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Publics in Emerging Economies Worry Social Media Sow Division, Even as They Offer New Chances for Political Engagement

Many who use social media say they regularly see false and misleading content along with new ideas

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Table of Contents

Overview: Publics in Emerging Economies Worry Social Media Sow Division, Even as They Offer New Chances for Political Engagement	3
1. Users say they regularly encounter false and misleading content on social media – but also new ideas	12
Fewer rely on or trust social media for political news than say the same of in-person discussions	13
Social media users regularly see incorrect information and content that makes them feel negatively about other groups	15
Users have mixed opinions about the nature of the content they find on social media	18
2. More people are comfortable discussing politics in person than on their phones or via social media	25
More prefer in-person conversations about politics to discussions on mobile phones or social media	26
Majorities have not been surprised by someone’s political views on social media or blocked a person for political reasons	31
3. Publics think technology impacts the political environment in both positive and negative ways	33
Mixed attitudes about the internet’s overall impact on politics	34
Many think technology has made people better informed – but also easier to manipulate	36
Social media seen to confer benefits – but also risks – on the overall political process	41
Acknowledgments	44
Methodology	46
Appendix A: About the focus groups	47
Appendix B: Technology-related surveys regularly find that people see connectivity bringing positives and negatives	49
Appendix C: Detailed tables	50
Topline questionnaire	58

Publics in Emerging Economies Worry Social Media Sow Division, Even as They Offer New Chances for Political Engagement

Many who use social media say they regularly see false and misleading content along with new ideas

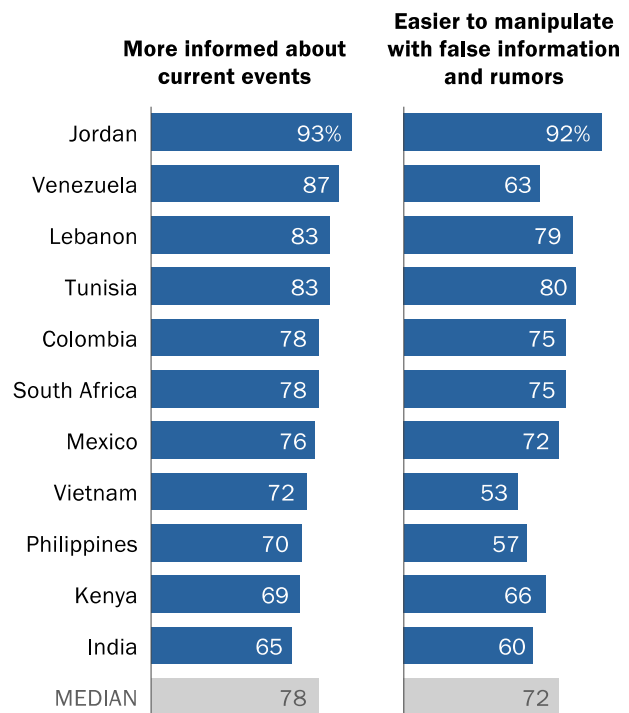
In recent years, the internet and social media have been integral to political protests, social movements and election campaigns around the globe. Events from the [Arab Spring](#) to the worldwide spread of [#MeToo](#) have been aided by digital connectivity in both advanced and emerging economies. But popular social media and messaging platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp have drawn attention for their potential role in spreading [misinformation](#), facilitating political manipulation by [foreign](#) and [domestic](#) actors, and increasing [violence](#) and [hate crimes](#).

Recently, the Sri Lankan government shut down several of the country's social media and messaging services immediately after [Easter day bombings](#) at Catholic churches killed and wounded hundreds. Some technology enthusiasts [praised](#) the decision but wondered if this development marked a change from pro-democracy, Arab Spring-era hopes that digital technology would be a liberating tool to a new fear that it has become [“a force that can corrode” societies](#).

In the context of these developments, a Pew Research Center survey of adults in 11 emerging economies finds these publics are worried about the risks associated with social media and other communications technologies – even as they cite their benefits in other respects. Succinctly put, the prevailing view in the surveyed countries is that mobile phones, the internet and social

Majorities say access to technology has made people more informed, but also easier to manipulate

% of adults who say access to mobile phones, the internet and social media have made people ...



Source: Mobile Technology and Its Social Impact Survey 2018. Q15a & Q15d.

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media have collectively amplified politics in both positive and negative directions – simultaneously making people more empowered politically *and* potentially more exposed to harm.

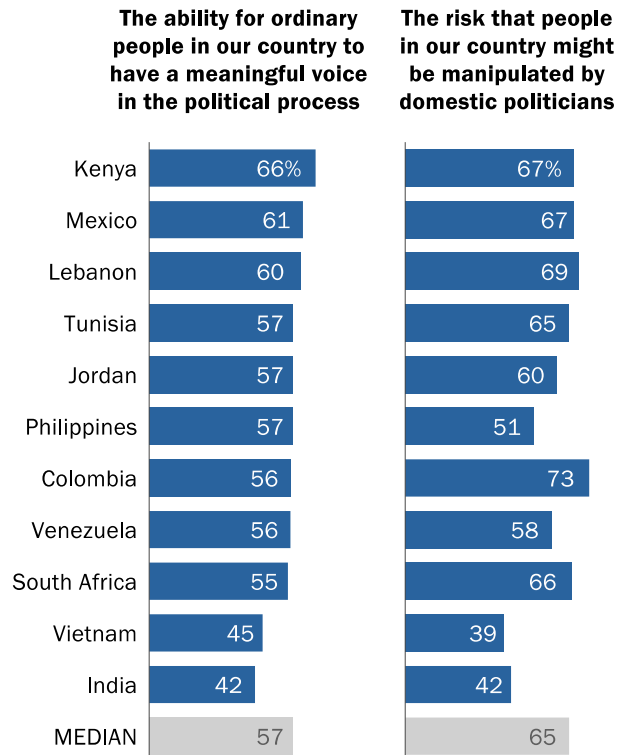
When it comes to the benefits, adults in these countries see digital connectivity enhancing people’s access to political information and facilitating engagement with their domestic politics. Majorities in each country say access to the internet, mobile phones and social media has made people more informed about current events, and majorities in most countries believe social media have increased ordinary people’s ability to have a meaningful voice in the political process. Additionally, half or more in seven of these 11 countries say technology has made people more accepting of those who have different views than they do.

But these perceived benefits are frequently accompanied by concerns about the limitations of technology as a tool for political action or information seeking. Even as many say social media have increased the influence of ordinary people in the political process, majorities in eight of these 11 countries feel these platforms have simultaneously increased the risk that people might be manipulated by domestic politicians. Around half or more in eight countries also think these platforms increase the risk that foreign powers might interfere in their country’s elections.

Similarly, the widespread view that technology has made people more informed about current events is often paired with worries that these tools might make people vulnerable: Majorities in 10 of these countries feel technology has made it easier to manipulate people with rumors and false information. Further, a [recent report](#) by the Center found that a median of 64% across these 11 countries say people should be very concerned about exposure to false or incorrect information when using their phones.

People see social media giving them political voice but also increasing the risk of manipulation

% of adults who say social media have increased ...



Source: Mobile Technology and Its Social Impact Survey 2018. Q34a & Q34c.

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What is a median?

Throughout this report, median percentages are used to help readers see overall patterns. The median is the middle number in a list of figures sorted in ascending or descending order. In a survey of 11 countries, the median result is the sixth figure on a list of country-level findings ranked in order.

Publics in these countries are also conflicted over the extent to which technology is broadening people's personal horizons or causing their politics to become more tribal – and many seem to see elements of both. An 11-country median of 52% say technology has made people more accepting of those who have different views than they do, while a median of 58% say it has made people more divided in their political opinions. In most countries, larger shares say technology is causing people to be more divided than say it has caused them to be open to different groups of people.

“The public’s opinion is easily manipulated through social media. Videos circulating about politicians can either make them famous and likable or break them down.”

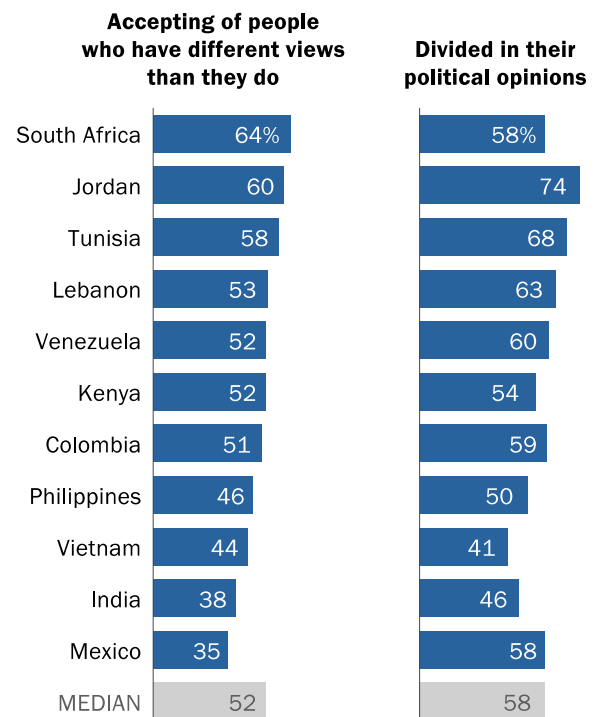
-Woman, 23, Tunisia

Those most attuned to digital technology’s potential benefits are often also most aware of its downsides

It is not simply the case that certain segments of the public have consistently positive views about the political impacts of digital technology while others feel consistently more negative. In many instances, individuals who are most attuned to the potential benefits technology can bring to the political domain are also the ones most anxious about the possible harms.

Many see technology both dividing people and bringing them together

% of adults who say access to mobile phones, the internet and social media have made people more ...



Source: Mobile Technology and Its Social Impact Survey 2018. Q15b & Q15c.

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For instance, in 10 of the 11 countries surveyed, the view that technology has made people more informed is correlated with the view that technology has made people easier to manipulate with rumors and false information. And in most countries, the view that technology has made people more accepting of each other is correlated with the view that it has made people more divided in their political opinions.

The social media landscape in the 11 countries surveyed

This report is the second in a series exploring mobile connectivity in 11 emerging economies. Because the [first report](#) goes into detail on mobile phone ownership and social media use, we will only briefly summarize it here.

In most of the 11 countries surveyed, a majority of adults report using at least one of the seven social media platforms or messaging apps included in this survey: Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram, Viber and Tinder. Social media use is especially common in Lebanon, Jordan, Colombia and Mexico, where about three-quarters or more use at least one of these services. Kenya and India are the only countries where a majority of adults do *not* use at least one of these social media or messaging services.

In each of these countries, Facebook or WhatsApp are the most widely used digital platforms among the seven asked about. A median of 62% of adults in these countries report using Facebook, and a median of 47% say they use WhatsApp. Using multiple social platforms is common: In all countries but the Philippines, India and Vietnam, around a third or more say they currently use more than one social media platform or messaging app. Among adults who use only one of these platforms, Facebook or WhatsApp tend to be dominant.

In most countries, each of these social media and messaging services are more likely to be used by younger adults. Educational gaps in usage are also significant for most of these services, with people who have a secondary education or higher being more likely to use them.

Certain groups – such as those with higher levels of education and those who are social media users – are especially likely to note both the positive and negative impacts of technology.^{1,2} Across all 11 countries, adults with a secondary education or higher are more likely to say technology has made people more informed about current events relative to those who do not have a secondary

¹ For the purpose of comparing education groups across countries, we standardize education levels based on the United Nations' International Standard Classification of Education. In all nations surveyed, the lower education category is below secondary education and the higher category is secondary or above.

² The survey asked respondents whether they use seven different social media and messaging platforms: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp, Snapchat and Viber, plus the dating app Tinder. Throughout this report, references to “social media platform and messaging app users” or “social media users” encompass anyone who uses one or more of these seven different sites. For more information on the use of these platforms in different countries and by different demographic groups, please see our previous report, “[Mobile Connectivity in Emerging Economies.](#)”

education. Yet, in nine countries, those with higher levels of education are also more inclined to say technology has made people more subject to false information and rumors. More highly educated adults are also more likely to say technology has contributed to both political divisions and tolerance of opposing viewpoints in seven of these countries (Colombia, India, Kenya, Lebanon, the Philippines, Tunisia and Vietnam).

Similarly, social media users in all 11 countries are more likely than non-users to say technology has made people more informed about current events. Users are also generally more likely to say technology has made people more accepting of those with different views, and more willing to engage in political debates. However, users are also more likely to say technology is making people more divided in their political opinions and easier to mislead with misinformation.

The public's sense that technology brings both promise and problems is mirrored in social media users' experiences on these platforms

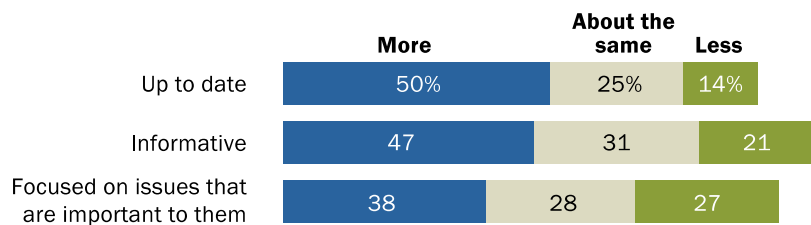
These broad public views about the positive and negative impacts of technology on the political and information environment are echoed in social media users' lived experiences on these platforms.

In some respects, social media users indicate that the nature of the content on these platforms is quite positive. In every country surveyed, for instance, majorities of social media users say they frequently or occasionally encounter content there that introduces them to new ideas. Similarly, pluralities of social media users in most countries say the news and information they get on these platforms is more up to date and more informative compared with other sources.

Social media users in 11 emerging economies regularly come across new ideas on these platforms

75% of social media platform and messaging app users frequently/occasionally see articles and other content when they use social media that introduce them to a new idea

% of social media platform and messaging app users who say that the news and information they get on social media is more/about the same/less ___ compared with other sources



Note: Percentages are 11-country medians. Social media and messaging app users include those who said they use one or more of the seven specific online platforms measured in this survey.

Source: Mobile Technology and Its Social Impact Survey 2018. Q32a, Q32b, Q32e & Q33c. "Publics in Emerging Economies Worry Social Media Sow Division, Even as They Offer New Chances for Political Engagement"

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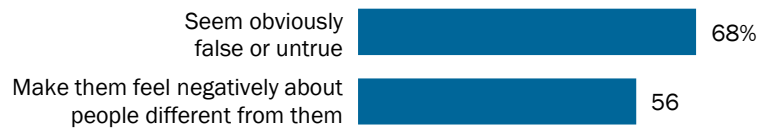
But as was true of views of the overall technology landscape, social media users see challenges as well as benefits. Most notably, majorities of social media users in 10 of these 11 countries frequently or occasionally encounter content that seems obviously false or untrue, and majorities of users in six countries regularly encounter content on these platforms that makes them feel negatively about groups of people who are different than they are.

Social media users also express mixed opinions about the characteristics of the social media environment relative to other information sources. Only in Vietnam do a plurality of users say these platforms are more reliable than other sources they encounter. In other countries, users are more divided about whether the information on social media is about as reliable – or less so – than what they see elsewhere. Opinion is also relatively mixed across the 11 countries as far as whether the news people get on these platforms is more hateful than what they get elsewhere.

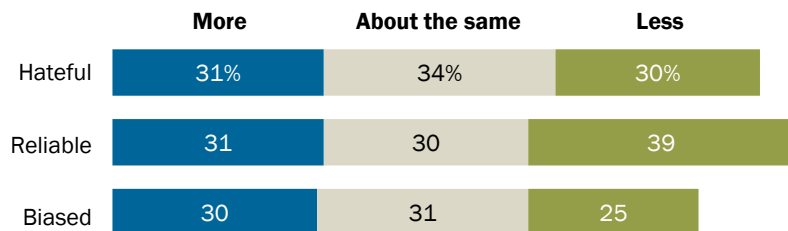
This range of experiences and attitudes is also reflected in at least some users' personal interactions on social media platforms. An 11-country median of 36% of social media users – including around half in Kenya and Venezuela – say they have learned someone's political beliefs were different than they had thought based on things that person posted to social media. In all 11 countries surveyed, those who have been surprised by

Social media users in 11 emerging economies regularly encounter negative content on these platforms

% of social media platform and messaging app users who frequently/occasionally see articles and other content when they use social media that ...



% of social media platform and messaging app users who say that the news and information they get on social media is more/about the same/less compared with other sources



Note: Percentages are 11-country medians. Social media and messaging app users include those who said they use one or more of the seven specific online platforms measured in this survey.

