

Social media ecosystems and transnational radicalization outcomes in Kenya: A mixed-methods analysis of content, platforms, networks, and algorithms

Fatuma Musa Said^{1*}
Fredrick Ochieng Agola²
Graham Amakanji Oluteyo³

^{1*}fsaid2777@stu.kemu.ac.ke

^{1,2,3}Department of International Relations, Kenya Methodist University, Kenya

<https://doi.org/10.51867/ajernet.7.1.30>

ABSTRACT

Violent extremist organizations increasingly exploit digital and social media to disseminate ideology, recruit adherents, and coordinate across borders. In the Horn of Africa, these dynamics interact with local socio-economic vulnerabilities, yet the mechanisms through which digital environments facilitate transnational radicalization at sub-national levels remain under-examined. This paper investigates the digital-media drivers of radicalization into extremism in Kenya, focusing on Likoni Sub-County in Mombasa County. Drawing on Liberalism, Transnationalism, and Securitization perspectives, the paper disaggregates digital influence into four mechanisms: online content, platform-specific dynamics, transnational network reach, and algorithmic exposure. A mixed-methods design combined questionnaires, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions among youth, community leaders, former programme participants, security personnel, civil society actors, and digital literacy trainers. Using Yamane's formula (8% margin of error), a sample of 156 respondents was selected through multi-stage, simple random, convenience, purposive, and snowball techniques. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and regression, while qualitative data were analyzed thematically. Results indicate that digital and social media significantly predict radicalization outcomes ($R^2 = .634$, $F=115.032$, $p < .01$), with platform dynamics ($\beta=.336$), online content ($\beta=.298$), network reach ($\beta=.272$), and algorithmic influence ($\beta=.216$) emerging as strong predictors. Qualitative evidence further shows how local grievances are reframed within global extremist narratives, recruitment shifts across open and encrypted platforms, and algorithmic curation reinforces echo chambers. The paper argues for balanced counter-radicalization approaches integrating security measures with rights-sensitive digital governance, platform-tailored regulation, digital literacy, and cross-border cooperation.

Keywords: Digital Media, Online Radicalization, Social Media Algorithms, Transnational Networks, Violent Extremism

I. INTRODUCTION

The digital and social media has transformed the modern paradigm of radicalization and violent extremist mobilization, facilitating the fast transnational proliferation of ideology, recruitment signs and coordination patterns across jurisdictions. Connected spaces help to drive down outreach costs and enable the entrepreneurs of extremism to reach out to far-flung audiences at scale, frequently evading established gatekeepers and geographical limits. A widely cited illustration is ISIS/Daesh, whose media strategy combined high-volume propaganda, peer-to-peer diffusion, and platform migration to sustain a "virtual" recruitment ecology even as territorial control fluctuated (Berger & Morgan, 2015; Conway, 2017; Winter, 2017). The social-network studies of foreign-fighters and internet supporters further reveal that online-networks can support the identity alignment, social reinforcement, and access to transnational extremist networks without a direct physical connection (Klausen, 2015). Comparative research also shows that digital infrastructures can intensify polarization and narrow exposure to countervailing views through digitally curated "enclaves," creating communicative conditions that can be exploited by extremist propagandists (Lim, 2017). These perspectives highlight the analytical value of disaggregating "social media" into content dynamics, platform affordances, network reach, and algorithmic exposure rather than treating it as a single undifferentiated driver.

Violent extremist movements use online and social media ecosystems more and more to propagate ideology, nurture a sense of belonging, recruit and maintain cross-border affiliations. However, major evidence reviews caution that the internet is often treated too generically in radicalization scholarship and policy. This paper contends that studies (Conway, 2017; Whittaker, 2022; Alava *et al.*, 2017) frequently acknowledge "online influence" while leaving unclear which mechanisms matter most (such as content framing, platform affordances, network reach, algorithmic curation), for whom, and under what contextual conditions. The trend uniformly observed in Europe and North America is that the extremist ecologies resolve pressures of governance by oscillating between more open and more closed or encrypted spaces, and by remaining in a narrative by distributing across platforms and redundancy. This adaptive behaviour complicates simple cause-effect claims and reinforces the need for localized, mechanism-specific empirical work that

specifies how and under what conditions digital environments shape vulnerability, mobilization, and escalation (Conway, 2017; Whittaker, 2022). Policy and evidence reviews similarly caution that the role of the internet varies across individuals and contexts, but remains recurrent as a facilitating environment through exposure, social reinforcement, and networked connection.

Counterterrorism and P/CVE has long prioritized physical pathways to recruitment, kinetic/security reaction, and territorial hazard evaluation-strategies, in Kenya, notwithstanding the fact that they are considered sufficient yet not adequate to address the processes of radicalization within the facts of a quickly digitizing information landscape. While Kenya's National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism recognizes prevention and counter-radicalization priorities-including the relevance of messaging and community-based approaches-the empirical basis for platform-aware, locally calibrated online interventions remains uneven. Consequently, policy and programming will find it challenging to understand which drivers are the most urgent in a given environment: exposure to extremist content, the possibilities of a given platform (and to encrypted spaces), the cross-border networks, or the reinforcing beliefs of algorithmic curation. This limitation reflects a broader imbalance in regional policy toolkits, where governments continue to prioritize combating violent extremism "from within" through policing, surveillance, arrests, and military operations (Oluteyo *et al.*, 2018, Chitembwe *et al.*, 2021) while the external threat environment increasingly manifests through cross-border digital networks, ideological diffusion, and online recruitment that are more difficult to detect and disrupt using conventional instruments. This imbalance reflects an over-emphasis on the visible "hardware" of violent extremism (fighters, weapons, territorial control, and kinetic operations) and comparatively less investment in the "software" domain-digital narratives, algorithmic amplification, online identity formation, and cross-border information pipelines that normalize extremist frames and accelerate radicalization trajectories.

In African contexts, digitally mediated radicalization usually gets involved in unique structural conditions-uneven connectivity, uneven digital literacy, multilingual information ecology and limitations to the capacity to moderate-enabling extremist accounts to spread quickly and reconstitute cross platforms. Within the regional security framework, extremist organizations use media products and communication infrastructure to spread their influence beyond direct areas of control, connecting localized complaints to broader ideological discourses, and remaining relevant when facing military repression (International Crisis Group, 2020). In the Horn of Africa, al-Shabaab's evolution demonstrates how violent extremist organizations combine communication, intimidation, and narrative framing to shape audiences beyond physical territory-an influence increasingly entangled with digital dissemination and platform adaptation (Anderson & McKnight, 2015; Gilroy, 2024).

Within Kenya, terrorism and radicalization debates have frequently emphasized cross-border threats and "physical" recruitment pathways (Botha, 2014). Yet Kenya's expanding digital penetration-especially among youth-means that online spaces increasingly mediate how grievances, identities, and transnational narratives are encountered, interpreted, and reinforced (Botha, 2014). Mombasa County, and Likoni Sub-County, in particular, offers a necessary empirical environment where the interactions of the coastal connection, compact social networks, and socio-economic vulnerability meet the transnational online ecosystems. The empirical approaches to recruitment and radicalization in Kenya-with evidence related to Mombasa-indicate that local dissatisfaction and identity discourses can be marshalled by violent extremist actors (Botha, 2014) although the digital channel is not always broken down into quantifiable elements at the sub-county stage.

