

Wikistories Africa Discovery Report

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Executive Summary

The number of people accessing the internet through their mobile phones has increased, and many of these new users are from emerging markets. This is not a monolithic population, but rather has unique factors such as language and context that makes content creation and consumption a complex endeavor. In this project, the Qhala research team collaborated with the Wikimedia Foundation to investigate content creation and consumption trends in three African countries (South Africa, Kenya, and Nigeria) and identify ways in which Wikimedia can attract, engage and retain new users by increasing creation and consumption of content in a quick, snack-sized pack and catchy format.

Results highlight that most people in Africa use their mobile phones to create and consume internet content. In addition we point out motivation for content creation and consumption, content creation processes, challenges faced while creating or consuming online content, and recommendations for making these processes smooth.

We conclude the report by discussing Wikipedia platform usage among emergent internet users in Africa and recommendations suggested to improve the platform for these users.

Introduction

This report presents the findings of the discovery phase of the Wikistroy project. The aim of the discovery phase was to understand the gaps and opportunities that exist in content creation and consumption in Africa, with particular emphasis on three countries: Nigeria, Kenya and South Africa. The data was collected from 96 participants (47 content consumers and 49 content creators) in different sectors over a period of four weeks. Qhala researchers in collaboration with the Wikimedia Foundation team developed the research protocol and discovery guides used to gather data.

Across the three countries, we identified that over 98% content creators and consumers mainly use their mobile phone to access the Internet. They often subscribe to mobile data packages offered by their mobile phone service provider to browse the internet and come across new content. In addition, they share content among their community networks. Their favorite social media platforms rank in order from most preferred beginning from Instagram, Tiktok, Facebook, Whatsapp, Youtube, LinkedIn, Twitter, and finally other social media. They prefer social media in this order because



the aforementioned platforms allow them to create or access content in different formats that relay both entertaining and educational information.

Despite being conversant with most social media platforms and online content, we identified more than 50% of the participants rarely use the Wikipedia platform due to limited knowledge of it. Those who had used it pointed out that Wikipedia is not user-friendly because it requires the user to go through a chunk of text to grasp information. The issue of content trustworthy was also highlighted. Participants mentioned that the platform does not allow users to interact with the content authors to seek clarification on the shared content. They emphasised that the Wikimedia design team should improve the platform by revamping the user interface, regulating editing of Wikipedia articles, including features (such as video editing and sharing), providing easier to find help pages, ensuring an abstract/summary for each article, and providing sharing features that encourage content creation and sharing among emergent internet users in Africa.

Research Background

Research Goal

The goal of this project was to enable the Wikimedia Foundation to understand how it might help attract, engage and retain new users by increasing creation and consumption of content in a quick, snack-sized pack and catchy format whilst hooking them to explore the longer format version of Wikipedia, retaining their attention and being mindful of their context. The overarching research questions guiding this project were:

1. How can Wikimedia Foundation increase content creation and consumption among emerging markets internet users?
2. What strengths, opportunities and gaps exist in the creation and consumption of short-stories in audio-visual formats that Wikimedia can leverage to increase its user base?

To answer these overarching questions, a number of more specific questions guided us:

1. What does Wikipedia mean to an emerging market user?
2. What is the motivation behind content creation and consumption among internet users in Africa?



- a. What are the processes that content creators follow while curating short stories across different platforms?
 - b. Which features encourage emerging internet users to interact with short stories across different platforms?
3. What are the main challenges that face content creation and engagement among users in Africa?

To address these questions, we opted to conduct this research in two parts: **Discovery** and **Usability testing** sessions. This report focuses on reporting the findings of the discovery sessions. The objectives for this research part were set in collaboration with the Wikimedia Foundation design strategy team. The objectives focused on the following research themes:

1. To understand the existing gaps and opportunities in the creation and consumption of online content among internet users in Africa.
2. To understand Wikipedia platform usage in Africa

Research Design

Respondent Selection and Recruitment

96 participants (47 content consumers and 49 content creators) were selected for this research from three countries with distinct user behaviors and context especially relating to Wikimedia. These include:

1. **South Africa:** This is regarded as the most economically advanced country with mobile subscriptions of 168.5% and 64% internet users penetration, and is the largest contributor to Wikipedia content in the continent.
2. **Nigeria:** With a population of 187 Million people, Nigeria has a mobile phone penetration of 90% and over 101 Million people have access to the internet. It is a leading contributor to Wikipedia content.
3. **Kenya:** This is hailed as the Silicon Savannah, a technological leader in the continent, with cheap internet connectivity and a highly educated populace with 108% mobile phone penetration and over 60% internet penetration. Kenya has an active social media and internet usage. However, there are fewer Wikipedia contributors, providing a control group for the study, an environment for learning factors that could lead to usage and contribution of content to Wikipedia in new formats.



We used participant sampling and snowballing methods to recruit participants. To ensure a fair and unbiased sample of participant, the following criteria were used:

- **Diversity:** We recruited participants from diverse fields to ensure we collected robust feedback
- **Experience:** We recruited participants with a minimum of 2 years of experience to ensure we received a deep engagement and good feedback
- **Tech Enthusiasm:** We recruited participants who are enthusiastic about technology and new app/technological innovation to get interesting feedback
- **Inclusivity:** We included both male and female creators and consumers of various ages for inclusivity and representation.

