

Influence of Social Media Engagement on Performance of  
Safaricom Plc Brand

by

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A thesis presented to the School of Business and Economics

of

Daystar University  
Nairobi, Kenya

In partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION  
in Strategic Management

September 2021

APPROVAL

INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT ON PERFORMANCE OF SAFARICOM BRAND

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DECLARATION

INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENTS ON PERFORMANCE OF  
SAFARICOM BRAND

I declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been submitted to any other college or university for academic credit.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I acknowledge the guidance of my supervisors, Mr. Paul Kamaku and Mr. Thomas Koyier, who were readily available to assist me in making this research a success. My sincere gratitude goes to them for availing their time to provide guidance and encouragement that saw the completion of this worthy course. The same goes to my family members for their unlimited support and for standing with me throughout this journey. May the Almighty God bless them.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

NPS	Net Promoter Score
PLC	Public Listed Company
SMA	Social Media Analytics
SMEs	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

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## ABSTRACT

The study examined the influence of social media engagements on the performance of the Safaricom PLC brand. Four (4) objectives guided the study: to identify the social media platforms Safaricom PLC has adopted for customer engagement, establish how Safaricom PLC uses social media for customer engagement, determine how Safaricom PLC measures its brand performance, and establish how the social media engagements adopted by

Safaricom PLC are affecting the brand's performance. Diffusion of innovation, social penetration, and balanced scorecard theories underpinned the study as they illustrate how technology spreads through a population and the operational benefits of using technology. The population of the study comprised 168 employees in Safaricom PLC's social media department. A questionnaire with open and closed-ended questions was used to collect both qualitative and quantitative data, and the response rate was 82%. Descriptive and inferential statistics were obtained using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, version 23, and the findings presented in tables and figures. Most (84.6%) of the respondents agreed that Facebook was the most popular platform used by Safaricom PLC for customer engagement, followed by Twitter (78.5%), blogs (76.9%), and YouTube

(61.5%). On Safaricom PLC's use of social media to engage with customers, 66.9% of the respondents agreed that the company uses Facebook to get feedback from the public while regarding Twitter, 86(62.2%) and 51.5% agreed that the company uses it for direct interaction with its customers, and to introduce new products, respectively. The overall conclusion of the study is that social media engagement positively impacts Safaricom

PLC brand's performance. The study recommends the adoption of social media as a marketing,

sales, and customer engagement strategy to increase brand performance.

#### DEDICATION

I thank my husband, Engineer Sande; my children, Sean and Suri; and everyone who supported me financially and emotionally throughout my study. God bless you all abundantly.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

#### Introduction

In recent years, consumer engagement has been investigated for online business growth through its contribution towards building online brand communities for organizations. Several scholars, such as Dessart, Veloutsou, and Morgan-Thomas (2015) sought to conceptualize consumer engagement as a multidimensional engagement without boundaries, yet different dimensions contribute to online brand communities. Muniz and O'guinn (2001) described a brand community as a “specialized, non-geographically bound community, based on a structured set of social relationships among admirers of a brand” (p. 412). They further noted that there are many varied interpretations of consumer engagement described by other scholars.

Cherotich (2016) revealed that social media has created a revolution in communication, affecting how people communicate and interact. Social media offers an invaluable tool for businesses to get their products out to the market, conduct market research, and engage various stakeholders in new communication ways. Studies have shown that understanding social dynamics and using social media are key strategic drivers to improve an organization's performance. New applications are often generated, and more innovative social network systems in communication continue to evolve.

According to Trainor, Andzulis, Rapp, and Agnihotri (2014), social media offers a platform for organizations to interact with customers and share new developments that are taking place and vice versa. Social media gives customers a forum to openly discuss products with respective organizations through, for example, customer reviews,

comments, and recommendations (Patil & Puri, 2015). Customer engagement influences brand loyalty by creating social value and regularity of brand pages' use. Social media creates an atmosphere of freedom and anonymity that triggers candid conversations. A good social media engagement should provide a better understanding of needs and expectations from consumers. It can also create room for mining information and creating social networks.

An accurate analysis of social media can help organizations identify social influencers. Dijkmans, Kerkhof, and Beukeboom (2015), Hollebeek and Chen (2014), and Lee, So, and Leung (2015) studied social media engagement and its contribution to the performance of an organization. They found a positive link between social media customer engagement and improved profitability, retaining customers, and perceived reputation. They concluded that social media engagement plays a part in the performance of an organization, since active customer engagement reduces the negative influence on the image of an organization that could be caused by events. Studies by McCann and Barlow (2015) and Kajalo and Lindblom (2015) revealed that direct contact with customers facilitated by social media enables small business enterprises to be flexible, hence improving their market position. However, this researcher did not find a study focusing on social media's influence on brand performance in the telecommunication industry.

Wambu (2017) conducted a study on internet usage in Kenya. The study indicated a significant increase, at 17(5%), in the number of Kenyans aged 16 years and over who had access to the internet in the year 2017 compared to the year 2016. Furthermore, a study that looked at social media's influence on brand equity found a steady increase

regarding internet users as customers seek information on the brand from social media and the internet (Nyairo, 2016).

Odhiambo (2014) observed that digital communication, when properly utilized, offers companies the opportunity to target, interact, and get feedback from their consumers. The study further noted that it is imperative for businesses in the 21st century to use digital communication since such a platform allows businesses to reach a larger audience. It also makes the businesses' communication efforts simpler, cost-effective; and makes it easier for the businesses to build brand equity.

Although a lot of research focusing on social media use has been done, for example, in marketing, sales, and advertising, this researcher did not come across any research focusing on social media engagements' influence on the telecommunication industry brands' performance. This research sought to contribute to the empirical literature on the social media engagements' benefits on the telecommunication industry brands' performance and emphasize the need for organizations to focus more on social media.

### Background to the Study

As one of the key influences on customers' and businesses' social behavior, social media has transformed global business communication since the early 1990s. There is a rising number of internet users and internet applications, especially in the recent decade. The Internet World Statistics, June 2017, documented that the worldwide number of internet users surpassed three billion in 2016 (Internet World Stats, n.d.).

Millions of global users have been able to connect via social media platforms, a farreaching effect that the platforms' founders may not have expected. Waldman (2016)

opined that Facebook is among the most widely used social media platforms worldwide and, as of March 2016, had more than 1.65 billion users. As of the first quarter of 2016, Twitter had 300 million users. There is a major growth in user numbers as more people subscribe to the platform (Waseem & Hovy, 2016). This ever-growing number of users on social media presents businesses with chances to interact with more persons and also elevates the social media profile between businesses (Jones, Simmons, Packham, ByononDavies, & Pickernell, 2014). Although social media use has given a worldwide spectrum for businesses to thrive, local engagements are vital for a business to accomplish its objectives. Local acceptance is the key driver to the successful building of a business brand.

The African continent has recorded some of the fastest growth rates of internet users, increasing by more than 20% annually. Etim, Uzonna, and Worgu (2018) did a study in Nigeria to determine the connection between social media usage and organizational performance in the Nigerian telecommunication sector. The research was carried out in a population of 95 employees comprising different levels of management in four telecommunication outlets located in Nigeria. Data collection was done by use of a questionnaire. The data was then interpreted using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient statistical technique. As shown by the study, the use of social media had a notable relationship with performance measures of profitability and market share. The study further recommended the need for the firm's management to provide ample attention to the firms' social media platforms and extensively utilize them in providing customer service, advertisement, and as a promotion tool to elevate performance in the business.

Locally, the Kenyan business community has taken cues from other parts of the world, and in their bid to keep up with the ever-challenging business environment, have established social media platforms for interacting with their current and future customers. However, social media engagement has encountered various challenges, mostly operational. There is a need to establish which platform best suits a business and further understand how to engage customers and potential customers. Prochaska, Coughlin, and Lyons (2017) posited that one of the chief advantages of consumer involvement in online engagement is seeking and acquiring information about a company. Customers expect quick access to information about a brand.

Mwavaga (2019) studied the impact of social media strategies on the performance of small enterprise bakers in Thika, Kiambu County. A descriptive research design was adopted, and primary data was used by the study. The study's population comprised 30 small enterprise bakers in Thika, Kiambu County, and questionnaires were used in data collection. It was established that the use of Facebook allowed access to new markets and customers and resulted in increased sales. Mwavaga (2019) noted that firms are progressively capitalizing on social media as one of their strategy and brand. Social media is likely to present marketers with a chance to connect with consumers through a media channel that has a higher reach.

Kyule (2017) researched the impact of social media marketing on consumer behavior at Britam Holdings Limited. The study was done in Nairobi County. The objectives of the study were to establish how consumer behaviour is influenced by social media, investigate different social media tools that directly impact buyer behavior, and determine how customer identification in consumer behaviour is targeted by social media. The study utilized a stratified sampling technique, and a 95% confidence level was

utilized to establish a sample size of 95 respondents from a target population of 2000 customers. Descriptive analysis was employed in data analysis. The study concluded that social media and its channels perform essential roles in influencing consumer behavior, either negatively or positively. The study recommended the assimilation of social media communication instruments and reliability in the information conveyed through the social media instruments.

Many organizations employ social media analytics (SMA) to analyze social media engagement, including likes and comments, which determine a successful social media strategy. The greater the success of social media engagement by the organizations, the greater the worth of social media. Organizations that utilize social media follow consumer interactions and establish the needs and sections that will respond most to a dissimilar approach.

Bhanot (2017) did a study on the impact of social media on company performance. The study established that the most frequent social media platforms utilized by Kenyan commercial banks are Facebook (44.4%), followed by Twitter (33.3%), and LinkedIn (11.1%). Even though some institutions are moving to Twitter and LinkedIn, Facebook is the leading social media platform employed for communication between customers and financial organizations. The study supported social media utilization in organizational performance. These observations supported the application of social penetration theory used in the study, which acknowledged that the first steps of developing a relationship are from superficial to intimate and vice versa. Ngai, Tao, and Moon (2015) stated that the interaction of people, organizations, or communities was affected by social media use. The theory has provided a theoretically grounded base for understanding how social media impacts organizations in the telecommunication sector,

hence providing a useful starting point for future empirical research on the influence of social media on the performance of the telecommunication sector's brands.

It is important to note that the digital generation is highly involved in social media. According to Rangel (2017), this is because this is the first generation to grow up in the digital age where their world is saturated with various forms of digital media. Therefore, they are able to embrace rapid technological changes (McCarthy, 2017). Consequently, this has led to an increase in digital communication's focus to increase the efficiency of key digital communication platforms, which include, among others, websites, mobile applications, and online advertisements.

### Brand Engagement

The term brand engagement has been defined in many concepts; however, it takes the persona of an individual representing consumers' tendency to involve a brand as part of how they see themselves. This concept aims to illustrate how customers engrave their identity with brands. It is a measure of gauging how consumers engage with brands and how they are ingrained in the brand. Patil and Puri (2015) stated that consumer interaction influences brand loyalty by the co-creation value, social value, and frequency of the brand pages' use. As maintained by Men and Tsai (2015), participating in social media activities between brands and consumers is beneficial to a business as it contributes to building relationships between businesses and customers. They also noted that customers rely on word-of-mouth since customer reviews are separate from the manufacturer.

Delia and Armstrong (2015) posited that each business today wants to be a part of peoples' lives through its brand. This ideally means that businesses need to reach out to customers more than before. Social media, therefore, becomes a quick and cheap way to

facilitate customer engagement towards improving the relationships between businesses and their customers. Kumar, Bezawada, Rishika, Janakiraman, and Kannan (2016) examined the impact of social media engagement on customer purchase behavior. They investigated social media engagement in terms of the influence of organizational-generated material on the public. More specifically, they studied the number of messages posted by an organization on a specific social media site per week. Based on their results, their conclusion was that organizational social media engagement is an important component of business growth.

According to Schultz (2017), posts generated by a business brand online are considered a key advantage of social networks and positively impact customer social interaction. Another team of researchers, Munnukka, Karjaluoto, Mahlamäki, and Hokkanen (2017), stated that social media interaction helps to build a positive impact on customer brand experience, consequently affecting customer brand loyalty.

#### Benefits of Using Social Media

Organizations need to understand the importance of using social media to achieve their objectives (Delia & Armstrong, 2015). Providing customer feedback, developing social media campaigns, gathering ideas about the brand, determining the impact of online campaigns, and identifying social media influencers, are some reasons that should drive organizations' engagement in social media. A company needs to have a clear understanding of each customer group's needs and habits. Simply put, the company should manage a profitable customer relationship to create value for customers and acquire value from the company in return. Delia and Armstrong (2015) further explained

the need to create value on customer engagement and what benefits the engagement brings to the organization.

He, Wang, and Akula (2017) proposed that organizations need to have a structured way of managing big social media data for the benefit of the organizations. They suggested that a knowledge management framework is key to leveraging big social media data. They further opined that the data obtained from social media sites should be presented visually and logically for easier interpretation and business intelligence to integrate big data technology.

