RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL MEDIA USE AND PSYCHOSOCIAL WELL-BEING OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN SELECTED PUBLIC AND PRIVATE TVET INSTITUTIONS IN KIAMBU COUNTY, KENYA

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been submitted to any other college or university for an academic award.

Signed:……Date: ……..
Leah Njeri Kuria (MACP/18560/0/21)

The thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as the appointed supervisor.

Signed: …… Date:……..
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Dedication

With profound gratitude and a heart full of love, I dedicate this thesis to my late father and Mother, Their unwavering belief in my potential continues to inspire me even in their absence. Their values and wisdom have been a guiding light throughout this journey. To my family, who are my greatest joy and source of strength, your patience, love, and understanding has been my motivation every step of the way. This accomplishment is as much yours as it is mine, and I hope it inspires you to pursue your dreams with the same determination.

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Abstract

The relationship between social media usage patterns and the psychosocial well-being of young people has become increasingly concerning in recent years. Numerous studies have been conducted, revealing the prevalence, trends, and underlying motives driving social media engagement among young people. This study aimed to elucidate the nexus between social media use and the psychosocial well-being of young people in TVET institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya. The specific objectives of the study were to; establish the forms of social media used by young people in TVET institutions, determine how use of social media influences the social well-being of young people studying at TVET institutions, examine how use of social media influences the mental well-being of young people in TVET institutions, and determine how use of social media influences the spiritual well-being of young people in TVET institutions. The Transactional Model of Stress and Coping and the Uses and Gratification Theory guided the study. Employing a convergent mixed-methods research design and stratified, simple random sampling method, data collection involved administering questionnaires to young people in selected public and private TVET institutions within Kiambu County and interview schedules for counsellors. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to present the data distribution with the help of SPSS version 29. Qualitative data was analysed using thematic analysis method. Quantitative results showed that WhatsApp, Facebook, and TikTok were the most frequently used platforms, with 81.3%, 62.0%, and 62.3% of respondents reporting frequent or very frequent use, respectively. Inferential analysis showed that while the set of social media platforms explained 33.8% of the variations in social well-being, only Twitter use (β = .276, t = 3.312, p = .001) had statistically significant positive effects on social well-being, none of the individual social media platforms significantly predicted mental well-being (p>.05), and only YouTube had a statistically significant positive effect on spiritual well-being (β = .179, t = 2.089, p<.05). The findings were corroborated by findings from in-depth interviews which revealed both positive and negative implications of social media use on psychosocial wellbeing. The study concluded that young people in TVET institutions in Kiambu County are highly engaged with a variety of social media platforms. However, the impact of social media use on psychosocial well-being of young people varied by the social media platform used. The study recommends that young people be encouraged to balance their online engagement with offline relationships and participation in community while using social media in ways that promote meaningful interaction, learning, and positive social support. Future research should incorporate a broader range of psychosocial, environmental, and personal variables in order to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that shape the psychosocial well-being of young people.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

ADHD: Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

BMI: Body Mass Index

EMA: Ecological Momentary Assessment

GAD: Generalised Anxiety Disorder

GPA: Grade Point Average

HBM: Health Belief Model

ICT: Information and Communication Technology

MD: Mental Development

PTSD: Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

SAD: Social Anxiety Disorder

SES: Socioeconomic Status

SMD: Standardised Mean Difference

SM: Social Media

SNS: Social Networking Sites

STS: Science, Technology, and Society

TPB: Theory of Planned Behavior

TVET: Technical Vocational Education and Training

YP: Young People

Operational Definition of Terms

Autonomy refers to the psychological capacity to make independent decisions, exercise self-direction, and have control over one's own behaviour and life choices (Gosselin, 2024). In the context of the study, autonomy entails the ability of young people to navigate their social media use in alignment with their personal values, goals, and preferences, without undue influence from external pressures or spelling errors.

Emotional well-being is a critical aspect of mental well-being that encompasses the ability to regulate emotions, maintain a positive outlook, and adapt to challenges effectively (Martínez-Líbano et al., 2025). In this study, emotional well-being is indicated by positive self-image, and a sense of purpose and meaning.

Psychosocial Well-being refers to a person's emotional, psychological, and social state, reflecting their overall mental health and satisfaction with life (Cilar Budler, 2025). In this study, the term is used as an umbrella term for mental well-being, social well-being, and spiritual well-being.

Self-acceptance: involves recognising, embracing, and affirming oneself, including both strengths and weaknesses, without judgement or self-criticism (Hall, 2022). In this study, it refers to young people’s unconditional and non-judgmental embrace of all aspects of their selves.

Social Media Use: This refers to the frequency, duration, and motive of use of social media platforms (Lugonzo, 2024). In this study, the term refers to the various types of social media platforms used by young people, their engagement level such as

active posting or passive, and the prevalence of use in terms of time spent and frequency of use.

Social media: The term social media encompasses websites and programmes that let users engage in social networking, produce and share content, and interact online (Zhang et al., 2023). In this study, the term social media refers to Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and WhatsApp.

Spiritual Well-being: This refers to a general and naturally occurring phenomenon in which a person has a close relationship with a supreme being (Monteiro et al., 2025). In this study, the term refers to young people's sense of purpose and connection to a community of faith.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET): In Kenya, TVET institutions provide practical skills-based education and training in various technical and vocational fields (Caroline, 2025). In this study, the term refers to institutions accredited by the Technical and Vocational Training Authority (TVETA) in Kiambu County.

Young People. In this context, the term young people refers to those between the ages of 18 and 24 in their early adulthood (Ojala, 2023). In this study, the term refers to students in the selected public TVET institutions aged 18 to 24 years.

Chapter One: Introduction and Background to the Study

Introduction

This chapter begins by providing a background overview that lays the foundation with respect to social media use in relation to the psychological well-being of young people. The research problem is then stated and the purpose of the study outlined. In addition, the chapter states the specific objectives and research questions of the study. The research assumptions are then stated and justification of the study provided. The chapter also comprises of the significance of the study to various stakeholders as well as scope of the study. The last part of the chapter highlights the limitations and delimitations of the study and the chapter summary.

Background to the Study

The Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and the unparalleled entry to mobile devices across the globe have led to the widespread overuse of social media and the platforms, particularly by the youth (Krishnamurthy et al., 2026). The recent use of social media is a source of concern because it is believed to have detrimental effects on psychological well-being (Zhang et al., 2023). In the context of the mentioned case, social media refers to websites and programmes that allow users to engage in social networking, create and share content, and interact online (Zhang et al., 2023).

The concept of psychosocial well-being is the holistic view that specifies four key aspects of a person's life, namely; mental, emotional, social, and spiritual (Jiwattanasuk et al., 2022). Mental well-being is a state of emotional, psychological, and social welfare of an individual, which is an indicator of his or her mental health

and life satisfaction (Bramhankar et al., 2023). These are positive emotions, engagement, relationship, meaning, and accomplishment. Also, mental well-being deals with mental, emotional, and cognitive development and maturity of a person, which helps to assure their mental and psychological well-being as well as their resilience (Gosselin, 2024).

Emotional well-being is a very important part of mental well-being that involves the capacity to control emotions, have a positive attitude, and be able to cope with challenges (Sharma, 2024). It includes an expression of various emotions fitting life situations and building resilience, as well as having a purpose and satisfaction with life (Bondarchuk et al., 2024). Emotional well-being is also connected to psychological flexibility, self-compassion, and interpersonal functioning, which is why it is an important variable in the literature that examines mental health outcomes (Yousefi et al., 2022).

Social well-being refers to the presence of good and significant relationships with others that make the person feel included and related to people in that society (Elliott et al., 2022). It also includes the capacity to communicate and interact efficiently with others around you, which makes the person feel appreciated and valued (Sen et al., 2022). The number of friends that a person can trust and share intimate information with, is positively related to higher levels of social well-being that decrease with the number of strangers (Gautam et al., 2024). Friends who are valued are those that support you during hard times.

According to Jastrzębski (2022), spirituality is a general and natural occurrence on which an individual is closely connected with some super being. In case the principle of spirituality as a versatile theoretical framework is neglected,

there is a chance that individuals might feel deprived of meaning, limitless, self-seeking, and numerous other psychological issues in life (Zurvani & Zarei, 2024). Every individual cannot help but can find a way of spiritualizing his/her life to offer spiritual fulfilment, seek his/her originality, values, beliefs, awareness, and goals (Ugwu, 2022). The spiritual needs are no less significant than the organs that constitute the body of the individual. The health of a person is based on their well-being in every aspect, such as spirit, biology, social, and emotional well-being. This is why the satisfaction of spiritual needs is a guarantee that the person will be spared of depressions in the mind (Zurvani & Zarei, 2024). Yaden et al. (2022) claim that spiritual well-being is a major variable that has an impact on mental health and life satisfaction.

The application of social media sites like Facebook, email, X, Instagram, WhatsApp, Snapchat, and so on has transformed social networking, media consumption, content creation, and sharing of information. Such excess use of social media has sparked the concern of a perceived connection between psychosocial well-being and spiritual well-being or destabilization of mental health (Swathi & Sujatha, 2022).

In the western world, including the Americas and European nations, research has been consistent in demonstrating a link between excessive use of social media and unwanted mental health outcomes, including anxiety, depression, and loneliness (Zubair et al., 2023). In the United States, Prasad et al. (2023) showed that a large percentage of teenagers had access to a smartphone and that a large proportion of them were always online. Another point that they made is the existence of various views on the impact of social media, and both negative and positive reactions were

mentioned. Weinstein (2023) highlighted the popularity of the negative consequences of social media on mental health, and possible positive impacts of social media, including community and connectivity. Dorčić et al. (2023), on the other hand, investigated the influence of social media in comparison to body image dissatisfaction in European adolescents and emphasized its detrimental consequences. Zhong et al. (2022) found that the rate of smartphone use among the youth in Asia was high, and they expressed the worry of negative emotional and psychological impacts. There was also problematic internet use, as indicated by the prevalence of problematic internet-related behaviour (Sanchez-Fernandez & Borda-Mas, 2023). On the same note, Samari et al. (2022) in Singapore found diverse undesirable impacts of social media, such as exposure to controversial content and encouragement of undesirable behaviour that destabilizes the psychological state.

Camara et al. (2023) noted the quick incorporation of social media among the youth in Africa and the need to conduct research to establish the usage patterns of social media, especially among the rural population. In this regard, studies carried out in Africa have yielded information on the effects of social media on mental health. A study by Ofuebe et al. (2022) in Nigeria revealed that a high level of psychological distress and reduced overall well-being were correlated with heavy social media usage. Equally, research in South Africa (Coetzee et al., 2024) and Egypt (Shouman et al., 2023) has also found the same, indicating that it is a common phenomenon on the continent. There were also positive and negative impacts of social media on behaviour, as a study conducted in Ghana by Abdul-Aziz and Maigah (2024) revealed. These results align with the overall trends in other neighbouring countries, such as Ethiopia, where Yimer's (2021) research found that the use of social media

among the younger population with no control can be worryingly linked to the mental health of young people.

In Kenya, the social and economic policies have put Technical, Vocational, and Entrepreneurship Training (TVET) as a main pillar of bridging the industrial and training gap (Muchira et al. 2023). The government has made much allocation in empowering its graduates with technical competencies in recognition of the role that institutions are expected to perform in imparting skills for adaptability and innovations (Ordu, 2022). Under the skills, the youth are deemed to make their own technological decisions in order to adapt and enhance upon the selected methods and products, and later to produce new technology internally. In an effort to assist the TVET graduates to be central to the realization of the Kenyan vision 2030, the government has also implemented interventions towards improved business environment through appropriate policy frameworks, and these include better internet connections to support acquisition of twenty first century digital and innovative skills (Motuka, 2024) The enhanced digital connections to improve acquisition of digital skills has however also shown some worrying trends in use of social media platforms by the youth. The present study focused on social media use among young people in selected public and private TVET institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya with a view to investigate the relationship between their social media use and their psychosocial well-being.

Statement of the Problem

In Kenya, the internet penetration on personal and institutional levels has seen a tremendous growth. This has intensified the use of social media, particularly amongst the young generation. Specifically, the availability of the internet,

particularly among students, has been regarded as one of the avenues through which information and knowledge sharing can effectively lead to learning. Nevertheless, some concerns have been raised regarding the possible impact of social media on psychosocial health following perceived social media addictions among the youth, particularly students. Without empirical evidence on the mechanism with which social media affects psychological well-being, interventions undertaken by TVET institutions may achieve limited effectiveness.

Several studies have indicated that there is a complicated association between the use of social media and psychological well-being. According to Opiyo and Muthee (2022), the idea of using social media to gather religious information, find health information, and share photos of themselves has potential benefits to a young person; however, the need to connect with friends has low utility. Ongeri et al. (2021) emphasized the possibilities of social media in the mental health practice, such as raising awareness and providing specialist care. Lugonzo (2024) highlighted dualism in social media use that is both advantageous and detrimental in the lives of teachers' training colleges, where social media can improve education and networking, as well as cause distraction and cybercrime. Lenkakuro et al. (2024) emphasized the ease of social media in accessing educational content, even though it is feared that it will affect the time and academic performance of students.

All of these studies pointed to the idea that although social media has some positive effects, its overuse and some exercises might be harmful to the psychosocial well-being. Nevertheless, research examining the relationship between social media use and psychosocial well-being has produced contradictory results, making it necessary to conduct more research. Moreover, sufficient studies have not been done

on TVET students and specifically on mental, social, and spiritual well-being that is crucial to psychosocial stability. The present study sought to contribute to the body of knowledge by investigating the connection between social media use and the psychosocial well-being of students in public TVET institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between social media use and the psychosocial well-being of young people in selected public TVET institutions within Kiambu County, Kenya.

Research Objectives

1. To establish the forms of social media used by young people in selected public and private TVET institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya.
2. To determine the relationship between social media and the social well-being of young people studying in selected public and private TVET institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya.
3. To examine the relationship between social media and the mental well-being of young people in selected public and private TVET institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya.
4. To determine the relationship between social media use and the spiritual well-being of young people in selected public and TVET institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following questions:

1. What are the forms of social media used by young people in selected public and private TVET institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya?
2. What is the relationship between social media use and the social well-being of young people in selected public and private TVET institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya?
3. What is the relationship between social media use and the mental well-being of young people in selected public and private TVET institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya?
4. What is the relationship between social media use and the spiritual well-being of young people in selected public and private TVET institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya?

Assumptions of the Study

This study works with the assumption that the use of social media among young adults in TVET institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya, is imminent, and it can have considerable consequences for their psychosocial well-being. The assumption is also that the difference in patterns of social media usage, motivation, and experience could shape the outcome of mental health, social connectedness, and academic performance among this age group. Also, the study presumes that adaptation strategies to encourage responsible social media use can be effective in alleviating the possible adverse effects on the psychosocial health that will lead to the overall resiliency and success of the youth.

Justification of the Study

The study was justified by the fact that, although social media is a major engine for marketing and communication, researchers are worried about the potential

negative psychological impact on young people (Chaudhary et al., 2023). Social media is generally unregulated, with people posting content without an urgency to filter it, meaning the potential damage it has on people is enormous (Vese, 2022). In the recent past, there has been an uproar over uncensored content such as pornography, which hurts people's mental health in Kenya (Odanga & Ogone, 2025). Colleges, among them TVET college students, are the concerns since young people have embraced social media as a means of interaction, shaping emotional and behavioral patterns (Ruita, 2023). The addictive nature of social media is particularly concerning, as scholars have noted that young people spend an average of 3 hours per day on social media, which is detrimental to their academic work and productivity (Finkelsztein et al., 2025).

While social media usage is highly prevalent among TVET students, there is a paucity of empirical evidence on the nexus between social media use and psychological well-being among TVET students. For instance, Kharono et al. (2022) and Muturi (2024) have examined the harmful effects of social media on the mental health of young people, meaning the study findings may not apply to older TVET students. Similarly, Kituyi and Kyeyune (2024) and Oriaso and Waithera (2025) focused on university students, therefore not accounting for the unique needs of TVET students. This study appreciates the unique challenges faced by TVET students, which uniquely shape the social media adoption and consumption. It is on this basis that this study examines the link between social media usage and the psychosocial well-being of young people in selected public and private TVET institutions within Kiambu County, Kenya.

Significance of the Study

The results of this study have major implications for different stakeholders concerned with the welfare and growth of the youth. The findings could provide practical implications to policymakers, educators, and mental health care providers in the creation of tailored interventions to meet the unique needs of this target group by illuminating an in-depth connection between the use of social media and psychosocial well-being. Furthermore, the study filled a contextual knowledge gap on how the digital world influences the psychosocial well-being of the youth through in the African context. The study hopes to equip the youth with knowledge and skills on how to use social media responsibly, thereby, enhancing a supportive and successful youth development process.

Scope of the Study

The study focused on the youths enrolled in TVET institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya. The study mainly examined the connection between the use of social media and psychosocial wellness in this cohort. The study also considered the effects of social media use on the major aspects of psychosocial well-being, which include social well-being, mental well-being, and spiritual well-being. The study specifically examined the positive and negative aspects of using social media. The study thus endeavored to investigate the degree to which the use of social media enhances or harms the psychosocial adaptation of the young people in TVET institutions.

The geographical area of the study was Kiambu County, which has special combination of rural and urban environments that makes it a representative area in studying the social media trends of young people in Kenya. Students between the ages of 18 and 24 were targeted as respondents since they are the most active on

social media and most susceptible to the psychological effects of the same (Wamuyu, 2020). Data was gathered through structured surveys and focus group discussions, which offer quantitative and qualitative information. Besides, the initiative explored methods and strategies of promoting responsible and balanced social media habits among TVET students. Such means were guided and informed by the results of the study and focused on enhancing digital literacy, increasing mental health awareness, and promoting positive online behavior.

Limitations

The reliance on self-reported questionnaire data may have introduced social desirability and recall biases, potentially affecting the accuracy of responses regarding social media use and well-being. This limitation was mitigated by incorporating multiple data collection methods such as questionnaire and interview guide. Further, the researcher ensured adequate rapport was created before gathering data. A safe space was created that set respondents free to be candid in their responses. The study was conducted within a limited timeframe, which constrained the period available for data collection, follow-up, and in-depth engagement with respondents. To mitigate this limitation, the researcher scheduled data collection activities and meetings at times that were convenient for respondents, thereby maximizing participation rates. Some respondents may have had varying levels of understanding of key concepts related to social media use and psychosocial well-being, which could have affected the accuracy and consistency of their responses. In addition, technical or academic terms used in the questionnaire may have been interpreted differently by different respondents. To mitigate this limitation, the researcher provided clear definitions of key terms and explained relevant concepts to

respondents before they completed the questionnaires, thereby enhancing comprehension.

