Original Article

The Digital Frontiers: How IT Shapes Social Media Trends in Iringa Municipal, Tanzania

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Abstract - The integration of Information Technology (IT) has significantly influenced social media trends and user engagement in Iringa Municipal, fundamentally transforming how individuals interact with digital platforms. This study examined the role of IT in shaping social media behavior, focusing on key aspects such as device usage, platform preference, content engagement, and participation in social media trends. Through a mixed-methods approach that combined quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews with 50 respondents, the research explored the impact of mobile technology, the dominance of platforms like Facebook, and the diverse purposes for social media use, including entertainment, news, and education. Findings revealed that smartphones were the primary device for social media access, with 70% of respondents using them to engage with content, highlighting the importance of mobile-optimized platforms. Additionally, 40% of participants actively participated in social media trends, reflecting varying levels of engagement influenced by personal interests and perceived relevance. The study also identified challenges, such as limited participation in trends among certain user groups. It emphasized the need for enhanced digital literacy and targeted content strategies to maximize the benefits of IT in social media engagement. Despite these challenges, the research underlined the transformative impact of IT on social media trends in Iringa Municipal, driving a more dynamic and connected digital landscape.

Keywords - Content Creation, Content Preferences, Digital Literacy, Digital Trends, Information Technology (IT), Mobile Technology, Social Media Behavior, Social Media Trends, Social Media Platforms, Technology Impact, User Engagement.

1. Introduction

In recent years, the social media landscape has undergone a profound transformation, largely driven by rapid advancements in information technology. Among these innovations, the development of sophisticated algorithms, artificial intelligence (AI), and big data analytics have emerged as key forces, significantly shaping how social media platforms operate and influence global communication. These technologies have not only enhanced the functionality and user experience of platforms but also revolutionized how trends are created, spread, and analyzed. As social media continues to evolve, understanding the interplay between IT and social media trends becomes crucial for deciphering their impact on societal behavior, culture, and commerce. The historical development of social media traced a trajectory from early competitive platforms to complex ecosystems. Initially, social networking sites competed directly for general audiences [1]. However, around the turn of the century, platforms began targeting niche populations and competing for user attention rather than against each other [1]. Facebook's evolution exemplified this shift, transitioning from a social networking site to a "platform-as-infrastructure" through increased programmability and corporate partnerships

[2]. This evolution involved balancing expansion with adaptability to changing user needs and environmental dynamics [2]. The development of social media platforms also facilitated improved communication between businesses and customers [3]. As platforms expanded, they transformed into service ecosystems, as demonstrated by TripAdvisor's evolution from a search engine to an end-to-end service provider [4]. This transformation was characterized by the creation of commercially viable and updatable data-driven services [4]. In Tanzania, the adoption of social media for the development of journalism and e-government has been slow. YouTube online TV platforms in Tanzania showed low rates of development journalism practice [5]. At the same time, a survey of 84 Tanzanian government institutions revealed that only 28.5% of public websites were connected to social media, with most platforms being inactive or infrequently used [6]. Despite the potential for social media to increase transparency and citizen participation, Tanzania has not yet adequately explored these opportunities in the public sector [6]. Recent research examined how technological innovations shaped social media experiences and user behavior. Studies found that features like augmented reality filters, ephemeral content, and algorithmic curation significantly enhanced user engagement

and content sharing [7]. Artificial Intelligence (AI) powered personalization on platforms like TikTok led to user-AI synergy, with users influencing algorithms to cater to their needs while AI facilitated content creation and networking [8]. Algorithms acted as gatekeepers, affecting online interactions, decision-making, and information intake [9].

The transformation framework highlighted how social media features, including algorithms, transformed adolescents' peer experiences, impacting peer status, influence, and victimization [10]. While these innovations improved user experiences, they also raised concerns about creating informational echo chambers and the ethical implications of algorithmic influence on user behavior [7, 9]. Studies have shown that users are generally receptive to AI-driven personalization on platforms like TikTok, with user-AI collaboration enhancing medium and social-interactive engagement [8]. However, concerns have been raised about potential negative effects, such as algorithmic bias and the spread of misinformation [11]. To address these issues, researchers recommend promoting transparency, media literacy, and ethical AI development in social media platforms [11]. As AI continues to evolve, understanding its impact on user experiences and societal implications remains crucial for researchers, practitioners, and policymakers [9]. Social media platforms have pointedly influenced consumer trends, public opinion, and cultural norms in recent years. These platforms shape consumer behavior through content virality, user engagement, and influencer impact, affecting purchasing decisions across industries [12-15].

The rapid exchange of ideas on platforms like Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok has accelerated the spread of cultural trends from fashion to language [16]. Social media's role extends beyond reflection, actively contributing to new cultural phenomena and molding societal landscapes. Furthermore, these platforms have become central in shaping public opinion, enabling individuals and groups to interact, share information, and participate in discussions that influence collective views on various issues [17].

This digital landscape has profound implications for businesses, marketers, and policymakers, necessitating adaptations in marketing strategies to accommodate evolving consumer preferences in the digital era [13, 15]. User-generated content (UGC) and social media platforms have significantly impacted economic and social outcomes, influencing consumer decisions and public opinion [18]. Research showed that UGC played a crucial role in driving social media trends and shaping platform evolution. The quality of UGC was influenced by factors such as promotional content, peer effects, and contributor biases [18]. Social ties and UGC were found to be interconnected, with content attracting discussion and new members in online communities [19]. Firm-Created Content (FCC) also stimulated UGC, contributing to brand image and purchase expenditures [20].

Both social-related and product-related UGC promoted community growth over time, while only social-related Marketer-Generated Content (MGC) was effective in this regard [21]. Sustaining the growth of social media brand communities requires a balance between marketer efforts and consumer responses [21]. The impact of User-Generated Content (UGC) on social media trends and platform evolution in Tanzania has been significant. UGC has facilitated the sharing of information and fostered the development of journalism practices on platforms like YouTube [5]. Social media platforms emphasizing UGC promote communication, idea propagation, and relationship-building [19]. In emerging markets, UGC influences social commerce activities by engaging customers, sharing reviews, and identifying new trends [22]. However, the practice of development journalism through ICT-powered social media platforms in Tanzania was found to be low, suggesting a need for economic, technological, and policy actions to support its growth [5]. These findings highlight the complex relationship between UGC, social media trends, and platform evolution in Tanzania's digital landscape.

The effect of technology on social media features has led to the development of innovative elements like stories, live streaming, and video content. The introduction of stories positively impacted user engagement and information sharing, particularly in low-power-distance cultures [23]. Live streaming emerged as a popular feature, utilized for learning, work, and marketing purposes, while also shaping user behavior through the social construction of technology [24]. This feature has significantly influenced consumer decision-making processes, as revealed through thematic analysis of social media platforms [25]. The growth of mobile devices and video consumption has further fueled the adoption of live streaming, offering a cost-effective and engaging method for brands to communicate with consumers [26]. These technological innovations have transformed social media marketing strategies, enhancing user interaction and providing new avenues for content creation and dissemination.