Source: Mobile Technology and Its Social Impact Survey 2018. Q32c, Q32d, Q32f, Q33a & Q33b.

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“We have to understand that there are scores of websites and articles on the internet that are false and inaccurate, purely opinion, or extremely biased or slanted.”

-Woman, 22, Philippines

someone's political beliefs in this way are more likely to say technology has made people more divided in their political opinions. In seven countries, however, these users are also more likely to say access to technology has made people more accepting of those who have different views.

More people are comfortable talking politics in person than in digital spaces

Even as social media have offered citizens new ways to encounter and share information, more people are comfortable speaking about politics in person than via mobile phones or social media. These differences are especially pronounced in Lebanon: 78% of Lebanese overall say they are comfortable discussing political issues in person, but 48% of Lebanese mobile phone users are comfortable discussing these issues on their phones and just 39% of Lebanese social media users say they are comfortable broaching these issues on those platforms.

People who are comfortable discussing politics in digital spaces tend to be more optimistic about the impact these technologies have on politics in their country. For example, social media users who are comfortable discussing politics there are more likely to say the internet has had a good impact on politics and that social media have increased ordinary people's ability to have a meaningful voice in politics. They also are usually more likely to describe the news they get on social media platforms positively – as more up to date, informative, reliable and focused on issues they care about – compared with other sources. And they are more likely to say they see articles on social media that introduce them to new ideas. But they are also somewhat more likely to say they regularly encounter articles or other content that makes them feel negatively about groups of people who are different from them.

Although publics in most countries are more comfortable discussing politics in person than via digital methods, people in certain countries are generally more comfortable discussing politics –

People in most countries more willing to discuss politics in person than via digital channels

% who say they are comfortable discussing political issues or news ...

	In person (based on all adults)	On their mobile phone (based on mobile phone users)	On social media (based on social media users)
Philippines	81	72	69
Lebanon	78	48	39
Vietnam	74	71	63
Kenya	72	61	63
South Africa	71	58	51
India	65	63	61
Mexico	59	44	37
Jordan	55	26	27
Tunisia	53	33	40
Colombia	52	36	29
Venezuela	45	29	29

Note: Mobile phone users include those who say they own or share a mobile phone. Social media users include those who use one or more of the specific online platforms measured in the survey. Source: Mobile Technology and Its Social Impact Survey 2018. Q35a, Q35b, Q35c.

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whether in person, using their mobile phone or over social media – than people in other countries. The Philippines, Vietnam, Kenya and India are countries where majorities are comfortable discussing politics in person, and majorities of users are comfortable talking politics on a mobile phone or via social media. However, people’s comfort levels have little relationship with overall measures of [civil liberties](#) in their country or measures of [how democratic the country](#) is (or is not). And countries with higher levels of interpersonal trust are not more likely to be comfortable discussing politics in any of these venues.³

“You know, there’s a politician that sends text messages to us saying ‘Happy birthday, from Senator this-and-that.’ Even with that, they have already got your number. What more [do they have] if you’re already on social media?”

-Man, 44, Philippines

These are among the major findings from a new Pew Research Center survey conducted among 28,122 adults in 11 countries from Sept. 7 to Dec. 7, 2018. In addition to the survey, the Center conducted focus groups with diverse groups of participants in Kenya, Mexico, the Philippines and Tunisia in March 2018, and their comments are included throughout the report (see [Appendix A](#) for more information).

³ We use the most recently available World Values Survey data for each country to examine interpersonal trust. Data is not available for Kenya. Esteban Ortiz-Ospina and Max Roser (2019) – “Trust”. Published online at OurWorldInData.org. Retrieved from: [‘https://ourworldindata.org/trust’](https://ourworldindata.org/trust)

Second report in a series about mobile connectivity in emerging economies

After more than a decade of studying the spread and impact of mobile devices in the United States, Pew Research Center has intensified its exploration of the impact of such connectivity in emerging economies. This report is the second of several reports about mobile use and attitudes toward digital connectivity in these 11 countries.

The [first report](#) covered general topics such as the impact of mobile connectivity on the economy, children and communication. It also found that people experience myriad tensions with their devices. Some examples include:

- In every country, around half or more adults say the increasing use of mobile phones has had a good influence on education – making it one of the factors where people see the most positive impact from the technology. But few think the increasing use of mobile phones has had a good influence on children in their country, and a median of 79% say people should be very concerned about children being exposed to harmful or immoral content when using their mobile phones.
- Large majorities of mobile phone users in all 11 countries say their devices have helped them stay in touch with those who live far away. At the same time, a median of 48% of adults say people should be very concerned about people losing the ability to communicate face-to-face when using their mobile phones.
- Mobile phone users in each of the 11 countries surveyed are more likely to say their phone is something that frees them than something that ties them down. Mobile phone users in most countries are also more likely to describe their phone as something that helps them save time rather than waste time. Although many mobile users view their phones as useful, they do not always see them as necessities. For instance, a majority of Venezuelans say their phone is something that frees them and helps them save time, but just 29% say they couldn't live without their phone. Conversely, a majority of Jordanians say they couldn't live without their phone – even as they are more likely to describe it as a time waster than a time saver.

These types of tensions are common in many Pew Research Center surveys about technology in the United States. For more, see [Appendix B](#).

1. Users say they regularly encounter false and misleading content on social media – but also new ideas

Social media use has [increased](#) in emerging and developing nations in recent years. And, across the 11 emerging economies surveyed for this report, a median of 28% of adults say social media are *very* important for helping them keep up with political news and other developments happening in the world.

Pluralities of social media users in most countries find the information they get on these platforms to be more up to date, informative and focused on issues important to them than what they get from other sources.⁴ Large majorities of social media users in most countries also say they regularly see articles and other content that introduce them to new ideas.

At the same time, opinions are divided when it comes to the reliability, bias and hateful nature of social media content when compared with other sources. And when asked about the kinds of material they encounter on these sites, majorities in most countries report at least occasionally seeing content that seems obviously false or untrue or that makes them feel negatively about groups different from them. Across almost all these measures, those who say social media are very important sources of political information see these platforms in different – and often more extreme – terms than other social media users.

⁴ Social media platform and messaging app users include those who say they use one or more of the seven specific online platforms asked about on the survey: Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, Viber, Instagram, Snapchat and Tinder. Overall, a median of 64% use at least one of these platforms across these 11 countries.

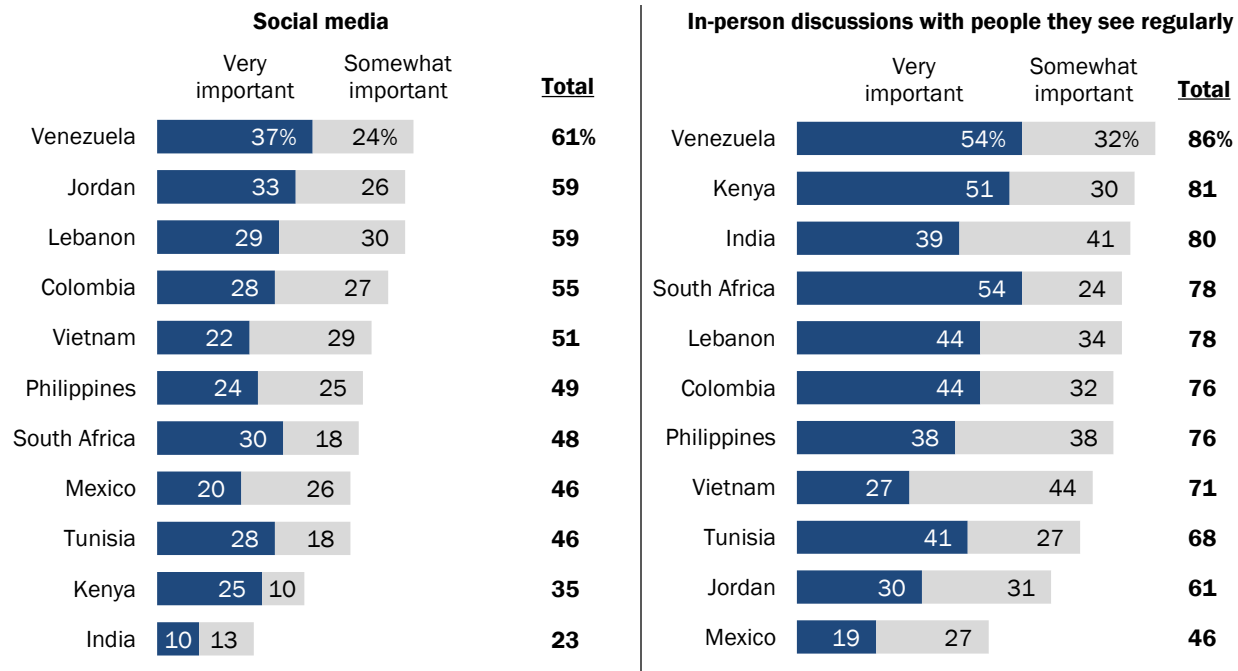
Fewer rely on or trust social media for political news than say the same of in-person discussions

Even as social media use has become more common in many emerging countries, in only four of the 11 countries surveyed do a majority of people say these platforms are an important source of political information – and nowhere does a majority say social media are *very* important for learning about politics. All told, a median of 28% of adults say social media are very important for helping them keep up with political news and other developments happening in the world.

In every country, many fewer people say social media are very important for helping them keep up with political events than say the same about a more traditional form of social networking – having discussions in person with people they see regularly. In every country but Mexico, a majority says in-person discussions are an important way they stay informed. Around four-in-ten or more in most countries say these conversations are *very* important.

In most countries, in-person discussions seen as more valuable for keeping up with political news than social media

% of adults who say ___ are very/somewhat important for helping them keep up with political news and other developments happening in the world



Source: Mobile Technology and Its Social Impact Survey 2018. Q30a & Q30e.

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Some of the reason people place less importance on social media might stem from the fact that social media use can [vary widely](#) across these 11 countries – from a low of 31% in India to a high of 85% in Lebanon. But even among those who use these platforms, only in four of the 11 countries surveyed (South Africa, Tunisia, Venezuela and Kenya) do about half or more social media users say these platforms are *very* important sources for helping them keep up with political news and global happenings.

In every country, younger and more educated people are more likely to say social media are very important to them for political news.⁵

However, in many instances this is largely due to high levels of social media adoption among the young and more educated. Among those who say they use social media, people with

higher and lower levels of education are equally likely to say these platforms are a very important source of political news in seven of these 11 countries, and the same is true of older and younger social media users in six countries.

“If you haven’t watched the news today, at least you can still watch it on Facebook.”

-Man, 40, Philippines

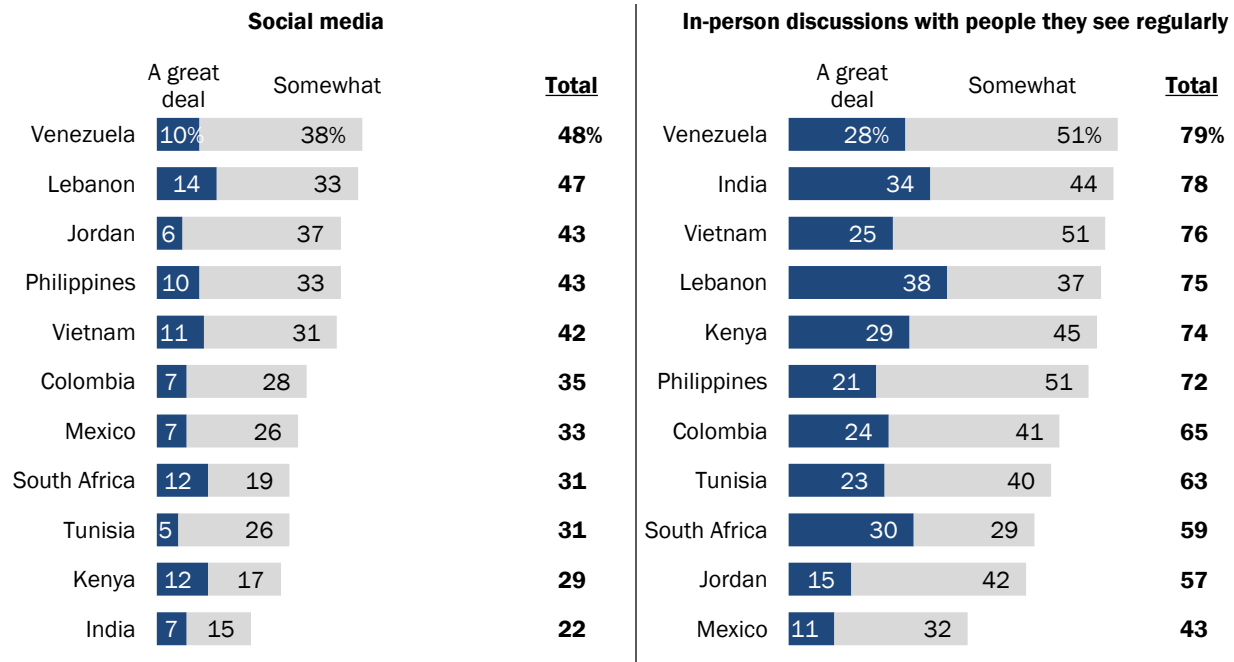
Publics in these countries more likely to trust political information from in-person conversations than from social media

More broadly, relatively few adults in these countries say they trust the information they get from social media platforms. Among all adults, a median of 35% trust the political news they get on social media, including a median of just 10% who trust it a great deal. Among the subset of adults in these countries who use social media, an 11-country median of 55% say they trust the information they find on social media at least somewhat – ranging from highs of about seven-in-ten in the Philippines, Kenya, India and Venezuela to lows of less than half in Colombia and Mexico. Few users in most countries trust the news they get on social media a great deal – varying from only 8% of Jordanian social media users to 31% of Kenyan users.

⁵ For the purpose of comparing education groups across countries, we standardize education levels based on the United Nations’ International Standard Classification of Education. In all nations surveyed, the lower education category is below secondary education and the higher category is secondary or above.

Larger shares trust news they get from others in person than trust what they see on social media

% of adults who trust the news and information they get from ...



Source: Mobile Technology and Its Social Impact Survey 2018. Q31a & Q31e.

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These levels of trust stand out in comparison with the faith people place in the information they gather from face-to-face conversations with people they see regularly. When it comes to in-person conversations, a median of 72% of adults say they trust the information they glean from these discussions, and in eight countries, around a quarter or more say they trust the information a great deal.

Social media users regularly see incorrect information and content that makes them feel negatively about other groups

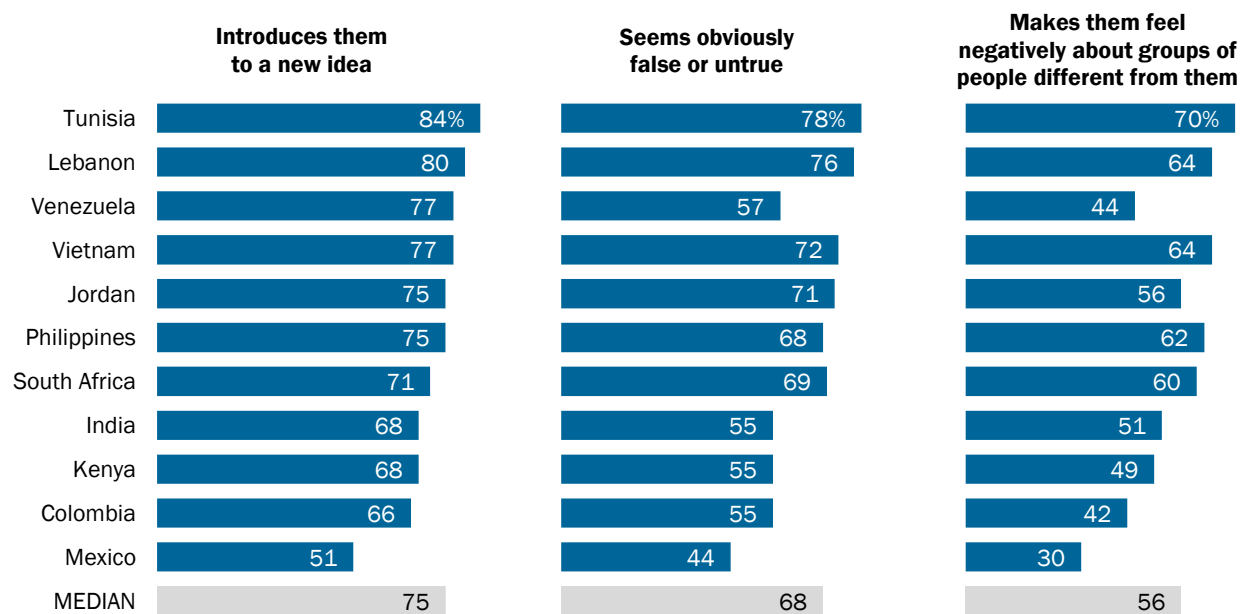
Social media users report a mix of positive and negative experiences related to the content they see on these platforms. This survey asked about the frequency with which people encounter three specific types of content on social media: content that introduces them to new ideas, that seems obviously false or untrue, or that makes them feel negatively about groups of people who are different from them. Although in no country do a majority of social media users see any of these types of content *frequently*, in many countries a majority reports seeing all of them at least occasionally.