Delimitations

In this research, the target group was youth in TVET establishments in the Kiambu County in Kenya. The institutions of the TVET that were not formally registered and accredited by the corresponding authorities were not considered eligible by definition. Thus, the unregistered or unofficial TVET institutions were not included in the research. The target population was the students between the ages of 18 and 24 who were pursuing diploma and certificate programs. This demographic was selected because it is the majority of the youth who engage on social media and are at the stage of mental development. As a result, the persons aged below 18 years (minors) and above 24 years were not included in the study to provide some consistency in the developmental phase of the respondents.

Students, institutional counsellors, and the designated guidance and counselling staff in the selected public and private TVET colleges participated in the study. The inclusion of the institutional counsellors and the guidance and counselling staff was informed by the fact that they had data about the measurable psychological and social impacts of using social media within the student population. Focus was on the effects of social media use on psychosocial well-being, with a special emphasis on three major dimensions, which are social well-being and spiritual well-being. The study did not incorporate any other factors that influence psychosocial well-being, like family history, socioeconomic status, or institutional policies, because they were not within the scope of the current study. The results and suggestions were limited to the given population and geographical setting of the Kiambu County, Kenya.

Chapter Summary

The chapter has discussed relevant literature that justifies the study by explaining the study's background, elucidating the problem, articulating the purpose, and listing the study's objectives and research questions. The chapter has also highlighted the study's assumptions, justified its design, and discussed its scope. This is in addition to the significance of the study, the limitations of the study, and the delimitations of the study.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction

In this chapter, a critical review of literature is undertaken. The empirical review is conducted on the basis of the research objectives, highlighting gaps in the literature currently available, which formed the centre of the study. Also, the theoretical framework is analyzed; the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping, as well as the Theory of Uses and Gratifications. The theories provide information on how customers interact with social media. These are the points of focus for this study. The chapter ends with the conceptual framework and a summary.

Empirical Review

Social Media Used by the Youth

Research conducted by Alatorre et al. (2023) examined the social effects of social media and social media preference among young individuals in the United States. This was a web-based study, and the findings were informed by interviewing teenagers through focus group discussions. The study established that social media platforms such as TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and Twitter were the most trafficked social media platforms among American young people. The study pinpointed the changing patterns in the use of the platforms by various age groups, and this illuminated the dynamic aspect of social media usage. Nevertheless, it is less useful when applied to Kenya due to its focus on the U.S context. It also fails to consider the psychological and social consequences of social media use, and, therefore, it is critical to investigate the correlation between the use of social media

and the mental and social well-being of young individuals in the Kenyan TVET institutions.

Fruehwirth et al. (2024) explored the usage of social media and mental health guided by empirical evidence. The study explains why Snapchat has remained the social media app of choice among the younger generations, highlighting the visual communication and disappearing content among youth, which are among the features that appeal to younger audiences. The findings also pointed out that the younger individuals tend to utilize applications such as Snapchat more than the older generation. The study was largely descriptive, though, and it is usage-oriented as opposed to psychosocial outcomes, which demonstrates the need to examine the uses and the impacts of it on the mental health of people who live in underdeveloped countries like Kenya.

Arnot et al. (2024) investigated the most prevalent social media used among young people in Australia, and the findings were informed by a sample of 500 young people. The qualitative study design showed that TikTok was mainly used to promote related content. The findings also showed that Facebook and Twitter were perceived to be less engaging, though they were used in corporate settings for organizing and amplifying marketing campaigns. The study also noted that Instagram and TikTok were adopted if the youth wanted the message to reach a wider audience. However, the study was exclusively informed by qualitative data, suggesting a methodological gap, which the current study bridged by using a convergent parallel research mixed methods design.

Lim et al. (2022) sought to understand the preferred social media platform for promoting health among young adults in the UK. The study was conducted through a

web-based conversation involving 165 participants aged 18 to 24 years. The study showed that Facebook was commonly used for news updates, for promoting brands (advertisements), and for reading health-related content. The study also observed that YouTube and Google were commonly used by the young adults for educational purposes and information search. YouTube was particularly preferred for educational purposes, as it enabled cross-checking the video content, helping them to compare and judge the credibility of the information they were looking for. The young adults also preferred to get health-related messages, especially among those dedicated to well-being and fitness, with Snapchat, Tumblr, and Twitter not featuring in health updates. However, the study evaluated social media as tools for promoting health among young adults, thus opening a conceptual gap. The present study addressed the gap by examining social media usage by the youth in public and private TVET institutions.

Mu et al. (2022) studied social media usage patterns among adolescents in China using a sample of 242 adolescents. The findings of the quantitative study showed that TikTok and Kuai Shou were the most popular social media platforms, with over 60% of surveyed adolescents using them regularly. The other platforms with significant market share include Sina Weibo (23%), Tencent (17%), and Watermelon (3%). The findings showed that the majority of users watch short-term videos, with the younger age group spending more time online. Most of the users were from secondary schools (55%), junior schools (26%), university students (14%), and primary school pupils (6%). The usage pattern also showed that more females were engaged in social media (66%) compared to their male counterparts (34%). Moreover, 43% of the sampled participants spent between 1 and 2 hours on social

media, with another 22% taking between 2 and 4 hours, and 3.7% spending more than 6 hours online. However, the study was anchored on quantitative methods, thus opening a methodological gap, which the current study bridged by relying on a mixed-methods design.

BinDhim et al. (2023) studied social media usage behavioral patterns in Saudi Arabia using secondary data obtained from 5,176 people ranging from 19 years to 60 years. The findings of the cross-sectional study design showed that people mainly used WhatsApp, Telegram, and Snapchat for shared communication and group chats, usual among peers. Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok were, however, used for entertainment, creative expression, and following celebrities. The study also indicated that Facebook was used for community interaction and Twitter for sharing and receiving news and opinions, while LinkedIn was used for promoting professional networking. However, the study's findings were informed by secondary data from older adults not in the college-going age, thus opening both contextual and methodological gaps. The current study addressed the gap by focusing on young people in TVET institutions.

Umeh et al. (2025) examined the use of social media by young people and their usage in Nigeria, guided by a quantitative survey design. The study, with a sample of 384 youths, showed that government websites were widely preferred by 77% of the participants to look for information regarding employment opportunities and government updates. The same study also observed that Facebook (79%) was used for networking and trends, while Instagram, with 78% indicating using it, showed it was used for marketing purposes, brand promotion, and trend-driven engagement. With 74% of the participants indicating they are using it, the study

observed that WhatsApp was mainly used in mobilization and information sharing among members of the WhatsApp group. Twitter was, on the other hand, used by 71% of the participants and was preferred for its highly lively updates, transparency, and helping the participants to track global and local trends. However, the study was conducted using a quantitative survey design, thus opening a methodological gap, which the current study bridged by using a convergent parallel research design.

Adjin-Tettey (2022) evaluated the purpose of social media usage among adolescents in Ghana using a sample of 300 secondary school students. The findings showed that Facebook was widely accepted as a tool for messaging and group communication, while WhatsApp was used for instant messaging and group communication. The study additionally observed that Twitter was used by the teenagers for news updates, following up on trends, and public conversation, while the Instagram platform was used for sharing still and moving images for identity-building. YouTube was also widely accepted for educational and entertainment purposes, including listening to music and watching movies. However, the study was conducted among secondary school students, thus opening a contextual gap, which the current study filled by focusing on TVET students.

Caro and Freeman (2023) investigated the usage of social media among the youth in Uganda, guided by a qualitative study design using a sample of 50 participants. The study showed that Twitter (X) was mainly used for mobilization and public discourse. Facebook was on the other side, used for networking, sharing experiences, and marketing purposes, while Instagram was used for visual content, creativity, and cultural exchange. The study showed that social media usage was addictive as young people spent a significant amount of time online rather than

engaging in productive activities. Specifically, the study noted that social media usage reduced concentration in class, reduced reasoning capacity, and led to low self-esteem. However, this study was anchored on a phenomenological study design, thus opening a methodological gap that the current study addressed by using a convergent mixed method.

Wamuyu (2020) explored the prevalence of social media in Kenya by interviewing 9,765 participants spread across 18 counties. This was a systematic study, and the findings were informed by synthesizing 18 journal articles. The study found that WhatsApp dominated the Kenyan social media space, with an 84.3% user base, followed by Facebook with an 81.6% user base. In the educational sector, the study indicated Facebook was the most dominant (87.1%) among undergraduate students, with 74.5% of the postgraduate students preferring professional networking. As far as content was concerned, the study found that 82.2% of the students used YouTube to access educational content. The findings also showed that the youth used Snapchat (72.4%) and TikTok (78.5%) for interactive purposes, while older adults preferred Facebook (85.8%) and Instagram (81.2%) for the same purpose. However, the study included non-college students, suggesting a wider study context.

Social Media and its Impact on the Social Well-Being of the Youth

Boniel-Nissim et al. (2022) investigated the impact of social media on the well-being of teenagers in 42 countries across the world. The longitudinal study design was conducted in the UK, and 190,089 adolescents were sampled. The findings showed that 46% of the participants were active users, while 7% were problematic users, implying that the inactive users were 47% of the sample. The findings also showed that the problematic users had the lowest mental/social well-

being and the highest cases of substance use. The passive users on the other side recorded the lowest substance use, but also lower life satisfaction and peer support. Comparatively, the findings also suggested that girls were predisposed to getting into intense or problematic social media use. Again, the study demonstrated that older adolescents often found themselves in intense/problematic social media use. However, this was a longitudinal study, thus opening a methodological gap, which the current study addressed by basing the field study on a cross-sectional study.

Sewall et al. (2022) investigated the impact of social media on the social well-being of young adults in the USA using a sample of 384 young adults. The findings showed that the duration and frequency of mobile phone usage and social networks predicted emotional distress. The findings also showed that social networks, including Facebook, lead to a higher level of social isolation because some individuals tend to compare themselves with others. Conversely, the study also observed that Instagram, which is rather visual, helped in creating a sense of belonging. The findings imply that people should have different social interactions both online and in the real world to ensure a healthy balance and reduce the risks of the harmful implications of overusing social media. However, in addition to social media, the study also considered smartphone addiction, thus opening a conceptual gap, which the current study filled by focusing on social media.

Plackett et al. (2023) investigated the effect of social media on the mental health of users in the UK through an empirical literature review. On the positive side, the findings demonstrated that social media enhanced social connectedness and peer relationships. The study additionally observed that social media facilitated learning, awareness, and social engagement. On the other hand, the study indicated that social

media increased depression and anxiety, as it reduced in-person interactions, which are essential for relationship stability. This is in addition to cyberbullying, which increases the likelihood of psychological trauma, leading to poor academic outcomes. The findings also highlighted the danger of social media addiction, which creates dependency, inhibiting personal growth. However, the study's findings were informed by extant literature, thus opening a methodological gap, which the present bridged by relying on primary data.

Pang (2022) sought to establish the efficacy of social media on the psychological well-being of young people in China. The study, which focused on WeChat, was conducted using a sample of 566 young people. The study established that network diversity positively and significantly predicted online bonding, social capital, and life satisfaction. Moreover, findings indicated that network diversity and network size were the means through which WeChat affected the young people's psychological well-being and quality of life. This implies that the expansion and diversification of social media networks partly explain social media engagement. However, the study was limited to investigating the effect of WeChat on the mental well-being of the participants, thus opening a conceptual gap. The present study addressed the gap by investigating the impact of social media in general on the social well-being of the youth.

Santangelo (2023) investigated the impact of social media on social well-being in college students in the Netherlands. Mixed methods research design was used. Data was collected from a sample size of 60 respondents. The findings showed that overusing the internet poses a risk of becoming addicted and becoming isolated as a result, which is predictable of anxiety and depression. The findings also

demonstrated that social media inhibited people from socializing. Though the study succeeds well in displaying cross-cultural patterns, it is overly dependent on external and small, contextually limited sample studies, such as the 60 respondents, thus opening a methodological gap. The present study compensated for the gap by relying on a sample of 390, including 10 student counselors.

Murari et al. (2024) investigated the impact of social media among young people in India through a systematic review. The findings showed that social media exposed the students to cyberbullying and pornography, which has a detrimental effect on their psychological well-being. The study also highlighted that social media has been accused of having social effects like isolation that can lead to anxiety and depression. On the positive side, the study demonstrated that social media builds a social support system and builds social integration among the students in tertiary institutions. It acknowledges the ability of social media to enhance communication and socialization, but indicates the risk of isolation and depression. However, it used existing studies to inform the findings, thus opening a methodological gap that the current study filled by using primary data.

Vaingankar et al. (2022) studied social media as a tool for enhancing mental well-being among young people in Singapore. This was a phenomenological study design, which was conducted in Singapore, with the findings informed by in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, using a sample of 95 young people. The study showed that social media use bridged geographical distance, helping loved ones keep in touch in real time. Thus, social media helps in building trust, a sense of belonging, and a means through which empathy can be shared with scattered relatives and friends. The findings also demonstrated that social media helped people to deal

with negative emotions by sharing them online with friends, thus acting as a coping mechanism. However, the study was framed to evaluate social media as a positive vehicle for promoting mental well-being, thus opening a conceptual gap. The present study addressed the gap by investigating the relationship between social media and the social well-being of the youth.

Ghai et al. (2022) examined the connection between social media and social well-being among African youth in Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), Latin America, China, and South and South-East Asia. The findings of the empirical review study showed that social media creates ties and support systems among groups. The study, however, emphasized the need to deal with the bad effects, including cyberbullying and social comparison that can come as a result of too much use of social media. The reviewed paper was based on the data of various studies conducted globally to demonstrate how social media influences the well-being of people in various regions of the world, thus broadening the context. The present study addressed the gap by focusing on TVET institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya.

Damome (2022) introduces the concept of social media as a tool for creating social impact among young people in Togo. This was a qualitative study, and the findings were informed by interviewing 79 young adults. The findings suggested that social media was a forum through which information was shared, building a sense of belonging, self-awareness, self-esteem, and identity. The study also identified social media as enhancing trust building and empathy, thus forming a foundation for building solid relationships. However, the study focused on social media as a tool for social remediation, thus opening a conceptual gap. The current study bridged the gap

by investigating the relationship between social media and the social well-being of students in TVET institutions.

Additionally, Onderi and Oginda (2024) studied the effects of social media on the well-being of students in public universities in Kenya. The study utilized existing literature, and the findings indicate that the amount of time spent on social media projects isolates and leads to anxiety and depression. The authors also report that students often waste time, leading to a general decline in student outcomes. For example, the reviewed studies noted that students used quality time on social media platforms, especially Facebook, WhatsApp, and Twitter, even when they were in lecture time. The results of the study also showed that online socialization among learners affected the behavior of the students in terms of studying and academic development. However, the study relied on existing literature, thus raising a methodological gap. Moreover, the focus on university students rather than TVET learners induces a deficit in the context. This gap renders the need to quantify and analyze the psychosocial effects of the use of social media on young people in the TVET institutions in Kiambu County using primary data.

Social Media and Mental Health among the Youths

Kwon et al. (2024) investigated the effect of social media time duration on the mental health of children in the US. The panel study was conducted using data collected from 48775 children. The study established that the overuse of social media and online platforms was related to heightened depression and loneliness among youths. The study has highlighted the need to limit screen time and the effects that it may have on mental health. The findings also noted that excessive social media usage leads to lower flourishing, in terms of negative emotions, and lower resilience. Such

children also show higher externalizing behaviors, characterized by hyperactivity and aggression. However, the study sought to understand the effect of screen time on children's mental health, thus raising a conceptual gap. The current study filled the gap by studying the relationship between social media and the mental health of TVET students.

Yu et al. (2024) investigated the role of social media on sleep quality among young people in Hong Kong, and the findings were informed by a scoping review of relevant literature. The findings showed that social media use (SMU) was associated with going to bed late, having poor sleep quality, shorter sleep duration, and insomnia. The study additionally showed that the unrestricted and excessive SMU predicted depression, anxiety, self-harm, and lower self-esteem. Moreover, the study showed that poor sleep and mental health can also drive increased SMU, meaning that this was a self-reinforcing cycle, making it hard to break free from SMU. However, the study sought to explain the role of SMU in insomnia, thus suggesting a conceptual gap. The present study addressed the gap by investigating the nexus between social media and mental well-being among TVET students.

Twenge et al. (2022) investigated the effect of social media on mental health outcomes in the UK. It was a longitudinal quantitative study design and the findings were informed by a sample of 5926 teenage girls and 5946 adolescent boys. The study showed that there was a direct link between mental health problems and SMU, with the effect being more pronounced among girls compared to their male counterparts. Again, the study showed that social media use was strongly linked to depression, anxiety, and lower well-being. Specifically, the study demonstrated that the SMU led to the likelihood of binge drinking, hard drug use, sexual assault, and

obesity. However, the study was a longitudinal study, thus suggesting a methodological gap, which the present study addressed by undertaking a cross-sectional study.

Saleem et al. (2024) investigated the relationship between the frequent use of social networking sites (SNS) and psychological functioning among children and adolescents. The study was conducted in the UK, and the findings were informed by synthesizing existing literature reviews. The study showed that excessive SNS use was associated with higher levels of psychological distress, comprising both depression and anxiety symptoms. The study also observed that the time spent on social networks and screen time was detrimental to health since it predicted emotional problems, maladaptive behavior, and obesity. Again, the findings indicated that girls experienced elevated levels of depression and anxiety compared to boys. However, the study relied on extant studies, thus revealing a method gap, which the current study addressed by relying on primary data.

Satyaninrum et al. (2023) investigated the mental health occasioned by social media usage in Indonesia. The mixed methods study design found that the more adolescents use social media, the lower their self-esteem, the higher their body dissatisfaction, the higher their depressive levels, and the higher their anxiety levels. The same study outlined negative implications of social comparison, cyberbullying, and pressure to uphold an idealized online persona as a major problem. The finding also pointed out the possible undesirable outcomes, including reduced face-to-face communication, social loneliness, elevated stress levels, and sleep problems. The findings also suggested the importance of specific interventions and guidance in the choice of positive mental health results in the framework of social media use. This is

in addition to the necessity of proper guidelines and measures to mitigate the possible adverse social media impact on mental health. However, the study focused on the effect of social media on psychological health in the general population, thus widening the context of the study, which the present study restricted by focusing on young people in selected public TVET institutions.

