

Article

Impact of news consumption on social media during the 2024 electoral campaign in Mozambique

Domingos Getimane^{1,*}, Rui Paulino Taula², Bruno Miguel Ferreira Gonçalves³

¹ Universidade Católica de Moçambique, Nampula 3100, Mozambique

² Universidade Politécnica, Maputo 1106, Mozambique

³ Instituto Politécnico de Bragança, 5300-253 Bragança, Portugal

* **Corresponding author:** Domingos Getimane, dominget@gmail.com

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Abstract: This scientific article discusses the consumption of news about the electoral campaign on social networks during the campaign period in Mozambique in 2024. The research was carried out on an exploratory basis, where the issue of news consumption on digital platforms was analyzed based on a bibliographical review of authors in the field, with some incidence of the approach defended by Stuart Hall's theory of encoding and decoding. This study investigated how different social networks impact on voter interest and the circulation of information. The results reveal a significant relationship of trust in private media and information organizations, which use Facebook to access digital media and WhatsApp to disseminate and share news. Finally, it is important to note that the results achieved had the participation of 160 respondents, all of them Mozambican nationals.

Keywords: news; Facebook; WhatsApp; electoral campaign; social networks; Mozambique

1. Introduction

In recent decades, the study of the content and impact of social networks has aroused growing interest among researchers from various fields. Several studies suggest that social networks significantly influence the behavior of individuals, groups and social contexts. In this sense, this article seeks to deepen the analysis of how social networks modify the consumption of news by Mozambicans during the period of the electoral campaign, which ran from 24 August to 6 October 2024, according to the calendar established by the National Electoral Commission of Mozambique, through Deliberation No. 1/CNE/2024 of January 4.

The research is based on the assumption that individuals have information preferences which, although isolated, are influenced by social and contextual factors. According to the Digital Report 2024: Mozambique, published on 23 February 2024 by Simon Kemp [1], Mozambique had 7.96 million Internet users, representing 23.2% of the population. This figure is significantly lower than the average for East Africa, which is 26.7%, and it is estimated that approximately 360 million people in the region still do not have access to the Internet, although these figures are expected to increase as Internet users grow year on year.

The report also highlights that 71% of Mozambicans use their cell phones to access the Internet, 28% use computers, and only 1% use other devices. The Chrome browser is the most popular, used by 86% of internet users, followed by Apple's Safari, with 5%. The expansion of access to and use of social networks has broadened the

dissemination of news content, allowing consumers not only to receive information, but also to create and share personalized news streams.

In Mozambique, the media strategy adopted to integrate the digitization of broadcasting into a global vision of the country's real needs in terms of the media industry is non-existent.

To put this into context, it should be noted that the country is located on the eastern southern coast of Africa, borders Tanzania (to the north), Zambia and Malawi (to the northwest), Eswatini and Zimbabwe (to the west), South Africa (to the south and west) and the Mozambique Channel to the east, was colonized by Portugal for around 500 years, and achieved its independence in 1975. After independence in 1977, the country was plunged into a military conflict that lasted around 16 years, ending with the General Peace Agreement signed on 4 October 1992, between FRELIMO and RENAMO.

From this agreement, Mozambique adopted a democratic and multi-party political and governance system, different from the previous one assumed since 1975, characterized by monopartisanship (one-party and socialist), which resulted in the approval of the new constitution of the Republic in 1990.

Therefore, the Mozambican democratic system emerged to overcome all the problems that the country had right after independence, so it is necessary to understand how the dissemination and interpretation of electoral processes is shaped during the campaign period, in which the media are an extremely important element in the political process and the exercise of democracy, as they stimulate debates, confront the points of view of political actors and promote the construction by citizens of their preference.

There is a directive in Mozambique on the coverage of electoral processes, underpinned by Law No. 2/2019, of May 31, according to which some guiding parts can be cited, namely the 5th article on freedom and equality, which provides for the existence of freedom of political propaganda and equality of candidacies, the same instrument determines in articles 18, 19 and 20 the campaign period as well as the forms of promotion and realization of the same, referring to the candidates, coalitions and parties, to equal rights, responsibility for promoting and carrying out the campaign, in a freeway.

