The State of Online Gender based Violence (OGBV) in Tanzania

Drawing from Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and Telegram

MEDIA CONVERGENCY

PREAMBLE

Women at Web Tanzania, in partnership with Media Convergency, is proud to present the results of an in-depth study on online gender-based violence in Tanzania, affecting both men and women. The research analyzed data from 650 accounts/channels across three major social media platforms - Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter - and grouped them into seven categories: politicians, celebrities, activists, public figures, social media influencers, digital media individuals, and normal users. In addition to these, the study also selected and evaluated 30 Telegram accounts.

The study aimed to understand the localization and utilization of the Telegram Application in Tanzania, with a particular emphasis on sextortion and non-consensual images, and their impact on individuals and communities. The study found that the use of social media has a significant impact on shaping our online experiences, and it's imperative to comprehend how user behavior affects different groups and individual users. This understanding can help us create a safer, more inclusive digital space and minimize the occurrence of online gender-based violence.

The findings of this study have far-reaching implications for policymakers, advocacy groups, and individuals, who aim to create a safer and more inclusive digital environment. Acknowledging the potential of social media to contribute to online gender-based violence is a crucial step towards reducing its incidence and improving digital safety for all.

The study concludes with recommendations across various sectors, highlighting the role of each and every person in creating a safe internet for all. By understanding the dynamics of online gender-based violence and implementing effective measures, we can work towards a safer and more inclusive digital world.

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Abbreviations

GB	Gigabytes
GBV	Gender Based Violence
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NCII	Non-Consensual Intimate Images
NDI	National Democratic Institute
OGBV	Online Gender Based Violence
TAMWA	Tanzania Media Women's Association
TCRA	Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority
TIL	The Internet Lurkers
TIP	The Internet Partaker
WIP	Women In Politics
WILDAF	Women in Law and Development in Africa

A Note of THANKS

This report "*The State of Online Gender-based Violence (OGBV) in Tanzania*" is Media Convergeny's third annual series in showcasing the significance of the issue to online citizens segmenting it's intent of playing an advocate for Digital Inclusion. For 2021 we had released the second series with title "*An overview of Online Gender-based Violence of Women in Politics (WIP)*" that you can access through the link bit.ly/OGBVReport-WIP.

Working in the space has given us rich knowledge, experience and contextual understanding of not only Tanzania but the East African region at large. With the current report, the journey has been of great learnings and reflections over the past five months as we have analyzed and scrutinized the online behavior of social media users in Tanzania.

Our Women at Web Program, part of the regional network - supported by DW Akademie has been working tirelessly to understand the extent and nature of online gender-based violence in the region. We have gathered and analyzed data from the most vulnerable groups online and digital media pages, to shed light on the issue and its impact on different individuals.

I am proud to say that the results of this study offer a unique and valuable perspective on online gender-based violence in Tanzania. Our team of four, along with an external advisor and expert in online content engagement, has worked tirelessly to bring this report to fruition. In today's digital age, social media plays a critical role in our online experiences. This study provides us with a glimpse into the future, giving us the information we need to take action and prevent further harm to the most vulnerable groups.

I extend my sincere gratitude to the entire Media Convergency team for their hard work and dedication to this project. Their passion for citizen engagement and understanding the behaviors of online users has been a driving force behind the success of this study. Thank you for your commitment to creating a better and safer online experience for all. It is of my belief that the results of our study are of the utmost importance for decision and policy makers, as well as relevant authorities. Understanding the extent and nature of online gender-based violence in Tanzania is crucial in order to take effective action in combating this issue. We hope that the insights and recommendations provided by this study will be taken into consideration by those in positions of power, and that they will take the necessary steps to address this serious problem. This includes creating effective policies and programs that will help protect individuals who are vulnerable to online abuse and harassment, and addressing the root causes of this issue. We also believe that education and awareness raising about online safety and responsible online behavior are key to reducing instances of online gender-based violence. By working together with government agencies, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders, we can create a safer and more inclusive online environment for everyone.

Asha D. Alinallah
CEO, Media Convergency,
30th January, 2023
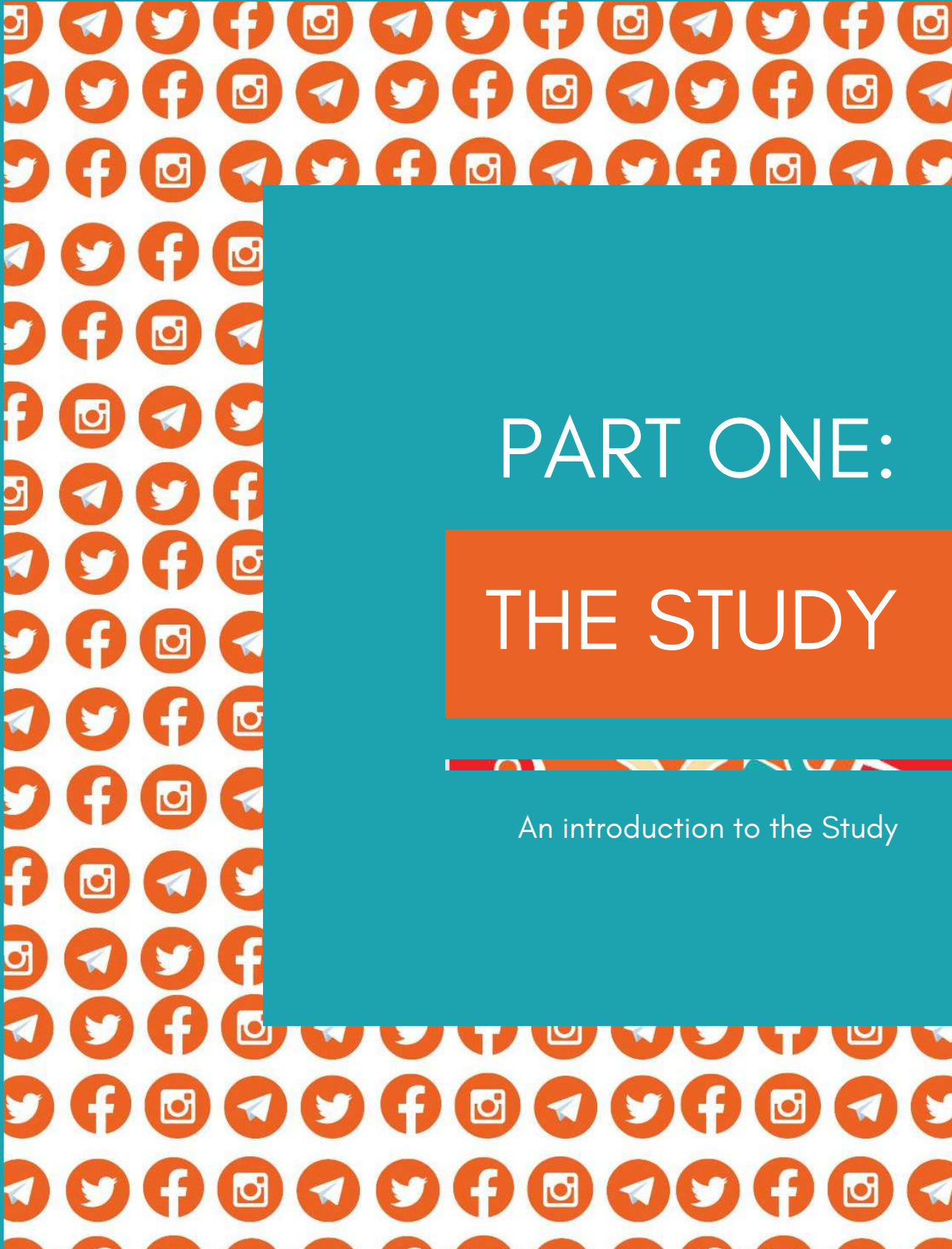
PART ONE:

THE STUDY

An introduction to the Study

Introduction

Online gender–based violence (OGBV) is a growing concern that has become increasingly prevalent in the digital world. This study focuses on a specific group of individuals – celebrities, politicians, activists, public figures, social media influencers, and individuals in the digital media industry – to examine the extent and nature of OGBV against these individuals and to shed light on the impact it has on their lives. The study takes place in Tanzania, where, according to the World's bank report (of all countries and economy of 2020), 22% of the population has access to internet services and 17% of women have mobile internet access compared to 35% of men. Despite the increase in internet access, there is a lack of statistical data on OGBV in the country.

The study has successfully collected and analyzed 650 social media accounts and over 15,000 posts over the course of five months. The representativeness, sampling selection and comprehensive content analysis shared very informative insights. We are used to having already knowledge to general information such as the predominance of male over female, or how it is a toxic environment that requires strong digital resilience, but missing the component of contextualizing that in numbers in relation to the victims.

The study's findings show that OGBV is a widespread and persistent problem that affects a broad range of individuals. The nature of OGBV can include cyberstalking, harassment, and cyberbullying, and can result in severe consequences such as psychological harm, loss of reputation, and career damage. The study also reveals that OGBV against these individuals is often motivated by their public visibility, political views, and activism.

The study's results emphasize the importance of addressing OGBV in the online world, and highlights the crucial role that online .

platforms and technology companies play in preventing and addressing this issue. The study recommends the development of policies, guidelines, and tools to help prevent OGBV, such as reporting mechanisms, support services for victims, and promotion of digital literacy and awareness. The study also underscores the need for education and training programs aimed at raising awareness of OGBV and equipping individuals with the skills and knowledge to protect themselves from harm.

While no kind of abuse is acceptable, it has been interesting to learn how some of the victims adapt to the space by being perpetrators of OGBV with the mentality of 'survival of the fittest'. Identifying that the selected targets all get insulted in one way or another, we coded the abuse in three categories to get insight of who where most target than the rest of the selected groups. We had the categories in "Hot, Mild and Rare".

Hot

The category of 'Hot' refers to posts that have a disproportionate number of negative comments, characterized by offensive and disrespectful language, compared to positive comments

Mild

In the context of this study, Mild posts refer to those with a balanced proportion of both positive and negative comments, including a limited number of offensive or disrespectful remarks.

Rare

Posts that receive minimal levels of offensive or disrespectful comments.

Overall, this study provides valuable insights into the issue of OGBV against celebrities, politicians, activists, public figures, social media influencers, and individuals in the digital media industry. Its findings highlight the need for action to address this growing problem and to ensure that online citizens are protected from online abuse. The study's recommendations can serve as a starting point for policymakers, technology companies, and civil society organizations working to prevent and address OGBV in the online world.

Study Approach

The study aimed to assess the prevalence of online gender-based violence (OGBV) in Tanzania, and did so by analyzing data from three major social media platforms: Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Data was collected from a total of 650 accounts, categorizing them into five groups: politicians, celebrities, activists, public figures, social media influencers. By evaluating OGBV on these four social media platforms, the study aimed to gain a comprehensive understanding of the issue in Tanzania and identify the most vulnerable groups. The data collected from the social media sites allowed the researchers to shed light on the nature and extent of OGBV, as well as its impact on the different groups of individuals. The study provided important insights into the ways in which OGBV can be addressed and prevented, helping to inform future policies and initiatives aimed at reducing the incidence of OGBV in the country.
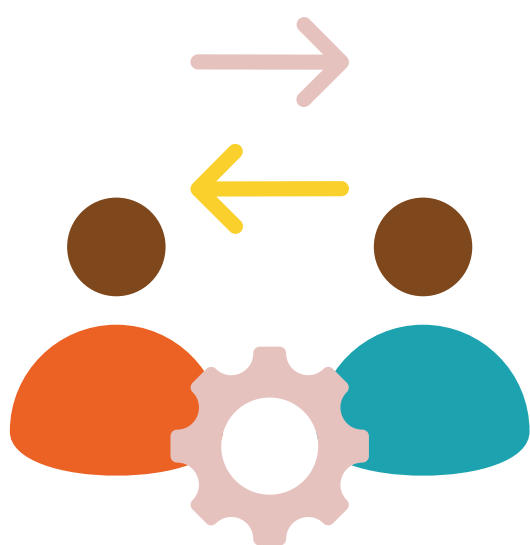
Objective of the Study

The aim of this study is to gather empirical data on the occurrence of gender-based violence through social media platforms, specifically Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and Telegram. The objective is to perform a thorough analysis of these platforms in order to better understand the extent and nature of gender-based violence in the online space in Tanzania.

