

AN INVESTIGATION ON THE EXTENT OF UTILISATION OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES IN CRISIS MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NAIROBI COUNTY, WESTLANDS SUB-COUNTY

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Abstract

This research study investigated the role of Social Networking Sites (SNS) in communication during crises in public secondary educational institutions within Westlands Sub County – Nairobi County. There has been increased usage of communication tools such as the Social Networking Sites (SNS). SNS are virtual communities where users create profiles to interact with people on shared interests. Every organisation encounter crises at some point, and public schools are no exception. SNS has been used to either propagate or crisis. The research was done using a mixed method, incorporating qualitative and quantitative data. Data was collected from principals, teachers, parents, union and MOE officials within the Nairobi County, Westlands Sub-County using questionnaires and interviews. Data was presented descriptively through percentages, figures and tables. The results showed (78%) of the respondents identified SNS as communication platforms used in crisis management in schools. The results depicted high usage of platforms such as WhatsApp and Facebook. In addition, (71%) of parents preferred venting their grievances on SNSs before addressing them with the school. However, they were reluctant to communicate with the administration on the same platforms. About (15%) of administrators used the SNS platforms for communication during a crisis. The study findings will be useful to managers of public schools and other stakeholder of education in Kenya.

Key terms: Communication, crisis management, information, public secondary schools, social networking sites.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The widespread use of smartphones to communicate easily allows users to create and disseminate content through Social Networking Sites. The mainstream media, in turn, relies significantly on the Social Networking Sites to pick and follow up on a news item before disseminating it to the public. A significant proportion of the public can get this news first on Social Networking Sites before the mainstream media airs it, and they turn to the mainstream media for confirmation. "The role of social media in shaping first perceptions of news: Priming effects resulting from incidental exposure to news on social media" by Flavius and Frederik (2018). In this article, the authors conducted a study to examine the role of social media in shaping first perceptions of news. The study found that social media plays a crucial role in shaping first perceptions of news, as a significant proportion of the public can get the news first through social media before it is disseminated by traditional media outlets. The authors argue that this is due to the fact that social media users tend to be more active in sharing and discussing news items, and the algorithmic curation of news feeds on social media sites can also contribute to the priming effects on users' first impressions of news.

According to Boyd and Ellison (2007), "Social Networking Sites (SNSs) are 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." A crisis is defined as a significant disruption to the normal activities of an organisation, leading to extensive media coverage and public scrutiny (Coombs, 2007). Every organisation is averse to the risk of facing a crisis in the course of its activities (Holtzhausen & Roberts, 2009). It is, therefore, important for organisations to have a clear communication plan and policies in place for preparedness in case of a crisis situation, which in most cases is not predictable.

The speedy circulation of information leaves an organisation with a short window of response in case of a crisis. It is, therefore, advisable for an organisation to have clear policies on information dissemination to the public in case of a crisis (Coombs, 2012). Despite organisations embracing Social Networking Sites and incorporating them into their activities, crises still spread, and by the time they are being tamed, a great deal of the public is already aware and acting upon it. There is also a lack of information on what kind of information to disseminate both to the public and the employees of the organisation during a crisis. This also includes the steps that are taken to lessen the damage caused to the reputation during a crisis. The public reacts by giving certain types of responses according to how the organisation reacts during a crisis. The employees are looked upon as the ambassadors of the organisation. Every time a crisis occurs, they have the mandate to shield the institution from further damage as they are a liaison between the public and the management. Most corporations assume that since young people appear to be well-versed in Social Networking Sites, then they can run the Social Networking Sites platforms (Coombs & Holladay, 2012).

The study is concentrated in the secondary education sub-sector, which consists of public schools, and is crucial because it forms the critical base from which manpower is generated for national development and participation in the global economy. Public schools have students, teachers and parents as the main stakeholders; however, the suppliers and general public also play a crucial role in the management of these institutions. Therefore, accurate and timely information sharing and management needs to be done systematically to avoid speculations when an issue arises in the school. Some of the common issues that happen in public secondary schools are fire, the welfare of the students, bullying, injuries from sporting

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activities, student unrest and other emergencies. These issues may create crises within the public secondary schools (Ndung'u & Njenga, 2016).

Social Networking Sites refer to the employment of mobile and web-based technology to create platforms that is highly interactive through which individuals and communities share, co-create and modify user-generated content (Kietzmann, 2012, pp. 16-21). Boyd defines Social Networking Sites as virtual communities where users can create individual public profiles, interact with real-life friends, and meet other people based on shared interests. SNSs are "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" (Boyd, 2008). Social Networking Sites is a phrase being tossed around a lot. It is an online platform that does not just give you information but interacts with you while giving you information. It is an internet-based applications group that allows the creation and exchange of user-generated content. Social news and social networking sites are confused because news reporters are frequently referred to as the media.

Social Networking Sites refer to the means of interaction among people in which they create, exchange, comment and share among themselves in different networks. Andreas and Michael (2010) opine that Social Networking Sites are a group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological foundation and allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content. Social Networking Sites have become one of the major channels of chatting through platforms such as 2go, Bareback chat, blogger and Wiki. There has been an increase in mobile Social Networking Sites, which has created new opportunities for browsing.

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) classified Social Networking Sites into six different classes as follows:

- i Collaborative Projects (Wikipedia and Google Docs)
- ii Blogs and Microblogs (Twitter, Instagram, TikTok)
- iii Content Communities
- iv Social Networking Sites (Facebook; 2go; BB chat)
- v Virtual Game World (World of Warcraft)
- vi Virtual Second World (Second life)

Technology includes blogs, picture sharing, music sharing, crowdsourcing, e-mail, instant messaging and voice-over. These services could be integrated through social network aggregation platforms.

According to Statista, a world statistics portal, the number of internet users worldwide in 2020 was about 4.6 billion. A total of 4.76 billion, or 59.4 (%) of the world's population, use social media. Currently, Facebook is the leading social networking site, with 2.9 billion active users in a month as of the third quarter of 2022, making it the biggest social network worldwide. From the time it was launched, Facebook has been influential in the Social Networking Sites scene, making it a key feature in the debate regarding the privacy of users online (Statista, 2019). Internet World Stats Regional statistics for Africa (2023) puts Egypt in the lead with approximately 48.8 million users. Nigeria comes in second with a figure of 31.8 million users, and Kenya ranks fifth with approximately 10.4 million Facebook users. A report published by Facebook (2020) indicates the top five African countries with the largest numbers of monthly Facebook users, as shown in Table 1 below.