In a journalistic article published in October 2019 by Romeu da Silva in DW, entitled "Electoral campaign on social networks", there is an emphasis on social networks by the majority of politicians, justified by the fact that the manifestos reach the voter in good time, taking traditional media as a basis for comparison and by the fact that large urban centers are strongly connected to social networks, with Facebook and WhatsApp standing out for their capacity to reach.

In Mozambique, social networks have brought significant innovations in digital communication at election campaign time. The simple act of activating a like on a page or specific content related to a candidate, coalition or political party can indicate the relevance of certain advertising content, transcending traditional interaction with links, as Farias [2] points out in his study on social networks and news consumption.

With elections approaching in Mozambique, scheduled for 9 October 2024, the influence of social media on the electoral process is becoming even more relevant. There are four candidates running in the presidential elections: Daniel Chapo from

Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO), Lutero Simango from the Mozambique Democratic Movement (MDM), Venâncio Mondlane from Optimistic People for the Development of Mozambique (PODEMOS) and Ossufo Momade from Mozambican National Revolutions (RENAMO). Meanwhile, along with these, 37 political parties are vying for seats in the National and Provincial Assemblies.

However, it should be noted that there is a mistrust on the part of the opposition parties because, according to them, they suffer some kind of black out in the dissemination of their election manifesto

s by the public media, despite being contradicted by articles 22 and 31 of Law No. 2/2019, of May 31, Mozambique, on the right to use the public radio and television service during the election campaign period, hence the perceived preference, in the view of the study, of the use of social networks by the opposition parties.

In general, the understanding is that FRELIMO, the party that currently governs Mozambique, uses all the means at its disposal to make use of the airtime to publicize its manifesto and carry out its propaganda, since it controls all the public communication and information media with national coverage. This reflection brings us back to Luabo's position [3], which suggests that political agents feel obliged to understand the language of communication in order to publicize their political position, seeking visibility by looking for other forms and means of communication.

2. Literature review

News consumption has been referred to as the act of searching for, reading, watching or listening to information about current events, topics of public interest, or any information content produced by media outlets, and is a central practice in contemporary society, as it informs and guides the opinions and actions of individuals, directly influencing their public and private lives [4,5].

In turn, communication in politics is essential for mobilizing and promoting trust between the actors and the administration, because the power of the symbols and signals transmitted is so influential that political leaders build their reputation through the meticulous elaboration of their political brand, so this conventional communication is the delivery of messages for political purposes, characterized by the emergence of actors who transmit their positions in order to achieve certain objectives, through the mass media [6].

Historically, research and interest in news consumption can be traced back to ancient civilizations, where the transmission of information took place through messengers or public proclamations. However, the modern press, as we know it, began to take hold in the 17th century with the appearance of the first printed newspapers in Europe, such as the "Relation" published in Strasbourg in 1605, considered by many to be the first newspaper in history [7]. This period marked the beginning of an era in which access to information began to expand, albeit restricted to certain social classes.

Therefore, some arguments referenced in various works related to the role of the media and information, the authors refer us to the interpretation of the idea that the way journalism approaches events in the electoral process has results in the way the voter perceives and understands the message, because it tends to directly influence the behavior of the audience and the way the image of social reality is organized [3].

With technological advances, news consumption has evolved significantly. The invention of the telegraph in the 19th century, followed by radio and television in the 20th century, revolutionized the way news was disseminated and consumed. These means allowed for faster transmission of information and an expansion of the audience reached [8]. From the 1990s onwards, the Internet transformed the scenario once again, introducing a new era of news consumption, characterized by speed, interactivity and the globalization of information.

Today, news is consumed in different ways. Traditional forms such as printed newspapers, radio and television still have their place, but the Internet and social networks are playing an increasingly dominant role. Digital platforms such as news websites, blogs, podcasts and social media provide quick and easy access to information. In addition, the personalization of content, where algorithms recommend news based on users' interests, has changed the dynamics of how people consume information [9].

Social media are seen as relevant, strategic instruments for change and development, as well as being considered effective for receiving and responding to public aspirations. Various leaders and governments, both regional and central, optimize social media to maintain political communication with the public while building their personal brand through political communication, as they have realized that through social media they can maintain communication and interaction with voters, promoting a culture of participation, aspirations and proximity without limitations of space and time [6].