There are many benefits derived from social media usage, with the most commonly known being to increase followers; advertise; boost sales; build customer relationships; and find and target potential customers, reaching them in a personalized way. Content creators, also known as social media influencers, are involved in distributing personal information, experiences, opinions, and including others into their everyday life through online communities (De Veirman, Cauberghe, & Hudders, 2017). Customer relationships shifted from the conventional customer care lines and shops to more diverse customer service on social media. In Muthoka's (2015) view, social media provides a better platform for customer care.

Brand image is described as "perceptions about a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in consumer memory" (Keller, 1993, p. 3). Relationship development is essential in all aspects of a business. Customers rely on and have faith in the information received from familiar people who have had personal experience with given products and services. Thus, word-of-mouth remains the leading means of creating awareness and brand recognition. Networking through formed relationships is therefore vital in spreading information about products. Twitter is a forum for online discussion, for

example, Kenyans on Twitter. These forums influence consumer perception and are, therefore, very powerful elements for online communities in Kenya (Muthoka, 2015).

An organization that can quickly identify opportunities and potential customers and thus bring them on board for future products improves its performance. Furthermore, organizations can meet customer needs through tailor-made products hence increased performance. Social media enables companies to reach a broader audience. On social media platforms, people share the things they like, such as a company's products and services, and through this, companies gain insight (Caruth, 2016).

### Brand Loyalty

The term 'brand' has many definitions by different scholars. In the context of this study, a brand is any name, design, style, words, or symbols employed separately or as a whole that differentiates one product from another in a consumer's eyes. In addition, Friedrich, Peterson, Koster, and Blum (2010) described branding as a collection of marketing and communication techniques that assist in differentiating an organization from its rivals and form a durable impression in customers' minds. Towards this goal, connections and interactions between consumers and brands are required to forge meaningful relationships.

Through social media platforms, organizations are well equipped to anticipate, leverage, and meet the changing demands of customers effectively, thereby improving their (organizations) performance. Relationships created between brands and customers over social networks consequently improve the overall performance of the brand, and sharing content on social media is a way to influence consumer behavior. According to Buzdar, Janjua, and Khurshid (2016), high-performing companies have higher perceived

quality by customers, and brand loyalty is the most important variable for high performance for any organization. Customers are more loyal to high-performing companies than lowperforming ones since they perceive the companies in the former category to have better quality than those in the latter category. Consequently, perceived quality is found to be the most important dimension affecting performance brand loyalty. Safaricom PLC is a leading telecommunication company in Kenya; hence, it is pivotal for it to keep ahead of the other telecommunication companies in a very competitive market.

The rise of social media has affected the premise of brand storytelling and opened an avenue for customers not just to be passive listeners but to instead take up a more active role as participants. This, as a result, brings a challenge to brand owners who must collaborate with consumers through sometimes ‘uncomfortable’ conversations. Social media helps to keep the brand performance alive by engaging customers. Harrigan, Evers, Miles, and Daly (2017) reported that social media customer engagement positively influences brand performance. The result is achieved through behavioral influences directed at the social media page with the aim of improving brand loyalty.

Harrigan et al. (2017) also asserted that social media creates value for an organization by creating user-generated intensity and brand strengthening through the influence of consumer engagement with brand pages. In addition, social media allows consumers to distribute knowledge about the product with their peers. Strategic social media approaches have been developed to identify key individuals who are able to influence buying decisions.

Chege (2017) researched the influence of social media instruments utilized on consumer’s brand loyalty. The study sought to establish the elements consumers seek in social media marketing messages and how social media can be used as a way to increase

consumers' brand loyalty. A descriptive survey design was used in the study. The study also adopted purposive and simple random sampling to choose the 138 respondents, even though only 94 responded. Both quantitative and qualitative data was collected, which was then analyzed. Based on the study's results, the researcher recommended that organizations utilize social media sites to post effective information, hence creating a lasting impression on customers.

### Mobile Telecommunication in Kenya

Mobile telecommunication was liberalized in 1997 after a long time of monopoly operations by Telkom Kenya in the Kenyan telecommunication industry. The government gave operating licenses to two main entrants in the business, Safaricom and Celtel (currently Airtel). This created tough rivalry, accessibility to consumers, and better services, which continue to generate even greater changes today. One of the greatest changes came with the introduction of internet technology which paved the way for widespread internet applications. The internet became a revolution for shared life aspects and continues to create even greater changes (Kioko, 2010).

According to Gruber and Koutroumpis (2011), the mobile telecommunication regulatory framework endorses the invention and growth of mobile financial services and other joined services by mobile network operators. It was predicted that the telecommunication industry was meant to grow and generate 1,300 billion US dollars globally by the year 2015. Communication and innovation made the telecommunication industry dynamic so as to support the growth of technological advancement, thus increasing service delivery (Sultana, Irum, Ahmed, & Mehmood, 2012). This led to the

introduction of mobile phone applications, such as Twitter, Facebook, and blogs, that continue to grow and introduce many new applications.

Sultana et al. (2012) maintained that the mobile telecommunication industry was becoming more unpredictable and very competitive. Globalization created a change from production to a knowledge-based economy and the development of information communications technology. The Kenya government has benefited from the telecommunication industry through generated tax revenue and employment opportunities for the general public, hence stimulating the economic growth of the country.

Currently, Safaricom PLC is the leading brand in the telecommunication industry, with the biggest market share of 72% in the industry. It has provided a comprehensive range of mobile telecommunication solutions, including voice calls, messaging, internet data, fixed broadband services, and financial services on a variety of platforms. The company prides itself on offering quality products and customized services. However, this question remains: What does it mean to stay on top of the food chain? Safaricom PLC is also voted as one of the most popular brands in the country, a leading taxpayer, and the best company in terms of services and reach.

According to Oloko, Anene, Kiara, Kathambi, and Mutulu (2014), a look into Safaricom PLC's strategies revealed that influential strategies distinguished the company from other industry players and businesses in general. The best way to manipulate influence is through communication. Social media has provided a good platform for Safaricom PLC to spread information effectively. The company was among the first organizations to offer customer service to customers on these social media platforms: Twitter and Facebook. Noteworthy is that the current chief executive officer of the

company is very active on Twitter hence encouraging interaction with partners and customers. This is also termed as putting a face to the product (Mativu, 2012).

### Statement of the Problem

Social media is a critical concern for many organizations. However, organizations lack valid and reliable social media engagement initiatives that can bring value to the performance of an organization's brand. Without these initiatives, they continue being incapable of aligning their social media engagement with organizational goals, which would otherwise enable them to attain business value. Social media has increased the power of people to circulate rumors or complaints about companies in an instant (Horn et al., 2015). This poses a challenge for organizations since they have less response time to attacks. Overlooking social media and enabling talks to occur without awareness or involvement can be identified as the main threat for businesses. Horn et al. emphasized the need for organizations to get involved in social media conversations as a strategy to improve their brand performance.

Kagonda (2018) studied the influence of social media marketing on the sales performance of large retail stores in Nairobi County. He opined that competition and technological advancements have forced organizations to look for other options to fit into the fast-changing business environment. As a result, social media has allowed organizations to rise above the competition as it provides a unique networking and communication platform.

Although the benefits of social media have been discussed by many authors, there is a lack of empirical research on the influence of social media on the performance of the Kenyan telecommunication industry brands. This study aimed to bring a better

understanding of the overall value of social media to organizations, specifically the benefits of social media to brand performance. The objectives were to identify the social media platforms that Safaricom PLC has been adopted, establish the social media engagements that Safaricom PLC has adopted on popular social media platforms, find out how Safaricom PLC measures its brand's performance, and determine how Safaricom PLC's social media engagement is affecting its brand performance. Therefore, the study investigated social media engagement's influence on Safaricom PLC brand's performance.

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of social media engagement on the performance of Safaricom PLC brand.

#### Objectives of the Study

1. To identify the social media platforms Safaricom PLC has adopted for customer engagement.
2. To establish how Safaricom PLC uses social media for customer engagement.
3. To determine how Safaricom PLC measures its brand performance.
4. To establish how the social media engagements adopted by Safaricom PLC are affecting the brand's performance.

#### Research Questions

1. Which social media platforms has Safaricom PLC adopted for customer engagement?
2. How does Safaricom PLC use social media for customer engagement?

3. How does Safaricom PLC measure its brand performance?
4. How do the social media engagements adopted by Safaricom PLC affect the company's brand performance?

#### Justification for the Study

This study aimed at providing information on the relationship between social media engagement and Safaricom PLC brand performance. It was hoped that the research findings would inform Safaricom PLC on the importance of social media engagement in influencing organizational performance. Additionally, the research would serve as an advocate towards the promotion of the adoption of best social media practices aimed at building the brand.

Furthermore, the findings would significantly contribute to current scholarly literature and hence serve as a reference for studies aiming to provide an understanding of social media and its benefits for businesses. Kim, Li, and Brymer (2016) were quick to point out that researchers need to engage in more studies that focus on highlighting the factors that influence and moderate social media with regard to its impact on the performance of businesses. Thus, this study sought to address the knowledge gap in the area of study, especially in the telecommunication industry.

#### Significance of the Study

The current business environment is in the age of technological advancement, in which changes occur continuously, making it difficult for business firms to predict future performance. The ability of an organization to effectively cope with these uncertainties is vital for its performance in the market. A study by Sutherland (1996) aimed to provide useful insights on how to effectively utilize social media towards improving brand

performance through financial or operational improvement. Population structure comes about from local communication between people and their surroundings. A framework is needed to combine the various levels of individual behavior, group-level phenomena, and population-level patterns.

This study aimed to help organizations understand social media's influence as a medium to improve brand performance. The results would be useful in aiding Safaricom PLC's management and stakeholders to focus on social media engagements that are effective in improving the company's performance.

Also, the findings would be a useful guide in the development of social media strategies suited for the telecommunication industry. Additionally, via the Ministry of Communication and the other interested bodies such as the Communication Authority of Kenya, the Kenyan government could use the findings in policy formulation.

#### Assumptions of the Study

This study was based on the following assumptions:

1. The information s provided by the respondents was unbiased and unprejudiced.
2. The respondents had knowledge of the area of study.
3. Social media engagement affected the performance of the Safaricom PLC brand.

#### Scope of the Study

The study was conducted in Nairobi County at Safaricom PLC headquarters. The data collection exercise was carried out in September 2018, and a questionnaire was used for the exercise. The response rate was 82%. The study targetted 168 Safaricom PLC employees handling social media-related roles.

### Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

The research was limited to the telecommunication industry, which is greatly affected by technology at a higher rate than other sectors. Social media being a communication tool. The research knowledge was biased limited to only the technology industry and may not apply to other industries.

The researcher got a letter of authorization known as a non-disclosure agreement facilitated by a lawyer written to Safaricom PLC requesting authorization to collect data from the institution. These increased the cost of the research due to legal fees, and the time taken in processing the permit caused delays in the research.

The delimitation of this study was that the study population was selected as the team that handles social media interactions with the customers on behalf of the organization. However, probably many other members of staff also use social media greatly and might have had a different input in the research.

### Definition of Terms

**Social media:** Refers to web-based technologies that transform and broadcast media monologues into social dialogues (Beer & Burrows, 2007). The study used this meaning.

**Social network sites:** According to Boyd and Ellison (2007), social network sites refer to “web-based services that allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system. The nature and nomenclature of these connections may vary from site to site” (p. 211). This study adopted the same definition.

Firm's performance: A set of financial and non-financial indicators which offer knowledge on the level of attainment of findings and objectives (Kaplan & Norton, 1992; Lebars & Euske, 2006). The same definition as used in this study.

Social interactions: Refers to communication between users through social media (Barker, Barker, Bormann, & Neher, 2012). The study adopted this meaning.

Social media measurement: This, according to Missaoui and Sarr (2015), refers to a system of evaluating a brand or company's popularity by deriving data from social media channels namely social networking sites, forums, blogs, microblogs like Twitter, message boards, wikis, video or photo sharing websites, user-generated content now and then, and news sites. The term was used in the same context in this study.

Organizational performance: As stated by Shonubi and Akintaro (2016), "organizational performance comprises the actual output or results of an organization as measured against its intended outputs" (p. 1910). The study used the term as per Shonubi and Akintaro's definition.

Social media use: The rate of a participant's input, exploration, and retrieval of material in a social media site (Mask & Blanchard, 2011). The term was used in the same context in this study.

### Summary

This chapter has provided the introduction and background of the study. The problem statement, purpose, objectives, research questions, and justification of the study have also been addressed. The chapter has further highlighted the study's significance, assumptions, scope, limitations, and delimitations. Additionally, definition of significant terms utilized in the study have been provided.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Introduction

This chapter presents theories on which the study was anchored, the variables of the study, and the general and empirical literature reviews. All these helped to support the study topic: the influence of social media engagements on the performance of a brand. The chapter further presents a conceptual framework showing the link between the dependent and independent variables, as well as the intervening variable.

#### Theoretical Framework

Theories are of practical value and are employed to offer a greater understanding and predict phenomena. Diffusion of innovation, social penetration, and balanced scorecard theories formed the theoretical underpinning for this study as they illustrate how technology spreads through a population and the operational benefits of using technology.

