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Investigating the Use of Facebook by Medical Institutions in Kenya

Completed Research Paper

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Abstract

Medical institutions are increasingly using social networking sites to converse with patients, employees, and society in general. This study therefore investigated 8 leading causes of death and health topics in Facebook posts of 16 healthcare organizations in Kenya. We collected 2,800 Facebook posts made over a one-year period by sixteen Level 5 and Level 6 medical institutions in Kenya. We then developed a list of keywords of the 8 leading causes of death and health topics in Kenya. The keywords were then deductively thematically analysed to identify frequency patterns. Results showed that, on average, the two most frequently used health topics in Facebook posts are cancer and heart diseases, each at 7%. These findings can be used as a basis for medical institutions to establish their presence in social media by identifying major themes that are very important to Kenyans and focus on regularly posting on these health topics.

Keywords: social media, social networking, Facebook, keywords, thematic analysis

Introduction

Social media use has permeated all professions (Zhang et al. 2018). The benefits of using social media in healthcare include raising awareness, combating misinformation, communicating crises, answering common questions, monitoring public health, engaging citizens, supporting patients, recruiting for research, healthcare education and marketing (Newberry 2020; Pizzuti et al. 2020). Almost 90% of older adults have used social platforms like Facebook and Twitter to seek and share health information (Tennant et al. 2015). Eighty percent of American internet users searched for health information online

and sixty percent of social media users believed social media posts by Physicians over any other persons (Chen et al. 2018). Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) define social media as “a group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content”. Social media can also be referred to as social networking (Ventola 2014). Social networks therefore have become an important health resource, and not just for millennials but older adults as well. Facebook is the largest and most widely used social media platform in the world with more than 2.4 billion users (Barnhart 2021; Ortiz-Ospina 2019; Statista 2020).

The five most used social media platforms in the European EU in 2017 were Facebook (89.20%), Google+ (56.80%), Instagram (48.60%), LinkedIn (43.20%) and Twitter (29.70%) (Drahošová and Balco 2017). People used social media in the EU to exchange information and communicate (97.20%), to share data (83.30%), for education purposes (52.80%), for teamwork and working from home (50.00%) and for offering services (44.40%). The study mentions the drawbacks of social media use as internet addiction (72.20%), lack of security (61.10%), information overload (58.30%) and loss of social contacts (47.20%) among others (2.80%).

In the United States (US), over 99 percent of healthcare organizations have an active Facebook page (Evarian 2019). A study carried out on 366 medical staff in South Texas found out that out of the 97% of the respondents who owned digital devices, 87.9% disclosed they used social media. These health professionals revealed that they spent about an hour on social media daily (Surani et al. 2017). A methodical review of literature on empirical research concerning the consequences of social media use by patients for health-related reasons disclosed that social media use by patients influences the caregiver - patient relationship. These changes include improved communication between the patient and the caregiver, increased substitution of physicians, congenial associations, and minimal face to face interaction between the patient and caregiver (Smailhodzic et al. 2016). Kordzadeh (2019) investigated the use of Twitter by hospitals in the United States. The findings indicated that Cleveland Clinic, Johns Hopkins Hospital, and Mayo Clinic used diet and cancer topics most frequently and diabetes was the least regularly used subject.

In Europe, social media awareness and use has been growing in medical institutions. The use of social media varies remarkably among nations. In Western European countries, social media usage remains low apart from the United Kingdom and Netherlands (Van de Belt et al. 2012). Van Gelder et al. (2019) performed a systematized exploration of posts related to medication safety and concluded that social network tracking can be effective in monitoring the probable life-threatening use of medicines in pregnancy. Therefore, unambiguous conversation between hospitals and expectant mothers on the benefits and dangers of medicine is crucial. In another inquiry, results revealed that social media can be used to incorporate patient’s viewpoint in oversight (Van de Belt et al. 2015). A study conducted in Spain divulged that citizens welcome the idea of hospitals’ doing their communication through social media, even though they may not be aware of how social networks operate (Heras-Pedrosa et al. 2020). Apart from lack of synergy, patients and relatives find it difficult to deduce information from posts with medical jargon. In their conclusion, the study suggested that for communication to be successful, healthcare organizations need to recognize the needs of patients and organizations in the topics being posted so that appropriate conversations can take place.