Methodology

The study primarily utilized a quantitative methodology, with a focus on content analysis, social media analytics, and content coding. The approach for selection of accounts was Representativeness (focusing on Politicians, Celebrities, Public Figures, Social Media

Influencers and Social Media Activists) and Random sampling in regards to the collected data for analysis. Purposeful sampling was applied the Telegram platform with intent to introduce it as a case-study and open to the world what Tanzania Telegram is at. From the combination of methodologies and approaches, this study was able to gather data from a large number of participants, providing a comprehensive picture of the extent and nature of the issue. Additionally, social media analytics tools were used to track and measure various metrics such as likes, comments, shares, and reach, providing a thorough analysis of online content. The use of content coding allowed the study to categorize and analyze large amounts of online content, providing valuable insights into the nature of online gender-based violence on social media.

Study Metrics

NUMBER OF GROUPS	05
NUMBER OF POSTS	15K
NUMBER OF ACCOUNTS	650
NUMBER OF CASE STUDIES	5

Group Selection Criteria

The study focuses on five groups. The Politicians, the Celebrities (comprised of movie actors, musicians and sports personas among a few), the Social Media Influencers, Social Media Activists and Public figures.

The study of online gender-based violence is important because it sheds light on a growing problem that affects a significant portion of the population, particularly women especially when it comes to accessing opportunities online. To be able to understand the significance, the representation of the right group is key. By focusing on celebrities, social media influencers, politicians, and activists, it guaranteed gaining a better understanding of how deep-rooted the challenge is.

Celebrities, social media influencers, politicians, and activists often have large followings and significant public visibility, making their online behavior and comments impactful. These groups often use social media in unique ways, reflecting their distinct motivations, goals, and objectives. The following are the key five attributes that guided us into settling for the five groups.

Visibility: These groups have a large online following and significant public visibility, making their online behavior and comments impactful and worthy of attention.

Influence: As influencers, these groups can play a significant role in shaping public opinion and discourse, particularly on social media. Their posts and comments can set the tone for discussions and debates on important issues, including online gender-based violence.

Representation: These groups can represent a diverse range of perspectives and experiences, including those of victims, perpetrators, and allies. By focusing on them, researchers can gain a more nuanced understanding of online gender-based violence, including the different ways it affects individuals and communities.

Platforms: Social media platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook can play a significant role in perpetuating or combating online gender-based violence. By focusing on how these groups use these platforms, researchers can gain a better understanding of how platform design and policies impact online gender-based violence.

Trends: These groups often reflect and influence broader societal trends, including those related to gender and technology. By focusing on them, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of how these trends contribute to or combat online gender-based violence, and how they may evolve over time.

With a combination of the above and with focus on Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and Telegram we have been able to understand the attributes of each platform, how unique they are and how they can build on ones career as well as destroy it. Most importantly we have gained valuable insights into how influential actors use these platforms to shape public opinion and discourse, and how these platforms impact citizen engagement and public discourse more broadly.

Understanding Online Users

As time goes on, we have more people using the internet day by day even in a country like Tanzania where we are yet to reach the bigger population to have access to the internet. There are a variety of pushing or pulling dynamics that play part into forces that act as motivation for the online user. Access to the internet, motivations of using the internet and how one engages varies from one to another resulting into clusters of groups such as Public Figures, Media Personalities, Social Media Activists, Online Influencers, Trend setters, Specialists (be it health, design, education and the like) Online shops and businesses and a lot more. Whatever the reason for accessing the internet, there are only two main groups of Internet users.
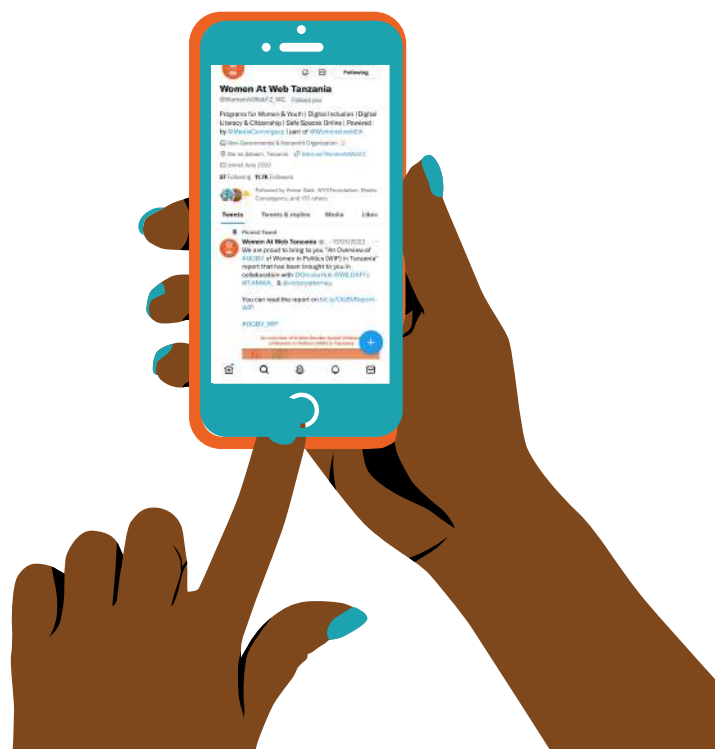
The Internet Partaker (TIP)

Is a netizen who consumes or/and produces certain action when using the internet. These actions may vary from content production, engagement (in terms of liking, commenting or sharing) and online patrol.

The Internet Lurkers (TIL)

TIL passively consume online content without actively participating, often through registered accounts across social media platforms to stay updated, while purposely avoiding any indication of their online presence.

What the "The Internet Partaker (TIP)" benefits from the online space varies from interest and intent of use or if at all they have reflected on why they are online and what they could get from it. Whereas with "The Internet Lurkers (TIL)" – their behavior online precisely emphasizes on their need not to be noticed or identified as active online. They are fully updated, mostly focused on what they search and follow online and fully informed. In the TIL group we have "*fully fledged Lurkers and the semi ones*". While the former involves a user who completely do not engage, with the later, the user has multiple accounts to which some are specifically created for lurking and others for partaking. It is clear that both TIPs and TILs have distinct characteristics and play important roles in shaping the online landscape. In order to maximize the potential benefits of the internet, it is important for individuals and organizations to be aware of these different types of users and the motivations behind their behaviors.

Nevertheless, one of our keen observations through the Women at Web Program powered by Media Convergency, we encourage TILs to become more active participants in online communities and initiatives can have a positive impact on their sense of belonging and well-being, as well as increasing their potential for meaningful engagement and contribution to society. On the other hand, it is also important to recognize that not all individuals may want or feel comfortable with active participation and to respect their choice to be passive consumers. Ultimately, it is crucial to promote a safe and inclusive online environment where individuals are free to engage with the internet in a way that is meaningful and fulfilling to them.

FACEBOOK: Tanzania Context

Facebook has been one of the prominent social media pages in Tanzania. According to the Global Monitor report (2011), Facebook first arrived in Tanzania in 2010 where it had 163,340 users in that year. According to Statista, Facebook users in Tanzania 2021 by gender; Facebook is mostly used by men in Tanzania. As of February 2021, 60.1 percent of the social media users in the country were males, while female users accounted for nearly 40 percent. In the same month, approximately 6.2 million people used Facebook in Tanzania, which represented 9.4 percent of the country's population.. Facebook has become a popular platform for people in Tanzania to connect with each other, share news and information, and express their opinions

Of the focus groups that we have selected as part of this study, Facebook is home to Politicians and Activists compared to celebrities. The platform has also become an important tool for businesses, organizations, and individuals to reach out to audiences and promote their products, services, and causes. It's influence still very evident in some of the attributes that has embedded a culture for the use of the Digital Space in the country. For instance one of the learnings for Media Convergency through its' Digital NGO accelerator programme; is that that the majority of newly and some old established non-profit organisation uses facebook as reference to their organisation's main digital page (instead of a proper website). It is one of the first prominent platform that has huge following and use by Tanzanians. This has been a result of some ripple down effects such majority of mobile companies (as well as shops) promoting the sell of devices by stating that the devices (smart and featured phones) has FaceBook and WhatsApp as free apps coming with the device. FaceBook platform had been a significant contributor to the boom and increase of internet users in the country.

The most recent data by the Tanzania Communication Regulatory Authority (TCRA), shows that Facebook platform has over 3 million IP addresses accessed followed by WhatsApp. In regards to Facebook, Facebook lead with a total of 2,595,691,922 GBs over YouTube usage which was 1,919,578,557 GBs. While Facebook is popular in terms of reach compared to Twitter, it is comparatively less abusive compared to Twitter and Instagram. The majority of abuse on Facebook is directed at already popular targets. It is relatively hard for anyone just to be popular on Facebook in recent years, an aspect which can be easily achieved for Twitter and Instagram.

One of the most interesting aspects of social media in Tanzania, Facebook is the leading platform in the county that has the highest number of impersonators across all popular Digital platforms (Twitter, Instagram and Tiktok). The users are so gullible and easily conned by using names of public figures. Most of the users on Facebook, have learned to use the Digital Platforms as their first time technology users sometimes next to WhatsApp; the illiteracy works well for those who intend to do any kind of cyber-malicious misconduct such as Doxxing, Sextortion and Cybersexism.

INSTAGRAM: Tanzania Context

Instagram is the most vibrant social media in Tanzania with an estimated number of 8 million monthly active users. Similar to Facebook, Instagram usage in Tanzania is also predominantly male, with females accounting for a smaller portion. Instagram sets itself apart from other social media platforms with its focus on visual content, aesthetics, influencer culture, explore feature, and interactivity. With its emphasis on sharing photos and videos, Instagram encourages users to carefully curate their feeds and present a visually appealing image of their life. The platform has become a hub for influencer culture, with many users leveraging their large followings to promote products, services, and causes.

Instagram's explore feature allows users to discover new content and accounts, providing a wealth of inspiration and discovery opportunities. All of these attributes make Instagram a unique and visually engaging social media platform, perfect for sharing moments, discovering new content, and connecting with others. According to a Study from the College of Business Education (2020), informal traders obtain new customers on Instagram through creating their own accounts, hiring space on agents' accounts and interfering with the flow of comments in celebrities' posts. The platforms is the most favorable for celebrities, in the country and thus the majority are there. It is common for Tanzania to find a celebrity on Instagram but absent in other platforms (Twitter and Facebook). Tanzania has celebrities with a huge number of following than majority of celebrities and public figures in the region (Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Malawi as well as Central Africa). The nature of an ease to post pictures as contents has been to the preference and taste for many. The platform is also home to the majority of social media influencers in Tanzania.

Informal traders promote their businesses by posting their products, posting testimonials from satisfied customers, and aligning the advertising messages with attractive images/photos that draw the traffic attention. In such settings it is rare to find any kind of abusive comments in the posts; there are of course promotional content in the comments section for pages/accounts that has huge reach. Promotional content can vary from those selling a service or product to those selling themselves (depending on their bodies) as business. Tanzania has been one of the leading countries when it comes to the use of the platform as an online shop, where the majority will sell a lot of service and products without owning any product nor physical location. It goes without saying that there have been some who have been scammed out of this loophole. Overtime the users have become more alert and careful compared to a few years ago three to five).

The platforms has done a great work on restrictions to abusive comments and insults, the mechanism for control of the user and systematic algorithmic system enhances capability to control/do away with such comments. One of the increasing content is porn on Social Media but with Instagram it has been easily removed upon reporting on the "report button" and through automatic dictation of Instagram platform itself. The most rampant kind of abuse on Instagram is Cyberstalking, Sextortion and online-harassments (in the name of tabloid pages).

Twitter: Tanzania Context

Twitter has an estimated number of 1.5 to 2 million monthly active users. Similar to Facebook and Instagram the usage in Tanzania is also predominantly male, than females. Twitter is home to Activists, Social Media Influencers, Public Figures and Politicians (not all public figures are Politician's and activists). While with Social Influencers in most of other nations are to do with lifestyle and entertainment, the majority of Influencers on the Tanzania Twitter are Activists, Online Campaign Amplifiers and Content Creators. Most active users on the platform are not active engagers but rather lurkers ().

Twitter is a unique platform that sets itself apart from other platforms through its real-time updates, use of hashtags, public nature, brevity, and verified accounts. With its character limit, Twitter encourages concise and to-the-point communication, making it easy for users to quickly scan and engage with a large amount of content. The use of hashtags also makes it easy to track and follow conversations and topics of interest, both globally and within specific communities. The platform's public nature allows for greater visibility and reach, particularly for public figures and organizations, while verified accounts enhance its credibility and help users identify trustworthy sources of information. All of these attributes make Twitter a valuable platform for real-time updates, discussions, and engagement on a variety of topics, from breaking news to trending topics.