Suhag and Rauniyar (2024) investigated the impact of social media on self-esteem and eating habits among teenagers in Indonesia. This was an empirical study in which the findings were informed by existing literature. The findings showed that excessive usage of social media increased body dissatisfaction, poor self-worth, and risk of eating disorders. Poor eating habits, which young people learned by watching celebrities promoting food, amplified harmful norms, including fad diets, extreme thinness, and weight-loss aids. The findings also showed that girls were more likely to get more depressed and anxious and adopt poor eating habits than their male counterparts. However, the study sought to establish the link between social media use and eating habits, thus opening a conceptual gap. The present study bridged the gap by investigating the relationship between social media and the mental well-being of TVET students.

Hendricks and Kanyiri (2021) investigated the impact of social media on the well-being of young people in South Africa. This was a qualitative study, and the findings were informed by interviewing 30 youths registered with dual findings. The findings mentioned the possibility of social comparison and depression due to excessive use of social media and the association between excessive use of social media and mental disorders, self-harm, and suicide. However, social media also positively impacted the well-being of the youth, including giving them a sense of

community and support. However, this was a qualitative study, thus opening a methodological gap, which the current study filled by relying on a mixed-method study design.

Aledeh et al. (2024) investigated the role of social media in mental health and suicide among young people in Nigeria, and the findings were informed through an empirical study design. On the positive side, the findings showed SNS encouraged peer support, identity formation, and an opportunity for self-expression, which significantly enhanced mental health. The negative effects include cyberbullying, social comparison, and exposure to harmful content, which increase psychological distress. The study linked the high-level mental health problems of young people, seen through depression and anxiety, to frequent usage of SNS. Again, the findings also demonstrated that adolescents and young adults were particularly susceptible due to developmental transitions, peer pressure, and identity exploration, owing to excessive SNS engagement. The findings also concluded that smartphone addiction was widespread, and it was linked to psychological morbidity in males. However, this study relied on existing literature, thus opening a methodological gap, which the present study addressed by relying on primary data.

Oseko and Muyaka (2022) examined the role of social media in the psychological health of adolescents in Kenya. The authors recruited 375 secondary school students who were using social media, in addition to 75 teachers. The study demonstrated that social media use positively correlated with self-concept, though the frequency of use, time spent, and number of friends showed negative correlations. The result showed that using social media worsened the self-confidence and self-esteem of students as they tended to believe the type of feedback (good or bad) they

received from their peers and how they interpreted and perceived that feedback. However, the study was limited to secondary school students, thus opening a contextual gap, which the present study filled by focusing on TVET students.

Kiarie and Gathuci (2025) examined the role of social media on the self-image of university students in private universities in Kenya. The descriptive design study was conducted using a sample of 359 university students, and the findings showed that spending more time and engagement on social media leads to a higher risk of body dysmorphia. Specifically, the study showed that the students often compared their looks with others and felt anxious about their appearance; used filters and editing tools before posting their images online; and felt pressured to look "perfect" online. However, the study was contextualized to understand whether social media activities led to body dysmorphia, thus opening a conceptual gap. The present study addressed this by investigating the relationship between social media and mental health among TVET students.

Social Media and Spiritual Well-Being

Ehlebracht (2022) examined the influence of online platforms, including social media, on spiritual development among young people in the USA. The qualitative study design involved 18 young people participating in the study. The research suggests that the Internet, including social media, plays a significant role in facilitating spiritual exploration and growth among young individuals by offering access to a wide range of spiritual resources and communities. The researchers found that young people often use Facebook to express their spiritual beliefs and connect with others who share similar values. However, the study introduced spiritual belief as the outcome variable being shaped by social media, thus opening a conceptual gap.

The current study filled the gap by treating spiritual well-being as the outcome variable.

Beckham (2023) explored the benefits and the harmful effects of social media on the spiritual growth of young adults. The phenomenological study design was conducted in the USA, and 15 participants were sampled. The study observed that social media creates virtual faith communities, where members provide instrumental, informational, and emotional support to members who are struggling or facing challenges. The study also indicated the benefits of faith podcasts and YouTube channels in building the faith community, meaning religious instruction is no longer limited to attending in-person meetings. As with conventional influencers, social media enabled religious influencers to share live testimonies with the public, thereby, positively enhancing the spiritual lives of young people. However, the study also noted the harmful side of social media, as it has the potential to accelerate the teachings of wrong doctrine. It provides a platform for competing religious teachings that may confuse the unlearned and new believers. However, this was a phenomenological study design, which opens a methodological gap, which the current study bridged by utilizing a convergent parallel research design.

Wang et al. (2025) investigated the role of social media in Chinese youth's religious life and moral behavior. This was a quantitative study design, in which the findings were informed by interviewing 525 young people. The study noted that the Z generation has adopted Weibo and Douyin social media platforms for spiritual engagement and to express their beliefs and participate in online rituals. The study also indicated that social media interaction was used as a pressure reliever for anxiety, offering **e**motional comfort, identity formation, and community belonging.

However, the study observed that in China's atheistic context, Gen Z's digital religious practices are regarded as secular coping strategies rather than deep faith commitments. The study was conducted in China, which is predominantly Buddhist; thus, the study shows a contextual misalignment, which the current study rectified by focusing on TVET students in Kenya, which is a predominantly Christian nation.

Pandya (2025) assessed the impact of social media on spiritual formation among Generation Z college students in universities in India. Data were collected via an online survey, and 25 participants responded. The findings of this study indicate that social media technology has altered the spiritual formation of young people, as they are unable to be fully present during such activities. However, the study found that social media was useful in cases where it was channeled towards enhancing religious values, as it enables individuals to participate in religious instruction from the comfort of their homes. However, its conclusions were based on Hindu religion, thus opening a contextual gap, as Kenya is largely a Christian nation. The contextual gap was satisfied by administering the questionnaires to TVET students, most of whom were Christians.

Hussain and Wang (2024) explored the use of social media in Muslims' pilgrimage to Mecca among Pakistani pilgrims. The qualitative study design interviewed 30 pilgrims randomly selected from groups that were traveling to Mecca. The study found that the pilgrims used social media to locate routes and accommodation and shared progress by sharing live updates, photos, and reflections. The findings also demonstrated that social media strengthened bonds across geographical distances, fostering shared identity and mutual encouragement. The study also observed that social media inspired others and contributed to collective

narratives, thus facilitating dialogue on spirituality and cultural exchange. However, the study was undertaken among Muslim faithfuls in the context of their pilgrimage journey, thus raising a contextual gap, which the current study sought to address by focusing on TVET students from various religious backgrounds.

Okpe and Jibrin (2024) examined the role of social media on the moral formation of young people in Nigeria. On the positive side, the study found that online groups foster fellowship, Bible study, prayer circles, and shared faith experiences. The study also observed that social media opens the church wall, enabling young people to engage with people from diverse religious traditions, broadening spiritual perspectives. However, the findings noted that social media risks exposing people to secular or conflicting ideologies, which weaken moral and spiritual commitments. Again, social media promotes impersonal interactions, with the youth experiencing tension between online personas and authentic spiritual life. The study also established that social media activity predicts the moral formation of young people. This was a qualitative study design, thus suggesting a methodological gap, which the current study filled by relying on a mixed study, specifically a convergent mixed-study design.

Adasi et al. (2025) studied social media as a tool for manipulating Christians and its effect on Christian growth in Ghana. This was a qualitative study in which the researcher analyzed WhatsApp, YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram and collected data from 50 Christians. The study found that some religious leaders have realized that the power of social media is a powerful tool for shaping the worldview of Christians. Consequently, the study noted that unscrupulous religious leaders were using this to exploit their followers psychologically and economically. The study

noted that while some of the church members accommodated such exploitation, possibly due to personal struggles that they believe the prophet may remedy, a significant number of Christians walked out of such places, destroyed mentally. The study noted that this creates a spiritual fallout between clergy, which further disorients followers. However, the study was specifically evaluating the effect of Christian leaders using social media to manipulate their followers, thus opening a conceptual gap. The present study addressed the gap by examining the relationship between social media and spiritual well-being.

Kiruja et al. (2025) audited the effectiveness of online services on spiritual growth in Kenya. This was a mixed descriptive study design in which the researcher and the findings were informed by interviewing 246 church members. The study showed a mixed reaction between the younger generation and the older generation, with the younger generation reporting that online services positively influenced faith, emotional well-being, and spiritual discipline. The older generation, some stressed effectiveness depends on youth discipline; others doubted depth compared to physical gatherings. The leaders and pastors recognized accessibility benefits but noted a lack of depth, passive engagement, and dependence on personal discipline. The study noted risks associated with online services, including the potential disconnection from the community if services are passive or lack follow-up. However, the study was limited to online church services, thus limiting the scope and the context of the study. The current study bridged the gap by studying the relationship between social media and the spiritual well-being of TVET students.

Theoretical Framework

The study was anchored on Transactional Model of Stress and Coping, and Uses and Gratification Theory. Each theory is discussed in this section in turn as follows:

Transactional Model of Stress and Coping

The Transactional Model of Stress and Coping, developed by Lazarus and Folkman in the 1984s, is a seminal psychological theory that provides a nuanced framework for comprehending how individuals perceive and navigate stressors in their lives, including those stemming from social media interactions (Wu et al. 2025). This model underscores the intricate interplay between an individual's cognitive appraisal of stressors and their coping strategies, shaping their overall well-being (Maqsood et al., 2024). The theory is preferred in explaining mental health challenges faced by college students due to social media, which has emerged as a prominent stressor (Sun et al., 2023). The cognitive appraisal process unfolds in two distinct stages: primary and secondary appraisal (West, 2025). During the primary appraisal stage, individuals evaluate the significance of the stressor, discerning whether it poses a threat, challenge, or harm/loss (Maqsood et al., 2024). Within this framework, social media usage can be perceived and evaluated diversely by these individuals, ranging from a source of connection and entertainment to one of comparison and anxiety (Fu et al., 2026).

After the primary appraisal, individuals proceed to assess their coping resources and strategies to manage the stressor (Fu et al., 2026). This pivotal appraisal phase influences their responses to social media's impact on various dimensions of their well-being, including mental, social, and spiritual aspects. Applying the Transactional Model to this context, scholars such as Wu et al. (2025)

have shed light on how young individuals perceive social media's influence on stress levels and employ coping mechanisms to mitigate adverse effects. Further studies by Bae (2023), Sharma and Gupta (2023), and others underscore the significance of comprehending both appraisal processes and coping strategies in response to online stressors, including those arising from social media interactions. Moreover, investigations by Maqsood et al. (2024) and Yue et al. (2022) emphasise the model's pertinence in exploring how young individuals assess social media's impact on their social relationships and utilise coping strategies to navigate online social stressors effectively. The transactional model of stress and coping was therefore useful for explaining psychosocial well-being, which was the dependent variable of the study. However, it was not adequate for explaining social media usage, thus necessitating the incorporation of Uses and Gratification Theory.

Uses and Gratification Theory

The Uses and Gratification Theory has evolved, but it was initially developed by Elihu Katz, Jay Blumler, and Michael Gurevitch in the 1970s (Stark & Schneiders, 2022). The Theory, as reviewed by Babatunde and Ayanwale (2023), posits that individuals actively choose media to fulfil specific needs and gratifications. Mouloud et al. (2026) further emphasize the focus of this theory on understanding why people use media, rather than the effects of media on people. The theory has been particularly useful in political communication research and has been applied to understand the gratifications sought by Internet users (Lord, 2024). It suggests that individuals use media to gratify certain needs, such as information, entertainment, social interaction, or personal identity reinforcement.

The theory can help analyse whether young people use social media to build and maintain relationships, and how this impacts their psychosocial well-being (Lord,

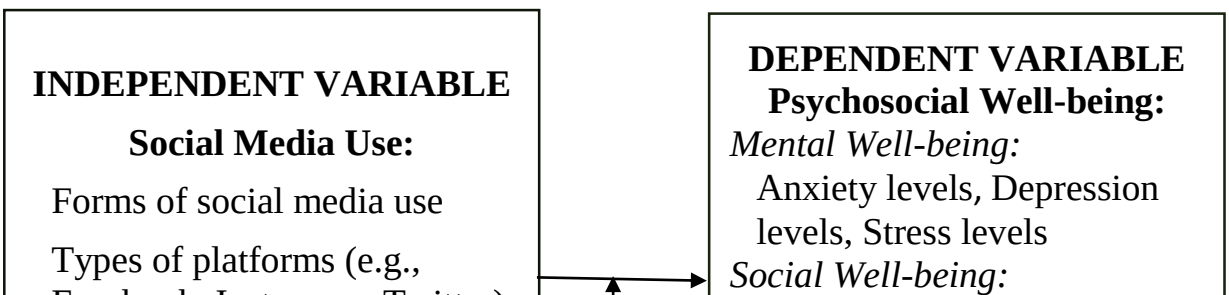
2024). The theory was applied to investigate whether young people use social media as a coping mechanism for stress or mental health support, and how effective this use is in gratifying their psychological needs (Stark & Schneiders, 2022). In an analysis of the motives for the use of TikTok, mention that while many young people may use TikTok as a means of self-expression and creativity, many others use it as a means of entertainment and escapism (Falgoust et al., 2022). Additionally, the analysis explores how TikTok's algorithm and content recommendations contribute to the satisfaction of users' social and psychological needs, such as belongingness and self-esteem (Wibowo, 2022). In this study, the theory was applied to explain social media use.

Conceptual Framework

To investigate the relationship between social media use and psychosocial well-being of young people in selected public and private TVET institutions in Nairobi County, Kenya, a conceptual framework was developed to guide the research. This framework outlines the key components, variables, and relationships involved in the study. The conceptual framework is designed to provide a visual representation of how social media use may influence the psychosocial well-being of young people in the specific context of Nairobi County, Kenya, based on the research objectives.

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework



As shown in Figure 1, social media use was the independent variable as indicated by forms of social media used, types of platforms (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter), engagement level (e.g., active posting, passive scrolling), and trends, prevalence. The intervening variable was availability of internet and personal principles on social media use. The dependent variable was psychosocial well-being whose dimensions are mental well-being, social well-being, and Spiritual well-being.

Summary of Research Gaps

Though several studies have been undertaken to establish the harmful effects of social media on the psychological well-being of individuals, the sampled studies have not been conceptualized to examine the relationship within the mixed methods study framework. For example, Sewall et al. (2022) studied social media use alongside smartphone addiction, while Pang's (2022) study was limited to WeChat. Similarly, Vaingankar et al. (2022) concentrated on the positive side of SMU, and

Kwon et al. (2024) sought to establish the effect SMU had on children's mental health. Likewise, Yu et al. (2024) sought to establish the effect social media has on sleep quality, even as Kiarie and Gathuci (2025) sought to establish whether it led to body dysmorphia. Several sampled studies were also conducted in different contexts; for example, Adjin-Tettey (2022) was conducted among high school students, and Lim et al. (2022) was conducted among young adults.

Others scholars like Onderi and Oginda (2024) focused on university students, and Oseko and Muyaka (2022) focused on secondary schools, even as Hussain and Wang (2024) focused on the Muslim faith and Wang et al. (2025) focused on Buddhism. This study bridged this gap by focusing on social media use among young people in selected public and private TVET institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya with a view to investigate the relationship between their social media use and their psychosocial well-being.

Table 1

Summary of Research Gaps

Study by	**Focus of the study**	**Methodology**	**Findings**	**Knowledge gap**	**How this study addressed these gaps**
Alatorre et al. (2023)	Social effects of social media and social media preference among young individuals in the United States.	This was a web-based study, and the findings were informed by interviewing teenagers through focus group discussions.	The study established that social media platforms such as TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and Twitter were the most trafficked.	The study focused on the U.S context.	The study was carried out in Kenya.
Arnot et al. (2024)	Social media used among young people in Australia	Descriptive research design was used. It was	TikTok was mainly used to promote related content. The	The study was exclusively informed by qualitative data	A convergent parallel research

Study by	Focus of the study	Methodology	Findings	Knowledge gap	How this study addressed these gaps
		informed by a sample of 500 young people	findings also showed that Facebook and Twitter were perceived to be less engaging.		mixed methods design was used.
Lim et al. (2022)	Preferred social media platform for promoting health among young adults in the UK.	The study was conducted through a web-based conversation involving 165 participants aged 18 to 24 years.	Facebook was commonly used for news updates, for promoting brands (advertisements), and for reading health-related content.	The study evaluated social media as tools for promoting health among young adults, thus opening a conceptual gap.	The present study examined social media usage by the youth in public TVET institutions.
Mu et al. (2022)	Social media usage patterns among adolescents in China	Descriptive research design was used. Questionnaires were administered to a sample of 242 adolescents	TikTok and Kuai Shou were the most popular social media platforms, with over 60% of surveyed adolescents using them regularly.	The research was based on a purely quantitative methods, thus opening a methodological gap.	The study bridged the gap by relying on a mixed-methods design.
BinDhim et al. (2023)	social media usage behavioral patterns in Saudi Arabia	Cross-sectional study design was used. The study used secondary data obtained from 5,176 people ranging from 19 years to 60 years.	People mainly used WhatsApp, Telegram, and Snapchat for shared communication and group chats	Findings were informed by secondary data from older adults not in the college-going age	The current study addressed the gap by focusing on young people in TVET institutions.
Umeh et al. (2025)	Use of social media by young people and their usage in Nigeria	Quantitative survey design was used. A sample of 384 youths was used.	Facebook (79%) was used for networking and trends, while Instagram, with 78% indicating using it.	The study was conducted using a quantitative survey design, thus opening a	The current study used a convergent parallel research design.