Although scholarship on radicalization and violent extremism (RVE) in Kenya and the wider Horn of Africa has expanded over time, much of the literature has tended to privilege localized "push factors"-including marginalization, identity politics, policing practices, unemployment, and recruitment pathways (Botha, 2014; Van Metre, 2016; Chome, 2017; Government of Kenya, 2023; Oluteyo *et al.*, 2018; Amakanji *et al.*, 2025). These contributions can be useful in gaining knowledge about vulnerability environments, but they tend to be less explicit and less formal when it comes to defining the digital processes, which cause radicalization to travel, evolve, and gain momentum across boundaries. Most Kenya-oriented research studies note the importance of digital and social media but often include them in the background section, as opposed to analytically central functions that platform affording, algorithmic curation, and transnational online connectivity impose. Global research syntheses similarly caution that public and policy claims about social media's role in radicalization have sometimes outpaced rigorous, context-specific empirical measurement, strengthening the case for studies that isolate and operationalize digital mechanisms more precisely (Alava, Frau-Meigs, & Hassan, 2017; Conway, 2017; Whittaker, 2022). It is not this gap that is simply a matter of concept; it extends to methodological decisions in that the studies that fail to unify digital influence cannot answer the question of which platform processes, exposure processes, or network processes are likely to have the most significant effect on the process of radicalization.

Moreover, much of current research takes a very localized analytical frame-community, county, or national-and devotes restricted empirical focus to the transnational aspect, particularly the manner in which extremist narratives and recruitment rationales circulate across borders and become localized because of the presence of digital ecosystems (Oluteyo *et al.*, 2018; Chitembwe *et al.*, 2021; Onunga *et al.*, 2021; Amakanji *et al.*, 2023). However, modern extremist mobilization is mediated more by cross-border online connections, migration between platforms, digitally formed

communities of belief-process that necessitate strikes to conceptual and empirical responsiveness to transnational digital spaces (Conway, 2017; Whittaker, 2022). In addition, some gaps in localized, mechanism-specific evidence-particularly not Euro-American-regarding how youth experience, perceive, and get solidified in extremist discourses via networked communication show gaps in global mapping of research (Alava *et al.*, 2017). Such granular evidence is necessary to ensure that prevention responses do not default to generic counter-messaging or blanket regulation which can be ineffective, rights problematic, or badly directed.

The legal and security frameworks in place in Kenya continue to prioritize enforcement capacities and proscribed behaviour over a proactive governance of digital economies and should be viewed more as mainly reactive and offence-focused. In the instance of Prevention of Terrorism Act (2012), counterterrorism is first and foremost presented in criminalization and enforcement mechanisms, such as counterterrorism communications and publication of offensive content (Republic of Kenya, 2012). Kenya's National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism recognizes the multi-sectoral nature of the challenge, yet implementation can remain uneven across agencies and levels of governance, particularly where digital spaces require coordinated approaches involving state actors, communities, civil society, and critically platform companies (NCTC, 2016). Meanwhile, securitized responses such as Kenya's military engagement in Somalia beginning with Operation *Linda Nchi* (2011) and subsequent participation under AMISOM and later ATMIS represent necessary "hardware" measures, but they are structurally limited in addressing radicalization pathways that operate through persuasion, online social reinforcement, and network effects rather than territorial control.

The paper fulfils this policy and empirical gap through the generation of localized mixed-methods evidence of the influence of the digital media in Likoni Sub-County, Mombasa County, modelling four different dynamics-online content dynamics, platform-specific dynamics, transnational network reach, and algorithmic exposure-and analysing how they are all more or less associated with outcomes of radicalization. By so doing, the paper makes an original scholarly contribution by strengthening the empirical foundation for understanding RVE through a mechanism-based digital lens rather than treating "the internet" as a generalized background condition. This contribution is particularly relevant to International Relations, security studies, and digital sociology, and it provides a foundation for comparative inquiry across Kenya's coastal, urban, and borderland contexts, as well as across Horn of Africa states where digital governance and transnational extremist ecosystems intersect.

The paper is thus policy-relevant in that it contributes to a stronger foundation to a more balanced response that incorporates internal and external threat factors and amalgamation of hardware and software responses. The findings can underlie more coherent, more active policy regimes that can help reduce vulnerability by: (i) differentiated, platform-conscious prevention programs; (ii) beefed-up digital literacy and algorithm-consciousness programs; (iii) enhanced cross-border cooperation to share information and monitor threats; and (iv) sensitive digital governance and community-centered preventive approaches sensitive to rights that do not rely on most people using coercive mechanisms that might not work effectively online (NCTC, 2016; Conway, Finally, this paper advocates the transformation of a more reactive counterterrorism drive towards evidence-based prevention and digital governance in quagmire of modern realities relating to transnational extremist mobilization.

1.1 Research Objectives

The paper was aimed at interrogating the dynamics of digital media on transnational extremism in Kenya with special emphasis on the Mombasa County.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

The three mutually complementary theories of the International Relations-Liberalism, Transnationalism, and Securitization Theory-form the basis of this paper to elaborate on the role played by the digital media dynamics in the radicalization of individuals to extremism in Kenya with a specific reference to the Likoni Sub-County, Mombasa County. The theories are applied sequentially and cumulatively to capture: (i) the enabling conditions created by open digital environments; (ii) the cross-border circulation of extremist ideas and networks through digital infrastructures; and (iii) the discursive processes through which threat narratives are constructed, legitimized, and internalized in digitally mediated spaces.

2.1.1 Liberalism Theory

Liberalism in International Relations draws on classical liberal ideas associated with Immanuel Kant and is further developed in contemporary IR through neoliberal institutionalism, particularly the work of Robert O. Keohane. Neoliberal institutionalism argues that cooperation and governance can emerge under anarchy through institutions, norms, rules, and interdependence, rather than coercive power alone (Keohane, 1984; Keohane, 1988). Liberalism can be applied in this paper since digital and social media exists within an open-low barriers-to entry, high rates-of-

information flow, pluralistic participation, and transboundary-connectivity architecture. These circumstances permit both legitimate public goods-expression and learning, as well as association and civic participation, and at the same time create assailant vulnerabilities that may fall prey to violent extremist actors. Open digital spaces are less heavily policed than empirical and in-contexts situations like Mombasa, where youth populations might be socio-economically constrained and face the contestation of identities, allowing them to be exposed to the polarizing frames, grievance messages, and multiple extents of extremism communication with fewer obstacles.

The strength of liberalism in this framework is that it explains why digital spaces cannot be regulated with the help of coercive tools only and this creates platform governance dilemmas. Liberal governance highlights the conflict between the security needs and requirements and safeguarding of civil liberties, privacy, and the freedom of expression, and explains why actions against online extremism tend to be based on regulatory frameworks, institutional coordination, and multi-stakeholder governance as opposed to force-only instruments. Nonetheless, liberalism is insufficient to complete explanation of intra-border transmission and local implantation of extremist influence due to its poverty in specifying the operation of the transnational network and non-state actors beyond the institutional level. This weakness encourages the inclusion of the theory of transnationalism.