#### Diffusion of Innovation Theory

The origin of this theory dates back centuries ago. Several reviews have been done over the years to create relevance in the most recent studies. Rogers (1962) popularized the diffusion of innovation theory after his review and introduction of adaptor categories aiming to clarify how, over time, a product or notion acquires momentum and circulates through a particular social system or people. He further explained that four main elements, channels for communication, a social system, the innovation itself, and time, determine the spread of a new idea. Rogers also noted that penetration highly depends on

human capital, how fast an idea can be transferred from one point to another setting, the rate of adoption, and how innovation reaches the optimum level or critical mass.

In Rogers' (1962) view, people have different inclinations as they evaluate new products or technologies. The diffusion of innovation theory refers to the process through which individuals embrace new ideas. Rogers described the process in this manner: initially, there are (innovators) of the idea who believe in the idea and package it for the people. They then spread the idea to the population, and initially, only a few people are receptive to the notion and are willing to adapt to its use (early adopters). The early adopters will internalize the use of the idea and consequently spread the word, resulting in more people (early majority) becoming open to the idea and adopting it. At this point, the idea has been developed, and its utility is achieved through ease of use. As the early innovators raise more awareness, individuals become receptive to it, leading to the growth of an essential mass. Over time, the innovative notion or product becomes distributed among the people (late majority) until a full capacity is achieved. There are a group of people who will adopt the idea late into the process - these are referred to as laggards. Rogers also noted that there is a group of people who will never buy into the idea - non-adaptors.

Diffusion of innovation is a valuable transformation model mostly used in technological innovation where innovation is improved and presented in various methods that satisfy demands, across all degrees of adopters. This formed the basis for using this theory in this study, creating relevance on how innovative social media applications affect people's networks and the best way an organization can benefit from these engagements to optimize results at different levels of the process.

### Limitation of the diffusion of innovation theory

Kaminski (2011) reviewed the theory and opined that it is applicable to a very large population and works well within society at large, thus concluding that it may not apply to small populations in research.

### Social Penetration Theory

The social penetration theory was initiated by Altman and Taylor in 1973 to render an explanation to the way information exchange functions. The theory explains the link between social behavior and innovation penetration through a population. It seeks to bring to the forefront more information on how relationships work and develop over time. The theory elaborates on the existence of different communication styles across different group settings while acknowledging that the first steps of developing a relationship are from superficial to intimate and vice versa (Altman & Taylor, 1973).

The social penetration theory, as noted by Carpenter and Greene (2015), outlines the task of communication in relationship development. Explicitly centering on how selfdisclosure works in growing relationships, they asserted that individuals employ selfdisclosure to increase intimacy. The theory acknowledges that human beings live in a society where they are encouraged to be self-expressive. Furthermore, it acknowledges the existence of intellectual and emotional intimacy, which influences the way information is shared among social groups. This study adopted the theory of social penetration to show how social networks are formed within society as applied in social media. The theory further helped this study in explaining how social media spreads through a population, thus helping organizations, through analysis of trends, understand what influences the purchasing behavior of customers.

### Limitation of the Social Penetration Theory

Van Hear (2010) discussed the limitation of the social penetration theory. He cited that, contrary to the early prediction that self-disclosure reciprocity would be utmost in the experimental stage of a relationship, joint sharing must be frequent in the semi-private central penetration range. The discrepancy may be due to the unexpected speed of self-revelation. In the context of this study, an organisation, in its self-disclosure, might not be willing to disclose information to the customers as expected, thus affecting their (customers) loyalty to the brand; customers expect to build mutual relationships.

### Balanced Scorecard

The balanced scorecard was established by Kaplan and Norton in 1992. The two scholars carried out a research in 1990, where they studied different companies to explore new ways of measuring performance. Due to a rising belief that financial measures of performance were not effective enough for modern-day businesses, they were convinced that relying on such measures only affected the ability to create value for the company (Kaplan & Norton, 1992). Though they discussed alternatives, they settled on the idea of a balanced scorecard. A balanced scorecard is a device for companies to handle the needs of relevant shareholders and to help transform strategies into action.

The performance of organizations can be interpreted through four different perspectives involving all the stakeholders in the organization. First, is the financial perspective: to excel financially through profit generation; secondly, the customer perspective: how should an organisation appear to customers and customer survey data; and thirdly is internal perspective: to please our shareholders and customers, what business operations must we succeed at? The last one is the learning perspective:

collecting data to make strategic decisions outlining the objectives related to employees, culture, and information system.

Non-financial performance measures, as noted by Gruber and Koutroumpis (2011), are utilized in establishing the degree of effectiveness in the production procedures of an organization and satisfying customer needs. Non-financial performance sees the operational excellence of an organization, determined through quality, operational flexibility, and business performance as having the drive to meet customer needs and expectations. There are many contributions of social media discussed by different studies, such as a marketing strategy, a cost-cutting measure, and a feedback platform. This study discussed the influence of social media engagement on the performance of the Safaricom

PLC brand.

Limitations of the balanced scorecard

The balanced scorecard approach does not offer suggestions on what should be done to enhance the performance of an organization. It also does not set the standards for the goal or performance measures for each of the four perspectives involving all the stakeholders in the organization. Hristov, Chirico, and Appolloni (2019) observed other limitations of the balanced scorecard. According to them, as a tool, the balanced scorecard is too expensive for enterprises and is not specific to certain business environments. This creates a burden because these limitations will not provide suggestions for addressing the gaps identified in the research.

## General Literature Review

### Social Media Customer Engagement and Brand Management

Businesses today want to be and make their brand a part of a consumer's life (Delia & Armstrong, 2015). Brands are targeting customer loyalty. Social media customer engagements create a good environment for organizations to personalize relationships. The way individuals act in purchasing situations is dependent on their society. While in a less developed society people might try to curb their purchasing desire, in an industrial society, they may attempt to develop or find objects that can satisfy their demands. Given the dynamism of customer behavior, Delia and Armstrong (2015) recommended that a successful business needs to approach each customer directly and personally through customer engagements facilitated by social media. Njoroge and Koloseni (2015) suggested that there are numerous effects that social media has on its users, one of its benefits being its ability to generate and communicate content without maintaining physical.

Over the years, social media has become a game-changer on how organizations communicate with their external and internal stakeholders. Most scholars agree that social media is a powerful instrument for businesses in meeting their objectives. Felix, Rauschnabel, and Hinsch (2017) described social media as an instrument for information flow that is borderless, seamless, and real-time, reaching millions in the shortest time. Social media can also be described as a means to bond or engage with present and future customers, with the main aim being to maintain or build relationships.

France, Merrilees, and Miller (2015) stated that current research demonstrates that organizations neither explain nor govern the brand anymore, instead, the brand is

codeveloped by customers. Customers' brand co-development behaviors are the customer-led engagements between the customer and brand. France et al. further came up with a conceptual model of brand co-development with brand engagement: customer engagement on social networking platforms is a crucial branding co-creation aspect. Organizations propose various customer retention measures, which include the first raw customer retention rate. This keeps in mind the number of customers conducting business with an organization after a trading period and is conveyed as a percentage of individuals who were active customers at the start of the period. Secondly, the sales-adjusted retention rate, which is the value of sales attained from the maintained customers, stated as a percentage of the sales gained from every customer who was active at the start of the period. Lastly, the profit-adjusted retention rate, which focuses on the profit made from the maintained customers, stated as a percentage of the profit received from every customer who was active at the start.

Different scholars have debated the diverse advantages of social media and the dynamic value it creates for a business. Social media and the internet, as advanced by Hassan, Ahmad Nadzim, and Shiratuddin (2015), are crucial for small businesses in their endeavor to gain a competitive advantage. Business leaders employ social media to interact with consumers and develop business value for their organizations (Sajid, 2016). Research shows that social media drives demand and is used by strategic businesses to create value in many ways, be it marketing, advertising, sales, and image building.

Focusing on Dead Sea products firms in Jordan, Dodokh (2017) investigated the influence of social media use on organizational performance. The study was conducted among one hundred and sixty-nine managers and supervisors employed at 20 Dead Sea

products firms. The findings showed a major influence of social media usage on organizational performance regarding innovation, cost reduction, satisfaction, rapid adaptation, and time to market.

Mwangi and Wagoki (2016) studied how the interactivity of social media impacts the performance of the advertisement business in prominent media groups in Kenya. They administered a structured questionnaire to collect data. The results revealed that social media interaction was linked positively with the operation of the advertisement business. In conclusion, interactivity was a major feature of social media relative to the operation of the advertisement business.

Singh and Sinha (2017) researched the influence of social media on business development and performance in India and observed that various businesses utilize social media as a communications tool. They further noted that companies also use traditional media for marketing their products as well as being connected to their customers. Singh and Sinha established that as opposed to traditional media, social media can get to a lot of customers and can entertain the customers' precise demands in a better way. In summary, they identified the following as the major benefits of social media for organizations: 1). Improved customer insights, 2). Better customer service, 3). Cost-efficiency, 4). Connectivity, 5). Sales, and 6). Establishing brand awareness.

#### Social Media Platforms

The notion of Web 2.0 was started by Tim O'Reilly and MediaLive International during a deliberation session at a conference. O'Reilly described it as a platform that businesses should embrace and use its strengths for a global audience and stated three conditions for a website to observe to be considered a part of web 2.0. The website should

be able to self-generate site content, have control over the information posted on it, and be interactive and useful (O'Reilly, 2007).

### Facebook

Facebook offers unrivaled communication possibilities. The three main features of a Facebook page are news feed, sharing through likes, and sharing comments which businesses use for customer engagement. Jahn and Kunz (2012) concurred, stating that “Facebook is a new online service for the customer-brand relationship” (p. 353). Good customer-brand relationships are very important for the sustainable growth of businesses. Most organizations in Kenya are on Facebook and use their pages to popularize their brands. The users' responses indicate whether the organization utilized its page successfully in comparison with other organizations, which hardly use their pages.

According to Samuel and Joe (2016), social media policies utilize a user-driven approach when making a decision on what to post on their pages to reach out to their customers. They emphasize social media being a user-driven user interface that requires content to interest customers. According to Deloitte (2016), the shopping behavior of every age group is affected by Facebook, particularly the younger population, and business owners should endeavor to polish their social media strategies to boost businesses' performance.

### Twitter

Twitter has seen significant progress in its number of users within the decade, with a growth of up to 300 million users as of the first quarter of 2016 (Waseem & Hovy, 2016). This large and growing number of users offers businesses chances to interact with

more individuals and elevates the social media profile among businesses (Samuel & Joe, 2016).

Research by Buzdar et al. (2016) on customer-based brand equity and companies' performance in the telecommunication industry recommended the need for telecommunication companies to put more focus on social media when branding their products and services. This is because social media promotes an organization's brand performance.

A brand comprises a company's products and trademarks and the meanings put in in those trademarks by the company's shareholders (Mutingi, 2016). It is a product of information exchange. Gradually, important communication comes from marketers, customers, and critics. Mutingi posited that trust, integrity, ethics, transparency, and authenticity are vital in developing a sustainable brand. Many telecom companies, including Safaricom PLC, consider branding as a critical part of the organization. Since its launch, Safaricom PLC has endeavoured to build a solid brand as a leading mobile telecommunication service provider with a difference and later as a multifunctional company offering solutions. It is a purpose-driven company with the vision to, above profits, change lives.

### Blogs

In a relatively short time, firms with blogs and bloggers have achieved an unprecedented position at the forefront of a vast marketplace of ideas that hitherto had only been an idea (Hong, 2012). Safaricom PLC has its own blog, referred to as Safaricom blog, which is used to share stories and experiences as well as entertain. Digital technology has enabled bloggers to practice their freedom of expression and

advertise their products and services to a new level. Although few bloggers are doing original reporting for new product quality, they have strong opinions of their firms and offer a robust diversity of points of view about the firms. The bloggers and their followers serve each other with opinions and comments, hence assisting the consumers in determining the best version of the truth in the conflicting views of the products (Ngare, 2011).

### Social Media and Business Use

Recently, many scholars have developed a lot of interest in studying social media and its business use. Many attempt to clarify the benefits of social media for a business. The extent to which organizations benefit from social media engagements varies from financial to operational. Veljković and Kaličanin (2016) confirmed that organizations are more likely to experience a deep in profits if they distort advertisement information, especially on social media. However, it was also found that brand equity is directly associated with firm profitability. The information being distributed through social media needs to be precise and easily understandable. Further, Veljković and Kaličanin's study elaborated on various aspects of the employment of social media to increase business performance through brand management elements. They maintained that brand equity is primarily determined by customer satisfaction which is mainly achieved when organizations focus their endeavours to brand value development. Processes such as brand revitalization result in better services and are at the core and endogenous to value creation for organizational growth.

Lam, Yeung, and Cheng (2016) examined the impact of social media initiatives on firms' operational efficiency and innovativeness. They concluded that the use of social

media led to the growth of fresh concepts and results in firms' operational effectiveness. Other social media studies contend that it (social media) is considered an effective billboard characterized by the capabilities of enabling organizations to attain excellence through improved overall performance (Zhao & Zhang, 2017).

