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The penetration and popularity of social media among the Kenyan youths and young adults has shown that social media has the potential to be a great tool that can foster democratic dialogue and freedom of expression. However, owing to the unrestricted nature of internet and social media, users without ethical standards and professionalism can use the tools to circulate misleading information. Such information can lead to destabilization of peace and ignite violence. Few studies have shown the role of social media in escalating political unrest while some have shown its role in crisis management in Kenya. There is inadequate information on the potential role of social media for conflict prevention and peace building.

This study sought to bridge this gap by conducting systematic research with the following objectives; to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of social media as a tool for conflict prevention and peace building; to analyze the contribution of regulatory mechanism of social media in promoting peace building; to examine the potential role of social media in generating social and political tensions that might result into violence; and to identify the early warning social and political signals through social media and ICT in conflict prevention.

The research study covered four locations in Nairobi’s Eastland’s areas; Dandora ward three, Dandora ward Four, Kariobangi North and Mathare Mabatini. Stratified random sampling was used to select 90 respondents aged from 13-50 years, Two key informants were indentified through purposive sampling; one a social media expert and the other a peace studies expert. The researcher used questionnaires, key informant interview and focus group discussions to collect data.

The study found out that over 80 percent of the respondents were on social media. Majority of the respondents had a circle of social media friends of about 101-1000. The study also established that mainstream media (televisions and newspapers) was used by respondents to complement social media in giving political updates. The study revealed that government regulation of social media would result into the users mostly using it for social reasons. The study also showed that social media is still an unpopular tool for early warning and for reporting violence.
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