A median of three-quarters of social media platform and messaging app users say they frequently or occasionally see articles or other content that introduce them to a new idea, ranging from more than eight-in-ten in Tunisia to about half in Mexico. Smaller shares see this content frequently – around four-in-ten or fewer in most countries.

Publics are more likely to say they regularly see content that introduces them to a new idea than to say they regularly see content that seems obviously false or untrue, or that provokes negative feelings toward others. Still, majorities of social media users in most countries surveyed see both at least occasionally, including about two-thirds or more in Tunisia, Lebanon and Vietnam. And very few social media users say they *never* see content like this: A median of 17% of social media users report never seeing articles that make them feel negatively toward groups of people different from them, and just 8% never see content that appears to be obviously false or untrue.

Social media users regularly see articles or other content that introduce them to new ideas, but many also report seeing things that are false or misleading

% of social media platform and messaging app users who frequently/occasionally see articles or other content when they use social media that ...



Note: Social media and messaging app users include those who said they use one or more of the seven specific online platforms measured in this survey.

Source: Mobile Technology and Its Social Impact Survey 2018. Q33a-c.

“Publics in Emerging Economies Worry Social Media Sow Division, Even as They Offer New Chances for Political Engagement”

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Social media users who access more than one platform are more likely than those who just use a single platform to come across all three kinds of content. The differences are especially large in Lebanon: 83% of Lebanese who access multiple social media sites regularly see articles that seem obviously false or untrue, compared with only about half (48%) of those who use a single site. In Tunisia, on the other hand, access to multiple platforms is not linked with someone's likelihood of coming across these kinds of content.

"It's bad enough that websites like Facebook already cocoon users because the author serves you information that he thinks you want to see and hear, based on what you've already seen and heard Now we learn on top of this, the information may not be true."

-Man, 25, Philippines

Social media users connected across multiple platforms are more likely to see both positive and negative content on social media

% of social media platform and messaging app users who frequently/occasionally see articles or other content when they use social media that ...

	<i>Seems obviously false or untrue</i>			<i>Introduces them to a new idea</i>			<i>Makes them feel negatively about groups of people different from them</i>		
	Those who use 1 platform	Those who use 2+ platforms	DIFF	Those who use 1 platform	Those who use 2+ platforms	DIFF	Those who use 1 platform	Those who use 2+ platforms	DIFF
	%	%		%	%		%	%	
Lebanon	48	83	+35	47	88	+41	36	71	+35
Colombia	31	60	+29	42	71	+29	29	44	+15
Mexico	26	49	+23	28	57	+29	21	32	+11
India	47	57	+10	52	72	+20	42	53	+11
Jordan	56	74	+18	58	78	+20	40	58	+18
South Africa	60	73	+13	58	75	+17	49	65	+16
Kenya	50	57	+7	58	73	+15	44	51	+7
Philippines	67	74	+7	71	86	+15	58	73	+15
Venezuela	53	59	+6	69	80	+11	40	46	+6
Vietnam	69	80	+11	76	81	+5	60	72	+12
Tunisia	75	80	+5	82	85	+3	70	72	+2

Note: Significant differences in **bold**. Social media and messaging app users include those who said they use one or more of the seven specific online platforms measured in this survey.

Source: Mobile Technology and Its Social Impact Survey 2018. Q33a-c.

"Publics in Emerging Economies Worry Social Media Sow Division, Even as They Offer New Chances for Political Engagement"

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These differences in platform use are themselves related to social media users' age and education. Older and less educated social media users are more likely to use only one site, while younger and more educated users are more likely to use many. Consequently, younger and more educated social media users are generally more likely to encounter all kinds of content than older and less educated users.

Users have mixed opinions about the nature of the content they find on social media

In addition to encountering a mix of positive and negative content on these platforms, social media users in these countries also have mixed opinions about the nature of what they see on social media relative to other information sources. In most countries, larger shares say these social media platforms are more up to date, informative and focused on issues that are personally important to them. But there is much more disagreement over whether these platforms are more reliable, hateful or biased than other information sources.

Pluralities in most countries see social media as more informative than other sources

Pluralities of social media users in most countries surveyed say social media are more informative and focused on issues important to them compared with other sources: Six-in-ten or more in Lebanon and Vietnam say these platforms are more informative, while about half say the same in Venezuela, South Africa, Tunisia and the Philippines. But Mexicans and Colombians take a different view. In these countries, only about a quarter of social media users say these platforms are more informative than other sources, with roughly half saying they are similarly informative.

Meanwhile, in no country does a majority say the news and information they get on social media is more focused on issues important to them compared with other sources. Instead, many say the news they get on social media is about as focused on issues they care about as other sources, if not less so. Half of Colombian

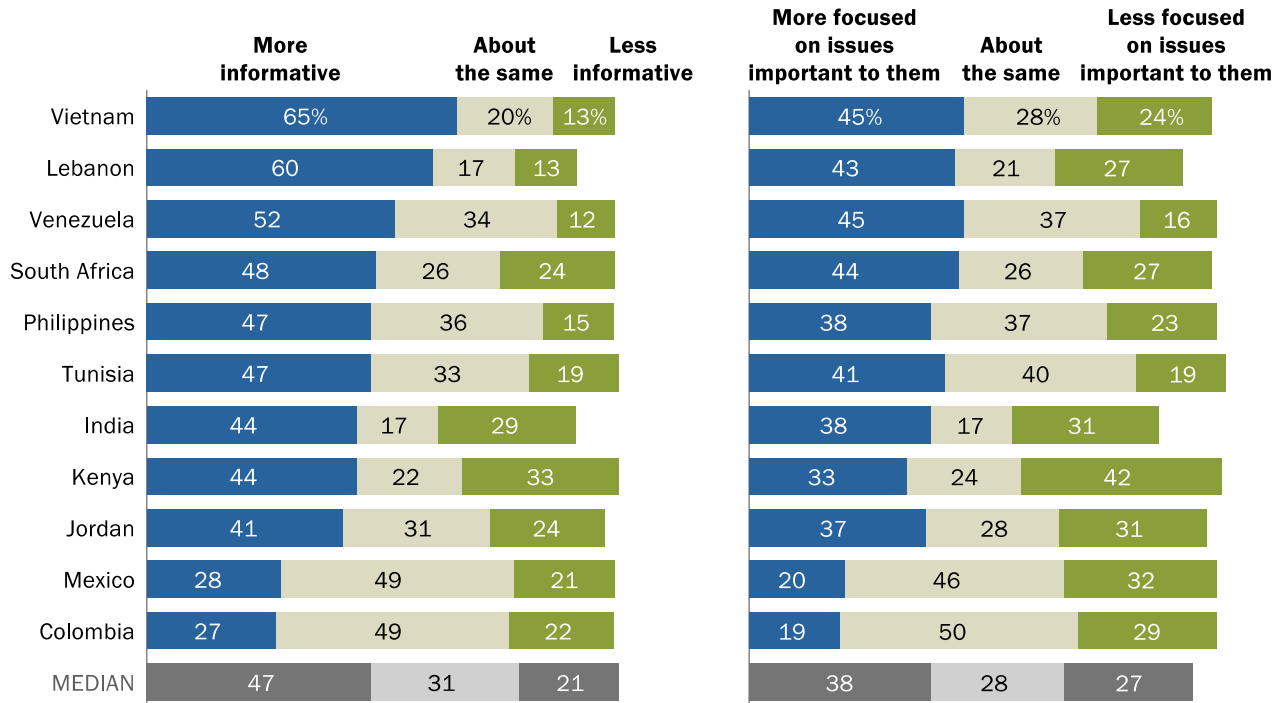
social media users, for example, say the news and information they get on social media is about as focused on issues that are important to them as the news they get elsewhere. And about four-in-ten Kenyan users feel it is *less* focused on personally relevant issues.

“[Facebook] identifies you and it sends you whatever you like the most. The information is more precise and it corresponds to your personality.”

-Woman, 34, Mexico

In many countries, pluralities of social media users see content on these platforms as more informative, more focused on issues important to them than other sources

% of social media platform and messaging app users who say the news and information they get on social media is ___ compared with other sources



Note: Social media and messaging app users include those who said they use one or more of the seven specific online platforms measured in this survey.

Source: Mobile Technology and Its Social Impact Survey 2018. Q32a & Q32e.

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These views are closely related to one another. In every country surveyed, social media users who feel these platforms deliver content that is more personally relevant than other sources are also more likely to say social media are more informative – and the reverse is also true.

More say social media deliver timely material than say the platforms are reliable

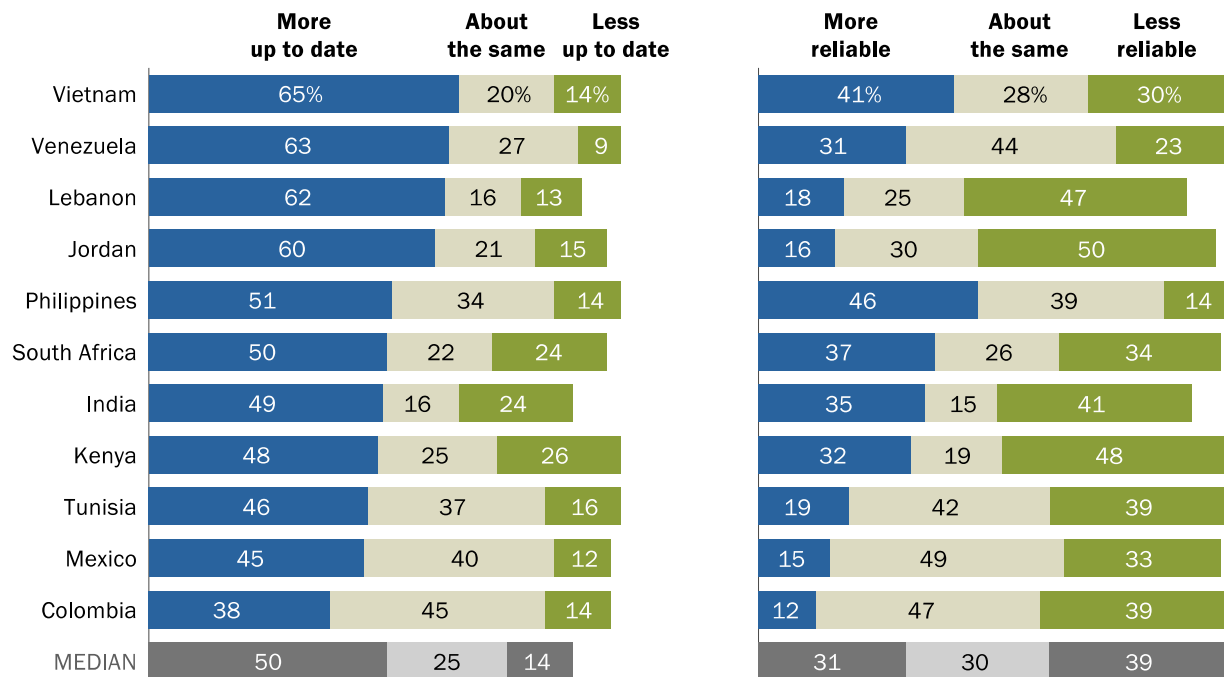
In most countries, about half or more social media users say the content they get from social media is more up to date than what they get from other sources. Jordanians, Lebanese, Venezuelans and Vietnamese are especially likely to rate social media as more up to date than other sources, while Colombians are least likely to do so.

“When I compare social media and the media houses, the media houses are more reliable ... on social media you find some bloggers who are conveying false information and false news just to hurt other people, or to just lie.”

-Man, 26, Kenya

Social media news viewed as more up to date, but fewer say it is more reliable

% of social media platform and messaging app users who say the news and information they get on social media is ___ compared with other sources



Note: Social media and messaging app users include those who said they use one or more of the seven specific online platforms measured in this survey.

Source: Mobile Technology and Its Social Impact Survey 2018. Q32b & Q32d.

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By contrast, in each of the 11 countries surveyed, smaller shares say the news and information they get on social media is more reliable than what they get elsewhere. But although relatively few think social media are *more* reliable than other sources, in no country does a majority think social

media are *less* reliable. Instead, many say that social media are about as reliable as other sources. Only in the Philippines and Vietnam does the largest share of users view these platforms as more reliable than other sources.

In addition, individuals who rate social media positively in one of these respects are also more likely to rate it positively in the other. Those who say the news and information on social media is more up to date are *also* more likely to say it is more reliable, and vice versa. Consider South Africa: More than half of South Africans (53%) who say social media news is more up to date also say it is more reliable than other sources, and a majority of South Africans who say it is less up to date (55%) say it is less reliable than other sources.

Social media users divided over whether content there is more biased, hateful than other sources

Social media users have mixed views when it comes to the degree of bias they see on social media. Pluralities in five countries – Colombia, Mexico, the Philippines, Venezuela and Tunisia – view content on social media as comparably biased to what they get elsewhere. But in other countries, the balance of sentiment points in different directions: A plurality of Indian and Lebanese social media users say social media content is *more* biased, while a plurality of Kenyan users say it is *less* biased.

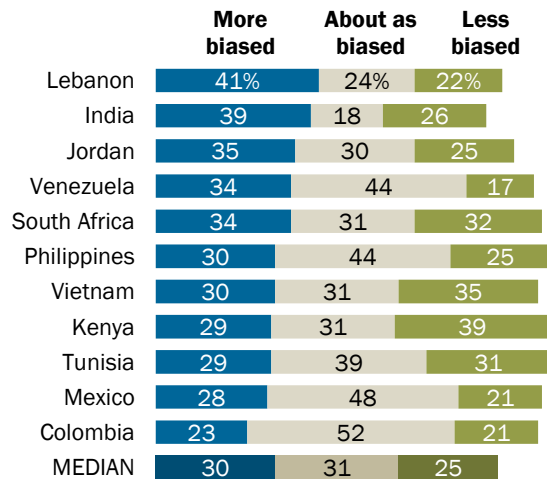
There is also a nearly even split across countries in people’s views of how hateful the news and information on social media is. A median of 31% say social media content is more hateful than content from other sources, while 30% say it is less hateful and 34% say they are about the same. Four-in-ten or more Lebanese and Colombians see more hateful content on social media than elsewhere, while similar shares of Kenyans and Vietnamese see less.

As with assessments of the timeliness and reliability of social media, views of bias and hatefulness also go together. People who say social media are more biased than other sources are more likely to say these sources are more hateful, and vice-versa.

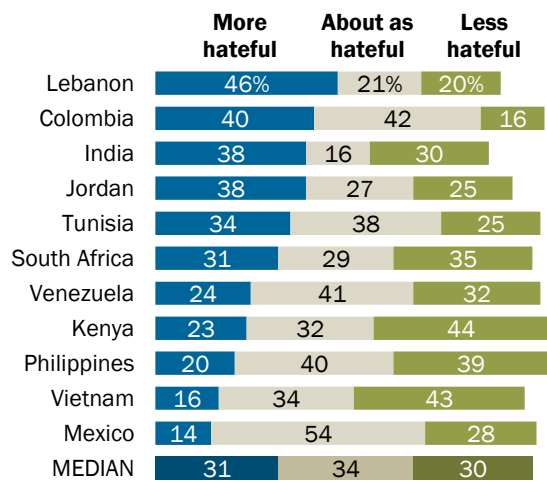
These attitudes vary only modestly by age and educational attainment. Larger shares of social media users with a secondary education or more say social media are more biased and hateful than other sources in Colombia, India and Mexico, but these assessments do not vary

Around three-in-ten social media users say news and information on those sites is more biased ...

% of social media platform and messaging app users who say that, compared with other sources, the news and information they get from social media is ...



... and more hateful compared with other sources



Note: Social media and messaging app users include those who said they use one or more of the seven specific online platforms measured in this survey.

Source: Mobile Technology and Its Social Impact Survey 2018. Q32c & Q32f.