2.1.2 Transnationalism Theory

Transnationalism is traditionally represented by Joseph S. Nye and Robert O. Keohane who suggest that international politics are not controlled only by state to state relationships but also by cross border relationships and networks that include non-state actors, movements and organizations (Nye and Keohane, 1971). This view is especially relevant today in the digital era in which communication technologies reduce the distance and allow maintaining interaction across the border on the grand scale. In the Kenyan context, transnationalism describes how digital spaces become transnational third spaces through which extremist discourses, identities, and recruitment tactics can move out of the global or regional sites into a local one like Likoni. Digital dynamics such as viral circulation, peer-to-peer circulation, connectivity of platforms, and encrypted messages facilitate interaction with external ideological frames, and transgressive networks at a distance without physical travel.

Transnationalism thus explains how localized dissatisfactions are made spatially linked to higher frames of global resistance and moral duty such that localized dissatisfaction is incorporated into a larger ideological agenda (Nye & Keohane, 1971). The main strength of transnationalism is that it has an explanatory power in the conceptualization of the extremist actors as transnational actors who exercise their impacts via networked communication, not territorial control. Yet transnationalism is less precise in explaining how particular narratives become legitimate and action-guiding at the individual level, because it focuses more on channels and flows than on the discursive construction of existential threats and audience acceptance. This gap is addressed by Securitization Theory.

2.1.3 Securitization Theory

Securitization Theory, associated with the Copenhagen School-especially Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver, and Jaap de Wilde-argues that security threats are not simply objective conditions; they are socially constructed through discourse. An issue becomes “security” when it is framed as an existential threat and accepted as such by a relevant audience, enabling exceptional measures to be justified (Buzan *et al.*, 1998). Later refinements emphasize that securitization is also shaped by context, audience reception, and practices beyond narrow “speech-act” readings (Balzacq, 2005; Stritzel, 2007; McDonald, 2008). The theory of securitization gives a direct connection between radicalization into extremes and digital media dynamics. Extremist communicators are able to package political grievances, identity assertions, and social states as existential threats and require extreme, immediate actions against them, including violence. Digitally mediated spaces have the power to enhance securitising actions by repetition, effects of visibility, and reinforcements, especially where platform structures and social validation systems amplify emotive or polarizing frames.

In Likoni, theory of securitization helps to analyze how digital accounts can translate socio-economic grievances to security-infused world-views whereby violence is viewed as defensive, essential, or defensible. It also enables scrutiny of how state counterterrorism practices-especially heavily securitized policing—may be reinterpreted online as collective targeting, potentially strengthening the credibility of extremist threat frames. Although a strong theory in terms of discursive legitimation and audience acceptance as was conducted by securitization theory, it alone fails to explain (i) the governance constraints/institutional dilemmas identified by liberalism, and (ii) the cross-border network structures identified by transnationalism. This supports the significance of the combination of the three theories.

2.2 Empirical Review

This section is an empirical review of empirical literature and policy evidence on the facilitation of transnational radicalization through digital and social media with an emphasis on the four mechanisms that can be operationalized to analyze it; (i) online content, (ii) platform affordances, (iii) networked diffusion, and (iv) algorithmic amplification. The review also shows gaps that warrant localized mechanism specific inquiry in Mombasa County.

2.2.1 Online Content and Transnational Radicalization

Empirical sources are moving towards considering extremist online content as an active background, rather than as a passive one, in which transnational influence is generated, translated, and localized. Worldwide scans of evidence indicate that violent extremist organizations are using open digital spaces to circumvent geographical limits, disseminate ideology, and recruit followers without regard to borders using multimedia propaganda, narrative framing, and participatory media culture. One recurring pattern among empirical studies is that extremist content ecosystems are curated by design: content is crafted to resonate (language, symbolism, and grievance appeals), and communicated via the cross-platform channels of distribution, which intermediaries ideological disclosure with identity-affirming, community-building content. This is in line with the fact that online content accelerates radicalization pathways as it influences interpretation and how grievances are told, rather than simply showing information (Conway, 2017).

However, the literature also cautions against simplistic “online-only” claims. Syntheses of evidence point to the fact that online material is more likely to induce, rather than preclude, offline vulnerabilities (perceived injustice, identity threats, social marginalization) along with the fact that the specificity of how content acts in a network effect is necessary, alongside the design of platforms and exposure algorithms (Conway, 2017). Kenya-focused work often foregrounds offline drivers while treating digital content as secondary context; comparatively fewer studies isolate content dynamics as a measurable explanatory pathway in specific sub-county settings such as Likoni-especially in a transnational frame.

2.2.2 Social Media Platforms and Transnational Radicalization

Evidence shows that “social media” is not a single uniform arena. Platforms differ in how they enable radicalization because of variations in affordances-visibility, virality, group formation, anonymity, encryption, moderation practices, and user-interaction design. As a result, extremist movements commonly adopt functional differentiation across platforms: open platforms for outreach and narrative seeding, and semi-closed/closed platforms (including encrypted messaging) for deeper socialization, trust-building, and coordination (Conway, 2017).

Empirical studies of platform enforcement also show that extremist actors adapt to moderation pressure through migration and reconstitution across alternative platforms and messaging apps. Research on deplatforming and migration documents shifts from mainstream spaces into Telegram and other alternatives, illustrating how governance actions can reshape but not necessarily eliminate-extremist ecosystems (Rogers, 2020). There remains limited, fine-grained evidence in the Kenyan coastal context that maps which platforms play which roles across stages of radicalization (exposure → engagement → reinforcement), and how users move between platforms in practice.

2.2.3 Social Media Networks and Cross-Border Ideological Diffusion

A major contribution of network-oriented research is showing that transnational radicalization is sustained through relational connectivity, not only message transmission. Digital networks create durable pathways for cross-border diffusion via: (a) direct messaging ties, (b) closed-group communities, (c) bridging nodes that connect local audiences to diaspora/regional hubs, and (d) cross-platform reposting that accelerates ideological circulation. Empirical and policy-oriented evidence from conflict-affected regions demonstrates that extremist influence can be sustained through information flows and networked communications even under territorial or military pressure (regional cases in Africa discussed in policy analyses) (International Crisis Group, 2019).

This supports the framing of transnational radicalization as a digitally mediated process in which identity and belonging are reinforced through network membership and repeated interaction-conditions that can be empirically examined through network reach, bridging ties, and cross-border online contact. Although transnational linkages are frequently asserted, fewer Kenya-specific studies empirically clarify how network pathways intersect with local socialization dynamics in sub-county settings, including which nodes (diaspora ties, cross-border contacts, influencer accounts, closed groups) matter most.