According to Mozambican researcher Dércio Tsandzana, with the development of Internet-based social networks, various authors have been consciously or unconsciously influencing public opinion, through news, opinion leaders, journalists, press groups or ordinary citizens. The same author highlights the importance of social networks on the Internet by highlighting two views, namely the cyber optimist, who considers the Internet to be an innovative political tool, and the cyber realist, who recognizes it as the ideal space for those who already have some political capital [10].

The importance of news consumption for people is multifaceted. Firstly, news keeps the public informed about events and issues that can impact their lives, directly or indirectly. This makes it crucial in times of crisis, such as natural disasters, public health emergencies, or in campaign actions and political instability, where quick and accurate access to information can be vital [11].

Secondly, news plays a fundamental role in shaping public opinion and building an informed and participatory society. Access to diverse and quality information allows citizens to make more informed decisions, whether in the political, economic or social field [12].

In addition, news consumption is a key element in education and the promotion of citizenship, as it facilitates an understanding of the rights and duties of individuals and promotes civic responsibility. Through news, people can engage in public debates and contribute to the democratization of information and knowledge [13], however, it is essential that consumers develop critical skills to assess the veracity and impartiality of the information they receive, especially in the current context where disinformation and fake news are significant challenges [14].

During the 2014 election campaign for president in Mozambique, there was a proliferation of several fake Facebook pages containing the names of candidates and political parties, whose main function was to denigrate the image of these competitors, promoting insulting messages with the clear intention of confusing voters with fake news [10].

With this in mind, Tsandzana [10] notes that social networks on the Internet have been used by politicians who find it difficult to transmit their propaganda and manifestos through traditional media, due to their historical performance in electoral periods in the country.

Analyses related to the use of digital media in electoral campaign processes, as in the case of Brazil, have received the attention of some authors who suggest that the growing complexity of media systems, the emptying of parties, changes in citizens' political loyalties and transformations in media habits point to a moment of change, when many societies are suffering profound challenges related to the legitimacy of institutions, the incoherence of audiences, the growth of disinformation and the relative weakening of the traditional institution of journalism [15].

2.1. The world and the relationship with social networks

Social networks are digital platforms that allow individuals or groups to interact, exchange information and create content. They are defined as structures made up of people or organizations, connected by one or more types of interdependence, such as friendship, kinship, common interests, financial exchange, beliefs, knowledge or social prestige [16,17].

Four groups of social networks are identified, namely:

- Relationships, Facebook, which facilitates the creation of personal profiles, sharing of updates, photos and videos and the formation of groups and pages of common interest [18]. LinkedIn, focused on professional networks, which helps with creating professional profiles, connecting with work colleagues and finding career opportunities [16];
- Content: YouTube, which allows videos to be shared and viewed, is an essential platform for vloggers, companies and content creators [19]. Instagram, based on images and short videos, popular for its stories and reels features, which facilitate quick visual interaction [20];
- Microblogging, X-Twitter, which facilitates communication through short messages called tweets, ideal for quick updates and public interaction [1]; and
- Specific interest networks, example Pinterest, used to discover and share ideas and inspiration through images and links, popular with creatives and event planners [21].

Social networks are applied in different contexts, namely in communication and marketing, through companies that use social networks for advertising campaigns, interaction with customers and product promotion [22], in education where tools such as Facebook and YouTube are used to create Learning communities and sharing educational resources [23], in Social mobilization, through platforms such as Twitter and Facebook are used to organize protests, social campaigns and disseminate information quickly [24].

Immediate access to social networks allows information to be shared instantly, facilitating real-time communication [18], which allows for expanded connections (bringing together the maintenance of broad and diverse contact networks), essential for personal and professional networking [16], and are considered an important marketing platform, as social networks are powerful tools for digital marketing, important in precise audience segmentation and direct feedback from consumers [17].

However, with so many benefits highlighted for social networks, their use brings risks in terms of privacy and security, and sharing personal information can lead to privacy and security risks, such as identity theft and misuse of data [25], dissemination of misinformation, and social media can facilitate the spread of fake news, negatively impacting public opinion and social behavior [26]. It also has effects on mental health, due to the excessive use of social networks and has been associated with anxiety, depression and other mental health problems [27].