In China, a developing country, healthcare organizations are using social network to engage with their patients for improved healthcare (Zhang et al. 2018). WeChat is the most used social network with more than 1 billion users followed by Sina Weibo (Luan et al. 2020; Zhang et al. 2018). Luan et al. (2020) in their review found that WeChat was used as a hybrid for both WeChat education and face to face education in the university setup as well as a combination of hybrid and WeChat-only for the hospital setup. They observed compelling diversity on the types of accounts, the content delivery methods and promoting exchanges online. Zhang et al. (2018) found out that bigger and newer medical institutions with more resources were more likely to adopt social media, whereas university affiliated hospitals were

less likely to adopt social media use. In India, another developing country, WhatsApp is the most preferred social media platform followed by Facebook (Bhaskaran 2017). These platforms are mostly used by youngsters aged between 18 - 27 years for networking. They are also used for seeking information on various diseases, medications and other health related information. Previous research indicates that accurate and timely information in healthcare ought to be shared through social media. Sharing of inaccurate and deceitful information about health on social media could result in fatalities though (Sasidharan 2018).

Few studies have investigated the use of social networks in developing countries (Zhang et al. 2018). A study done in Nigeria found out that 65% of Nigerian teaching medical institutions have websites of which 75% of those are on Facebook (Batta and Iwokwagh 2015). These institutions' presence on Twitter and LinkedIn is between 10% - 25% and seven of the investigated hospitals did not have websites. The main use of social media was to get feedback from clients. Only 25% of the hospitals used social networks for health promotion while none was used for interactive engagement with clients. In Ghana, citizens see social networking as an effective platform for medical practitioners to disseminate health information. The public also take health information on social networks seriously. Medical practitioners see social networking as an effective platform for sending health information to the members of the public. Classical media are no longer considered as effective means of sharing health information (Bannor et al. 2017). A study done in Makerere University Teaching Hospital showed that more than 75% of medical students and healthcare professionals are routinely using social media in Uganda. Usage was similar for both medical students and healthcare professionals. Medical students commonly used Facebook (54.8%), Twitter (39.1%), Instagram (24%) and Telegram (10.8%). The inquiry concluded that social media platforms can be used as sources of reliable information on COVID-19 pandemic as well as for circulation of research results findings and protocols (Olum and Bongomin 2020).

In Kenya, social media has become a key facet in public conversations, facilitating online dialogues while at the same time being a key theme of scholarly, sociocultural, economic, and political debates. Since the first case of Coronavirus was confirmed in Kenya on 12th March 2020, video conferencing and web conferencing platforms such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Skype, Google Meet and Cisco Webex are now commonly used among the public. This was a few months ago, a preserve of the corporate world. According to World Internet Stats, Kenya had 8.799 million Facebook subscribers at the end of December 2019 (Internet Word Stats 2020). This represents about 16.4% penetration rate. WhatsApp (89%), Facebook (81.7%), YouTube (58.4%), Facebook Messenger (37.4%) and Instagram (37.3%) are the five most used social networking platforms in Kenya (Wamuyu 2020). Many Kenyans in the countryside use Facebook (44.5%) and WhatsApp (44.2%), compared to the citified residents who use TikTok (67.9%), Vimeo (67.4%), and Pinterest (63.4%).

A study evaluated Facebook Page interactions of eleven hospitals in Central Pennsylvania with online communities. Results revealed that most frequently posted content across all Facebook Pages was advertisements (89%) and institutional news (89%) (George et al. 2015). Another study which analyzed 19,817 Facebook posts from 126 medical institutions found out that these hospitals were not exploiting the use of social networks to engage with their users. The study goes ahead to recommend that circulation of information using visibly appealing means may help draw the attention of clients and subsequently be beneficial to the public (Alonso-Cañadas et al. 2020). Kordzadeh and Young (2018) observed that the most frequently used theme in Facebook posts was sharing health information with 35.81% (424/1184), followed by recognizing special days with 14.95% (177/1184) and recognizing employees with 11.82% (140/1184). They went ahead to conclude that healthcare organizations use Facebook as a cheap way to enlighten the public on various health topics and other distinct types of information.

