

Online content regulation policy in Kenya: potential challenges and possible solutions

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Abstract

The digital explosion experienced in Africa has rendered old media laws and ethics inapplicable in dealing with cases of abuse and misuse on social media platforms. As a result, authorities in most African countries are playing catch-up in combating bloggers and citizens who keep flouting media laws and ethics in cyberspace. This paper, focussing on mis/disinformation, identifies the key concerns and challenges in the present online content regulation in Kenya. It offers an up-to-date, well-informed review of the Kenyan regulatory landscape and a critical analysis of its limitations and the risks associated with it. In responding to these limitations, the paper proposes a concept of Media Regulation and Media Literacy (MRAML). MRAML incorporates media literacy education as part of the existing cyber regulation in curbing harmful online content. MRAML is anchored in UNESCO's Triple E's Model and social responsibility theory and recognises internet users as crucial stakeholders who can also be incorporated in online content regulation. MRAML aims to empower Kenyan internet users by creating awareness of the existing cyber regulations, developing their skills in critical thinking and enhancing their ability to identify and tackle illegal and harmful online content, thereby ensuring a safe, respectful, harmonious and inclusive Kenyan cyberspace.