Research Method



One-on-one
Interview



Participant
observation



Remote
Interviews

We used qualitative research methodologies to uncover content creation and consumption processes and usage of the wikipedia platform. We used one-on-one interview method with participants to establish their needs and recommendations on existing social media platforms. Our researchers used a flexible conversational approach with participants to establish trust, build rapport, and deepen empathy with their needs and motivations. We also used observation method to analyse the body language of the participants to understand their mood, frustrations and peak points. Working in collaboration with educational institutions such as University of Cape Town, University of Baze(Abuja, Nigeria), University of Ibadan,(Lagos, Nigeria), Baraka lab (Nairobi, Kenya) and Aglican church of Kenya helped us to gather information from a wide range of participants with vast knowledge in their various sectors.

With the rise of the highly transmissible omicron variant in South Africa in late 2021, participants became reluctant to participate in-person interview sessions. Thus, our researcher in Cape Town opted to use remote interviews to engage one participant.



We took field notes and video recorded both in-person and remote interview sessions for future reference. The data collected was transcribed and thematically analysed using the Dovetail platform. In the next section we discuss the field findings. We start by providing a summary of participant’s demography and the online content creation and consumption trends in Africa. We conclude by highlighting Wikipedia platform usage and recommendations that might lift the platform usage among emerging internet users in Africa.

Online Content Creation and Consumption Trends in Africa

Participant’s Demography

We interacted with 96 participants from different sectors as shown in Table 2. 95% of the participants were from urban and peri-urban areas. Based on our experience with this particular recruitment process, we identified that online content creation was predominantly done by men except for Cape Town and Nairobi where women formed the bulk of content creators.

Country	City	Creators		Consumers	
Nigeria	Lagos	(F)2	(M) 6	(F) 4	(M) 4
	Abuja	(F)1	(M) 7	(F)4	(M)4
Kenya	Nairobi	(F) 7	(M) 2	(F) 3	(M) 5
	Nakuru/Kajiado	(F) 0	(M) 7	(F)4	(M) 4
S. Africa	Cape Town	(F)7	(M) 1	(F)5	(M) 3
	Johannesburg	(F) 2	(M) 6	(F) 5	(M) 3

Table 1: Distribution of participants and genders across the three countries and six cities



Sector	Creators	Consumers
Agriculture	4	4
Law	1	3
Academia	11	0
Health	3	0
Entertainment	1	4
Fashion & lifestyle	10	5
Religion	4	4
Entrepreneur	3	5
Fitness	1	0
Theatre	5	0
Media	3	0
Photography	2	0
Bloggers	2	0
Technology	0	3

Table 2: Distribution of participants by sector



49% of the participants were young (20-30 age bracket) and emergent internet users. The table below summarizes the ages of our participants.

Age Bracket	Creators	Consumers
18-20	1	3
21-30	23	24
31-40	19	12
41-50	4	5
51-60	0	2
61 and above	1	2

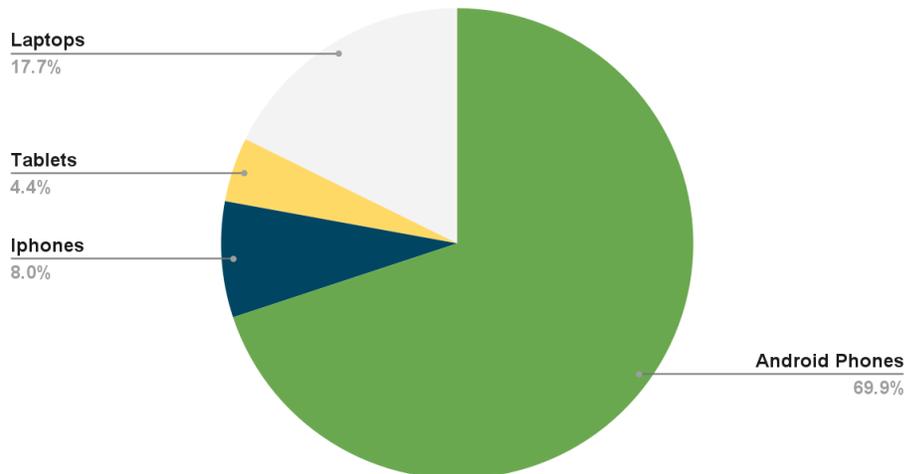
87% of the participants had undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. Most of the content creators were unemployed and mainly focused on earning a living from the content creation and other side hustles. Use of online platforms became prevalent during the pandemic period where most content creators shared content to advertise their services and their products.



Technology Usage

Devices

Devices



Distribution of devices used by participants

All participants use their mobile phones to access the internet, and in fact 60% of the participants only have a mobile phone for accessing the Internet. All participants said they did not share their phone with other people in their households.

"I use my phone, a Samsung A31 and it is my personal phone. I don't like sharing a phone"--JHB011, Consumer

They highlighted that mobile phones were affordable and they could access the internet from any geographic location. In addition to the mobile phone, 20% of the content creators and 15% of content consumers used laptops to access the internet. We learned that participants acquired laptops and tablets due to the low storage capacity on their phone.

"I use mobile phone but, due to low storage I changed to palmtop."--LAG002, creator

In addition, others said it was easy to create/access content on laptops because of the larger screen size. However, they emphasized that owning a good laptop is expensive. Thus, most participants acknowledged sharing a laptop with their family members and



colleagues at their place of work. This was common in Kenya and Nigeria, unlike in South Africa where participants more frequently own a personal laptop.

