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How Does Social Media Enhance Access To Information And Criticism In Vietnam?

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Linh Vu, English Language Institute – Summer 2021

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Abstract

Social media appeared in Vietnam in the 90s when people had less free space to access diverse information. By presenting compelling interactive platforms, social media has become a game-changer to create profound impacts.

Introduction

Users can access directly diverse global information but also regulate self-controlled content without censorship on social media.

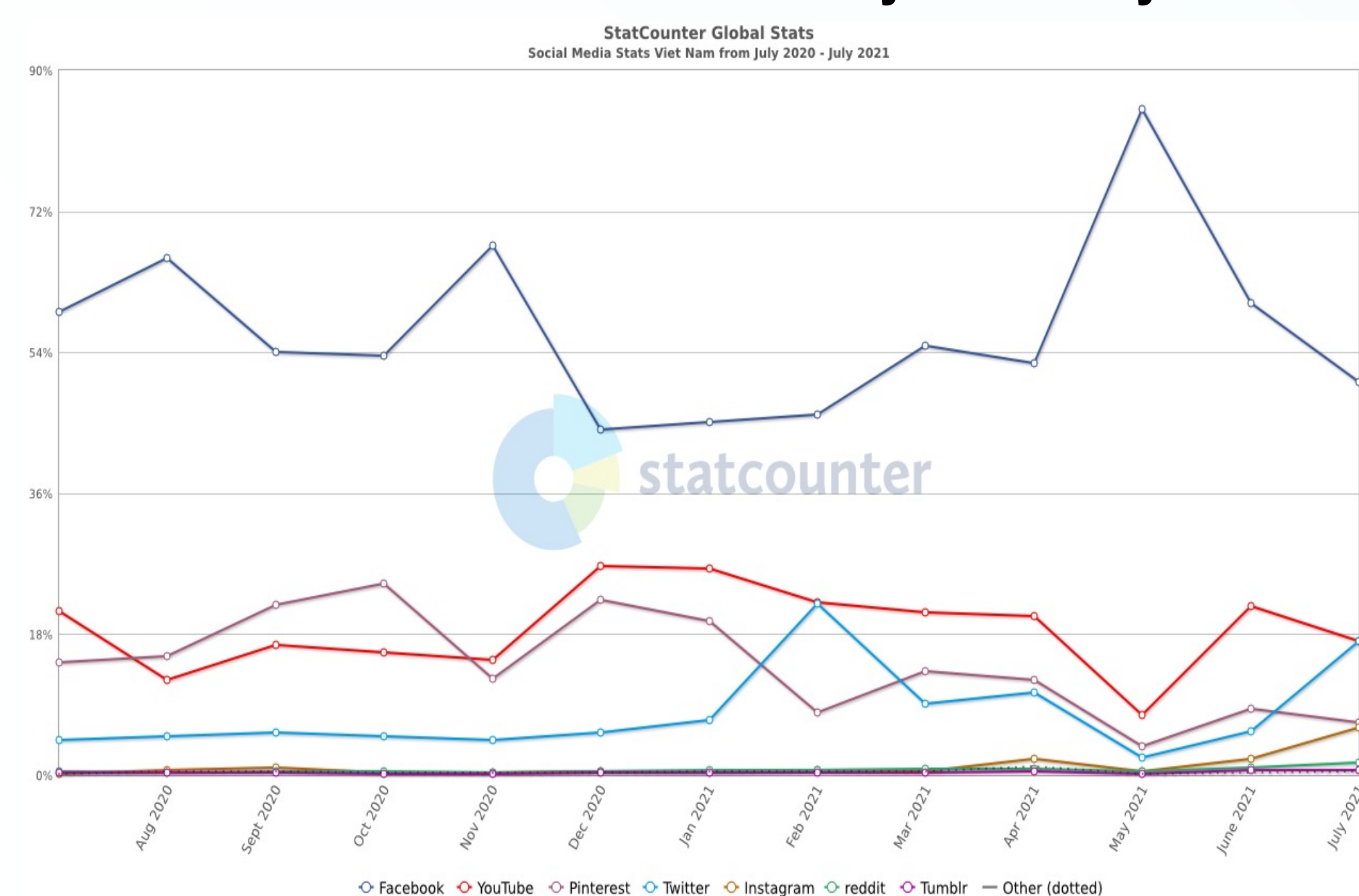
While elite KOLs (Key Opinion Leaders) set a base on social platforms to deliver verified information and insights, the community breaks hierarchy to raise voices and enhance criticism in a virtual environment.



Huy, A. (2021, 6 Feb). *VnExpress*.

Social Media Users in Vietnam

Social Media Stats Vietnam from July 2020- July 2021



According to Data Portal, Vietnam has 72 million social media users, which accounts for 73.7% population.

Statista reports Facebook is the most popular social media platform. With 70 million users, Vietnam's ranked 7th globally among the countries with the highest number of Facebook users as of April 2021.

Arenas for Free Speech

- ❖ Open eyes to local users by directly accessing diverse international news/information.
- ❖ Collect, share, report and analyze information. Sometimes, local users have exclusive information that makes mainstream media waiting around.