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Table 1: Top Internet users in African countries Number

Number	COUNTRY	TOTAL POPULATION (Approx.)	TOTAL USERS of INTERNET	Facebook Users
1	Egypt	104,258,327	54,741,493	48,830,000
2	Nigeria	211,400,708	154,301,195	31,860,000
3	South Africa	60,041,994	34,545,165	24,600,000
4	Morocco	37,344,795	25,589,581	21,730,000
5	Kenya	54,985,698	46,870,422	10,444,000

Source: www.internetworldstats.com,2022

Authority of Kenya (CAK) quarterly report indicates that the internet statistics in Kenya have registered constant growth due to improved use of online-enabled cellular phone devices and the increased fibre optic network connections. Specifically, a 5.9 per cent increase in data and internet subscriptions was registered in the quarter under review, giving a figure of 19.9 million. Accordingly, the number of online users went up to 29.6 million during the quarter by a related margin. In comparison to the same period in 2019, the growth was 42.0 per cent and 32.9 per cent, respectively. Data and internet subscriptions on mobile networks contribute 99 per cent when considering total subscriptions, thus recording 19.8 million users. A growth of 42.2 per cent was registered in regard to the previous year of the same period (2015).

Kaigwa et al. (2015), citing Facebook Ad Planner, report that Kenyans on Facebook remain at 3.8 million, and this should be seen as a fraction of those with access to the internet. Twitter, which, though growing in status, comes behind Facebook with 500,000 users in approximation. Further, Adika (2014) says that about 49 per cent of Kenyans with mobile phones use WhatsApp for sending messages. According to Ugolik (2014), WhatsApp has more online active users in comparison to Twitter users. WhatsApp has interactive features that enable its users to directly share files, videos, photos and links in a more open and connected way. The users enjoy more privacy compared to the Facebook platform since WhatsApp does not require them to share much of their personal data.

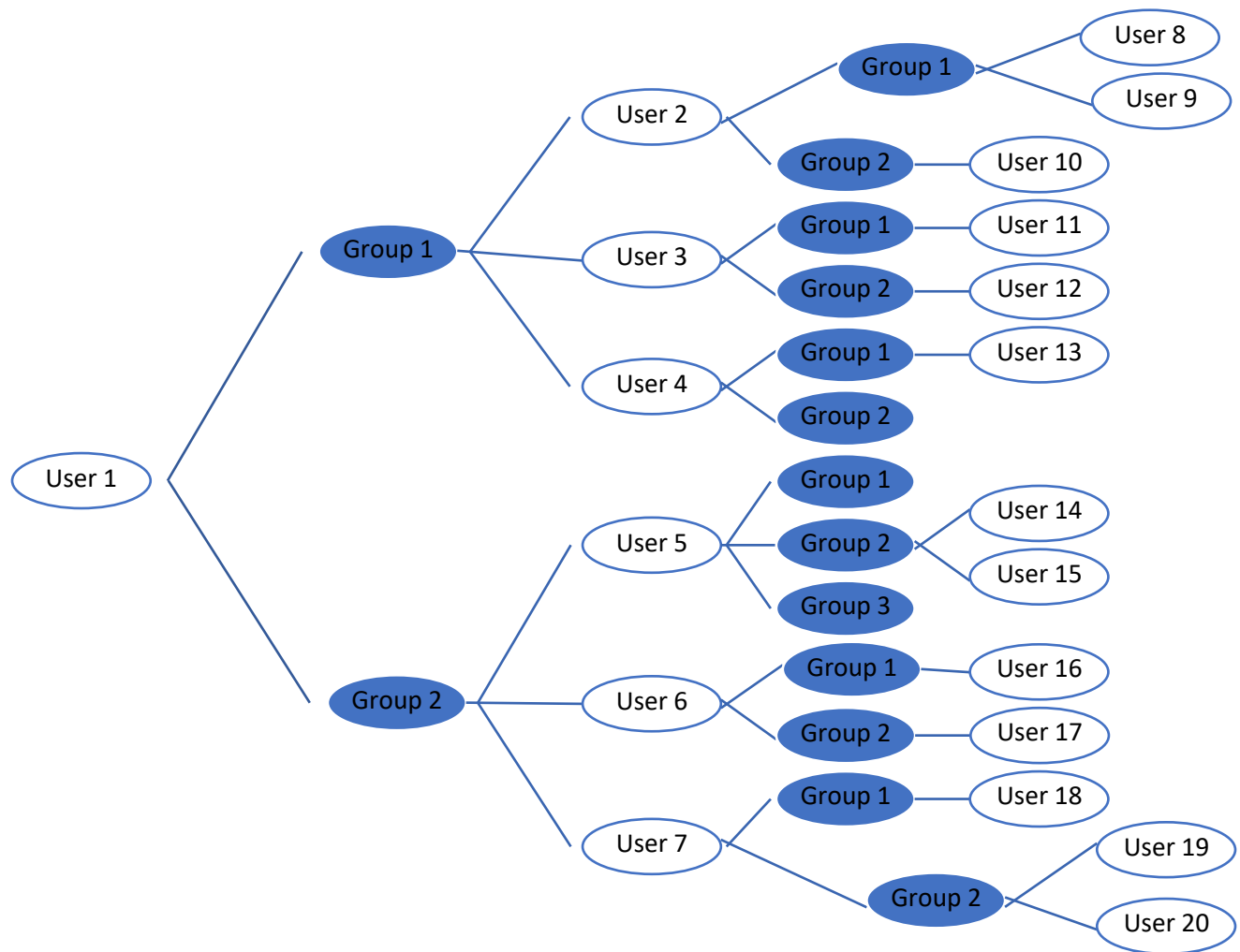


Figure 1: The Exponential nature of WhatsApp groups

Source: Researcher (2021)

WhatsApp, as a service provider, does not intend to change its policy on privacy, as underscored by its co-founder Brian Acton (Malekhosseini et al. 2018). In those countries where individuals were searching for means they could use to send messages to family and friends overseas without incurring huge charges, WhatsApp soared in popularity. Billions of messages each day are sent by WhatsApp users today (Jessica, 2014). WhatsApp is one of the leading SNSs in Kenya, with anyone who has a smartphone being able to use it. Features such as the formation of groups where users can share files, photos, videos and messages make it extremely popular. The standard WhatsApp group can have as many as 256 members, meaning a single message can instantaneously reach over 200 people with the click of a button. The individuals in these groups may also have subscribed to other groups, exponentially forming a large pool of people who are interconnected.

Boyd and Ellison (2007) state that online social networking has rapidly grown in the past decade. Further, Rainie and Wellman (2015), on networked individuals, see the rapid growth of social networking sites resulting in faster communication, global, collective, and interactive. Every individual on an SNS is connected to another, making an intricate web of networked individuals. The round-the-clock accessibility

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of social networking sites means that the public can use them at any time, day or night. Geographical barriers and different time zones have almost zero effect on when, where and whom to interact with on Social Networking Sites; thus, when handling a crisis, the organisation managers must consider such factors that information that is not factual or untrue about an organisation can spread and reach a wide range of recipients online within a very short time in what is commonly referred to as viral messages.