Twitter is that one platform that guarantees interaction between citizens with those in influential positions and power, a place where most of the current socio-political and economic issues are vibrant and consistently updated and the majority of serious minds make sure to visit at a daily basis to be up to-date on trends and current issues. According to the "How Africa Tweets" report (2015), findings revealed that Africans are increasingly using Twitter to talk about politics, where conversations about politics is more than the stats from the United States and the United Kingdom. This is indicative to Tanzania Twitter.

The platform has so much power to constructively influence some of the decision making not only of the government but respective institutions both public and private. Unfortunately their is the prevalence of online harassment, including cyberbullying, hate speech, and online gender-based violence. Due to its public nature, users can be vulnerable to abuse and insults from anonymous or anonymous-looking accounts. Twitter's limited mechanisms for controlling and addressing abusive behavior have been criticized, and many users feel that the platform needs to do more to protect its users from harm. In addition, Twitter's algorithm for determining the relevance and visibility of content has been criticized for promoting controversial and polarizing viewpoints, and for amplifying misinformation and propaganda. Finally, the fast pace and ephemeral nature of Twitter can make it difficult for users to fully engage with and understand complex issues, leading to shallow and superficial discussions. There has also been a trend where cyber harassing is promoted and has become an avenue of having a huge following.

PART TWO:

Gender Representation

Drawing from Twitter,
Facebook and Instagram

Gender representation of the Study:
Twitter, Facebook and Instagram

The approach of the study was to make sure to have equal representation of men and women to get to accurate representation of the results. Nevertheless, while it was possible to attain equal representation for Facebook and Instagram, it was challenging to the the same on Twitter. Most of the subjects avoid the use of Twitter and prefer the other platforms. The findings showed that most of the high engagement accounts had interesting and engaging posts, except for a small number of accounts that posted misleading content. The gender distribution was even on Instagram and Facebook.

These findings provide insights into the demographics of social media influencer accounts and can help inform strategies for engaging with them. All the selected groups in this study have a common trait of a huge recognition by a huge number of online followers, this recognition allows them to use their pages to promote causes, products, and services, which in turn can make them very influential and interesting individuals to the majority of online users in Tanzania.

CELEBRITIES: Gender–representation

Twitter Users	Facebook Users	Instagram Users
80% 20%	50% 50%	50% 50%

Fig 01: Celebrity representation
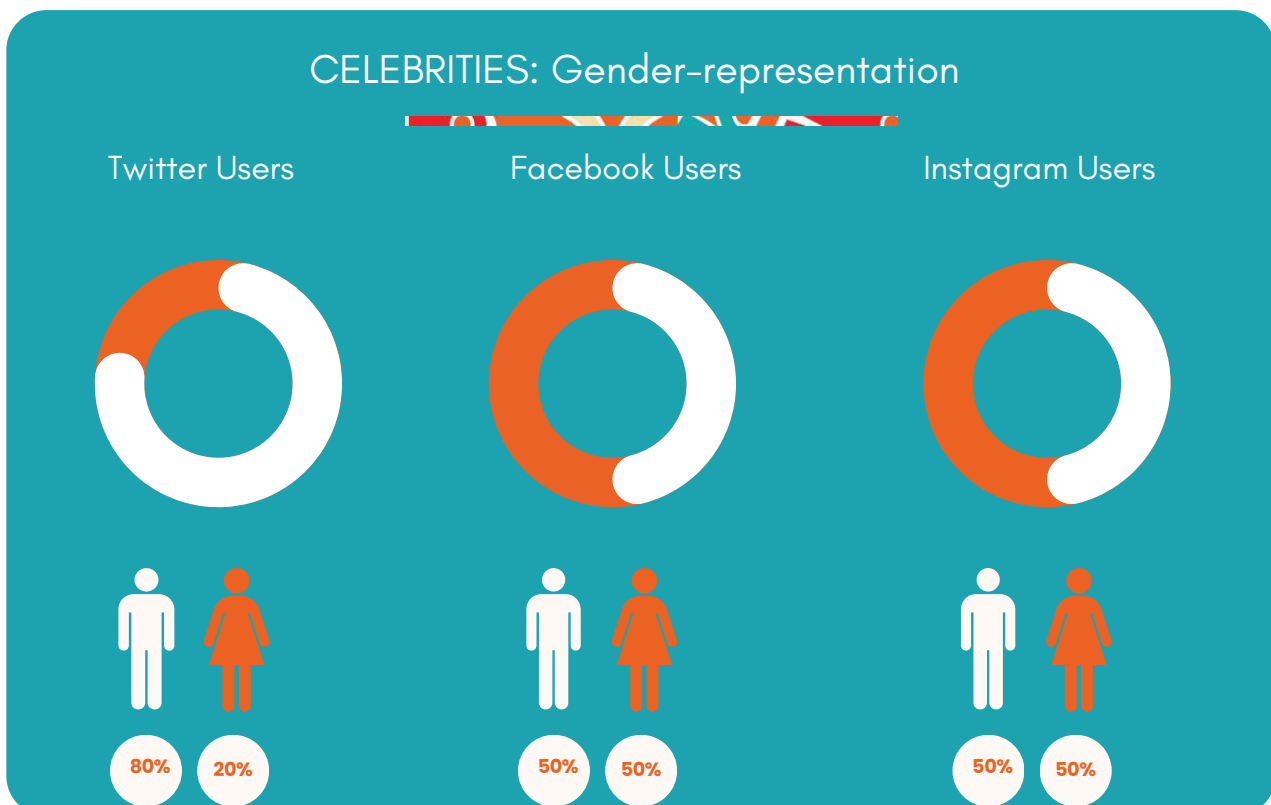
While public figures, politicians and social media influencers can be considered as part of the celebrities circle, for the sake of this study, the celebrities that have been referred to are from the entertainment industry such as the movie industry, sports, music and fashion. Of all the three platforms, the Celebrities are more fond of Instagram, followed by Facebook then Twitter.

PUBLIC FIGURES: Gender-Representation

Twitter Users	Facebook Users	Instagram Users

57% 43%   63% 37%   33% 67%
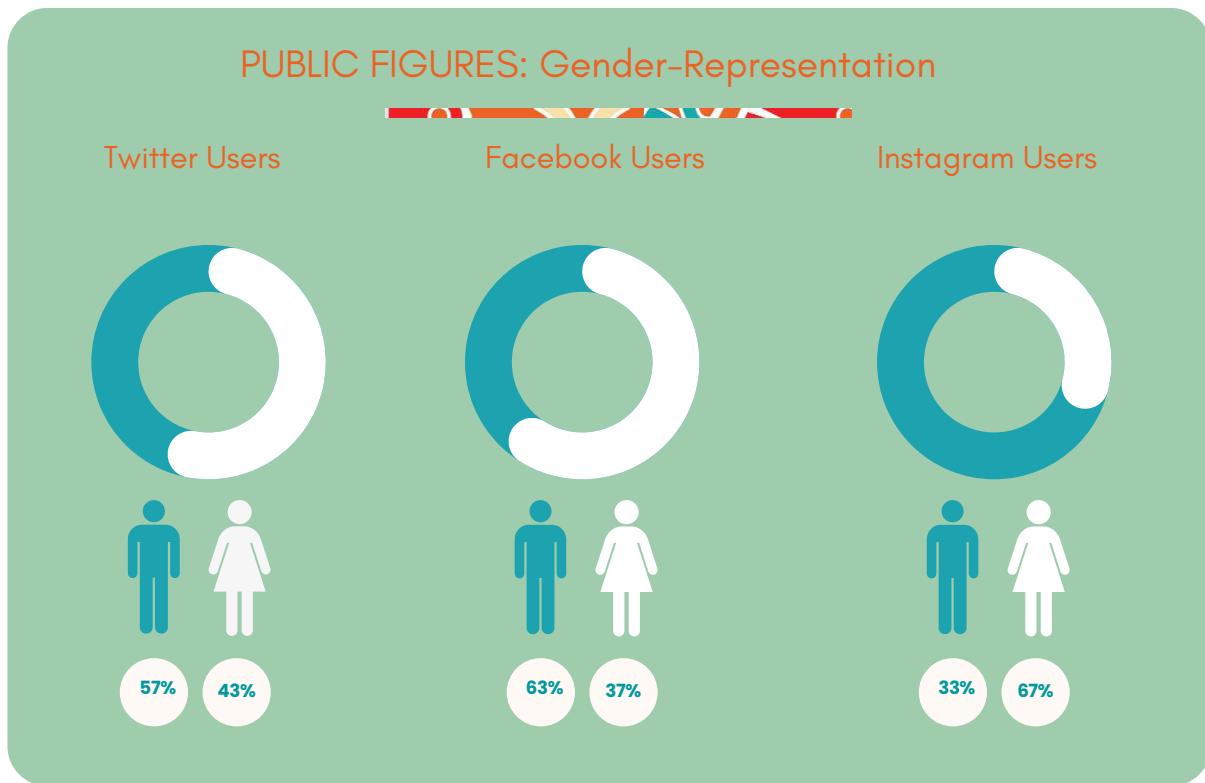
Fig 02: Public Figures gender-representation

On Twitter, the gender balance is relatively even with 57% of accounts being male and 43% being female. On Instagram, there is a higher proportion of male public figures with 63% of accounts being male, while 37% of accounts are female. On Facebook, the majority of public figures are female with 67% of accounts being female, and 33% being male.

POLITICIANS: Gender Representation

Twitter Users	Facebook Users	Instagram Users

76% 24%   83% 17%   83% 17%
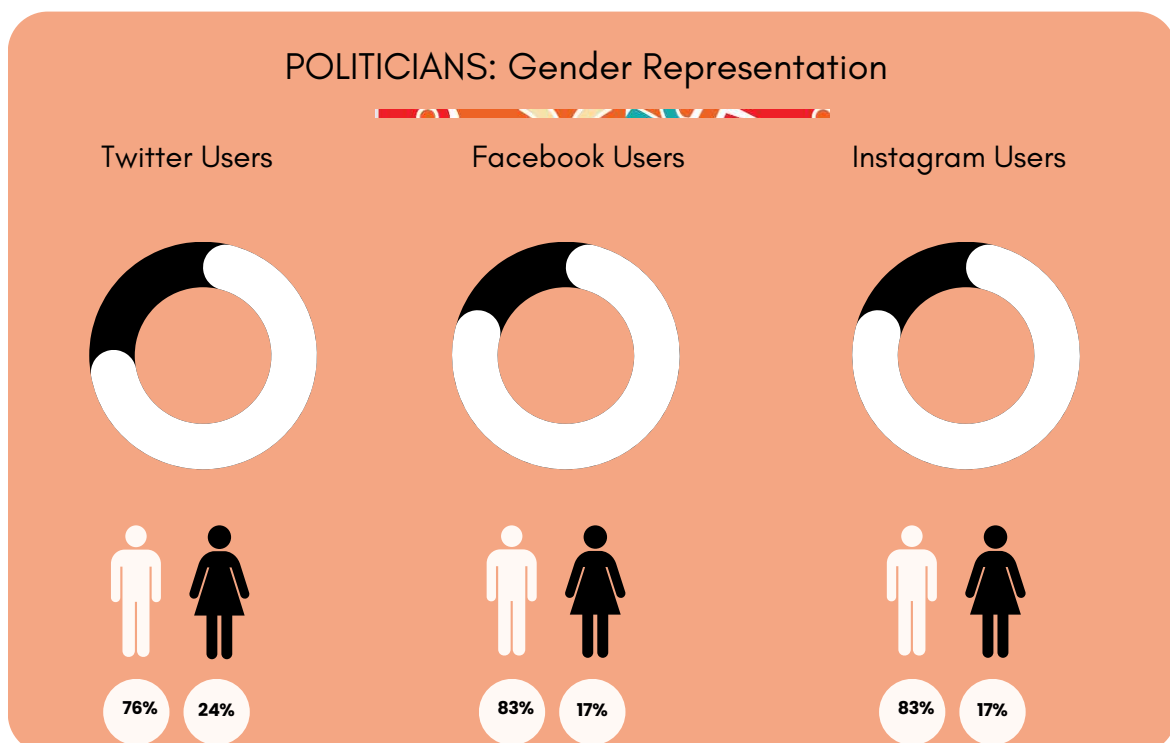
Fig 03: Politicians gender-representation

With 83% of the accounts on both Instagram and Facebook and 76% of the accounts on Twitter being male, this data suggests that male politicians are more likely to have a strong presence on social media than female politicians. Not having equal representation of both genders creates a skewed perception of the political landscape and can lead to further unequal representation in other areas of politics and decision-making.