“Publics in Emerging Economies Worry Social Media Sow Division, Even as They Offer New Chances for Political Engagement”

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by educational attainment in the other countries surveyed. And age-related differences are even less common. Only in Mexico, Kenya and Vietnam do those ages 50 and older and those under 30 differ in their views of the bias on social media, and only in India do they differ when it comes to hatefulness.

“Before and during the election, there was incitement and violence and social media fueled this. ... But the same social media brings togetherness and peace in this country.”

-Man, 26, Kenya

Those who view social media as a very important source of political information tend to have more positive views of these platforms

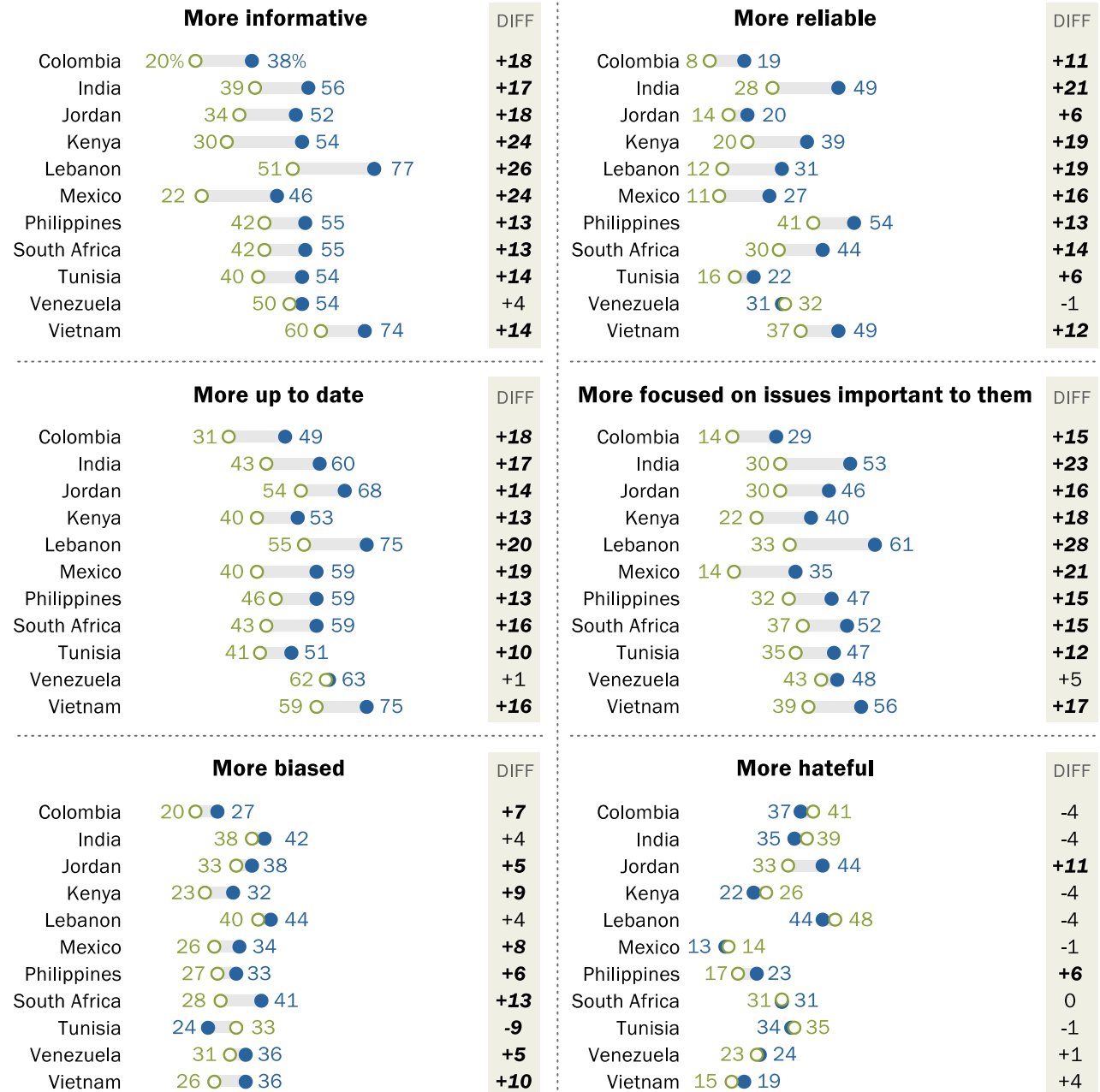
Across many of these attributes, those who say social media are very important for helping them get political information stand apart from social media users who do not say these platforms are very important political news sources. They are more likely than other social media users to call the news and information they get on social media more informative, timely, reliable and focused on issues important to them than other users in every country but Venezuela. In eight countries, they are more likely to call the information they get from social media more biased compared with other sources. But when it comes to the potentially hateful nature of news on social media, in most countries, social media users tend to view news on these platforms in similar terms.

Those who view social media as a very important source of political content are more likely to see these platforms as a heightened version of other options

% of social media platform and messaging app users who say the news and information they get from social media is ___ compared with other sources

Among those who say social media are ___ sources of political information

○ NOT very important ● Very important



Note: Statistically significant differences in **bold**. Social media and messaging app users include those who said they use one or more of the seven specific online platforms measured in this survey.

Source: Mobile Technology and Its Social Impact Survey 2018. Q32a-f.

“Publics in Emerging Economies Worry Social Media Sow Division, Even as They Offer New Chances for Political Engagement”

2. More people are comfortable discussing politics in person than on their phones or via social media

Some people in the 11 countries surveyed stand out for their comfort discussing politics in a variety of venues – whether face-to-face, via mobile phone or on social media. In general, those who identify with a political party, younger people and those with higher levels of education tend to be more comfortable discussing political news and issues, regardless of the way in which the discussions take place. But in most countries, more people are comfortable talking about political issues and news face-to-face, rather than digitally.

Those who *do* feel comfortable discussing politics via mobile phone or on social media tend to be more positive about the influence digital technologies have on politics and tend to say social media are a very important source in their lives for acquiring political news and information. People who are comfortable discussing politics on social media are also more likely to say the news they get there is more informative, up to date, reliable and focused on issues they care about compared with other sources.

“You can comment on something [on social media] – maybe a product. But politically, there is some fear of posting things. I don’t think we are free to say something politically.”

-Woman, 35, Kenya

More prefer in-person conversations about politics to discussions on mobile phones or social media

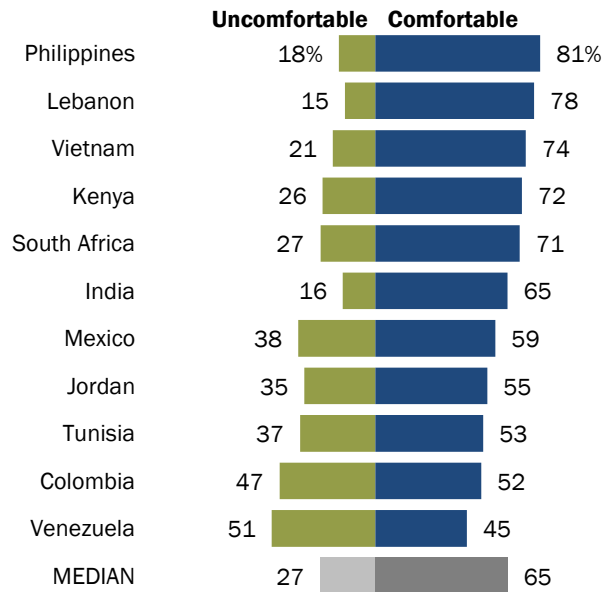
In nearly all of the emerging economies surveyed, more than half of adults say they feel comfortable discussing political issues or news by talking to someone in person. This feeling is most widespread in the Philippines, Lebanon, Vietnam and Kenya, where about three-quarters or more say they would feel comfortable talking about politics face-to-face. The only country where fewer than half say they are comfortable talking about politics in person is Venezuela: 51% say they would not be comfortable discussing politics face-to-face, while 45% say they would be comfortable doing this.

“Both politics and religion are controversial to even consider talking [about], so you’d better spare yourself the trouble.”

-Woman, 39, Mexico

People often feel comfortable talking about politics face-to-face

% of adults who say they would feel ___ discussing political issues or news by talking to someone in person



Source: Mobile Technology and Its Social Impact Survey 2018. Q35c.

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In 10 of the 11 countries surveyed, people who are comfortable discussing politics in person are far more likely to describe these discussions as *very* important for helping them keep up with political news and other world developments. They are also more likely to trust the news and information they get from these face-to-face discussions. In Lebanon, for example, the vast majority (84%) of people who are comfortable talking about politics face-to-face say they trust the information they get from in-person discussions, compared with only 42% of those who say they don’t feel comfortable engaging in such discussions.

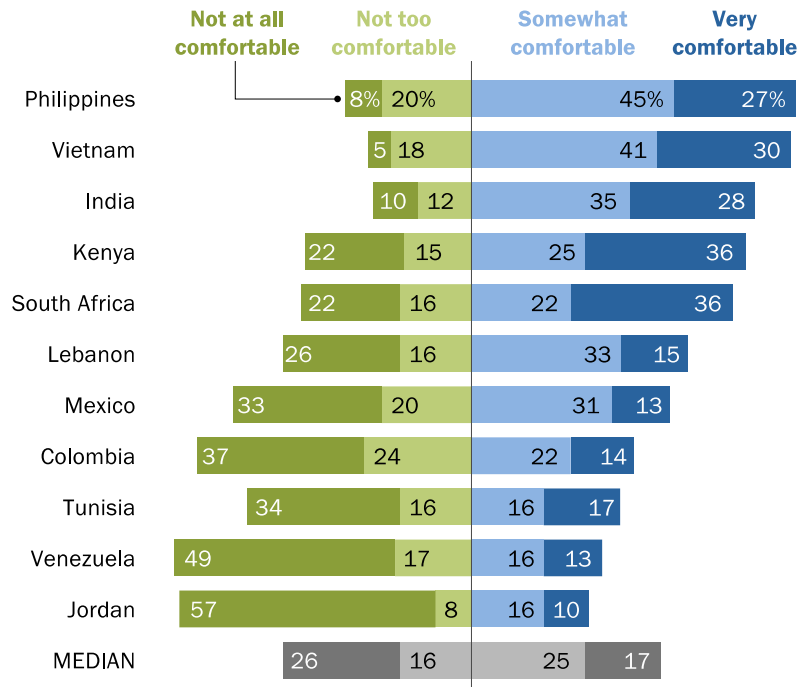
But although majorities of adults in most of the countries surveyed say they feel comfortable discussing politics in face-to-face settings, people are often less likely to feel comfortable talking about these issues on their mobile phones. Across the 11 countries, Filipinos are the most comfortable with using their mobile phones to discuss political issues: 72% of Filipino mobile phone users say they'd be comfortable doing so, including around a quarter who would be *very* comfortable.

Majorities of mobile users also say they would be comfortable discussing politics on their phone in Vietnam, India, Kenya and South Africa. Other publics stand out for their apprehension in using mobile phones to discuss

political issues or news. Majorities of mobile users in Venezuela, Jordan and Colombia say they would be *uncomfortable* talking about politics with someone via mobile phone, with Jordanians feeling particularly strongly: A majority of the country's mobile users (57%) say they would be *not at all* comfortable discussing politics on their phones. About half of Venezuelan mobile users (49%) also say they would not feel comfortable at all discussing politics via mobile device.

Mobile users' comfort levels in discussing political issues on their devices vary widely

% of *adult mobile phones users* who say they would feel ___ discussing political issues or news on their mobile phones



Note: Mobile phone users include those who say they own or share a mobile phone.

Source: Mobile Technology and Its Social Impact Survey 2018. Q35b.

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In every emerging economy surveyed, mobile phone users are more likely to say they would be comfortable talking about politics in person than on their mobile phones. In Lebanon, for example, a majority of mobile users (78%) say they would be comfortable talking about politics with someone in person, but only about half (48%) say they would be comfortable doing so on their mobile phones. In nearby Jordan, a similarly large gap is seen.

In 10 of the 11 countries surveyed, people who are comfortable discussing politics on their mobile phones are more likely to say mobile phones have had a good influence on politics. In the Philippines, for example, a majority of mobile users who are comfortable discussing politics on their phone (57%) say these devices have had a good influence on politics, compared with just 42% of those who are uncomfortable talking about politics on their phone.

Substantial variation across countries in people's willingness to discuss political topics on social media

Country to country, social media platform and messaging app users vary widely in their comfort discussing political issues or news on social media.⁶ Again, Filipino users (69%) are the most likely to say they would feel comfortable discussing politics on social media. Majorities of users also say they would be comfortable discussing politics on social media in Vietnam, Kenya and India.

Jordanians, Venezuelans and Colombians – who are the most likely to feel uncomfortable talking about politics on mobile phones – also stand out for their hesitancy to discuss politics on digital platforms. More than six-in-ten social media users in these countries say they would *not* be comfortable discussing politics on social media. A majority of Mexican users (58%) also say they

More mobile users feel comfortable talking politics in person than on their phones

% of adult mobile phone users who say they would feel comfortable discussing political issues or news by talking to someone ...

	In person	On their mobile phones	DIFF
	%	%	
Lebanon	78	48	+30
Jordan	55	26	+29
Tunisia	53	33	+20
Colombia	53	36	+17
Venezuela	46	29	+17
Mexico	60	44	+16
South Africa	71	58	+13
Kenya	72	61	+11
Philippines	81	72	+9
India	68	63	+5
Vietnam	74	71	+3

Note: Significant differences shown in **bold**. Mobile phone users include those who say they own or share a mobile phone.

Source: Mobile Technology and Its Social Impact Survey 2018. Q35b & Q35c.

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⁶ Social media platform and messaging app users include those who say they use one or more of the seven specific online platforms asked about on the survey: Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, Viber, Instagram, Snapchat and Tinder. Overall, a median of 64% use at least one of these platforms across these 11 countries.

would be uncomfortable discussing political news and issues on social media. Users in South Africa, Tunisia and Lebanon are somewhat divided over whether they would be comfortable discussing politics on social media platforms.

As was the case with mobile phones, social media users are more likely to say they would feel comfortable discussing politics face-to-face than on social media. For example, 78% of Lebanese social media users say they would be comfortable talking about political issues with someone in person, but just 39% say they would be comfortable doing this on social media.

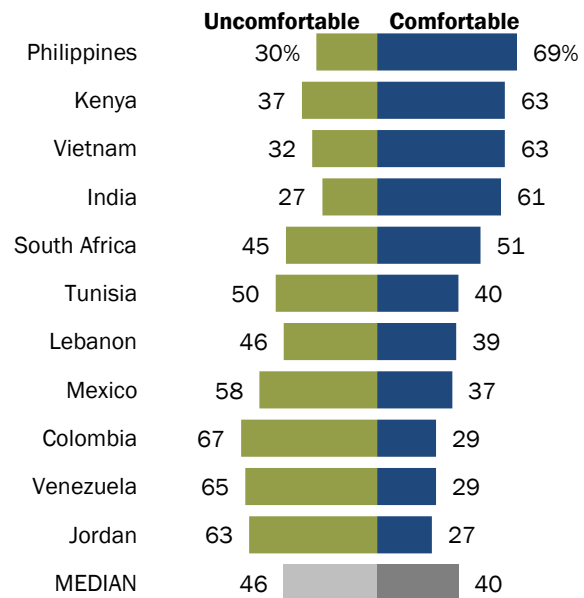
“If you express your political opinion on social media, it could impact your work life. You might get in trouble for that. That’s why we prefer to remain neutral.”

-Woman, 29, Tunisia

People who are comfortable talking about politics on social media tend to feel more positively about the internet’s impact on politics more broadly in nine of the 11 countries surveyed. And no matter the medium of conversation – face-to-face, mobile phone or social media – people who identify with a political party, younger people and those with higher levels of education tend to feel more comfortable discussing political news and issues (see [Appendix C](#) for

Across countries, social media users are divided about whether they would feel comfortable talking about politics there

% of *social media platform and messaging app users* who say they would feel ___ discussing political issues or news on social media



Note: Social media and messaging app users include those who said they use one or more of the seven specific online platforms measured in this survey.

Source: Mobile Technology and Its Social Impact Survey 2018. Q35a.

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detailed tables).^{7,8} Meanwhile, men in Colombia, Mexico, South Africa and Venezuela report feeling more comfortable talking about politics than women, regardless of the setting.

⁷ This analysis excludes Vietnam, which has a single-party system, and Jordan, where fewer than 100 people said they had a partisan identification.