Organisations like schools face many crises emanating from within or outside of the school. These crises, when inappropriately handled, may lead to more dire repercussions. Crisis management is part of the normal school environment since problems or disasters are deemed to arise at any point during the institution's life cycle (Ndana, 2015). Crises could arise from within the organisation or outside, including administrative and stakeholder-related problems. Ndana (2015) notes that head teachers in secondary schools in Kenya face crises as minor as student disagreements and disasters as severe as destructive lawsuits. Therefore, crisis management presents important frameworks for handling such situations. Many approaches have been used to respond to the crises. One such technique is the use of Social Networking Sites in crisis management. People use SNS platforms since they are simple and with minimal dynamics. These platforms are simple to use, yet they have profound interaction complexities such as Artificial Intelligence (AI). They can lead to the dissemination of information to masses of people in one instant, hence their imperativeness in crisis management.

Jie Xu (2020) notes that a respectable number of studies have emphasised the nexus between crisis management and SNS. Most of the studies maintained that public relations practitioners have adopted social media in running an organisation, and this has also been extended to manage crises. Alanezi (2020) indicates that SNS has brought a new face to crisis communication. Therefore, when a crisis occurs, the public opts for the utilisation of SNS to solicit emotional support, bundling up virtually to share information and demand solutions (Alanezi, 2020). Globally, crisis management in public institutions has been managed through the effective use of SNS to give correct information effectively and efficiently to the stakeholders and the general public. A study in Kuwait middle schools on the use of social networks by Principals in managing a school crisis reported a low degree of reliance on social networks in general and at all stages of the crisis. The most used social networks comprised WhatsApp (69.7%), Twitter (24.2%), and Instagram and Facebook (up to 3%) (Alanezi, 2020).

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

The principles of this research were informed by literature from the following fields: 1) Public Educational Institutions, 2) Management in Educational Institutions, 3) Some Social Networking Sites, 4) Communication in educational institutions during the crisis and 4) Context: Public Secondary Schools in Nairobi County. An exploratory strategy was used in the review to get a better understanding of the function of Social Networking Sites and the relationship that exists among them in handling a crisis at a public secondary school.

As of January 2020, there were 22.86 million internet users in Kenya. This number had increased by 3.2 million between 2019 and 2020. This increment accounts for a 16 per cent increase within a year (Matanji, 2020). As of January 2020, internet penetration in Kenya stood at 43 per cent. Social Networking site usage alone accounted for almost half of the total internet utilisation percentage, with a whopping 8.80 million users as per January data. The number of Social Networking site users experienced an increase of 1.0 million, which is roughly 13 per cent, for the period of April 2019 to January 2020 (Matanji, 2020). Social

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Networking site penetration in Kenya, therefore, stood at 17 per cent for the same period. Mobile connections enable most of the internet connections in Kenya, and as of January 2020, there were 52.06 million mobile connections.

In Kenya, school principals are classified as the administrators and supervisors of the country's education system. They are the link between educational policies and the implementers of the said policies. Principals draw their authority from the Education Act of 1968. The principals play out their role within two contexts, namely the system in which their duties are embedded and, secondly, the community within which their schools are located (Akinyi, 2020).

Secondary school education in Kenya is guided by sector policies articulated in the Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2005, Kenya Education Sector Support Program (2005-2010), Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation (ERSWC, 2003) and the Vision 2030. Vision 2030, in particular, underscores the importance of secondary school education in laying a firm base for skills development at higher educational levels, including technological adaptation, innovation and technology. It is noted that a great number of people have subscribed to online networks and have embedded them into their lives and that, due to this, communications and interactions between individuals and groups have changed in significant ways. Internet use of platforms like Facebook can be interactively fertile, rich, diverse, and expanded according to both ethnographic and survey studies. Walt (2012) says that it is hardly unthinkable that one can make the case that authentic relationships cannot be realised through the contribution of Social Networking Sites. In America alone, statistics show that out of the marriages that took place in 2011, one in eight of those couples met online. But yet still, the superficial nature of online communities is scoffed at by many.

The goal of Social Networking Sites should be to engage and build relationships, regardless of the tool, and this ought to be the reason behind using these network platforms. Walt (2012) points out that Social Networking Sites are either a place of a billion tweets, friends in thousands, a few angry birds or a means of grace. He points out that instead of championing or decrying Social Networking Sites, individuals should work towards realising pastoral wisdom and the best application in how to pilot the ways this new technology can open up the old planet. In this way, people will be engaging the social networking sites' platforms in ways that promote and build relationships rather than harm and destroy them.

In Ghana, a study done by Mahama (2020) investigated the way government communicators take advantage of social media channels to convey policy narratives while containing or expanding coalitions. With the positive impacts of social media, attention has shifted to expanding the frontiers to areas such as social media's direct benefits to citizens. To make government policies and processes more effective and efficient, the government must invest social and human capital in social media use to produce the required feedback to improve policy.

In Kenya, a study conducted by Kabura (2019) found that Social Networking Sites are a better communication platform in crisis management, and they reach the intended audience on time during a crisis situation. She further presents that the SNS are moderately effective during a crisis, and the main reason attributed to Safaricom is that queries by social media users are responded to on time and to their satisfaction.

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In the 21st century, Social Networking Sites are the trending media. People tweet about the improbable plots being aired on television shows. Individuals brief their friends about links to information sites on Facebook. People view each other's status on the daily occurrences of the world on WhatsApp, Facebook and Instagram. Facebook, for example, allows users to chat with others and share photos, videos, and links to separate websites, making them a very attractive platform for communication purposes (Fazeli et al, 2021). Social networking sites are sites that harbour many people; therefore, information distortion is inevitable (Malekhosseini, Hosseinzadeh & Navi, 2018), especially for the type of message that has to undergo different checkpoints. As a result, the study aims to identify the channels through which the crisis in public secondary schools is passed, how the information is disseminated, and if distortion occurs, the study analyses the extent to which information can be rendered invalid.

In Nigeria, for instance, Social Networking Sites such as Twitter, Facebook and WhatsApp easily create tension between state authorities and networked citizens. The recent banning of Twitter by the Nigerian government is an indicator that distorted information can easily be a source of conflict. Differences expressed in internet forums can elicit responses in real time. Some issues arise when using platforms with large audiences. However, if governments understand that it provides them with greater access to their citizenry, the benefits may exceed the concerns (Adegoke, 2019).