Internet Connection

All participants said they use mobile data to access the internet. In the three countries, participants said they subscribe to mobile data offered by their mobile service providers. We learned that users buy data plans restricted for a certain period of time during the day (e.g., 5GB data plan from midnight to 6am at \$0.50). These offers allow participants to optimize Internet access while reducing costs.

“I mostly use data bundles. I don't have WiFi at my place. And I only like using WiFi when I don't have data bundles because I don't like how WiFi takes up a lot of charge”-NRB CR-02, Creator.

“I use data bundles that safaricom offers that are ongoing, and prefer weekly offers that are cheap.”--NKR-CR-15, Creator

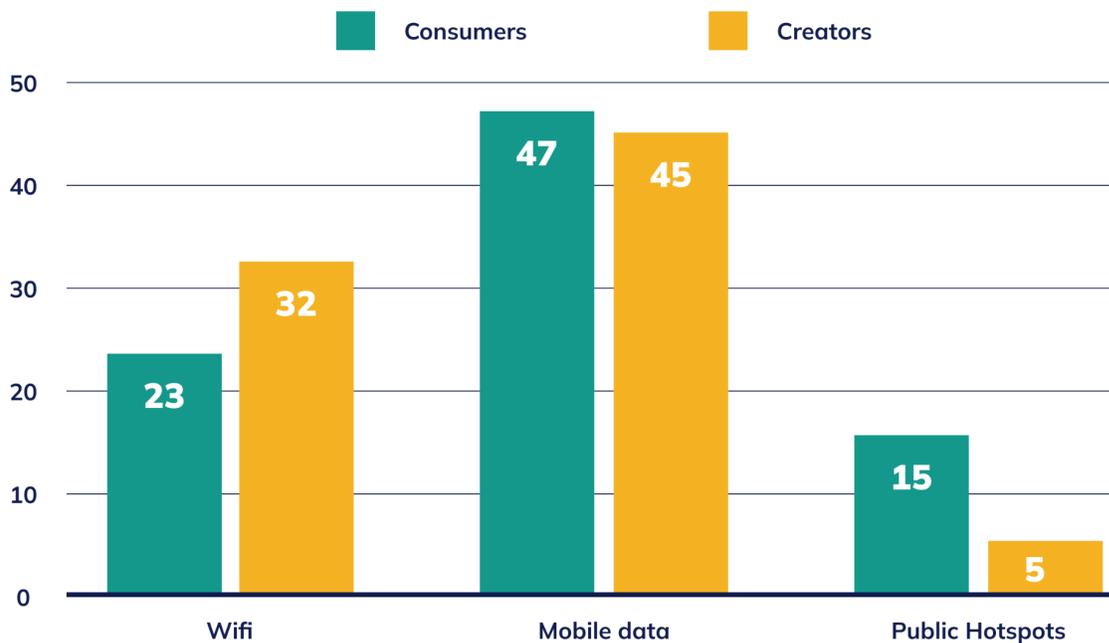
Other participants prefer using WiFi at their place of work. They tend to use their mobile data only while at home or on the move.

“Actually, I have Internet in my office and I use my data when I'm at home.”-Abuj006, Creator

“I use WiFi most of the time and when I'm outside, I can compromise and buy bundles”--NRB CO-05, Consumer

When possible, content creators prefer installing WiFi in their homes to enable them to create content with no data restrictions. For instance in South Africa and Nairobi, creators have unlimited internet connection (mostly fibre). On the other hand, Nigerians subscribe to data ranging from 20 to 150GB. Unlike content creators, consumers make use of office WiFi, public WiFi, and sometimes their mobile data to access their preferred online platforms.





Internet Access

Content creators data usage is higher than that of consumers. Data usage also varied from participants in urban areas and peri-urban areas. It also varied with the content creation and consumption process involved. For instance, in urban areas content creators use more data to collect and edit content, thus using more data. On the other hand, content creators in peri-urban areas such as Nakuru and Kajiado take pictures and video recordings and share them as they are. Hence, they consume less data.

Internet Access Time

Internet access time varied from the content creators and content consumers. Content creators said they collect content (take photos, record videos) during the day and edit the content late at night or early in morning. They said there are limited distractions at these hours, thus giving them time to concentrate and create quality content.

“I create content at night because of the serenity of the time, and the lack of interference and other disturbances”–Abuj_CR-006, Creator

In addition, they said data is faster at night since there are few people utilizing the bandwidth. Interestingly in Nigeria, content creators said they prefer these hours because of power availability. They mentioned that power outages are common during the day, thus limiting them from using their devices because mobile phones require