2.2. Social media in increasing coverage by television stations

Television broadcasters widely use social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube to reach and engage their audiences. These platforms are used to promote programs, interact with viewers in real time, share exclusive content, and broadcast live events [28]. The integration of social networks with traditional television allows for a more interactive and personalized viewing experience, attracting a younger and more digitally engaged audience, increasing accessibility and interactivity, personalizing content through algorithms and diversifying news sources.

2.2.1. Impact of social media on news consumption

The increase in accessibility and interactivity on social networks has revolutionized news consumption by significantly increasing the accessibility and interactivity of information. Accessibility is enhanced by social media's ability to quickly distribute news to a wide, global audience, 24 h a day.

Platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram allow users to access news in real time, from anywhere, using mobile devices [29]. This accessibility democratizes access to information, eliminating geographic and temporal barriers that previously limited the reach of traditional media [30].

Furthermore, the interactivity of social networks transforms the news consumer from a passive receiver to an active participant. Users can comment, share and discuss news, creating an ongoing and dynamic dialogue with journalists and other readers. This interactivity not only engages users more, but also influences the way news is consumed and perceived, as social interactions can amplify or moderate the relevance of certain news [29].

Algorithmic content personalization, where social networks use sophisticated algorithms to personalize the content that users see, based on their preferences, past behaviors and interactions. This personalization can increase engagement by providing news that is more relevant and interesting to each individual [31]. For example, Facebook's algorithm prioritizes posts that are most likely to generate meaningful interactions, while Twitter suggests tweets from accounts that the user does not yet follow but that are popular within the user's network [32].

However, this personalization also brings challenges, such as the creation of “filter bubbles” and “echo chambers”, where users are primarily exposed to information that reinforces their existing beliefs and are less likely to encounter dissenting views [33]. This can further polarize public debate and limit exposure to a diversity of perspectives, essential for a healthy democracy [34].

Diversification of news sources, in which social networks promote a significant diversification of news sources. Instead of relying solely on large traditional media outlets, users can access a wide variety of sources, including independent blogs, citizen journalists, and alternative media organizations [35]. This diversification allows a greater variety of voices and perspectives to be heard, enriching public discourse and providing more comprehensive coverage of events [30].

However, diversification can also make it difficult to verify the quality and accuracy of information. With the proliferation of sources comes the challenge of distinguishing between factual news and misinformation, an issue exacerbated by the speed and volume at which information is shared on social media [26]. Thus, although social networks increase the diversity of sources, they also require more sophisticated media literacy from news consumers to critically evaluate the credibility of the information they consume [36].

2.2.2. Influence of social media on credibility and trust

Social networks, by providing a continuous and diverse flow of information, often challenge the credibility of news broadcast on television. Karlsson and Strömbäck [37] discuss how the dynamic and interactive nature of online news can affect the public’s perception of the trustworthiness of traditional media sources. They argue that the “freezing” of the online news flow, where news is constantly updated and recontextualized, can lead to an increase in distrust towards information provided by traditional media, which tends to be more static.

Furthermore, Hermida and colleagues [29] explore how social recommendation and news sharing on digital platforms impact public trust. Social interaction and peer endorsement on social media can increase the perceived credibility of a news story, regardless of its original source. This phenomenon can create a paradox where information from less reliable but widely shared sources can be seen as more reliable than news broadcast on television.

Newman and colleagues [30] indicate that trust in television news can be undermined by the rapidity and fragmented nature of news on social media. Digital platforms allow for a diversity of voices and perspectives, often without the same editorial rigor as TV stations, which can lead to the spread of misinformation and fake news. This is supported by Mihailidis and Viotty [36], who discuss the impact of fake news and post-truth on public trust in traditional media institutions.

The migration of news consumption to social media has provided greater accessibility and diversity of information, allowing users to access a wider range of perspectives. However, as highlighted by Pariser [38], social media algorithms that personalize content for users can create “filter bubbles”, where individuals are mainly exposed to information that reinforces their existing beliefs, making it difficult to form a critical and balanced view of the news.