The worth of social media comes not only from the platform itself but also from how the platform is employed for different purposes. Moreover, social media applications have the potential to offer value beyond familiar e-commerce through content distribution and sales promotion. This is because they transfer information through online customer communities, also known as virtual customer environments. As a result, these communities increase customer satisfaction, consequently increasing brand performance. Some of the available social media platforms have a chatbot. They are programs designed to stimulate conversations, commonly used on Facebook. When users open a website, they get a chatbot for engagement; for example, Safaricom PLC has Zuri as its chatbot application. These engagements create a personalized experience for customers. Many brands are not able to link the quality of the content with performance. Proper social media applications need to be administered in order to assist customers in decision-making. Information is tactfully loaded into a website to reach its targeted audience.

Another way to reach a targeted audience is via the effective use of social media platforms to create an audience known as "followers," which is a good social media strategy. An organization should continuously work towards increasing its followers (Behmann & Wu, 2015), considering the assumption that these days the behaviour of individuals is swayed by social media, whose affluent use has brought about developments and sophistication amongst consumers. When an organization has a social media presence, it can identify changes in consumer behavior, also known as trends.

Irrespective of some usage bottlenecks, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in developing markets appear to be attaining better social media profits by setting up their marketing campaigns through several platforms (Odoom, Anning-Dorson, & Acheampong, 2017).

Social media is the main aspect of the accomplishments of 21st-century business organizations. Social media exhibits value in businesses through enhanced computer-based customer circles, encouraging, improved customer service, increased product development opportunities, and product branding (Culnan, McHugh, & Zubillaga, 2010). According to Lam et al. (2016) organizations that use social media get the advantage of quicker information dissemination to customers and knowledge acquisition through the improved distribution of concepts within and outside the organizations. Social media has proved to enhance relationships within the organization's stakeholders, including customers, suppliers, and improved external collaborations.

#### Organizational Brand Performance

Brand performance has been tackled by many scholars in various ways. However, there seems to be no collective agreement that constitutes a collective resolution on one description of the subject matter in this study. Gavrea, Ilies, and Stegorean (2011) maintained that brand performance is perceived as a way via which a firm's development and success are attained. Today, as noted by Olusanya, Awotungase, and Ohadebere (2012), business performance cannot be ignored since it is the standard on which businesses evaluate their degree of effectiveness compared to their contemporaries. It is

also noted that brand images are perceptions formed by consumers towards a brand through interaction

(Management Study Guide, 2016). The different attributes toward a brand contribute to its (brand) overall performance since many consumers would compare the experience with other competitive brands to establish the brand position.

Organizations need to determine the perception of consumers towards them in the business they are operating in. Graves (2016) suggested that the data acquired from social media should be employed to obtain important insights on brand perceptions and that proper synthesis of the data will help in creating effective strategies for an organization. Graves also noted that social media interaction helps to monitor and analyze the brand interaction with consumers in real-time. Consequently, the data collected from social media posts by users helps in generating effective strategies.

The corporate usage of social media offers several benefits, and many studies have recognized a positive connection between social media engagement and brand performance (Ainin, Parveen, Moghavvemi, Jaafar, & Shuib, 2015; Rodriguez et al., 2015). For example, Rodriguez et al. (2015) established that the use of social media has a positive impact on customer engagement activities and, therefore, improves performance. Social media engagement impacts businesses by significantly influencing consumers' buying choices (Hassan et al., 2015). These findings concur with earlier literature on technology use, which found that social media utilization has a positive influence on organizations' performance.

Parveen, Jaafar, and Ainin (2015) studied the use of social media and the performance of organizations and found that social media initiatives positively correlate with firm performance. The topic of social media and business value research continues

to elicit a lot of debate in the business community regarding the actual benefits of social media. The discussion regarding the significance and advantages of social media initiatives by scholars and practitioners has been rife, with many varied conclusions being disclosed in early 2000 when social media use was still growing.

Lutz (2012) researched the controversy on social media use and its influence on several organizations. The study sought to discover if the investment in social media equates to the benefits derived. Regardless of the seeming significance of social media on customer relations, organizations are suspicious about its (social media) employment and are doubtful regarding social media investments' value in relation to investment (ROI). Consequently, they (firms) are often reluctant to incorporate social media initiatives in their strategies. According to Etim et al. (2018), "a study by Harvard Business School as far back as 2010 revealed that 79% of businesses in the United States had adopted social media as part of their communication strategies, while 21% were preparing to launch their social media initiatives" (p. 10).

Many companies are utilizing social media to gain consumers' attention and involvement around the world, and social media data is advantageous to organizations (Graves, 2016). In the same vein, a study by Kimani (2015) discovered that social media has shown to be a more effective interaction tool than traditional communication tools. He noted that social media is valuable to consumers since it enables employees to engage with clients in various geographic zones and assists organizations to have well-timed and direct consumer contact at a rationally small cost.

Özer and Uncu (2015) observed that businesses are working to reduce the marketing time of new products. Social media offers a platform for businesses to share

the content of their services and products to a large target audience and is, therefore, the best fit for reducing marketing time. A company's determination in acquiring the anticipated corporate brand identity can be established via many corporate branding elements.

Sutcliffe, Vogus, and Dane (2016) observed that social media could be used as a guide to track the activities of competitors. As a result, it assists to upgrade business plans, including providing discounts and other offers to appeal to more customers and gain a competitive advantage.

Malhotra (2017), on the contrary, concentrated on determining the influence of social networking sites, especially Facebook, on the financial performance of banks in India. The research focused on the Facebook pages of 47 public and private banks from 2012 to 2014. Data was analyzed using multiple regression, and as per the findings, there was no significant relationship between profitability and having a Facebook presence.

Tajvidi and Karami (2017) examined social media's influence on organizational performance in the United Kingdom (UK) hotel industry. The study applied a mail survey to collect data from a sample of 384 hotels in the UK. The findings showed that social media use led to increased bookings and had an affirmative impact on the overall performance of hotels in the UK. Thus, there was a clear relationship between social media and organizational performance (Tajvidi & Karami, 2017).

Similarly, Okari (2017) aimed to determine the effect of social media on the financial performance of microfinance institutions in Kenya. The study was a census survey of all the 13 licensed deposit-taking microfinance institutions in Kenya covering the period 2014 to 2016. The collected data was analyzed using regression analysis. The analysis revealed that social media had a significant impact on financial performance

among microfinance institutions, evident in the growth in revenue earning. As noted in the study, there is a positive association between social media and performance concerning different orientations.

### Subscriber Growth

Safaricom PLC has set up strategies to increase its subscriber base as one of its goals. Customers are an intangible asset to any organization, and hence must be valued and treated with respect. They are critical for the growth, expansion, and sustainability of an organization. According to Rigby and Bilodeau (2011), Safaricom PLC has been able to sustainably increase its subscriber base gradually since its inception in 2007. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, most of the mobile telephony businesses were thriving, and acceptance of the new applications was common. To ensure success, many companies used all their resources to attract and acquire new customers, believing that customer acquisition would lead to the firms' rapid growth. Cohen and Sherman (2014) asserted that the urge to retain and acquire customers had led many companies to find innovative ways of reaching out to customers. Safaricom PLC targets to continuously increase and sustain its customer subscriber base as a growth strategy.

### Customer Retention and Loyalty

Chege (2017) defined brand loyalty as the situation whereby “customers are committed to a brand and make repeated purchases regardless of the price offering or convenience of the product or service” (p. 1). According to Glendah, Alala, and Dishon (2019), “through these creations, consumers display and deepen brand loyalty, build

brand communities, and raise brand profiles. Brands, in turn, learn who their most loyal consumers are and what they want” (p. 52).

Customer retention indicates the capability of a company to maintain its customers over an indicated period. Muthoka (2015) argued that since social media is a current innovative technology that encourages more interaction between customers and producers and deviates from the traditional way of relaying information, it should not be a copy and paste affair. An effective strategy should be adopted in order to add value to organizations and increase traffic flow on social media platforms. Malthouse, Haenlein, Skiera, Wege, and Zhang (2013) stated that businesses that employ social media for marketing reasons only are not able to recognize the other potential benefits of social media to their businesses. Social media can be used as a strategy by an organization to meet its sustainable objectives. Organizations should consider all the value and benefits of social media, such as customer relationship management, access to wider markets, market research, responsiveness to customers, and brand building.

Erdoğmuş and Cicek (2012) assessed social media marketing’s effect on brand loyalty. The scope of the study was customers who followed at least one brand on social media in Turkey, and data was collected through a questionnaire administered to 338 such customers. Analysis of the data was done using stepwise multiple regression analysis. The findings revealed that customers loyalty is affected when the brand provides beneficial campaigns, relevant and popular material, and is present on various social media platforms.

Firms utilize social media platforms to endorse their services and products towards attracting and retaining customers. Customers have different perceptions of the promotional messages broadcasted on social media, and a simple message can have a

positive or negative influence on a firm's products and or services. Kimani (2015) noted that it is important for an organization to be actively involved in social media activities to defend its brand. Social media offers a unique benefit to customers, which is the ability to interact with businesses on a personal level. Given the number of individuals using social media platforms daily, failure to capitalize on the opportunity to attract and build customer loyalty is a massive opportunity loss for organizations.

According to Kumar et al. (2016), social media platforms help an organization to engage people in conversations suitable for both consumers and producers, in turn, building long-term relationships. A recent shift on social media is an emphasis on the value of engagement, instead of just the number of followers on social media, which has been employed as a tool for increasing brand awareness. Customers' liking of social media pages provides an excellent way for organizations to share future products, news, and discounts. Most telecommunication companies have identified a matrix to enable monitoring of customer satisfaction. For instance, the Net Promoter Score (NPS) is used by Safaricom PLC to monitor and measure customer satisfaction. NPS measures the possibility that a customer would recommend the company's products to other businesses or friends based on his or her general experience (Safaricom, 2018).

Hong (2012) suggested that customer loyalty is achieved through a consistently positive emotional attachment to a product or service and the perceived value of customer experience for a product or service. NPS is measured independently for consumers and enterprise customers. These measures consist of a survey done on all social media customer touchpoints, including Facebook, Twitter, video, and blogs. They can poll customers and rate product and service delivery. These measures are aimed at increasing operational excellence.

## Empirical Literature Review

### Dissemination of Information Through Social Media

Social media has become a center for gathering information for most individuals and organizations. However, through it, false information can be easily spread to a wide audience. Jagongo and Kinyua (2013) studied the influence of social media on a firm's corporate performance. The study began by identifying the key determinants of social media activities among firms. This was done through evaluating the following: the industry in which the firms operated, market capitalization, firm turnover, market share, and other firm-specific variables. Measures of performance included abnormal returns and long-term firm value.

According to Ogaji, Okoyeukwu, Wanjiku, Osiro, and Ogutu (2017), Kenya got caught in the social media buzz and is one of the most engaged, with a huge base of social media users. It is rated among the most active countries when it comes to the use of social media. The wave of social media has proved beneficial to individuals and organizations. Ogaji et al. noted that organizations and individuals use social media online platforms to distribute services and information and ideas on their products.

Focused on developing countries, Daowd (2016) assessed the impact social media has on the performance of the microfinance industry (MFI). The researcher used a webbased questionnaire distributed to 383 MFIs employees in 1000 firms in developing countries such as Jordan, Kenya, and India. Structured equation modeling method was used in data analysis, and it was revealed that social media has a major impact on MFI's performance. Further, Daowd identified various benefits that organizations derive from their social media usage, for example, its use as an instrument for advertising,

communicating, and marketing, and concluded that social media benefits could significantly enhance an organization's brand.

Furthermore, Njagi (2012) conducted a study on social media usage as a competitive strategy in customer care by mobile telecommunication firms in Kenya and observed a need for consumers to access instant feedback from service providers. The researcher also noted that firms that employ social media in customer care have a competitive advantage over those that do not because social media is a two-way communication that enables the dissemination of information faster than traditional methods.

Kimani (2015) researched the impact of social media on the development of small businesses in Kenya. The collected data was analyzed, and the findings showed that many respondents have social media accounts, mostly Facebook and Twitter and that Facebook has the most users. Kimani concluded that social media is a valuable communication tool and that it generates product awareness which can be utilized to monitor customer experience.

#### Social Media on Customer Relationships/Satisfaction

Focusing on three-star hotels, Nyairo (2016) conducted a study on the influence of social media in developing brand equity in the hospitality industry in Nairobi County. The study acknowledged the existence of diverse social media platforms that facilitate blogging, social networking, and content communities. According to the study, because of ease of access to smartphones and computers, accessibility to social media has improved. The findings indicated that the utilization of social media impacted organizational performance in many ways. These ways include opening new

communication channels through which members can communicate directly for faster feedback; increasing brand awareness among customers, thus a rise in sales; enhancing the degree of customer involvement; and assisting organizations in managing their relationships and interactions with customers.

