pandemic has led to the viral spread of fake news online. In his

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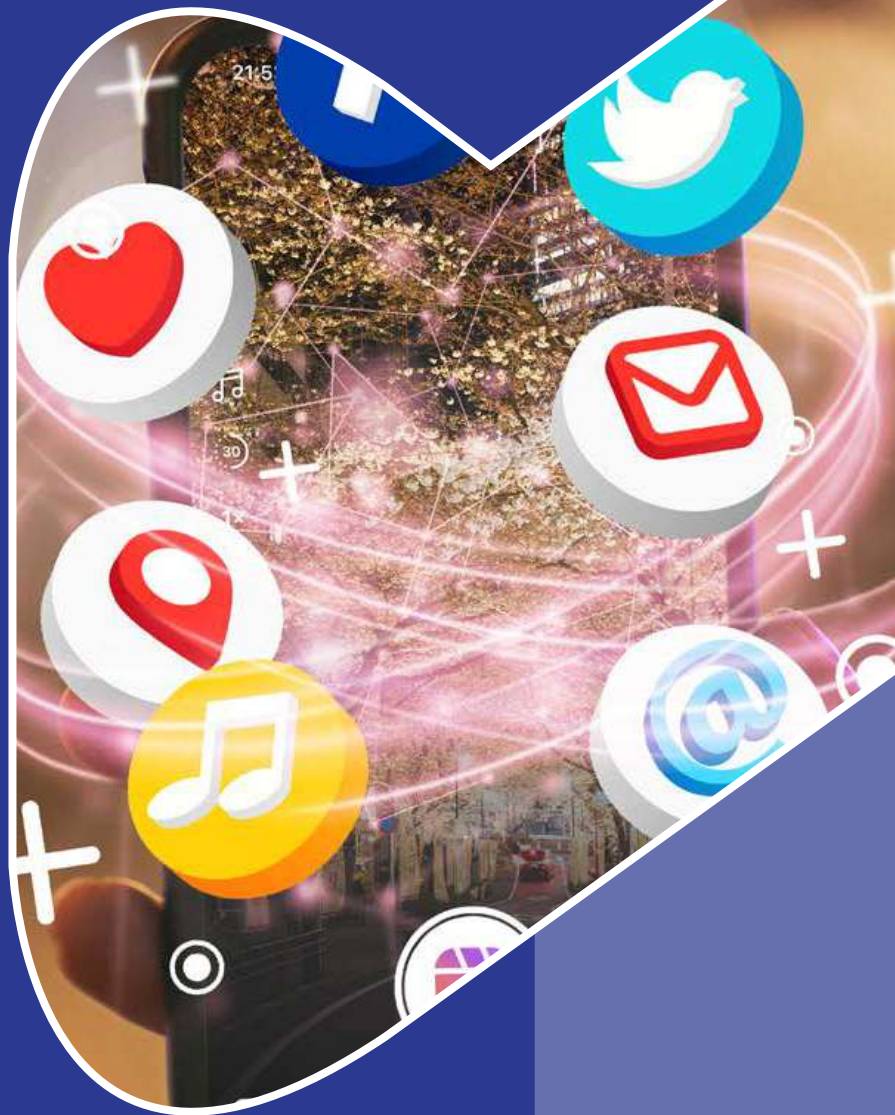
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