ACTIVISTS: Gender-representation

Twitter Users	Facebook Users	Instagram Users

63% | 30% | 33% | 67% | 33% | 67%

7%
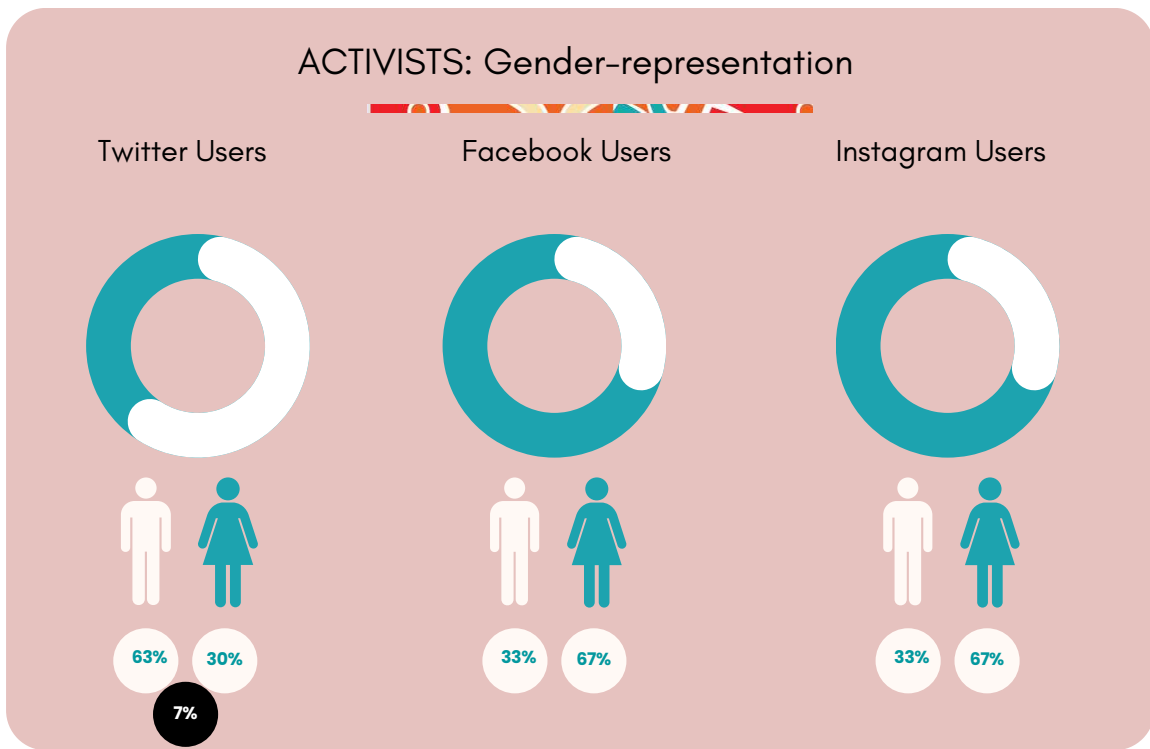
Fig 04: Social Media Activists gender-representation – Black is equal to Gender–neutral

This category cuts across strong topics apart from politics, such as education, gender equality and human rights. The majority of "Activist accounts" category are female, with 67% of the accounts on both Instagram and Facebook being female. On Twitter, the gender breakdown is 63% of accounts being male and 30% being female.

SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS: Gender-representation

Twitter Users	Facebook Users	Instagram Users

63% | 37% | 60% | 40% | 60% | 40%
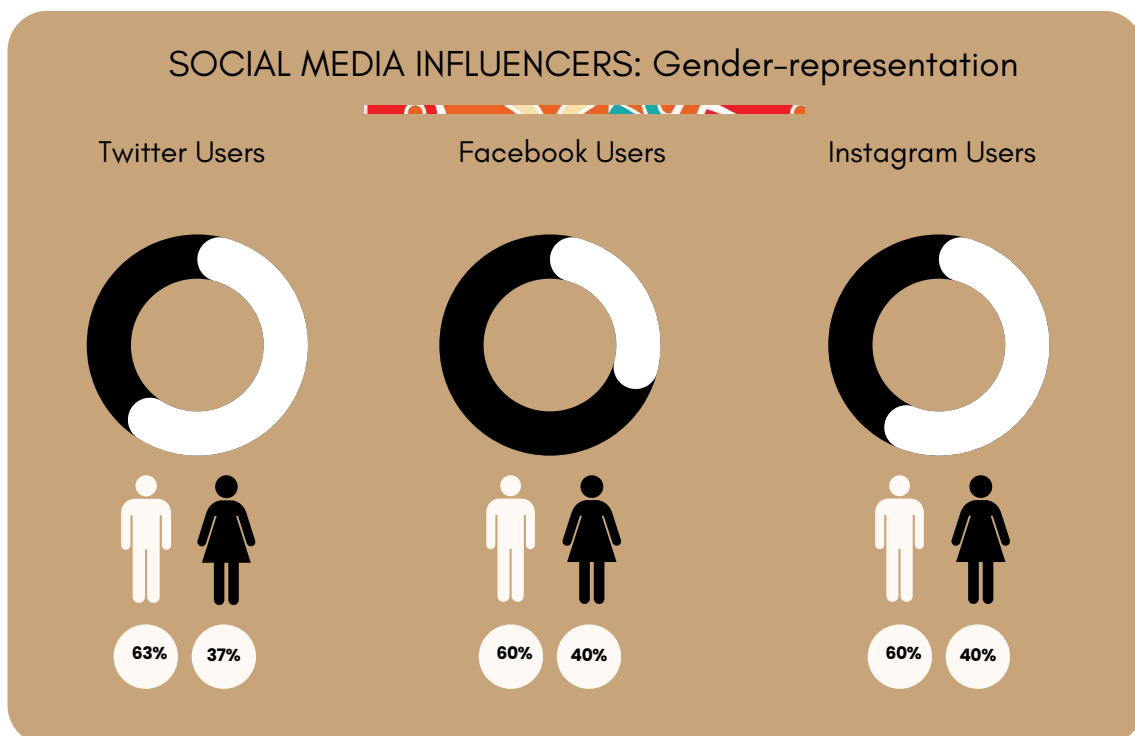
Fig 05: Social Media Influencers gender-representation

Based on this data, we can see that the gender balance of social media accounts on these platforms is relatively similar, with a slightly higher proportion of male accounts on Twitter (63%) compared to Instagram and Facebook (both 60%). The proportion of female accounts on all three platforms is 40%. Aside from the fact that all social media accounts has male users compared to female; in regards to Social Media Influencers there is a huge representation of both gender on the platforms.

PART THREE:

FINDINGS

Drawing from Twitter, Facebook and Instagram

HOT, MILD & RARE
Categories of Abuse

The study categorized the online abuse into three categories: 'Hot,' 'Mild,' and 'Rare.' This was because the nature of abuse is not always clear-cut and can be difficult to recognize. The categories were created to highlight that not all forms of abuse are the same, and some types may be less noticeable than others. It's essential to note that while all abuse is harmful, not all abuse victims may realize that they are being abused.

The "HOT" Category of abuse

The "Hot" category of abuse in the context of this study refers to social media posts that have a significantly high number of negative comments, particularly those that contain offensive and disrespectful language. In other words, these posts receive a disproportionate amount of negative comments compared to positive ones. The term "hot" is used to describe the level of activity surrounding these posts, with the negative comments acting as a catalyst for increased engagement and attention.
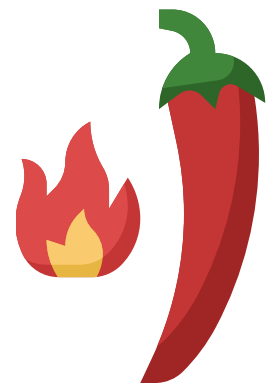
The "MILD" Category of abuse

In the context of the study, the "medium" category of abuse refers to posts that have a balanced proportion of both positive and negative comments, including a limited number of offensive or disrespectful remarks. These posts may have a mix of supportive and critical comments, with some constructive feedback or disagreement. The negative comments may be more moderate in tone, and the level of abuse is not as high as in the "hot" category. While these posts may not be as severe as the "hot" category, they can still have a negative impact on the recipient and contribute to the normalization of online gender-based violence. It is important to address and prevent all forms of online abuse, regardless of the degree of severity.

The "RARE" Category of abuse

In the context of the study, the "rare" category of abuse refers to posts that receive minimal levels of offensive or disrespectful comments. These types of posts have a high proportion of positive comments and a low proportion of negative comments, with only a few or no offensive or disrespectful remarks. The rarity of abuse in these posts suggests that the online community interacting with the posts is respectful and engaged in constructive dialogue
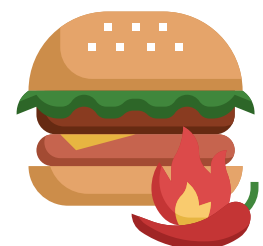
This category indicates that online spaces can be safe and supportive environments when positive norms of engagement are established and reinforced. However, it is important to note that just because abuse is rare does not mean it should be ignored or dismissed. All forms of online abuse, regardless of the frequency, can have significant impacts on individuals and communities.

What level of online gender based violence (OGBV) do **Celebrities** experience?

The study examined the prevalence of gender-based online violence suffered by celebrities on three major social media sites: Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook of over 2,250 comments of online users. The findings indicated that Instagram was the leading platform for celebrities to experience extreme and mid-level online gender-based violence, with 43.3% and 33% respectively. Twitter and Facebook also recorded instances of this type of violence, with 23.33% and 33.3% of celebrities experiencing mid-level attacks. This emphasizes that celebrities are susceptible to gender-based online violence on all three platforms, with Instagram being the leading platform of OGBV. There is a direct link between the prevalent OGBV on Instagram and the majority of Celebrities being available on Instagram as their favorite social media platform. Between the female and male celebrities, the male celebrities incur more cyberbullying by 54% more than the female celebrities.
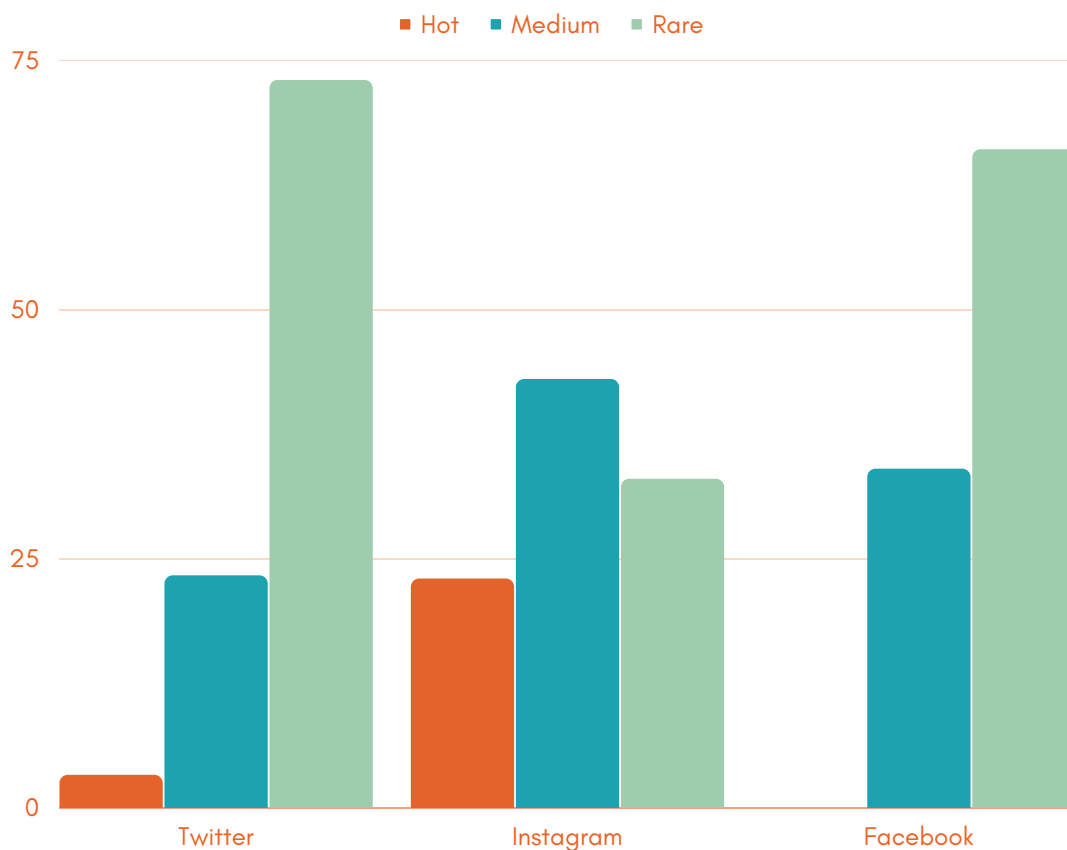
	HOT	MID	RARE
Twitter	3%	24%	73%
Instagram	23%	44%	33%
Facebook	0%	33%	67%

What level of online gender based violence (OGBV) do **Public figures** experience?