⁸ For the purpose of comparing education groups across countries, we standardize education levels based on the United Nations' International Standard Classification of Education. In all nations surveyed, the lower education category is below secondary education and the higher category is secondary or above.

Majorities have not been surprised by someone's political views on social media or blocked a person for political reasons

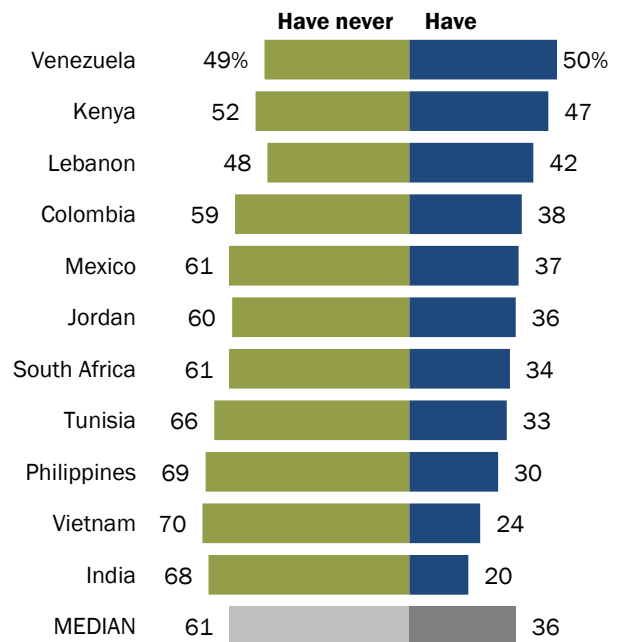
In most countries, a minority of social media and messaging app users say they have learned that someone's political beliefs were different than they originally thought because of something that person posted to social media. Venezuelans and Kenyans stand out as the two publics where around half of social media users say they have learned someone's political beliefs are different than they originally assumed. By comparison, a [2016 survey](#) of U.S. adults found that half of social media users had been surprised by someone's political views based on their social media posts.

More-educated social media users are more likely to say they have been surprised by someone's political views on social media. To a lesser degree, age and gender play a role in some countries; younger social media users and male users are more likely to have been surprised.

And in Colombia, India, South Africa, Lebanon and Tunisia, people with partisan identifications are more likely than those who say no party represents them to say they have been surprised by someone's political views on social media. In six of the 11 countries, people who are comfortable engaging in political discussions on social media are also more likely to have been surprised by someone's beliefs.

Many users have not been surprised by someone's political views on social media

% of social media platform and messaging app users who ___ learned that someone's political beliefs were different than they thought they were based on something they posted on social media



Note: Social media platform and messaging app users include those who said they use one or more of the seven specific online platforms measured in this survey.

Source: Mobile Technology and Its Social Impact Survey 2018. Q37. "Publics in Emerging Economies Worry Social Media Sow Division, Even as They Offer New Chances for Political Engagement"

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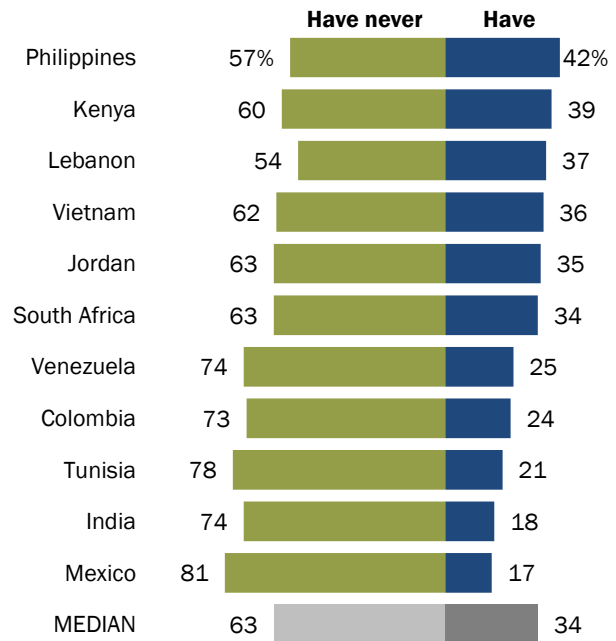
Meanwhile, modest shares of social media and messaging app users (median of 34%) say they have unfriended, blocked or hidden someone from their social media feed because of their political views. Blocking another social media user because of his or her political views is most common in the Philippines (42% of users) – the country where users are most likely to say they feel comfortable discussing politics via social media. And in every country surveyed, people who say they’ve been surprised by someone’s political views on social media are more likely to have blocked someone. In Jordan, Lebanon, the Philippines and South Africa, younger social media users (ages 18 to 29) are more likely than users 50 and older to have blocked someone because of their political views. In five of the countries surveyed – and particularly in Jordan (by 18 percentage points) – male social media users are more likely to have blocked people than female users. But in most countries, partisans are no more likely than nonpartisans to have blocked someone.

“One of my colleagues at work shouted at me when I expressed my opinion. He deleted me from Facebook because we do not have the same mentality.”

-Woman, 45, Tunisia

Majorities of social media users have never blocked someone due to their political views

% of social media platform and messaging app users who ___ unfriended, blocked or hidden someone from their feed on social media because of their political views



Note: Social media and messaging app users include those who said they use one or more of the seven specific online platforms measured in this survey.

Source: Mobile Technology and Its Social Impact Survey 2018. Q36. “Publics in Emerging Economies Worry Social Media Sow Division, Even as They Offer New Chances for Political Engagement”

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3. Publics think technology impacts the political environment in both positive and negative ways

Beyond their views of the personal impact of various technologies, publics in these countries are divided over how the internet in general has impacted politics in their societies. An 11-country median of 44% say the increasing use of the internet has had a good impact on politics, but 28% feel that impact has been largely bad – and this balance of opinion is most negative in Tunisia, Jordan and Lebanon.

Adults in these countries also feel access to technology has had a variety of both positive and negative impacts on their fellow citizens. On the positive side of the ledger, a median of 78% say access to the internet, mobile phones and social media has made people more informed about current events. And when asked about the impact of social media on the broader political process, majorities in nine of these 11 countries say they have increased the ability for ordinary citizens to take part in the political process.

At the same time, an 11-country median of 72% say these technologies have made people easier to manipulate with rumors and false information. And majorities in eight countries say social media have increased the risk that citizens might be manipulated by domestic politicians.

Mixed attitudes about the internet's overall impact on politics

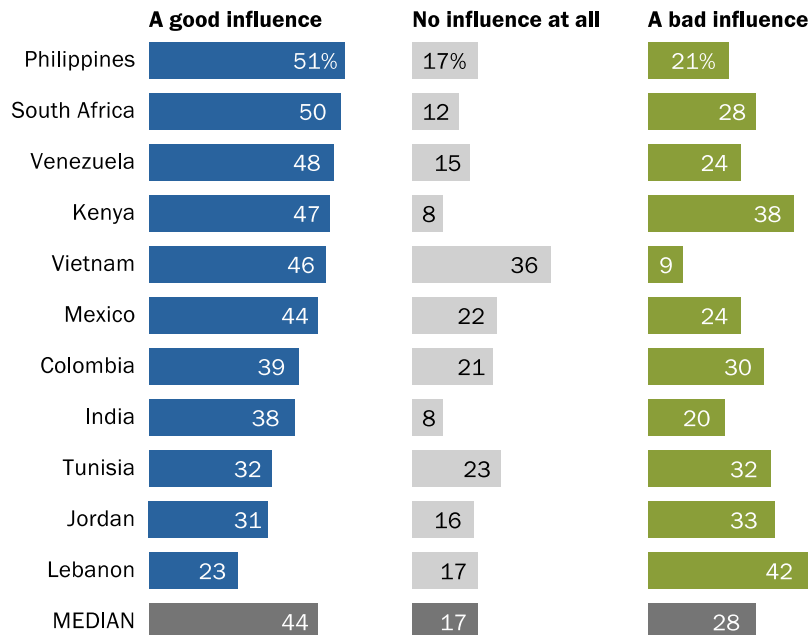
Adults in these countries express mixed views about the overall influence of the internet on politics. In [most countries](#), larger shares say the internet has had a good impact on politics than say the same about issues such as children or morality. But notably *smaller* shares say the internet has had a good impact on politics than say this about its effect on issues such as education, the economy or local culture (for more, see the [first report](#) in this series).

Adults in these countries also make little distinction between the impact of the internet and mobile phones when it comes to politics. Nearly identical shares say the internet and mobile phones have had a good, bad or negligible impact on politics.

People who themselves use the internet are somewhat more upbeat than non-users about its effect on politics.⁹ And in most of these countries there are only modest to nonexistent differences in attitudes between older and younger adults. But those who describe social media as a very important source of political news for them, personally, are more likely to say the internet has had a good impact on politics relative to those who say social media are less important, or to those who do not use social media at all.

Views of internet's impact on politics are mixed

% of adults who say the increasing use of the internet has had ___ on politics



Source: Mobile Technology and Its Social Impact Survey 2018. Q14Ab.
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⁹ In India, Jordan, Lebanon and South Africa, non-internet users are less likely to offer a response.

Across these 11 countries, public opinion about the internet's impact on politics is most negative in Jordan, Lebanon and Tunisia. In Lebanon, nearly twice as many say the internet has had a bad (42%) rather than good (23%) influence on politics. And in Jordan and Tunisia, the shares saying the internet's impact on politics has been good are comparable to the shares saying it has been bad.

In addition to having a comparably negative balance of sentiment relative to the other countries in this survey, publics in these three countries have also turned somewhat less upbeat in recent years in their assessments of the internet's impact on politics. From 2014 to 2018, the share of adults in these countries saying the internet has had a good influence on politics has declined by 11 percentage points in Jordan, 9 points in Lebanon and 6 points in Tunisia. By contrast, sentiment in the other seven countries for which trends are available either grew more positive or stayed largely the same over that time. This positive shift has been most pronounced in Mexico, South Africa and Venezuela.

In some countries, more now say the internet influenced politics positively

% of adults who say the increasing use of the internet has had a good influence on politics

	2014	2018	CHANGE
	%	%	
Mexico	28	44	+16
South Africa	36	50	+14
Venezuela	36	48	+12
Colombia	33	39	+6
Kenya	41	47	+6
Vietnam	41	46	+5
Philippines	48	51	+3
Tunisia	38	32	-6
Lebanon	32	23	-9
Jordan	42	31	-11

Note: India excluded due to changes in sampling design between 2014 and 2018.

Source: Mobile Technology and Its Social Impact Survey 2018.

Q14Aa & Q14Ab. Spring 2014 Global Attitudes Survey.

"Publics in Emerging Economies Worry Social Media Sow Division, Even as They Offer New Chances for Political Engagement"

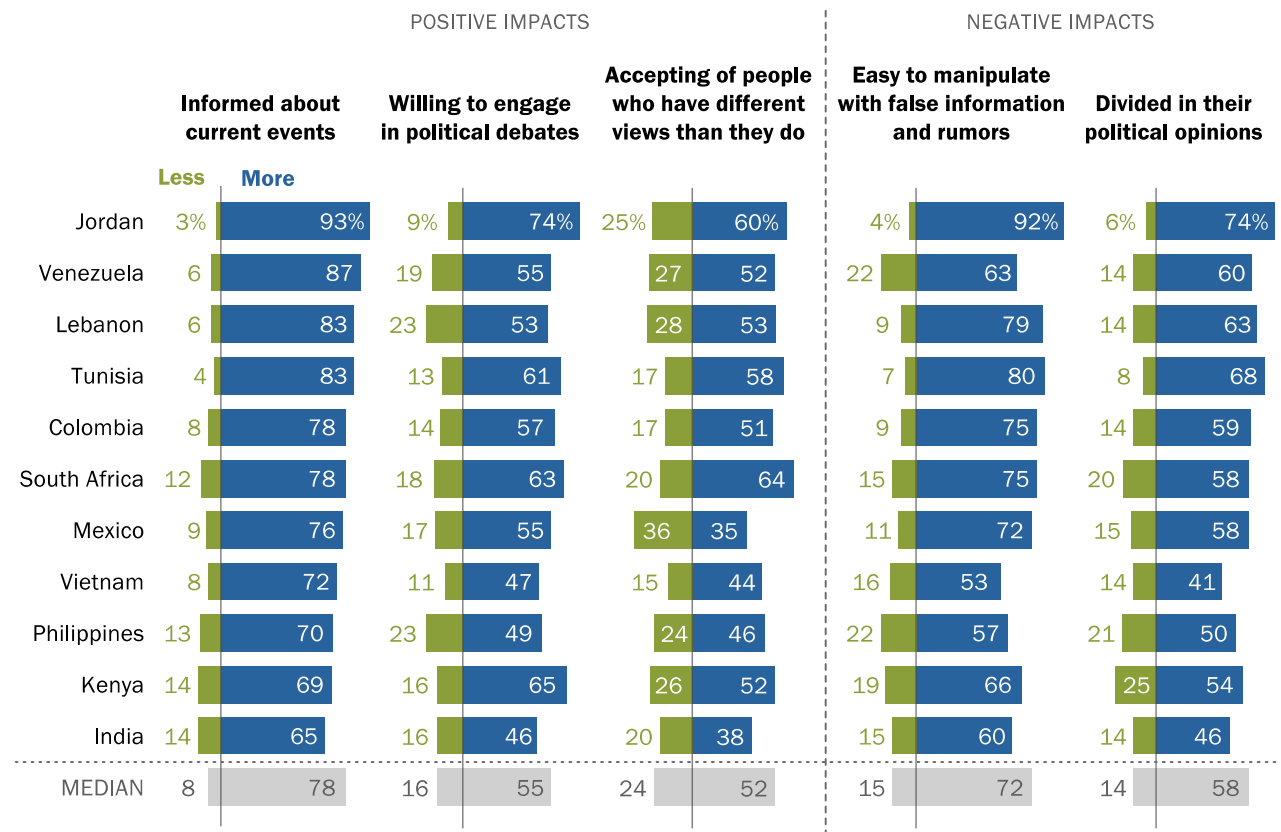
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Many think technology has made people better informed – but also easier to manipulate

When asked about the impact of mobile phones, the internet and social media on various political behaviors and attitudes, people in these nations tend to express seemingly dual views of how technology has brought “more” to society: that it has made people more informed, yet more manipulatable; more divided, yet sometimes more accepting of others.

Publics see digital technologies, the information they bring as both good and bad

% of adults who say access to mobile phones, the internet and social media has made people ...



Note: Respondents who gave other responses are not shown.

Source: Mobile Technology and Its Social Impact Survey 2018. Q15a-e.

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At one level, publics in these countries believe that technology simultaneously makes people more informed and more gullible. Majorities in every country – and an 11-country median of 78% – say access to technology has made people more informed about current events. At the same time,

majorities in every country except for Vietnam – and an 11-country median of 72% – say technology has made it easier to manipulate people with false information and rumors.

The survey highlights similar tensions over whether these technologies make people more divided or more accepting of others. A median of 58% say access to mobile phones, the internet and social media has made people more divided in their political opinions. At the same time, a median of 52% say these technologies have made people more accepting of those who have different views than they do. And a median of 55% say they have generally made people more willing to engage in political debates.

These positive and negative views of technology’s impact on political attitudes are often related. In 10 of the 11 countries surveyed, those who believe technology has made people more informed are more likely than others to say technology has also made people easier to manipulate.

Similarly, in most countries those who say technology has made people more accepting of diverse viewpoints are simultaneously more likely to say it has made people more divided in their political opinions.

These same costs and benefits are visible when it comes to technology’s impact on political news and discussion. For instance, people in these countries [overwhelmingly feel](#) mobile phones have improved people’s ability to obtain news. Yet an 11-country median of 64% say people should be very concerned about exposure to false information when using their mobile devices.

“We become numb to the news, like the presidential campaigns in Mexico. A term ago, we were struggling to get more political awareness, and now everything is made a meme and laughed at. It defeats the purpose of the internet.”

-Man, 28, Mexico

“Through our mobile phones, since there is that social media, it has really led to the spread of hatred and tribalism amongst ourselves.”

-Man, 38, Kenya

People in some countries stand out for their views on the influence of technology on politics

Especially large shares of Jordanians feel technology has made people more receptive to most of the political impacts measured in the survey, and this is especially true of the notion that technology makes people more informed but also easier to manipulate. Around nine-in-ten Jordanians say access to mobile phones, the internet and social media has made people more informed about current events, but a similar share says this access makes them more vulnerable to being manipulated with rumors and false information. And roughly three-quarters of Jordanians say technology has made people more divided in their political opinions, but also more willing to engage in political debates.