The influence of social media on organizational practices and knowledge sharing in Tanzania was explored in several studies. Research showed that different social media platforms engendered various strategizing methods in telecommunications companies [27]. Informal social media use within organizations facilitates knowledge sharing and daily work processes [27]. The importance of social networking for student participation in education was also noted [28]. A recent study focused on the impact of social media marketing platforms on sales revenue in the Tanzania Telecommunication Company Limited. It found that Instagram was the most effective platform for promoting sales revenue, highlighting the growing importance of social media in business strategies [29]. These studies collectively demonstrate the significant role of social media in shaping organizational practices, knowledge sharing, and marketing

strategies in Tanzania's telecommunications and education sectors.The integration of social media with e-commerce platforms has meaningfully impacted consumer behavior and shopping trends. A randomized field experiment showed that incorporating Facebook comments on product pages increased the likelihood of adding items to a cart and placing orders [30]. Social media platforms have become spaces for attractive consumer experiences, particularly for younger generations like Millennials and Gen Z [31]. Research has demonstrated strong correlations between Twitter mentions and eBay search queries, with certain categories like Video Games and Sports showing higher correlations [32]. Social media's influence extends beyond e-commerce, shaping consumer trends across various industries through mechanisms such as influencer marketing and algorithmic content distribution [33]. These findings highlight the growing interplay between social media and digital platforms, emphasizing the need for businesses to adapt their strategies to leverage these interconnected digital ecosystems.

The relationship between IT and social media marketing has considerably impacted customer behavior and advertising strategies. Social media platforms have gained widespread popularity, enabling organizations to use them as cost-effective marketing tools with extensive reach [34]. These platforms have facilitated the rise of influencer marketing, which has become a powerful force in shaping consumer behavior [35]. The effectiveness of influencers is influenced by factors such as credibility, content type, and engagement levels [35]. Additionally, an individual's self-concept and IT identity play crucial roles in determining how social media influencers utilize technology features [36]. The impact of social media on consumer behavior extends to online shopping habits, with users increasingly relying on online reviews and recommendations [37]. This shift has led to the emergence of social commerce and personalized advertising, presenting both challenges and opportunities for businesses in the digital age [37].

The relationship between IT and social media marketing in Tanzania was explored across multiple studies. Research indicated that Social Media Analytics (SMA) adoption among tourism SMEs in Tanzania was low, despite the potential benefits [38, 39]. Small and medium enterprises were urged to leverage social media for marketing, given its growing popularity and accessibility [39]. In the telecommunications sector, Instagram was found to be the most effective social media platform for increasing sales revenue [29]. Digital marketing strategies, including pay-per-click, email marketing, and social media marketing, positively impacted the performance of telecommunication companies [40].

These studies collectively highlighted the importance of social media and digital marketing in various sectors of Tanzania's economy, emphasizing the need for businesses to adopt and effectively utilize these technologies to enhance their marketing efforts and overall performance. In Iringa Municipal, the rapid evolution of Information Technology (IT) had begun to markedly influence the local social media landscape, affecting how trends emerged and spread within the community. However, despite this significant shift, there remained a limited understanding of how IT advancements specifically impacted social media trends in this region. Previous studies had broadly addressed the relationship between IT and social media trends, but they often failed to account for the unique socio-cultural and technological context of Iringa Municipal. As a result, there was a gap in understanding how local IT developments, such as the adoption of new technologies and digital platforms, had shaped trend formation, user engagement, and content dissemination in this area. This study sought to fill this gap by examining the specific ways in which IT innovations had influenced social media trends within Iringa Municipal, thereby providing valuable insights into the local dynamics of technology-driven social media behavior.

The objective of the study was to investigate how advancements in Information Technology (IT) had influenced social media trends in Iringa Municipal. It aimed to identify and analyze the specific ways in which IT developments, such as new algorithms and digital tools, had shaped the emergence, propagation, and impact of social media trends in the region. The study sought to uncover the relationship between technological innovations and user behavior on social media platforms, providing a detailed understanding of how these factors interacted to affect trend dynamics within the local context of Iringa Municipal.

The main contribution of the study was its detailed examination of how Information Technology (IT) advancements specifically influenced social media trends in Iringa Municipal. By providing an in-depth analysis of the impact of IT innovations, such as algorithmic changes and digital tools, on local social media behavior, the study offered valuable insights into the unique dynamics of trend formation and dissemination within this regional context. This research filled a critical gap in understanding how global IT developments intersect with local social media practices, thereby enhancing knowledge of both the technological mechanisms at play and the ways in which they shape user engagement and trend evolution in Iringa Municipal.The remaining part of the paper is organized as follows: Section 2 comprises methodology, section 3 contains results and discussion, and section 4 concludes the study.

2. Methodology

The methodology of the study employed a mixed-methods approach to explore how information technology (IT) influenced social media trends in Iringa Municipal. The research utilized both quantitative and qualitative techniques to provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon.

2.1. Sample Selection

A purposive sampling method was used to select a sample of 50 participants from a range of social media users in Iringa Municipal. The sample included diverse demographic groups, including age, gender, and socio-economic status, to ensure a representative view of the local social media landscape.

2.2. Data Collection
2.2.1. Quantitative Data

Surveys were distributed to the 50 participants to gather data on their social media usage patterns, engagement with trends, and perceptions of how IT tools and technologies influenced their online behavior. The survey included both closed and Likert-scale questions to quantify trends and behaviors.

2.2.2. Qualitative Data

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a subset of 15 participants, including social media influencers, IT professionals, and content creators based in Iringa Municipal. These interviews aimed to gain deeper insights into the specific ways IT advancements affected trend creation and dissemination from the perspectives of industry experts.

2.3. Data Analysis
2.3.1. Quantitative Analysis

Statistical methods were applied to survey responses to identify patterns and correlations between IT advancements and social media trends. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data and draw conclusions about the influence of IT on trend dynamics.

2.3.2. Qualitative Analysis

Thematic analysis was performed on interview transcripts to identify recurring themes and insights related to IT's impact on social media behavior. This analysis provided a slightly different understanding of participant experiences and the contextual factors influencing trend formation.

2.4. Ethical Considerations

Informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring they were aware of the study's objectives and their right to withdraw at any time. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout the research process. By combining quantitative and qualitative approaches, the study aimed to offer a vigorous analysis of IT's role in shaping social media trends, providing both statistical evidence and in-depth personal insights.

3. Results and Discussion

The results and discussion section of this study presents a detailed analysis of how advancements in Information Technology (IT) have influenced social media trends in Iringa Municipal. The quantitative analysis of survey data provides a broad overview of how IT advancements have altered social media trends, including changes in user preferences and interaction patterns. This is complemented by qualitative insights from interviews with industry experts, which offer a deeper understanding of the mechanisms behind these trends and the specific impacts of technology on content creation and dissemination in the local context.

3.1. Demographic Information of the Respondents

This section presents an overview of the demographic characteristics of the participants, including age, gender, educational background, occupation and monthly income of the respondents.