Current research has focused heavily on the use of social media in medical institutions in developed countries (Heras-Pedrosa et al. 2020; Kordzadeh 2019; Surani et al. 2017) and other developing

countries (Alanzi and Al-Yami 2019; Luan et al. 2020; Yousuf et al. 2017; Zhang et al. 2018), with few studies exploring its usage in the context of developing countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, such as Kenya. Little is known about the content medical institutions in Kenya are posting on their Facebook pages. This study therefore investigates 8 leading causes of death and health topics in Kenya: HIV/AIDS, diarrheal disease, tuberculosis (TB), cancer, heart diseases, road traffic accidents (RTAs), malaria and pneumonia in Facebook posts of sixteen healthcare organizations in Kenya (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) 2019; Kenya National Bureau of Statistics 2018; Ministry of Health 2014; UNICEF 2019; World Health Organization 2017, 2018; World Life Expectancy 2018). Findings from the study will inform future social media strategies for the institutions that are already on Facebook or those that intend to subscribe.

Methods

Study Design

All Level 5 and Level 6 hospitals were selected based on The Kenya Medical Practitioners and Dentists Act (Cap 253) (The Medical Practitioners and Dentists Act (Cap 253) 2020). The Act categorises institutions into six levels of hierarchy i.e., Level 1, community health facilities; Level 2, dispensaries and clinics; Level 3, health centres, nursing homes and funeral homes; Level 4, county hospitals and specialized hospitals; Level 5, county referral hospitals and large private hospitals; and level 6, national referral and teaching hospitals and specialized hospitals. These organizations were also selected based on previous studies that have indicated that social media platforms are most likely to be used by large, urban, private not-for-profit and teaching hospitals (Griffis et al. 2014; Richter et al. 2014).

Table 1. Medical Institutions Facebook Account Information

NO.	Facility Name	Ownership	Level	Username	Likes
1.	Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH)	National Government	Level 6	@KenyattaNationalHospital	96,908
2.	Gertrude's Garden Children's Hospital (GGCH)	Private	Level 5	@GertrudesHosp	47,795
3.	The Karen Hospital (Karen)	Private	Level 5	@TKH2006	37,504
4.	The Nairobi Women's Hospital (TNWH)	Private	Level 5	@NairobiWomensHospital	35,369
5.	The Nairobi Hospital (Nairobi)	Private	Level 5	@TheNairobiHosp	35,277
6.	AIC Kijabe Hospital (Kijabe)	Faith Based	Level 5	@AICKijabeHospital	22,892
7.	Coptic Hospital (Coptic)	Faith Based	Level 5	@Coptic.Hospital.Nairobi	21,997
8.	Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital (MTRH)	National Government	Level 6	@MTRHofficial	21,715
9.	MP Shah Hospital (MP Shah)	Private	Level 5	@MPShahHospital	24,798
10.	Nairobi West Hospital (NWH)	Private	Level 5	@NaiWestHospital	17,784
11.	Tenwek Hospital (Tenwek)	Faith Based	Level 5	@TenwekHospital	16,410
12.	The Mater Hospital (Mater)	Faith Based	Level 5	@MaterKenya	10,076
13.	AIC Cure International Hospital (AICCIH)	Faith Based	Level 5	@CureKenya	9,108
14.	Reale Hospital Eldoret (RHE)	Private	Level 5	@HospitalReale	8,577
15.	PCEA Chogoria Hospital (PCEACH)	Faith Based	Level 5	@ChogoriaHospital	5,888
16.	RFH Specialist Hospital (RFHSH)	Private	Level 5	@RFHHealthcare	5,377

From the 38 hospitals selected, we searched for Facebook links from the institutions' websites and from Facebook as well. Thirty of these hospitals had official Facebook pages while eight had none. Healthcare institutions with a popularity of more than 5,000 were sampled based on earlier studies which showed that liking and commenting on brand posts on Facebook reflects brand post popularity (De Vries et al. 2012). Sixteen institutions had Facebook likes between 5,377 and 96,908 as of April 19, 2020 as shown in Table 1. They were distributed as follows: national hospitals (2), private hospitals (8) and faith based hospitals (6). Kenyatta National Hospital, the oldest, largest, public, national and teaching hospital in East and Central Africa had the largest number of Facebook likes at 96,908 (Kenyatta National Hospital n.d.), followed by Gertrude's Garden Children's Hospital, the largest not-for-profit private hospital in East and Central Africa with 47,795 likes (Gertrude's Garden Children's Hospital n.d.). Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital, the second largest, public, teaching and referral hospital had 21,715 likes (Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital n.d.).