Current research suggests that social media should focus on the ways in which socially and institutionally disruptive forces are reshaping contemporary political communication, developing concepts and methods more aimed at explaining contemporary phenomena and less at confirming established ideas of communication, democracy and society, with institutions focused more on the analysis of impulses, emotions, identities and beliefs [15].

In short, social media has a profound impact on public perception and trust in television news. While they offer opportunities for greater engagement and access to diverse sources of information, they also present significant challenges in terms of credibility and the spread of misinformation. Television broadcasters therefore face the ongoing challenge of adapting their communications strategies to maintain public trust in an increasingly fragmented and digital media environment [38].

Stuart Hall, a pioneer in cultural studies, through coding/decoding theory, addresses the question of how media messages are produced and interpreted by the public. According to Hall [39], messages are encoded by media producers with specific meanings, which are then decoded by audiences in different ways depending on their social and cultural contexts. This author identified three main reading positions:

- Dominant (hegemonic) reading: The public accepts the message as intended by the producer;
- Negotiated reading: The public accepts part of the message, but modifies it based on their own experiences;
- Opposite reading: The audience understands the message but rejects it, creating an alternative meaning.

This theory is especially relevant in the context of social networks, where messages are constantly reinterpreted and redistributed by the public. By analyzing interactions on social media, it is possible to observe how different audience segments decode messages in different ways.

3. Methodology

This study adopted an exploratory approach to investigate the role of social networks in news consumption during the electoral campaign period in Mozambique, held between 24th August and 6th October 2024.

The exploratory research adopted appears to be appropriate, in our analysis, as it is a little-known subject, providing an initial understanding of the phenomenon [40]. A survey was applied using online questionnaires, consisting of 13 closed questions, of which 5 intended to collect sociodemographic data from the respondents, 7 intended to collect information on Internet use and the degree of relationship with digital social networks and media and 1 intended to evaluate the degree of access and familiarity with national television channels, broadcast through media based on digital social networks, sent individually and collectively to users of the WhatsApp and Facebook platforms, and was prepared on the Google Form platform, aimed at a convenience sample .

It is important to note that the population registered for the 2024 elections is made up of a total of 17,163,686 voters, according to information released by the National

Elections Commission, referenced by the digital periodical Carta de Moçambique, which however suggests that there is a possibility of occurrence of an abstention level between 40% and 50%, according to the trend, based on data from the 2023 and 2014 elections.

The use of online questionnaires is justified by its ability to reach a large number of respondents in a short period of time, in addition to allowing the collection of detailed information about user behavior [41]. The questionnaire included closed questions, addressing aspects such as frequency of use of social networks, most used platforms and news consumption preferences and was applied to a universe of 160 individuals, all Mozambicans, between the 24th and 26th of September 2024.

The analysis of the data collected through the online questionnaire survey was carried out on Google Form, using the response report made available by it, based fundamentally on descriptive statistical techniques, which allows exploring and summarizing characteristics of large amounts of data in an understandable way, according to Field [42]. Although the methodology adopted provides a comprehensive view of the behavior of social media users in Mozambique, during the 2024 electoral campaign, the research inferred about individuals with access to the Internet, which may not represent the entire population intended for the study.

4. Presentation and discussion of results

According to the responses, the study sample, made up of a total of 160 responding individuals, 63.75% were male and the remaining 36.25% were female, which means that in total the respondents were male were those who were predisposed to participate in the research.

Of these, 38.75% were in the age group between 36–45 years old, 30% between 46–60 years old, 20.63% between 26–35 years old, 5.63% over 60 years old and 5% between 18–25 years old, which allowed the study to conclude that of the sample presented, the majority of respondents with Internet access are over 36 years of age, which means that they are individuals with some financial capacity, which makes it possible to purchase and pay for the Internet service, as shown in **Figure 1** below.