Study by	Focus of the study	Methodology	Findings	Knowledge gap	How this study addressed these gaps
				methodological gap.	
Adjin-Tettey (2022)	The purpose of social media usage among adolescents in Ghana.	Descriptive study design was used, based on sample of 300 secondary school students	Facebook was widely accepted as a tool for messaging and group communication, while WhatsApp was used for instant messaging and group communication.	The study was conducted among secondary school students, thus opening a contextual gap	Current study filled the gap by focusing on TVET students.
Boniel-Nissim et al. (2022)	Impact of social media on the well-being of teenagers	longitudinal study design was conducted in the UK, and 190,089 adolescents were sampled	46% of the participants were active users, while 7% were problematic users.	This was a longitudinal study, thus opening a methodological gap.	The present study utilized mixed methods research design.
Pang (2022)	Efficacy of social media on the psychological well-being of young people in China.	Focused on WeChat, was conducted using a sample of 566 young people.	Network diversity positively and significantly predicted online bonding, social capital, and life satisfaction	The study narrowly focused on a single platform, thus less comprehensive	The present study investigated multiple social media platforms.
Santangelo (2023)	Impact of social media on social well-being in college students in the Netherlands.	Mixed methods research design was used. Data was collected from a sample size of 60 respondents.	Overusing the internet poses a risk of becoming addicted and becoming isolated as a result, which is predictable of anxiety and depression.	The research used a modest sample of 50 respondents, which limits the reliability of statistical estimates.	The gap was closed by increasing the sample size to 360 participants.
Onderi and Oginda (2024)	Effects of social media on the well-being of students in	The study utilized existing literature.	Online socialization among learners affected the behavior of the	The focused on university students rather than TVET learners thus	The gap was closed by conducting

Study by	Focus of the study	Methodology	Findings	Knowledge gap	How this study addressed these gaps
	public universities in Kenya.		students in terms of studying and academic development.	creating a contextual gap.	primary research.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented the empirical review of literature. This entailed a critical review of literature on social media types used by the youth, social media and its impact on the social well-being of the youth, social media and mental health among the youths, and social media and spiritual well-being. Subsequently, the theoretical framework was discussed. This comprised of Transactional Model of Stress and Coping and Uses and Gratification Theory. The chapter concluded with illustration of the conceptual framework and summary of research gaps. The next chapter describes the methodology to be used.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

Introduction

This chapter outlines the study's research methodology. It describes and justifies the research design. It then explains the study location and target population. Subsequently, it discusses the sampling methods and sample size. It also explains the types of data, data collection methods and research procedures. Similarly, instrument pre-testing, data analysis plan, and ethical considerations are provided.

Research Design

A research design is the strategy of gathering and processing data to answer research questions (Ganesha & Aithal, 2022). According to Gamage (2025), a research design influences decision regarding sampling design, data types, data collection methods, research procedures, and data analysis plans. Dhlakama and Murairwa (2024) add that the purpose of a research design is to direct the process of converting the study's problem into data that can be efficiently processed to answer specific questions. Research designs are organized into three categories: quantitative study designs, qualitative study designs, and mixed methods study designs (Ganesha & Aithal, 2022).

This study employed a mixed-methods research design, specifically a convergent parallel research design, as it combines both quantitative and qualitative data. Klingshirn et al. (2022) describe a convergent parallel design as a form of mixed methods research where quantitative and qualitative data are gathered simultaneously and analysed independently. After analysis, the results are combined or compared to form a conclusion. This design was useful in relation to the variables of this study because it facilitates the comparison of quantitative data with qualitative

data, thus enabling a better understanding of the research problem (Dhlakama & Murairwa, 2024). Additionally, researchers use this mixed methods approach to validate and exemplify qualitative findings with quantitative data (Babaie et al., 2024). The methodological pluralism of mixed methods research provides a more comprehensive understanding of research problems and complex phenomena (Klingshirn et al., 2022). In studying the effects of social media use on the psychosocial well-being of young people in TVET institutions in Kiambu County, the researcher gathered statistical data on social media usage patterns and well-being indicators.

Target Population

A target population is a comprehensive set of all members of a real or hypothetical group of people, events, or objects to which an investigator seeks to generalise the conclusions (Ahmad et al., 2023). In this study, the target population comprised all the students enrolled in registered TVET institutions accredited by the Technical and Vocational Training Authority (TVETA) in Kiambu County. Kiambu County was chosen because it has the highest concentration of TVET institutions in Kenya. According to the Directorate of Technical and Vocational Training (2023), there are 101 TVET institutions in Kiambu County, of which 33 are public and 68 are private. The two categories of institutions have a total enrolment of 36,107 students. The Ministry of Education requires that every TVET institution must have a trained counsellor to address the psychological needs of the students. Table 2 provides a summary of the target population. Thus, the total population for the study consisted of 36,107 students and 99 counsellors, making a total of 36,206 respondents.

Table 2

The Population Matrix

	Category of TVET Institution	No. of TVET institutions	Student Enrolment	No. of Counsellors
1.	Private	68	11,256	66
2.	Public	33	24,851	33
	Total	**101**	**36,107**	**99**

Sample Size and Sampling Design

According to Willie (2024), a sample refers to a subset of the target population that is analysed to make inferences about the entire population. Ahmad et al. 2023) add that for research findings to apply to the broader population, the sample size must be sufficient and representative of the population of the study. This study employed a multistage sampling technique, incorporating stratified random sampling, simple random sampling, and purposive sampling techniques. Stratified random sampling was used to select the TVET institutions participating in the study. Lists of all TVET institutions in Kiambu County was obtained from the respective education offices and used to categorise the institutions into two groups, namely; public and private. Zhao et al. (2023) assert that a representative sample ought to constitute at least 10% of the population when the population is large, and 30% if the population of the study is small. Accordingly, in order to get a fair representation of all TVET institutions in Kiambu County, a sampling index of 0.1 (10%) was used to select institutions in each TVET category. Thus, 7 private and 3 public institutions were sampled using the simple random sampling technique.

The second stage involves selecting the students to be involved in the research. There were 36,107 students enrolled in TVET institutions in Kiambu County at the time of data collection. The number of students sampled were

determined using a sampling formula by Krejci and Morgan (1970) (Appendix 2). According to this formula, a population of 36,107 students was adequately represented by a sample of 380 respondents. Since this sample was distributed in the 10 sampled institutions, the number of students to be drawn from each of the sampled institutions was 38. In addition, all the counsellors in the sampled institutions were purposively sampled and included in the study. Thus, the sample comprised 390 respondents, 380 students, and 10 counsellors. The sample was selected through simple random sampling in which papers equivalent to the target population per institution were prepared, and those equivalent to the sample size were written 'yes' and the rest 'no', then they were folded and put in a basket and then selected. Table 3 presents a summary of the sample size.

Table 3

Sample Size

S/No.	Name of TVET Institution	Type of Institution	No. of Students Sampled	No. of Counsellors Sampled
1.	Thika Technical Training Institute	Public	38	1
2.	Gatanga Technical and Vocational College	Public	38	1
3.	International Plant Machinery Technical Training Institute	Public	38	1
4.	CITC Technical and Business College	Private	38	1
5.	Thika Institute of Business Studies	Private	38	1
6.	Jodan College of Technology	Private	38	1
7.	JFC Munene College of health sciences	Private	38	1
8.	International Centre of Technology (ICT) Thika	Private	38	1
9.	Gakuyo Technical College	Private	38	1
10.	Umma University TVET Institute	Private	38	1

	380	**10**

Types of Data

Data types are categorised based on their source (primary or secondary), and their analytical approach (quantitative or qualitative) (Taherdoost, 2022). This research utilised primary data, involving the collection of original information directly from the participants to fulfil the study's objectives (Bellis et al, 2023). The research incorporated both quantitative and qualitative data (Taherdoost, 2022). Qualitative data was obtained from counsellors' interview responses, while quantitative data was gathered from questionnaires completed by young adults. Quantitative data allowed for the determination of effect sizes through inferential analysis of numerical information. In contrast, qualitative analysis clarified the inferences by identifying key themes from non-numeric data (Shrivastava et al., 2024).

Data Collection Methods

Data collection methods constitute the set of instruments and techniques to be utilised in the data gathering process (Sukmawati, 2023). In keeping with a mixed-methods research design, a combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection methods was adopted.

Data Collection Instruments

The study used two different sets of instruments to collect data; a student questionnaire and a counsellor' interview schedule. A researcher-developed structured questionnaire was administered to students. The students' questionnaire consisted of three sections, 1, 2 and 3. Section 1 had four items and gathered data on the respondents' background information. Section 2 had 7 items on a Likert scale and

sought information on the social media platforms that are frequently visited by the respondents. Section 3 had 30 items on a Likert scale and is divided into three subsections, A, B and C, each of the sub-sections has 10 items. Sub-section A gathered data on social well-being, Sub section B on mental well-being, and sub-section C on spiritual well-being. In addition, interviews were administered on 10 respondents to gather insights and observations on how social media usage affects various aspects of the students' lives in TVET institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya.

Research Procedures

Initially, the researcher obtained an approval letter from Pan Africa Christian University Ethical Review Committee. This was followed by an application for a research licence from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). Next, the researcher sought permission from the principals of the sampled TVET institutions to collect data. Finally, the researcher approached the respondents of the sampled TVET institution and sought their consent to participate in the study. Quantitative data was collected through the administration of a questionnaire. These questionnaires were distributed physically as well as using user-friendly software platforms such as email and WhatsApp. A research assistant was hired to manage the quantitative research data related to specific research inquiries. Before starting the data collection exercise, the researcher provided training to the assistant. The questionnaires and interviews were then administered face-to-face within the respective TVET institutions.

Instrument Pre-Testing

According to Campoamor et al. (2024), before starting the actual study, the researcher should ensure that the research tools are administered to a small sample of

respondents. This helps evaluate whether the data collection instruments can produce the desired data to meet the research objectives (Bhalla et al., 2023). It allows researchers to identify practical issues in the data collection process and provides data for analysing instrument validity and reliability. The instruments were tested in two TVET institutions, which were excluded from the final study. These were: Thika Technical College and JFC Munene College of health sciences. Pretesting helped determine if participants understood the questions and could respond easily. Consequently, the instruments were refined to generate the necessary information and elicit appropriate answers to the research questions.

Validity of Research Instruments

According to Cruchinho et al. (2024), the validity of research instruments refers to the extent to which these instruments accurately measure what they are intended to measure. Ensuring validity is crucial in research because it affects the reliability and credibility of the study's findings. Content validity was ensured by designing the items to capture the indicators of the specific objectives. This guaranteed that the tools collected all the necessary information to address the research questions. The instruments were also reviewed by professionals at PAC University's Department of Psychology for verification. Any confusing or ambiguous instructions, as well as extraneous items, were revised.

Reliability of the Research Instruments

According to Klingshirn et al. (2022), reliability of research instruments refers to the consistency and dependability of the measurements obtained using the instruments. Reliable instruments produce stable and consistent results over repeated applications under similar conditions. Izah et al. (2023) adds that the reliability of a

tool refers to the precision, accurateness, and exactness of a measuring procedure. Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha was used to evaluate the instrument's reliability. A reliability coefficient of 0.7 and above is considered to indicate that the instrument meets the stipulated threshold recommended for research studies in the social sciences. In this study, Social Media Use yielded an alpha coefficient of 0.797 while the coefficient for Psychosocial Wellbeing was 0.956. Therefore, the instrument was considered reliable.

Data Analysis Plan

The collected data was processed and analysed. According to Luong and Flake (2023), this is essential for scientific research, as it ensures that all relevant data for making assessments and analyses are available. The procedure includes editing, which involves cleaning the raw data to identify and correct errors and gaps in questionnaires and interview schedules; coding, which entails assigning numbers to responses to categorise them into a limited number of groups or classes aligned with the study's objectives; and tabulation, which involves presenting the data in a form that facilitates visualization and ease of interpretation.

Qualitative Data Analysis

Qualitative analysis involves gathering detailed information about the phenomenon under study and identifying patterns and trends from the collected data (Li & Zhang, 2022). This process includes giving meaning to the data by organising it into categories and themes. In this study, qualitative data obtained from counsellor interviews was analyzed using a six-step procedure. The researcher first got familiar with the interview data through repeated reading of transcripts, then generated initial codes based on meaningful responses concerning social, mental, and spiritual well-

being. Related codes were grouped to form preliminary themes. The themes were then reviewed and refined to ensure they accurately represented respondents' perspectives and aligned with the study objectives. Finally, the themes were defined, named, and integrated into the findings to complement and corroborate the quantitative results,

Quantitative Data Analysis

The quantitative analysis is based on numerical measurements of specific aspects of a phenomenon (Dehalwar & Sharma, 2024). Therefore, figures and statistical methods were employed. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse the data with the help of SPSS version 29. Descriptive statistics such as percentages, frequencies, and means were utilised. Additionally, inferential statistics, including ANOVA, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation, and regression analysis, were employed to compare groups and determine relationships between variables. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2018), correlation analysis is an ideal statistical tool for determining if a relationship exists between two variables or sets of data. Correlation analysis also helps establish the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two variables (Dehalwar & Sharma, 2024). Pearson's product-moment coefficient measures the association, ranging from -1.0 to +1.0, and quantifies the relationship between two variables. The data analysis was facilitated by the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 26. Table 4 presents a summary of the data variables and the statistical methods that was used.

Table 4

Data Analysis Variables and Statistical Methods Used

	Research Questions	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Statistic
1.	What is the most common social media sites visited by youth studying at TVET institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya?	Social media sites	None	Mean scores, standard deviation, frequencies, percentages, ANOVA
2	How does social media influence the social well-being of young people studying at TVET institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya?	Social media	Social well-being	Mean scores, frequencies, percentages, Pearson correlation
3.	In what ways does social media affect the mental well-being of young people studying at TVET institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya?	Social media	Mental well-being	Mean scores, frequencies, percentages, Pearson correlation
4.	How does social media affect the spiritual well-being of youths studying at TVET institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya?	Social media	Spiritual Well-being	Mean scores, frequencies, percentages, Pearson correlation

Ethical Considerations

Complying with the regulations set out by law for conducting research was the first ethical prerequisite in this study. The researcher requested permission and approval from the PAC University Ethics Review Committee to conduct the field study. Before submitting an application to the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI) for a research permit, the researcher

addressed issues brought up by the review committee. The researcher then sought permission from the management of the respective TVET institutions before accessing the students.

Before administering the questionnaires and interviews, informed consent was obtained from the respondents. In this endeavor, the researcher explained the purpose of the study, procedures, expected duration, and how the data would be used, allowing respondents to make voluntary decisions about participation. Respondents were assured of their right to withdraw at any stage without penalty or negative consequences. The researcher ensured protection from psychological harm by asking questions respectfully, minimizing distress, and allowing respondents to skip uncomfortable questions or stop interviews if needed; where necessary. To protect privacy, confidentiality and anonymity were maintained by excluding names or personal identifiers from questionnaires and interview transcripts. Further confidentiality measures were taken by storing data securely with restricted access. During data analysis and reporting, integrity and honesty were maintained by accurately presenting both quantitative and qualitative findings factually. Plans were made to disseminate the findings in academic conferences and peer reviewed journals after data de-identification.

Chapter Summary

This chapter focused on the methods and procedures employed in conducting the research. This entailed a discussion of the research design and explanation of the sampling design. Accordingly, the population of the study is described and sampling strategy explained. The chapter has also discussed the data collection methods and

research procedures. The chapter has further articulated the data analysis plan and the ethical considerations. The next chapter presents the results and discussions.

Chapter Four: Results and Discussions

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study on the relationship between social media use and the psychosocial well-being of young people in selected public and private TVET institutions in Kiambu County. The chapter is divided into five sections. The first section contains descriptive analysis of the response rate and demographic profile of the respondents. The rest of the chapter is presented in line with the specific objectives. These were: to establish the forms of social media used by young people in selected public and private TVET institutions in Kiambu County, to determine the relationship between social media and the social well-being of young people studying at selected public and private TVET institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya, to examine the relationship between social media and the mental well-being of young people in selected public and private TVET institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya, and to determine the relationship between social media use and the spiritual well-being of young people in selected public and private TVET institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya. For each objective, descriptive statistics comprising of percentage frequencies, mean and standard deviation as well as correlation and regression analysis is presented and discussed. Thematic analysis of qualitative data is used to corroborate and clarify the quantitative findings.

Response Rate and Demographic Information

Demographic information of the respondents was gathered to get a feel of the respondents' characteristics. This section comprises the response rate as well as the demographic profile of the respondents such as gender, time spent daily on social

media platforms, social media use motives, and respondents' perception of negative impact of social media.

Response Rate

Table 5 presents the response rate for the study questionnaires.

Table 5

Response Rate

Respondent category	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Completed and returned questionnaires	292	76.8	76.8	76.8
Incomplete questionnaires/ non-respondents	88	23.2	23.2	100.0
Total	380	100.0	100.0	

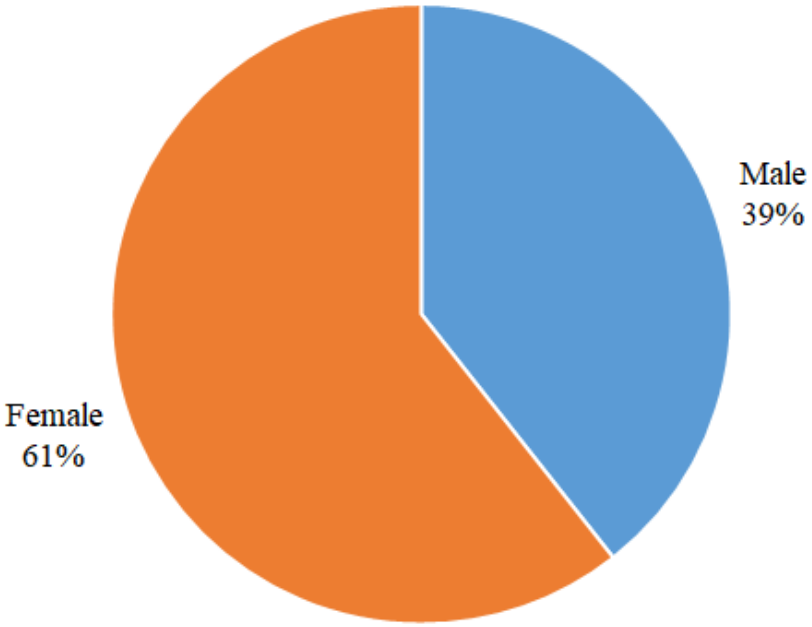
Out of the 380 questionnaires distributed, 292 were completed and returned, representing a response rate of 76.8%. Conversely, 88 questionnaires (23.2%) were either incomplete or not returned by the respondents. The response rate compares favorably with a previous study investigating the relationship between social media use on mental well-being of young adults in the United States International University by Macharia (2023), which reported a response rate of 73.6%. The high response rate provided a reliable basis for subsequent data analysis. It means that the study provides sufficient empirical evidence for examining how patterns of social media engagement relate to young people's social well-being.