2.1.4 Social Media Algorithms and Radical Content Exposure

A growing empirical literature identifies algorithmic systems-recommendations, ranking, and personalization-as key structures shaping exposure to extremist or borderline content. Evidence indicates that recommendation systems can create progressive exposure pathways, where users engaging with certain political or identity-related content are more likely to be steered toward adjacent, more extreme material over time (Ribeiro *et al.*, 2020). Platform-specific experimental work further shows that amplification effects vary by platform: one large empirical assessment found evidence of recommendation-driven amplification on YouTube in the context of far-right content, while observing different dynamics on other platforms-reinforcing the argument that algorithmic influence is uneven and cannot be generalized across all platforms (Whittaker *et al.*, 2021). There is limited localized evidence on how users in Mombasa County experience algorithmic curation (what they encounter, how they interpret it, and whether they perceive escalation), making it difficult to design context-appropriate digital governance and prevention interventions.

III. METHODOLOGY

This section presents the research design employed to examine the effect of social media use on transnational radicalization in Likoni Sub-County, Mombasa County using mixed-methods descriptive research design. The paper targeted youth (18–35 years), former counter-radicalization programme participants (2019–2024), and key stakeholder informants-including community/religious leaders, security personnel, civil society actors, and digital literacy trainers/content moderators-who were selected through a multi-stage approach combining simple random, convenience, purposive, and snowball sampling.

The sample size was determined using Yamane's (1967) formula at an 8% margin of error, yielding 156 respondents from an estimated youth-target population of 75,000. Sampling was distributed to ensure representation across key categories, with youth constituting the majority of respondents (94 aged 18–25 years (60%) and 47 aged 26–35 years (30%)), alongside smaller but analytically significant groups: former programme participants (6; 4%), community/religious leaders (3; 2%), security personnel (3; 2%), civil society representatives (2; 1.3%), and digital literacy trainers (1; 0.7%), totaling 156 (100%).

Table 1
Sample Distribution

Category	Target Population	Sample Ratio (%)	Sampling Technique	Sample Size
Youth (18–25 years)	45,000	60.0%	Simple random	94
Youth (26–35 years)	22,500	30.0%		47
Former program participants	3,000	4.0%	Snowball	6
Community/religious leaders	1,500	2.0%	Convenience	3
Security personnel	1,500	2.0%	Purposive	3
Civil society representatives	1,000	1.3%	Purposive	2
Digital literacy trainers	500	0.7%	Convenience	1
Total	75,000	100%		156

Source: Researcher (2025)

Structured questionnaires were designed to produce quantitative data, but collect the patterns of social media use and exposure to radical material, whereas qualitative richness was gained via key informant interviewing and focus groups discussion, investigating the experiences of being radicalized digitally, the community dynamics, and perception of it.

Data analysis entailed a combination of SPSS based descriptive analysis and regression analysis, followed by a thematic qualitative coding and instruments were validated by piloting a sample of 10 percent in Nyali Sub-County. A pilot study with 16 participants (10%) tested instrument validity and reliability. All constructs met validity thresholds (KMO = 0.769–0.813; Bartlett's $p = 0.001$; factor loadings = 0.698–0.887). Reliability was also strong (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.831$ –0.889), with the overall 42-item scale $\alpha = 0.856$, confirming the tool was valid and highly reliable for the main study.

Ethical protection measures were informed consent, confidentiality, voluntary involvement, secure data management, and NACOSTI approval of the research and facilitated by notifying county and security offices and referral routes to participant distress.

IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

This section provides the results and discussion of the objective of the study.

4.1 Descriptive Analysis

The purpose of this case study is to demonstrate how the presence of online content influences the activities of transnational radicalization. The paper examined the role of online content in supporting transnational radicalization in Mombasa County through connecting local grievances to broader cross-border stories and cases. As shown in Table 2.

Table 2
The Effect of Online Content on Transnational Radicalization

Statement	SD f(%)	D f(%)	N f(%)	A f(%)	SA f(%)	Mean	Std. Dev.
Encountered content connecting local grievances to international movements	12(8.5)	18(12.8)	25(17.7)	52(36.9)	34(24.1)	3.55	1.24
Social media portrays conflicts in other countries as locally relevant	15(10.6)	22(15.6)	28(19.9)	48(34.0)	28(19.9)	3.37	1.31
Online narratives link religious/ethnic issues across different countries	18(12.8)	24(17.0)	31(22.0)	45(31.9)	23(16.3)	3.22	1.29
Seen content promoting solidarity with extremist movements in other nations	25(17.7)	35(24.8)	33(23.4)	32(22.7)	16(11.4)	2.85	1.32
Social media posts frame local problems as global conspiracies	20(14.2)	28(19.9)	35(24.8)	38(27.0)	20(14.2)	3.07	1.28
Content glorifies international radical figures or movements	22(15.6)	31(22.0)	29(20.6)	39(27.7)	20(14.2)	3.03	1.33
Observed content encouraging support for transnational radical causes	28(19.9)	33(23.4)	37(26.2)	28(19.9)	15(10.6)	2.78	1.29
Social media presents international conflicts in simplistic terms	16(11.3)	25(17.7)	29(20.6)	44(31.2)	27(19.1)	3.29	1.30

Source: Field Data (2025)

Respondents reported notable exposure to content that connected local problems to international struggles. The highest level of agreement related to encountering content that linked local grievances to international movements ($M=3.55$, $SD=1.24$), with 60.9% agreeing/strongly agreeing. This pattern is consistent with evidence that extremist communicators strategically frame local grievances within broader global narratives to increase resonance and recruitment potential (Conway, 2017). Respondents also indicated that social media portrayed foreign conflicts as locally relevant ($M=3.37$, $SD=1.31$; 53.9% agree/strongly agree) and presented international conflicts in simplified terms ($M=3.29$, $SD=1.30$), suggesting that content exposure in the study area frequently collapsed distant conflicts into locally meaningful moral frames. This finding aligns with scholarship showing that digital media can compress geographic distance and facilitate narrative convergence, making external conflicts appear personally salient to local audiences (Archetti, 2015). Overall, the moderate standard deviations across items indicated a relatively consistent perception among respondents that transnational grievance framing and simplified conflict narratives were widely encountered online.

“The content these young people see online is very clever. It starts with local problems they recognize-unemployment, corruption, and discrimination-then gradually connects these to global movements claiming to fight the same issues.” (Key informant interview, Likoni Sub-County, Mombasa County, November 2025)

Qualitative data supplemented the results of the survey by elucidating the way in which content served as a kind of progressive mechanism of influence. Key informants indicated that extremist facing discourses had a way of starting with local issues-unemployment, corruption, discrimination-and slowly linking them with transnational movements that said they could solve them, thus gaining credibility and opening the gate to more radical ideological languages. Security respondents also focused on the emotive tactic of such messaging, where images of suffering in conflict areas were applied in order to create a feeling of empathy, moral pathos and a feeling of victimization, building solidarity that defied borders. These qualitative perspectives complemented the quantitative finding that online content was a strong predictor of radicalization outcomes in the regression model ($\beta = .298$, $p < .01$), indicating that grievance-based framing and emotionally evocative transnational narratives constituted an important pathway through which radicalization unfolded in Likoni. Additionally, informants described gradual escalation through exposure trajectories, where youth engaging initially with legitimate social justice or religious content were subsequently presented with more extreme interpretations-often through recommended content-corroborating the role of algorithmically mediated exposure in the study ($\beta = .216$, $p < .01$) and suggesting that content dynamics and platform curation interacted to accelerate movement toward radical frames.