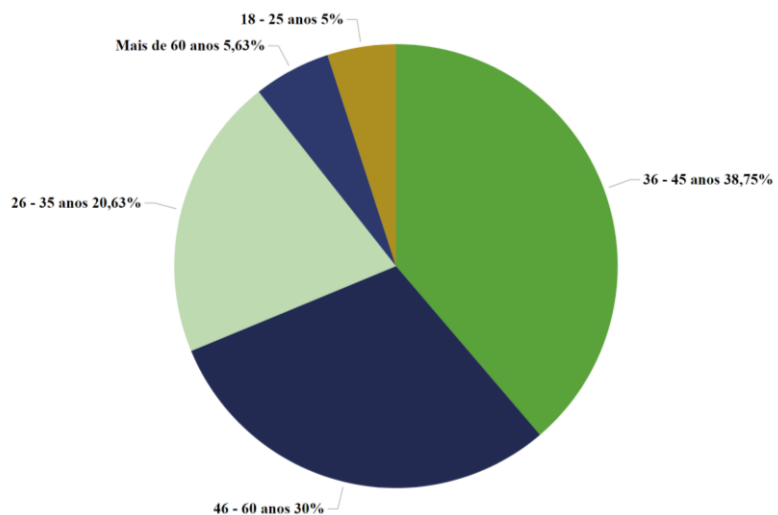


Figure 1. Respondent data divided by age group.

The study also found that of the 160 respondents, 86.25% had higher education, followed by 13.13% with secondary/high school education and 0.63% with primary education, as shown in **Figure 2** below. It can be inferred from these data that the majority of respondents with higher education need to remain connected to the Internet so that they can have access not only to social networks, but also to the information conveyed by them, of an economic, political and sociocultural context of Mozambique, which complements the occupation that the respondents have, as 73.75% are workers, 16.25% perform other functions and 10% are students.

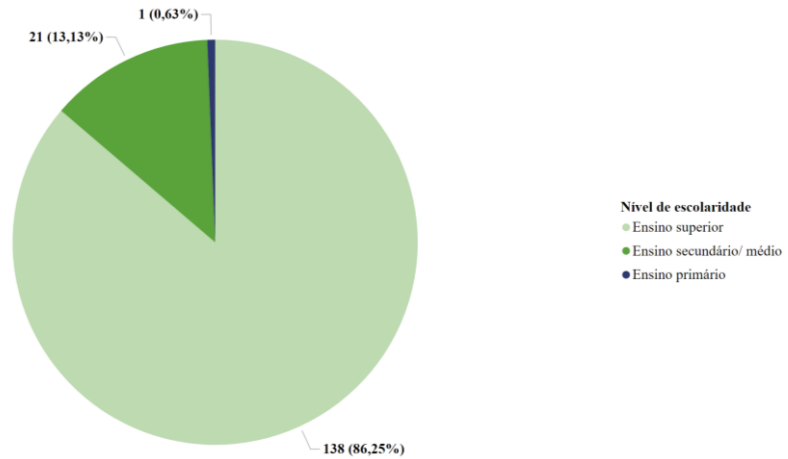


Figure 2. Respondent data divided by educational level.

As shown in **Figure 3** below, of the questions applied with the purpose of measuring the degree of information about Internet use and relationships with social networks, 94.38% are always connected to the Internet, 5% connect to the Internet 2 to 5 times a week and the remainder 0.62% connect to the Internet once a week. Asked what the main means they use to get news about the ongoing 2024 electoral campaign, the survey found that the majority (53.13%) use their cell phones, 36.88% use television, 3.75% use radio, 3.13% use a personal computer, 1.88% use another medium, and 1.25% use an electronic newspaper. We realized from this data that cell phones are the preferred means of obtaining news about the 2024 electoral campaign.

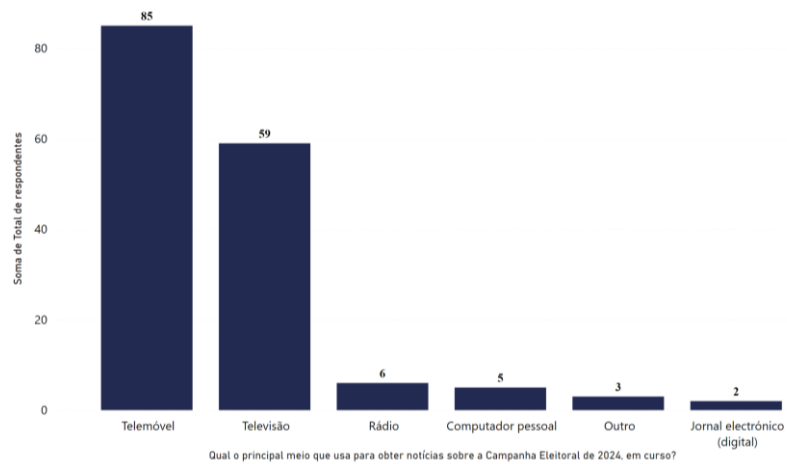


Figure 3. Respondent data on the medium used to obtain news about the 2024 electoral campaign.

