

Chapter 5

Social Network Sites Audience Engagement on Health Reports: An Evaluation of Daily Nations' X Platform, @DNHealthyNation

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ABSTRACT

The news media play an important role in informing the public on scientific research findings in health matters. In Kenya there has been unprecedented rise in the use of Social Network Sites more so among the youth. According to a report by SIMElab Africa, 2019, X is specifically used more by those aged 26 to 35 years in addition to being used by journalists and media organizations to disseminate information. Condit (2004) posits that there has been a mismatch between the expectations of the scientists and those of the reporter on disseminating scientific research findings which

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sometimes twists the messaging. The overall objective of the study was to establish framing of health research findings on X as a news media platform with focus given to The Daily Nation's Health and Science pull out '@DNHealthyNation'. The study found out that there is a mismatch between health reports on social network sites and original scientific health disseminations due to factors such as competition for readers' attention by journalists which leads to sensationalized report interpretations

INTRODUCTION

This study highlights how the public react and interact to scientific Health disseminations on Social Networking Sites (SNS) shared by news media. It further shades light on messaging of scientific research disseminations by journalists and the expectations of the researchers.

As highlighted by Aggarwal (2011), Social Networking Sites are more about the tools used to make content available to others and allow users of the tools to connect, engage with it and build communities. This definition is supported by that of McBride (2012) referring to SNS to be web built to allow people to express themselves and interact socially with each other.

While noting that the nature and nomenclature of connections may vary from site to site, Donah & Nicole (2007) define SNS as web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system.

Aggarwal (2011) posits that types of Social Networks can vary based on the objectives of such sites. There are several types of Social Networks such as Profile-based and connection sites which are organized primarily around members' profile pages which consists of likes, interests, dislikes and pictures. Such sites include *Facebook, Bebo and MySpace*.

The second category of Social Network Sites are Multimedia Sharing Social Networks that allow users to upload and share video content easily. i.e *Youtube*. The third category of Social Network Sites are the Microb-

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