By contrast, Vietnamese adults are relatively likely to say access to these technologies hasn't changed much compared with those in the other countries surveyed. One-third or more Vietnamese say these technologies haven't had much impact on people's willingness to engage in political debates (33%), how divided they are in their political opinions (35%) or how accepting they are of those with different views (35%), while 26% say they haven't had much impact on how easy people are to manipulate. In each instance, these represent the largest shares among the 11 countries surveyed.

Meanwhile, Mexicans stand out for their assessment of the impact of technologies on people's tolerance of different viewpoints. Some 35% of Mexicans say technology has made people more accepting of people who have different views than they do, but a nearly identical share (36%) says technology has had a negative impact in this regard. Younger Mexicans are especially likely to say technologies have made people *less* tolerant to people who hold different views: 41% hold this view, compared with 30% of Mexicans ages 50 and older.

Social media users, those affiliated with a political party and the more educated are more likely to see both positive and negative political impacts of digital technologies

Certain groups are especially likely to cite both the positive and negative impacts of technology on political engagement.

For example, social media users are more likely than non-users to say technology has made people more informed about current events in all 11 countries surveyed; more accepting of people with different views in eight countries; and more willing to engage in political debates in nine countries.¹⁰ At the same time, in nine countries a larger share of users say technology is making people more divided in their political opinions – and in 10 countries a larger share of social media users say technology is making people easier to mislead with misinformation (see [Appendix C](#) for detailed tables).

These attitudes also vary by education level.¹¹ Across all 11

countries, adults with a secondary education or higher are more likely to say technology has made people more informed about current events relative to those who do not have a secondary education. And in nine countries, adults with higher levels of educational attainment are more inclined to say technology has made people more subject to false information and rumors.

Views of technology's impact on people's willingness to debate politics vary by social media use, education level

% of adults who say access to technologies makes people more willing to engage in political debates

Social media use			Education				
	User	Non-user		More education	Less education	DIFF	
	%	%		%	%		
Lebanon	56	33	+23	India	60	39	+21
Jordan	77	59	+18	Kenya	76	61	+15
India	61	43	+18	Lebanon	62	48	+14
Philippines	54	43	+11	Vietnam	56	42	+14
Colombia	60	50	+10	Philippines	54	41	+13
Vietnam	51	41	+10	Mexico	62	50	+12
Mexico	57	49	+8	Colombia	62	51	+11
Tunisia	65	57	+8	Jordan	79	69	+10
Kenya	70	62	+8	South Africa	67	59	+8
South Africa	64	60	+4	Tunisia	65	58	+7
Venezuela	56	53	+3	Venezuela	55	55	0

Note: Significant differences shown in **bold**. Social media platform and messaging app users include those who said they use one or more of the seven specific online platforms measured in this survey. For the purpose of comparing education groups across countries, we standardize education levels based on the United Nations' International Standard Classification of Education. In all nations surveyed, the lower education category is below secondary education and the higher category is secondary or above.

Source: Mobile Technology and Its Social Impact Survey 2018. Q15e.

"Publics in Emerging Economies Worry Social Media Sow Division, Even as They Offer New Chances for Political Engagement"

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¹⁰ Social media platform and messaging app users include those who say they use one or more of the seven specific online platforms asked about on the survey: Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, Viber, Instagram, Snapchat and Tinder. Overall, a median of 64% use at least one of these platforms across these 11 countries.

¹¹ For the purpose of comparing education groups across countries, we standardize education levels based on the United Nations' International Standard Classification of Education. In all nations surveyed, the lower education category is below secondary education and the higher category is secondary or above.

Meanwhile, adults with higher levels of educational attainment are more likely to say technology has contributed to both political divisions and tolerance of opposing viewpoints in seven of these countries (Colombia, India, Kenya, Lebanon, the Philippines, Tunisia and Vietnam).

In eight of the nine countries for which partisan information is available, those who have a partisan affiliation are somewhat more likely than those who don't identify with any particular party to say technology has made people more willing to engage in political debate.¹² And in five of those countries, those with a partisan affiliation are more likely to say access to technology has made people more divided in their political opinions. But in most countries, similar shares of the affiliated and unaffiliated say technology has made people more informed, more accepting of those with different viewpoints and more susceptible to misinformation.¹³

Lastly, social media users' assessments of the impact of technology on political attitudes are somewhat related to whether they view social media as an important news source. In seven out of the 11 countries, those who say social media are a very important news source for them to get political news and information are more likely than users who do not think social media are as important to say technology has made people more informed about news and current events.

¹² This analysis excludes Vietnam, which has a single-party system, and Jordan, where fewer than 100 people said they had a partisan identification.

¹³ In some countries, non-social media users, those with lower levels of education or those who have no partisan affiliation are less likely to offer a response.

Social media seen to confer benefits – but also risks – on the overall political process

When asked about different impacts social media have had on their country’s political process, publics in these countries are more likely than not to say social media offer new avenues for political engagement. A median of 57% – and majorities in every country except for Vietnam and India – say social media have increased the ability for ordinary people in their country to have a meaningful voice in the political process. And a median of 53% say these platforms have increased the ability of nongovernmental organizations to promote their causes.

But these perceived benefits from social media are matched with perceived costs. An 11-country median of 65% say social media have increased the risk that people in their country might be manipulated by domestic politicians. And when asked whether these platforms might facilitate foreign interference in their country’s elections, a median of 55% say these platforms have indeed increased this risk – although a median of 27% feel they have not had much effect either way.

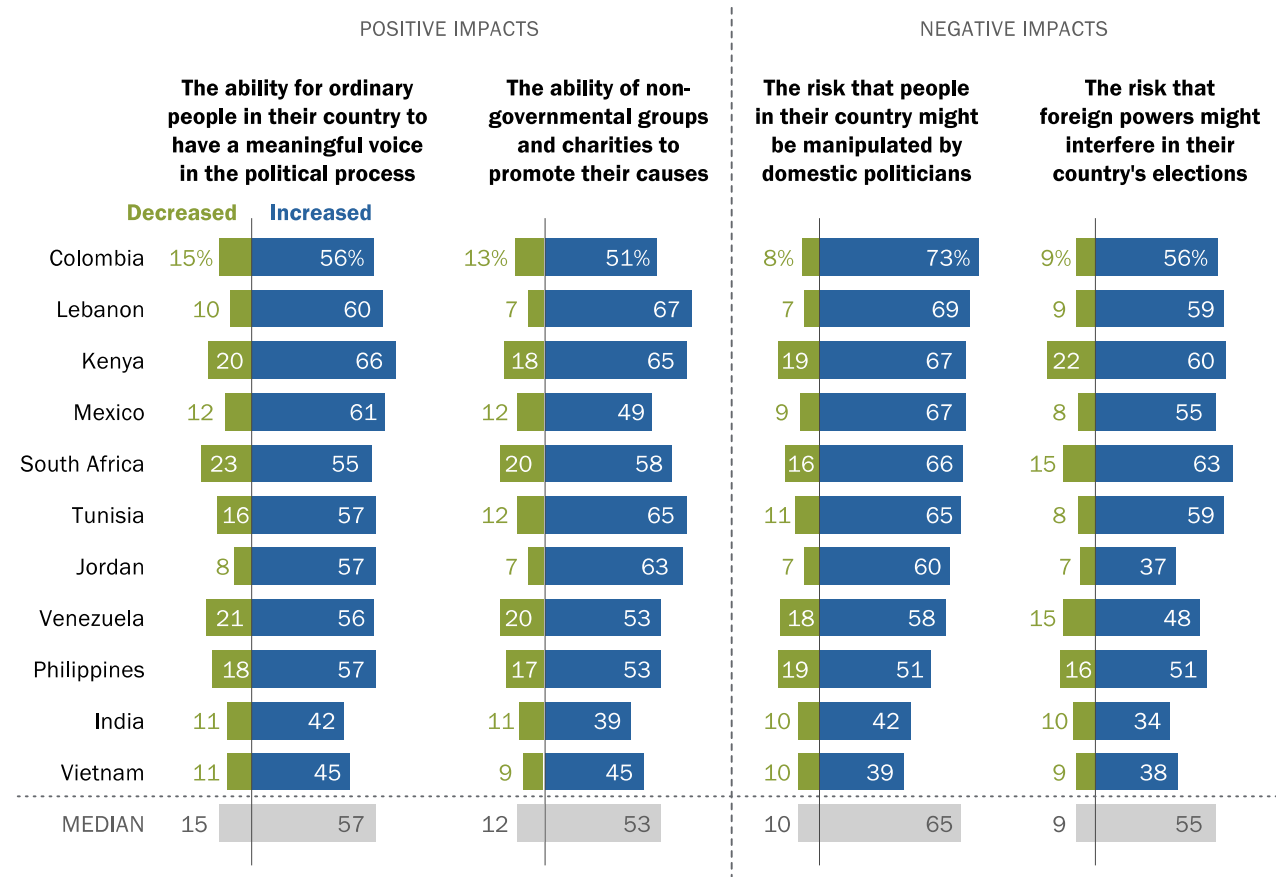
Among those who use social media, there are only minimal differences between the views of younger (ages 18 to 29) and older adults (those ages 50+) on these questions. However, there are some differences based on how extensively people rely on these platforms for information. In most countries, those who say social media are a very important news source are more likely to say these platforms have increased ordinary people’s ability to have a meaningful voice in politics, and that they have helped nongovernmental groups to promote their causes. At the same time, in seven countries this group is also more likely to say these platforms have increased the risk of people being manipulated by domestic politicians, compared with users who do not see social media as a very important source of information.

“Now it is much easier for our countrymen to know about the plans of our government for our OFW [Overseas Filipino Workers].”

-Woman, 48, Philippines

Many see social media conferring both benefits and risks to civic life and their country's political process

% of adults who say social media have had the following impact on ...



Note: Respondents who gave other responses are not shown.

Source: Mobile Technology and Its Social Impact Survey 2018. Q34a-d.

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In several countries, sizable shares say they do not know how these platforms have impacted the broader political system

These questions were asked of all adults – regardless of whether they themselves use social media platforms or not. And in several of these countries, sizable shares of those who do not use any social media platforms are unable to offer an opinion on how social media have impacted these aspects of the political process. This is especially true in Jordan, Lebanon, India and Vietnam. Among people in these countries who do not use social media, as many as 21% of Vietnamese, 34% of Jordanians, 41% of Lebanese and 51% of Indians either do not know the answer to these individual questions or refused to offer a guess.

Similarly, demographic groups who use social media at low rates (such as older adults or those with lower levels of education) are often more likely to say they do not know how social media have impacted these elements of the political process.

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Methodology

About Pew Research Center's Mobile Technology and Its Social Impact Survey 2018

Results for the survey are based on face-to-face interviews conducted under the direction of D3 Systems, Inc. The results are based on national samples. More details about our international survey methodology and country-specific sample designs are [available here](#).

Appendix A: About the focus groups

Pew Research Center conducted a series of focus groups to better understand how people think about their own mobile phones and the impact of these devices on their society. Five focus groups were held in each of the following four countries: Kenya, Mexico, the Philippines and Tunisia.¹⁴ Each focus group consisted of 10 adults coming together for an hour and a half for a discussion led by a local, professional moderator using a guide developed by Pew Research Center.

In each country, the groups were structured according to the following criteria:

- Group 1, “basic phone” – all participants either owned or shared a basic phone that could not connect to the internet and were 36 years old or older;
- Group 2, “younger, smartphone” – all participants owned or shared a smartphone and were under the age of 30;
- Group 3, “older, smartphone” – all participants owned or shared a smartphone and were at least 30 years old;
- Group 4, “women phone users” – all participants were women who either owned or shared a phone (including a minimum of five participants who owned or shared a smartphone), and at least two participants were married and two were unmarried;
- Group 5, “migrant phone users” – all participants either owned or shared a phone (including a minimum of five participants who owned or shared a smartphone) and all either lived in a place that was different from where they grew up or had a family member who lived elsewhere.

All focus groups also required participants to have at least some interest in politics, and, aside from group 4, which was all women, they were balanced with regard to gender. Aside from group 1, participants were also required to use their phone at least once a week. Where feasible, participants were recruited to ensure diversity with regard to education levels, employment status, rural and urban location, and the duration for which they have owned their phones.

¹⁴ Focus groups were held in four, rather than all 11 countries, because of available time and resources. Countries were chosen to cover all four key regions included in the survey: Latin America, the Asia-Pacific region, sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

Focus groups were held in the following locations and on the following dates:

- Mexico City, Mexico: March 13-15, 2018
- Manila, Philippines: March 21-23, 2018
- Nairobi, Kenya: March 26-28, 2018
- Tunis, Tunisia: March 28-30, 2018

D3 Systems Inc. worked with local field partners in each of the four countries to recruit the participants using a screener designed by Pew Research Center. All participants were given financial remuneration for their time.

These groups were primarily used [to help shape the survey questions asked](#) in each of the 11 countries. But, throughout the report, we have also included quotations that illustrate some of the major themes that were discussed during the groups. Quotations are chosen to provide context for the survey findings and are not necessarily representative of the majority opinion in any particular group or country. Quotations may have been edited for grammar, spelling and clarity.

Appendix B: Technology-related surveys regularly find that people see connectivity bringing positives and negatives

Findings in this survey highlight that publics generally see both benefits and harms emerging from mobile phones, the internet and social media in their societies. In many cases, the more a person sees benefits – such as technology making people more informed – the more they are also likely to see negatives, such as connectivity making people easier to manipulate.

Pew Research Center has found a similar pattern in [domestic surveys](#). For example, while 56% of Americans say social media make it easier to hold powerful people accountable, roughly seven-in-ten (71%) say that these platforms may make people think they're making a difference when they really aren't. Similarly, around two-thirds of Americans say social media can help highlight important issues that may not otherwise get a lot of attention, even as around three-quarters say they also run the risk of distracting people from issues that are truly important. In [election contexts](#), Americans have said they believe the internet makes it easier to meet others with similar political views but also increases political extremism.

Some of these tensions may reflect that people generally see digital technologies as [more beneficial for themselves than for society at large](#). Across the 11 emerging economies surveyed in this report, a median of 82% say mobile phones have been mostly a good thing for them personally, compared with a median of 70% who say mobile phones have positively impacted society. Once again, this same pattern exists in the [United States](#); 88% of online American adults say the internet has been mostly good for them, while only 70% say the internet has been mostly good for society.

Surveys also show that people are often confident in their own ability to navigate technology, even if they are concerned about broader societal harms. For [example](#), a median of 79% of adult mobile phone users across these 11 emerging economies say that their phone has mostly helped their ability to get information and news about important issues, even while about two-thirds of adults say people should be very concerned about exposure to false or incorrect information when using their mobile phones. And in the U.S., a large majority of adults are very or somewhat confident in their ability to [recognize made-up news](#), although nearly two-thirds say it has caused a great deal of confusion about the basic facts of current events.

Appendix C: Detailed tables

Comfort discussing political issues or news on social media

% of social media platform and messaging app users who say they feel comfortable discussing political issues or news on social media

	TOTAL	Age				Gender			Education			Partisanship		
		18-29	30-49	50+	YOUNGEST-OLDEST DIFF	Women	Men	DIFF	Less education	More education	DIFF	Non- partisan	Partisan	DIFF
	%	%	%	%		%	%		%	%		%	%	
Colombia	29	38	26	18	+20	24	35	+11	22	33	+11	22	42	+20
Mexico	37	40	40	25	+15	32	43	+11	33	41	+8	34	43	+9
Venezuela	29	31	26	31	0	23	35	+12	31	28	-3	26	34	+8
India	61	65	56	51	+14	53	64	+11	51	66	+15	52	64	+12
Philippines	69	74	65	68	+6	69	71	+2	63	71	+8	69	73	+4
Vietnam	63	64	62	-	-	61	64	+3	61	64	+3	-	-	-
Jordan	27	28	26	23	+5	26	26	0	20	31	+11	-	-	-
Lebanon	39	48	38	26	+22	38	40	+2	34	45	+11	36	44	+8
Tunisia	40	41	41	32	+9	34	44	+10	38	40	+2	36	49	+13
Kenya	63	64	63	-	-	60	65	+5	67	59	-8	47	68	+21
South Africa	51	57	47	41	+16	44	58	+14	51	51	0	45	54	+9

Note: Significant differences shown in **bold**. Results for 50+ social media users in Kenya and Vietnam excluded due to insufficient sample size. Social media and messaging app users include those who said they use one or more of the seven specific online platforms measured in this survey. For the purpose of comparing education groups across countries, we standardize education levels based on the United Nations' International Standard Classification of Education. In all nations surveyed, the lower education category is below secondary education and the higher category is secondary or above. Partisanship analysis excludes Vietnam, which is a single-party system, and Jordan, where fewer than 100 people said they had a partisan identification.