Data Collection

To understand the content medical institutions in Kenya are posting on their Facebook pages, we collected Facebook posts made by the selected health institutions. Two thousand eight hundred Facebook posts made by the 16 institutions between March 1, 2019 to February 29, 2020 were copied into our data collection in Excel. A sample of collected Facebook posts is shown in Figure 1.

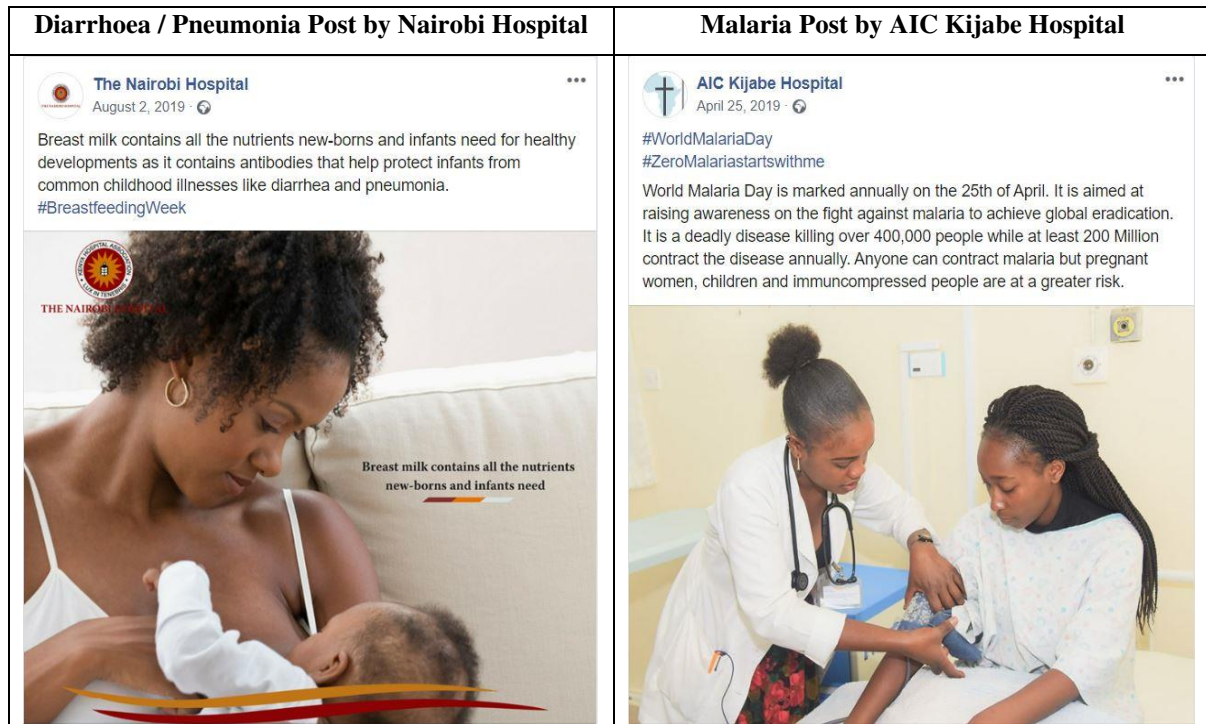


Figure 1. Sample Facebook Posts

Data Analysis

A list of keywords of the eight leading causes of death and health topics in Kenya was developed. The keywords were derived from existing medical terminologies and literature. An investigation of all the Facebook posts of the 16 medical institutions in our sampling frame was done. The keywords were then deductively thematically analysed using the steps by Braun and Clarke (2006). Braun and Clarke define thematic analysis as a process of identifying themes and analysing their prevalence in data. Thematic analysis was then employed to deductively identify frequency patterns which were driven by the theoretic preconceptions of eight leading causes of death and health topics in Kenya. Technical terms related to each of the topic were not included as part of the keywords given the fact that the posts are meant for people of all walks of life. All the Facebook posts were manually recorded and checked to ensure the contextual meaning of each topic was semantically consistent. Several iterations were made through the entire sample to identify keywords. On any occasion we established new keywords related to each topic that we had not included at the beginning, we augmented them to the list of keywords and ran the coding queries again in Excel. This process assisted us to enhance the reliability of the coding procedure. The sample of keywords used are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Sample Keywords and Posts

Topic	Keywords	Hospital	Sample Posts
HIV / AIDS	HIV, AIDS, Antiretroviral, Exposure Prophylaxis,	Kenyatta National Hospital	Kenyatta National Hospital participated in Beyond Zero Marathon today at Nyayo Stadium, an initiative of her Excellency the first lady by educating the public the benefits of safe deliveries and reduction of mother to child transmission of HIV.
		The Nairobi Hospital	We all have a role to play in stopping the stigma around HIV & AIDS 🧡 #WorldAIDSDay
Diarrhoeal Disease	Diarrhoea, Diarrhea, Dysentery	MP Shah Hospital	Cholera is a bacterial disease usually spread through contaminated food and water. It causes severe diarrhoea leading to dehydration and death if untreated.
		Tenwek Hospital	When it comes to the treatment of children, never assume that a cold will go away on its own or that terrible diarrhea will ease with time. Visit us today for the comprehensive diagnosis and treatment of paediatric illnesses.