The study examined 90 public figures and over 2,250 of their comments to determine the extent of online gender-based violence they experienced on three social media platforms: Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. The results revealed that public figures encountered varying degrees of online gender-based violence on these platforms. On Twitter, the majority of public figures received few, if any, comments that were considered online gender-based violence (96%), while a small fraction experienced Mild-level attacks (4%). No public figures on Twitter were subjected to extreme forms of online gender-based violence. On Instagram, all public figures encountered only rare instances of online gender-based violence comments and did not experience any Mild or extreme comments. On Facebook, the majority of public figures received few, if any, comments that were considered online gender-based violence (93%), with a minority subjected to Mild-level attacks (7%). No public figures on Facebook were subjected to extreme forms of online gender-based violence. These findings suggest that Twitter is the platform with the lowest incidence of online gender-based violence for public figures, while Facebook has a moderate level of such incidents.
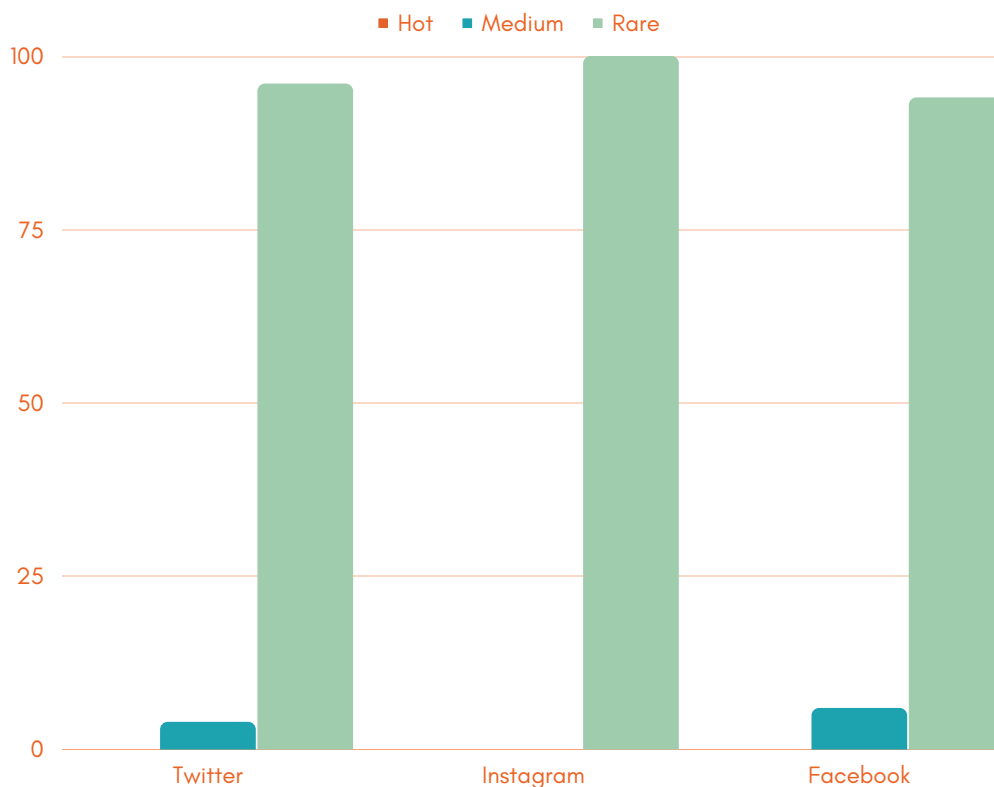
	HOT	MID	RARE
Twitter	0%	4%	96%
Instagram	0%	0%	100%
Facebook	0%	7%	93%

What level of online gender based violence (OGBV) do **Politicians** experience

Drawing from the Tanzanian context, Twitter is where serious minds meet especially to public conversations that has to do with socio-economic political issues. The findings from the study indicate that Twitter, in particular, is a hotbed for the majority of Politicians.. The high percentage of politicians experiencing cyberbullying on Twitter, with almost 20% experiencing extreme cyberbullying, underscores the magnitude of this problem. The results further reveal that politicians on Instagram and Facebook face fewer instances of cyberbullying attacks than those on Twitter, with no instances of extreme cyberbullying attacks reported. This may be attributed to the differences in the platforms' structures and user demographics. Instagram, for instance, is a more visual platform that may discourage text-based attacks, while Facebook offers stronger privacy controls. Such attacks can also impact politicians' decision-making processes and their engagement with the public, leading to censorship and reduced participation in online discussions. On the other hand, 69% of politicians on Twitter experience rare category of the cyberbullying attacks.

■ Hot   ■ Medium   ■ Rare
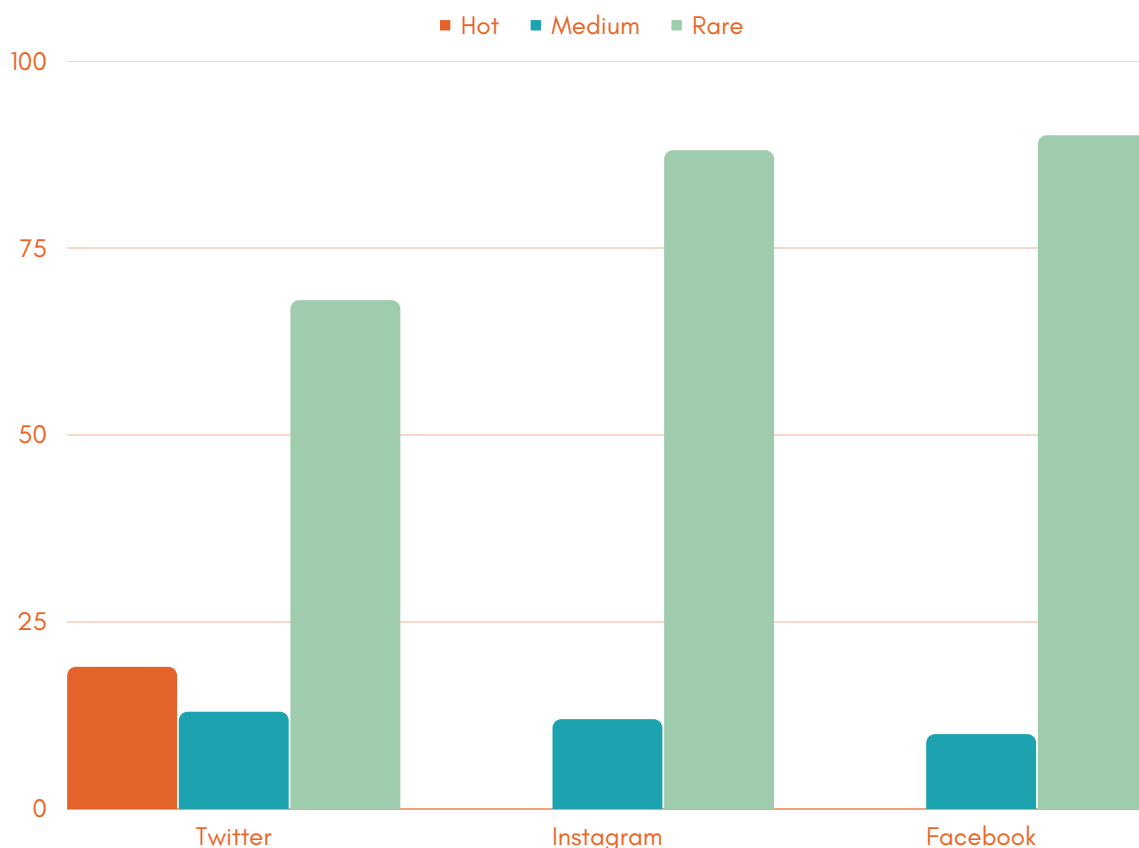
	HOT	MID	RARE
Twitter	19%	13%	68%
Instagram	0%	12%	88%
Facebook	0%	10%	90%

What level of online gender based violence (OGBV) do **Social Media Activists** experience?

With over 2,750 posts collected, data reveals that the levels of OGBV experienced by activists on three social media platforms: Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. On Twitter, the study found that OGBV against activists is rare, with only 4% of activists experiencing mid-level attacks. No comments indicated extreme attacks on the platform, which is a positive sign. The majority of activists on Twitter (96%) have a minimal number of OGBV. Instagram emerged as the safest platform for activists in terms of OGBV, with 100% of the comments showing no incidents of extreme or mid-level attacks. This may be attributed to the platform's user demographics and content formats, which may discourage text-based attacks. Surprisingly, the study found that Facebook was the leading platform for mid-level online gender-based violence against activists, with 10% of activists experiencing such incidents. This is a concerning trend, given the platform's large user base and the potential for such incidents to escalate.
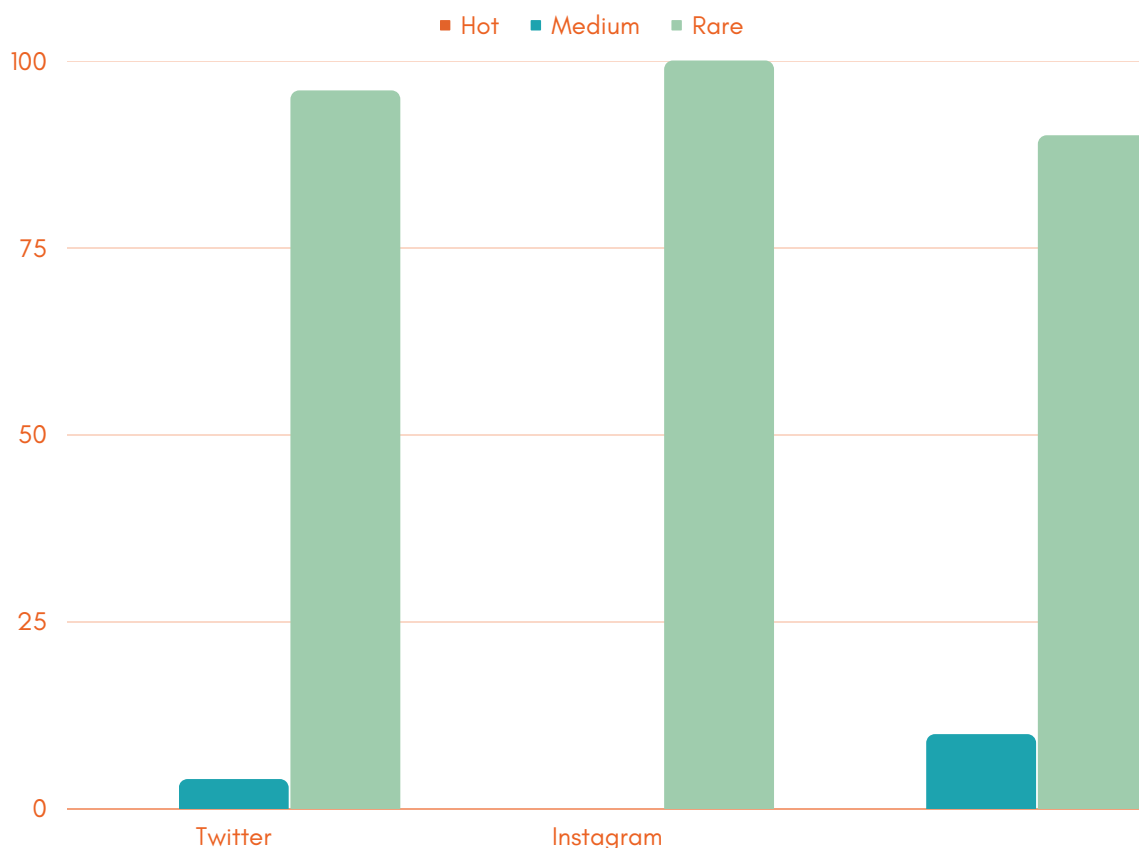
	HOT	MID	RARE
Twitter	0%	4%	96%
Instagram	0%	0%	100%
Facebook	0%	10%	90%

What level of online gender based violence (OGBV) do **Social Media Influencers** experience?