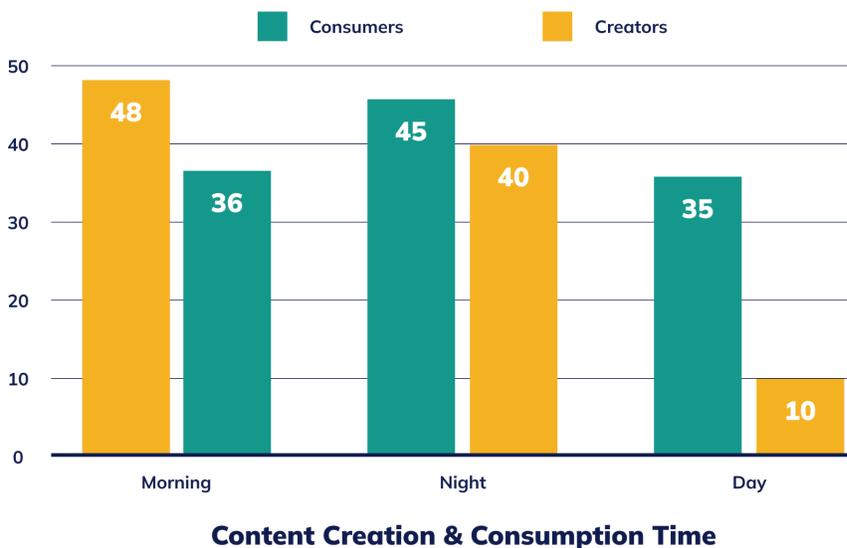


constant charging especially when using mobile data. For those using laptops, they need to plug in throughout the editing process.

On the other hand, consumers access the internet early in the morning when they wake up and late at night before they sleep. Most of them said they are addicted to their mobile phone and they have to access it to update themselves on trending online topics. Unlike content creators, consumers say they often access their favorite content during the day when they get bored.

“During the day, from when I wake up at around 5.30, I have to be in school by maybe 7.30 or 8.00. So my day starts at eight, and as soon as my day is that I’ll leave school at around 5.00 in the evening. So when I leave school around 5.00 in the evening to go back home I do a couple of things, then sit down and start browsing”- NRB CO-05, Consumer

On average content creators and consumers said they browse the internet for at least 6 and 4 hours per day respectively.



Content Creation and Consumption Trends

In this section we will describe the content creation and consumption processes. We begin by describing content creator trends.

Content Creators

Content creators usually create content in the following modes:

1. **Pre-planned:** This is when content creators plan ahead to create content. The planning includes time, venue, equipment and topics to discuss or write content on.
2. **Spontaneous:** This happens when content creators see some instant events that catch their interest. For instance, an accident that just occurred or an observation during a walk. Often, content creation of this manner is done or happens at the time/place of the happening. In addition, this content is usually created using mobile phones.
3. **Bulk Content Creation:** This involves creating content in bulk such that it can last for a long period of time/span a period of time or can be used in future.

Motivation to Create Content

From our interaction with content creators, we identified various factors that motivate them to create content. These include:

To earn income: 46% of participants said they create content to earn a living. For instance in Cape Town, South Africa all creators were freelancers who create content for financial incentives. They said that they hoped to sustain their needs through this venture but the income was not sufficient

"...Money no so, I mean, predominantly, I'm actually a dancer. But dancing doesn't bring in the cash. Enough cash, especially now. So yeah, I've kind of had to turn full time. But in freelance photography, I'm feeling demotivated because I'm just getting a little bit over it."--CPT0016, creator

"I create e-commerce websites to sell products online and also blogs sites which I utilize them to review products and monetize through affiliation of those products."-JHB002, Creator

In the agricultural sector, content creators earned a living by advertising their consultancy services as well as their farm products. In Nigeria, participants created content as a side hustle.



"Yeah, currently I'm working and as well as I'm a freelancer.."ABUJ-CR003, creator.

Most content creators in Nigeria were employed and they hoped to earn some money after sharing their content.

To have impact: 40% of participants create content because they like to impact others or their community as a result of the experience or exposure. In academia, religious, fashion and lifestyle sector participants share content to encourage and motivate their target audience.

"My drive is whatever I do must have an impact on people. I want to let people know what I know."-LAG-CR-004, Creator.

It is worth noting that monetary value is not a drive to make an impact or create content for this group of creators.

Share knowledge: Another strong reason is a good number of the content creators are passionate and intrigued about content creation. It seems natural and inherent for them to share knowledge with their community. In the process of sharing knowledge, participants said they hoped to create a community that focused on learning a specific topic. This was common among academia, entertainment and agricultural sectors in Kenya, South Africa and Nigeria respectively.

"I am a teacher at heart and as a result content creation is an avenue for me to educate others."-LAG-CR-003, Creator

"I always tell people that I love creating content to cause conversation, to inspire? I want people to be like, Oh, my God. Yeah, that's right"- NRB-CR-007, Creator

"First, I started farming as a passion, a career. I'm an accountant. So when the COVID pandemic came, I tried farming as one of, as one of my passion....So I try to gather the information and train farmers on different methods of farming"-NKR-CR-014, Creator

"There was this girl Michelle with natural hair. So she was looking for tips to grow her hair. I was like, why not creating content about this so that other people know how to take care of their hair naturally. And then for the love of my hair." -JHB014, Creator



To connect: Content creators own up that they also often create content because they believe it would put them in the public space, help them grow and connect to others. The belief is that going public would put them in a position for opportunities.

“Well, for social media it's just to interact with people other people online to get their views on certain ideas.”- ABUJ-CR-004, Creator

To entertain: In the entertainment sector, people create content to entertain their audience. This was common especially during lockdown.