Gender Distribution of Respondents

Figure 2 presents the gender distribution of the respondents.

Figure 2

Distribution of Respondents by Gender



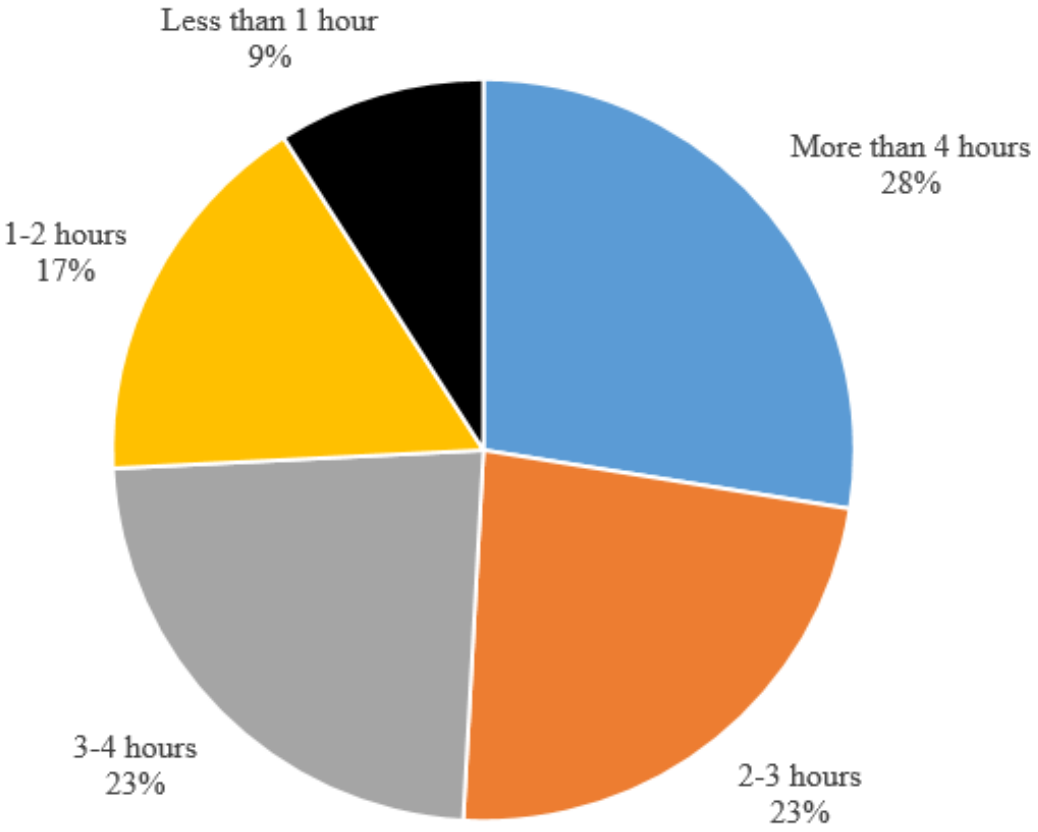
The results indicate that the majority of the respondents were female (60.6%), while male respondents accounted for 39.4% of the sample. This distribution shows that females constituted a larger proportion of the participants in the study. The finding is consistent with the research by Macharia (2023) which also reported that female respondents accounted for the majority (57.6%) of the respondents. This gender distribution suggests the subject of social media use and psychosocial well-being generated more interest among female students than male students.

Time Spent on Social Media

Figure 3 presents the amount of time respondents spend daily on social media.

Figure 3

Distribution of Respondents by Time Spent on Social Media



The findings indicate that the largest proportion of respondents reported spending more than four hours on social media (28%). This was followed by those who spent two to three hours (23%) and three to four hours (23%) per day. Additionally, 17% of the respondents indicated that they spend one to two hours daily on social media, while the smallest proportion reported spending less than one hour (9%). These findings contrast with past trends by Mu et al. (2022) which found that 43% of the sampled participants spent between 1 and 2 hours on social media, with another 22% taking between 2 and 4 hours, and 3.7% spending more than 6 hours online. This discrepancy suggests that social media use among young people has increased over time. The results suggest that a considerable proportion of respondents

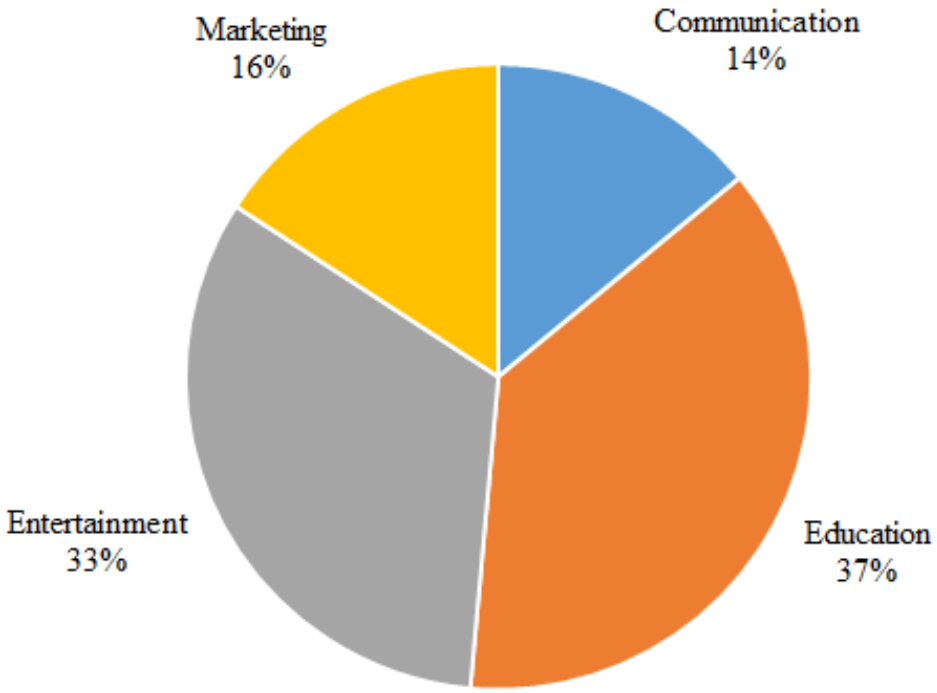
spend several hours each day on social media. The results were corroborated by interview data which showed that young people engage with social media frequently, with daily use ranging from 1–2 hours to more than 4 hours. These patterns signify that increased exposure intensity is associated with stronger psychosocial effects, thereby underscoring the importance of usage duration as a key factor in theorizing the influence of social media on psychosocial well-being.

Motives of Social Media Use

Figure 4 presents the motives for social media use among the respondents.

Figure 4

Motives of Social Media Use



The findings indicate that education was the most common motive (37%), followed by entertainment (33%). Communication accounted for 14% of the responses, while marketing constituted 16%. The results suggest that respondents

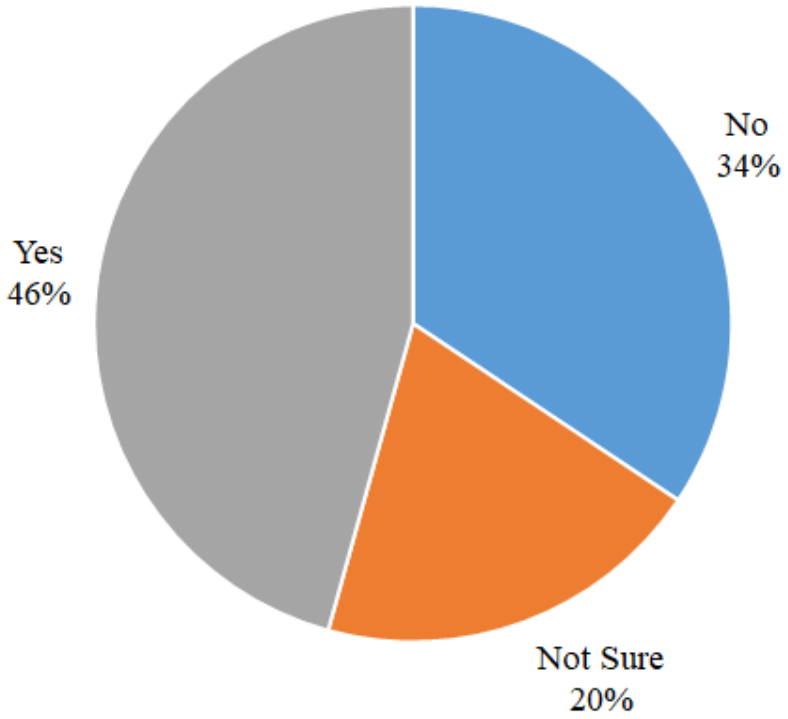
primarily use social media for educational and entertainment purposes. Interview results corroborated these statistics as they showed that education and entertainment was a primary purpose for most young people in the TVET institutions, while communication featured prominently for others. These results align with the Uses and Gratification Theory that asserts that media users intentionally engage with platforms to obtain particular gratifications such as information seeking, entertainment, and social interaction. It is in line with the argument by Mouloud et al. (2026) that media consumption is driven by users' intentional choices to meet their needs. Thus, the prominence of educational and entertainment motives in the findings supports the theory's premise as advanced by Lord (2024) that individuals deliberately use media to gratify informational and leisure needs, while the presence of communication motives further reflects the social interaction dimension highlighted in the literature. The results of this study may be explained by the fact that platforms such as WhatsApp groups are common for facilitating group works, meetings with group members and comparing notes, thus delivering a more connected and interactive learning experience by bridging communication students. These findings reinforce the notion that social media use among students is goal-oriented and driven by specific psychological and social needs.

Whether Social Media Negatively Impacts Well-being

Figure 5 presents respondents' opinions on whether social media has negative impacts on the well-being of individuals who use it.

Figure 5

Whether Social Media Negatively Impacts Well-being



The results indicate that the 46% of respondents believed that social media has negative impacts on individual well-being. Meanwhile, 34% of the respondents indicated that social media does not have negative impacts, while 20% reported that they were not sure. Overall, the findings reveal mixed perception concerning whether social media negatively effects individual well-being. This was affirmed by in-depth interviews with counsellors, which revealed that social media use among young people is associated with different psychosocial impacts, with some users reporting minimal distress and others experiencing noticeable emotional effects, while others reported positive impact. These findings are consistent with previous research showing that although excessive social media use is associated with adverse mental health outcomes (Zubair et al., 2023), some individuals also report neutral or

beneficial experiences depending on how they engage with these platforms. The finding aligns with Weinstein (2023) who notes that while negative psychological consequences are widely reported, social media can also foster community and connectivity. It can thus be inferred from the results of the present study that the impact of social media on the user varies across users, with some reporting negative impact and others reporting positive or no impact. This variability in perceived effects supports more nuanced theoretical perspectives that account for individual differences in social media interpretation, usage patterns, and psychosocial context.

Forms of Social Media Used by Young People

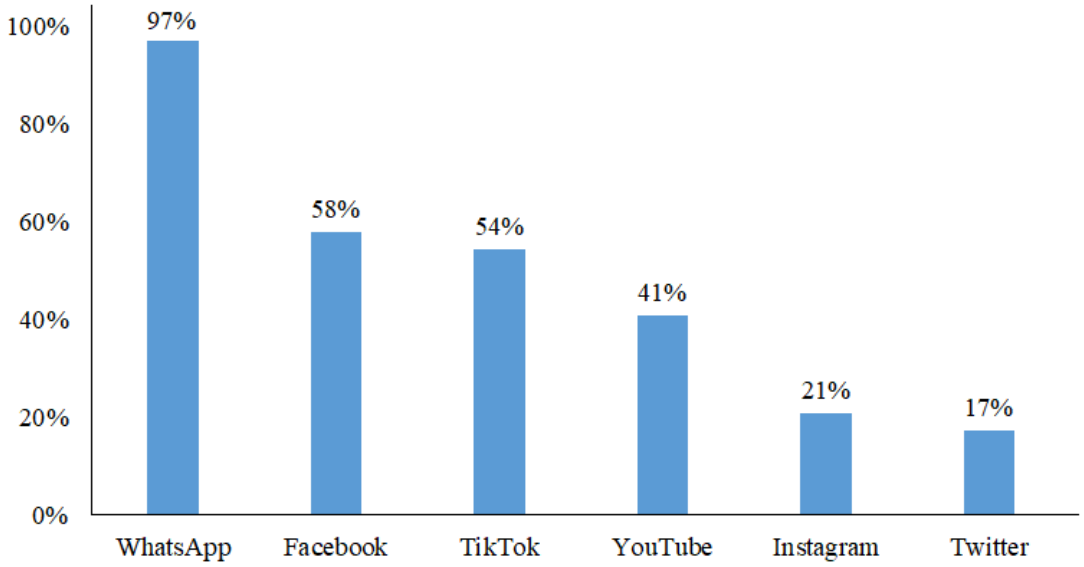
The first objective of the study was to establish the forms of social media used by young people in public and private TVET institutions in Kiambu County. This section presents descriptive analysis of the forms of social media used and the frequency of use.

Forms of Social Media Used

Figure 6 presents the distribution of the forms of social media used by respondents.

Figure 6

Forms of Social Media Used By Respondents



The findings in Figure 6 indicate that WhatsApp was the most widely used platform, reported by 97% of the respondents. This is followed by Facebook (58%) and TikTok (54%), suggesting a strong preference for both social networking and short-form video content. Additionally, YouTube is used by 41% of respondents, while Instagram (21%) and Twitter (17%) are comparatively less utilized. Overall, the results demonstrate that instant messaging and highly interactive content platforms dominate social media usage among the study participants. These findings corroborate the results of Wamuyu (2020) who studied the prevalence of social media in Kenya found that WhatsApp dominated the Kenyan social media space, with an 84.3% user base, followed by Facebook with an 81.6% user base, and TikTok at 78.5%.. The dominance of highly interactive and messaging-based platforms supports the concept of media dependency and uses-and-gratifications perspectives, which

highlight that users gravitate toward platforms that best satisfy their needs for communication, immediacy, and social connection.

Frequency of Social Media Use

Respondents were asked to indicate how frequently they used various social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and WhatsApp on a 5-point scale where 1=never and 5=frequently. Table 6 presents the respondents' frequency of social media use across different platforms.

Table 6

Respondents' Frequency of Social Media Use

	Never	Rarely (less than once a week)	Occasionally (1-2 times a week)	Frequently (3-5 times a week)	Very Frequently (daily)	Mean	Std. Dev
Instagram	11.9%	18.4%	17.6%	33.2%	18.9%	3.29	1.292
TikTok	7.2%	11.6%	18.9%	22.5%	39.8%	3.76	1.285
Twitter	17.0%	13.4%	18.6%	30.4%	20.6%	3.24	1.375
Facebook	11.8%	13.3%	12.9%	25.5%	36.5%	3.81	1.336
YouTube	9.1%	14.6%	18.2%	34.0%	24.1%	3.57	1.244

WhatsApp	1.2%	4.8%	12.7%	28.3%	53.0%	4.36	.876

Table 6 shows that WhatsApp was the most frequently used platform (M = 4.36, SD = 0.876), with 81.3% of respondents reporting frequent or very frequent use. This is followed by Facebook (M = 3.81, SD = 1.336), with 62.0% reporting frequent or very frequent use, and TikTok (M = 3.76, SD = 1.285), where 62.3% indicated frequent or very frequent use. Other social media platforms follows with 61.4%, while YouTube records 58.1%, reflecting substantial engagement. Instagram records 52.1% frequent or very frequent use, while Twitter ranks as the least frequently used platform (M = 3.24, SD = 1.375), with 51.0% of respondents indicating frequent or very frequent use. These results agree with Wamuyu (2020) whose study reported that WhatsApp and Facebook remain the most dominant social media platforms in Kenya. Specifically, the present study identifies WhatsApp as the most frequently used platform, which aligns closely with Wamuyu's (2020) report of an 84.3% user base, confirming its widespread adoption. Similarly, Facebook's high usage in the present study supports its strong presence reported in the literature, particularly among students. The relatively high engagement with TikTok and YouTube in the current study is also consistent with Wamuyu's (2020) findings that youth actively use TikTok and YouTube. These usage patterns reinforce the idea that social media adoption and sustained engagement are shaped by perceived usefulness and gratification, whereby social media platforms that offer immediate communication and rich interactive features tend to attract higher and more consistent user engagement.

Relationship between Social Media Use and Social Well-being

The second objective of the study was to determine the relationship between social media and the social well-being of young people studying at public and private TVET institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya. This section presents both descriptive statistics and inferential analysis.

Respondents' Rating of their Social Well-being

Respondents were asked to rate the extent to which they agree or disagree with statements concerning their feelings of social well-being on a 5-point scale from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree. Table 7 presents the percentage distribution of respondents as well as mean and standard deviation scores for each social well-being item.

Table 7

Descriptive Analysis of Social Well-being Items

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Dev
I feel connected to my peers.	4.5%	13.5%	24.5%	41.2%	16.3%	3.55	1.041
I have close and supportive friendships.	5.1%	12.2%	18.1%	32.3%	32.3%	3.82	1.136
I feel accepted by my social group.	4.6%	10.4%	23.9%	44.4%	16.6%	3.64	.998
I participate in social activities regularly.	5.7%	11.8%	23.6%	29.3%	29.7%	3.75	1.163

I have someone to talk to when I need support.	4.9%	8.6%	19.8%	44.0%	22.6%	3.76	1.038
I feel valued by the people around me.	3.4%	6.3%	19.3%	33.6%	37.4%	3.96	1.056
I feel lonely and isolated (reverse-scored).	10.0%	11.7%	18.2%	39.0%	21.2%	3.50	1.230
I enjoy spending time with others.	4.4%	5.7%	17.9%	33.2%	38.9%	3.97	1.092
I find it easy to make new friends.	6.7%	7.9%	18.8%	44.8%	21.8%	3.71	1.091
I feel that my social relationships are positive and rewarding.	9.0%	6.0%	22.2%	27.8%	35.0%	3.75	1.249

Table 7 shows that a total of 72.1% of the respondents agreed/strongly agreed that they enjoy spending time with others (M = 3.97, SD = 1.092) This means that majority of the respondents enjoyed the time they spent with others, which agrees with the literature by Plackett et al. (2023) and Vaingankar et al. (2022) highlighting enhanced social connectedness and interaction through social media. This implies that social media may facilitate interpersonal engagement and shared experiences. These findings suggest that social media platforms can strengthen interpersonal bonds by enabling interaction, shared participation, and the maintenance of social relationships.