3.1.1. Gender of the Respondents

In the study, the analysis of gender distribution among the 50 respondents revealed that 22 individuals, representing 44.0% of the sample, were male, while 28 individuals, or 56.0%, were female, as per Table 1. This distribution showed a slightly higher proportion of female participants compared to their male counterparts. The predominance of female respondents provided a significant context for interpreting the study's findings, particularly in relation to how gender might influence engagement with social media and perceptions of IT advancements.

The higher representation of females in the sample suggested that the study's results could reflect particular trends or behaviors that were more prevalent among women in Iringa Municipal. For example, it was possible that female participants had different social media usage patterns or were more engaged with certain types of content compared to male participants.

This gender imbalance in the sample also implied that the perceptions and experiences of male respondents might have been less represented in the study's findings, potentially influencing the overall conclusions about social media trends and IT impacts.

The analysis of gender distribution was essential for understanding how demographic factors could influence the study's outcomes. By noting that there were more female respondents, the study acknowledged that gender differences might have played a role in shaping the observed social media behaviors and attitudes towards IT.

This gender variation in the sample underlined the importance of considering demographic diversity when interpreting the data and drawing conclusions about the impact of IT on social media trends.

In general, the gender distribution provided a foundational understanding of the respondent profile, which was essential for contextualizing the study's results and ensuring a nuanced interpretation of how IT advancements were perceived and utilized across different gender groups in the local context of Iringa Municipal.

Table 1. Showing demographic information of the respondents

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	22	44.0
	Female	28	56.0
Age Group	Below 25 years	15	30.0
	25-34 years	20	40.0
	35-44 years	10	20.0
	45 years and above	5	10.0
Education Level	Advanced level or below	12	24.0
	Certificate/Diploma	18	36.0
	Bachelor's degree	15	30.0
	Postgraduate and above	5	10.0
Occupation	Student	14	28.0
	Employed (Private Sector)	20	40.0
	Employed (Public Sector)	8	16.0
	Self-Employed	6	12.0
Monthly Income	Less than 500,000 TZS	18	36.0
	500,000 – 1,000,000 TZS	15	30.0
	1,000,001 – 2,000,000 TZS	10	20.0
	More than 2,000,000 TZS	7	14.0

3.1.2. Age of the Respondents

In the study, the age distribution of the 50 respondents illustrated a diverse range of age groups, reflecting varying levels of engagement with social media and perceptions of IT advancements. As shown in Table 1, the largest age group consisted of individuals aged 25 to 34 years, numbering 20 respondents, which accounted for 40.0% of the sample. This age bracket's prominence indicated that a significant portion of the respondents were within a demographic that is often highly active on social media and adept at using new technologies. This group provided substantial insights into current trends and technological impacts, given their typically higher engagement with digital platforms.

The next largest age group was those aged below 25 years, with 15 respondents representing 30.0% of the sample. This younger demographic was expected to have distinct social media habits and technology usage patterns compared to older age groups, possibly reflecting more recent trends and innovative uses of technology. Their opinions were valuable for understanding emerging social media trends and the adoption of new IT tools among younger users. Respondents aged 35 to 44 years comprised 20.0% of the sample, with 10 individuals in this category. This group potentially exhibited different social media behaviors and attitudes towards IT

compared to the younger age brackets, possibly showing more established usage patterns and preferences. Their input provided a balanced view of how middle-aged individuals interacted with social media and perceived technological changes.

The smallest age group, comprising those aged 45 years and above, included just 5 respondents, making up 10.0% of the sample. The relatively low number in this category suggested that older individuals were less represented in the study. This shows that older adults have different social media engagement levels or use technology in distinct ways compared to younger respondents. Despite their smaller representation, their reaction was important for understanding the assessments of an age group that has different needs and experiences related to social media and IT. The diverse age distribution among the respondents offered a comprehensive view of how different age groups engaged with social media and interacted with IT advancements. The variation in age helped contextualize the study's findings and understand how technological impacts might vary across different life stages and social media usage patterns.

3.1.3. Education Level of the Respondents

The study revealed a varied distribution of educational backgrounds among the 50 respondents, shedding light on how educational attainment influenced their engagement with social media and perceptions of Information Technology (IT). As demonstrated in table 1, among the respondents, 12 individuals, or 24.0% of the sample, had attained an advanced level of education or below. This group represented those with either high school education or some level of vocational training, and their participation offered insights into the social media behaviors and IT interactions of individuals with a relatively lower level of formal education.

The next significant educational category was individuals holding certificates or diplomas, comprising 36.0% of the sample with 18 respondents. This group included those who had pursued specialized training or vocational education beyond high school but had not completed a bachelor's degree. Their opinions were essential for understanding how intermediate levels of education influenced social media usage and engagement with technological advancements. Their experiences provided a valuable middle ground between basic education and higher academic achievements, reflecting a segment of the population that is often actively involved in both social media and IT-related activities. Fifteen respondents, or 30.0% of the sample, had attained a bachelor's degree.

This group represented a significant portion of the respondents, indicating that a substantial number of participants had completed higher education. Individuals with a bachelor's degree were likely to have a more informed and critical perception of social media trends and IT

developments. Their educational background has contributed to a deeper understanding and more analytical approach to technology use, influencing their engagement with digital platforms in ways distinct from those with lower educational attainment.

The smallest educational category consisted of respondents with postgraduate degrees, totaling 5 individuals, or 10.0% of the sample. This group, comprising those with advanced academic qualifications such as master's or doctoral degrees, provided insights into how higher levels of education influenced social media interactions and perceptions of IT. Their experiences and perceptions were valuable for understanding the impact of advanced education on technology use, potentially revealing more nuanced and sophisticated views on digital trends and IT advancements. The educational diversity among the respondents allowed for a comprehensive analysis of how different levels of formal education affected social media engagement and IT usage. The variation in educational backgrounds enriched the study's findings by offering a broad spectrum of insights into how education influenced participants' interactions with social media and technology.

3.1.4. Occupation of the Respondents

The study, as in Table 1, provided a diverse overview of the respondents' occupational backgrounds, which was instrumental in understanding how employment status influenced social media use and perceptions of information technology (IT). Among the 50 respondents, 14 individuals, or 28.0% of the sample, were students. This group included individuals currently engaged in academic pursuits, and their opinions offered insights into how educational commitments and student life influenced their social media habits and interactions with IT. Given their relatively younger age and current immersion in learning environments, students exhibited distinct patterns of social media engagement and technology use compared to other occupational groups.

The largest occupational category was those employed in the private sector, comprising 20 respondents, or 40.0% of the sample. This significant portion of the study population represented individuals working in various private companies and businesses. Their responses were crucial for understanding how employment in the private sector, often characterized by dynamic work environments and technology use, affected their social media behaviors and IT perceptions. Employees in this sector had more exposure to digital tools and platforms, influencing their engagement with social media trends and technological innovations. Additionally, 8 respondents, or 16.0% of the sample, were employed in the public sector.

This group included individuals working for government agencies and public institutions. Their responses provided valuable insights into how employment in the public sector,

typically associated with more structured and formal work environments, impacted their social media usage and attitudes towards IT. The public sector employees might have had different experiences with technology compared to their private sector counterparts, reflected in their social media behavior and technology adoption.