Locally, the use of SNS in crisis management is largely done in the corporate sector and in a few public institutions; many public schools have, however, not embraced the use of SNS. This is because communication in public schools is done through conventional means such as newsletters, phone calls and Instant Messaging (IM). The use of SNS is confined to WhatsApp. The information largely shared may include, but is not limited to, fee structure, opening and closing dates, scheduled meetings, and academic reports, among others. However, in the event of a crisis, public schools rarely use the SNS extensively to communicate with the stakeholders and the general public. Apart from socialisation, SNS platforms are complex and can lead to the dissemination of information to masses of people in one instant, hence their importance in crisis management (Coombs & Holladay, 2012). A peek at various SNS platforms reveals that SNS has become the most used and active mode of communication; nevertheless, studies that look at the uses of social media in crisis management are in their growing phase. Chandra and Kumar (2021) suggest that SNS can be a beneficial tool for communication with stakeholders during a crisis; however, schools must also be cognizant of the possibility of disinformation and other issues. Muhammad 2022 notes that the use of SNS for crisis communication in Nigerian secondary schools can be an effective tool for disseminating information and engaging with stakeholders during a crisis, but schools must also be prepared to manage negative comments and misinformation. Due to limited substantive literature in Kenya on the role of SNS in managing response to crises in public secondary schools, there was a need to carry out this study in order to contribute to existing knowledge.

Crisis such as bullying and other deviant behaviours in public secondary schools have been reported and amplified through Social Networking Sites (as reported in the local print dailies and electronic media (Standard Newspaper, 2019). This crisis was first sighted in social media before the mainstream media amplified it. A disgruntled parent shared information about their child being bullied in one of the schools on Social Networking Sites, and this information was quickly shared among the different groups on those platforms. There was a public uproar on the issue, and crisis management was employed by the schools affected, although a bit late (Muia, 2016). In this and other cases, the researcher tried to find out the role of SNS in amplifying this crisis and the response from the school management, government, and the

general public on how this can be addressed to help promote good management practices in public secondary schools.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The several types of qualitative research are focus groups, ethnographic research, content analysis, case study research, and in-depth interviews. The study employed in-depth interviews, especially with the Principals, Union officials, and MOE officials, to observe the different dynamics of social media relevant to crisis management in public secondary schools. Content analysis was also essential because it enabled the researcher to analyse available past data about the study's topic. Integrating both the qualitative and quantitative data involved collecting both types of data at the same simultaneously, assessing information using parallel constructs for both types of data, and comparing findings through procedures such as transforming the qualitative data set into quantitative scores, side-by-side comparison in a discussion, or jointly displaying both forms of data. These two types of data validated each other and created a solid foundation for drawing conclusions about the intervention. This study was conducted in public secondary schools located in the Westlands Sub-county of Nairobi County. Westlands Sub-County is feasible for the research. The composition of schools in this sub-county represents the diverse categories of schools: day and boarding, national and county schools, girls and boys only, and mixed schools. A random selection for the sample schools was done from schools in this Sub County for the study. These schools represent boys' and girls' boarding, mixed, and day schools within Nairobi County, which is cosmopolitan in design. In this region, random selections for the sampled schools were visited, and data was recorded for further analysis.

Target Population

The population sampled for this study was segregated into a mutually exclusive population using the purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling was employed in this study. The target population was made up of the Westlands sub-county public secondary schools in Nairobi County. There are ten (10) secondary schools in Westlands, according to the MOE records (Kituko, 2020). This study targeted respondents in all ten public secondary schools in Westlands Sub-County, from which teachers and all the principals were included in the study. In each of the ten schools, all the 347 teachers and 10 Principals were targeted as respondents.

Schools that have interactions with social networking sites were eligible for the study. Therefore, the research targeted some of these schools, which include The Nairobi School and Kangemi Boys High School, as boys' schools, The Kenya High School and Parklands Arya, which are girls' schools and Lavington Secondary School and High Ridge Secondary as a day school. The researcher, through the help of research assistants, targeted this population only on the Social Networking Sites platform. Out of the 10 schools, 5 were using SNS. The targeted platforms were Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter and TikTok. These sites were chosen because of their prevalence in the community today. Therefore, they are accessible by many, hence their viability in the study. The study, therefore, targeted the headteachers, teachers, parents who are PTA representatives, MOE, and Union officials, as tabulated below. An assumption is made that the student population is directly proportional to the parent/guardian population. The distributions across schools are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Population Distribution

Schools per category	Teachers		Non-Teaching Staff
Boys Schools			
Nairobi Milimani	17		40
Nairobi Schools	78		98
Kangemi Secondary sch	26		35
Girls Schools			
Parklands Arya	22		25
Kenya High Sch	51		110
St. Georges Girls	41		68
State House Girls	52		80
Mixed Schools			
Lavington Mixed	16		30
Highridge Sec Sch	18		35
Hospital Hill	43		65
Total	364		

Sample size determination by Yamane (1967:886), cited in EDIS (2015) was used. The formula is as follows:

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

Where,

n is the sample size

N is the Population

e is the level of precision assuming 5% or 0.05 for the parents and 10% or 0.1 for the teachers and non-teaching staff.

The resulting samples were as follows:

Teachers sample size

$$n = \frac{364}{1 + 364(0.13)^2} = 50.89 = 51$$

Non-Teaching Sample size

$$n = \frac{586}{1 + 586(0.13)^2} = 50.89 = 51$$

Teachers' sample size is considered adequate based on Mugenda and Mugenda's (2003) recommendation that at least 10% of the sample in descriptive studies is adequate when the population is large. On the other hand, the justification for 5.26 per cent of the parents/guardians is based on the recommendation of a 1 per cent sample for large populations, as recommended by Gravetter & Forzano (2012).

This study employed multiple sampling procedures, such as the simple random sampling technique in selecting the head teachers, teachers, parents, union officials, non-teaching staff, and MOE officials to be used as study respondents and purposive sampling to select the schools for the study. Since the study involved a fairly wide population, a census is not appropriate. The researcher began with a complete list of

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all member schools of the population that use Social Networking Sites and then chose samples through simple random sampling. This list was acquired through analysis of the aforementioned Social Networking Sites (Facebook and Twitter) in search of the schools that have accounts on those platforms. Purposive sampling was adopted to collect qualitative data from the Principals, Union, and MOE officials. The interviews were conducted on the selected sample. Interviews for qualitative data were carried out on and offsite, face-to-face and virtually based on the convenience of the interviewee. Table 3 below indicates the sample size distribution.

Table 3: Sample Size Distribution

<i>School per category</i>	<i>Teachers</i>	<i>Parents/Guardian</i>	<i>Principals</i>
Boys Schools			
Nairobi Milimani	3	1	1
Kangemi Secondary Sch	3	1	1
Nairobi School	7	1	1
Girls Schools			
Parklands Arya	2	1	1
Kenya High School	8	1	1
St. Georges Girls	5	1	1
Statehouse Girls	4	1	1
Mixed Schools			
Lavington Mixed	4	1	1
Highridge Sec School	6		1
Hospital Hill	9	1	1
Total	51	10	10

Table 4: Sample Size Distribution for MOE and Union Officials

Category	Target population	Sample
MOE Officials	10	2
Union Officials	5	2

The researcher administered questionnaires in Google Forms to the sample size of Westlands Subcounty public secondary schools as they are distributed in the schools within Nairobi County. The breakdown was on Principals (10), teachers (42), parents (114), union officials (3) and MOE officials (2).

