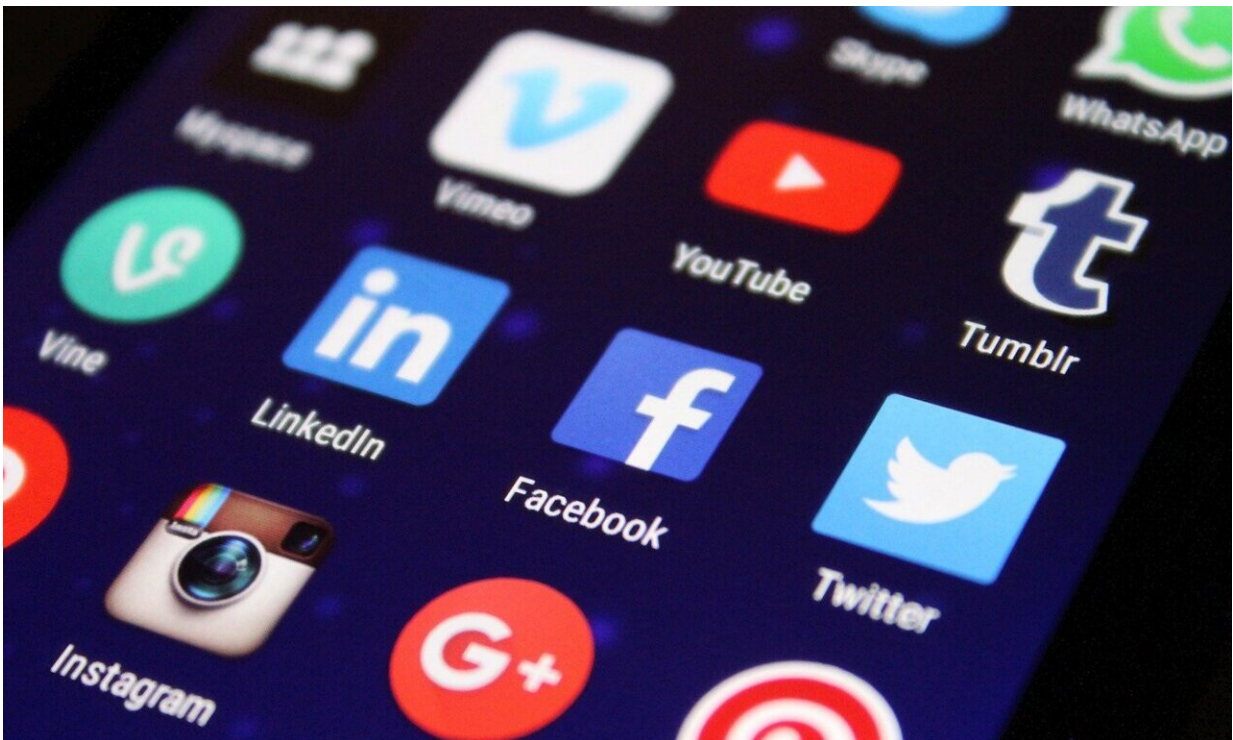# Social media use by young people in conflict-ridden Myanmar

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Credit: CC0 Public Domain

Myanmar youth rely heavily on Facebook for news and information. This can be a platform for disseminating fake news and hate speech. With poor digital literacy skills, these youths may be susceptible to disinformation campaigns and other online dangers, according to the peer-reviewed journal *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social*

Networking.

Facebook and its sister app Messenger were used by 87.4% and 71.4% of Myanmar youth living in conflict-affected areas. Overall, 58% of respondents indicated that they use social media, mainly Facebook, to read news.

The results "suggest that young people living in conflict-affected areas of Myanmar are aware of the proliferation of fake news on social media, and often check the accuracy of the news they receive from this medium," states Dr. Brad Ridout, The University of Sydney, and coauthors. "However, the overreliance on Facebook for checking news accuracy, combined with poor literacy skills and low levels of trust in traditional and state-run media, may have a negative impact on the information ecosystem within which young people in Myanmar exist."

"Teaching young people media and information literacy has always been an important tool, to give them the critical thinking skills to properly navigate the information they are exposed to in everyday life. Digital networks that have enabled trans-border and trans-media information availability makes this education more important now than ever before to encourage us all to call into question the information encountered online," says Editor-in-Chief Brenda K. Wiederhold, Ph.D., MBA, BCB, BCN, Interactive Media Institute, San Diego, California and Virtual Reality Medical Institute, Brusse (social-networking/10" target="_blank">home.liebertpub.com/publicatio … and-social-networking/10) is an authoritative peer-reviewed journal published monthly online with Open Access options and in print that explores the psychological and social issues surrounding the Internet and interactive technologies. Complete tables of contents and a sample issue may be viewed on the *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking* (home.liebertpub.com/publicatio … social-networking/10) website.

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