With over 2,250 comments/posts; the given information presents the levels of OGBV experienced by social media influencers on three popular platforms: Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. The study found that all three platforms are witnessing online gender-based violence against influencers. The results of the study revealed that a significant proportion of influencers experience mid-level online gender-based violence, which is neither extreme nor rare. On Facebook, 27% of influencers experience mid-level online gender-based violence, which is the highest percentage among the three platforms. In comparison, Twitter and Instagram had a similar occurrence of mid-level online gender-based violence against influencers, with 23% of influencers experiencing such incidents on each platform. It was also found that Instagram has the highest percentage of influencers experiencing rare online gender-based violence, with 74% of influencers reporting such incidents. Meanwhile, Twitter had the highest percentage of influencers experiencing no online gender-based violence at all, with 77% of influencers reporting no incidents.
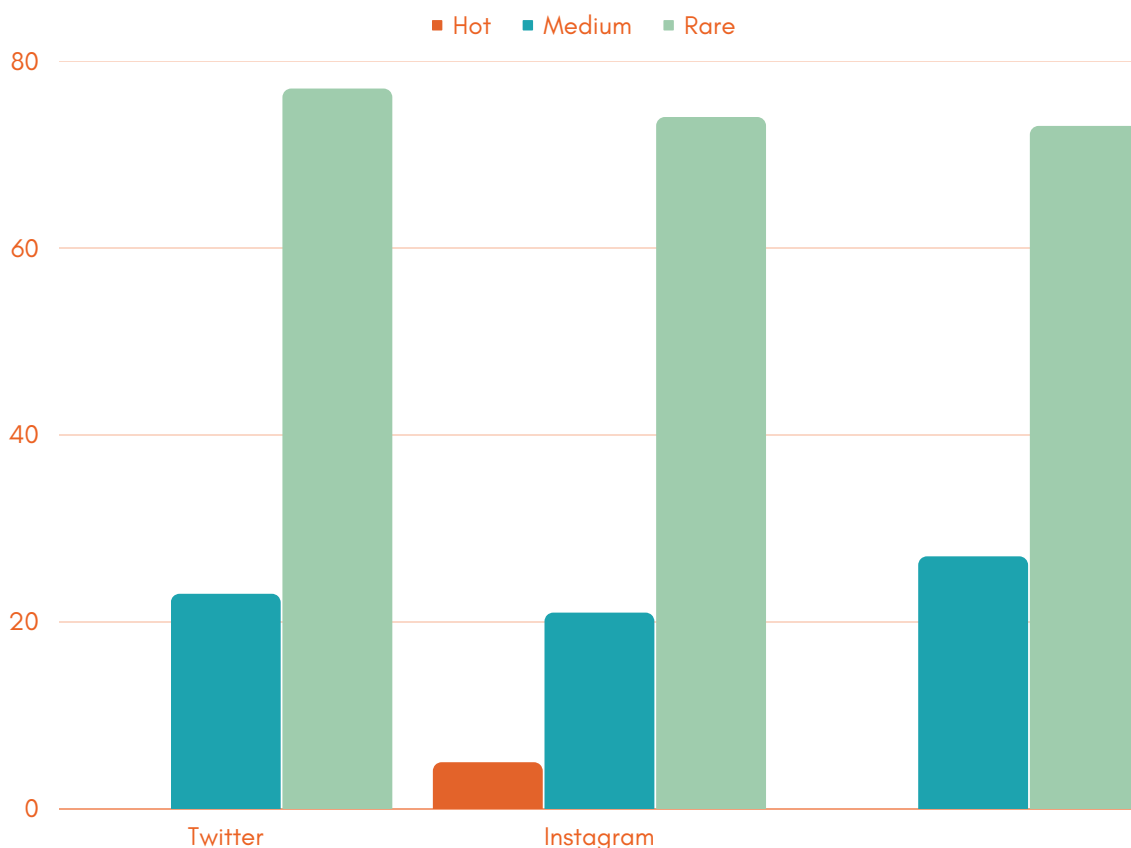
	HOT	MID	RARE
Twitter	0%	23%	77%
Instagram	5%	21%	74%
Facebook	0%	27%	73%

SPEACIAL OBSERVATION:
Cyber-harassments to Cyber Harassers

In the context of OGBV, an amplifier refers to a person or group who amplifies (by directly posting to spread abusive or harmful content through online platforms), which can lead to an increase in the reach and impact of the abuse. Amplifiers can include individuals, social media influencers, online communities, and even bots. They play a role in perpetuating OGBV by spreading harmful messages, images, or videos and inciting others to engage in abusive behavior towards a victim. These accounts are of those who publicly target more on non-consensual images and share on public. On Twitter, the sample comments revealed that normal users experience hot negative comments, with 100% considered rare to receive OGBV and 0% experiencing Mild levels of OGBV. In contrast, Instagram normal users experience Mild levels of OGBV, with 36.7% of users reporting such incidents. A small percentage of users (4%) experience hot levels of OGBV, while the majority of users (60%) experience rare levels of OGBV. While users on Facebook experience rare levels of OGBV at 45%, with only a small percentage of users (3%) experiencing Mild levels of OGBV. However, a significant portion of users (52%) experience hot levels of OGBV, highlighting that Facebook users are more likely to face OGBV in the form of hot negative comments.
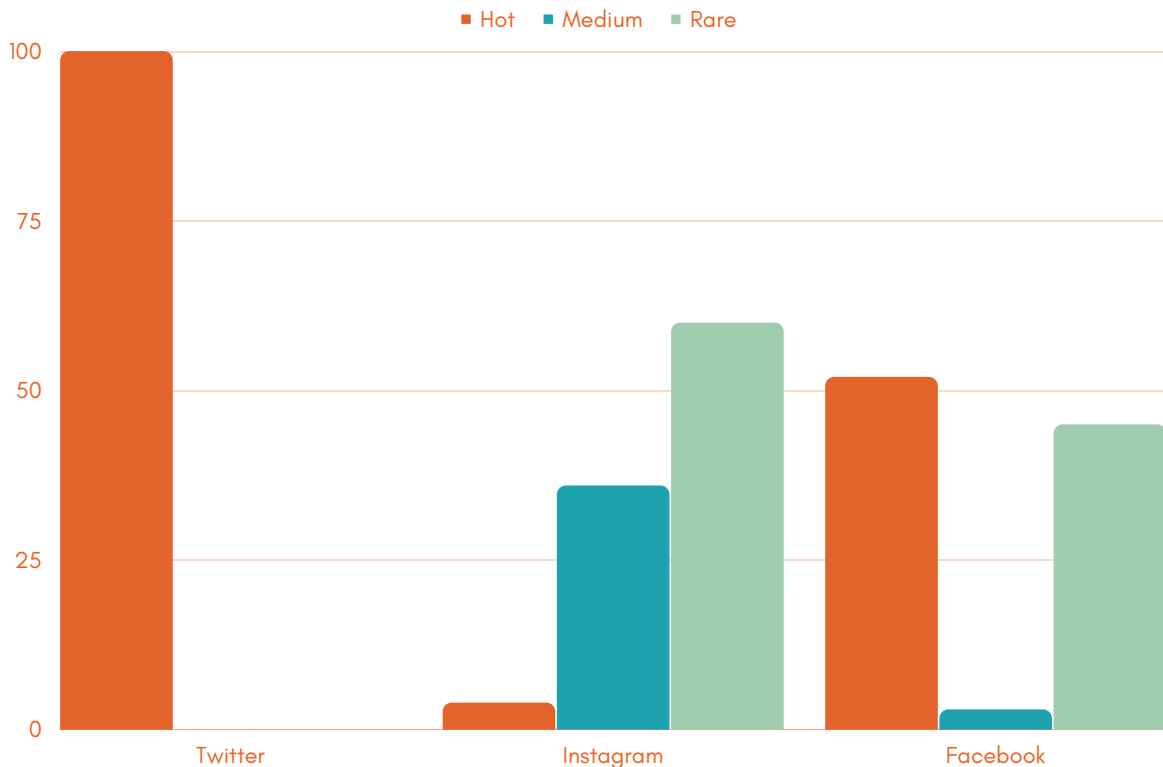
	HOT	MID	RARE
Twitter	100%	0%	0%
Instagram	4%	36%	60%
Facebook	52%	3%	45%

PART FOUR:

Telegram

Understanding the role of
Telegram in OGBV in Tanzania

Telegram: Tanzania Context

Telegram, a cloud-based instant messaging app, has become a platform where online gender-based violence (OGBV) is prevalent. The purpose of this analysis is to evaluate the impact of OGBV on Telegram and its spread. Thirty Telegram groups were analyzed, and they were found to be the primary source of OGBV videos. Telegram allows users to share files up to 2GB in size, which is significantly larger than many other messaging platforms. This can make it easier for users to share large files, including explicit videos and images. Victims in these videos are typically university students and public figures, including celebrities and influencers.

With its end-to-end encryption, that Telegram offers; makes the messages sent between users securely private and cannot be intercepted by third parties. This encourages users to share sensitive or explicit content without fear of it being seen by anyone else. The videos are often passed from one user to another, making it difficult to trace their source, resulting in the widespread occurrence of OGBV on Telegram. The term "Connection" has become a popular trend in Tanzania for sharing explicit videos on Telegram. These videos are shared on public sites such as blogs and social media platforms, mainly Twitter. With the current nature of telegram supporting large groups and channels with up to 200,000 members, which makes it an ideal platform for perpetrators take advantage of.

They are shared in two ways, one – by embedding links in posts using code words, or, two – by posting them directly to the public. This trend has become a major concern for society as it contributes to the spread of OGBV. The analysis of Telegram sample data revealed that doxing and cyberstalking are the most common forms of OGBV found in the groups. Doxing involves publishing private information about someone online with the intention of causing harm, while cyberstalking involves using electronic communication to harass, threaten, or intimidate someone. Both doxing and cyberstalking are illegal and have serious consequences for the victims. The source of the videos is challenging to trace from the platform, and they are often shared among users, making it hard to stop their spread.

To address this challenge, authorities and the public need to work together to raise awareness about the dangers of OGBV and take action to prevent it. This can be done through education and outreach programs, as well as by enforcing existing laws and regulations against OGBV. A collaborative approach of online users could work positively especially when it comes to such content that is shared on other platforms such as Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.

The most effective approach would be if, Telegram itself could take steps to prevent the spread of non-consensual images and videos on its platform. For instance, it could implement stricter content moderation policies, increase the use of automated detection tools, and collaborate with law enforcement agencies to identify and prosecute those responsible for distributing such content. Ultimately, it will take a collective effort to create a safer online environment and protect vulnerable individuals from the harmful effects of OGBV on Telegram and other digital platforms.

NON-Consensual Images/Videos
Understanding Victims

Non-consensual images or videos, also known as revenge porn, is the act of distributing intimate images or videos of an individual without their consent. It is important to recognize that victims of non-consensual images or videos can come from all walks of life and can experience a wide range of negative consequences as a result of the distribution of these images or videos. It is essential to take measures to prevent non-consensual images or videos from being distributed and to support victims who have experienced this type of abuse. The spread of non-consensual images or videos can have a devastating impact on the victim's life. With technology being a click away, anyone can easily fall victim of such an abuse regardless of the gender. Nevertheless the female gender are more susceptible to this kind of cybercrime harassments. From the cases that the Women at Web Program under the umbrella of Media Convergency; it has been observed that the victims are as young as the ages of 16 to as older as 48 years old. This varies from secondary students, university students, graduates, women professionals and politicians. From the study "An overview of Online Gender-based Violence of Women in Politics (WIP) – 2021)" 14% of the 394 women leaders in politics admitted to having been exploited through blackmailing and sextortion. The nature of these images/videos derive from a variety of ways as follows:-

1. Individuals whose intimate images or videos were taken without their consent and shared online.
2. People who were coerced or manipulated into creating or sharing explicit images or videos, which were then spread without their consent.
3. Minors who have had their images or videos shared online without their or their parents' consent.
4. Individuals whose images or videos were edited or digitally altered to create explicit content without their knowledge or consent.
5. People who have been impersonated online through fake profiles or accounts, which have been used to distribute explicit content without their consent.