Data Collection Methods

The researcher used questionnaires as the key tool to collect data for this study. In selecting these tools, the researcher was guided by the nature of the data to be collected, the objectives of the study, the time, and the availability of funds. The researcher recruited research assistants who were teachers in the localities around the public secondary schools in Nairobi County, Westlands Sub-county, with the responsibility of collecting the information from respondents over a period of 2 weeks. The researcher inducted research assistants to enable them to collect the information required with the support of head teachers from these individual schools. The assistants had a one-session training because of the simplicity of the process. The training focused on the conduction of the questionnaires, which guided the target audience in filling in the question forms.

The researcher used questionnaires since they can collect outsized amounts of data from many subjects with less expense. They are also easy to manage and analyse. The respondents targeted by this study are also literate; hence, they had less hindrance responding to the items in the questionnaire. The interview tools helped the researcher to pick up the voices, views, thoughts and attitudes of union officials and head teachers concerning the role of Social Networking Sites in the management of information during a crisis. Information of this nature is best collected by the use of questionnaires and interview techniques. The questionnaires were close-ended to enable analysis of the collected data under one parameter. The questionnaires had approximately 4 sections: Individual details, demographic information, individual social networking site usage, and knowledge of institutional social networking site interactions.

The questionnaires employed both open-ended and closed-ended questions divided into 2 sections (Sections "A" and "B"). Section "A" employed open-ended questions requiring the background information of the respondents. Section "B" was concerned with Social Networking site interactivity. A Likert-type scale was used on the respondents to help the researcher weigh in on the options chosen with the closed-ended questions. The findings were evaluated depending on the variations between high and low scores. The questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data. Section A sought to collect data on respondents' demography. Sections B, C, D, E, F, and G captured data on the respective variables: type of SNS use, extent of utilisation of SNS, response to social networking site content, promotion of healthy relationships, and crisis management. The interview instrument was designed to collect qualitative data that captured variables: type of SNS use, extent of utilisation of SNS, response to social networking sites' content, promotion of healthy relationships, and crisis management. Some respondents gave their inputs virtually, leveraging Google Forms, and others used face-to-face interactions.

Data Processing and Analysis

The researcher used field tables, data frequencies and percentages to analyse data from the questionnaires. The collected data was analysed as per the research questions and objectives. Descriptive statistics were used to verify the frequencies of the assorted variables in the study. Tables were used to prepare the data for analysis and interpretation. Data needing SPSS software treatment and those collected using Summated Scales (Likert-type scales) were analysed to aid in the interpretation of findings. The data was analysed using percentages, means and standard deviations. The interpretation of this section will be based on the Likert scale, such that 1 and 2 would mean a negative value while 3 and 4 would mean a positive assessment of the statement. During inferential statistics, Pearson correlation was used to establish the relationship's strength and significance between the type of social networking sites, utilisation of SNS, response to social networking site content, promotion of healthy relationships, and crisis management. The Pearson correlation coefficient might have a value between +1 and -1. There is no correlation between the two variables, as indicated by a value of 0. A number greater than 0 denotes a positive correlation, meaning that if the value of one variable rises, so does the value of the other variable. A number less than 0 denotes a negative relationship, meaning that when one variable's value rises, the value of the other variable falls. Regression analysis was computed to determine the influence of independent variables on the dependent variable. Furthermore, Null Hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level. The criteria for rejection and failure to reject the null hypothesis were based on the concept that when the p-value is less than the alpha level, the null hypothesis was rejected.

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The findings of the study were then organised on recurring themes. The conclusions made are the frequency of Social Networking Sites usage in schools, the frequency and types of crises experienced in public secondary schools, the roles of leaders in the schools in managing the crisis, and the role of Social Networking Sites in managing crises in the various schools. The final stage was to report the major findings of the study after testing the hypotheses regarding the effects of Social Networking Sites in crisis management in public secondary schools, as per the results from the sample schools of Westlands Sub-county in Nairobi County. Thematic analysis of qualitative data helped the researcher draw up assumptions informed by the analysis.

In order to analyse qualitative data, the following procedures were used: first, data preparation and organisation began. A review and investigation of the data came next. The creation of initial codes came before integrating them into themes. Finally, a unified presentation of the themes was achieved. A pilot test was carried out in two schools outside the study location, that is, Starehe – sub-county, to ensure that the questions were relevant, clearly understandable, and made sense. The questionnaire was piloted on six respondents: two teachers, two head teachers and two parents drawn from the schools to enable the researcher to make amendments to the questionnaire where necessary. However, the selected respondents were not included in the actual study. The final data that was collected for piloting were analysed and presented as follows:

The researcher conducted pre-test interviews with various stakeholders (teaching staff, non-teaching staff) in the schools before the actual study schedules. This ensured that the questionnaires got the data necessary to satisfy the study's objectives, thereby ensuring the reliability and validity of the data collected. The questionnaire items were constructed in line with the problem under study for consistency and relevance purposes. The study's content and objectives were explored in detail by the researcher to ensure the varied items being investigated are represented. Relevant persons were consulted to verify whether the items would solicit the required information. In this research, reliability was determined using Cronbach's alpha. Its findings are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Scale Reliability Analysis

Variable	No. of Items	Cronbachs' Alpha	Assessment
Type of Social Networking Sites	9	0.929	Reliable
Extent of Utilisation of SNS	7	0.918	Reliable
Response to Social Networking Sites Content	5	0.858	Reliable
Promoting Healthy Relationships	5	0.707	Reliable
Crisis Management	5	0.915	Reliable
Overall Index	31	0.865	Reliable

Cronbach's alpha, which conceptualises dependability as item consistency, can be a valuable reliability measure. According to Table 5, it can be noted that all the variables surpass the benchmark requirement for reliability. The researcher got an introduction letter from Africa International University (AIU), IERB permission from AIU and a Government permit from NACOSTI, which were made available to the local leadership prior to going to the field notifying them of the planned research and gathering of data from

the chosen areas. The reason for using the questionnaires, the manner of information required, and what the information would be used for were illustrated to the participants.

4.0 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The objective of this study was to investigate how the extent of utilisation of various forms of social networking sites affects the crisis management of secondary public schools in Nairobi County, Westlands Sub-county. The descriptive analysis was done using the 5-point Likert scale that measures extent. The variables analysed included tension reduction, information Publishing and clientele participation. The descriptive analysis was done using the 5-point Likert scale that measures extent. The nature of responses that were examined includes how participants analysed the social media mentions and how Feedback and support were given in response to the problems identified. The fourth objective was to find out what public secondary schools' management was doing to promote healthy relationships between the school and the public through SNS. These variables were descriptively analysed using the 5-point Likert scale that measures extent. The indicators studied include policy development, adoption of SNS and content filtering.