Tuberculosis	Tuberculosis, TB	The Nairobi West Hospital	"TB remains the world's deadliest infectious killer. Each day, nearly 4500 people lose their lives to TB and close to 30,000 people fall ill with this preventable and curable disease" – WHO
		Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital	The Isolation wing will help the Hospital manage cases of hemorrhagic fevers and other highly infectious diseases such as Multiple Drug Resistant Tuberculosis.
Cancer	Cancer, Oncology, Oncologist, Tumour, Sarcoma, Chemo	MP Shah Hospital	Happening now at M.P. Shah Hospital in collaboration with Rotary District 9212 and HCGCCK Cancer Centre. "Cancer sucks in every color." But early detection saves lives.
		Reale Hospital Eldoret	Our RADIOLOGY department is ready to serve you at any time with the following services under our modern CT scan machine: Diagnosing muscle and bone disorders, Pinpointing location of tumors, blood clot or infection.
Heart Diseases	Heart, Aorta, Cardiac, Cardio, Arterial, Mitral	AIC Cure International Hospital	CURE Kenya is a Training Site for the American Heart Association for the following courses; BLS, PALS and ACLS. For more details about training, contact Anne 0722915888. #CURE #AHA #acls #bls #pals #training #lifeskills #kenya
		PCEA Chogoria Hospital	Welcome for Cardiology clinic (heart clinic) and prosthesis clinic (daktari wa viungo bandia) tomorrow 4/10/2019. #qualitycomprehensivehealthcare
Road Traffic Accidents	Road Traffic Injuries, Accident, Traffic Accidents, Road Safety	AIC Kijabe Hospital	Meet Dr. David Nolen, one of our Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgeons (OHNS) whose sub-specialty is facial plastics and reconstructive surgeries. He performs procedures on; cleft lip and palate, facial reconstructions on traffic road victims, cancer facial deformities, neck growths, and ear surgeries.
		GGCH	Road Safety is important as a child grows!! #speakup for your child's safety and help protect/educate your little ones as they grow. #Gertrudes #Kenya #roadsafety
Malaria	Malaria, Jungle Fever, Blackwater Fever,	AIC Kijabe Hospital	The symptoms of Malaria include; fever, chills, headache, vomiting, nausea, muscle aches and joint pains, if you experience any of these please seek medical advice in any of our facilities.
		PCEA Chogoria Hospital	We provide ANC services like: - Preventive measures e.g. treatment of Malaria
Pneumonia	Pneumonia, Pneumology, Pneumonitis, Inflammation of the Lungs	The Karen Hospital	Pneumonia is one of the leading causes of deaths of children under the age of 5. Every child deserves access to life saving vaccines and medicine; prevent pneumonia by getting vaccinations. Visit us for all your healthcare needs.
		MP Shah Hospital	Did you know that breastfeeding protects your baby from ear infections, diarrhoea, pneumonia, and other childhood diseases? #BreastFeedingWeek