4.1.2 Effect of Various Social Media on Radicalization across Nations

The paper investigated the role of various social media in achieving transnational radicalization in Likoni Sub-County with the results showing that perceived platform variations in exposure and intensity of recruitment were strong Table 3.

Table 3
Media-Indicative Influence on Transnational Radicalization

Statement	SD f(%)	D f(%)	N f(%)	A f(%)	SA f(%)	Mean	Std. Dev.
WhatsApp groups spread more radical content than public platforms	11(7.8)	16(11.3)	22(15.6)	58(41.1)	34(24.1)	3.62	1.19
Telegram channels commonly used for sharing extremist international content	13(9.2)	19(13.5)	28(19.9)	51(36.2)	30(21.3)	3.47	1.25
Facebook facilitates broader exposure to transnational radical narratives	18(12.8)	25(17.7)	31(22.0)	45(31.9)	22(15.6)	3.20	1.29
YouTube videos effectively spread international extremist ideologies	16(11.3)	23(16.3)	27(19.1)	47(33.3)	28(19.9)	3.34	1.31
Twitter/X frequently used to coordinate international radical movements	24(17.0)	32(22.7)	35(24.8)	33(23.4)	17(12.1)	2.91	1.30
TikTok contains content romanticizing international extremist activities	20(14.2)	29(20.6)	38(27.0)	35(24.8)	19(13.5)	3.03	1.27
Encrypted platforms enable more direct recruitment into transnational networks	14(9.9)	18(12.8)	26(18.4)	54(38.3)	29(20.6)	3.47	1.24
Different platforms target different demographics for transnational recruitment	12(8.5)	21(14.9)	29(20.6)	52(36.9)	27(19.1)	3.43	1.22

Source: Field Data (2025)

Overall, respondents viewed encrypted and semi-closed platforms as the most influential spaces for the circulation of radical content and recruitment. WhatsApp recorded the highest agreement as a conduit for radical content diffusion ($M=3.62$, $SD=1.19$), with 65.2% of respondents agreeing/strongly agreeing that WhatsApp groups spread more radical content than public platforms. This perception is consistent with evidence that private messaging applications can provide relatively protected environments for intensive socialization, reduced public scrutiny, and easier circulation of high-risk material compared to open networks (Berger, 2018). Telegram was also rated highly ($M=3.47$, $SD=1.25$; 57.4% agree/strongly agree), reinforcing research that identifies Telegram as a central infrastructure for extremist dissemination due to channel architecture, large audience capacity, and comparatively weaker moderation regimes in some contexts. Respondents similarly agreed that encrypted platforms enabled more direct recruitment into transnational networks ($M=3.47$, $SD = 1.24$; 58.9%), and that different platforms were used to target different demographic groups ($M=3.43$, $SD=1.22$; 56.0%). Open platforms also featured as exposure channels-YouTube ($M=3.34$, $SD=1.31$) and Facebook ($M=3.20$, $SD=1.29$)-suggesting that transnational narratives circulated across both public and private layers of the platform ecosystem, albeit with different functional roles.

“Each platform serves a different purpose in the radicalization pipeline. Facebook and YouTube are used for initial exposure and broad messaging, while WhatsApp and Telegram are used for more direct recruitment and planning activities.”(Key informant interview, Likoni Sub-County, Mombasa County, November 2025)

Qualitative evidence clarified the platform differentiation strategy that underpinned these patterns. Key informants described a structured “pipeline” in which open platforms (Facebook and YouTube) operated as entry points for initial exposure, awareness-building, and broad narrative dissemination, while encrypted platforms (WhatsApp and Telegram) facilitated deeper engagement, trust-building, and more targeted recruitment and coordination. This functional separation supports the interpretation that radicalization was embedded in a multi-platform ecosystem, rather than being driven by any single platform. Community-level testimony further highlighted age-segmented platform use, noting that younger cohorts gravitated toward short-form visual platforms (TikTok and Instagram) while older youth relied more on Facebook and WhatsApp, and that recruiters tailored content styles accordingly. In combination, these findings indicated that platform-specific affordances and demographic segmentation shaped the spread and intensity of transnational radicalization in Likoni, with encrypted environments supporting higher-risk engagement while public platforms facilitated initial exposure and narrative seeding.

4.1.3 Cross-border Ideological Diffusion and Social Media Network Reach

The paper evaluated the role of the strength of the social media networks in the cross-border spread of radical ideologies that impacted the communities at Likoni Sub-County. Results in Table 4 showed that respondents viewed social media to be an important channel of transnational circulation of ideologies and solidarity.

Table 4

Network Reach and Cross-Border Ideological Diffusion

Statement	SD f(%)	D f(%)	N f(%)	A f(%)	SA f(%)	Mean	Std. Dev.
Social media connects me to people with similar views across different countries	15(10.6)	20(14.2)	24(17.0)	54(38.3)	28(19.9)	3.43	1.28
Online networks spread radical ideologies from Somalia and neighboring countries	12(8.5)	18(12.8)	27(19.1)	56(39.7)	28(19.9)	3.50	1.23
Social media enables real-time communication with international extremist sympathizers	17(12.1)	25(17.7)	32(22.7)	45(31.9)	22(15.6)	3.22	1.29
Cross-border social media connections strengthen radical beliefs and commitments	14(9.9)	22(15.6)	31(22.0)	48(34.0)	26(18.4)	3.35	1.26
Online networks facilitate recruitment into international extremist organizations	18(12.8)	26(18.4)	35(24.8)	42(29.8)	20(14.2)	3.14	1.27
Social media coordinates activities between local and international radical groups	21(14.9)	28(19.9)	33(23.4)	39(27.7)	20(14.2)	3.06	1.30
Global reach of social media amplifies local grievances internationally	13(9.2)	19(13.5)	26(18.4)	52(36.9)	31(22.0)	3.49	1.25
International online connections provide resources and support for local radical activities	19(13.5)	29(20.6)	34(24.1)	38(27.0)	21(14.9)	3.09	1.30

Source: Field Data (2025)

Online networks as a source of radical ideas in Somalia and neighbouring nations was the highest-rated ($M=3.50$, $SD=1.23$) with 59.6% of the respondents agreeing/strongly agreeing. This pattern suggested that proximity to Somalia and the region's historical association with violent extremist activity created a plausible informational and relational corridor through which narratives and ideological cues circulated digitally. It was further confirmed that social media increased the visibility of local grievances into international spheres ($M=3.49$, $SD=1.25$; 58.9% agree/strongly agree) and established that digital media increased local discontent beyond national borders and perhaps connected it to external spheres and frames. Also, most of them admitted that social media connected them with other like-minded people in other countries ($M=3.43$, $SD=1.28$; 58.2% agree/strongly agree), which confirmed the analysis in that network connectivity strengthened transnational identification and rooted ideational communities outside of the local context.

The mechanisms by which these network effects worked were explained by qualitative evidence. Key informants described how digital connectivity enabled direct cross-border interactions, creating a perceived "global brotherhood" among youth who shared grievances and identity narratives with individuals in other countries. According to security personnel, such a deterritorialized influence made it difficult to prevent or monitor due to the fact that cross-border ideological exposure was not contingent upon physical proximity anymore or face-to-face recruitment.

