COHORT ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL MEDIA USERS IN NAIROBI: A STUDY OF USIU AND COCA-COLA COMPANY COMMUNITIES

BY

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this is my original work and has not been submitted to any other college, institution or university other than the United States International University in Nairobi for academic credit.

Signed: Miriam Limo (ID: 617101) Date: 26.04.2014

This project has been presented for examination with my approval as the appointed supervisor.

Signed: Dr. Peter Kiriri Date: 04/06/2014

Signed: Dean, Chandaria School of Business Date: 12 June 2014
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to identify the demographic characteristics of the social media users in Nairobi, Kenya with a view of coming up with social media strategies that businesses can adopt when dealing with different generational cohorts and demographic groups that form part of their targets. The study was guided by three research questions: Do different genders and age groups have different social media engagement levels? Does Social Media influence the propensity to make a purchase or recommendation of an organization or a product? And to what extent does internet and social media influence the decision making of the different age cohorts? What social media platforms should organizations use to reach different targeted demographic groups to drive their (organizational) growth and build their businesses through social media?

The study adopted a quantitative descriptive research design approach. The study population comprised of the entire 5362 USIU students registered in summer of 2013 and the 163 employees of the Coca-Cola Central East and West Africa Business Unit in Nairobi. This was narrowed down to a sample size of 373. The data was collected between June 15th and July 9th 2013 by use of a standardized questionnaire, the preferred tool for its stability, consistency and uniformity in collecting data. From a sample of 373 respondents, 330 complete questionnaires were received representing a response rate of 88.4%. Data analysis involved the use of SPSS software to generate the measures of central tendency in this case the mode was used to highlight the most frequent responses. A chi square test of independence was also applied to establish the statistical significance between any differences observed in the responses. Finally the data collected was presented in graphs, tables and figures.

The study showed that different gender and age groups have different social media engagement levels and that women are more likely than men to learn about social media from friends. Similarly they use social media sites more than men. The study also revealed that younger people learn about social networks more from their friends than the older people. Apart from family and friends, older generations learn about the social media significantly from other sources (school, internet, television and other media sources). The
usage of social media also declines with age. Age group 21-30 years is the most active with most of their time spent on getting new information, meeting new people, connecting with friends, and learning about new products in the order. Their level of activity is followed by those aged 31-40 years then those between 15-20 years and finally those aged above 40 years. Those aged above 40 years mostly spend time to learn about new products.

The study showed that for a majority of the respondents, social media has no influence on their purchase making decision as well as their intention to recommend a product but younger cohorts are likely than older people to recommend a product on line. Older people are less likely to buy products recommended through social media than younger age groups.

The study pointed out that the most frequently used social media platforms within the population of study are Facebook, followed by email services, then Google+, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, MySpace and lastly Pinterest.

The study recommended market segmentation to effectively capitalize on the demographic differences and varying social media needs among the population members. Since Facebook stood out as the most used social media platform, it is recommended that its adoption as well as that of the other sites should be subject to demographic characteristic exhibited by the findings of this study. From this study, it was very evident that companies need to promote the use of social media and incorporate social media into their marketing tools by identifying the most frequently used platform and the category to which it appeals the most.

In conclusion, it was evident that indeed age and gender have an influence on the engagement levels. An organization with strategic intent would be advised to segment its target audience on these grounds when communicating through social media. Further, younger people are more likely to be influenced through social media to purchase or consider a good or a service offered. Facebook stood out as the most popular platform across gender and age groups.

For further research, the study recommends an in-depth evaluation of the role of social media on purchase making decisions and advocacy since this study showed conflicting findings from the previous studies. Since the study was more exploratory, an understanding is needed for the various differences within and across group variations.
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<td>Coca-Cola East and West Africa</td>
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<td>NSMR</td>
<td>Nielsen Social Media Report</td>
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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Problem

Many organizations are in better shape today than they have been in the past ten years, their balance sheets are healthier, they have successfully implemented cost cutting measures and probably have sizable reserves of working capital now than they did ten years ago. All these measures were required for survival between 2008 and 2010. This is 2013, and as a strategic company seeking to enter new markets, it has to innovate continuously, offer compelling customer value propositions, customer relationship management and brand awareness (Baird and Parasnis, 2011). In the past five years, new communications platforms and networks have emerged whose adoption numbers dwarf those of the traditional media that came before them and the speed at which these platforms and networks emerge is blinding (Barger, 2012).

According to a recent Nielsen study, consumers spend more time on social networks than on any category of websites, personal computer users spend approximately 20 percent of their online time in social networks, while mobile users are even more prolific at 30 percent, (Nielsen Social Media Report, [NSMR], 2012). The study by Nielsen (NSMR, 2012) further suggested that more than a quarter of social media users say they are more likely to pay attention to an advertisement shared by one of their social connections, additionally, more than a quarter of consumers are okay with seeing advertisements on social networking sites tailored to them based on their profile information.