Results

The results indicate that the two national hospitals posted on average 121 posts per annum, while the private and faith based hospitals posted 211 and 144 posts respectively. But the distribution varies from one hospital to the other. The Nairobi Hospital posted the highest number of 338 Facebook posts, followed by RFH Specialist Hospital at 325 and Gertrude's Garden Children's Hospital at 306. Coptic Hospital posted the lowest number of 18 posts, followed closely by The Mater Hospital and Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital at 42 and 44, respectively. This means that private hospitals post relatively higher number of posts than the national and faith based hospitals. Out of the total of 2,800 analysed posts, only 527 (19%) posted content on 8 leading causes of death and health topics in Kenya.

The study went ahead to identify that, of the 527 posts on the 8 leading causes of death in Kenya, the majority of the posts 389 (74%), were those of announcing, reporting and recognising health related activities. Here are examples of posts made by Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital, The Nairobi Women's Hospital and Kenyatta National Hospital respectively.

"Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital (MTRH) dispatched an assortment of drugs, Public Health Officers and Health Education & Health Promotion Team to Baringo County following an appeal by the County Health Department about malaria outbreak in Tirioko Ward, East Pokot Sub-County."

“Today is world aids day World AIDS Day takes place on 1st December. It’s an opportunity for people worldwide to unite in the fight against HIV. Know your status today by visiting any of our branches. Call 0708 667 000.”

“12th November every year marks World Pneumonia Day. According to WHO, pneumonia kills an estimated 1.4 million children under the age of five years, accounting for 18% of all deaths of children under five years old worldwide”

The first post by MTRH was announcing and recognising the role the national hospital is playing in supporting the county of Baringo while the second post by TNWH was broadcasting an upcoming event and recognizing a special day in World AIDS Day. On the other hand, the third post by KNH was recognising and reporting on very important information about Pneumonia from the World Health Organization (WHO).