"When local youth see that their struggles are shared by people across the world, it validates their feelings and sometimes their anger. Unfortunately, extremist groups exploit this validation to suggest that violent solutions are justified globally." (Key informant interview, Likoni Sub-County, Mombasa County, November 2025)

Civil society respondents also highlighted the psychological process of validation: youth seeing their plight as something the world shares was allowed to affirm a sense of being wronged enough that such a sense could be tapped by extremist forces and used as an excuse to justify all manner of violence as a natural reaction to perceived transnational oppression. Consistent with this interpretation, the regression results indicated that transnational network reach was a statistically significant predictor of radicalization outcomes in the model ($\beta=.272$, $p<.01$), demonstrating that network connectivity operated as a key pathway through which cross-border ideological diffusion influenced radicalization susceptibility in Likoni.

4.1.4 How Social Media Algorithms Search Radical Content

The paper assessed exposure to and reinforcement of radical content based on social media algorithms in the form of personalized recommendation and echo-chamber effects as indicated in Table 5. Generally, participants were highly worried that algorithmic curation simplified the viewing of radical content and minimized the exposure to other opposing opinions.

Table 5
Radical Content Exposure Influence by Algorithms

Statement	SD f(%)	D f(%)	N f(%)	A f(%)	SA f(%)	Mean	Std. Dev.
Platforms show more extreme content after interacting with radical posts	16(11.3)	21(14.9)	26(18.4)	51(36.2)	27(19.1)	3.37	1.29
Algorithm recommendations lead to progressively more radical content consumption	14(9.9)	18(12.8)	29(20.6)	54(38.3)	26(18.4)	3.42	1.24
Social media algorithms create echo chambers that reinforce extremist views	12(8.5)	16(11.3)	25(17.7)	58(41.1)	30(21.3)	3.55	1.20
Platform recommendations suggest joining radical groups or channels	20(14.2)	27(19.1)	33(23.4)	41(29.1)	20(14.2)	3.10	1.30
Algorithms make it difficult to encounter moderate or opposing viewpoints	18(12.8)	24(17.0)	31(22.0)	46(32.6)	22(15.6)	3.21	1.29
Personalized content feeds gradually normalize extremist narratives	15(10.6)	20(14.2)	28(19.9)	52(36.9)	26(18.4)	3.38	1.26
Algorithms accelerate radicalization through targeted content	13(9.2)	19(13.5)	27(19.1)	55(39.0)	27(19.1)	3.45	1.23
Recommendation systems connect vulnerable users to radical influencers	17(12.1)	22(15.6)	30(21.3)	49(34.8)	23(16.3)	3.27	1.28

Source: Field Data (2025)

The most highly rated item showed that the use of algorithms generated echo chambers that strengthen the extremist ideas ($M=3.55$, $SD=1.20$), with 62.4% respondents agree/strong agree. This finding was indicative of the general literature regarding the capacity of personalization systems to reduce information space, accentuate ideologically consistent content, and restrictive exposure to diverse ideologies-conditions that are especially informative in the radicalization context (Sunstein, 2017). Respondents also accepted that algorithms increased the rate of radicalization by serving up content targeted to them ($M=3.45$, $SD=1.23$; 58.2% agree/strongly agree) and that they consumed increasingly more radical content as recommended to them ($M=3.42$, $SD=1.24$; 56.7% agree/strongly agree). These patterns were consistent with empirical audits of platform recommendations showing that recommender systems can generate “pathways” through which users are progressively exposed to more extreme content after initial engagement with adjacent political or identity-related material (Ribeiro *et al.*, 2020). Escalation perception also showed through the item that platforms showed more extreme content after experiencing radical posts ($M=3.37$, $SD=1.29$), which supports the analysis that personalization processes made exposure to radical content follow progressive paths.

Qualitative descriptions described the experience of these mechanisms by users and how they were understood by local stakeholders. Digital literacy informants described algorithms as engagement-driven systems that repeatedly surface similar content, creating a “rabbit hole” effect in which users moved from legitimate discussions (religious persecution or political grievances) toward more extreme interpretations through automated recommendations. At the community level, testimony was focused on the subtle and implicit character of this power by saying that most young people were not aware of how their digital footprints might be biased into content feeds until their minds were changed. Security staff also emphasized the individual dimension, with algorithms responding by making the content seem personal since algorithms evolve what elicits emotional reactions and moves content that addresses those weaknesses to the forefront. Together, these qualitative evidence complemented the regression findings that algorithmic influence was a statistically significant predictor of radicalization outcomes ($\beta=.216$, $p<.01$), suggesting that algorithmic curation operated as a reinforcing mechanism that intensified exposure, strengthened ideological consistency, and accelerated movement toward radical frames within the Likoni digital environment.

4.2 Transnational Radicalization

Table 6 showed moderately high levels of concern among the indicators measured on transnational radicalization of Likoni Sub-County.

Table 6
Indicators of Transnational Radicalization

Statement	SD f(%)	D f(%)	N f(%)	A f(%)	SA f(%)	Mean	Std. Dev.
Witnessed youth developing sympathies for international extremist movements	18(12.8)	25(17.7)	28(19.9)	46(32.6)	24(17.0)	3.23	1.30
Community members express support for radical groups in neighboring countries	21(14.9)	29(20.6)	31(22.0)	41(29.1)	19(13.5)	3.06	1.31
Youth view local issues through international radical ideological lenses	16(11.3)	22(15.6)	26(18.4)	52(36.9)	25(17.7)	3.34	1.28
Social media exposure led youth to consider joining transnational extremist networks	26(18.4)	34(24.1)	35(24.8)	32(22.7)	14(9.9)	2.82	1.30
Growing identification with international radical causes among vulnerable youth	19(13.5)	26(18.4)	32(22.7)	43(30.5)	21(14.9)	3.15	1.29
Community members adopted extremist interpretations promoted by international groups	22(15.6)	30(21.3)	33(23.4)	38(27.0)	18(12.8)	3.00	1.31
Cross-border radical connections influenced local youth behavior and attitudes	17(12.1)	24(17.0)	29(20.6)	47(33.3)	24(17.0)	3.26	1.29
International extremist narratives increasingly accepted as legitimate	20(14.2)	28(19.9)	34(24.1)	40(28.4)	19(13.5)	3.07	1.30
Social media facilitated recruitment of local youth into transnational networks	24(17.0)	31(22.0)	36(25.5)	35(24.8)	15(10.6)	2.90	1.29
Evidence of coordination between local youth and international extremist groups	28(19.9)	35(24.8)	38(27.0)	28(19.9)	12(8.5)	2.72	1.26

Source: Field Data (2025)

The most rated was the fact that the youth interpreted local concerns in terms of internationally radical ideological orientations ($M=3.34$, $SD=1.28$) and 54.6% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed. This indicated that transnational extremist discourses were gradually being used as interpretive frames on local grievances and identity conflicts, which confirms claims that global radical narratives could redefine how local issues were construed by incorporating them into a larger ideological conflict (Sageman, 2017).