Similarly, 71.0% of the respondents felt valued by those around them (M = 3.96, SD = 1.056). This finding is consistent with studies such as those conducted by Pang (2022) and Damome (2022) that associate social media with increased sense of

belonging and social support. This suggests that social media strengthens perceived emotional support and validation. The 64.6% who reported having close and supportive friendships (M = 3.82, SD = 1.136) also agrees with evidence by Ghai et al. (2022) that social media strengthens peer relationships. This reinforces the notion that online networks can enhance bonding social capital among peers. It demonstrates that digital interactions can contribute to both perceived emotional support and the strengthening of bonding ties within peer networks.

Likewise, 66.6% of the respondents agreed/strongly agreed that indicating they have someone to talk to when in need (M = 3.76, SD = 1.038) agrees with findings by Vaingankar et al. (2022) that social media facilitates communication and emotional support. This underscores the relevance of Uses and Gratifications Theory, where individuals utilize social media to fulfill emotional and relational needs. Participation in social activities (59.0%; M = 3.75, SD = 1.163) and the 62.8% who viewed their relationships as positive and rewarding (M = 3.75, SD = 1.249) further agree with Plackett et al. (2023) who emphasize social engagement and integration benefits. This implies that social media contributes to social integration processes. These findings reinforce the social integration function of media use, as articulated in Uses and Gratifications Theory, by demonstrating that social media serves as a tool for fulfilling emotional support, communication, and relational bonding needs.

The results further indicated that 61.0% agreed/strongly agreed that they felt accepted (M = 3.64, SD = .998), 57.5% agreed/strongly agreed that they felt connected to peers (M = 3.55, SD = 1.041), and 66.6% agreed/strongly agreed that they found it easy to make new friends (M = 3.71, SD = 1.091). These results affirm the study by Pang (2022) which link social media use to enhanced belongingness and

network expansion. This supports the view that digital platforms expand both bonding and bridging social capital. However, the finding that 60.2% agreed/strongly agreed that they felt lonely and isolated (M = 3.50, SD = 1.230) supports the results of multiple studies (Boniel-Nissim et al., 2022; Murari et al., 2024; Onderi & Oginda, 2024; Santangelo, 2023;) that associates social media use with isolation, anxiety, and reduced well-being. This suggests that excessive online interaction may substitute meaningful offline relationships, leading to social isolation. These mixed findings highlight the different ways in which social media affects students, where engagement in social media can simultaneously enhance connectedness while also contributing to perceived isolation depending on usage patterns and depth of offline relationships.

Correlation between Social Media Use and Social Well-being

Pearson correlation technique was used to analyze the correlation between different social media use and social well-being of young people studying at TVET institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya. Table 8 presents the output at p<.01.

Table 8

Correlation between Social Media Use and Social Well-being

		Social Well-being
1. Social Well-being	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	
	N	292
2. Instagram	Pearson Correlation	.337**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	292
3. TikTok	Pearson Correlation	.455**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	292
4. Twitter	Pearson Correlation	.475**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	292

		Social Well-being
5. Facebook	Pearson Correlation	.408**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	292
6. YouTube	Pearson Correlation	.381**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	292
7. WhatsApp	Pearson Correlation	.199**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002
	N	292

Table 8 shows that the strongest positive relationship with social well-being was observed Twitter (r = .475, p < .01) and TikTok (r = .455, p < .01). Facebook also demonstrated a moderate positive correlation with social well-being (r = .408, p < .01), while YouTube showed a slightly lower but still significant association (r = .381, p < .01). Instagram was moderately correlated with social well-being (r = .337, p < .01). The weakest, though still significant, relationship was observed for WhatsApp (r = .199, p < .01). These findings align with past empirical studies by Plackett et al. (2023) and Vaingankar et al. (2022) which highlight the role of social media platforms in facilitating interaction, information exchange, and social engagement. It means that social media use potentially facilitates the social connection that is needed to boost the user's social well-being. These results suggest that different social media platforms affect psychosocial well-being differently. This implies that the strength of social outcomes depends on the nature and intensity of user engagement with specific platforms.

Regression of Social Well-being on Social Media Use

Multiple linear regression analysis was performed to establish the differential effects of various social media on social well-being of young people studying at

TVET institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya. Table 9 presents the model summary, ANOVA, and coefficients.

Table 9

Regression of Social Well-being on Social Media Use

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.581[a]	.338	.313	.68423

a. Predictors: (Constant), WhatsApp, Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, TikTok

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	45.807	6	6.544	13.977	.000[b]
	Residual	89.890	286	.468		
	Total	135.696	292			

a. Dependent Variable: Social Well-being

b. Predictors: (Constant), WhatsApp, Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, TikTok

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.017	.297		6.788	.000
	Instagram	-.025	.058	-.038	-.424	.672
	TikTok	-.011	.063	-.015	-.176	.861
	Twitter	.175	.053	.276	3.312	.001
	Facebook	.050	.053	.078	.953	.342
	YouTube	.093	.048	.140	1.928	.055
	WhatsApp	.070	.071	.067	.980	.328

a. Dependent Variable: Social Well-being

Table 9 shows that the set of social media explained 33.8% of the variations in social well-being (R^2 =.338). This agrees with studies by Plackett et al. (2023) and Murari et al. (2024) which acknowledge that social media is an important but not exclusive determinant of well-being. The ANOVA results show that the overall regression model was statistically significant, $F(7, 192) = 13.98$, $p < .01$. However, the coefficients reveal that Twitter ($\beta = .276$, $t = 3.312$, $p < .01$) and other social

media platforms (β = .239, t = 2.930, p <.01) had statistically significant positive effects on social well-being. These results align with Vaingankar et al. (2022) who held that interactive platforms enhance communication, engagement, and social connectedness. In contrast, YouTube (β = .140, t = 1.928, p>.05), Facebook (β = .078, t = .953, p>.05), WhatsApp (β = .067, t = .980, p>.05), Instagram (β = −.038, t = −.424, p>.05), and TikTok (β = −.015, t = −.176, p>.05) did not significantly predict social well-being. The findings suggest that only Twitter and other social media platforms significantly predicted social well-being of the respondents. This finding disagrees with literature (Damome, 2022; Vaingankar et al., 2022) that emphasizes the respective social media platform's role in maintaining relationships and providing emotional support.

The results were reflected in the findings from in-depth interviews which also showed that social media use among young people has a mixed influence on social well-being, with effects varying according to usage intensity and purpose. Some respondents reported minimal social disruption or distress, suggesting that frequent or moderate use does not necessarily compromise social well-being. Others indicated noticeable psychosocial effects, implying that heavy or very frequent engagement may affect emotional and social interactions. Several respondents displayed mixed experiences, highlighting that selective engagement in social media activities can produce both positive and negative social outcomes. These findings are in accord with literature (Boniel-Nissim et al., 2022; Ghai et al., 2022) observing that not all social media platforms contribute equally to well-being outcomes and that the impact of social media is platform-specific and context-dependent. The following are verbatim excerpts:

> Even though I use social media every day, it has not really affected how I relate with other people socially (Respondent #2).
>
> "I spend many hours online, and sometimes it affects my interactions and emotions when communicating with others" (Respondent #5).
>
> "Some social media activities help me stay connected, but others sometimes make me disengage socially" (Respondent #6)
>
> "My use is moderate. I rarely experience social problems because of social media" (Respondent #9).

In summary, it can be inferred that some specific platforms are significant predictors of social well-being, suggesting that certain types of engagement are more influential than others. Widely used platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, and TikTok did not individually demonstrate a significant predictive effect, indicating that their contribution to social well-being is limited. Thus, the results highlight that the impact of social media on social well-being is not uniform across platforms, but potentially vary depending on the nature and use of each platform.

Relationship between Social Media and Mental Well-being

The third objective of the study was to examine the relationship between social media and the mental well-being of young people in public and private TVET institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya. This section of the chapter presents descriptive analysis of mental well-being items, followed by correlation and regression analysis to test significance.

Respondents' Rating of their Mental Well-being

Respondents were asked to rate the extent to which they agree or disagree with statements concerning their feelings of mental well-being on a 5-point scale from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree. Table 10 presents the percentage distribution of respondents as well as mean and standard deviation scores for each mental well-being item.

Table 10

Descriptive Analysis of Mental Well-being Items

Mental well-being Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Dev
I feel happy and satisfied with my life.	9.0%	8.6%	14.8%	43.0%	24.6%	3.74	1.139
I feel confident in my ability to handle my personal problems.	5.9%	11.1%	11.9%	32.8%	38.3%	3.97	1.132
I have supportive friends and family I can turn to when I need help.	4.5%	8.1%	17.0%	47.0%	23.5%	3.84	.988
I often feel anxious or worried.	5.0%	12.9%	16.2%	31.1%	34.9%	3.88	1.130
I have trouble sleeping due to stress or anxiety.	7.2%	13.6%	14.0%	45.3%	19.9%	3.62	1.148
I am able to relax and enjoy my free time.	3.9%	5.3%	14.5%	32.9%	43.4%	4.10	1.050
I feel overwhelmed by the demands of school/work.	4.3%	10.2%	21.3%	45.5%	18.7%	3.68	1.023
I feel good about myself and my accomplishments.	4.8%	4.4%	12.7%	33.3%	44.7%	4.12	1.058
I find it difficult to concentrate on tasks.	6.7%	14.2%	14.7%	42.2%	22.2%	3.61	1.169
I engage in regular physical activity or exercise.	4.9%	7.1%	15.0%	34.5%	38.5%	3.96	1.120

Table 10 shows that the highest mean score was recorded for “I feel good about myself and my accomplishments” (M = 4.12, SD = 1.058), with 33.3% of respondents who agreed and 44.7% of the respondents who strongly agreed. This finding agrees with literature (Aledeh et al., 2024; Hendricks & Kanyiri, 2021) suggesting that social media can foster self-expression, identity formation, and peer support that enhance positive self-perception. This implies that constructive engagement on social media can promote self-efficacy and positive self-concept. Similarly, the statement “I am able to relax and enjoy my free time” yielded a high mean score on a 5-point scale (M = 4.10, SD = 1.050), with 32.9% of the respondents having agreed and 43.4% strongly agreed. This finding supports the notion advanced by Vaingankar et al. (2022) and Kwon et al. (2024) that online interactions can act as coping mechanisms. It can be inferred from the findings that social media use can support autonomy-related needs such as relaxation, self-expression, and the development of positive self-evaluation.

The results showed that 43.0% of the respondents agreed and 24.6% strongly agreed that they feel confident in their ability to handle personal problems (M = 3.97, SD = 1.132). This finding agrees with prior studies (Aledeh et al., 2024; Oseko & Muyaka, 2022) linking social media to enhanced social support, identity formation, and self-efficacy, implying that social media engagement can strengthen resilience in youth. Further, 34.5% of the respondents agreed and 38.5% strongly agreed that they engage in regular physical activity or exercise (M = 3.96, SD = 1.120). Also, 47.0% of the respondents agreed and 23.5% strongly agreed that they have supportive friends and family they can turn to when they need help (M = 3.84, SD = .988). The results align with the emphasis that balanced social media use does not necessarily

preclude healthy routines and can coexist with physical well-being suggesting that mental and physical health can be mutually reinforcing. The finding is consistent with Aledeh et al. (2024) who identified that social media facilitates social connectedness and peer support, implying that social networks enhance perceived social capital. The findings suggest that social media engagement, perceived social support, and individual coping resources interact to shape resilience and overall psychosocial well-being among youth.

Further results show that 43.0% of the respondents agreed and 24.6% strongly agreed that they feel happy and satisfied with their lives (M = 3.74, SD = 1.139). This finding is in contrast to research by Twenge et al. (2022) and Satyaninrum et al. (2023), suggesting that the effect of social media on mental well-being is potentially conditional on usage patterns. This implies that social media may serve as a source of positive reinforcement or social connectedness for some individuals, rather than an inherent threat to mental well-being, highlighting the need for conceptual models that account for conditional and context-specific effects rather than assuming a uniform negative influence. It means that the relationship between social media use and psychosocial well-being varies depending on individual differences, usage intensity, and social context.

Further findings showed that 31.1% of the respondents agreed and 34.9% strongly agreed that they often feel anxious or worried (M = 3.88, SD = 1.130), 45.5% of the respondents agreed and 18.7% strongly agreed that they feel overwhelmed by the demands of school or work (M = 3.68, SD = 1.023), 45.3% of the respondents agreed and 19.9% strongly agreed that they have trouble sleeping due to stress or anxiety (M = 3.62, SD = 1.148), and 42.2% agreed and 22.2% strongly

agreed that they find it difficult to concentrate on tasks (M = 3.61, SD = 1.169). These results agree with multiple studies such as Kwon et al. (2024) and Saleem et al. (2024) inking excessive or problematic social media use to heightened anxiety, stress, sleep disturbances, and cognitive difficulties, implying that while social media may provide benefits, overuse or maladaptive engagement can undermine mental health and functional well-being. Thus, excessive social media engagement can displace restorative activities and contribute to psychological strain, thereby negatively affecting mental and cognitive well-being.

Correlation between Social Media Use and Mental Well-being

Pearson correlation technique was used to analyze the correlation between different social media use and mental well-being of young people studying at TVET institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya. Table 11 presents the output at $p<.01$.

Table 11

Correlation between Social Media Use and Mental Well-being

		Mental Well-being
1. Mental Well-being	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	
	N	292
2. Instagram	Pearson Correlation	.239**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	292
3. TikTok	Pearson Correlation	.351**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	292
4. Twitter	Pearson Correlation	.325**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	292
5. Facebook	Pearson Correlation	.257**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	292
6. YouTube	Pearson Correlation	.238**

	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	292
7. WhatsApp	Pearson Correlation	.113
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.088
	N	292

Table 11 shows that TikTok demonstrated the strongest positive correlation with mental well-being (r = .351, p<.01), followed by Twitter (r = .325, p<.01). Facebook (r = .257, p<.01), Instagram (r = .239, p<.01), and YouTube (r = .238, p<.01) exhibited weaker but still statistically significant positive relationships. However, WhatsApp did not show a statistically significant correlation with mental well-being (r =.113, >.05). The findings indicate that increased use of most social media platforms is positively associated with higher levels of mental well-being among the respondents, although the strength of the relationships varies across platforms. The results imply that platform-specific effects vary in maintaining positive mental well-being. The results align with Oseko and Muyaka (2022) indicating that not all social media platforms equally contribute to psychological outcomes. This suggests that mere usage without interactive or expressive engagement may have limited impact on mental health. The findings signify that psychosocial outcomes depend on the specific affordances of each social media platform, particularly the degree of interactivity, expression, and social reinforcement they enable.

Regression of Mental Well-being on Social Media Use

Multiple linear regression analysis was performed to establish the differential effects of various social media on mental well-being of young people studying at

TVET institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya. Table 12 presents the model summary, ANOVA, and coefficients.

Table 12

Regression of Social Well-being on Social Media Use

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.327[a]	.107	.074	.77777

a. Predictors: (Constant), WhatsApp, Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, TikTok

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	13.727	6	1.961	3.242	.003[b]
	Residual	114.331	286	.605		
	Total	128.058	292			

a. Dependent Variable: Mental Well-being

b. Predictors: (Constant), WhatsApp, Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, TikTok

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.011	.343		8.779	.000
	Instagram	-.035	.067	-.055	-.525	.600
	TikTok	.025	.072	.037	.354	.724
	Twitter	.086	.062	.138	1.396	.164
	Facebook	.013	.061	.020	.214	.831
	YouTube	.087	.055	.134	1.581	.116

	WhatsApp	.004	.083	.004	.054	.957

a. Dependent Variable: Mental Well-being

Table 12 shows that the combined use of the seven social media platforms explained 10.7% of the variance in mental well-being (R^2 =.107). The ANOVA results show that the overall regression model was statistically significant, $F(7, 285) = 3.24$, $p<.01$, indicating that the predictors collectively contributed to explaining variations in mental well-being among the respondents. However, the coefficients results reveal that none of the individual social media platforms significantly predicted mental well-being: Instagram ($\beta = -.055$, $t = -.525$, $p>.05$), TikTok ($\beta = .037$, $t = .354$, $p>.05$), Twitter ($\beta = .138$, $t = 1.396$, $p>.05$), Facebook ($\beta = .020$, $t = .214$, $p>.05$), YouTube ($\beta = .134$, $t = 1.581$, $p>.05$), and WhatsApp ($\beta = .004$, $t = .054$, $p>.05$) did not show statistically significant effects. The findings suggest that although the set of social media variables jointly explains a small but significant portion of variance in mental well-being, none of the individual platforms independently predicts mental well-being among the respondents. This finding is in contrast with studies (Kwon et al., 2024; Yu et al., 2024) which often emphasizes that social media use is associated with negative mental health outcome. It means that the concept of psychosocial well-being is better understood as an outcome of combined social media exposure rather than isolated platform influences.

Qualitative analysis of interview data revealed that social media use among young people has a variable influence on mental well-being, with effects ranging from minimal to moderate depending on usage patterns. Some respondents reported predominantly low distress and disagreement with statements related to anxiety, depression, or low self-esteem, indicating that frequent or moderate use does not

always negatively affect mental health. In contrast, other respondents reported agreement or strong agreement with several psychosocial impact items, reflecting moderate to noticeable emotional and cognitive influence linked to heavy or very frequent use. Other respondents demonstrated mixed responses, showing that selective engagement in certain social media activities can have both positive and negative mental effects. The results align with literature (Hendricks & Kanyiri, 2021; Oseko & Muyaka, 2022) which recognize that social media can both support mental health through social connection, identity formation, and self-expression. Some of the verbatim views are as follows:

> "I do not feel anxious, depressed, or less confident because of social media" (Respondent#1).
>
> "Using social media for long hours sometimes affects my emotions and the way I think" (Respondent #4).
>
> "There are times social media makes me feel emotionally affected, although not all the time" (Respondent #7).
>
> "Some experiences online affect my mood negatively, while other times I feel completely fine" (Respondent #11).