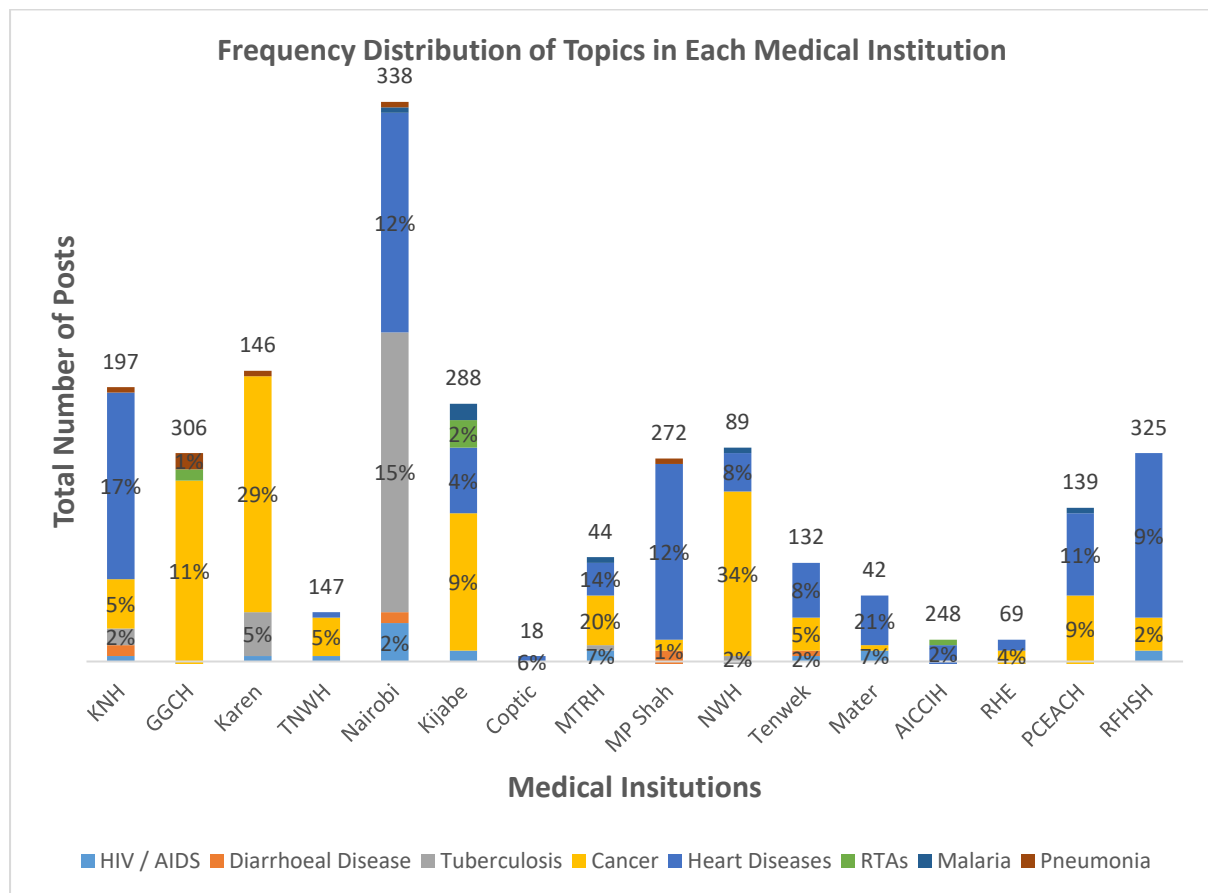


Figure 2. Frequency Distribution of Topics in Each Medical Institution

The other set of identified posts 138 (26%), were focused on the dissemination of health information. In this case the institutions were making posts that provide advice, health and lifestyle tips, etc. to the members of society. Having a healthy way of life can help prevent persistent diseases and long-term ailments. Here are good examples of posts made by Nairobi Hospital, Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital and Nairobi West Hospital, respectively.

“A person who has both consistent signs or symptoms and risk factors as follows should be considered a person under investigation (PUI): 1. Elevated body temperature or subjective fever or symptoms, including severe headache, fatigue, muscle pain, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, or unexplained hemorrhage.”

“A cleft lip is a birth defect in which the parts of the face that form the upper lip remain split, instead of sealing together before birth. Similar splits can occur in the roof of the mouth or palate.”

‘Sleep under a treated net, pregnant women should take preventive malaria therapy, clear all stagnant water around your environment and spray insecticides on indoor walls and ceilings. These are common ways that help prevent the spread of malaria....’

The three posts above provided health tips, defined a condition, and gave advice on how to prevent health problems from starting and/or from getting worse.

The inquiry also found out that none of the 16 institutions made Facebook posts on all the 8 health topics. Kenyatta National Hospital posted 6 of the 8 subjects followed by AIC Kijabe Hospital and Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital with 5. Coptic Hospital, AIC Cure International Hospital and Reale Hospital Eldoret posted on only 2 subjects. On average, the two most frequently used health topics in Facebook posts were heart diseases and cancer, each at 7%. Apart from Tuberculosis (2%) and HIV/AIDS (1%), all the other health topics were below 1%. On the individual subject, the most frequently posted health topic on average was Tuberculosis, 51/527 (10%), followed by Cancer by The Karen Hospital, 43/527 (8%), and heart diseases, 34/527 (7%) by Kenyatta National Hospital.

Based on the total number of posts per medical institution, The Mater Hospital used heart diseases in 21% of their Facebook posts, followed by Kenyatta National Hospital and Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital at 17% and 14% respectively as shown in Figure 2. This finding shows that these medical institutions used their pages to highlight the various health issues on heart diseases. Gertrude's Garden Children's Hospital and The Karen Hospital never posted anything on heart diseases during the sampled period. On the other hand, Nairobi West Hospital used cancer in 34% of their posts, followed by The Karen Hospital and Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital at 29% and 20% respectively. This indicates that Facebook was used to relay information on cancer to the public. The Nairobi Hospital, Coptic Hospital and AIC Cure International Hospital never posted anything on cancer on their pages. Together these results provide important insights on the 8 leading causes of death and health topics in Kenya.