Singla and Durga (2015) opined that social media is not merely about placing minor comments or liking photos on Facebook. This is because social media usage by organizations enhances other aspects for the organizations, such as knowledge management externally, sales and marketing, and brand management. The world is in the process of a social transformation whereby people are motivated by the relations between technology and connectivity and suggested that social media has the probability to transform organizational behavior (McFarland & Ployhart, 2015). Therefore, in McFarland and Ployhart's view, the topic of social media gives rise to a persistent call to researchers to explore the topic in more detail. Jeske and Shultz (2016) stated that organizations are seeking ways in which they can best assimilate social media into their daily commercial activities. The issue of what the best social media practice is has been raised and, therefore, the need to separate fact from fiction.

Lam (2016) looked at the use of social media to build and commercialize new ICT products. The only positive thing is that the wonder of social media is here to stay, and its prevalence and penetration into people's existence may be regarded as all-encompassing for some. Social media usage and its tendency to form an everlasting digital record also present fascinating enquiries linked with the degree to which individuals go through a universe whereby continuous digital surveillance is normal. The study also advised on an integrated framework that assists organizations to better comprehend their growth and practices that ought to be accomplished.

Muthoka (2015) described social media strategy as a tactical approach used to accomplish the objectives of an organization. For an organization to benefit from social media, it needs to keep its audience engaged, fresh, and entertained. It is necessary to improve social media campaigns via a sustainable social media strategy. Although it can be difficult in the beginning to get the right traction (audience), it is essential to comprehend the landscape, the context of the organization, and the audience being targeted. Many researchers have outlined the steps of achieving a good social media presence. It is necessary for an organization to engage with customers on its social media pages.

Social media has greatly influenced consumer behavior. Statista (2018) showed that 8 out of 10 top active users of Facebook worldwide are from developing countries, and 9 out of 10 of these users are on WhatsApp. These statistics show that social media is easy to access, understand, and cost-friendly to people with respect to the contribution of social media to the performance of an organization. Social media has great potential for enhancing several areas of an organization, including marketing, communication, and customer satisfaction.

Similarly, research was carried out by Davison and Ou (2017) on the importance of social media as a channel for improving customer satisfaction. They found that social media platforms are a foundation of horizontal and vertical flow of constantly updated information. The researchers sought to understand how social media contributes to customer satisfaction. Owino et al. (2016) sought to “determine the influence of social media on brand equity in the banking industry in Kenya” (abstract). The study concluded that brand image and customer interactions have an affirmative relationship, which is promoted by social media platforms’ use.

Mutero (2014) studied the effect of social media engagement on the performance of Kenyan commercial banks. The research utilized a descriptive research design and found that the banks had embraced social media interaction. It was observed that the most dominant social media platform was Facebook, as it had the highest number of users and interaction between the banks and customers. Yator (2014) investigated “the use of social networking in service delivery in the hotel industry in Kenya” (abstract). Through a stratified proportionate sampling procedure, the study selected 190 permanent employees working in the hotels in Nakuru County. Data collection was done using a questionnaire whose analysis revealed that a big percentage of the respondents were using social media. The research also revealed that the younger age group was more conversant with social media than their older counterparts.

#### Power of Sharing Content on Social Media

Social media is a great instrument that a business can use to promote its brand worldwide. The ability to share information online is more powerful than most people think. Organizations strategize to harness the power of emotions through sharing content on social media. As noted by Parveen et al. (2015), social media has various benefits such as knowledge distribution and searching, branding, promotion, carrying out market research, getting customer feedback, accessing additional customers, building customer relations, customer service activities, interacting with customers, and getting referrals. Regardless, for this study, the focus was on the two main uses of social media, distributing information and search and branding. To understand how the two are related, Lam et al. (2016) examined the impact of social media initiatives on firms’ operational

efficiency and innovativeness. They concluded that the use of social media led to the growth of fresh concepts and an increase in operational efficiency in organizations

Parveen et al. (2015) studied social media usage and organizational performance. The data collected and analyzed revealed that social media initiatives correspond with improved firm performance. Organizations that are going through changes such as new technology and the internet use Twitter, Facebook, blogs, mobile phones, and other social network instruments to distribute information about their changes. Blogs are an effective tool for mending an organization's image and status while avoiding a boycott of the organization's products and services (Pang, Hassan, & Chong, 2014). Thus, social media can be an effective communication platform for decreasing the effect of a crisis and as an instrument to distribute information on an organization's management (Yates & Paquette, 2011). The researchers concur that social media has a lot of effect on managing the brand, passing information to customers, and eventually helping to alleviate misconceptions about an organization.

Kazungu, Matto, and Massawe (2017) explored social media influence on Micro Enterprises' (MEs) performance in Moshi, Tanzania, in the context of brand improvement, maximizing profit, customers' base, and sales increase. Data was collected using interviews and questionnaires among business owners of 90 MEs and analyzed using ANOVA. The results showed that MEs highly utilize social media and that its utilization has contributed to superior business performance. In conclusion, Kazungu et al. pointed out that social media largely assisted organizations in reaching out to many customers, increase customer satisfaction, and improve brand awareness and image.

#### Social Media and Customer Engagement

According to Van Doorn et al. (2010), customer engagements are “behavioral manifestations towards a brand or firm, beyond purchase, resulting from motivational drivers” (abstract). Furthermore, customer engagement mirrors the strength of a person’s involvement and link with an organization's undertakings and initiatives (Hibbler-Britt & Sussan, 2015).

Leung, Bai, and Erdem (2017) referred to the type of material of social media. Their study was based on the social media marketing of hotels with a specific interest in Facebook. The results of the study established that the most effective types of messages were those associated with the brand, participation, and product. However, messages associated with rewards and advertising were not effective. Further, product engagement and attitude towards the community and interest in online engagement were noted as factors that have a great influence on social media engagement. Lastly, Chinomona (2016) showed that brand communication has a major influence on brand loyalty in the presence of brand image as a mediating variable in the association between brand communication and brand loyalty.

Kimani (2015) observed that “social media marketing has a lot of value to us because it allows employees to connect to the clients, especially the ones in different geographic zones. Social media allows firms to engage in timely and direct end-consumer contacts at fairly low cost and higher levels of efficiency than can be achieved with more traditional communication tools” (p. 102). Kimani also noted that companies using social media are keen to establish the influence of this use on business performance.

Previous works have tried to depict the benefits of social media in organizations. Maravilhas (2014) contended that examining the business environment technologically and market developments help in recognizing the prospects for acquiring competitive

advantage and identifying possible business threats. This will give preference to transformational technologies, which are essential in facilitating success via technology.

Making the customer the most important part of a business is one very effective customer engagement strategy that has been used over the years. Munoz et al. (2016) opined that customer engagement strategies include making the customer feel like a significant part of the company. Effective customer engagement strategies increase brand loyalty and improve the performance of the organization.

Social communication has developed through the growing use of digital media by consumers and the penchant of future users joining the digital age. The number of Internet users worldwide was over 3.2 billion towards the end of 2015, and it is expected that this immense knowledge traffic will keep on doubling each year (Bosomworth, 2015). Social media is among the best cost-efficient digital marketing techniques employed to distribute material and grow one business' perceptibility. Effecting a social media strategy significantly increases brand recognition since it enables an organization to engage with a broad audience of consumers, consequently improving the organization's performance (Kelley, Sheehan, & Jugenheimer, 2015).

Coulter, Gummerus, Liljander, Weman, and Pihlström (2012) defined customer engagement on social media as “a combination of brand community and transactional behaviors, including frequency of brand community visits, content liking, commenting, and news reading” (p. 863). This essentially means an initiated involvement with the brand on social media by a customer. Customer brand engagement is partitioned into five areas: interaction, attention, absorption, identification, and enthusiasm (So, King, & Sparks, 2014). There are individuals, also known as influencers, who have a large social media presence and followers who can influence consumer purchasing decisions through

conversations with them, both on and offline. The lack of well-structured procedure guidelines is a major challenge in the implementation of social media strategies in some of the organizations in Kenya. According to Muthoka (2015), offering lessons on the benefits of social media, understanding an organization's strategy, and encouraging information exchange are important strategies towards the enhancement of social media utilization by an organization.

Daowd (2016) argued that since the advent of the internet technology era, there has been an increase in effective communication and interaction between individuals, and these new ways now serve as the substitute for conventional tools. The researcher also pointed out that social media platforms embody one of the most adopted applications that have gathered significant interest. This is because of their ease of use, which makes it possible for consumers and organizations to share information, get instant feedback, and generate ideas that help maintain solid communication, enhance, and build relationships, and enhance loyalty. Similarly, when it comes to business performance, social media brings many benefits, the most important being that it provides opportunities for businesses to interact with their customers at ease, resulting in increased loyalty and enhanced performance (Bojare & Romanova, 2017).

Ashley and Tuten (2015) emphasized that communication is the center of any strategy. Based on this statement, social media accomplishes this by actively involving consumers on several social media platforms. This appeals to consumers and enhances their contentment with the business, eventually improving business performance. Onyancha (2015) researched social media and customer service at the Kenya Commercial Bank. Data was collected through the use of questionnaires and interview guides. Content analysis was employed in data analysis of the data collected by the use of an interview

guide. The study found that an estimated 50 customer inquiries were handled daily through social media channels. This indicates that customers were turning to social media platforms seeking customer service from the organization, proving that social media is a customer service instrument. Consumers are turning to social media as their choice channel of engagement.

Previous studies have shown that social media and brand image have a healthy bond that encourages shared profit for the customers and the organization (Odoom et al., 2017).

The impact of social media use is positive but unpredictable across product-and servicebased organizations. It was noted that SMEs offering physical products are encouraged to utilize social media for cost reduction. In contrast, for the SMEs that are service providers, increasing interactivity is the key motivation for their social media usage. Furthermore, the study's results suggested that in a tale of two sites, Facebook had an upper hand over Twitter in terms of generating performance benefits.

Felix et al. (2017) observed that some scholars have defined social media engagement as a means to interact with present and future customers, with the main aim of upholding or developing a relationship that an organization can derive from later. Cvijikj and Michahelles (2013) measured customer engagement through actions on social media sites, rated by activities such as page views, click-through rates, and other measures, as per the social media platform.

Sang (2014) sought to understand "how communication is used to reduce the uncertainty people face in interpersonal interactions" (p. 17). He believed that indecision

is a disadvantageous state in people which results in “cognitive stress among people in interpersonal relationships” (p. 17). People try to reduce doubt through communication.

### Conceptual Framework

Njeru, Njeru, Memba, and Tirimba (2015) defined a conceptual framework as “a group of concepts that are systematically organized in providing a focus, rationale, and a tool for interpretation and integration of information” (p. 1240) and is commonly done in pictorial graphics. Figure 2.1 illustrates this study’s conceptual framework.

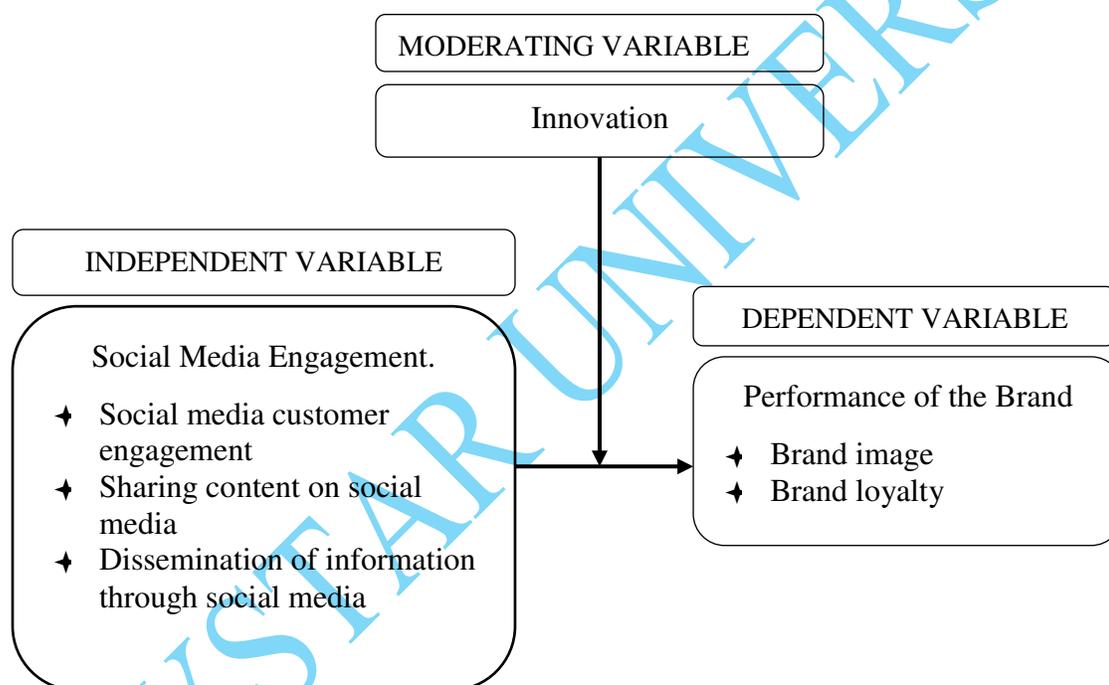


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Researcher (2021)

### Discussion

This research was guided by the conceptual framework illustrated in Figure 2.1. A conceptual framework is described as a plan that shows the rational course of ideas on how the researcher would tackle the research problem (Punch & Oancea, 2014). The social media engagements adopted in this study through Facebook, videos, blogs, and

Twitter are represented by the independent variable. The moderating variable demonstrates how innovation in technological advancement creates new social media platforms, thus affecting how communication amongst groups of people would change social structures in the future.