There were other indicators that displayed significant perceptions of cross-border influence. They stated that they had seen youth growing sympathetic to international extremist movements ($M=3.23$, $SD=1.30$) and agreed that cross-border radical linkage had been felt through local youth conduct and attitudes ($M=3.26$, $SD=1.29$) which suggests that transnational diffusion could be observed by attitudinal and interpretive mobility. Views of increasing association of youths who are vulnerable to international radical causes were also moderate ($M=3.15$, $SD=1.29$). Meanwhile, indicators of further involvement in operation engagement were less significant: joining transnational extremist networks ($M=2.82$, $SD=1.30$), using social media to recruit new members ($M=2.90$, $SD=1.29$), and signs of coordination between local youths and international extremists ($M=2.72$, $SD=1.26$). This pattern implied that while transnational ideological alignment and sympathy were perceived as present, more overt recruitment or coordination dynamics were less commonly observed-potentially due to their clandestine nature, limited community visibility, or respondents' reluctance to report sensitive activities.

4.3 Inferential Analysis

Social media components that determine transnational radicalization outcomes in Mombasa County were used in multiple regression analysis to identify the predictive power of social media.

4.3.1 Model Summary

Table 7
Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.796	.634	.623	.43521

a. Predictors: (Constant), Online Content, Platform-Specific, Network Reach, Algorithm



To check the predictive capacity of important elements of social media- online content, platform-specific influence, network reach, and algorithmic influence- on transnational radicalization outcomes in Mombasa County, a multiple regression analysis was performed. As presented in the model summary (Table 7), the model produced a strong correlation coefficient ($R = .796$) and an explained variance of $R^2 = .634$, indicating that 63.4% of the variance in transnational radicalization was accounted for by the four predictors. The adjusted R^2 value (.623) further suggested that the model retained substantial explanatory strength after accounting for the number of predictors included. All these statistics pointed to a strong model with a significant predictive value in the study setting to understand transnational radicalization.

4.3.2 ANOVA Results

Table 8
ANOVA Results

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	87.245	4	21.811	115.032	.000**
Residual	25.782	136	.190		
Total	113.027	140			

- a. Dependent Variable: Transnational Radicalization.
- b. Predictors: (Constant), Online Content, Platform-Specific, Network Reach, Algorithm.,

The statistical results of the ANOVA (Table 8) ensured that the regression equation was significant. The model produced an F-statistic of 115.032 ($p < .01$) because the collective predictors had a stronger effect on transnational radicalization results than a model with no predictors. The implication of this finding was that online content dynamics, platform-specific factors, network reach, and algorithmic exposure all exerted a statistically significant effect on transnational radicalization in Mombasa County, which, in turn, justified the conceptual scheme and confirmed the use of these social media elements as explanatory variables.

The findings demonstrated that digitally mediated transnational radicalization in Mombasa County operated through four mutually reinforcing mechanisms-content framing, platform affordances, networked connectivity, and algorithmic curation-whose combined effects were strongly predictive of radicalization outcomes ($R^2 = .634$).

Table 9
Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.412	.142		2.901	.004
Online Content Influence	.287	.051	.298	5.627	.000
Platform-Specific Impact	.324	.053	.336	6.113	.000
Network Reach Effects	.251	.048	.272	5.229	.000
Algorithm Influence	.198	.045	.216	4.400	.000

Source: Field Data (2025)

First, online content significantly shaped transnational meaning-making by linking local grievances to international movements and conflicts (60.9% agreement; $M = 3.55$), and it emerged as a significant predictor of radicalization ($\beta = .298$, $p < .01$), with qualitative evidence indicating a staged narrative strategy that began with credible local concerns before escalating toward extremist interpretations and emotionally resonant solidarity frames. Second, platform dynamics exerted the strongest influence ($\beta = .336$, $p < .01$), reflecting a differentiated “ecosystem” in which encrypted and semi-closed spaces-especially WhatsApp (65.2% agreement; $M = 3.62$) and Telegram (57.4% agreement; $M = 3.47$)-facilitated more intensive socialization and recruitment than open platforms, while demographic targeting shaped which platforms carried which messages. Third, transnational network reach significantly enabled cross-border ideological diffusion ($\beta = .272$, $p < .01$), as respondents reported exposure to ideologies circulating from Somalia and neighbouring contexts (59.6%; $M = 3.50$), international amplification of local grievances (58.9%; $M = 3.49$), and connectivity to like-minded actors across borders (58.2%; $M = 3.43$), highlighting the transnationalist perspective that non-state influence is increasingly exercised through networked flows rather than territorial proximity. Finally, algorithmic influence was a significant predictor ($\beta = .216$, $p < .01$), with respondents emphasizing echo-chamber reinforcement (62.4%; $M = 3.55$), progressive exposure to more radical content (56.7%; $M = 3.42$), and targeted delivery that made extremist narratives feel personally relevant (58.2%; $M = 3.45$), consistent with securitization dynamics in which repeated, curated threat framing normalizes extreme worldviews. Collectively, the results supported an IR-informed interpretation that radicalization in Likoni was not merely a localized social problem but a deterritorialized



process embedded in transnational communication infrastructures, where governance dilemmas, cross-border networks, and discursive construction of threats interact to shape susceptibility and engagement.

V. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

It was concluded in this paper that the flow of online content framing, platform-specific affordances, transnational network connectivity, and algorithmic curation played a role of great significance in the radicalization of pathways of Likoni Sub-County in Mombasa County into extremism in Kenya. The digital environments allowed a re-framing of local complaints and identity conflicts in terms of transnational ideological storylines, and the differentiated platform ecosystem provided the means of transit between the general exposure of open networks to increased socialization and recruitment on encrypted platforms. Simultaneously, cross-border online relationships offered legitimacy and membership that reinforced ideological adherence and progressive exposure and echo-chamber reinforcement. As a collective, the results placed radicalization in Likoni as a deterritorialized, networked, and discursively built process of security, where digital infrastructures mediated the means of how the threat was perceived, solidarities developed, and extremist views of the world normalized-the necessity of prevention and governance forms that addressed not only the local vulnerabilities but also the transnational digital ecosystems through which extremist influence circulates.

5.2 Recommendations

The paper proposed a comprehensive and preventive-focused response that considers the digital and transnationality of radicalization but is not contradictory to rights-based governance. Primarily, the digital literacy and resilience youth programming should be institutionalised by stakeholders-government, universities and civil society-with a focus on algorithm awareness, source checking, critical thinking, and locally based counter-narratives that have been created with a credible community, religious and cultural leaders. Second, regulators and technology companies should adopt platform-differentiated governance, prioritizing transparency, proportionate moderation, and risk-based monitoring that reflects how radicalization shifts from open platforms to encrypted spaces, supported by accountable public-private coordination that protects privacy and prevents overreach. Third, the community and Mombasa County infrastructures must enhance the robustness of early warning and intervention systems by training frontline actors (parents, teachers, mentors, community leaders) to recognize progressive radicalization, create referral channels, and link psychosocial support with livelihood/mentorship programs that would make recruitment less likely. Lastly, Kenya ought to enhance the regional collaboration by organized intelligence sharing, common capacity-building of digital investigations and prevention, and regular coordination platforms among East African nations in order to strip down cross-border networked recruitment and harmonize reaction against digitally mediated extremist mobilization.