It should also be noted that Non-consensual images or videos of children and teenagers is a growing problem, particularly as young people increasingly share intimate images with one another. The distribution of these images or videos can have a devastating impact on the victim's emotional well-being and can lead to long-term consequences such as difficulty finding employment, social isolation, and more.

Stop Non-Consensual Intimate Images (NCII) Initiative
Media Convergency join forces

As a result of ongoing initiatives done by META since 2017, they had announced new tools to help people when intimate images are shared on Facebook without their permission. When this content is reported to us, they can now prevent it from being shared on Facebook, Messenger and Instagram. This is one step to help people who fear an intimate image will be shared without their consent. It's demeaning and devastating when someone's intimate images are shared without their permission, and we want to do everything we can to help victims of this abuse.

Media Convergency partnered up with the StopNCII.org initiative in partnership with the UK Revenge Porn Helpline and Meta to provide people in Sub-Saharan Africa with an accessible platform to combat the sharing of sexual images online without consent. The proliferation of non-consensual intimate images causes tremendous harm, but due to a variety of factors, victims may find it distressing to report. This comes after a series of communication from META reaching out to stakeholders exploring on the ways they could scale up their NCII (non-consensual intimate images) pilot, make it more accessible globally and strengthen the safety, privacy, and security for victims. We had also discussed part of this in the Sub-Saharan Africa Women's Rights Working Group. The group was convened by the Africa Human Rights Team in Facebook Africa and the Middle East and Turkey (AMET) Policy division. The group is part of their work to strengthen dialogues to support Women Rights Online.

StopNCII.org aims to empower victims by giving them a secure tool to proactively identify this content where it lives online. We are committed to playing our part to ensure the online safety and privacy of every victim in Sub-Saharan Africa. Built with Meta's expert guidance and funding, in collaboration with over 50 global NGO partners, experts and victim advocates, the UK Revenge Porn Helpline is launching StopNCII.org to combat the spread of non-consensual intimate images (NCII). StopNCII.org has been built with safety, security and privacy at the forefront of every step of the process. The platform uses technology that hashes images and videos directly on a person's device, so those images or videos never have to leave a person's possession. This platform is the first of its kind to detect NCII by providing people more control and privacy. Through StopNCII.org, users can;

1. Proactively prevent their NCII from existing on participating tech platforms;
2. Keep control of their NCII on their own devices;
3. Track their cases in real time;
4. Withdraw their cases at any time.

The platform is available to people worldwide, as StopNCII.org has partnered with more than 50 global organizations supporting victims of NCII. StopNCII.org builds on Facebook and Instagram's work over the last several years to proactively stop the proliferation of non-consensual intimate imagery from our platforms. This new platform offers people a secure and private tool to proactively stop the proliferation of their non-consensually shared images online, empowering victims during an often difficult and seemingly uncontrollable situation.

One of the biggest challenges of most women and young girls face is having their images used inappropriately and thus associated challenges such as blackmailing from the perpetrators. The Stop NCII initiative solves most of those challenges.

To learn more, visit StopNCII.org

PART FIVE:

CASE STUDIES

Drawing from Twitter,
Facebook, Instagram and Telegram

CASE STUDY # 1 - **Instagram**
37 young girls – Secondary and University Graduates

Over several months from early 2022, there were, numerous videos involving soda bottles circulating on the internet, and many young girls, aged between 18 and 20, were being targeted by online criminals who's aim was to extort money from them. These criminals leak the videos on the internet after the girls refuse to pay the amount of money they demand not to leak the videos. Women at Web was in contact with a self-formed groups of 37 victims who all had experienced the blackmail in a span of five months.

- According to the these young girls who were victims they communicated and where convinced by people close to them. Which later they would learn most of the people they considered close had been hacked.
- The perpetrator convinces a girl to film herself naked, sometime performing an act with the soda bottles with a promise of paying them an amount of Tanzanian shillings (Tshs. 700,000) an equivalent to almost USD 300.00.
- After the girl sends the video, the criminal asks for her email address and password, claiming that they are needed to pay the promised amount. However, the criminal uses the email and password to extort money from the girl, threatening to leak her empty videos online if she refuses to pay.
- The criminals also hack into the victim's social media accounts and entice their friends to do the same, creating a chain of victims. The victims are mostly young girls who are easy to convince, and many have not reported the incident to the police due to fear and a lack of help from law enforcement. The law in regards to images and videos, holds the victim accountable and can be jailed and fined.
- The situation has made some of the victims feel helpless, depressed, feel isolated and some of them stop going to work/school and in rare cases some have taken their own lifes.

CASE STUDY # 2 - **Instagram**
Media Personality

Meena Ally, a well-known Tanzanian Media Personality, influencer, and activist, was the victim of cyberbullying and trolling in early 2022. An explicit intimate video, claiming to feature Meena, was leaked on the internet, resulting in false accusations and a widespread public scandal. In response, Meena issued a statement, apologizing to her loved ones and fans for the hurt caused by these false allegations. She also strongly condemned the spread of such explicit materials and urged fellow Tanzanians to refrain from contributing to the abuse.

Such cyberbullying and trolling inevitably causes depression, distress and a toll on mental health and reputation. This case highlights the damaging impact of cyberbullying and trolling and the importance of speaking out against such harmful behavior. In such instances it is important and it helps when a victim is surrounded by loved ones without any kind of prejudgment.

CASE STUDY # 3 – Facebook, Twitter and Instagram
A Male Celebrity

In 2022, Masanja Mkandamizaji, a pastor, comedian, and journalist, faced significant backlash on Instagram due to a rumored infidelity scandal involving his wife and a church leader. The situation was exacerbated when a video leaked, and the church leader committed suicide shortly thereafter, with speculation suggesting it was due to Masanja's wife's refusal to enter into a committed relationship with him.

The abuse Masanja faced can be classified as cyberbullying and trolling. Many of the comments he received on social media were sexually objectifying his wife and suggesting that he should share her with other men. The abuse started during the event occurrence four months prior and lasted for approximately a month. The impact of cyberbullying and trolling can be devastating, and it's essential to address it as soon as possible. The situation with Masanja highlights the need for social media platforms to have robust reporting and moderation tools to combat cyberbullying and trolling. It's also crucial for individuals to have a support system to help them cope with the emotional toll of online abuse.

CASE STUDY # 4 – Twitter, Facebook & Instagram
A Female Celebrity

A Tanzanian actress, famous for her role in the film "Jua Kali" as Love, was shown dancing in a Facebook post from October 2022. Love has been subject to continuous cyberbullying comments since her debut, with comments degrading her and making fun of her weight. This is one example of many other similar posts. Love, whose stage name is Hellen Herman, has been dealing with ongoing body shaming comments, both on her personal account and from media outlets.

Despite this, Love has chosen to ignore such comments, and in most interviews, she responds to questions about body shaming by saying, "I have been dealing with body shaming comments ever since I was a child, there's nothing new they will say that will break me."

The abuse Love faces includes cyberbullying, body shaming, and trolling.

CASE STUDY # 5 – Twitter, Facebook & Instagram
A Male Celebrity

In September 2022, a professional boxer named Hassan Mwakinyo received a significant amount of online abuse across multiple social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, after his boxing match with Liam Smith ended with uncertainty.

A post by Milard Ayo on Facebook garnered numerous negative and ironic comments after Mwakinyo expressed dissatisfaction with the referee's performance, stating that it was unfair. Additionally, Mwakinyo revealed that he had underperformed in the match because his gear had been misplaced at the airport. The type of abuse that Mwakinyo experienced was bullying. The abusive comments continued for a few days, and even though Mwakinyo was not an active user, the abuse persisted whenever he shared a post in the following weeks.

The Effects of OGBV
to a victim

These effects have been drawn from engagements one on one with victims and from engagements in Digital Resilience sessions and peer to peer groups support by Women at Web Tanzania which brings together victims to share experiences, form groups and give testimonials of the toil of a variety forms of OGBV in their lives.

Emotional and psychological distress can have significant effects on a victim's. The experience of being targeted and attacked online can lead to feelings of anxiety, depression, fear, and stress, among other negative emotions. The constant exposure to abusive and degrading messages can take a toll on a victim's mental health and lead to long-term emotional distress. In addition, victims of online gender-based violence often feel shame, guilt, and self-blame, as if they are responsible for the abuse they are receiving. These feelings can further contribute to the victim's emotional and psychological distress and can be difficult to overcome without proper support and intervention. Women at web has been witness and has worked with several cases, sometimes you know ways on which you can help the victim but they are too scared. For example, we had a one of the girls from Zanzibar, who was being blackmailed by the ex-boyfriend of two years. It took almost 8 months to convince her to take action. Her case was resolved with the help of the police enforcement in Zanzibar. She was recently married. Not all have been lucky to move on.

Social Isolation of the victim in different levels. Victims shared, it had affected them and led to feelings of fear and anxiety, which can lead to hypervigilance and other symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Additionally, some victims may be driven to self-harm or suicide as a result of the abuse, causing long-term physical damage or even death. Sadly, this kind of violence/abuse is usually undermined in the society.

Self-censorship is a common consequence of OGBV, where victims feel compelled to limit their online activities or avoid expressing themselves freely online. The fear of further abuse can lead to a sense of insecurity and vulnerability, which can make it difficult for victims to engage with others online. Self-censorship can also limit a victim's access to online resources and support systems, which can further exacerbate the negative impact of online gender-based violence on their mental health and well-being. Overall, self-censorship can significantly affect a victim's ability to participate fully in online spaces, limiting their freedom of expression and their ability to connect with others.

Economic harm and daily work/education, OGBV can cause reputational damage, which may lead to the loss of a job or other economic opportunities, school expulsion, or disrupting any kind of daily routine of a victim. Victims may have to take time off of their daily routines to deal with the emotional and psychological effects of the abuse, which can lead to a decrease in income, capacity in school, production and the like.

Unsupportive family and friends, can have a profound impact on their well-being. Victims may feel stigmatized, embarrassed, and ashamed, leading to feelings of isolation and a reluctance to seek help. The fear of being judged and blamed for the abuse can lead to self-doubt, self-blame, and a sense of powerlessness, making it more difficult for the victim to take action to protect themselves. In some cases, the pressure from family and friends may also result in the victim being blamed for the abuse, exacerbating the emotional distress and trauma they may already be experiencing. It's crucial for family and friends to provide support and understanding, rather than judgment and blame, in order to help the victim heal and recover from the abuse. It should however be noted that some of these cases are to hard for the loved ones to take. Among the case-studies in this report (case study number one); had one of them having their mother admitted after the shock of knowing that her young daughters'(19 years) body was out in the world for anyone to see.

The Best Practices
for/to a victim of OGBV

The impact of online gender-based violence can also spread to families, friends, and entire communities. It is important to address these challenges and take proactive steps towards preventing and responding to online gender-based violence. This requires a multi-faceted approach, including educating the public on the importance of respecting online boundaries, holding perpetrators accountable, providing support to victims, and promoting online safety and security. Failure to address these challenges perpetuates a culture of violence and harms the overall well-being of individuals, families, and society as a whole.

Seeking professional advice can help the victim process and cope with the emotional and psychological effects of the violence. Mental health professionals can provide support, guidance, and resources to help the victim recover from the trauma and build resilience. Seeking legal advice may also be necessary in cases where the violence involves criminal offenses, such as threats, harassment, or non-consensual distribution of intimate images.

Social media detoxification is also a useful practice to help victims of online gender-based violence. This involves taking a break from social media platforms or limiting their use to reduce exposure to abusive content. Victims can also take steps to increase their privacy settings and block or report abusive accounts. Taking a break from social media can also provide the victim with time to focus on self-care and recovery, such as engaging in physical activity, spending time with loved ones, or pursuing creative hobbies.

Report the abuse woks at contexts that are of low gravity and not in trending. In cases where the content is trending it is hard to report and hold accountable every single post and channel. Nevertheless there are instances that are easily managed through reporting. It's important to report the abuse to the platform or social media site where it occurred, as well as law enforcement, if necessary. Many social media sites have a reporting system for online abuse and harassment. In such cases a victim can also document the abuse by keeping record that can be helpful in pursuing legal action or reporting the abuse to the platform or law enforcement. Save screenshots, messages, and any other evidence of the abuse.

Practicing self-care is very important, by taking care of oneself in dealing with the emotional impact of abuse. This can include engaging in activities that bring joy and relaxation, seeking out counseling or therapy, and finding a support group and engaging in activities that give you more peace and harmony. This goes very well and hand in hand with social media detoxification.