“I am a comedian content creator who does creative comedies to make people laugh. So I do comedy, and the message is to make people laugh.”- JHB-Cr-004, Creator

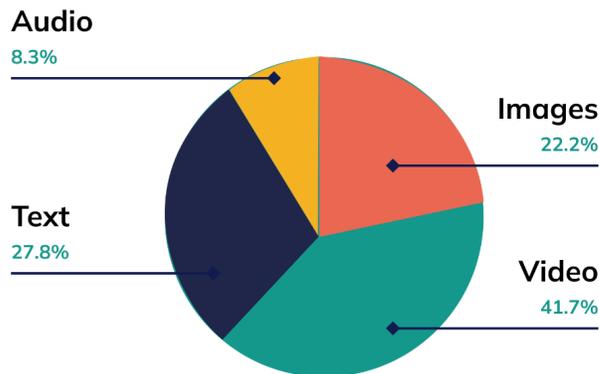
Content Creation

96% of participants said they learned content creation on their own. They described their beginnings as a process of trial and error. This related to their use of software for editing and producing, and their navigating of social media and best practices. YouTube served as a place for tutorials when there were questions, and other low-cost methods of figuring things out were also used such as asking other creators. Most of them mainly used their phone to collect data and edit their content. Others used laptops, cameras and in addition to their mobile phone for content creation. Only 5% of participants (mostly who create content as a profession) said they bought licenses for editing software such as draw board, adobe photo editor, daVinci resolve etc.

42% of content creators said they prefer creating and sharing content in video format. They said that video content attracts a larger audience since it is easy to grasp the information shared. They mentioned that videos are more engaging because consumers use their visual and audio senses to grasp information. To ensure consumers watch the entire video, content creators ensure the video is not longer than four minutes. In addition, they provide supplementary content in image format (not more than two images) and text format. Audio format was mainly used when providing instructions or clarification of information previously shared in the other formats.



Preferred Content Creation Format



When asked which language they prefer sharing information in, 90% of content creators prefer sharing content in the English language to reach more people.

“So when I want a song or a poetry piece to cut across a larger group of people, I'll use the most common language and not only the most common language, but also the most common terminologies and pronunciation of things. I can use English”- NKR-CR-005, Creator

Content creators determine the language of the content by the target audience and format of information shared. For instance, when sharing information with young educated people, creators preferred using English. However, there was emphasis on sharing text content in English, despite the audience age group, to avoid misinterpretation given the various dialects of vernacular languages. They said that consumers with a basic education level could easily read English text and grasp the information shared.

On the other hand, while sharing content in video format with old people or people in rural or slum areas, creators preferred using local languages to ensure audience comprehension.

“Now language has to be relevant because also young people, especially from slum areas or not so good to do areas will say, when you're speaking English, you're putting yourself in a certain caliber.....Now, you're putting yourself at a higher position and trying to talk down at us.”- NKR-Cr-005, Creator



Importantly, we learned that there is a group of content creators who focus on sharing content in their vernacular language despite their target audience age group or area of residence. These content creators are mainly young (between 25-35 years) and they focus on creating content in the cultural and art sectors. These creators said that they want to preserve the authenticity of their vernacular language to ensure they do not disappear

“Why Luo is because as the years go by, you know, our mother tongue is vanishing in a way. So I'd love the Luos to always get something... Even the younger generations, you find most families don't speak Luo in their house. But with my content, they can learn Luo.”-NRB-CR-008, Creator

Unlike when sharing English content, creators do not translate content shared in their vernacular language to encourage their audience to learn the language.

Other content creators mix languages to meet their target consumers' needs. This is mainly done by young creators (between 25-30 years) that use slang to satisfy their target consumers who are young or from peri-urban regions (such as slum areas). Sharing content in English with these target audiences creates a power imbalance thus limiting the consumers from engaging with the content.

“Like you realize that if I send something in English and most people are not able to understand it is very difficult for them to come to me and tell me, we don't understand English. What they will do is that they do not comment, yes they keep quiet”-NKR-CR-001, Creator

Also, in the religious content creators mentioned they switch languages to ensure they are understood by the congregants.

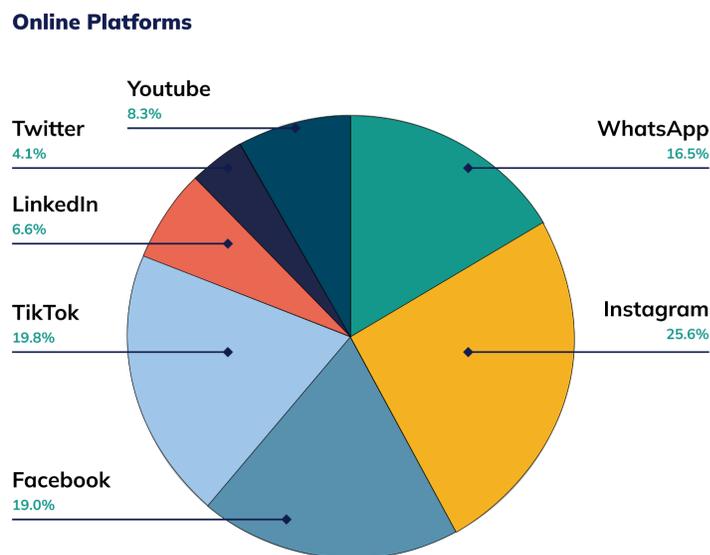
“...it is good to communicate to the people, the language they understand. That's why we use both English and Swahili to avoid being misunderstood.- NKR-CR-006, Creator

Content Creation Frequency

96% of participants said they create content at home. Others, especially those in academia create content at their place of work, where they have unlimited internet connection. The content creation process is tasking and creators acknowledge they do create video content on a daily basis. Instead, they share videos on a weekly basis or twice a week. To keep their audience engaged, they often share images and short text messages on a daily basis. They also reshare their old content or other creators' content.