The survey, when asking respondents whether they used social networks, 99.38% responded affirmatively, with only 0.63% responding negatively. Those who answered affirmatively were asked which digital platform they most accessed social networks and 44.38% accessed Facebook, 28.75% others, 14.38% Youtube, 8.13% Instagram, 2.5% LinkedIn and the remaining 1.86% other platforms, including Pinterest and X Twitter.

However, as shown in **Figure 4** below, it is important to note that the research results are aligned with the Digital Report 2024: Mozambique produced by researcher Simon Kemp, and concludes that in Mozambique the most used digital platform is Facebook, of which 73.13% have already shared news about the 2024 election campaign with someone they know, 18.13% did not share and 8.75% may have shared.

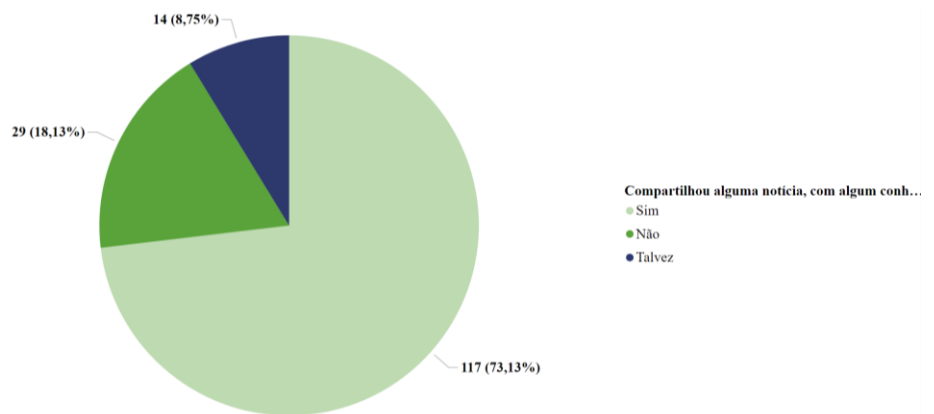


Figure 4. Respondent data on sharing news about the 2024 election campaign.

Respondents whose answers were between yes and maybe were asked about which social networks they used to use to share news about the 2024 electoral campaign, a significant majority (73.13%) indicated WhatsApp as the most used, placing Facebook at 8.75%, which the results reveal that users of social networks have mastery over the facilities they offer to interact with each other, with Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp being products of Meta and The 3 account for 85% of preferences, hence the ease of sharing between these first ones and with other digital platforms, possibly, as shown in **Figure 5** below.

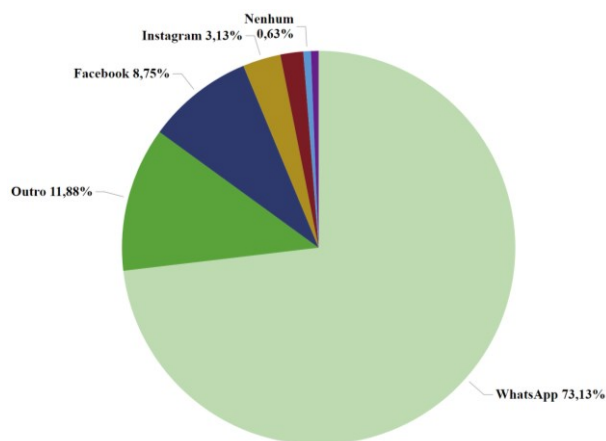


Figure 5. Respondent data on the media used to share news about the 2024 election campaign.