Conversely, the dependent variable for the study was crisis management. The main indicators for this variable include disaster planning and training, problem-solving, decision making and information dissemination. They were analysed descriptively using percentages and standard deviations. Regarding inferential statistics, correlation Analysis was run to establish the significance and nature of the relationship between independent and dependent variables. Specifically, it attempted to examine the relationship between the type of social networking sites, the extent of utilisation of SNS, and the response to social networking sites' content, as well as promote healthy relationships with crisis management variables. To this end, multiple linear regression was conducted to establish the extent of the influence of independent variables on the dependent variable. Particularly, the model summary table, ANOVA and coefficients were computed and interpreted. Finally, regarding hypothesis testing, the benchmark of rejection or failure of rejection of the null hypothesis was based on the 5 per cent alpha. In this regard, Beta coefficients were evaluated using their corresponding p-values. Conclusions from the beta coefficients were made in line with the t-values and level of significance at the 0.05 alpha level.

Descriptive Statistics for the Response Rate

The quality of the data gathered and the methods employed to collect it are both described by the response rate. Surveys are well-established means for gathering statistical profiles in this regard that cannot be obtained from other sources. The response rate in this study was calculated to be 95 per cent, as seen in Table 6.

Table 6: Response Rate

School per category	Initial Sample	Response	Response Rate (%)
Boys Schools			
Sub Total	13	12	92
Girls Schools			
Sub Total	19	18	94

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Mixed Schools			
Sub Total	19	18	94
Principals	10	10	100
Total	61	58	95

The overall response rate for the study was (95%) of the total sample.

Demographic Data

The demographic data that was analysed in this section was respondents' age, gender and the type of school. The demographic data in this study was used to help provide the context of the participants involved in this study.

Age

According to Table 7, the distribution of the age bracket of the respondents was as follows: (48.3%) of respondents were aged 50 years and above. Furthermore, the results recognised that (34.5%) and (13.8%) were between the ages of 40 and 49 as well as 30 and 39, respectively. The 20-29 age group made up the smallest portion of this set of participants, accounting for just (3.4%) of the total. These findings imply that respondents above 50 years were the major participants who might have experience in matters relating to Social Networking Sites. However, (3.4%) of respondents constituted those within 20-29 years. This finding implies that that age group might not be experienced with how SNS affect crisis management. This finding agrees with that of Drouin, McDaniel, Pater and Toscos (2020) results, who found that the vast majority of social media participants over the age of 65 only use Facebook despite younger age groups exhibiting a predisposition to utilise a wider range of online media, particularly including Snapchat and Instagram. According to statistics, Facebook is currently used by (41%) of those over the age of 65, with LinkedIn coming in second with 9% of users. From a short-term viewpoint, this indicates that Facebook is the platform on which to concentrate our efforts when communicating with older consumers. However, this could all change in the next few years.

Table 7: Corresponding Ages

Age stratum	Frequency	Per cent
20-29 years	2	3.4
30-39 years	8	13.8
40-49 years	20	34.5
Above 50 years	28	48.3
Total	58	100.0

Gender

The respondents' genders were descriptively analysed, as shown in Table 8 below. The results showed that (55.2%) of respondents were males, while (44.8%) constituted female respondents. The quality of the research and the market acceptance of innovation are improved by the inclusion of gender analysis in the research content. Gender study provides current empirical knowledge about gendered behaviours, expectations, and discourses in ways that are socially meaningful. According to Van Der Veur (2007),

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gender plays a significant role in determining which people in a society have access to power, privilege, and opportunities. This study shows proportional differences between male and female participants in crisis management. As it has been observed, more males participated than females, as males are more inclined to the use of technology than females. The finding is presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Gender Analysis

	Frequency	Per cent	Chi-square (χ^2)	p-value
Male	32	55.2	0.621	0.431
Female	26	44.8		
Total	58	100.0		

Type of School

It was observed that (37.9%) of participants were from girls boarding. Furthermore, (34.5%) and (27.6%) were from mixed and boys' boarding schools respectively. The results are shown in Table 9.

Table 9: Gender and Type of School Cross-tabulation

			Type of School			Total
			Boys Boarding	Girls Boarding	Mixed School	
Gender	Male	Count	10	10	12	32
		% of Total	17.2%	17.2%	20.7%	55.2%
	Female	Count	6	12	8	26
		% of Total	10.3%	20.7%	13.8%	44.8%
		Count	16	22	20	58
		% of Total	27.6%	37.9%	34.5%	100.0%

Type of Social Networking Sites

The study indicates that (52%) of participants typically used WhatsApp, while Facebook and Instagram users represented (47%) of the participants, respectively. In addition, it was also noted that (21%) never used Twitter. Furthermore, (14%) notably argued that they never used Facebook. In conclusion, it was observed that the type of social networking site mainly used was WhatsApp (Mean = 3.18; SD = 0.92), while Twitter remained the least used by participants (Mean = 2.87; SD = 1.20). According to the data, Facebook and WhatsApp are the two most frequently used social media platforms. This study agrees with Maweu and Yudah's (2020) findings, which were based on research done in Kenya at the University of Kabianga with a sample size of 103 students and indicated that Facebook and WhatsApp were the most popular Social Media platforms for student information sharing. Table 10 shows the findings.

Table 10: Type of Social Networking Sites

Type of SNS	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Always	Mean	SD
I typically use WhatsApp	2%	29%	17%	52%	3.18	0.92
I mostly use Twitter	21%	16%	19%	45%	2.87	1.20
I regularly use Facebook	14%	12%	28%	47%	3.06	1.07
I mostly use Instagram	10%	22%	21%	47%	3.03	1.05

Qualitative Data

The sampled head teacher participants had the following views concerning the types of SNS they use. They affirmed that the prominent Social Networking Sites used in school were Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp. However, the school rarely uses SNS to communicate with its users unless it's a WhatsApp communication.

This finding agrees with the quantitative data that showed that schools have yet to fully embrace the usage of social networking sites in crisis management. Due to the social sharing feature and the enormous number of people that regularly use the platforms, social media can assist in spreading information quickly in times of need.

The study found that (58%) of participants affirmed that they use SNS in publishing information regarding their school, such as academic clinics, among others. This implies that SNS could enhance information sharing within a given defined network. In addition, (74%) affirmed that they use SNS because it breaks news faster as compared to traditional broadcast media. Social media is thought to spread information to a sizable number of people who are connected to one another either directly or indirectly but who are part of the same network. This viewpoint is in line with that of Aillerie and McNicol (2016), who affirm that SNSs offer a significant quantity of data as well as different sorts of information compared to that available from many other sources and covering a wide variety of themes. Therefore, SNSs can be thought of as efficient information centres.