Across both strands of data, the evidence converges on the idea that the impact of social media is not anchored in any single platform but is instead embedded in the use, whereby combined exposure and patterns of engagement are more consequential than isolated channels. At the same time, the qualitative accounts add interpretive depth to the statistical outcome by clarifying why individual platform effects may appear weak or undetectable: experiences of psychosocial well-being

vary substantially across users and within the same users over time, depending on intensity, purpose, and emotional involvement in online interactions.

Relationship between Social Media and Spiritual Well-being

The fourth objective of the study was to examine the relationship between social media and the spiritual well-being of young people in public and private TVET institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya. This section presents descriptive statistics of mental well-being items, as well as correlation and regression analysis to test statistical significance.

Respondents' Rating of their Spiritual Well-being

Respondents were asked to rate the extent to which they agree or disagree with statements concerning their feelings of mental well-being on a 5-point scale from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree. Table 13 presents the percentage distribution of respondents as well as mean and standard deviation scores for each spiritual well-being item.

Table 13

Descriptive Analysis of Spiritual Well-being Items

Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Dev
I feel a sense of purpose and meaning in my life.	4.8%	10.9%	19.8%	39.9%	24.6%	3.75	1.072
I engage in regular practices (e.g., meditation, prayer) that nourish my spirit.	4.0%	11.7%	19.8%	32.6%	31.9%	3.89	1.077
I feel connected to a higher power or greater force in the universe.	2.8%	11.5%	22.2%	46.4%	17.1%	3.70	.966

Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Dev
I participate in community or religious activities that support my spiritual growth.	3.4%	7.2%	19.5%	33.5%	36.4%	3.94	1.071
I feel inner peace and harmony in my daily life.	3.0%	5.9%	19.5%	45.3%	26.3%	3.88	.959
I find inspiration and strength from my spiritual beliefs	2.6%	5.2%	16.5%	34.3%	41.3%	4.08	1.006
I feel a strong sense of belonging to a spiritual or religious community.	3.5%	5.2%	18.8%	44.5%	27.9%	3.89	.993
My spiritual beliefs influence my decisions and actions.	3.0%	5.2%	18.7%	32.6%	40.4%	4.03	1.038
I feel gratitude and appreciation for the beauty and mystery of life.	1.7%	6.9%	14.7%	48.3%	28.4%	3.98	.900
I feel that my spiritual life provides me with a sense of hope and optimism.	3.8%	6.3%	15.0%	32.9%	42.1%	4.07	1.048

Table 13 shows that the highest mean score was recorded for the statement “I find inspiration and strength from my spiritual beliefs” (M = 4.08, SD = 1.006), with 34.3% of the respondents who agreed and 41.3% strongly agreed. The highest mean score agrees with Ehlebracht (2022) which showed that social media and online platforms can facilitate spiritual growth and provide access to spiritual resources. This suggests that spiritual well-being among youths can be enhanced through digital engagement, supporting models of mediated spirituality where online platforms act as facilitators of personal growth.

Similarly, 32.9% of the respondents and 42.1% strongly agreed that their spiritual life provides them with a sense of hope and optimism (M = 4.07, SD = 1.048), while 32.6% of the respondents agreed and 40.4% strongly agreed that their spiritual beliefs influence their decisions and actions (M = 4.03, SD = 1.038). This finding aligns with Wang et al. (2025) who found that virtual faith communities and online engagement promote emotional comfort and hope. This implies that positive psychological outcomes, such as hope, can be linked to spiritual engagement through social media, supporting the notion of digital environments as psychosocial resources.

Further findings showed that 48.3% of the respondents agreed and 28.4% strongly agreed that they feel gratitude and appreciation for the beauty and mystery of life (M = 3.98, SD = .900). Also, 33.5% of the respondents agreed and 36.4% strongly agreed that they participate in community or religious activities that support their spiritual growth (M = 3.94, SD = 1.071). In addition, 44.5% of the respondents agreed and 27.9% strongly agreed that they feel a strong sense of belonging to a spiritual or religious community (M = 3.89, SD = .993), while 32.6% of the respondents agreed and 31.9% strongly agreed that they engage in regular spiritual practices such as meditation or prayer (M = 3.89, SD = 1.077). The results highlight that spiritual engagement online fosters mindfulness, reflection, and positive emotions, which is consistent with Kiruja et al. (2025), who opined that online spiritual practices may serve as mechanisms for cultivating positive affect and mindfulness, aligning with theories linking spirituality and well-being. This supports the need for emphasizing meaning-making, gratitude, and spiritual connectedness function as protective factors that enhance overall psychological well-being.

Furthermore, 45.3% of the respondents agreed and 26.3% strongly agreed that they feel inner peace and harmony in their daily life (M = 3.88, SD = .959), 39.9% of the respondents agreed and 24.6% strongly agreed that they feel a sense of purpose and meaning in life (M = 3.75, SD = 1.072), and 46.4% of the respondents agreed and 17.1% strongly agreed that they feel connected to a higher power or greater force in the universe (M = 3.70, SD = .966). The results agree with research showing that online faith communities provide social support and identity formation (Okpe & Jibrin, 2024). This implies that belongingness contributes to young people's well-being. It emphasizes that meaning, purpose, and perceived transcendence are central dimensions of psychosocial well-being.

Correlation between Social Media Use and Spiritual Well-being

Pearson correlation technique was used to analyze the correlation between different social media use and spiritual well-being of young people studying at TVET institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya. Table 14 presents the output at $p<.01$.

Table 14

Correlation between Social Media Use and Spiritual Well-being

		Spiritual Well-being
1. Spiritual Well-being	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	
	N	292
2. Instagram	Pearson Correlation	.165*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.010
	N	292
3. TikTok	Pearson Correlation	.241**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	292

		Spiritual Well-being
4. Twitter	Pearson Correlation	.221**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	292
5. Facebook	Pearson Correlation	.197**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003
	N	292
6. YouTube	Pearson Correlation	.216**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001
	N	292
7. WhatsApp	Pearson Correlation	.095
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.153
	N	292

Table 14 a revealed that TikTok showed the strongest positive correlation with spiritual well-being (r = .241, p< .01), followed by Twitter (r = .221, p < .01), YouTube (r = .216, p <.01), Facebook (r = .197, p<.05), and Instagram (r = .165, p<.05). WhatsApp, however, did not show a statistically significant correlation with spiritual well-being (r = .095, p> .05). These findings indicate that increased use of most social media platforms is associated with higher levels of spiritual well-being, although the strength of the relationship varies across platforms. This agrees with the literature (Kiruja et al., 2025; Okpe & Jibrin, 2024; Wang et al., 2025), which demonstrates that social media facilitates spiritual exploration, emotional comfort, community belonging, and moral formation. The findings reveal that spiritual well-being is more strongly influenced by platforms that enable expressive, content-rich, and community-oriented interactions.

Regression of Spiritual Well-being on Social Media Use

Multiple linear regression analysis was performed to establish the differential effects of various social media on spiritual well-being of young people studying at

TVET institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya. Table 15 presents the model summary, ANOVA, and coefficients.

Table 15

Regression of Spiritual Well-being on Social Media Use

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.292[a]	.085	.051	.77635

a. Predictors: (Constant), WhatsApp, Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, TikTok

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	10.692	6	1.527	2.534	.016[b]
	Residual	115.119	192	.603		
	Total	125.811	198			

a. Dependent Variable: Spiritual Well-being
b. Predictors: (Constant), WhatsApp, Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, TikTok

Coefficients[a]

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	3.364	.341		9.859	.000
	Instagram	-.022	.066	-.035	-.333	.740
	TikTok	-.072	.071	-.105	-1.009	.314
	Twitter	.093	.060	.153	1.559	.121
	Facebook	.051	.060	.082	.858	.392
	YouTube	.115	.055	.179	2.089	.038
	WhatsApp	.002	.082	.002	.030	.976

a. Dependent Variable: Spiritual Well-being

Table 15 indicates that approximately 8.5% of the variance in spiritual well-being was explained by the combined use of the seven social media platforms (R^2=0.85). The ANOVA results show that the overall regression model was statistically significant, $F(7, 191) = 2.53$, $p < .05$. The coefficients indicate that only YouTube had a statistically significant positive effect on spiritual well-being (β = .179, t = 2.089, p<.05). This is in line with research by Wang et al. (2025) which highlights that social media can facilitate spiritual exploration. However, Instagram

($\beta = -.035$, $t = -.333$, $p > .05$), TikTok ($\beta = -.105$, $t = -1.009$, $p > .05$), Twitter ($\beta = .153$, $t = 1.559$, $p > .05$), Facebook ($\beta = .082$, $t = .858$, $p > .05$), and WhatsApp ($\beta = .002$, $t = .030$, $p > .05$) did not significantly predict spiritual well-being. These results contrast with Kiruja et al. (2025) whose study showed that the effect of most social media platforms on spiritual well-being is limited.

The foregoing quantitative findings were corroborated by the qualitative findings, where the responses indicated that social media use among young people has a varying influence on spiritual well-being, with some respondents showing minimal effect while others report noticeable influence. Respondents held the view that despite frequent or moderate use, there was little disruption to their spiritual practices or beliefs, suggesting that social media does not necessarily interfere with spiritual engagement. Conversely, there are respondents who reported experiences that suggest social media may influence attention, focus, or time allocation related to spiritual activities, reflecting moderate impact. Other respondents displayed mixed patterns, with certain social media activities seen to affect some aspects of spiritual focus while others remained unaffected. Verbatim expressions are as follows:

> "Social media has not really interfered with my spiritual life or religious practices" (Respondent #3).
>
> "Sometimes I spend too much time online and it reduces the time I would have used for spiritual activities" (Respondent #5).
>
> ""Certain online content affects my focus spiritually, but not everything I engage with has that effect" (Respondent #8).
>
> "I experience both positive and negative effects depending on what I consume on social media" (Respondent #10).

In sum, the findings indicated that social media has a varied influence on the spiritual well-being of young people in TVET institutions. While some platforms, such as YouTube, appear to have a positive impact, most individual platforms do not significantly predict spiritual well-being on their own. This was affirmed by qualitative results which showed that social media can both support and challenge spiritual growth depending on how it is used.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented the results and findings of the study. This comprised descriptive statistical analysis using percentage frequencies, mean and standard deviation scores. The chapter has also tested the significance of relationship between the study variables using inferential statistics. This entailed the application of both Pearson correlation and multiple regression analysis. The findings have been presented in figures and tables, and corroborated by thematic analysis of qualitative data.

Chapter Five: Summary of Findings, Recommendations, Areas for Further Research and Conclusion

Introduction

This final chapter summarizes the findings, draws conclusions, and makes recommendations as well as suggests areas for further research. The summary is undertaken for each objective. This is followed by conclusions drawn from the findings. Subsequently, practical recommendations are proposed. The last section of the chapter highlights areas for further research.

Summary of Findings

The first objective of the study was to establish the forms of social media used by young people in selected public and private TVET institutions in Kiambu County. WhatsApp was the most frequently used platform (M = 4.36, SD = 0.876), with 81.3% of respondents reporting frequent or very frequent use. This is followed by Facebook (M = 3.81, SD = 1.336), with 62.0% reporting frequent or very frequent use, and TikTok (M = 3.76, SD = 1.285), where 62.3% indicated frequent or very frequent use. Other social media platforms follow with 61.4%, while YouTube records 58.1%, reflecting substantial engagement. Instagram records 52.1% frequent or very frequent use, while Twitter ranks as the least frequently used platform (M = 3.24, SD = 1.375), with 51.0% of respondents indicating frequent or very frequent use.

The second objective of the study was to determine the relationship between social media and the social well-being of young people studying at public and private TVET institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya. The strongest positive relationship with social well-being was Twitter ($r = .475$, $p < .01$) and TikTok ($r = .455$, $p < .01$).

Facebook also demonstrated a moderate positive correlation with social well-being (r = .408, p < .01), while YouTube showed a slightly lower but still significant association (r = .381, p < .01). Instagram was moderately correlated with social well-being (r = .337, p < .01). The weakest, though still significant, relationship was observed for WhatsApp (r = .199, p < .01). The set of social media explained 33.8% of the variations in social well-being (R^2 =.338). The ANOVA results show that the overall regression model was statistically significant, $F(7, 192) = 13.98$, p < .01. The coefficients results reveal that Twitter (β = .276, t = 3.312, p = .001) had statistically significant positive effects on social well-being. However, YouTube (β = .140, t = 1.928, p>.05), while Facebook (β = .078, t = .953, p>.05), WhatsApp (β = .067, t = .980, p>.05), Instagram (β = −.038, t = −.424, p>.05), and TikTok (β = −.015, t = −.176, p>.05) did not significantly predict social well-being. The findings suggest that only Twitter significantly predicted social well-being of the respondents. The results were reflected in the findings from in-depth interviews which also showed that social media use among young people has a mixed influence on social well-being, with effects varying according to usage intensity and purpose. Respondents displayed mixed experiences, highlighting that selective engagement in social media activities can produce both positive and negative social outcomes.

The third objective of the study was to examine the relationship between social media and the mental well-being of young people in selected public TVET institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya. TikTok demonstrated the strongest positive correlation with mental well-being (r = .351, p<.01), followed by Twitter (r = .325, p<.01). Facebook (r = .257, p<.01), Instagram (r = .239, p<.01), and YouTube (r = .238, p<.01) exhibited weaker but still statistically significant positive relationships.

However, WhatsApp did not show a statistically significant correlation with mental well-being (r =.113, >.05). The combined use of the seven social media platforms explained 10.7% of the variance in mental well-being (R^2 =.107). The ANOVA results show that the overall regression model was statistically significant, $F(7, 285) = 3.24$, $p<.01$, indicating that the predictors collectively contributed to explaining variations in mental well-being among the respondents. However, the coefficients results reveal that none of the individual social media platforms significantly predicted mental well-being: Instagram ($\beta = -.055$, $t = -.525$, $p>.05$), TikTok ($\beta = .037$, $t = .354$, $p>.05$), Twitter ($\beta = .138$, $t = 1.396$, $p>.05$), Facebook ($\beta = .020$, $t = .214$, $p>.05$), YouTube ($\beta = .134$, $t = 1.581$, $p>.05$), and WhatsApp ($\beta = .004$, $t = .054$, $p>.05$) did not show statistically significant effects. Qualitative analysis of interview data revealed that social media use among young people has a variable influence on mental well-being, with effects ranging from minimal to moderate depending on usage patterns. The evidence from both data strands converges on the idea that the impact of social media is not anchored in any single platform but is instead embedded in the use, whereby combined exposure and patterns of engagement are more consequential than isolated channels.

The fourth objective of the study was to examine the relationship between social media and the spiritual well-being of young people in TVET institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya. TikTok showed the strongest positive correlation with spiritual well-being ($r = .241$, $p< .01$), followed by Twitter ($r = .221$, $p < .01$), YouTube ($r = .216$, $p <.01$), Facebook ($r = .197$, $p <.05$), and Instagram ($r = .165$, $p<.05$). WhatsApp, however, did not show a statistically significant correlation with spiritual well-being ($r = .095$, $p> .05$). Approximately 8.5% of the variance in

spiritual well-being was explained by the combined use of the seven social media platforms (R^2=0.85). The ANOVA results show that the overall regression model was statistically significant, $F(7, 191) = 2.53$, $p < .05$. The coefficients indicate that only YouTube had a statistically significant positive effect on spiritual well-being (β = .179, t = 2.089, p<.05). Instagram (β = −.035, t = −.333, p<.05), TikTok (β = −.105, t = −1.009, p>.05), Twitter (β = .153, t = 1.559, p>.05), Facebook (β = .082, t = .858, p>.05), and WhatsApp (β = .002, t = .030, p> .05) did not significantly predict spiritual well-being. Qualitative findings showed that social media use among young people has a varying influence on spiritual well-being, with some respondents showing minimal effect while others report noticeable influence. Respondents held the view that despite frequent or moderate use, there was little disruption to their spiritual practices or beliefs, suggesting that social media does not necessarily interfere with spiritual engagement. Conversely, there are respondents who reported experiences that suggest social media may influence attention, focus, or time allocation related to spiritual activities

Conclusion

In light of the findings from the study, a number of conclusions can be made.

Young people in TVET institutions in Kiambu County are highly engaged with a variety of social media platforms, with messaging and networking platforms being the most dominant. WhatsApp emerged as the most widely used platform, indicating that instant communication and group interaction play a central role in how young people connect with peers, share information, and maintain relationships. Platforms such as Facebook and TikTok also attract substantial engagement. Although other platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and Twitter are also used,

their engagement levels are comparatively lower. Thus, it can be surmised that social media has become an integral part of the everyday communication, information sharing, and leisure activities of young people in TVET institutions.

Social media use is positively associated with the social well-being of young people in TVET institutions, although the influence varies across platforms. While several platforms demonstrate positive relationships with social well-being, only a few meaningfully contribute to improving social connectedness and interpersonal engagement among the respondents. Platforms that encourage broader interaction and discussion appear offer greater opportunities for social participation, exchange of ideas, and development of online communities. In contrast, platforms used for private messaging or entertainment show weaker contributions to social well-being.

Although social media use showed some positive associations with the mental well-being of young people in TVET institutions, the individual platforms do not exert a strong or direct influence on mental well-being. This suggests that social media may contribute to certain aspects of emotional expression, information access, and entertainment that could indirectly support mental well-being. However, the absence of strong predictive effects indicates that mental well-being among young people is shaped by a broader range of factors beyond social media use alone.

Social media has a limited relationship with the spiritual well-being of young people in TVET institutions. While some platforms provide opportunities for exposure to spiritual or inspirational content, discussions on faith, and access to religious teachings, most platforms do not significantly influence spiritual well-being, suggesting that social media is not a primary avenue through which young people nurture their spirituality. Thus, while certain forms of online content may support

spiritual engagement, social media plays a peripheral role in shaping the spiritual well-being of young people.

Recommendations

The following recommendations have been made:

i) TVET institutions should encourage young people to balance their online engagement with offline relationships and participation in community while using social media in ways that promote meaningful interaction, learning, and positive social support.

ii) Counselling psychologists should help young people develop healthy digital habits, address potential stressors related to online interactions, and strengthen coping strategies that enhance psychological resilience.

iii) Psycho-educators/counsellors should design educational programs that promote responsible social media engagement among students in TVET institutions. Such initiatives should focus on equipping young people with skills to critically evaluate online content, manage screen time, engage constructively in online communities, and identify content that promotes positive values and personal growth.

iv) Policymakers and educational authorities should develop policies and institutional guidelines that promote healthy and constructive use of social media among young people in TVET institutions. Policymakers should support initiatives that integrate digital well-being education into TVET curricula.