The dependent variable brand performance illustrates how social media engagements adopted by Safaricom PLC affect the performance of the company's brand through influencing customers' perceptions of the brand image and brand loyalty. Although social media platforms are developed often, Facebook, Twitter, blogs, and videos were the focus of this study, as they are actively in use at Safaricom PLC and also have a customer interface aspect. This study sought to understand the influence of social media engagement on the performance of the Safaricom PLC brand.

### Summary

Chapter two has reviewed theories of social media strategies, such as the social penetration theory and diffusion of innovation theory. The theories help to clarify how new ideas can spread through a population through social media and the extent of the contribution of human capital. General and empirical literature that relates to the topic under discussion has also been reviewed. Further, the conceptual framework that guided this study is illustrated.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

This chapter focuses on the methodological procedures that were employed in the study. It contains the research design, the population, sampling techniques, and

instruments utilized for collecting data. Additionally, it handles data collection methods, procedures, data analysis, and ethical considerations. The research sought to determine the influence of social media engagement on the Safaricom PLC brand in the Kenyan telecommunication industry.

### Research Design

A research design refers to the procedure a researcher follows that goes about responding to the laid down research questions (Bell & Bryman, 2007). This study adopted the descriptive research design, described by Kothari and Garg (2014), as involving the description of a population, regarding key variables with prominence being placed on determining the rate of occurring events or the level to which two variables co-vary.

### Population

A population refers to a whole group of people, things, or events with shared characteristics. It is also known as a universe, referring to all the items in the field of inquiry (Garg, Gupta, Dzever, Sivarajah, & Kumar, 2020). It includes all prospective participants that can form a study group. The population of this study comprised all 5236 permanent Safaricom PLC employees (Safaricom, 2018).

### Target Population

A target population is described as a whole group of people or objects, which the researcher is interested in using to generalize the conclusions in a study. This study's target population consisted of 168 employees at Safaricom PLC's social media customer service department. The distribution of the target population was depicted in Table 3.1.

*Table 3.1: Target Population*

Position in the organization	Frequency
Senior management	5
Supervisors	10
Social media analysts	110
Other Staff	43
Total	168

### Sampling Techniques

The study population was 168 members of staff who handle social media channels in the organization; hence a group census method was used as all the members were available in the same location and could easily be reached to fill in the questionnaire.

### Data Collection Instruments

Data is described as facts or knowledge on behavior gathered from different participants. This section discusses how the researcher collected data for the study. The study used questionnaires with both open and closed-ended questions. The five-point Likert scale - ranging from 1 to 5 where; 1=No extent, 2=Little extent, 3=Moderate extent, 4=Great extent, and 5=Very great extent, was utilized to formulate the closed-ended questions. The choice of a questionnaire as the data collection tool was based on the fact that it (questionnaire) is convenient, cost-efficient, and not time-consuming.

### Data Collection Procedures

Chandran, Panda, and Sahay (2004), in their research, defined data collection as an assembly of empirical evidence to gain fresh insight into a situation through answering questions prompted in the research. The researcher sought approval from Daystar University; Safaricom PLC; and the National Commission for Science, Innovation and Technology (NACOSTI) before proceeding to administer the questionnaire.

After getting the approvals, the questionnaire was administered to Safaricom PLC employees at their workplace, ensuring minimal disruptions in their everyday work activities. The researcher allowed the respondents to fill in the questionnaire in their free time. The researcher then collected the filled questionnaire copies and went through the questions to ensure they had all been answered. This method was used to ensure a high response rate from the respondents.

### Pretesting

A pretest was conducted to confirm the accuracy and reliability of the research instruments. This was done on 10 employees, randomly chosen by the researcher, at Safaricom PLC. The results of the pretest indicated a need for enhancing the general quality of the final data collection. Places that required enhancements were recognised and enhanced. Additionally, the pretest enabled the formation of a proper rapport during the research period, as it provided an opportunity for the researcher to make introductions beforehand.

### Data Analysis Plan

According to Kothari (2004), data analysis is a process that begins instantly following data collection and concludes at interpretation and processing of findings. It usually involves reducing collected data to a controllable portion, building summaries, searching for patterns, and employing statistical techniques (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). The data collected in this study was analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 23 and descriptive and inferential statistics. The study findings were presented using frequency tables, graphs, and percentages.

## Ethical Considerations

Research ethics, as noted by Cooper and Schindler (1998), require personal integrity from the researcher. In this study, the researcher made sure that the questions were not invasive and considered the privacy of the respondents. Moreover, the researcher assured the respondents that the collected data was for academic use only.

## Summary

This chapter concentrated on the methodological processes employed in the study. It has captured the research design, illustrating how the research variables were addressed; the research population; the sampling techniques; data collection instruments and procedures; pretesting; the data analysis plan; and finally the ethical aspects that the study factored in.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

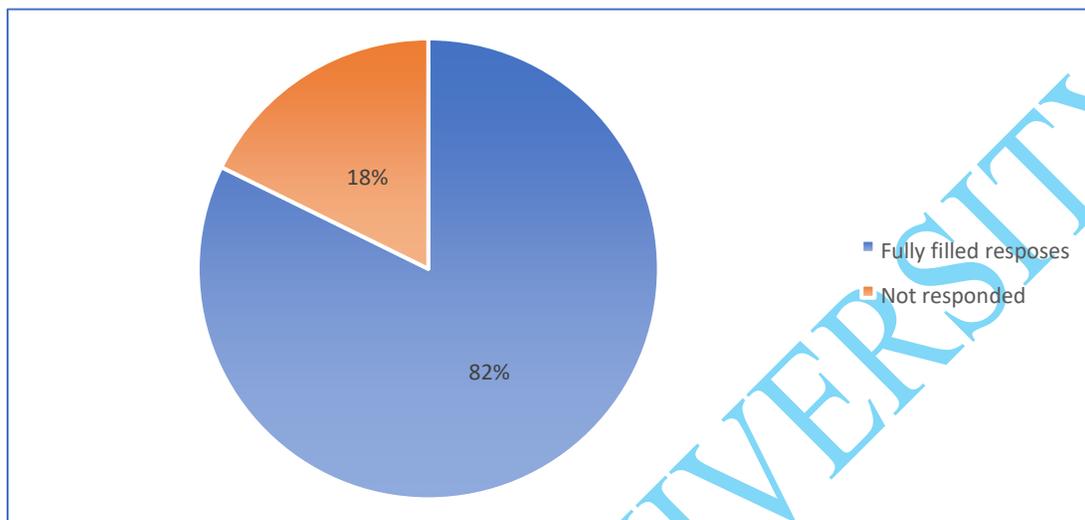
#### Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher presents the analysis and interpretation of the study data collected using a questionnaire. The data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 23, and descriptive and inferential statistics, and the findings were presented using frequency tables, graphs, and percentages. Data presentation was guided by the research objectives.

#### Analysis and Interpretation

#### Response Rate

The researcher circulated 158 questionnaires to the respondents, out of which 130 were completely filled. This translated to an 82% response rate. Figure 4.1 illustrates the response rate.



*Figure 4.1: Response Rate*

As illustrated by Figure 4.1, 82% of the respondents completed the questionnaire, while 18% did not complete or respond to the questionnaire. These findings agreed with Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) that validity is the level to which findings acquired from data analysis illustrate the case being studied. It is the level to which a test calculates what it is envisioned to calculate.

#### Respondents' Demographics

The frequency of respondents' information is displayed in tables which show the demographics of the respondents, that is, gender, years of service, and level of education.

#### Gender

The researcher aimed to examine the ratio of the respondents' gender. The results are presented in Table 4.1.

<u>Gender</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Male	43	33.1
Female	87	66.9
<u>Total</u>	<u>130</u>	<u>100.0</u>

*Table 4.1: Respondents' Gender Ratio*

As depicted in Table 4.1, 33.1% of the respondents were male, while 66.9% were female. The researcher involved both the male and female gender in the study, therefore complying with the third gender rule presented in the Constitution of Kenya, 2010.

#### Years of service

Table 4.2 demonstrates the years of service of the respondents.

*Table 4.2: Years of Service of the Respondents*

<u>Years of service</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1-5	19	14.6
5-10	68	52.3
10-15	24	18.5
<u>Above 15</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>14.6</u>
Total	130	100.0

According to the results, most of the respondents, 68(52.3%), had been with Safaricom PLC for 5-10 years and 24(18.5%) for 10-15 years. There was a tie between respondents who had been with Safaricom PLC for 1-5 years and those in the category of above 15 years, with 19(14.6%) each. The researcher concluded that the respondents who had stayed in the organization for a longer period were conversant with the topic of interest, that is, identifying the impact of social media on the performance of Safaricom PLC.

#### Level of education

The researcher endeavored to determine the intellectual ability of the respondents based on their education level. The findings are presented in Table 4.3.

*Table 4.3: Education Level of Respondents*

Education level	Frequency	Percent
Certificate	19	14.6
Degree	69	53.0
Diploma	26	20.0
Masters and above	16	12.4
Total	130	100.0

The results in Table 4.3 point out that the majority of the respondents 69(53.0%), had a degree, followed by 26(20.0%) with a diploma, 19(14.6%) with a certificate, and lastly, 16(12.4%) who had masters and above. The researcher concluded that the respondents had enough knowledge and skills to read and provide responses to the questions in the questionnaire.

#### Social Media Platforms Adopted in Safaricom PLC

The researcher aimed to identify popular social media platforms utilized by Safaricom PLC to interact with customers. Table 4.4 demonstrates the findings.

*Table 4.4: Social Media Platforms and Their Level of Popularity.*

Social media platforms	Frequency	Percent
Facebook	110	84.6
Blogs	100	76.9
Twitter	102	78.5
YouTube	80	61.5

According to Table 4.4, the most popular social media platform was Facebook 110(84.6%), then Twitter 102(78.5%), blogs 100(76.9%), and YouTube 80(61.5%). Correspondingly, a study conducted by Kimani (2015) on the effects of social media on the development of small businesses in Kenya concluded that most respondents have social media account(s) with Facebook or Twitter. Facebook is among the oldest social

media platforms and has been able to capture the interest of many people, both young and old.

### Social Media Platform Engagement

#### Facebook

The researcher sought to determine the level of acceptance of Facebook use at Safaricom PLC. The results are captured in Table 4.5.

*Table 4. 5: Level of Acceptance of Facebook Use in Safaricom PLC*

	Level of agreement	Frequency	Percent
Facebook	Not at all	10	7.7
	Little	9	6.9
	Moderate	10	7.7
	Great	68	52.3
	<u>Very great</u>	<u>33</u>	25.4
<u>Total</u>		<u>130</u>	<u>100</u>

The results reveal that most respondents, 68(52.3%), noted that Facebook use was greatly accepted, 33(25.4%) noted it was very greatly accepted, and 10(7.7%) agreed that Facebook use was moderately accepted. These results show the extent of Facebook adoption as a social media platform and customer engagement on the platform. The study concluded that customer engagement was high on the Facebook platform in Safaricom PLC, seen through followers and likes on the platform. Similar findings were recorded by Bhanot (2017) based on research on the effect of social media on the performance of commercial banks in Kenya. The data collected revealed that Facebook use comprised 44.4%, then Twitter, represented by 33.3%. Therefore, Facebook had a higher interaction rate than Twitter.

## Twitter

The researcher sought to ascertain the degree of the use of Twitter and customer engagement on the platforms. Table 4.6 presents the results.

*Table 4. 6: Level of Agreement of Twitter Use in the Organization*

	Level of agreement	Frequency	
Twitter	Not at all	0	0
	Little	0	0
	Moderate	63	48.5
	Great	43	33.1
	<u>Very great</u>	<u>24</u>	18.5
<u>Total</u>		<u>130</u>	<u>100</u>

Table 4.6 reveals that 67(51.6%) respondents agreed that Twitter was used greatly. 63(48.5%) agreed that Twitter use was moderate in the organization. These results concur with Bhanot's (2017) finding that Twitter adoption is on steady growth and sometimes Twitter and Facebook tend to rival one another. Bhanot also determined that Twitter accounted for 33.3% and is the second most popular social media platform in Kenya.

## Blogs

The researcher sought to determine the extent of blogs' adoption as a social media platform and the level of engagement on the platform. Table 4.7 demonstrates the findings.

*Table 4. 7: Level of Engagement of Blogs Use in the Organization*

	Level of agreement	Frequency	Percent
Blogs	Not at all	15	11.5
	Little	23	17.7

Moderate	25	19.2
Great	33	25.4
Very great	34	26.1
Total	130	100

A total of 67(51.5%) respondents agreed that blogs were greatly used in the organization. More than half (51.5%) of the respondents greatly and very greatly agreed that Safaricom PLC uses blogs to relate with their customers, 19.2% moderately agreed, and 11.5 % did not agree at all. These findings were encouraging as they are in line with the study, showing how the Safaricom PLC blog is gaining popularity and reaching out to customers. Therefore, the organization can tell its story to the public and build its brand.