Discussion

There is a paucity of studies exploring the use of social networks in developing countries. To bridge the gap in literature, our study sought to investigate the 8 leading causes of death and health topics in Facebook posts of 16 medical organizations in Kenya. The current study found that medical institutions in Kenya are posting an average of 15 Facebook posts per month. This is almost similar to the average of 13 Facebook posts made per month by the Spanish public and private hospitals (Alonso-Cañadas et al. 2020) and way lower than the average of 34 posts made by US hospitals (Kordzadeh and Young 2018) and 32 posts by five major hospitals in the US (Kordzadeh and Young 2015). Another important finding was that, majority of the posts were those of announcing, reporting, and recognising health related activities. This finding is in line with other studies which have indicated that hospitals majorly use Facebook for announcing and reporting events, as well as sharing health information (Kordzadeh and Young 2015); and that the most regularly used subject was sharing health information (Kordzadeh and Young 2018). The results go ahead to indicate that the two most frequently used health topics in Facebook posts were cancer and heart diseases. This result is consistent with an earlier finding by Kordzadeh (2019) which indicated Cancer as one of the most frequently tweeted topics by three top medical centers in the United States.

Our study findings offer scholarly and practical implications to the area of social network use in healthcare. From a scholarly standpoint, previous studies have focused so much on the use of social platforms in medical institutions in industrialised countries (Heras-Pedrosa et al. 2020; Kordzadeh 2019; Surani et al. 2017) and other developing countries (Alanzi and Al-Yami 2019; Luan et al. 2020; Yousuf et al. 2017; Zhang et al. 2018). Our study contributes to the growing body of literature on social media use by medical institutions in developing countries in Sub Saharan Africa. From a practical

viewpoint, our findings indicate that medical institutions in Kenya use Facebook to highlight the various health issues on heart diseases and cancer. These findings can be used as a basis for medical institutions that intend to subscribe or those that are already on social media to establish their presence. These institutions must identify major themes and health topics that are very important to the Kenyan population. Then they will need to formulate and implement their social media strategies that should focus on regularly posting on these health topics and subsequently meet society's informational requirements.

Although this study has several scholarly and practical implications, it is subject to certain limitations. First, our study sampled only Kenyan institutions. For generalization of results, future studies should include data from other healthcare institutions in developing countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. Secondly, the inquiry looked at a set of eight leading causes of death and health topics. Future research can look at this set and other sets of health topics. Thirdly, this study deductively thematically analysed Facebook posts by using a set of keywords related to the eight themes in analyzing data. Future research can be done to empirically and inductively pinpoint patterns within the resulting data collection in Facebook and other social networking sites such as Twitter, WhatsApp, YouTube, Instagram, LinkedIn etc. This will identify all health social media themes being posted by the medical institutions in Kenya and beyond. Moreover, further studies with more focus on specific demographics such as age, sex, income level, education level etc. need to be undertaken. Demographical information makes certain conjectures about groups.

Conclusion

Medical institutions are increasingly using social networking sites to announce, report, recognise and share health information with patients, employees, and society in general. In Kenya, these institutions are majorly using Facebook to post two of the eight leading causes of death and health topics. The posts highlighted the various health issues on cancer and heart diseases to the public. However, there is need to increase the number of posts on all the major health topics in Kenya. This can go a long way in preventing health problems from starting and/or from getting worse. These findings can be used as a basis for medical institutions to establish their presence in social media by identifying major health themes that are very important to Kenyans. Then they should focus on regularly posting on these health topics and subsequently meet society's informational requirements. It is therefore recommended that medical institutions in Kenya need to come up with social media policies and strategies, and subsequently carry out a comprehensive social media audit. Once they have formulated the requisite legislations and collected necessary information, they will have to implement their social media strategies accordingly.

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