Source: Mobile Technology and Its Social Impact Survey 2018. Q35a.

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Comfort discussing political issues or news by talking to someone on their mobile phone

% of mobile phone users who say they feel comfortable discussing political issues or news by talking to someone on their mobile phone

	TOTAL	Age				YOUNGEST- OLDEST DIFF	Gender			Education			Partisanship		
		18-29	30-49	50+	Women		Men	DIFF	Less education	More education	DIFF	Non- partisan	Partisan	DIFF	
	%	%	%	%		%	%		%	%		%	%		
Colombia	36	48	34	27	+21	32	41	+9	30	42	+12	31	45	+14	
Mexico	44	52	45	32	+20	42	47	+5	40	49	+9	40	51	+11	
Venezuela	29	31	31	26	+5	25	34	+9	30	29	-1	26	36	+10	
India	63	66	62	58	+8	59	65	+6	62	64	+2	58	66	+8	
Philippines	72	80	71	57	+23	70	74	+4	67	74	+7	72	72	0	
Vietnam	71	75	71	66	+9	71	72	+1	69	76	+7	-	-	-	
Jordan	26	30	23	21	+9	24	26	+2	19	30	+11	-	-	-	
Lebanon	48	54	49	41	+13	48	49	+1	47	52	+5	46	53	+7	
Tunisia	33	38	32	27	+11	31	34	+3	29	36	+7	31	37	+6	
Kenya	61	69	57	51	+18	59	64	+5	62	61	-1	53	64	+11	
South Africa	58	64	58	51	+13	52	66	+14	56	62	+6	53	61	+8	

Note: Significant differences shown in **bold**. Mobile phone users include those who say they own or share a mobile phone. For the purpose of comparing education groups across countries, we standardize education levels based on the United Nations' International Standard Classification of Education. In all nations surveyed, the lower education category is below secondary education and the higher category is secondary or above. Partisanship analysis excludes Vietnam, which is a single-party system, and Jordan, where fewer than 100 people said they had a partisan identification.

Source: Mobile Technology and Its Social Impact Survey 2018. Q35b.

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Comfort discussing political issues or news by talking to someone in person

% of adults who say they feel comfortable discussing political issues or news by talking to someone in person

	TOTAL	Age				YOUNGEST- OLDEST DIFF	Gender			Education			Partisanship		
		18-29	30-49	50+			Women	Men	DIFF	Less education	More education	DIFF	Non- partisan	Partisan	DIFF
	%	%	%	%		%	%		%	%		%	%		
Colombia	52	64	51	40	+24	47	58	+11	42	61	+19	47	60	+13	
Mexico	59	67	59	48	+19	55	63	+8	52	69	+17	53	67	+14	
Venezuela	45	50	44	40	+10	39	51	+12	41	48	+7	41	52	+11	
India	65	70	64	64	+6	60	71	+11	64	69	+5	56	72	+16	
Philippines	81	85	81	75	+10	78	84	+6	77	83	+6	81	80	-1	
Vietnam	74	75	74	71	+4	73	75	+2	71	79	+8	-	-	-	
Jordan	55	58	54	50	+8	54	55	+1	49	60	+11	-	-	-	
Lebanon	78	79	78	76	+3	75	80	+5	75	82	+7	73	84	+11	
Tunisia	53	56	54	48	+8	52	54	+2	47	59	+12	51	57	+6	
Kenya	72	75	70	67	+8	67	77	+10	71	74	+3	61	75	+14	
South Africa	71	73	72	68	+5	67	76	+9	68	76	+8	68	73	+5	

Note: Significant differences shown in **bold**. For the purpose of comparing education groups across countries, we standardize education levels based on the United Nations' International Standard Classification of Education. In all nations surveyed, the lower education category is below secondary education and the higher category is secondary or above. Partisanship analysis excludes Vietnam, which is a single-party system, and Jordan, where fewer than 100 people said they had a partisan identification.

Source: Mobile Technology and Its Social Impact Survey 2018. Q35c.

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Impact of access to digital technologies by social media use and education level

% of adults who say access to mobile phones, the internet and social media has made people more informed about current events

	TOTAL	Social media platform and messaging app use			Education		
		Non-user	User	DIFF	Less education	More education	DIFF
	%	%	%		%	%	
Colombia	78	62	84	+22	68	87	+19
Mexico	76	65	80	+15	70	84	+14
Venezuela	87	81	90	+9	83	91	+8
India	65	61	76	+15	59	77	+18
Philippines	70	63	76	+13	62	75	+13
Vietnam	72	63	77	+14	66	84	+18
Jordan	93	86	94	+8	90	96	+6
Lebanon	83	67	85	+18	79	89	+10
Tunisia	83	78	87	+9	77	89	+12
Kenya	69	63	78	+15	62	86	+24
South Africa	78	72	82	+10	73	85	+12

Note: Significant differences shown in **bold**. Social media and messaging app users include those who said they use one or more of the seven specific online platforms measured in this survey. For the purpose of comparing education groups across countries, we standardize education levels based on the United Nations' International Standard Classification of Education. In all nations surveyed, the lower education category is below secondary education and the higher category is secondary or above.

Source: Mobile Technology and Its Social Impact Survey 2018. Q15a.

"Publics in Emerging Economies Worry Social Media Sow Division, Even as They Offer New Chances for Political Engagement"

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Impact of access to digital technologies by social media use and education level

% of adults who say access to mobile phones, the internet and social media has made people more divided in their political opinions

	TOTAL	Social media platform and messaging app use			Education		
		Non-user	User	DIFF	Less education	More education	DIFF
	%	%	%		%	%	
Colombia	59	47	63	+16	50	67	+17
Mexico	58	48	61	+13	53	65	+12
Venezuela	60	59	60	+1	60	60	0
India	46	42	62	+20	39	60	+21
Philippines	50	43	55	+12	39	57	+18
Vietnam	41	37	43	+6	35	51	+16
Jordan	74	57	78	+21	67	81	+14
Lebanon	63	47	65	+18	59	69	+10
Tunisia	68	61	73	+12	59	77	+18
Kenya	54	52	58	+6	50	65	+15
South Africa	58	56	60	+4	56	61	+5

Note: Significant differences shown in **bold**. Social media and messaging app users include those who said they use one or more of the seven specific online platforms measured in this survey. For the purpose of comparing education groups across countries, we standardize education levels based on the United Nations' International Standard Classification of Education. In all nations surveyed, the lower education category is below secondary education and the higher category is secondary or above.

Source: Mobile Technology and Its Social Impact Survey 2018. Q15b.

"Publics in Emerging Economies Worry Social Media Sow Division, Even as They Offer New Chances for Political Engagement"

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Impact of access to digital technologies by social media use and education level

% of adults who say access to mobile phones, the internet and social media has made people more accepting of people who have different views than they do

	TOTAL	Social media platform and messaging app use			Education		
		Non-user	User	DIFF	Less education	More education	DIFF
		%	%	%	%	%	%
Colombia	51	41	54	+13	45	56	+11
Mexico	35	35	35	0	36	33	-3
Venezuela	52	49	54	+5	50	54	+4
India	38	36	49	+13	33	48	+15
Philippines	46	42	50	+8	41	50	+9
Vietnam	44	41	45	+4	40	51	+11
Jordan	60	56	61	+5	62	59	-3
Lebanon	53	28	57	+29	48	61	+13
Tunisia	58	54	61	+7	52	64	+12
Kenya	52	47	59	+12	48	63	+15
South Africa	64	59	67	+8	63	65	+2

Note: Significant differences shown in **bold**. Social media and messaging app users include those who said they use one or more of the seven specific online platforms measured in this survey. For the purpose of comparing education groups across countries, we standardize education levels based on the United Nations' International Standard Classification of Education. In all nations surveyed, the lower education category is below secondary education and the higher category is secondary or above.

Source: Mobile Technology and Its Social Impact Survey 2018. Q15c.

"Publics in Emerging Economies Worry Social Media Sow Division, Even as They Offer New Chances for Political Engagement"

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Impact of access to digital technologies by social media use and education level

% of adults who say access to mobile phones, the internet and social media has made people easier to manipulate with false information and rumors

	TOTAL	Social media platform and messaging app use			Education		
		Non-user	User	DIFF	Less education	More education	DIFF
		%	%		%	%	
Colombia	75	60	80	+20	64	84	+20
Mexico	72	66	74	+8	69	76	+7
Venezuela	63	61	64	+3	63	63	0
India	60	59	71	+12	56	69	+13
Philippines	57	51	62	+11	48	62	+14
Vietnam	53	46	57	+11	47	64	+17
Jordan	92	86	93	+7	90	94	+4
Lebanon	79	69	81	+12	80	80	0
Tunisia	80	75	84	+9	75	86	+11
Kenya	66	63	71	+8	62	76	+14
South Africa	75	68	79	+11	70	82	+12

Note: Significant differences shown in **bold**. Social media and messaging app users include those who said they use one or more of the seven specific online platforms measured in this survey. For the purpose of comparing education groups across countries, we standardize education levels based on the United Nations' International Standard Classification of Education. In all nations surveyed, the lower education category is below secondary education and the higher category is secondary or above.

Source: Mobile Technology and Its Social Impact Survey 2018. Q15d.

"Publics in Emerging Economies Worry Social Media Sow Division, Even as They Offer New Chances for Political Engagement"

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Impact of access to digital technologies by social media use and education level

% of adults who say access to mobile phones, the internet and social media has made people more willing to engage in political debates

	TOTAL	Social media platform and messaging app use			Education		
		Non-user	User	DIFF	Less education	More education	DIFF
		%	%	%	%	%	%
Colombia	57	50	60	+10	51	62	+11
Mexico	55	49	57	+8	50	62	+12
Venezuela	55	53	56	+3	55	55	0
India	46	43	61	+18	39	60	+21
Philippines	49	43	54	+11	41	54	+13
Vietnam	47	41	51	+10	42	56	+14
Jordan	74	59	77	+18	69	79	+10
Lebanon	53	33	56	+23	48	62	+14
Tunisia	61	57	65	+8	58	65	+7
Kenya	65	62	70	+8	61	76	+15
South Africa	63	60	64	+4	59	67	+8

Note: Significant differences shown in **bold**. Social media and messaging app users include those who said they use one or more of the seven specific online platforms measured in this survey. For the purpose of comparing education groups across countries, we standardize education levels based on the United Nations' International Standard Classification of Education. In all nations surveyed, the lower education category is below secondary education and the higher category is secondary or above.

Source: Mobile Technology and Its Social Impact Survey 2018. Q15e.

"Publics in Emerging Economies Worry Social Media Sow Division, Even as They Offer New Chances for Political Engagement"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Topline questionnaire

Pew Research Center
Mobile Technology and Its Social Impact Survey 2018
May 13, 2019 Release

Methodological notes:

- Survey results are based on national samples. For further details on sample designs, see the Methodology section and our [international survey methods database](#).
- Due to rounding, percentages may not total 100%. The topline “total” columns show 100% because they are based on unrounded numbers.
- Not all questions included in the Mobile Technology and Its Social Impact Survey 2018 are presented in this topline. Omitted questions have either been previously released or will be released in future reports.
- Chapter 3 presents trend data drawn from a Global Attitudes survey conducted in 2014. For more on these data, please see the [report](#), its [topline](#) or its [methodology](#). Because of differences in the sampling plan and coverage of the survey, we do not trend this survey to the 2014 survey conducted in India.

	Q15a. In general, do you think that access to mobile phones, the internet, and social media have made people more ____, less ____, or have they not had much impact either way? a. informed about current events				
	More informed about current events	Less informed about current events	Not had much impact either way	DK/Refused	Total
Colombia	78	8	12	2	100
India	65	14	4	17	100
Jordan	93	3	3	1	100
Kenya	69	14	15	2	100
Lebanon	83	6	6	5	100
Mexico	76	9	13	2	100
Philippines	70	13	14	3	100
South Africa	78	12	8	2	100
Tunisia	83	4	11	2	100
Venezuela	87	6	5	2	100
Vietnam	72	8	16	4	100

	Q15b. In general, do you think that access to mobile phones, the internet, and social media have made people more ____, less ____, or have they not had much impact either way? b. divided in their political opinions				
	More divided in their political opinions	Less divided in their political opinions	Not had much impact either way	DK/Refused	Total
Colombia	59	14	23	4	100
India	46	14	8	32	100
Jordan	74	6	10	10	100
Kenya	54	25	18	3	100
Lebanon	63	14	13	11	100
Mexico	58	15	22	4	100
Philippines	50	21	24	4	100
South Africa	58	20	16	6	100
Tunisia	68	8	20	4	100
Venezuela	60	14	18	9	100
Vietnam	41	14	35	11	100

	Q15c. In general, do you think that access to mobile phones, the internet, and social media have made people more ____, less ____, or have they not had much impact either way? c. accepting of people who have different views than they do				
	More accepting of people who have different views than they do	Less accepting of people who have different views than they do	Not had much impact either way	DK/Refused	Total
Colombia	51	17	28	4	100
India	38	20	10	32	100
Jordan	60	25	9	5	100
Kenya	52	26	20	3	100
Lebanon	53	28	12	7	100
Mexico	35	36	24	5	100
Philippines	46	24	26	4	100
South Africa	64	20	12	3	100
Tunisia	58	17	23	3	100
Venezuela	52	27	16	4	100
Vietnam	44	15	35	6	100

	Q15d. In general, do you think that access to mobile phones, the internet, and social media have made people more ____, less ____, or have they not had much impact either way? d. easy to manipulate with false information and rumors				
	More easy to manipulate with false information and rumors	Less easy to manipulate with false information and rumors	Not had much impact either way	DK/Refused	Total
Colombia	75	9	14	2	100
India	60	15	7	18	100
Jordan	92	4	3	2	100
Kenya	66	19	13	2	100
Lebanon	79	9	6	6	100
Mexico	72	11	15	2	100
Philippines	57	22	18	3	100
South Africa	75	15	8	2	100
Tunisia	80	7	11	2	100
Venezuela	63	22	11	4	100
Vietnam	53	16	26	5	100

	Q15e. In general, do you think that access to mobile phones, the internet, and social media have made people more ____, less ____, or have they not had much impact either way? e. willing to engage in political debates				
	More willing to engage in political debates	Less willing to engage in political debates	Not had much impact either way	DK/Refused	Total
Colombia	57	14	24	4	100
India	46	16	8	30	100
Jordan	74	9	8	9	100
Kenya	65	16	16	3	100
Lebanon	53	23	12	12	100
Mexico	55	17	24	5	100
Philippines	49	23	23	4	100
South Africa	63	18	13	5	100
Tunisia	61	13	20	6	100
Venezuela	55	19	17	9	100
Vietnam	47	11	33	10	100

	Q30a. ASK SOCIAL MEDIA USERS ONLY: How important are ____ for helping you keep up with political news and other developments happening in the world – are they very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important? a. social media							
	Not at all important	Not too important	Somewhat important	Very important	Does not use this [VOL]	DK/Refused	Total	N=
Colombia	9	15	36	37	2	0	100	1781
India	6	13	43	34	3	3	100	1276
Jordan	12	12	32	41	3	0	100	2006
Kenya	4	8	25	62	1	0	100	1370
Lebanon	10	13	35	35	6	1	100	2162
Mexico	12	24	35	27	2	0	100	1536
Philippines	3	13	43	41	1	0	100	1385
South Africa	10	12	28	48	2	0	100	1634
Tunisia	9	10	31	49	0	0	100	1485
Venezuela	3	9	34	53	0	0	100	1634
Vietnam	2	17	45	34	0	1	100	1896

	Q30e. How important are ____ for helping you keep up with political news and other developments happening in the world – are they very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important? e. in-person discussions with people you see						
	Not at all important	Not too important	Somewhat important	Very important	Does not use this [VOL]	DK/Refused	Total
Colombia	11	12	32	44	0	0	100
India	6	8	41	39	2	4	100
Jordan	17	13	31	30	9	0	100
Kenya	8	11	30	51	1	0	100
Lebanon	7	12	34	44	2	1	100
Mexico	24	28	27	19	2	1	100
Philippines	7	17	38	38	0	0	100
South Africa	9	12	24	54	1	0	100
Tunisia	16	13	27	41	2	0	100
Venezuela	5	7	32	54	0	0	100
Vietnam	4	24	44	27	1	1	100