REFERENCES

- Alava, S., Frau-Meigs, D., & Hassan, G. (2017). *Youth and violent extremism on social media: Mapping the research*. UNESCO. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000260382>
- Amakanji, G. O., Okoth, P. G., & Maloba, E. W. (2023). The cursed promised land? Demographic risk factors for homegrown extremism in the squatter enclaves of Mount Elgon region of Western Kenya. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 0(0). <https://doi.org/10.1177/00219096231197777>
- Anderson, D. M., & McKnight, J. (2015). Kenya at war: Al-Shabaab and its enemies in Eastern Africa. *African Affairs*, 114(454), 1–27. <https://doi.org/10.1093/afraf/afu082>
- Archetti, C. (2015). Terrorism, communication and new media: Explaining radicalization in the digital age. *Perspectives on Terrorism*, 9(1), 49–59.
- Balzacq, T. (2005). The three faces of securitization: Political agency, audience and context. *European Journal of International Relations*, 11(2), 171–201. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066105052960>
- Berger, J. M. (2018). *Extremism*. MIT Press. <https://doi.org/10.7551/mitpress/11688.001.0001>
- Berger, J. M., & Morgan, J. (2015). *The ISIS Twitter census: Defining and describing the population of ISIS supporters on Twitter*. Brookings Institution.
- Botha, A. (2014). *Radicalisation in Kenya: Recruitment to al-Shabaab and the Mombasa Republican Council* (ISS Paper 265). Institute for Security Studies.
- Buzan, B., Wæver, O., & de Wilde, J. (1998). *Security: A new framework for analysis*. Lynne Rienner.
- Chitembwe, S. J., Okoth, P. G., & Matanga, F. K. (2021). The nature, extent and impact of youth radicalization in Mombasa and Kwale Counties, Kenya. *Open Access Library Journal*, 8, e7386. <https://doi.org/10.4236/oalib.1107386>

- Chome, N. (2016). *Violent extremism and clan dynamics in Kenya*. United States Institute of Peace.
- Clifford, B., & Powell, H. (2019). *Encrypted extremism: Inside the English-speaking Islamic State ecosystem on Telegram*. Program on Extremism, The George Washington University. <https://extremism.gwu.edu/encrypted-extremism>
- Conway, M. (2017). Determining the role of the Internet in violent extremism and terrorism: Six suggestions for progressing research. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 40(1), 77–98. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2016.1157408>
- Gilroy, G. (2024). The online frontline: Decoding al-Shabaab's social media strategy. *CTC Sentinel*, 17(1), 25–30. <https://ctc.westpoint.edu/the-online-frontline-decoding-al-shabbaabs-social-media-strategy/>
- Government of Kenya. (2023). *National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism (NSCVE)* (PDF). National Counter Terrorism Centre. <https://counterterrorism.go.ke/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/National-Strategy-to-Counter-Violent-Extremism-NSCVE-1.pdf>
- International Crisis Group. (2019). *Facing the challenge of the Islamic State in West Africa Province* (Africa Report No. 273). <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/west-africa/nigeria/273-facing-challenge-islamic-state-west-africa-province>
- International Crisis Group. (2020). *The Islamic State franchises in Africa: Lessons from Lake Chad*. <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/central-africa/lake-chad/lessons-islamic-state-franchises-africa>
- Keohane, R. O. (1984). *After hegemony: Cooperation and discord in the world political economy*. Princeton University Press.
- Keohane, R. O. (1988). International institutions: Two approaches. *International Studies Quarterly*, 32(4), 379–396.
- Klausen, J. (2015). Tweeting the jihad: Social media networks of Western foreign fighters in Syria and Iraq. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 38(1), 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2014.974948>
- Lim, M. (2017). Freedom to hate: Social media, algorithmic enclaves, and the rise of tribal nationalism in Indonesia. *Critical Asian Studies*, 49(3), 411–427. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14672715.2017.1341188>
- McDonald, M. (2008). Securitization and the construction of security. *European Journal of International Relations*, 14(4), 563–587. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066108097553>
- National Counter Terrorism Centre. (2016). *National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism (NSCVE)*. Government of Kenya. <https://counterterrorism.go.ke/major-nctc-driven-strategies-and-policies%E2%80%A8/>
- Nye, J. S., & Keohane, R. O. (1971). Transnational relations and world politics: An introduction. *International Organization*, 25(3), 329–349. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2706043>
- Oluteyo, G. A., Were, E., & Simiyu, R. (2018). Nature of scanning, analysis, response and assessment (SARA) based response strategies in the management of youth radicalization in Nairobi County, Kenya. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, 8(8). <https://doi.org/10.29322/IJSRP.8.8.2018.p8074>
- Onunga, R. A., Onkware, K., & Iteyo, C. (2022). Nature of religious groups' engagement in preventing youth radicalization in Mombasa County, Kenya. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, 8(8). <http://dx.doi.org/10.29322/IJSRP.12.07.2022.p12715>
- Republic of Kenya. (2012). *Prevention of Terrorism Act (No. 30 of 2012)*. National Council for Law Reporting (Kenya Law). <https://www.frc.go.ke/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/PreventionofTerrorismAct30of2012.pdf>
- Ribeiro, M. H., Ottoni, R., West, R., Almeida, V. A. F., & Meira, W., Jr. (2020). Auditing radicalization pathways on YouTube. In *Proceedings of the 2020 Conference on Fairness, Accountability, and Transparency (FAcT '20)*.
- Rogers, R. (2020). Deplatforming: Following extreme Internet celebrities to Telegram and alternative social media. *European Journal of Communication*, 35(3), 213–229. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0267323120922066>
- Sageman, M. (2017). *Misunderstanding terrorism*. University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Stritzel, H. (2007). Towards a theory of securitization: Copenhagen and beyond. *European Journal of International Relations*, 13(3), 357–383. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066107080128>
- Sunstein, C. R. (2017). *#Republic: Divided democracy in the age of social media*. Princeton University Press.
- United Nations Security Council. (2022). *Resolution 2628 (2022) [on the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS)]*. [https://undocs.org/S/RES/2628\(2022\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/2628(2022))
- Van Metre, L. (2016). *Community resilience to violent extremism in Kenya* (Peaceworks No. 122). United States Institute of Peace. <https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/PW122-Community-Resilience-to-Violent-Extremism-in-Kenya.pdf>
- Van Metre, L. (2016). *From the ground up: Regional and local approaches to countering violent extremism*. United States Institute of Peace.
- Whittaker, J. (2022). Rethinking online radicalization. *Perspectives on Terrorism*, 16(4), 27–40.
- Whittaker, J., Looney, S., Reed, A., & Votta, F. (2021). Recommender systems and the amplification of extremist content. *Internet Policy Review*, 10(2). <https://doi.org/10.14763/2021.2.1565>
- Winter, C. (2017). Media jihad: The Islamic State's doctrine for information warfare. *International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation (ICSR), King's College London*. <https://icsr.info/2017/02/23/new-report-media-jihad/>