#### YouTube

The researcher aimed to determine the extent of YouTube's use as a social media platform in the organization. Table 4.8 illustrates the respondents' level of agreement on this aspect.

*Table 4. 8: Level of Agreement of YouTube Use in the Organization*

	Level of agreement	Frequency	Percent
You tube	Not at all	0	0.0
	Little	13	10.0
	Moderate	30	23.0
	Great	63	48.5
	Very great	24	18.5
Total		130	100.0

The results captured in Table 4.8 show that cumulatively, 87(67.0%) of the respondents agreed that YouTube was greatly used in the organization. However, the study noted that YouTube is not a very interactive social media platform.

#### How Safaricom Uses Social Media to Engage Customers.

The researcher sought to determine how Safaricom PLC used social media in engaging customers. The findings are shown in Table 4.9.

*Table 4.9: Agreement Levels of Customer Engagement with the Brand on Facebook*

Statement	Level of agreement	Frequency	Percent
Safaricom PLC uses Facebook to facilitate communication use and interaction between them and the customers.	strongly disagree	19	14.6
	disagree	0	0.0
	Neutral agree	43	33.1
		19	14.6
	strongly agree	49	37.7
<b>Total</b>		130	100.0

On whether Safaricom PLC uses Facebook to engage its customers, 68(52.3%) of the respondents agreed, 19(14.6%) disagreed, and 43(33.1%) were neutral. These findings agreed with Kimani (2015), who posited that social media has much value to people because it enables employees to interact with the clients.

Table 4.10 demonstrates the level of agreement of Facebook's use by Safaricom PLC to disseminate information to customers.

*Table 4.10: Level of Agreement of Facebook Use by Safaricom PLC to Disseminate Information to Customers*

Statement	Level of agreement	Frequency	Percentage
Safaricom uses Facebook for the dissemination of information to customers.	Strongly disagree	0	0
	Disagree	18	13.9
	Neutral	24	17.7
	Agree	38	29.9
	Strongly agree	50	38.5
<b>Total</b>		130	100

On whether Safaricom uses Facebook to disseminate information to customers, half of the respondents, 50(38.5%), strongly agreed; 38(29.9%) agreed; 18(13.9%) disagreed and 24(17.7%) were neutral. Similar research was conducted by Kimani (2015)

on the effects of social media on the development of small businesses in Kenya. The results showed that social media is a powerful instrument for distributing information among individuals of different social classes.

Table 4.11 depicts the results regarding how Facebook engagements affect feedback from customers.

*Table 4.11: How Facebook Engagements Affect Feedback From Customers*

Statement	Level of Agreement	Frequency	Percent
It is through Facebook that Safaricom gets honest feedback from the public about its products and services.	strongly disagree	9	6.9
	disagree	15	11.6
	Neutral	19	14.6
	agree	68	52.3
	<u>strongly agree</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>21.5</u>
Total		130	100.0

In relation to whether Safaricom PLC uses Facebook to get feedback from its customers, 68(52.3%) agreed, and 28(21.5%) strongly agreed; hence, a total of 96(73.8%) of the respondents alluded that they get feedback from customers using Facebook. This concurs with Odhiambo (2014), who observed that digital communication, when properly utilized, offers companies the opportunity to target, interact, and get feedback from their consumers. This observation was significant to this study as it depicted how social media can be utilized for customer feedback.

The researcher sought to determine the use of Twitter with respect to subsequent functions, as shown in Table 4.12.

*Table 4.12: Use of Twitter with Respect to Subsequent Functions*

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree agree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
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	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Safaricom uses twitter to advertise its products	0	0	0	0	24	18.5	106	81.5	0	0
Twitter used to interact with customers directly	0	0	0	0	44	33.8	62	47.7	24	18.5
Twitter is used as a customer education channel	19	14.6	19	14.6	19	14.6	67	51.5	0	0
Data can be collected through twitter customer feedback	0	0	0	0	44	33.8	86	66.2	0	0

Most of the respondents, 106(81.5%), agreed that Safaricom PLC uses Twitter to advertise its products. This is consistent with Mwangi and Birundu's (2015) study, which noted that social media can be utilized by businesses to develop and expand to great heights by accessing expansive clientele that includes more than 22 million Kenyans who have accessible internet.

As shown in Table 4.12, 62.2% of the respondents agreed that Safaricom PLC used Twitter to interact directly with the customers, while 44(33.8%) were neutral. 51.5% of the respondents agreed that Twitter was used as a customer education channel.

A total of 86(66.2%) respondents agreed that Twitter can be used to collect data through customer feedback. The findings are similar to a study done by Kimani (2015), who observed that "social media marketing has a lot of value to people because it allows employees to connect to the clients, especially the ones in different geographic zones" (p. 102). It was noted that Twitter is a very interactive platform as 66.2% of respondents agreed that it was used to interact with customers while 81.5% agreed that it was used to advertise the company's products.

The degree of engagement on social media as observed by the respondents in Safaricom PLC concurs with Ogaji et al. (2017), who stated that Kenya is caught in the

social media buzz and is one of the most engaged. Kenya has a huge base of social media users and is rated as one of the most active countries in social media.

The researcher sought to ascertain the influence of blogs on brand performance.

The findings are presented in Table 4.13.

*Table 4.13: How Blogs Influence Brand Performance of Safaricom PLC*

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	%	%	%	%	%
Safaricom has its own blog	0	0	0	14.6	85.4
Safaricom advertises its products through its blog	0	14.6	19.2	33.1	33.1
Bloggers are helping Safaricom customers best obtain the truth among conflicting views	0	0	33.8	47.7	18.5

As shown by the results in Table 4.13, the researcher established overwhelming support for Safaricom PLC to have its own blog. 66.2% of the respondents agreed that the company's blog is used to obtain the truth among conflicting views. These results agree with Ngare (2011), who found that bloggers and their followers serve each other with opinions and comments, hence assisting consumers in determining the best version of the truth in the conflicting views on products. The members of staff were fully aware of Safaricom PLC's blog existence, and 66.2% agreed that the blog was used for advertising the company's products.

#### Social Media Contribution to Performance

The researcher sought to determine how social media engagements influence the brand's performance based on social media engagement. Table 4.14 displays the customer value, customer satisfaction, and social media.

*Table 4.14: The Customer Value, Customer Satisfaction, and Social Media*

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
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	%	%	%	%	%
Safaricom value their customers	0	14.6	19.2	33.1	33.1
Safaricom treat their customers with respect	0	0	33.8	47.7	18.5
Satisfied customers consume more products leading to higher firm growth.	0	0	18.5	66.9	14.6
Safaricom PLC gaining market share increased profitability	0	14.6	0	66.2	19.2

According to the findings displayed in Table 4.14, the study identified that 66.2% of the respondents agreed that Safaricom PLC valued their customers, 19.2% were neutral, and 14.6% disagreed. These findings reveal that customer value is a significant part of the organization. Customer satisfaction performs a central part in sales, as indicated in the study. Most (81.5%) of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that the organization would experience an increase in sales when customers are satisfied. This concurs with Kyule (2017), who concluded that social media and its channels play integral roles in influencing consumer behavior positively or negatively. On whether Safaricom PLC gaining market share increased profitability, 66.2% of the respondents agreed, while 19.2% strongly agreed. Likewise, Okari (2017) did a regression analysis that showed that social media has a major impact on financial performance among institutions in terms of revenue earning growth.

#### Social Media Impact on Brand Performance

Table 4.15 presents the results on how social media engagement influences brand perceptions and information sharing on social media.

*Table 4.15: How Social Media Engagement Influences Brand Perceptions and Sharing of Information on Social Media*

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	%	%	%	%	%

Through social media, Safaricom PLC gets more information about its customers	0	18.5	14.6	29.2	37.7
Safaricom PLC can easily find out how its business is perceived by its customers	0	10.6	18.5	47.7	23.2
It is through social media that Safaricom PLC strengthens its customer loyalty	0	14.6	14.6	56.2	14.6
Social media offers the unique benefit of being able to connect with customers on a personal level	0	29.3	14.6	36.9	19.2
Social media pages are an excellent way to share information	0	15.4	19.2	46.9	18.5

Regarding whether through social media, Safaricom PLC gets more information about its customers on what they (customers) want to buy, 87(66.9%) of the respondents agreed, 19(14.6%) were neutral, and 24(18.5%) disagreed. Further, 70.9% of respondents agreed and strongly agreed that Safaricom PLC can easily find out how its business is perceived by its customers, concluding that social media is used to measure perceptions of customers towards the brand. These findings concur with those by Owino et al. (2016) that brand image and customer relations have an affirmative association.

The findings in Table 4.15 also revealed that 70.8% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that Safaricom PLC is using social media to strengthen its customer loyalty. On whether social media offers a good platform for customer engagement, 56.1% of the respondents agreed. This is echoed by Kimani (2015), who established that social media engagements contribute to the performance of customer loyalty. Additionally, Kimani observed that social media engagements also help firms “to engage in timely and direct end-consumer contacts at fairly low cost and higher levels of efficiency than can be achieved with more traditional communication tools” (p. 102).

Safaricom PLC is among companies in Kenya that have embraced social media as a customer service channel to improve accessibility and communicate with their customers candidly. This encourages customer feedback and builds customer perceptions. The organization trends on social media pages often hence creating relevance as people talk about it. Safaricom has established ways to manage information flow in its social media platforms so as to manage the brand image and keep customers entertained. In a survey done by Oloko et al. (2014), 56.1% of the respondents agreed that social media offers personalized customer service. Consumer behavior can be best manipulated through communication. Social media has provided a good platform for an organization to spread information effectively.

The degree of interaction on social media is expected to grow as people engage with the social media platforms. Mativu (2012) stated that this is also known as putting a face to the product. According to the results presented in Table 4.15, 65.4% of the respondents in this present study agreed that social media pages are an excellent way of sharing information. This contributes highly to the independent variable in this study, that is, how social media contributes to the sharing of information to a population.

#### Summary of Key Findings

1. Identifying the social media platforms adopted by Safaricom PLC for customer engagement was the first objective of this study. The research revealed that four social media platforms: Facebook, Twitter, blogs, and YouTube, were used for customer engagement and for introducing new products in Safaricom PLC.

Facebook was the most utilized social media platform, followed by Twitter, blogs, and YouTube.

2. Social media was used to increase customer engagements, which increased customer loyalty and satisfaction, consequently improving operational performance.
3. Several factors determine the performance of the Safaricom PLC brand. A total of 66.2% of the respondents agreed that Safaricom PLC valued its customers, while 66.2% agreed that Safaricom PLC treated its customers with respect. These customer service initiatives lead to customer satisfaction. Most (81.5%) of the respondents agreed that satisfied customers consume more products, leading to a higher organizational growth rate.
4. The fourth objective was to determine how the various social media engagements adopted by Safaricom PLC affect the performance of the company brand. The study established that all social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, blogs, and YouTube) have an affirmative effect and significantly influence the performance of the Safaricom PLC brand positively.

#### Summary

This chapter has presented the analysis of primary data collected during the study. Questionnaires were used to collect data, which was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics included the use of frequencies, graphs, and percentages. The data was then presented in tables and figures. A summary of key findings from the research has been given. The next chapter discusses the analyzed findings, drawing necessary conclusions and recommendations.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Introduction

This chapter examines the results from the earlier chapter. It also gives the conclusions, recommendations, and recommendations for further research. The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of social media engagement on the performance of the Safaricom PLC brand. Four objectives guided the study: to identify the social media platforms adopted by Safaricom PLC for customer engagements, establish how Safaricom PLC uses social media for customer engagement, determine how Safaricom PLC measures the performance of the company brand, and establish how the social media engagements by Safaricom PLC affect the company brand. The discussions and outline of the study results were guided by the objectives and research questions.

#### Discussions of Key Findings

##### Social Media Platforms Adopted by Safaricom PLC

The first objective of this study was to establish the social media platforms adopted by Safaricom PLC for customer engagement. The research revealed that the social media platforms adopted by the organization for customer engagements were Facebook, Twitter, blogs, and YouTube. A large percentage (84.6%) of the respondents agreed that Facebook was the most popular platform, then Twitter (78.5%), and lastly, blogs (76.9%). This agrees with Bhanot (2017), who found that Facebook is the leading social media instrument employed for customer engagement by organizations. Statista's (2018) found that 8 out of

10 top Facebook's active users worldwide were from developing countries. Being a developing country, Kenya is quickly adopting social media, with Facebook taking the lead in social platforms.

### Social Media Customer Engagement

On the second objective, which was to establish how Safaricom PLC uses social media for customer engagement, many respondents acknowledged that social media was used to engage with customers in several ways. On whether Facebook was used to get feedback from the public, 66.9% agreed, and 14.6% were neutral. Regarding whether Safaricom PLC uses Twitter for direct interaction with its customers, 86(62.2%) of the respondents agreed. Additionally, 51.5% of the respondents agreed that Safaricom PLC uses Twitter to introduce new products. Safaricom PLC disseminates information to its customers through its social media pages. This strategy helped to keep conversations about the organization going, hence creating awareness among customers and potential customers.