The smallest group consisted of 6 self-employed respondents, making up 12.0% of the sample. These individuals were engaged in various forms of self-employment, including freelancing and entrepreneurial ventures. Their perspectives were particularly relevant for understanding how self-employment, with its inherent flexibility and potential reliance on digital tools for business operations, influenced their social media interactions and views on IT advancements. The self-employed participants might have demonstrated unique patterns in technology use and social media engagement, reflecting their need to manage and promote their businesses online. The varied occupational backgrounds of the respondents enriched the study by providing a broad range of views on how different types of employment influenced social media behavior and interactions with technology. The deviation in occupation highlighted how factors such as work environment and employment status could affect individuals' engagement with digital platforms and perceptions of IT advancements.

3.1.5. Monthly Income of the Respondents

The study examined the distribution of monthly income among the 50 respondents to gain insights into how financial status influenced social media usage and perceptions of Information Technology (IT). The income data revealed a varied economic landscape among the participants, as exemplified in Table 1. Eighteen respondents, or 36.0% of the sample, reported a monthly income of less than 500,000 TZS. This group represented individuals with relatively lower income levels, and their responses provided a perspective on how limited financial resources might affect their access to and engagement with social media and technological tools. It was likely that this income bracket had constraints on their ability to invest in advanced IT gadgets or high-speed internet, which could influence their online behaviors and interactions with technology.

The next income bracket comprised 15 respondents, or 30.0% of the sample, who earned between 500,000 and 1,000,000 TZS per month. This group represented a moderate income level and included individuals who might have had more discretionary spending power compared to those in the lower income category. Their belief was valuable for understanding how moderate financial resources impacted social media usage and technology adoption. Participants in this income range have been more capable of affording necessary digital tools and services, which have influenced their engagement with social media trends and IT advancements. Ten respondents, making up 20.0% of the

sample, fell into the income range of 1,000,001 to 2,000,000 TZS per month. This group, with relatively higher income levels, likely had better access to advanced technology and high-speed internet. Their responses offered insights into how higher financial resources affected social media behavior and IT perceptions. Individuals in this income range have been more inclined to adopt new technologies and engage with social media platforms in more sophisticated ways, reflecting their greater financial capability to invest in such technologies.

The smallest income group consisted of seven respondents, or 14.0% of the sample, who earned more than 2,000,000 TZS per month. This group represented the highest income bracket, indicating a significant level of financial stability and purchasing power. Their feelings were important for understanding how substantial financial resources influenced social media engagement and IT usage. Participants in this category had the means to access the latest technologies and services, potentially leading to more extensive and varied interactions with digital platforms and trends. The income distribution among the respondents highlighted how different financial levels could affect social media behavior and technology use. The varied income brackets provided a comprehensive view of how economic factors influenced access to and engagement with IT, offering valuable context for understanding the broader implications of income on social media trends and technological advancements.

3.2. Social Media Usage

Based on the social media usage indicators, the study assessed various aspects of respondents' interaction with digital platforms. It evaluated the frequency of social media use, identifying how often participants engaged with these platforms daily. The primary devices used for accessing social media were also examined, highlighting the most common technologies employed by respondents. Additionally, the study identified the most engaged social media platforms, determining which specific platforms were most popular among the users. Lastly, the research explored the primary purposes for social media use, understanding the motivations driving respondents to engage with these platforms, whether for networking, entertainment, or other activities.

3.2.1. Frequency of Social Media Use

The study revealed diverse patterns in the frequency of social media use among the 50 respondents, highlighting significant differences in daily engagement with digital platforms. As highlighted in Figure 1, a portion of the respondents, totaling 8 individuals or 16.0% of the sample, reported spending less than one hour per day on social media. These respondents expressed that their limited time on social media was due to busy schedules or a conscious effort to avoid excessive screen time. One respondent mentioned:

"...I find social media to be quite distracting, so I try to limit my usage to under an hour a day,

just enough to check in with friends and catch up on essential news..."

The majority of respondents, however, indicated a moderate level of daily engagement, with 20 individuals, or 40.0% of the sample, spending between one to two hours on social media each day. This group reflected a balanced approach to social media usage, often integrating it into their daily routines without allowing it to dominate their time. As one respondent shared:

"...I usually scroll through social media in the morning and evening, mainly to stay updated on the news and see what my friends are up to. It's a nice break, but I don't let it consume my day..."

A significant portion of the respondents, numbering 15 individuals or 30.0%, reported using social media for three to four hours daily. This higher level of engagement suggested that these individuals were more invested in their online activities, often using social media for entertainment, networking, or even professional purposes. One participant described their experience, saying:

"...social media is a big part of my day, especially since I use it for both work and leisure. I spend several hours on different platforms, whether it's for connecting with colleagues, promoting my business, or just unwinding with some entertainment..."

Finally, a smaller group of 7 respondents, or 14.0% of the sample, admitted to spending more than four hours a day on social media. These individuals often saw social media as an integral part of their lives, heavily influencing their daily activities and interactions. One respondent emphasized the extent of their usage, stating:

"...I'm online most of the day. Social media is how I stay connected with the world, and I often lose track of time browsing through content. It's not just about staying updated; it's also a source of inspiration and creativity for me..."

These varied patterns in social media use reflected the diverse ways in which individuals engaged with digital platforms, influenced by factors such as personal interests, professional needs, and lifestyle choices. The quotes from respondents stressed the different motivations and habits that shaped their social media behaviors, ranging from minimal use for essential communication to extensive engagement driven by both professional and personal needs. The study's findings on the frequency of social media use provided valuable insights into how deeply integrated these platforms had become in the daily lives of the respondents.