It may seem important to use social media during the crisis response phase to deal with the immediate and operational impact of a crisis. The current study established that (76%) of participants agree that they use SNS to reduce the tension of the situation within our school. Furthermore (69%) of respondents assert that they used SNS to provoke participation among stakeholders in their school. This perspective is consistent with that of Eismann, Posegga, and Fischbach (2021), who emphasises that social media give organisations a chance to integrate information, knowledge, and collaborative processes that exist outside of their established structures in addition to allowing them to learn about a crisis as it is happening (i.e., intra-crisis learning). They can, therefore, enable organisations to support crisis management.

The use of modern technology to communicate with parents quickly, easily, and in a variety of ways indicates their potential to improve ties between different contexts, such as home and school. According to the findings, (43%) of respondents agreed that they used SNS to a considerable extent since it remained the most preferred tool for communication among the target audience. Furthermore, up to 33 per cent of participants indicated that they used SNS to a considerable extent since it allowed real-time messaging among the stakeholders. These findings indicate that clients usually prefer social networks that allow real-time feedback. These findings are in line with those of Ogie et al. (2022), who affirm that using social media for crisis response work has advantages such as enabling remote posting of updates by schools, facilitating discussion and support, providing access to resources, and enhancing community perceptions of a caring and helpful school culture. Due to cell phone networks' inability to manage the high volume of incoming calls, social media may also be one of the only ways for families to get in contact during major crises.

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The many benefits of social media during and after school emergencies must be acknowledged by administrators and members of the crisis response team. From the findings, it was noted that (29%) of respondents affirmed that the use of SNS enabled their institution to distract rumours and propaganda to a very large extent. The results of this study are in line with those of Kerr and King (2018), who stress the ability of social media to swiftly reach a larger group. They assert that by using social media to share crisis information, the school can more swiftly refute rumours and correct inaccuracies. However, in a parallel dimension, the study also sought to determine the level to which the parents would go to air their grievances regarding the school. Surprisingly, a greater percentage of the parents presented their complaints on social media platforms before addressing them with the school administration. The finding is given in Table 11.

Table 11: Extent of Utilisation of Social Networking Sites

Statement	NA	LE	SE	LE	VLE	Mean	SD
I use SNS to publish information regarding our school, such as academic clinics, among others.	3%	38%	12%	36%	10%	3.12	1.14
I use SNS because it breaks news faster as compared to the traditional broadcast media	9%	17%	22%	36%	16%	3.32	1.19
I use SNS to reduce the tension in the situation within our school	2%	22%	16%	38%	22%	3.56	1.12
I use SNS to provoke participation among stakeholders in our school	7%	24%	14%	33%	22%	3.39	1.26
I use SNS to allow real-time messaging among the stakeholders	12%	19%	28%	24%	17%	3.15	1.26
I use SNS because it is the most preferred tool for communication among the target audience	10%	16%	16%	43%	16%	3.37	1.22
The use of SNS has enabled our institution to distract rumours and propaganda	10%	24%	9%	28%	29%	3.41	1.40

NA=Not at All; LE=Little Extent; SE=Some Extent; LE=Large Extent; VLE=Very Large Extent

Qualitative Data for Extent of Utilisation of SNS

The sampled head teacher respondents regarding the current social networking site usage opined that the platform is essential but unmanned. Moreover, SNS is important, but efforts have not benefitted through active use by the school. On the other hand, the Ministry of Education officials observed that: "We usually use WhatsApp as the chief mode of communication with head teachers. However, during delicate crisis situations, we minimise this mode of communication and resort to another traditional mode of communication." They cited the Ministry of Education's policy on communication that guided the mode of communication.

Regarding the utilisation of SNS, the qualitative data showed that the majority of parents averred that: "I prefer other methods of communication such as instant messaging, mobile phones, or face to face, with very few instances where I have ever communicated with the school through SNS platforms. However, I find WhatsApp to be the prominent SNS to use".

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Furthermore, the survey also aimed to ascertain the extremes to which parents were willing to go in order to voice their concerns about the school. Surprisingly, parents also reported that: "Majority of us find it easy to post a complaint on social media platforms before addressing them with the school administration. It is only a few who can use a face-to-face channel of airing grievances."

This qualitative data concurs with the quantitative data that was collected from teachers who had affirmed that they utilised SNS to a lesser extent in communicating with the stakeholders. The researcher found out that not many parents were still able to present their grievances through the face-to-face method of communication, perhaps due to the fear of intimidation from their superiors afterwards.

Correlation Analysis for Extent of Utilisation of SNS

Pearson correlation analysis was run to establish the nature and significance of the relationship between the Extent of Utilisation of SNS and the dependent variable, Crisis Management. It was established that there is a statistically significant relationship at 0.05 alpha level between the extent of utilisation of SNS and Crisis management ($r=0.850^{**}$; $p<0.05$). This suggests that the extent of utilisation of SNS has a positive correlation with how the crisis is managed. The finding of the correlation matrix is shown in Table 12. In this research, a correlation of 0.8 denotes a strong correlation between the extent of utilisation of SNS and crisis management.

Table 12: Correlation between Extent of Utilisation of SNS and Crisis Management

		Crisis Management
Extent of Utilisation of SNS	Pearson Correlation	.850**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	58

Response to Utilisation of SNS in Regard to a Crisis

The study established that (39%) of the participants indicated that they used SNS to assess the magnitude of disaster or crisis. It is crucial that school officials respond to allegations of a crisis. This entails determining the crisis's severity. Furthermore, (38%) of participants reported that they used SNS to a large extent in monitoring social media mentions for appropriate action. The researchers also claimed that with widespread participation, it is simple for informed individuals to dispel any false stories that do start to spread.

Instantaneous and effective communication between institutions and the populations they serve is essential. According to the findings, up to (43%) of participants reported that they used SNS to a large extent to provide instant feedback to their clients. This suggests that in order to notify the general public about the mitigation techniques in a crisis situation, the school administration thought they must act quickly. These technologies' benefits include being free, quick, and simple to use. They also reduce workload and time waste by sending out mass communications.

Information sharing on social media in schools is becoming more and more widespread. In order to lessen the effects of a crisis, school officials must respond quickly and accurately following an incident. According to this current research, (34%) of participants asserted that they use SNS to provide emotional support and healing when a relevant crisis has happened. Furthermore, 31% of the participants acknowledged that they

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used SNS to rebuild confidence by engaging the public directly. This implies that when SNS is used appropriately, organisations can rebuild confidence and trust from the clients. This perspective is similar to that of Conolly and Crepeau-Hobson (2020), who claim that social media can offer reliable and current information as well as practical resources for crisis prevention and crisis recovery. In this context, schools could make use of SNS to share information about the crisis, as well as to demonstrate their support and the actions they plan to take to resolve it. Table 13 shows the findings.