Finally, as shown in **Figure 6** below, respondents were asked the question about which television channel they watch most on social media, to stay informed about the 2024 electoral campaign, and the preferences were for TV Sucesso (38.13%) and STV (38.13%), and a tiny proportion corresponding to 16.25% prefer TVM, the national public information channel.

Based on these responses, the research realized that respondents tend to opt for information organizations with a presence on social networks, whose access is guaranteed via the Internet, and the means used for this purpose is the cell phone. On the other hand, given the countless possibilities that Facebook offers in creating accounts for groups, people, organizations (for-profit and non-profit) and, falling within the latter, communication and information bodies.

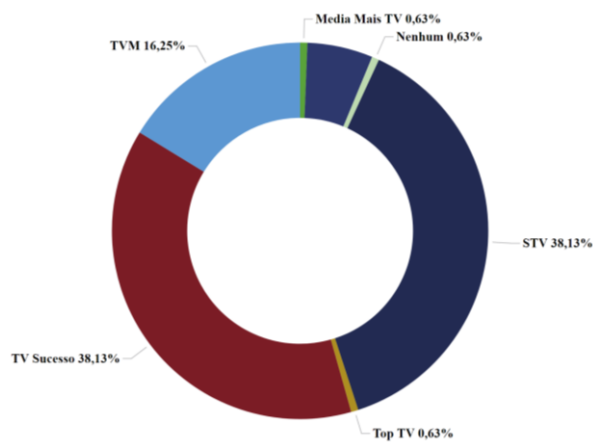


Figure 6. Data on your preferred television channel media to search for news about the 2024 election campaign.

Stuart Hall's coding/decoding theory [39] provides a useful lens for understanding how survey respondents interpret and interact with messages about the election campaign on social media, as they are messages that are encoded by producers with specific meanings, but the spectators can decode them

In the context of this research, the data reveals that cell phones are the main means of accessing news about the 2024 election campaign, with 53.13% of respondents using this device. This finding can be interpreted as a dominant-hegemonic reading, where users accept and use social networks according to the intentions of media producers, who aim to facilitate access to information via mobile devices.

On the other hand, the high percentage of respondents (94.38%) who are always connected to the Internet and who mainly use Facebook to access social networks (44.38%) and share news (73.13%) via WhatsApp, suggests a negotiated reading. Users not only accept messages as they are, but also modify and redistribute them, reflecting their own experiences and cultural contexts.

Finally, the significant trust in private media outlets, such as TV Sucesso and STV, to the detriment of TVM, can be seen as an opposite reading. Respondents understand traditional media messages, but prefer alternative sources that they consider more independent and trustworthy. Data analysis from the perspective of Stuart Hall's theory [39] reveals the complexity of users' interactions with social

networks during the electoral period, highlighting the importance of considering the different ways in which messages are encoded and decoded.

5. Conclusions

This research has shown that WhatsApp in Mozambique during the 2024 electoral campaign was the most widely used social network for consulting and sharing news related to this year's electoral campaign to choose the President of the Republic as well as the deputies for the Assembly of the Republic and Provinces.

Not far from this analysis, the survey also confirms the information provided by Datareport's reports (2023 and 2024) on the growth in the number of people (individuals) and groups making Facebook their preferred digital social platform.

Another important fact is that private television channels, whose investment in dissemination and the search for a larger audience is centered on the digital medium of "free" access, have been the choice of Mozambicans, possibly due to the fact that public information and communication bodies do not convey the image of impartiality during election campaigns in Mozambique, which is why they tend to be preferred by other users who use social networks as the main source of news related to campaign activities carried out by political parties and other participants and supporters of these parties, due to all the advantages they offer.

Finally, the survey shows that the majority of respondents prefer to access news via digital channels, with the public television news organization being given a less preferential role, which can be understood as a growing rejection of public news organizations in favor of private digital media based on social networks on the Internet, interpreted as an oppositional reading because they are more independent and reliable.

With regard to limitations and future studies, we would like to point out that this article presents the results of research carried out during a short campaign period, in which we sought to understand the mechanisms and trends in the use of digital media on the Internet, with a focus on what was produced and shared on social networks during this act. In this sense, we hope that in future studies we will be able to improve the methodology, increase the sample so that it is representative, taking into account the number of voters registered for the election.

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