Areas of Further Research

The research proposes three research areas thus:

i) One limitation of this study is that a substantial proportion of the variance in social, mental, and spiritual well-being remains unexplained by the social media variables examined. Future research should incorporate a broader range of psychosocial, environmental, and personal variables in order to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that shape the social, mental, and spiritual well-being of young people.

ii) A second limitation was the study's focus on students in TVET institutions in Kiambu County, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other educational contexts. Future studies should replicate similar research across other educational settings in order to compare patterns of social media use and its relationship with well-being among different groups of young people.

iii) A third limitation of the study was that the sample focused exclusively on young people within a specific age cohort, thereby excluding other age groups who may interact with social media in different ways. Future research should include different age cohorts in order to explore how the relationship between social media use and well-being may vary across the lifespan.

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Appendices

Appendix I: Informed Consent Form

Dear Respondent,

My name is Leah Njeri Kuria a student at Pan Africa Christian University pursuing a degree of Master of Arts in Counselling Psychology. I am carrying out a study on the Relationship between Social Media use and Psychosocial Well-Being of Young People in Selected public and private TVET Institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya. For this study, I kindly ask for some of your time to answer a few questions. Your privacy and confidentiality will be strictly maintained, and your name will not appear on any materials. Only the researcher will have access to your information. Participation is voluntary, and you can withdraw at any time before or during the study. Please note that there is no compensation for participating. If you agree to participate in this research, please sign the form below.

Participant:

| --- | --- | --- |
| Participant | Signature | Date |

Researcher:

Leah Njeri Kuria  Date: 6/12/24

| --- | --- | --- |
| Name of Researcher | Signature | Date |

Appendix II. Students' Questionnaire

Introduction

I'm a student at Pan Africa Christian University pursuing a degree of Master of Arts in Counselling Psychology. I am researching on the "Relationship between Social Media use and p\ Psychosocial Well-Being of Young People in Selected public TVET Institutions In Kiambu County, Kenya". Your answers to this questionnaire will be used for research purposes and will be kept completely confidential. Please respond to the questions honestly and truthfully. I assure you that your comments will not be used to identify you, and your name or identity will not be disclosed to anyone without your explicit consent. **PLEASE DO NOT INCLUDE YOUR NAME ANYWHERE IN THIS QUESTIONNAIRE.**

Thank you.

Section 1. General Information.

1. Gender

   Male [ ]

   Female [ ]

   Other. please specify [ ]

2. On average, how much time do you spend daily using social media platforms.

   Less than 1hour [ ]

   1-2 hours [ ]

   2-3 hours [ ]

   3-4 hours [ ]

   More that 4 hours [ ]

3. What is your purpose of using social media platforms.

   Communication [ ]

   Education [ ]

   Entertainment [ ]

   Marketing

   Other. Please specify .....

4. In your opinion are there any negative impacts of social media on the well-being of an individual using it.

   Yes [ ]

   No [ ]

   Not sure [ ]

Section 2. Social Media Platforms Commonly Visited by the Respondent

5. Which of the following social media platforms do you use? [Tick all that apply].

Instagram	
TikTok	
Twitter	
Facebook	
YouTube	
WhatsApp	

The items below will use the Likert scale; Never (1), Rarely (2), Sometimes (3), Often (4), Frequently (5) Please indicate how often you visit each of the following social media platforms by selecting the option that best describes your usage.

		Never	**Rarely (less than once a week)**	**Occasionally (1-2 times a week)**	**Frequently (3-5 times a week)**	**Very Frequently (daily)**
6.	Instagram					
7.	TikTok					
8.	Twitter					
9.	Facebook					
10.	YouTube					
11.	WhatsApp					

Section 3

The items below will use the Likert scale; Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), Strongly Agree (5). Please indicate (√) the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. Tick the response that most closely approximates your knowledge about the following attributes concerning your feelings of social well-being, Mental Well-Being and Spiritual Well-Being

a) Social Well-Being.

Please rate each statement on a scale from Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), Strongly Agree (5)

	Please indicate how often you experienced the following	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neutra**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
12.	I feel connected to my peers.					
13.	I have close and supportive friendships.					
14.	I feel accepted by my social group.					
15.	I participate in social activities regularly.					
16.	I have someone to talk to when I need support.					
17.	I feel valued by the people around me.					
18.	I feel lonely and isolated (reverse-scored).					
19.	I enjoy spending time with others.					
20.	I find it easy to make new friends.					
21.	I feel that my social relationships are positive and rewarding.					

b) Mental Well-Being:

Please rate each statement on a scale from Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), Strongly Agree (5)

	Please indicate how often you experienced the following	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neutra**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
22.	I feel happy and satisfied with my life.					
23.	I feel confident in my ability to handle my personal problems.					
24.	I have supportive friends and family I can turn to when I need help.					
25.	I often feel anxious or worried.					
26.	I have trouble sleeping due to stress or anxiety.					
27.	I am able to relax and enjoy my free time.					
28.	I feel overwhelmed by the demands of school/work.					
29.	I feel good about myself and my accomplishments.					
30.	I find it difficult to concentrate on tasks.					
31.	I engage in regular physical activity or exercise.					

c) Spiritual Well-Being

Please rate each statement on a scale from Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), Strongly Agree (5)

	Please indicate how often you experienced the following	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neutra**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
32.	I feel a sense of purpose and meaning in my life.					
33.	I engage in regular practices (e.g., meditation, prayer) that nourish my spirit.					
34.	I feel connected to a higher power or greater force in the universe.					
35.	I participate in community or religious activities that support my spiritual growth.					
36.	I feel inner peace and harmony in my daily life.					
37.	I find inspiration and strength from my spiritual beliefs					
38.	I feel a strong sense of belonging to a spiritual or religious community.					
39.	My spiritual beliefs influence my decisions and actions.					
40.	I feel gratitude and appreciation for the beauty and mystery of life.					
41.	I feel that my spiritual life provides me with a sense of hope and optimism.					

Appendix III: Counsellors' Interview Schedule

These questions are designed to gather the counsellor's insights and observations on how social media usage affects various aspects of the students' lives in TVET institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya.

1. Based on your interactions with students, which social media platforms do they mention using most frequently? Are there specific reasons they prefer these platforms?
2. Have you observed any trends or changes in the social media preferences of students over time? What might be driving these changes?
3. From your perspective, how does social media usage affect students' relationships with their peers and family? Are there more positive or negative impacts?
4. Have students reported feeling more connected or isolated due to their social media use? How does this manifest in their behaviour or attitudes?
5. Can you provide examples of how social media has either helped or hindered students' social interactions and well-being? Are there specific patterns you have noticed?
6. What mental health issues related to social media use have students discussed with you? How prevalent are these issues among the students' you counsel?
7. In your experience, does social media contribute to students' stress, anxiety, or depression? Are there particular aspects of social media that are most problematic?
8. How do students cope with the mental health challenges they face due to social media? What strategies have been effective or ineffective?

9. Do students discuss the impact of social media on their spiritual lives with you? What are their main concerns or benefits mentioned?
10. Have you observed any changes in students' spiritual practices or beliefs that can be attributed to social media use? How do these changes affect their overall well-being?

Appendix IV: List of the Accredited TVETS in Kiambu County

Private TVET Institutions in Kiambu County

1. Aberdare Institute of Business Studies and Catering
2. African Milling School
3. Africana College of Professionals
4. Amboseli Institute of Hospitality & Technology-Thika
5. Brainsway Business College
6. Brilliant Institute of Professional Studies
7. Cascade Institute
8. Cascade Institute of Hospitality
9. Chania Training Institute
10. Christian Industrial Training College
11. Comtech College
12. Dykaan College – Juja
13. Dykaan College-Githurai Campus
14. Experts Business College
15. Gakeo College of Business Studies
16. Gakuyo Technical College
17. Global Institute of Computers & Engineering Studies
18. Havard Institute of Development Studies
19. Hemland College of Professional and Technical Studies -Thika Campus
20. Hemland College of Professional and Technical Studies - Githunguri Campus
21. Highlands State College – Thika
22. ICT College Limited
23. Institute of Neo Technology and Business Management
24. International Centre of Technology
25. Jodan College of Technology- Thika
26. Juja College of Accountancy
27. Keiway Mining and Technology College
28. Kena Institute of Technology and Hospitality
29. Kenya Institute of Organic Farming
30. Kenya School Of Medical Science &Technology
31. Kenya School of Medical Science and Technology
32. Kenya YMCA College of Agriculture and Technology
33. Kiambu County Institute of Management
34. Kiambu Institute of Business Studies
35. Kiambu Institute of Computer Engineering
36. Kijabe College of Health Science
37. Kilimambogo Highways Building Technology Institute
38. Kivuli College
39. Kolping Vocational Training Centre
40. Krones LCS Centre East Africa Limited
41. Kwihota VocationalTraining Centre

42. Matric Institute of Professional Studies
43. Miles College
44. Miramar International College
45. Munyu Institute of Technology
46. Nairobi Institute of Business Studies
47. Nairobi Institute of Business Studies (NIBS)
48. Nairobi Institute of E-Commerce
49. Perfect Ten Hair and Beauty College
50. Petanns Institute of Business Studies
51. Petanns Institute of Business Studies
52. Premier Professional Institute
53. Premier Professional Institute- Limuru
54. Premier Professional Institute- Ruaka
55. Raynata Institute of Hotels and Catering
56. Reward College of Technology
57. Rosana Training Institute
58. Ruiru college of Catering and Management Studies
59. Ruiru Institute of Business Studies
60. Sisters of Mercy Commercial College
61. Skynet Business College-Limuru
62. Spackle College of hair design and beauty
63. Thika Institute of Business Studies
64. Thika Institute of Business Studies – Town Campus
65. Thika Institute of Business Studies-Highway Campus
66. Thika Institute of Computers
67. Thika School of medical and Health Sciences
68. Tonic Institute

Public TVET Institutions in Kiambu County

1. Transafric Accountancy & Management College
2. Trident School of Technicaland Professional Studies
3. Vitec Training Institution
4. Word of Faith Community College
5. Gitiha Vocational Training Centre
6. Gituamba vocational training Centre
7. Gokoe Vocational Training Centre
8. Juja Farm Vocational Training Centre
9. Kagumo-ini Vocational Training Centre
10. Kairi Vocational Training Centre
11. Kamirithu Vocational Training Centre
12. Kanyariri VTC
13. Karatu vocational training Centre
14. Karingari Vocational Training Centre
15. Kiambu Institute of Science and Technology
16. Kinoo Vocational Training Centre

17. Komothai Vocational Training Centre
18. Makongeni Educational Vocational Training Centre
19. Mangu Vocational Training Centre
20. Mbichi vocational training Centre
21. Muguga Vocational Training Centre
22. Munyu-ini Vocational Training Centre
23. Ndenderu Vocational Training Centre
24. Nyaga Vocational Training Centre
25. Nyanduma Vocational Training Centre
26. Riabai Vocational Training Centre
27. Riuki Youth Polytechnic
28. St Bosco VCT
29. St. Joseph The Worker Thuita VTC
30. Thika Technical Training Institute
31. Thogoto Vocational Training Centre
32. Uthiru Vocational Training Centre
33. Wabeni Vocational Training Centre

Appendix V: Krejcie and Morgan Sampling Table

N = Population size S = Recommended sample size

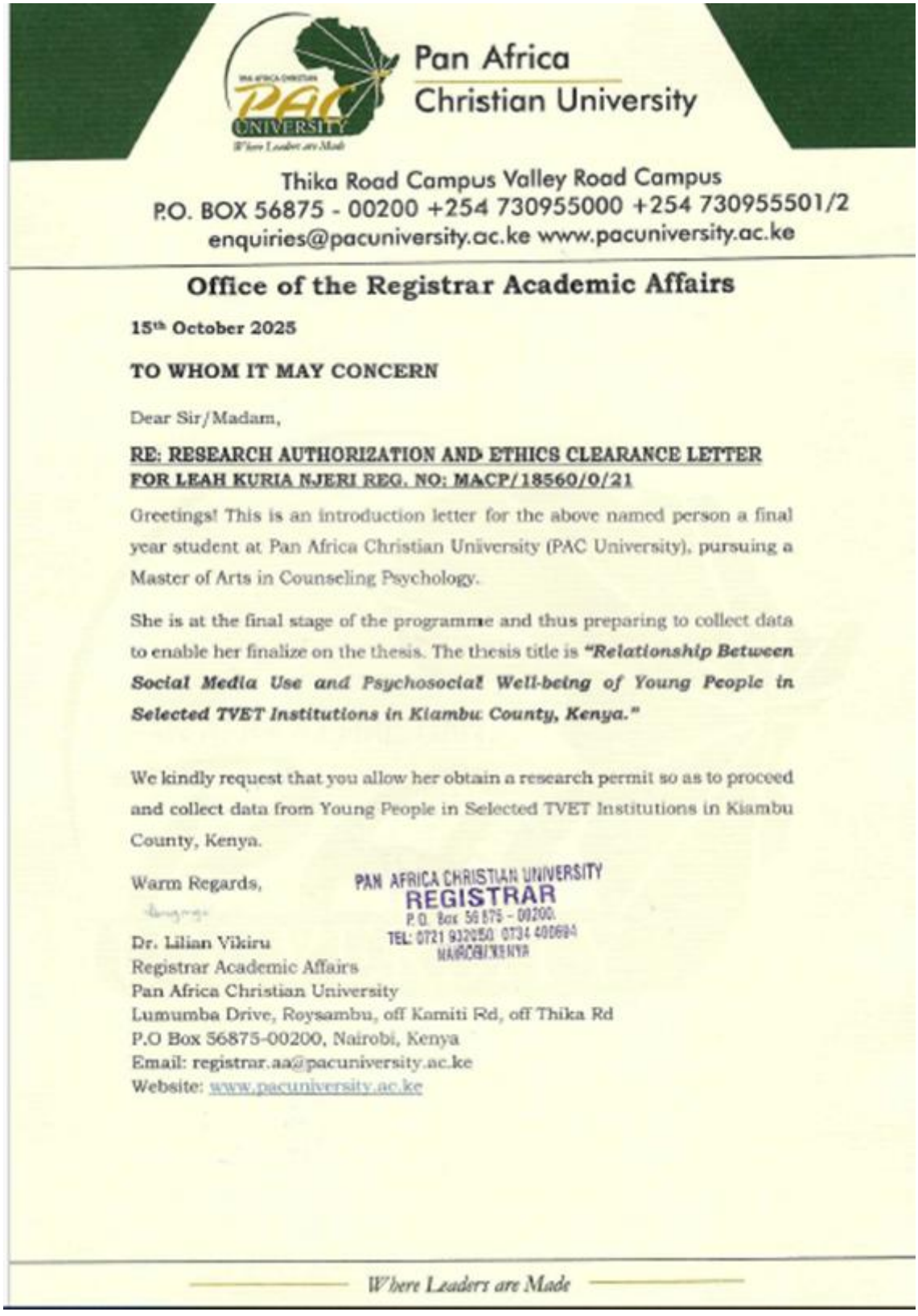
N	S	N	S	N	S
10	10	220	140	1 200	291
15	14	230	144	1 300	297
20	19	240	148	1 400	302
25	24	250	152	1 500	306
30	28	260	155	1 600	310
35	32	270	159	1 700	313
40	36	280	162	1 800	317
45	40	290	165	1 900	320
50	44	300	169	2 000	322
55	48	320	175	2 200	327
60	52	340	181	2 400	331
65	56	360	186	2 600	335
70	59	380	191	2 800	338
75	63	400	196	3 000	341
80	66	420	201	3 500	346
85	70	440	205	4 000	351
90	73	460	210	4 500	354
95	76	480	214	5 000	357
100	80	500	217	6 000	361
110	86	550	226	7 000	364
120	92	600	234	8 000	367
130	97	650	242	9 000	368
140	103	700	248	10 000	370
150	108	750	254	15 000	375
160	113	800	260	20 000	377
170	118	850	265	30 000	379
180	123	900	269	40 000	380
190	127	950	274	50 000	381
200	132	1 000	278	75 000	382
210	136	1 100	285	1 000 000	384

(Krecjie & Morgan, 1970)

Appendix VI: Map Of Kiambu County



Appendix VII: PAC University Research Authorization Letter



Pan Africa Christian University

Thika Road Campus Valley Road Campus
P.O. BOX 56875 - 00200 +254 730955000 +254 730955501/2
enquiries@pacuniversity.ac.ke www.pacuniversity.ac.ke

Office of the Registrar Academic Affairs

15th October 2025

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION AND ETHICS CLEARANCE LETTER FOR LEAH KURIA NJERI REG. NO: MACP/18560/0/21

Greetings! This is an introduction letter for the above named person a final year student at Pan Africa Christian University (PAC University), pursuing a Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology.

She is at the final stage of the programme and thus preparing to collect data to enable her finalize on the thesis. The thesis title is ***"Relationship Between Social Media Use and Psychosocial Well-being of Young People in Selected TVET Institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya."***

We kindly request that you allow her obtain a research permit so as to proceed and collect data from Young People in Selected TVET Institutions in Kiambu County, Kenya.

Warm Regards,

PAN AFRICA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
REGISTRAR
P.O. Box 56875 - 00200
TEL: 0721 932050 0734 400694
NAIROBI/KENYA

Dr. Lilian Vikiru
Registrar Academic Affairs
Pan Africa Christian University
Lumumba Drive, Roysambu, off Kamiti Rd, off Thika Rd
P.O Box 56875-00200, Nairobi, Kenya
Email: registrar.aa@pacuniversity.ac.ke
Website: www.pacuniversity.ac.ke

Where Leaders are Made

Appendix VIII: NACOSTI Permit

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Ref No: 179783

Date of Issue: 20/November/2025

RESEARCH LICENSE



This is to Certify that Ms.. Leah Njeri kiarie of Pan Africa Christian University, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Kiambu on the topic: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL MEDIA USE AND PSYCHOSOCIAL WELL-BEING OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN SELECTED TVET INSTITUTIONS IN KIAMBU COUNTY, KENYA. for the period ending : 20/November/2026.

License No: NACOSTI/P/25/4182271

179783

Applicant Identification Number

Ag. Director General
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Verification QR Code

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See overleaf for conditions