	Q31a. ASK SOCIAL MEDIA USERS ONLY: In general, how much do you trust the news and information you get from ____ – a great deal, somewhat, not too much, or not at all? a. social media							
	Not at all	Not too much	Somewhat	A great deal	Does not use this [VOL]	DK/Refused	Total	N=
Colombia	13	37	38	9	2	0	100	1781
India	5	19	49	22	3	2	100	1276
Jordan	12	32	46	8	2	1	100	2006
Kenya	6	21	42	31	0	0	100	1370
Lebanon	13	25	39	16	7	1	100	2162
Mexico	16	37	35	10	1	0	100	1536
Philippines	3	23	56	17	1	0	100	1385
South Africa	15	32	30	20	2	0	100	1634
Tunisia	18	26	45	9	0	0	100	1485
Venezuela	8	22	54	14	1	0	100	1634
Vietnam	2	31	49	17	0	1	100	1896

	Q31e. In general, how much do you trust the news and information you get from ____ – a great deal, somewhat, not too much, or not at all? e. in-person discussions with people you see regularly						
	Not at all	Not too much	Somewhat	A great deal	Does not use this [VOL]	DK/Refused	Total
Colombia	8	27	41	24	0	0	100
India	5	12	44	34	2	3	100
Jordan	11	21	42	15	10	1	100
Kenya	8	18	45	29	0	0	100
Lebanon	6	16	37	38	2	1	100
Mexico	22	33	32	11	1	1	100
Philippines	6	20	51	21	1	0	100
South Africa	13	27	29	30	0	0	100
Tunisia	16	19	40	23	1	1	100
Venezuela	7	14	51	28	0	1	100
Vietnam	2	21	51	25	0	1	100

	Q32a. ASK SOCIAL MEDIA USERS ONLY: Compared to other sources, would you say that the news and information you get from social media is more ____, less ____, or about the same? a. informative						
	About the same	Less informative	More informative	Does not use social media [VOL]	DK/Refused	Total	N=
Colombia	49	22	27	2	0	100	1781
India	17	29	44	2	8	100	1276
Jordan	31	24	41	2	2	100	2006
Kenya	22	33	44	0	0	100	1370
Lebanon	17	13	60	7	2	100	2162
Mexico	49	21	28	1	0	100	1536
Philippines	36	15	47	1	1	100	1385
South Africa	26	24	48	2	1	100	1634
Tunisia	33	19	47	0	1	100	1485
Venezuela	34	12	52	1	1	100	1634
Vietnam	20	13	65	0	1	100	1896

	Q32b. ASK SOCIAL MEDIA USERS ONLY: Compared to other sources, would you say that the news and information you get from social media is more ____, less ____, or about the same? b. up-to-date						
	About the same	Less up-to-date	More up-to-date	Does not use social media [VOL]	DK/Refused	Total	N=
Colombia	45	14	38	2	1	100	1781
India	16	24	49	3	8	100	1276
Jordan	21	15	60	2	2	100	2006
Kenya	25	26	48	0	0	100	1370
Lebanon	16	13	62	6	3	100	2162
Mexico	40	12	45	1	1	100	1536
Philippines	34	14	51	0	1	100	1385
South Africa	22	24	50	2	1	100	1634
Tunisia	37	16	46	0	0	100	1485
Venezuela	27	9	63	1	1	100	1634
Vietnam	20	14	65	0	1	100	1896

	Q32c. ASK SOCIAL MEDIA USERS ONLY: Compared to other sources, would you say that the news and information you get from social media is more ____, less ____, or about the same? c. biased						
	About the same	Less biased	More biased	Does not use social media [VOL]	DK/Refused	Total	N=
Colombia	52	21	23	2	2	100	1781
India	18	26	39	3	13	100	1276
Jordan	30	25	35	2	8	100	2006
Kenya	31	39	29	0	0	100	1370
Lebanon	24	22	41	6	7	100	2162
Mexico	48	21	28	1	1	100	1536
Philippines	44	25	30	0	1	100	1385
South Africa	31	32	34	2	1	100	1634
Tunisia	39	31	29	0	1	100	1485
Venezuela	44	17	34	1	5	100	1634
Vietnam	31	35	30	0	4	100	1896

	Q32d. ASK SOCIAL MEDIA USERS ONLY: Compared to other sources, would you say that the news and information you get from social media is more ____, less ____, or about the same? d. reliable						
	About the same	Less reliable	More reliable	Does not use social media [VOL]	DK/Refused	Total	N=
Colombia	47	39	12	2	0	100	1781
India	15	41	35	2	7	100	1276
Jordan	30	50	16	2	2	100	2006
Kenya	19	48	32	0	0	100	1370
Lebanon	25	47	18	7	3	100	2162
Mexico	49	33	15	1	1	100	1536
Philippines	39	14	46	1	0	100	1385
South Africa	26	34	37	2	1	100	1634
Tunisia	42	39	19	0	0	100	1485
Venezuela	44	23	31	1	1	100	1634
Vietnam	28	30	41	0	2	100	1896

	Q32e. ASK SOCIAL MEDIA USERS ONLY: Compared to other sources, would you say that the news and information you get from social media is more ____, less ____, or about the same? e. focused on issues that are important to you						
	About the same	Less focused on issues that are important to you	More focused on issues that are important to you	Does not use social media [VOL]	DK/Refused	Total	N=
Colombia	50	29	19	2	1	100	1781
India	17	31	38	3	11	100	1276
Jordan	28	31	37	2	3	100	2006
Kenya	24	42	33	0	0	100	1370
Lebanon	21	27	43	7	3	100	2162
Mexico	46	32	20	1	1	100	1536
Philippines	37	23	38	0	1	100	1385
South Africa	26	27	44	2	1	100	1634
Tunisia	40	19	41	0	0	100	1485
Venezuela	37	16	45	1	1	100	1634
Vietnam	28	24	45	0	3	100	1896

	Q32f. ASK SOCIAL MEDIA USERS ONLY: Compared to other sources, would you say that the news and information you get from social media is more ____, less ____, or about the same? f. hateful						
	About the same	Less hateful	More hateful	Does not use social media [VOL]	DK/Refused	Total	N=
Colombia	42	16	40	2	1	100	1781
India	16	30	38	2	14	100	1276
Jordan	27	25	38	2	9	100	2006
Kenya	32	44	23	0	0	100	1370
Lebanon	21	20	46	6	6	100	2162
Mexico	54	28	14	2	2	100	1536
Philippines	40	39	20	1	1	100	1385
South Africa	29	35	31	3	2	100	1634
Tunisia	38	25	34	0	2	100	1485
Venezuela	41	32	24	1	2	100	1634
Vietnam	34	43	16	1	6	100	1896

	Q33a. ASK SOCIAL MEDIA USERS ONLY: How often do the following situations happen when you use social media – frequently, occasionally, rarely, or never? a. you see articles or other content that make you feel negatively about groups of people different than you							
	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Does not use social media [VOL]	DK/Refused	Total	N=
Colombia	20	35	30	12	3	1	100	1781
India	20	20	37	14	2	7	100	1276
Jordan	22	19	38	18	2	2	100	2006
Kenya	10	40	25	24	0	0	100	1370
Lebanon	10	16	40	24	8	2	100	2162
Mexico	27	41	17	13	2	0	100	1536
Philippines	8	29	41	21	0	0	100	1385
South Africa	17	19	31	29	3	1	100	1634
Tunisia	10	19	46	24	0	0	100	1485
Venezuela	21	32	24	20	2	1	100	1634
Vietnam	11	24	49	15	0	1	100	1896

	Q33b. ASK SOCIAL MEDIA USERS ONLY: How often do the following situations happen when you use social media – frequently, occasionally, rarely, or never? b. you see articles or other content that seem obviously false or untrue							
	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Does not use social media [VOL]	DK/Refused	Total	N=
Colombia	15	28	31	24	2	0	100	1781
India	19	20	39	16	2	5	100	1276
Jordan	8	17	39	32	2	1	100	2006
Kenya	8	37	24	31	0	0	100	1370
Lebanon	3	11	42	34	8	1	100	2162
Mexico	20	34	19	25	2	0	100	1536
Philippines	5	25	41	27	0	0	100	1385
South Africa	10	17	33	36	3	0	100	1634
Tunisia	5	16	49	29	1	0	100	1485
Venezuela	10	30	30	27	2	1	100	1634
Vietnam	8	19	53	19	0	1	100	1896

	Q33c. ASK SOCIAL MEDIA USERS ONLY: How often do the following situations happen when you use social media – frequently, occasionally, rarely, or never? c. you see articles or other content that introduce you to a new idea							
	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Does not use social media [VOL]	DK/Refused	Total	N=
Colombia	9	21	39	27	3	0	100	1781
India	11	16	43	25	2	4	100	1276
Jordan	8	13	38	37	2	1	100	2006
Kenya	5	25	27	41	0	1	100	1370
Lebanon	3	9	39	41	8	1	100	2162
Mexico	14	33	22	29	2	0	100	1536
Philippines	4	20	40	35	0	0	100	1385
South Africa	10	16	33	38	3	0	100	1634
Tunisia	4	11	42	42	0	0	100	1485
Venezuela	6	15	25	52	2	0	100	1634
Vietnam	7	15	54	23	0	1	100	1896

	Q34a. Thinking about the impact of social media on the political process in (survey country), do you think it has increased, decreased, or not had much effect on ____? a. the risk that people in (survey country) might be manipulated by domestic politicians				
	Not had much effect	Decreased	Increased	DK/Refused	Total
Colombia	14	8	73	5	100
India	9	10	42	38	100
Jordan	13	7	60	20	100
Kenya	11	19	67	3	100
Lebanon	9	7	69	15	100
Mexico	19	9	67	5	100
Philippines	24	19	51	5	100
South Africa	12	16	66	6	100
Tunisia	17	11	65	7	100
Venezuela	17	18	58	7	100
Vietnam	34	10	39	16	100

	Q34b. Thinking about the impact of social media on the political process in (survey country), do you think it has increased, decreased, or not had much effect on ____? b. the risk that foreign powers might interfere in (survey country)'s elections				
	Not had much effect	Decreased	Increased	DK/Refused	Total
Colombia	27	9	56	8	100
India	11	10	34	45	100
Jordan	30	7	37	25	100
Kenya	14	22	60	4	100
Lebanon	12	9	59	19	100
Mexico	29	8	55	8	100
Philippines	27	16	51	6	100
South Africa	15	15	63	6	100
Tunisia	22	8	59	11	100
Venezuela	28	15	48	9	100
Vietnam	36	9	38	17	100

	Q34c. Thinking about the impact of social media on the political process in (survey country), do you think it has increased, decreased, or not had much effect on ____? c. the ability for ordinary people in (survey country) to have a meaningful voice in the political process				
	Not had much effect	Decreased	Increased	DK/Refused	Total
Colombia	23	15	56	6	100
India	9	11	42	37	100
Jordan	17	8	57	18	100
Kenya	11	20	66	3	100
Lebanon	15	10	60	16	100
Mexico	23	12	61	5	100
Philippines	20	18	57	5	100
South Africa	17	23	55	5	100
Tunisia	21	16	57	6	100
Venezuela	17	21	56	6	100
Vietnam	32	11	45	12	100

	Q34d. Thinking about the impact of social media on the political process in (survey country), do you think it has increased, decreased, or not had much effect on ____? d. the ability of non-governmental groups and charities to promote their causes				
	Not had much effect	Decreased	Increased	DK/Refused	Total
Colombia	27	13	51	8	100
India	8	11	39	43	100
Jordan	12	7	63	18	100
Kenya	14	18	65	4	100
Lebanon	10	7	67	16	100
Mexico	31	12	49	8	100
Philippines	24	17	53	6	100
South Africa	17	20	58	5	100
Tunisia	18	12	65	5	100
Venezuela	17	20	53	10	100
Vietnam	33	9	45	13	100

Q35a. ASK SOCIAL MEDIA USERS ONLY: Some people feel more comfortable than others in talking about political issues in certain ways. How comfortable would you personally feel discussing political issues or news _____ – very comfortable, somewhat comfortable, not too comfortable, or not at all comfortable? a. on social media										
	Not at all comfortable	Not too comfortable	Somewhat comfortable	Very comfortable	Does not use social media [VOL]	It depends on the topic [VOL]	It depends on the person [VOL]	DK/Refused	Total	N=
Colombia	41	26	19	10	3	1	0	1	100	1781
India	13	14	38	23	3	2	1	6	100	1276
Jordan	54	9	17	10	3	3	2	2	100	2006
Kenya	20	17	30	33	1	0	0	0	100	1371
Lebanon	28	18	29	10	8	2	2	3	100	2162
Mexico	35	23	28	9	3	0	0	1	100	1536
Philippines	7	23	51	18	0	0	0	0	100	1385
South Africa	26	19	24	27	3	0	0	0	100	1634
Tunisia	30	20	23	17	5	1	0	5	100	1488
Venezuela	45	20	17	12	5	0	0	1	100	1634
Vietnam	6	26	42	21	0	1	0	3	100	1896

Q35b. ASK MOBILE PHONE USERS ONLY: Some people feel more comfortable than others in talking about political issues in certain ways. How comfortable would you personally feel discussing political issues or news _____ – very comfortable, somewhat comfortable, not too comfortable, or not at all comfortable? b. by talking to someone on your mobile phone										
	Not at all comfortable	Not too comfortable	Somewhat comfortable	Very comfortable	Does not use social media [VOL]	It depends on the topic [VOL]	It depends on the person [VOL]	DK/Refused	Total	N=
Colombia	37	24	22	14	0	0	0	2	100	2332
India	10	12	35	28	0	2	1	13	100	3005
Jordan	57	8	16	10	0	2	3	4	100	2434
Kenya	22	15	25	36	0	0	0	2	100	2449
Lebanon	26	16	33	15	0	2	3	4	100	2272
Mexico	33	20	31	13	0	0	0	2	100	1860
Philippines	8	20	45	27	0	0	0	0	100	1974
South Africa	22	16	22	36	2	0	0	1	100	2365
Tunisia	34	16	16	17	0	1	1	15	100	2445
Venezuela	49	17	16	13	0	1	1	4	100	2074
Vietnam	5	18	41	30	0	1	1	4	100	2475

Q35c. Some people feel more comfortable than others in talking about political issues in certain ways. How comfortable would you personally feel discussing political issues or news _____ – very comfortable, somewhat comfortable, not too comfortable, or not at all comfortable? c. by talking to someone in person										
	Not at all comfortable	Not too comfortable	Somewhat comfortable	Very comfortable	Does not use social media [VOL]	It depends on the topic [VOL]	It depends on the person [VOL]	DK/Refused	Total	
Colombia	29	18	27	25	0	0	0	1	100	
India	7	9	30	35	0	3	1	15	100	
Jordan	30	5	20	35	0	2	5	4	100	
Kenya	16	10	27	45	0	1	0	1	100	
Lebanon	8	7	26	52	0	1	3	3	100	
Mexico	23	15	33	26	1	0	1	1	100	
Philippines	4	14	37	44	0	0	0	0	100	
South Africa	16	11	20	51	1	0	0	1	100	
Tunisia	24	13	21	32	0	0	2	8	100	
Venezuela	37	14	23	22	0	1	1	3	100	
Vietnam	4	17	40	34	0	1	1	3	100	

	Q36. ASK SOCIAL MEDIA USERS ONLY: Have you ever unfriended, blocked or hidden someone from your feed on social media because of their political views — yes or no?					
	Yes	No	Does not use social media [VOL]	DK/Refused	Total	N=
Colombia	24	73	3	0	100	1781
India	18	74	3	4	100	1276
Jordan	35	63	2	0	100	2006
Kenya	39	60	1	0	100	1370
Lebanon	37	54	7	2	100	2162
Mexico	17	81	2	0	100	1536
Philippines	42	57	1	0	100	1385
South Africa	34	63	3	0	100	1634
Tunisia	21	78	1	0	100	1485
Venezuela	25	74	1	0	100	1634
Vietnam	36	62	1	1	100	1896

	Q37. ASK SOCIAL MEDIA USERS ONLY: Have you ever learned that someone's political beliefs were different than you thought they were, based on something they posted on social media, or has this never happened to you?					
	Yes, has happened to me	No, has never happened to me	Does not use social media [VOL]	DK/Refused	Total	N=
Colombia	38	59	2	0	100	1781
India	20	68	4	8	100	1276
Jordan	36	60	2	2	100	2006
Kenya	47	52	0	1	100	1370
Lebanon	42	48	7	2	100	2162
Mexico	37	61	1	0	100	1536
Philippines	30	69	0	1	100	1385
South Africa	34	61	3	1	100	1634
Tunisia	33	66	0	1	100	1485
Venezuela	50	49	1	1	100	1634
Vietnam	24	70	0	5	100	1896