Platforms Used to Share Content



Content creators in this study prefer sharing content on Instagram, Tiktok, Facebook, Whatsapp, Youtube and other social media in that order of preference. Instagram, Tiktok, Facebook and Whatsapp are predominant because:

- They allow creators to share their content in video, image, text and audio format.
- They have features that allow creators to share short format content that is easily consumed.
- They allow content to disappear after a certain period of time thus allowing the target audience to regularly engage with the new content shared by the creators.
- They allow content to be shared and re-shared across other platforms
- They allow creators to access their audience feedback

Creators said that YouTube is a good platform for sharing content, but it consumes a lot of data to upload content. LinkedIn and Twitter are preferred by professionals who wish to share and reshare content related to their expertise.



Content Creation Challenges

The list below presents the challenges faced by content creators. We have listed the challenges from the most to least severe.

- **High internet cost:** Content creation is tasking and consumes a lot of data. Creators mentioned the high cost of internet in their respective countries prohibits them from sharing content on platforms like Youtube and Facebook live

“I could not sometimes be able to afford to buy the bundles or when they are needed. It was also problematic to me, but by the grace of God, I was able to buy it by, on every other Sunday.”-NKR-CR-002, Creator

“I would like to share summons on Youtube because it has wide coverage but the cost of data to stream live is high. That’s why i opted for Whatsapp”- NKR-CR-004, Creator

- **Expensive content creation devices:** Owning devices such as laptops, cameras and licenses of editing software is costly. Creators said they would wish to have these technologies to create quality content but due to their high cost, they opt to use their mobile phone which are affordable
- **Low storage capacity:** Mobile phones have low storage capacity that can not handle the content on a weekly basis. As an alternative, creators delete content on their phone to create more space for new content. Other buy external storage or affordable cloud services
- **Low content consumption:** Creators get demotivated when there is lower viewership from their target audiences than they expected. They mentioned that content creation is time consuming and when their content is not consumed they feel unappreciated. Interestingly, creators need to keep tabs on the trends and consumption needs of their audience while finding time to create content to meet those needs – this creates tension and challenges in finding time to both engage with their online community and create content that community will find entertaining and helpful
- **Limited feedback from audience:** Creators expect feedback from the consumer to understand how they can improve their content to meet their needs. Thus, when creators receive limited feedback from their audience they assume consumers did not access or did not like their content
- **Short content creation process:** Creators said it is difficult to create short content. They do not know what to keep and what to leave out. They said consumers often skip their content when it exceed a certain time frame



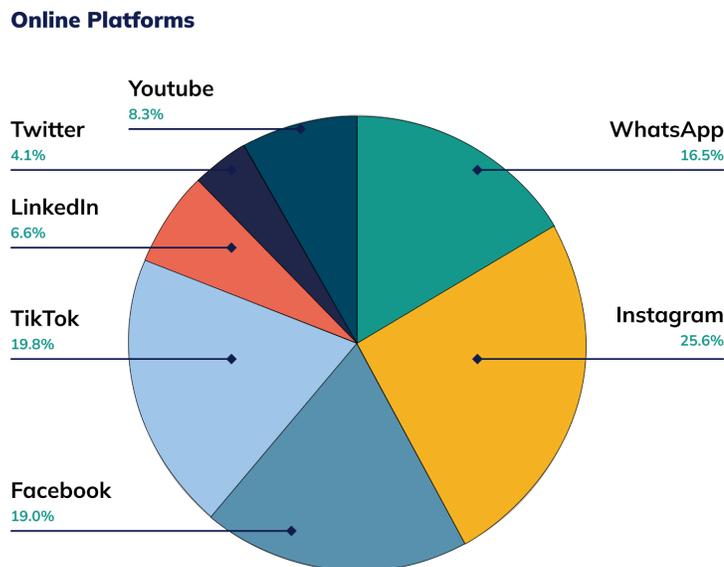
Content Consumers

Content consumers discover content online after receiving recommendations from their networks (family and friends). Ownership of personal phones allows consumers to access their favourite content at any time and anywhere.

Motivation to Consume Content

- **To Connect:** With people of like mind and expand their network.
- **To get information** E.g. about an ongoing enrolled courses or lecture, trend in an area of interest, read up peoples experiences, get mentors, job opportunities
- **For Entertainment:** Necessary to relax the mind and body

Platform used to Access Content



Content consumers prefer accessing content on Instagram, Tiktok, Facebook, Whatsapp and other social media platforms as shown in the pie chart above. Consumers prefer these platforms because they share content in short format thus they do not consume a lot of data while consuming data. They also said that the platforms allow them to share content with their networks across different platforms.

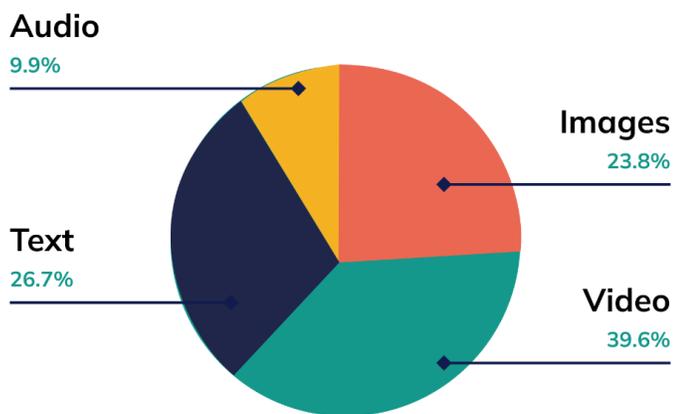
"You know you can easily share a video on Instagram via whatsapp or facebook"-- NRB-003, Consumers



We realized they often use Youtube when accessing educational or instructional information. LinkedIn is used when searching for job opportunities or when looking for connections with people with like minds.