Protecting online presence is very key. Being cautious when sharing personal information with others, even those you trust. For instance one should never give out sensitive information to someone who contacts you unexpectedly or to someone you do not know as well as updating and sharing personal and sensitive information on Social Media. It is also important to secure social media platforms with privacy and security settings every now and then.

Seek support and comfort is essential whether it be from friends, family, or professional resources. This can help with processing the experience and provide a sense of safety and avoid feeling lost and lonely.

Mapping Actors on OGBV
Agencies that have dedicated programs/initiatives

The Women at Web Tanzania for Media Convergency is no longer just a program, but a movement towards enhancing online safe spaces for the women and youth. The OGBV dedicated movement started in 2017 and gave birth to a pilot study in 2018 implemented in four regions (Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya and Rwanda) supported by DW Akademie. This movement has been monumental in Tanzania with evident and vivid impacts of those who have been reached. The program in Tanzania has touched lives of over 1,000 individuals, numerous universities, organizations, institutions and other actors. Having been working in the space for a long time, it is reason that made Media Convergency provide a series annual reports to give a glimpse of what is happening in the space.

Government Agencies
Enforcement Mechanisms

- The Tanzania Police Force (Gender Desk)
- Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA)
- The Content Committee (TCRAA)

Funding Support Agencies
Implementing Partners

- DW Akademie funded by BMZ German Cooperation
- UN Women
- National Democratic Institute (NDI)
- Internews, United States
- Women Fund Tanzania Trust
- Urgent Action Fund Africa

Media Outlets/Personalities

- Podcast – Dig it with Imani
- Women at Web Tanzania Digital Pages
- LP Digital – an arm length of the Launch Pad Tanzania Digital Pages

National Agencies
with dedicated programs

- Media Convergency Catalyst, through Women at Web Tanzania
- Women in Law and Development in Africa (WiLDAF)
- Pollicy Org, Tanzania Branch
- Tanzania Media Women's Association (TAMWA)
- The Launch Pad, Tanzania
- Open Youth Opportunities

Associations

- Mkuki Coalition – a GBV coalition that also employees some OGBV initiatives
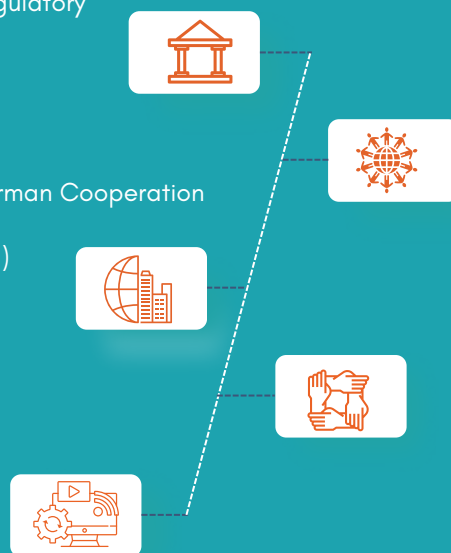
Fig 06: Mapping

National agencies, such as Women in Law and Development in Africa (WiLDAF) and Tanzania Media Women's Association (TAMWA), and associations like the Mkuki Coalition that addresses OGBV, have been doing commendable work, but they are still not enough to cater to all victims. While there are various actors and efforts aimed at advocating against online gender-based violence (OGBV) in Tanzania, there is still a lot of work that needs to be done at the national level to reach all citizens who have access to the internet. The existing government agencies and enforcement mechanisms, such as the Tanzania Police Force (Gender Desk) and the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA), are a good start, but they may not have enough resources or capacity to address the problem comprehensively. Efforts from international agencies and implementing partners, such as UN Women and Internews, are also significant, but they may not have a strong enough presence in Tanzania to make a substantial impact. Therefore, there is a need for more actors and efforts at the national level to address OGBV comprehensively and reach all citizens who have access to the internet.

PART SIX:

Highlights, Recommendations & Conclusion

Building a path

towards a progressive way forward

Fig 07: Data Collection Summary

650 Posts · Accounts · Female · Male
15K · 50 · 20
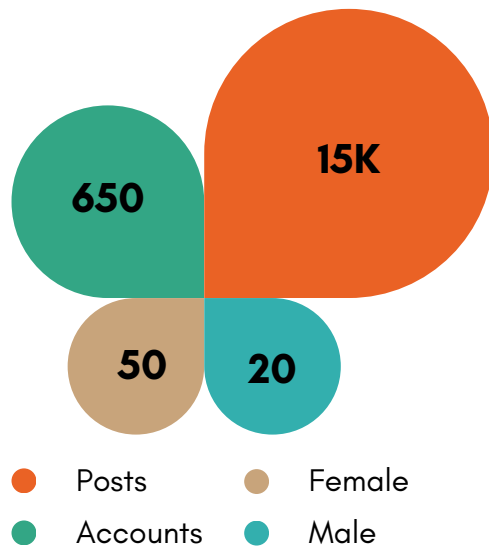
- Data of 650 accounts of both female and male users and over 15, 000 posts was collected across the social media platforms of Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and Telegram in a span of six weeks and was studied in a span of three months to get the intended results.

- Of the four social media platforms of this study, the majority of Celebrities prefer the Instagram platform as their favorite followed by Facebook then Twitter. The study also found out that male celebrity face more online abused compared to female celebrities. Instagram takes lead at the level of abuse on Celebrities followed by Twitter and Facebook.

- The politicians category had representatives of three national political parties. The study found out every single politician was subject to abuse, what only differed was the form of abuse from one politician to another from the level of abuse between hot, Mild or rare. The politicians take lead in being the most abused subject of the study with Twitter being the most violent, followed by Instagram then Facebook.

- There are more female activists on Social Media than there are of male, that is to say 67% female and 23% male. Social Media Activists receive a minimal backlash of abuse, and even when it happens the abuse is of rare category as opposed to hot and Mild category. Even at the category of "rare", the Twitter platform takes a lead on being the most abusive while Facebook as the least abusive.

- A normal citizen (normal in the sense of not associating to any of the category of the study) receives the most abuse compared to all targets in this study's categories. While the Politicians receive the most online abuse than all categories, the normal citizens receives the most than the politicians.

- The study shows that Public Figures are mostly abused on Facebook followed by Twitter then Instagram. Nevertheless, this subject indicates that they are susceptible to the third kind of abuse "rare". It is uncommon to observe the "hot and Mild" of of abuse.

- In cases where a user is digitally literate and cautious on how they manage their personal data in the use of all the three social media platforms of this study - Instagram is more user-friendly when it comes to addressing OGBV at an individual or group level.

Recommendations to Key Stakeholders

Non-government Organizations
NGOs

From the Mapping, we can observe that there are only a few players advocating against OGBV. Tanzania has more than 8,000 registered NGOs, and if we could have at least 30 local NGOs advocating for this agenda by 2028 it will be a great milestone. NGOs can play a crucial role in providing support, raising awareness, and advocacy efforts, especially in communities where incidents of OGBV are common.

They can also work towards providing safe spaces, support groups, and legal aid to victims. However, it is crucial that these NGOs are well-resourced, supported by the development partners, government and have strong networks with other stakeholders to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of their efforts. NGOs are often the first line of defense for victims of OGBV and play a critical role in creating a safe and enabling environment for all internet users, especially women and girls.

The Government
Through respective Authorities

Through the already existing structures such as the Tanzania Police Gender-desk, the Parliament and Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA); the governments have an important role to play in addressing online gender-based violence. They can create and enforce laws and policies that protect individuals from such violence and provide support for victims.

This includes ensuring that laws on harassment and violence are updated to include online forms of abuse and that law enforcement agencies are properly trained to respond to cases of online gender-based violence. Governments can also support the development of public awareness campaigns to raise awareness about the issue, promote positive online behavior, and encourage victims to come forward and seek help. Additionally, governments can work to promote digital literacy and ensure that citizens have access to online safety resources and support services. Finally, governments can also collaborate with civil society organizations, tech companies, and other stakeholders to develop a comprehensive and coordinated response to online gender-based violence.

Funding Agencies
Implementing Partners

There is a lot of support on Gender-based Violence (GBV) from funding agencies, but a very few have seriously considered OGBV. While there is a lot of work to be done in the space, for NGOs to be able to implement impactful programs they require resources as well. Donors can play a crucial role in addressing online gender-based violence by providing financial resources to organizations and initiatives focused on preventing and responding to OGBV. They can support the development and implementation of programs that raise awareness about OGBV.

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Donors can also encourage collaboration and coordination among different stakeholders, including governments, NGOs, and private sector actors, to create a more comprehensive and effective response to OGBV. Additionally, donors can incentivize the adoption of best practices and standards related to OGBV prevention and response by making funding conditional on compliance with such standards. Donors can also support research and data collection on OGBV to better understand the scope and nature of the problem and inform evidence-based interventions.

Family and Friends
of the Victims

It is important to understand that with technology one can make a mistake through a click. Any OGBV victim requires those close to them to offer the most support. Family and friends can play an essential role in addressing OGBV by offering emotional and social support to victims. They can create a safe space for the victim to talk about their experiences and provide practical support, such as helping the victim report the abuse or seek professional counseling. Family and friends can also be advocates and allies in challenging harmful societal norms and stereotypes that contribute to OGBV. By educating themselves and others about the issue and actively promoting gender equality and respectful relationships, family and friends can help create a culture that rejects OGBV and promotes the rights and dignity of all people.

Resources on OGBV
Studies and Research

Studies and research can add significant value towards addressing OGBV by providing a better understanding of the issue and informing evidence-based solutions. Research can identify the types and prevalence of OGBV in different contexts, and provide insights into the root causes and factors that contribute to the problem.

It is from this need and necessary requirement that Media Convergency shares an annual release since 2021 (An overview of Online Gender-based Violence on Women Leaders in Politics); so as to show case the magnitude of the matter. It can also help identify the populations most vulnerable to OGBV and the most effective strategies for prevention and response. Studies and research can add significant value towards addressing OGBV by providing a better understanding of the issue and informing evidence-based solutions. Research can identify the types and prevalence of OGBV in different contexts, and provide insights into the root causes and factors that contribute to the problem. It can also help identify the populations most vulnerable to OGBV and the most effective strategies for prevention and response. Studies can also provide a basis for advocacy efforts and policy recommendations, and help raise awareness of the issue. The data and evidence generated by research can be used to inform the development of programs, policies, and interventions aimed at preventing and responding to OGBV. Additionally, research can help identify gaps in existing efforts and areas where further action is needed.

By investing in research and supporting the development of a strong evidence base, stakeholders can better understand the scope and nature of OGBV, develop more effective strategies to address the problem, and ultimately work towards creating a safer and more equitable digital environment for all.

Acknowledging OGBV
It's serious Implications

Our community undermines stress, depression or anxiety of a victim brought by OGBV. It is important for the community and key partners to acknowledge that OGBV can be just as painful as physical gender-based violence (GBV) for victims. OGBV can cause significant emotional and psychological distress, such as anxiety, depression, fear, and stress. It can also lead to feelings of shame, guilt, and self-blame, just like physical GBV. Furthermore, the impact of OGBV can extend beyond the digital world, affecting the victim's physical safety, reputation, and economic well-being. OGBV can also lead to social isolation, as victims may withdraw from friends, family, and other social activities due to the fear of further abuse and humiliation. Therefore, it is crucial to recognize that OGBV is just as painful as GBV and to take steps to address this form of violence.

Conclusion

We feel privileged to be part of the movement and continuously acknowledge the role of DW Akademie in the success we have achieved in the last four years. OGBV is a pervasive problem in Tanzania and has significant negative impacts on victims, including emotional distress, social isolation, economic harm, and physical harm. While there are efforts being made to address this issue by various actors and organizations, the scope of work still needs to be expanded to reach all citizens who have access to the internet. There is a need for increased collaboration between government agencies, NGOs, donors, and other stakeholders to address this problem effectively. It is evident that all stakeholders need to contribute their efforts to the eradication of OGBV in Tanzania. Furthermore, there is a need for more studies and research on this issue to provide policymakers with the necessary data and insights to implement effective solutions. As a call for action, we urge partners to come together and work towards ending OGBV in Tanzania, and for donors to provide more funding to support the efforts of NGOs and government agencies in addressing this issue. By working together, we can create a safer and more inclusive digital space for all Tanzanians. Media Convergency knows for a fact that by, partnering with other organizations, the Women at Web program can increase its reach and effectiveness in addressing online gender-based violence through leveraging on the strengths and expertise of other stakeholder so as to create a more comprehensive and sustainable approach to addressing OGBV.

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