3.2.2. Primary Device Used for Social Media

In Iringa Municipal, the primary devices used for accessing social media platforms reveal significant trends in how technology shapes online engagement and communication. Based on the study, as in Figure 1, the majority of respondents use smartphones (35), followed by laptops/PCs (10), tablets (3), and a few other devices (2).
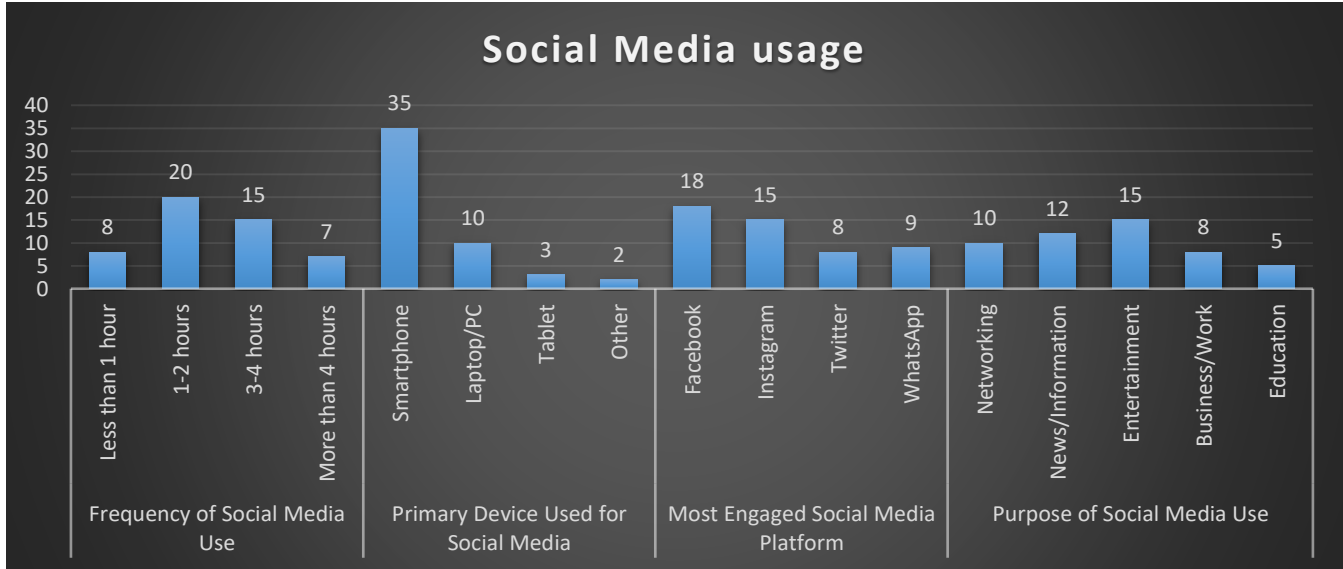
Fig 1: Showing social media usage

This distribution provides a window into the evolving landscape of digital media consumption and its implications for social media trends in the region. Smartphones dominate as the primary device for social media use in Iringa Municipal, with 35 respondents indicating they rely on these devices. This prevalence can be attributed to several factors, including the accessibility and convenience that smartphones offer. As one respondent highlighted:

"...For me, the smartphone is indispensable. It's not just about social media; it's my lifeline to everything. I use it to stay connected with friends and family, follow the latest news, and even manage my small business. The ease of having all this in one device is unmatched. It fits in my pocket, so I can check updates and respond to messages wherever I am, whether I'm at a café or waiting for a bus. The smartphone is like an extension of myself at this point..."

This quote highlights the multifunctional role of smartphones in daily life, enhancing the accessibility of social media and facilitating real-time interaction. The convenience of mobile connectivity and the integration of various applications into a single device makes smartphones a preferred choice for many users in Iringa. Laptops and PCs are used by 10 respondents, reflecting a more traditional but still important means of accessing social media. While these devices are less portable compared to smartphones, they offer a different set of advantages, particularly for tasks that require more extensive interaction or content creation. One respondent shared:

"...I use my laptop for social media primarily when I'm at home or in the office. The larger screen and keyboard make it easier to write long posts, edit photos, or manage multiple accounts simultaneously. It's also great for streaming

videos or participating in video calls. While my smartphone is handy for quick updates, my laptop is where I do more detailed work and engage more deeply with content..."

This opinion highlights how laptops and PCs serve as valuable tools for more involved social media activities, complementing the on-the-go nature of smartphones with their robust capabilities. Tablets, used by 3 respondents, and other devices, used by 2 respondents, represent a smaller segment of the social media landscape. Tablets often offer a middle ground between the portability of smartphones and the larger display of laptops. One tablet user noted:

"...I prefer my tablet for social media because it combines the best of both worlds. It's portable like a phone, but the screen is bigger, which makes reading articles and viewing images more enjoyable. It's also easier on my eyes compared to my smartphone. I don't use it as much as my phone, but it's a nice alternative when I want a bit more screen space..."

Similarly, respondents using other devices may have unique or specific reasons for their choices, such as specialized functions or personal preferences that aren't widely shared. The distribution of primary devices used for social media in Iringa Municipal reflects broader trends in digital engagement. Smartphones are the clear leader, driven by their portability and multifunctionality. Laptops and PCs continue to play a significant role in more comprehensive social media activities.

Tablets and other devices, while less common, offer unique advantages for specific user needs. Understanding these device preferences helps in analyzing how social media trends are shaped and highlights the diverse ways in which technology intersects with daily life in Iringa Municipal.

3.2.3. Most Engaged Social Media Platform

In this study, respondents provided insights into their most engaged social media platforms. The data revealed that Facebook was the most engaged platform with 18 respondents, followed by Instagram with 15, WhatsApp with 9, and Twitter with 8, as indicated in Figure 1. This distribution reflects varying preferences and usage patterns among residents of Iringa Municipal, shedding light on how different platforms influenced social interactions and content consumption in the past. Facebook emerged as the most engaged social media platform, with 18 respondents indicating it as their primary choice. The platform's widespread popularity was attributed to its versatility and extensive reach. One respondent elaborated:

"...Facebook was where I spent most of my time online. It had everything I needed—news updates, community groups, and a way to keep in touch with friends and family. I could share photos, post status updates, and participate in discussions on various topics. It was particularly useful for staying connected with local events and groups in Iringa. I remember organizing and promoting community events through Facebook, which proved to be an invaluable tool for engaging with people in my area..."

This comment highlights Facebook's role as a comprehensive social networking tool, facilitating both personal connections and community engagement. The platform's features made it a central hub for many users, offering a broad range of functionalities that catered to diverse needs. Instagram followed as a significant platform of engagement, with 15 respondents noting its importance. Instagram's emphasis on visual content, such as photos and videos, made it a preferred choice for users interested in image-driven communication. One respondent shared:

"...Instagram had become my go-to platform for sharing and exploring photos and videos. I loved how it allowed me to capture and showcase moments from my life in a visually appealing way. The Stories feature, and the ability to follow influencers and brands kept me constantly engaged. I used Instagram to get inspired by travel photos, fashion trends, and local happenings in Iringa. It felt like a vibrant space where I could not only share my experiences but also see what others were up to..."

This statement reflects Instagram's appeal as a platform focused on visual content, which resonated strongly with users who valued aesthetics and creativity. WhatsApp was used by 9 respondents, illustrating its role as a primary communication tool rather than a social media platform in the traditional sense. Its focus on instant messaging and group chats made it indispensable for many. One respondent noted:

"...I relied heavily on WhatsApp to stay in touch with my family and friends. It was my main channel for quick conversations, sharing updates, and coordinating plans. The group chat feature was particularly useful for coordinating with community groups and keeping everyone in the loop about important events or local news. WhatsApp wasn't as much about sharing public content as it was about maintaining private conversations and organizing group activities..."

This belief emphasizes WhatsApp's functionality as a communication tool, distinct from other social media platforms that emphasize public content sharing. Twitter was the least engaged platform among the respondents, with 8 indicating it as their primary choice. Despite its lower engagement, Twitter served as a key platform for real-time updates and brief interactions. A respondent explained:

"...I used Twitter to keep up with breaking news and trending topics. The brevity of tweets made it easy to scan through information quickly. Although I didn't engage as much in conversations or follow many accounts, Twitter was my go-to for staying informed about current events and opinions. It was useful for getting immediate updates and participating in discussions on various issues, though I found myself checking it less frequently compared to Facebook and Instagram..."