Content Format

Preferred Content Consumption Format



39.6% of content consumers prefer accessing content in video format. They said it was easy to comprehend information shared in video format because it engages their visual and hearing senses. Text format on platforms such as Facebook and Whatsapp were preferred because they could refer to the content in the future. For long text format, consumers preferred audio notes which they could consume while doing other chores. Alternatively they said images with a caption could easily relay information.

Language

When asked about the preferred language of accessing information, 82% of consumers preferred using English Language.

"I prefer using English because it makes me feel equal to the person sharing information. I think sharing content in other language especially in this election period can make people avoid some content"-NKR-CON-013, consumer

They emphasised that when information is shared in other languages, it should have subtitles in English to enhance comprehension.



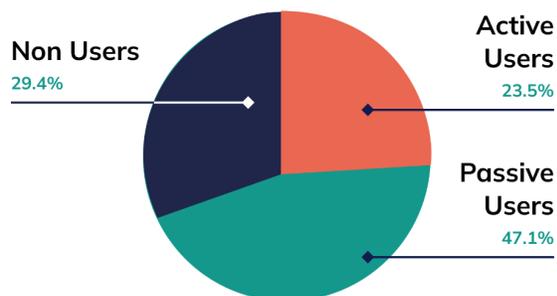
“ I access information in English and Kiswahili. More in English but I also do other languages but it has to be in subtitles and it has to be something that I am really interested in”- NRB-CON-003, Consumer

Content Consumption Challenges

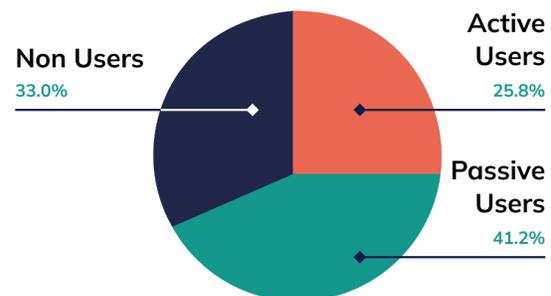
- **High internet cost:** High internet cost restrict users from accessing online content
- **Disruptive advertising:** Pop-up images and disruptive ads discourage consumers from accessing content from certain platforms. For instance, on Facebook, users switch off advertisements to ensure they access only relevant content
- **Lack of credible content:** Consumers do not trust all the information shared on social platforms. They often counter check the shared information with their friends and sometimes with the local TV and online news sources to ensure the credibility of content.

Wikipedia Usage

Consumers



Creators



There are three categories of Wikipedia platform users:

1. **Active users:** These are users who use the platform most of the time as they conduct their research or interact with the internet



2. **Passive users:** These are users who only use Wikipedia platform when looking for facts or clarifying history of a particular subject
3. **Non users:** These are users who have never interacted with the platform

In this research, most participants were passive users. They periodically used the Wikipedia platform when conducting research, looking for facts, biography, history and academic reasons. The platform is hardly used for content such as beauty, fashion. Non users contributors noted that the nature of their work, which consisted of mostly personal content targeted towards the lifestyle, beauty, and natural hair space, made it unlikely that Wikipedia would feature into their content creation process. The purely facts-based format did not fit within their content curation philosophy. For instance, creators in fashion, entertainment, music and photography field said that the information shared on Wikipedia was detailed and did not fit their line of interest:

“I mean, if I'm looking for reggae music, I wouldn't search for it on Wikipedia. Because again, to give me a overview on reggae music”-CPT-CR-015, Creator

“It's not helpful in my field, It just broadens my my knowledge, but then I can't necessarily use it in my profession”.-NRB-CR-004, Creator

That said, through further probing, creators started realizing that there are ways in which a platform such as Wikipedia could fit within their process. This included, for natural hair content, using Wikipedia to explain the chemical found in natural hair products and how it affects different types and textures of hair.

Participants who had interacted with the platform said they love it because it brings many ideas together in one place and has a good Search Engine Optimization (SEO). However, they said they were sometimes a bit skeptical about the information therein due to trust issues/editing rights. They said they did not perceive Wikipedia as a platform for sharing content because it was text oriented and not-user friendly.

29% of consumers and 33% of creators said they had not accessed the Wikipedia platform. Instead they said they preferred assessing information via Google search Engine.

Wikipedia Likes

- According to the participants interviewed, Wikipedia is easily accessible
- Wikipedia has a wide range of information
- Participants said that they liked the pop up feature that appears when you hover over certain information on Wikipedia while using the laptop.



Wikipedia Dislikes

- Participants in academia felt that information on Wikipedia cannot always be trusted. They said that the fact that they could not interact with the author of the content to clarify the information shared, made them not to trust the information
- Sometimes the participants do not find the information they are looking for, thus frustrating them.

Recommendations for Wikipedia

The major recommendations received from the participants include:

1. **Update Wikipedia's interface to target non-academic visitors:** Participants felt Wikipedia is mainly fitted for users in academia. They said the platform is text based with jargon that they have to look up. They recommended the inclusion of graphics, videos and different colors to make the platform appealing to users of a wider range.