Table 13: Response to Social Networking Sites Content

Statement		NA	LE	SE	LE	VLE	Mean	SD
I use SNS to assess the magnitude of a disaster or crisis	7%	26%	28%	29%	10%	3.10	1.11	
I use SNS to provide Instant Feedback to the clients	17%	14%	12%	43%	14%	3.22	1.33	
I use SNS to Provide emotional support & healing when a crisis is mentioned	3%	19%	21%	34%	22%	3.53	1.14	
I use SNS to rebuild confidence by engaging the public directly	9%	24%	22%	31%	14%	3.17	1.20	
I use SNS to monitor social media mentions for appropriate action	5%	26%	10%	38%	21%	3.43	1.22	

NA=Not at All; LE=Little Extent; SE=Some Extent; LE=Large Extent; VLE=Very Large Extent

Qualitative Data for Analysis of a Crisis

The heads of schools who were chosen shared the following thoughts about their response to social media queries. They affirmed that:

SNS is a good platform, but we rarely utilise it to analyse the size of disasters or crises. In addition, SNS can be a great venue to provide supportive care when a crisis is revealed. This is because using SNS to monitor social media mentions and take relevant action is an effective method. This result agrees with the quantitative data in which teacher respondents acknowledged that schools should use Social Networking Sites (SNS) to disseminate the news about a situation or crisis, as well as to express their solidarity and the steps they are taking to address the problem.

Crisis Management

The dependent variable for the study was analysed and presented in Table 13. The main indicators for this variable include: Disaster planning and training, Problem-solving, decision making and information dissemination. The study established that (40%) of participants indicated that they use Social Network Sites in response, planning and training concerning a crisis to a large extent. However, up to (29%) lamented that they never use Social Network Sites in crisis management. This implies that in order to send out timely messages and identify spreading rumours, SNS officials must constantly monitor public postings on social media. Moreover, (43%) of participants averred that they use Social Network Sites in problem-solving regarding a crisis. This suggests that Social Networking Sites continue to be an essential tool for providing prompt attention to problems affecting learning institutions. These findings are in agreement with those of Kabura (2019), who discovered that Social Networking Sites are a better communication medium for crisis management and that they effectively reach their intended audience when a crisis occurs.

In times of crisis, an organisation should use SNS to make decisions and offer solutions. In this research, it was found that 28 per cent of respondents assert that they used social network sites to a large extent in decision-making regarding a crisis. Additionally, 33 per cent of participants stated that they used Social Network Sites to Provide updates on critical issues that have arisen. Also (29%) asserted that they used Social Network Sites in information dissemination relating to a crisis. This finding is in line with that of Lachlan et al. (2015), who note that increased social media use during a crisis, coupled with the public's expectation of receiving information quickly and, at the same time, the natural tendency of rumour spreading on social media, can foster the spread of false disaster-related information. Social networking site administrators must quickly correct fraudulent remarks that are posted on social media sites.

Table 14: Crisis Management

Statement	NA	LE	SE	LE	VLE	Mean	SD
I use Social Network Sites in response, planning and training concerning a crisis	3%	26%	16%	40%	16%	3.37	1.13
I use Social Network Sites in Problem-solving regarding a crisis	21%	7%	17%	43%	12%	3.18	1.34
I use Social Network Sites in decision-making regarding a crisis	10%	16%	22%	28%	24%	3.39	1.29
I use Social Network Sites in Information dissemination relating to a crisis	12%	16%	26%	29%	17%	3.24	1.26
I use Social Network Sites to Provide updates on critical issues that have arisen	3%	28%	14%	33%	22%	3.43	1.21

NA=Not at All; LE=Little Extent; SE=Some Extent; LE=Large Extent; VLE=Very Large Extent

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion: SNS have influenced crisis communication; hence, crisis management in the social media realm has become more complex because schools are not actively utilising this space while the rest of the world is using it effectively. Schools have allowed themselves to be points of discussion in times of crisis without the benefit of an appropriate avenue for responding to the interested parties on critical matters that are the basis for a crisis. Furthermore, schools have lost opportunities to benefit economically and socially from the community by not positioning themselves strategically in the social environment.

The study showed that schools are present on SNS platforms and update their information; however, they do not necessarily use these platforms as the primary sources of crisis communication. Furthermore, schools do not actively address the grievances of most parents who are active in the SNS. The parents, together with the general public, complain and sometimes compliment these schools on platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook and Twitter without any credible response from the school. When a school is in crisis, some teachers, parents, and non-teaching staff would go to their social media pages and update the public on the conditions of the school. However, the school itself does not actively participate in the

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communication process on those platforms. As a result, information regarding a crisis situation goes directly to the public without any control of the content by the school management.

Formal methods such as letters and person-to-person communication are still preferred in schools to communicate the status of the institutions to the public. Schools, especially public secondary schools, need to adapt and ensure that social media is effectively used in crisis communication to facilitate proper crisis management. Therefore, these schools should ensure their SNS platforms are user-friendly, constantly active with live updates, and provide all relevant information in good time during a crisis. This is an essential aspect that schools have been lacking in their utilisation of Social Networking Sites in crisis management. Thus far, social media has been used by everyone else during a crisis, except the schools themselves. The impact is that the crisis escalates in the SNS platforms with minimal to zero communication from the schools' representatives. Biegón (2017) agrees with the statement that the SNS platforms are fast methods to disseminate information to the public. Failure to effectively manage information distributed by parties other than the school management is catastrophic to the crisis management efforts of the school.

Recommendations: This research recommends that school principals start prioritising the use of social media in efforts to enhance effectiveness and efficiency in crisis management. The ministry is obligated to add a new role in public secondary schools, known as a *social media controller*. The school's social media controller is more like a public relations person, except that they operate on the SNS platforms. This employee's role is to communicate effectively to the public and any other concerned stakeholders, especially during a crisis. The employee is mandated to gather facts from the school and regarding the school in times of crisis, then convey these facts in a manner that is effectively regarded by the concerned parties.

Furthermore, through the social media controller, the study recommends that the schools adopt a feedback mechanism that enables the institutions to communicate with people through SNS and, at the same time, maintain the integrity and confidentiality of information disseminated to the public. The emphasis on this part is to manage the crisis, not to escalate the problem.

Crisis management in public secondary schools defines a benchmark for crisis management in all schools in Kenya. Therefore, crisis management in schools can also be enhanced by encouraging teachers, parents, non-teaching staff, and other stakeholders in the schools to fully utilise SNS to communicate crises in a manner that positively affects the general public. These stakeholders should be guided on how to treat confidential and sensitive information in the public domain through efficient laws and guidelines on SNS use. These laws and guidelines should emanate from the unions and the Ministry of Education down to the schools. The principals/managers of the public schools will be better equipped during crisis management through accurate, timely, and relevant communication. On the other hand, researchers will have a vantage point of reference because this will be a major aspect of the study for analysing the role and impact of social media in crisis management in public schools and beyond.

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