Photo: Tra, H.L.N (2021, May 24). Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/lenguyenhuongtra.de>

Tra is an influencer KOL having exclusive political insights, revealed the detailed results of the members of the National Assembly election.

- ❖ Elite writers are experts, teachers, writers, doctors, artists, freelance journalists. Their engagement have set up a base for independent criticism in Vietnam.



Photo: Hung N. (2021, May 18). Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/linh.hung.1865>

Hung N - A private social page of a well-known doctor hits views for introducing verified information and insights related to health. The author also has led opinions in many social matters and built trust by his profound knowledge.

- ❖ Break the traditional hierarchy of communication in Vietnamese society. Ethnic and professional groups have stirred up their voices on concerned matters.

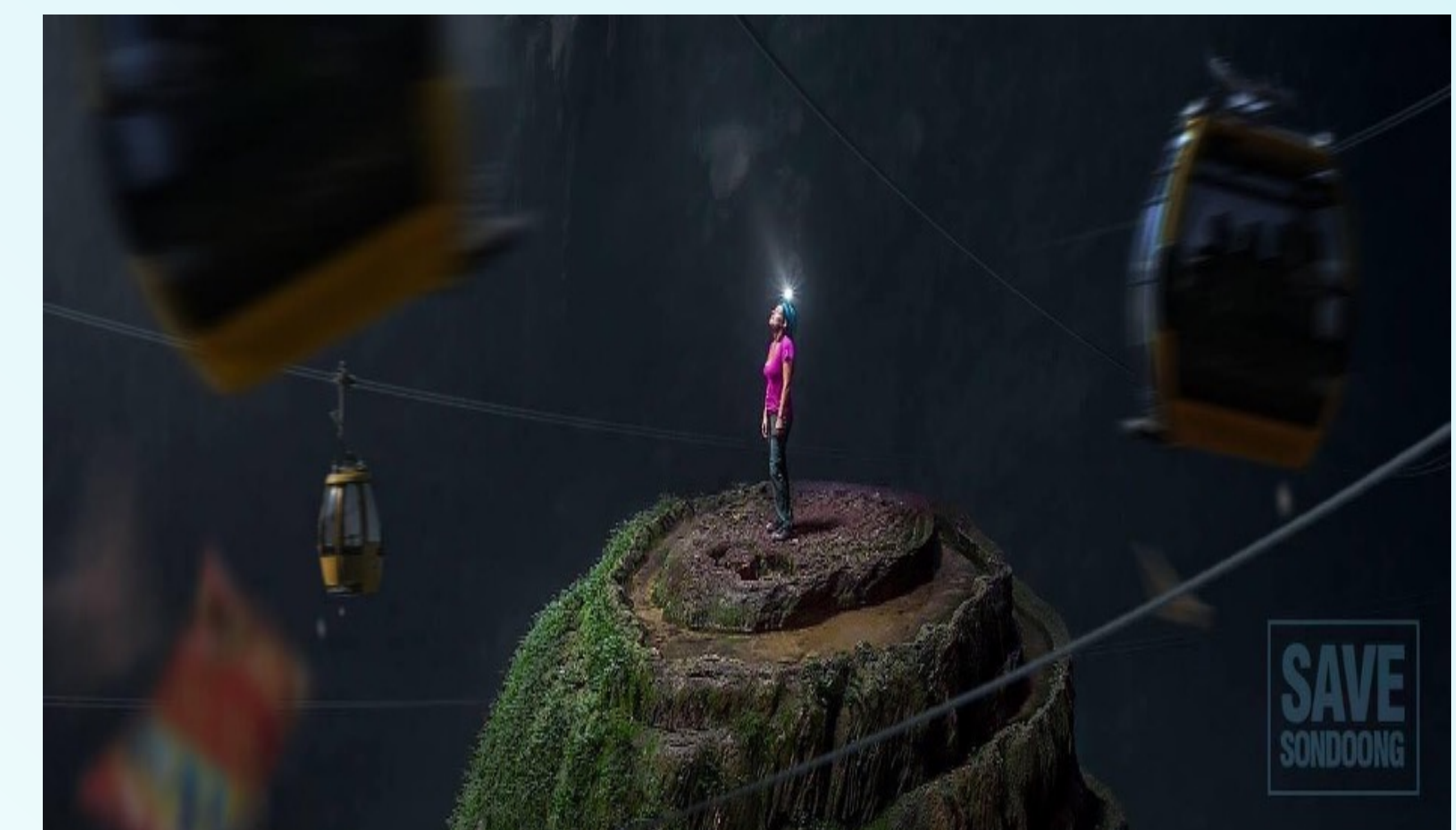


Photo: SaveSonDoong. (n.d). Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/NoCableCarInSonDoong>

SaveSonDoong presents an online social movement that opposed government and investor plans to commercially exploit the eponymous cave system in north-central Vietnam through tourism. SonDoong is best known as the biggest cave on the planet.

Conclusion

Conclusion:

Application platforms on social media have supported Vietnamese to access information and enhance their criticism in the information era. People have got the freedom to reach out to the world and exchanging thoughts and voices. Their information freedom has been beyond the virtual environment to make changes for a better society.

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