"it's very text based , because obviously, it's an official site. But I think if I think just, I will feel better on the site, if it looked prettier, I guess. Like, I don't know if it's colour or the text that imaging but not extreme just like, gives you a nice, appealing."-CPT014-CON, consumer

I mean, if it's possible to create differently. Interfaces for different people. For example, we have the dark mode, which is possible to put the dark mode in Wikipedia for people that have eye problem or colour blindness ABUJ-CR-001, creator

2. **Surface signals that increase trust:** Participants do not trust the information shared on wikipedia articles because the articles are edited by numerous people who sometimes do not have the facts. They said that the editing rights of the articles should be control and possibly engage academia in various field to verify the online content

"For it to be trusted, I guess they have to get integrated into the academic space. And have their information actually verified. That way I guess they'll have more online writers and all that having access to the information which you can actually use in class as a reference."-NRB-CON-004, consumer

"First I will say they should regulate the content and it should not be so easy for anyone to put anything up. They should confirm the credibility of people who



post information there before allowing them to post information. I think it will be very cool. Or they should have two platforms: one should be an easy quick wiki platform and the other one should be credible based. So that people that want to have a quick visit can go there and also those that want to have credible information can as well go there.” - LAG-CR-003- Creator

3. **Make Wikipedia easy to reference:** Participants in academia highlighted that referencing Wikipedia articles is a challenge. They recommended that the platform should show the metadata of the author to make referencing easy. In addition, they recommended that sharing of content should be made easier.

“I don’t like things like when you have some information and you cannot get the source of the information easily or the source cannot be reached out”-ABUJ-CR-005, Creator

4. **Increase discoverability and navigability of search on Wikipedia:** Participants said they always use Google search engine to search for Wikipedia. They recommended that Wikipedia platform should be accessible easily like google to enable them search for content

“Wikipedia can have its own search engine. So that we don’t have to go through Google.”-ABUJ-CON-004, Consumer

“Then secondly, accessibility of content, not just only by typing on search engines they should have an independent, I can call it either software in terms of web application or mobile application or even a desktop whereby somebody can install it on his computer wherever anytime you need, you don't have to go to search engine for you to get those content.”-ABUJ-CR-003, Contributor

5. **Increase access to Wikipedia tutorial/help page:** There is a need for videos/tutorials that can guide people to create a Wikipedia page of their choice.

“For Wikipedia, as I mentioned earlier, the Graphical User Interface (GUI)? It's a bit old, so it's a bit difficult sometimes, because especially when I wanted to register, I had a problem finding the registration link.”-ABUJ-CR-004, Creator

6. **Summaries and short reads:** Participants recommended that Wikipedia should include a summary section at the top of the page to allow concise/bit-size info (more like abstract page/section).



“So I think that maybe you could take, for example, if I'm searching for information on something, they could take the article, and summarize it into a video. Obviously, you're not going to put everything in there, but maybe like a 10-15 minute video, on the overview of what this is about.”-CPT-CR-015, Creator

- 7. Make Wikipedia accessible on other platforms:** Participants said that users of platforms such as Instagram, Tiktok and Facebook are able to share content via the different platforms. They recommended that Wikipedia should allow their users to share content similar to these platforms

“I would love Wikipedia to integrate sharing options with other social media platforms”-NRB-CO-001, Consumer

- 8. New products and incentivized editing:** Participants recommended that Wikipedia should include features that allow users to post videos, share content and add feedback on the shared content. They also suggested options where content creators are paid for submitting content to the platform.

“If Wikipedia comes up with an app, with videos, comment section and other things I have mentioned, I probably would be on Wikipedia”- CPT-CON-012 Consumer

“Most of the things I do are in real time so if Wikipedia can incorporate real time engagement that will incorporate audio video and text then I think that will be great. Is as simple as that.”- LAG-CR-003- Creator

“Yes, I would like them to have the feature of sponsored poster articles so that the author can send some payments so that his article can be published.”-ABUJ-CR-001, creator

“If you have paid platforms, something in the sense of maybe if we create a on such a platform, then if... you know how Youtube works? That would be nice.”-NRB-CR-06, Creator



Conclusion

Content Creators

Content creation, though fun and fulfilling for many participants, still requires more attention with respect to platforms or applications that can be used to create content. Wikipedia has been identified as a platform that a lot of participants engage with to learn. However, it's not perceived by most participants as a platform they can use to create content. A major reason is the unattractive user interface with old GUI, long content format, primarily text content, cumbersome/unclear process on how to use it and its open access policy/edit right. The domineering belief is that if all suggestions listed are taken into consideration, Wikipedia would become more appealing and attract a larger audience. Many participants see potential in the product becoming an educational social media. Their advice is that if Wikipedia decides to make the Wikistory a form of social media, they shouldn't deviate from their core/values which is knowledge sharing and education.

Content Consumers

Consumers have various reasons for accessing content online. Some of the reasons are entertainment, work demands, self-improvement, school work/project, connection. It's interesting to also note that the choice of platform to access for content consumption depends on the type of content intended to consume. While some participants access Wikipedia content, they only do it for quick information or gain insights about some concepts. Many of them still go to other platforms to further read more. A main reason is because of the open edit that Wikipedia provides, the level of trust seems to be low. Another reason is because academics do not see Wikipedia as a valid platform for referencing.