This perception showcases Twitter's niche role in providing timely information and facilitating brief interactions, contrasting with the more extensive engagement found on other platforms. The study's findings on social media platform engagement in Iringa Municipal illustrated distinct usage patterns. Facebook's broad functionality, Instagram's visual appeal, WhatsApp's communication efficiency, and Twitter's role in real-time updates each contributed to the varied social media landscape. These insights provide a deeper understanding of how different platforms influenced social interactions and content consumption, reflecting the unique preferences and needs of the respondents.

3.2.4. Purpose of Social Media Use

The study explored various purposes for social media use among respondents. The data revealed a range of uses, as demonstrated in Figure 1: Networking (10 respondents), News/Information (12 respondents), Entertainment (15 respondents), Business/Work (8 respondents), and Education (5 respondents). These insights provided a comprehensive view of how social media was integrated into different aspects of users' lives and how it influenced their interactions and activities. Entertainment emerged as the primary purpose of social media use, with 15 respondents indicating that they used social media primarily for this reason. The diverse forms of entertainment, including videos, music, memes, and games, made social media a major source of leisure and enjoyment. One respondent shared:

"...Social media was where I went to unwind and have fun. I spent hours watching funny videos, scrolling through memes, and discovering new music. Platforms like Instagram and Facebook were my go-to places for entertainment. I remember vividly how I used to follow various pages and channels that posted humorous content or engaging videos. It wasn't just about relaxing; it was also a way to connect with friends over shared interests and laugh together at the latest viral trends..."

This reaction shows how social media provided a rich source of entertainment, becoming a central element of leisure activities for many users. News and information were significant purposes for social media use, with 12 respondents using these platforms to stay informed about current events and updates. Social media served as a critical tool for accessing real-time information and engaging with news content. One respondent noted:

"...I relied on social media to keep up with the latest news and developments, both locally and globally. Platforms like Facebook and Twitter were essential for getting updates on current events. I followed news pages and journalists, and I found it incredibly useful for accessing information quickly. During major events or emergencies, social media was often the first place I turned to for accurate and timely news. It provided a real-time feed of information that traditional media sometimes lagged behind..."

This response highlights the role of social media as a vital source of news and information, emphasizing its importance in staying informed and updated. Networking was another important purpose, with 10 respondents using social media primarily to build and maintain personal and professional connections. Social media platforms facilitate networking by connecting users with friends, family, and colleagues. A respondent explained:

"...For me, social media was all about connecting with people. I used platforms like LinkedIn for professional networking and Facebook for keeping in touch with friends and family. It was an effective way to maintain relationships and build new ones, especially when it came to expanding my professional network. I found it particularly useful for staying connected with former colleagues and joining groups related to my interests and industry..."

This comment reflects the role of social media in fostering relationships and facilitating networking opportunities, both personally and professionally. Social media was also utilized for business and work-related purposes by 8 respondents. This use included marketing, networking, and professional development. One respondent mentioned:

"...I used social media extensively for my business. Platforms like Instagram and Facebook were crucial for marketing my products and engaging with customers. I also participated in industry-related groups and forums to stay updated on market trends and network with other professionals. Social media became a significant tool for promoting my business and reaching a wider audience. It allowed me to interact directly with customers and receive feedback that was valuable for improving my services..."

This view underlines the importance of social media in business contexts, demonstrating how it was used for marketing and professional growth. Education was the least common purpose, with 5 respondents using social media for learning and educational content. These users sought out resources, tutorials, and educational materials through various platforms. One respondent described:

"...I primarily used social media to enhance my learning. I followed educational pages and joined groups focused on topics I was interested in. Platforms like YouTube and Facebook provide access to a wealth of tutorials, lectures, and discussions. It was a supplementary tool that helped me learn new skills and stay informed about academic subjects. While it wasn't my primary source of education, it played a valuable role in supporting my learning journey..."

This perception highlights how social media served as a supplementary educational tool, providing access to learning resources and facilitating academic growth. The study on social media use in Iringa Municipal revealed diverse purposes that users attributed to these platforms. Entertainment was the most prevalent use, reflecting a broad engagement with leisure content. News and information followed closely, emphasizing the role of social media in keeping users informed. Networking, business, and education also played significant roles, each addressing specific needs and interests. These findings demonstrate the multifaceted nature of social media, demonstrating its integration into various aspects of users' lives and its influence on their daily activities.

3.3. IT on Social Media Trends

In recent years, Information Technology (IT) has profoundly influenced social media trends by enhancing connectivity and content creation capabilities. The perceived impact of IT has been significant, with advancements in technology driving changes in how users interact online. The use of sophisticated IT tools has empowered creators to produce diverse and high-quality content, which has, in turn, shaped the types of content most engaged with on social media. As IT innovations accelerated the spread of trends and enabled real-time interactions, users' engagement with social media evolved, reflecting the dynamic interplay between technology and online behavior.
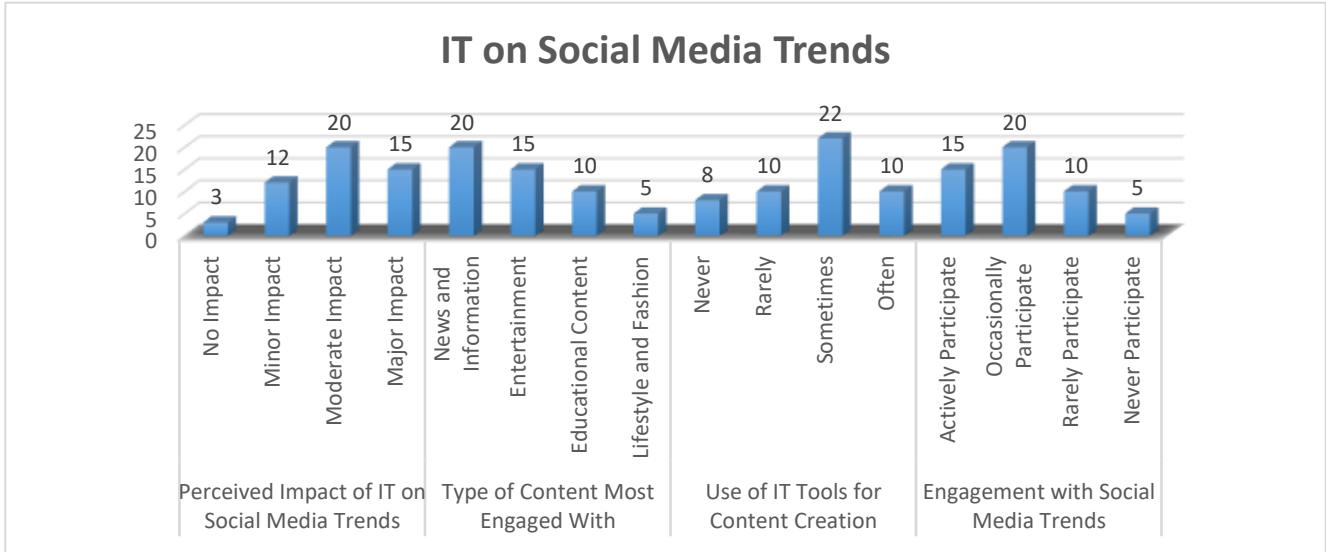
Fig. 2 Showing the IT on social media trends