Mwangi (2014) concluded that social media was being used as an interactive tool, which was led by Internet users encountering exposure online, with increased social networking instigated through online digital sources. Similarly, the research established that the organization was using social media as a customer engagement tool, interaction tool, and advertising tool. This collectively increased the value of the organization's brand.

It was noted that the popularity of blogs was at 76.9%, as most of the respondents revealed. In the research, 66.2% of respondents agreed that blogs help in managing the brand image by helping the customers of Safaricom PLC to obtain the truth among

conflicting views. Ogaji et al. (2017) stated that Kenya is caught in the social media buzz and is one of the most engaged.

Kenya has a huge base of social media users and is rated among the most active countries in social media. Kimotho (2018) noted that in September 2016, Kenyans embracing social media won Kenya an unexpected visit from Mark Zuckerberg, the creator of Facebook, whereby he recognised via his post that Kenya is certainly a significant member in the social media arena and is at the forefront to embracing social media into its population.

#### Social Media Influence on Performance of Safaricom PLC Brand

The third objective was to determine how Safaricom PLC measures the performance of the brand. A high number (70.9%) of the respondents stated that the organization can measure its performance through social media. Similarly, Kimani (2015) researched the effect of social media on the development of small businesses in Kenya and revealed that many respondents have social media account(s), with either Facebook or Twitter. This shows that social media is a powerful instrument for distributing information between individuals of various social classes.

Blogs have been used to strengthen the Safaricom PLC brand, with more than half (66.2%) of the respondents indicating that the organization strives to communicate the truth in conflicting views, strengthening the brand among customers. Similar research Kajalo and Lindblom (2015) focusing on SMEs revealed that close contact with customers facilitated by social media enables small business enterprises to be flexible, hence improving their market position.

#### How Social Media Engagements Affect Safaricom PLC Brand's Performance

The fourth objective was to establish how social media engagements adopted by Safaricom PLC affect the performance of the company brand. The research revealed that social media greatly (70.8%) impacts the performance of the Safaricom PLC brand. The respondents opined the social media engagements helped to improve customer engagement, consequently enhancing the performance of the organization. On whether social media created a platform for a personal relationship with customers, 65.4% of the respondents agreed. Correspondingly, Nyairo (2016), focusing on the hospitality industry in Nairobi County, specifically on three-star hotels, studied the impact of social media on the development of brand equity and established the existence of diverse social media platforms for blogging and social networking. Nyairo observed that social media impacted organizational performance in many ways, for instance, opening new communication channels for direct communication by members, facilitating quick feedback, and increasing brand awareness.

There are many initiatives that Safaricom PLC can use to improve its performance. The research showed a total of 66.2% of the respondents agreed that Safaricom PLC valued its customers, 66.2% agreed that Safaricom PLC treated its customers with respect. These customer service initiatives lead to customer satisfaction. Most (81.5%) of the respondents agreed that satisfied customers consume more products, leading to a higher organizational growth rate. Further, 70.8% of respondents agreed that Safaricom PLC's gaining market share increases its profitability.

The results of this research point out that Safaricom PLC strives to improve its customer relationship. Similar observations were made by Owino et al. (2016), who sought to "determine the influence of social media on brand equity in the banking industry in Kenya" (abstract) and concluded that brand image and customer relations have

a positive connection. The value and benefits of social media have made it an essential part of any business that endeavors to thrive. Prochaska et al. (2017) posited that searching and getting information about a company is a key satisfaction of consumer engagement in online interactions. Customers expect quick access to information about a brand.

### Conclusion

Derived from the research results, the researcher drew the following conclusions:

1. Safaricom PLC has adopted the use of several social media platforms for customer engagements, with Facebook being the most popular platform used in the organization, followed by Twitter, blogs, and YouTube.
2. Social media promotes customer engagement, which helps to improve customers' confidence in the brand.
3. Social media engagements have improved the brand's performance, through enhanced customer satisfaction and loyalty, consequently improving the organization's overall performance.

### Recommendations

Based on the results and conclusions, the researcher drew up the following recommendations.

1. Organizations should give more consideration to social media as a way of promoting customer engagement. The organization should popularize other forms of social media such as blogs to increase customer reach.
2. An organization's management should not solely focus on profitability as a measure of performance but should also investigate other measures of improving

operational performance, such as brand loyalty to continue being competitive in the market.

3. An organization's management should continue to strengthen its presence on social media through sharing content, passing information, and customer engagement as these have a positive effect on the performance of its (organization) brand.

#### Recommendations for Further Research

This study concentrated on the influence of social media engagement on the performance of Safaricom PLC. Since organizations have different ways of operating and performing, the results from this study may not apply to other organizations. Further research on the influence of social media on organizational performance can be conducted in other organizations, especially among SMEs, for comparison.

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## APPENDICES

## Appendix A: Questionnaire

Dear Respondent,

I am a student at Daystar University. In order to fulfill the requirements of Master of Business Administration; I am undertaking a research project on the: *Influence of Social media on the performance of Safaricom PLC brand.* I kindly request your assistance in providing data by filling out the accompanying questionnaire. The information provided will exclusively be used for academic purposes and will be held in strict confidence.

## PART A: BACKGROUND OF THE RESPONDENTS

For each of the questions below, please select where appropriate

Mark with a tick only one answer per question

## 1. Gender

Male

Female

## 2. What position do you hold at Safaricom PLC?

.....

## 3. How long have you worked at the Safaricom PLC?

1-5 years  5-10 years

10-15 years  Over 15 years



7. Please indicate with a tick your level of agreement with the various statements regarding Facebook adopted by Safaricom limited. Tick appropriately where 1 means you strongly agree, 2 you agree, 3 Neutral, 4 disagree and 5 means you strongly disagree with the statement

Facebook	1	2	3	4	5
Safaricom use face book to market their products and services					
Facebook is used to facilitate communication					
Facebook is the quicker dissemination that Safaricom use for information.					
It is through face book that Safaricom gets honest feedback					

8. In general terms, to what extent do you agree/disagree with how face book has impacted on performance at Safaricom limited? And why?

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#### PART D: TWITTER

9. Please indicate with a tick your level of agreement with the various statements regarding twitter adopted by Safaricom limited. Tick appropriately where 1 means you strongly agree, 2 you agree, 3 Neutral, 4 disagree and 5 means you strongly disagree with the statement

Twitter	1	2	3	4	5

Safaricom use twitter to advertise its products and services					
Safaricom PLC use twitter to advertise its sponsored events and open days					
Safaricom PLC use twitter for interaction with their customers.					
customers are introduced to new offers through twitter Safaricom					
At Safaricom data can be collected through twitter					

10. In general terms, to what extent do you agree/disagree with how twitter has impacted on performance at Safaricom limited? And why?

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**PART E: BLOGS**

11. Please indicate with a tick your level of agreement with the various statements regarding blogs and video podcasts adopted by Safaricom limited. Tick appropriately where 1 means you strongly agree, 2 you agree, 3 Neutral, 4 disagree and 5 means you strongly disagree with the statement

Blogs	1	2	3	4	5
-------	---	---	---	---	---

Safaricom are at unprecedented position at the forefront of a vast marketplace one of the reasons been that it has its own blog,					
Through blogs, Safaricom limited can advertise their products and services to a new level					
Safaricom limited bloggers are helping their customers to determine the best obtainable version of the truth among conflicting views on their products and services					

12. In general terms, to what extent do you agree/disagree with how blogs and video podcasts has impacted on performance at Safaricom limited? And why?

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#### PART F: DETERMINANTS OF FIRM PERFORMANCE

13. Please indicate with a tick your level of agreement with the various statements regarding determinant of firm performance at Safaricom limited. Tick appropriately where 1 means you strongly agree, 2 you agree, 3 Neutral, 4 disagree and 5 means you strongly disagree with the statement

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
Customer growth					
Safaricom value their customers					
Safaricom treat their customers with respect					

Customer acquisition led to rapid growth of the firm					
Satisfied customers consume more products leading to a higher firm growth.					
Market share					
Safaricom gaining market share by taking home the profits					

14. In general terms, what is the other determinant of firm performance at Safaricom limited?

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#### PART G: ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE

15. Please indicate with a tick your level of agreement with the various statements regarding performance at Safaricom PLC. Tick appropriately where 1 means you strongly agree, 2 you agree, 3 Neutral, 4 disagree and 5 means you strongly disagree with the statement

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
At Safaricom sales play a vital role in the growth					

Through social media, Safaricom gets more information about their customers on what they want to buy.					
Through sales growth, Safaricom can easily find out how their business is perceived by their customers which allows them to make the necessary changes in their products or services and to initiate conversations to cultivate a prospect or sales lead.					
Customer Loyalty					
It is through social media that Safaricom strengthens their customer loyalty					
Social media offers the unique benefit of being able to connect with customers on a personal level					
Safaricom has dedicated individuals who measure and monitor the internet pages daily.					
Customer Retention					
If the customers like social media pages, it is an excellent way to share future products, news and discounts					

16. In general terms, what other way do Safaricom measure its performance?

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Appendix B: Ethical Clearance

Safaricom PLC,  
Safaricom House  
Wariyaki Way  
P.O. Box 6827-00100  
NAIROBI



9th September 2019

Dear Sir/Madam

**RE: INDEMNITY IN RESPECT OF RESEARCH TO BE UNDERTAKEN BY SUSAN PHERAH ADUVAGAH**

I write to confirm that Susan Pherah Aduvagh is a Postgraduate student at Daystar University pursuing a Master of Business Administration degree. She is currently engaged in an academic research project which involves your organisation. This is part fulfillment of the requirements for a Master of Business Administration degree where the student is required to write a thesis. Her thesis topic is **THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY IN ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE**.

Susan Pherah Aduvagh has requested to be allowed to undertake her research at Safaricom PLC. We are aware that in the course of her research she may receive confidential information from your organisation (Safaricom PLC).

In this regard, the University hereby agrees to indemnify and hold harmless Safaricom PLC from and against all claims, liabilities, losses, damages, and expenses incurred (including any legal costs or penalties and liabilities awarded or imposed by a court or expenses properly incurred) by Susan Pherah Aduvagh in relation to this academic research project, pursuant to any breach or non-observance by her obligations or warranties under the Non-Disclosure Agreement which she has executed with Safaricom PLC.

Dr. Evans Amata  
Dean, School of Business and Economics

*[Handwritten Signature]* 23/9/2019

In the presence of

Dr. Samuel Muriithi  
H.O.D, Commerce

*[Handwritten Signature]* 23/9/2019

Dean  
School of Business & Economics  
Daystar University  
P. O. Box 4466  
Nairobi 00100  
KENYA

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Dr.

## Appendix C: Research Permit



**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,  
TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION**

Telephone: +254 20 22 3471,  
2011419,22 42 71,22 5120  
Fax: +254 20 21 8515, 118540  
Email: dg@nacosti.go.ke  
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke  
When replying please quote

NACOSTI Upper Kabets  
Off. Wayuki Way  
P.O. Box 20622-00100  
NAIROBI KENYA

Ref. No. **NACOSTI/P/18/70224/26126**

Date: **12<sup>th</sup> October, 2018**

Susan Phera Aduvagah  
Daystar University  
P.O.Box 44400-00100  
**NAIROBI.**

**RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION**

Following your application for authority to carry out research on "*Effect of social media adoption on firm's performance: A case study of Safaricom Kenya Limited*" I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Nairobi County** for the period ending **12<sup>th</sup> October, 2019**.

You are advised to report to **the Chief Executive Officer, Safaricom Kenya Limited, the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Nairobi County** before embarking on the research project.

Kindly note that, as an applicant who has been licensed under the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 to conduct research in Kenya, you shall deposit a **copy** of the final research report to the Commission **within one year** of completion. The soft copy of the same should be submitted through the Online Research Information System.

  
**GODFREY P. KALERWA MSc., MBA, MKIM**  
**FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO**

Copy to:

The Chief Executive Officer  
Safaricom Kenya Limited.

The County Commissioner  
Nairobi County.

National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) (SIC 9900) 2008 Certified

**DAYS!**

**THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:**  
**MISS. SUSAN PHERA ADUVAGAH**  
**of DAYSTAR UNIVERSITY, 444000-100**  
**NAIROBI, has been permitted to conduct**  
**research in Nairobi County**

**Permit No : NACOSTI/P/18/70224/26126**  
**Date Of Issue : 12th October,2018**  
**Fee Received :Ksh 1000**

**on the topic: EFFECT OF SOCIAL MEDIA**  
**ADOPTION ON FIRM'S PERFORMANCE: A**  
**CASE STUDY OF SAFARICOM KENYA**  
**LIMITED.**

**for the period ending:**  
**12th. October,2019**

**Applicant's**  
**Signature**

**Signature**  
**of Director General**  
**National Commission for Science,**  
**Technology & Innovation**



## Appendix D: Plagiarism Report

Susan Aduvagah Thesis - 04-09-2021

## ORIGINALITY REPORT

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