3.3.1. Perceived Impact of IT on Social Media Trends

The study dug into the perceptions of residents in Iringa Municipal regarding the influence of Information Technology (IT) on the evolution of social media trends. Respondents were presented with a range of impact levels, ranging from "No Impact" to "Major Impact." These perceptions reflected a range of experiences and understandings of IT's role in shaping online interactions and content consumption. A small group of respondents (3) perceived that IT had no impact on social media trends. For these individuals, social media seemed to function independently of technological changes. One respondent explained:

"...I honestly didn't see much difference in my social media experience with the advances in technology. To me, social media was always about connecting with friends and sharing updates. The platforms themselves seemed similar to how they were a few years ago, and the technology didn't really change the way I used them. It felt like the technology behind it was more about convenience than altering the core of my social media interactions..."

This perception highlights a belief that IT advancements had little effect on the fundamental nature of social media use for some users. Twelve respondents felt that IT had a minor impact on social media trends, indicating that while there were some technological changes, they did not significantly alter their online behavior. One respondent noted:

"...I noticed that technology had brought some new features to social media, like better photo quality and faster load times. However, these changes were pretty minor in the grand scheme of things. My core activities on social media—posting updates, liking photos, and chatting with friends— remained mostly the same. The

improvements made things smoother but didn't fundamentally change how I interacted with the platforms..."

This response reflects a view that while IT improvements were acknowledged, their influence on overall social media engagement was limited. A larger group of respondents (20) perceived a moderate impact of IT on social media trends. These individuals recognized that advancements in technology had brought noticeable changes to their social media experience. One respondent detailed:

"...IT advancements definitely changed how I used social media. The introduction of new features like live streaming and interactive posts made my online interactions more dynamic. Enhanced algorithms also meant I saw more relevant content and ads tailored to my interests. While my core social media activities didn't change drastically, the overall experience was noticeably improved, making it easier to connect with others and discover new content..."

This perception underlines a recognition of the significant yet transformative effects of IT on the way social media is used and experienced. Fifteen respondents felt that IT had a major impact on social media trends, indicating that technological advancements had profoundly reshaped their social media experience. One respondent described:

"...The impact of IT on social media was immense for me. The evolution of mobile technology and faster internet speeds revolutionized how I engaged with social media. I could now upload high-definition videos, participate in live broadcasts, and interact with content in real time. These advancements transformed how I connected with people, accessed information, and consumed media. Social media became a more immersive and

integral part of my daily life due to these technological changes…"

This opinion highlights a view that IT advancements brought about transformative changes in how social media was used, enhancing connectivity and interaction in ways that were deeply felt by the respondents. The study's findings on the perceived impact of IT on social media trends in Iringa Municipal revealed a range of opinions, from no impact to major impact. While a small number of respondents felt that IT had little effect on their social media experience, a substantial portion recognized moderate to major impacts, reflecting how technological advancements had reshaped user interactions and content engagement. These insights illustrate the varied ways in which IT has influenced social media trends, shaping the online landscape in significant and diverse ways.

3.3.2. Use of IT Tools for Content Creation

The study revealed varying frequencies in the use of IT tools for content creation among respondents. The data as in Figure 2, indicated that 8 respondents never used IT tools, 10 used them rarely, 22 used them sometimes, and 10 used them often. These patterns highlight the diverse ways in which individuals engage with technological tools to enhance their social media content. A small group of 8 respondents reported that they never used IT tools for content creation. For these individuals, social media content creation was often managed without the aid of advanced technology. One respondent shared:

"…I never really bothered with using specialized tools for creating content. I mostly relied on my phone's basic camera and the default editing options available. To me, the focus was more on the message or the moment rather than the technical quality of the content. My posts were straightforward, and I didn't see much need to invest in or learn how to use advanced tools…"

This remark reflects a preference for simplicity and a focus on content over technology for some users. Ten respondents reported using IT tools for content creation only rarely. These individuals utilized technological tools occasionally, typically for specific needs or special occasions. A respondent explained:

"…I used advanced IT tools for content creation only on rare occasions, like when I wanted to create a high-quality video for a special event or presentation. Most of the time, I stuck to the basic features of my phone or computer. The tools were useful when I needed them, but they were not part of my everyday content creation process..."

This view highlights that while IT tools were sometimes used, their application was not frequent or integral to the respondent's routine content creation. A larger segment of respondents, 22 in total, reported using IT tools for content creation sometimes. These users integrated technological tools into their content creation process more regularly but not consistently. One respondent noted:

"…I found IT tools to be quite helpful in enhancing my social media posts. I used graphic design software to create engaging visuals and video editing tools to polish my clips. Although I didn't use them every day, they were a significant part of my content creation process whenever I wanted to ensure my posts stood out or conveyed a specific message clearly. The occasional use of these tools made a noticeable difference in the quality of my content…"

This quote underlines a moderate and purposeful use of IT tools to enhance content quality and effectiveness on social media. Finally, 10 respondents indicated that they used IT tools for content creation often. For these individuals, technological tools were integral to their social media activities, contributing significantly to their content strategy. A respondent elaborated:

"…IT tools were a crucial part of my content creation process. I frequently used advanced editing software and graphic design applications to produce high-quality posts and videos. These tools allowed me to experiment with different formats and effects, and they played a key role in maintaining a professional standard for my content. Regular use of these tools not only improved the visual appeal of my posts but also helped me engage more effectively with my audience…"

This quote highlights the significant role that IT tools played in the daily content creation activities of these respondents, reflecting a high level of engagement with technological resources. The study's findings on the use of IT tools for content creation in Iringa Municipal illustrated an extensive range of engagement. While some respondents rarely or never used such tools, a notable portion integrated them into their content-creation processes with varying degrees of frequency. The diverse levels of engagement reflect differing needs and approaches to utilizing technology in enhancing social media content, emphasizing the role of IT tools in shaping the quality and effectiveness of online communication.

3.3.3. Type of Content Most Engaged With

The study revealed diverse preferences among respondents regarding the type of content they engaged with most frequently. The analysis as in Figure 2, categorized content into four main types: News and Information (20 respondents), Entertainment (15 respondents), Educational Content (10 respondents), and Lifestyle and Fashion (5 respondents). These findings highlighted the varying interests and engagement patterns of social media users in the region. News and information emerged as the most engaged-with type of content, with 20 respondents indicating that this was their

primary focus on social media. For many users, staying informed about current events and accessing timely updates were top priorities. One respondent elaborated:

"...I predominantly engaged with news and information on social media. I followed several news outlets and journalists to keep up with both local and global developments. Social media provided a quick and accessible way to get updates, especially when traditional news sources were slower to report. Whether it was breaking news or in-depth articles, I valued the immediate access and variety of perspectives that social media offered. It became my go-to platform for staying informed throughout the day..."

This comment underlines the critical role that social media plays in keeping users updated and informed, reflecting its importance as a news source. Entertainment content was also highly engaging, with 15 respondents indicating that this type of content captured their interest. Social media platforms provide a wide array of entertainment options, from videos and memes to music and live streams. One respondent noted:

"...Entertainment was a major reason I used social media. I spent a lot of time watching funny videos, following entertainment news, and engaging with memes. Platforms like Instagram and TikTok were particularly engaging for this type of content. They offered endless entertainment options that kept me entertained during my free time. The sheer variety of content available made it easy to find something enjoyable and light-hearted to unwind with..."

This response highlights how entertainment content served as a significant draw for users, providing them with leisure and relaxation. Educational content also attracted considerable engagement, with 10 respondents using social media as a tool for learning and self-improvement. Users sought out tutorials, informational videos, and educational articles to enhance their knowledge. One respondent explained:

"...I engaged with educational content quite often on social media. I followed pages and accounts dedicated to various subjects I was interested in, like technology, history, and personal development. Social media platforms, especially YouTube and Facebook, provide access to a wealth of tutorials and informative posts. This content was invaluable for my learning journey, as it allowed me to explore new topics and gain insights from experts and enthusiasts in different fields..."

This quote emphasizes the role of social media as a supplementary educational tool, providing valuable resources for personal and professional growth. Lifestyle and fashion content, while less frequently engaged with, was still a notable area of interest for 5 respondents. Social media served as a

platform for exploring trends, fashion tips, and lifestyle inspirations. One respondent described:

"...I occasionally engaged with lifestyle and fashion content on social media. I followed a few influencers and brands to get ideas on the latest trends and style tips. While it wasn't my main focus, I enjoyed browsing through posts related to fashion and lifestyle for inspiration. It was a way to stay updated on trends and see how others were styling their outfits or organizing their lives..."

This viewpoint reflects the more niche but still significant role of lifestyle and fashion content in users' social media experiences. The study's findings on the type of content most engaged with in Iringa Municipal revealed varied preferences among respondents. News and information were the primary focus for many, highlighting the importance of social media as a news source. Entertainment content also drew significant engagement, providing users with leisure and relaxation. Educational content was valued for its learning opportunities, while lifestyle and fashion content catered to more specific interests. These insights illustrate the diverse ways in which social media content resonated with users, reflecting their unique needs and preferences.

3.3.4. Engagement with Social Media Trends

The study also examined how respondents engaged with social media trends, revealing varying levels of participation. The data, as shown in Figure 2, categorized engagement into four types: Actively Participate (15 respondents), occasionally Participate (20 respondents), rarely Participate (10 respondents), and Never Participate (5 respondents). These categories reflected the different ways users interacted with trends and their levels of involvement in the dynamic social media landscape. A group of 15 respondents actively participated in social media trends, reflecting a high level of engagement and enthusiasm. These individuals were deeply involved in trending challenges, hashtags, and viral content. One respondent described their experience:

"...I was heavily involved in social media trends and made it a point to actively participate in them. Whether it was a viral challenge, a trending hashtag, or a new meme, I loved joining in and contributing my own take. For instance, I remember participating in a viral dance challenge that took off on TikTok. It was exciting to see how quickly trends spread and to be part of that movement. Engaging with trends made my social media experience more interactive and fun, and it also helped me connect with others who shared similar interests..."

This comment illustrates a proactive and enthusiastic approach to engaging with social media trends, highlighting how participation enriched the respondent's online experience. Twenty respondents reported occasionally participating in social media trends, indicating a moderate level of

engagement. These users joined trends sporadically, typically when they found them particularly interesting or relevant. One respondent explained:

"...I participated in social media trends from time to time, but not on a regular basis. When I saw a trend that caught my eye or seemed particularly relevant, I would jump in and contribute. For example, I would sometimes share posts related to popular challenges or comment on trending topics that aligned with my interests. While I didn't make it a habit to follow every trend, I enjoyed joining in when something really appealed to me..."

This response reflects a more selective approach to engaging with trends, emphasizing occasional participation based on personal interest. A smaller group of 10 respondents rarely participated in social media trends, indicating limited engagement. These users engaged with trends infrequently, often due to a lack of interest or time. One respondent shared:

"...I rarely got involved in social media trends. I would occasionally come across trending content in my feed, but I didn't often participate. Most of the time, I preferred to stick to my usual content and interactions. Trends didn't usually capture my attention, and I didn't feel the need to join in unless it was something that really stood out to me..."

This quote highlights a more passive approach to trends, where engagement was minimal and driven by personal preference. Finally, 5 respondents indicated that they never participated in social media trends. For these individuals, trends were of no interest or relevance. One respondent elaborated:

"...I never participated in social media trends. To me, trends often seemed fleeting and not worth the effort to engage with. I preferred to use social media for more meaningful interactions and content that mattered to me personally. While I was aware of trends, I chose not to get involved with them, focusing instead on content that aligned with my interests and values..."

This opinion reflects a complete disinterest in trends, underscoring a focus on other aspects of social media that are better aligned with the respondent's preferences. The study on engagement with social media trends in Iringa Municipal revealed a range of participation levels among respondents.

While some users actively engaged with trends, finding them exciting and interactive, others participated occasionally or rarely, depending on their interest and relevance. A small group never participated, indicating a deliberate choice to focus on different aspects of social media. These varied engagement patterns illustrate how different individuals interacted with trends, reflecting their unique preferences and engagement styles.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

By analyzing various aspects of social media use, including the primary devices used, the most engaged platforms, the purposes of social media use, and engagement with trends, the study highlights significant insights into the intersection of technology and social media behavior. It was found that smartphones were the primary device for social media access, underscoring the importance of mobile technology in shaping online interactions. Facebook emerged as the most engaged platform, followed closely by Instagram, Twitter, and WhatsApp, each catering to different user needs, from news and information to entertainment and private communication.

The study also revealed that respondents predominantly used social media for entertainment and staying informed, with some also valuing it for educational purposes, reflecting diverse motivations behind social media engagement. Moreover, the study demonstrated varying levels of participation in social media trends, with some users actively engaging and others participating occasionally, rarely, or not at all. This range of engagement highlighted different approaches to interacting with trending content influenced by personal interest and perceived relevance.

In general, the study emphasized the profound impact of IT on social media behaviors in Iringa Municipal, illustrating how technological advancements have shaped user preferences, content engagement, and the overall digital experience. These perceptions provide a valuable understanding of the ongoing evolution of social media trends and their implications for users and content creators in the region. The study recommends that stakeholders, including social media platforms, content creators, and educators, prioritize mobile-friendly content and strategies, given the dominance of smartphone use in the region. Additionally, content creators should focus on producing diverse and engaging content that caters to the varied interests of users, particularly in news, entertainment, and educational content. Finally, initiatives to increase digital literacy and awareness of social media trends could help users better navigate the rapidly evolving digital landscape, fostering more meaningful and informed engagement with social media platforms.

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