According to studies done by Pew Internet in the USA, more than 90% of teens and young adults use the Internet and similar statistics are reported from many European countries (Madden and Zickuhr, 2011). The implications of this are profound for businesses seeking to tap into that demographic. Social Media has become a key medium for people who have access to digital technology and the basic skills to use it. Consumers have countless social sites to choose from, with Blogger, Twitter, WordPress, LinkedIn and Pinterest coming in after Facebook in order of popularity (NSMR, 2012).
Today, if you want to discover what your customers and your competitors think about your brand, social media is your earpiece. If you want to change perceptions about your company and improve customer service, social media is your microphone and if you want to find out who the influencers and the advocates are and get them to broadcast your message on your behalf, social media will identify the people in your network whom you should engage with (Holloman, 2012).

As Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and Foursquare attract millions of users and media attention, companies are still struggling to adjust or react to the speed, size, and magnitude of the changes brought by social media. It’s downright scary to many —especially when the company leadership teams realize that customers now expect them to be not only present within the social web but also aware, responsive, and engaged (NSMR, 2012).

Social media is evolving as a very powerful opportunity for reaching out to a huge number of potential business partners, buyers and prospects, and influencing them to form a favorable opinion about a brand, product, service, business, or company (Barger, 2012). This study is thus motivated by this growing importance of the Internet and social media to businesses.

It is not surprising therefore, that today’s strategic businesses are vigorously building social media programs to get closer to their customers and consumers. While conventional wisdom holds that a dis-satisfied customer will tell 10 people of his bad experience, in the age of social media, the same dissatisfied customer now has the tools to tell ten million people (Barger, 2012).

According to studies by McKinsey, as consumers increasingly go online to discuss products and brands, seek advice, and offer guidance, the gap that many companies face is where and how to influence these conversations which take place across an ever-growing variety of platforms, among diverse and dispersed communities, and may occur either with lightning speed or over the course of months. Secondly, there’s no single measure of social media’s financial impact, and many companies find that it’s difficult to justify devoting significant resources—financial or human—to an activity whose precise effect remains unclear (McKinsey, Africa Consumer Survey Insights [MACS], 2012). With growing competition,
companies are continuously pushed to reduce costs, improve productivity and drive innovation so as to maintain their competitive advantage.

Despite these shortcomings, Brown (2010) asserts that being part of this engagement and being where the audience spend their online social hours gives companies a great opportunity to drive their agenda, generate brand advocacy, get ideas for innovation, drive down costs of media and increase revenue by engaging directly with customers and consumers and hence driving overall organizational growth. However, it is not just important for companies to have a Facebook or Twitter profile; organizations need to design experiences that deliver tangible value in return for customers’ time, attention, endorsement and data (Baird and Parasnis, 2011).

According to MACS (2012), businesses need to integrate social media into their strategy as a tool that will drive organizational growth. This is because consumers today interact with organizations and brands through channels that are beyond retailers and manufacturer’s control. In Africa, consumer studies conducted by McKinsey in 2012 indicate that overall 22% of urban Africans spend more than ten hours a week online; further, more than 50% of urban Africans had accessed the internet within the past four weeks. It was also revealed that in urban Kenya, internet penetration is at 70%, propelled by affordable mobile broadband and high penetration of Internet capable mobile-devices which do much the same thing as internet users everywhere- use social networking sites, send e-mails, watch videos and search for information (MACS, 2011; MACS, 2012).

Looking at available social media statistics from Socialbakers.com on social media usage in Kenya and Africa; there are 1,775,060 Facebook users in Kenya; it is 67th in the world ranking. This number has grown by 447,320 between May 2012 and October 2012. The statistics further show that Facebook penetration in Kenya is 4.43% compared to the country’s population and 44.43% in relation to the country’s internet users. Kenya is number seven in Africa behind, Egypt, South Africa, Nigeria, Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia. An overall look at Africa reveals that there are 48,021,400 Facebook users across the continent, it is the 5th out of 6 continents and the Facebook penetration is 5.15% compared to the population, obviously businesses need to be where consumers are congregating and if Facebook is an indicator then social media is the place to be (Duggan and Brenner, 2012).
This study investigated the uptake of social media by different age cohorts and genders in Nairobi. It sought to establish to what extent it is possible for a customized social media campaign in Kenya to be designed to achieve cohort specific organizational objectives of increasing online brand awareness, increasing sales leads and establishing a reputation for good product and service quality. Drawing on other existing studies, this study provides insights on the demographics of social media users in Kenya and Nairobi specifically.

The study aimed to develop an approach with which Kenyan organizations can develop segmented strategies for each category of social media users and hopefully manage expectations of growth; the outcomes would also help to identify the best entry strategy into the social sphere for different organizations. Finally, the study sought to clarify which cohort could be influenced most by social media thus giving organizations a competitive advantage in the short run and profitability in the long run by influencing the awareness and purchase decisions of the consumers in the cohort.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

With the exponential growth of social media, organizations have a chance to join the conversation with millions of customers every day. How can businesses design their social media strategy to address the individual engagement levels remains the nagging question. Unlike in the past where a relationship between an organization and its consumers dissipated after a purchase, now most consumers are still aggressively engaged with the brand and the business and are in a position to publicly promote or publicly assail the products they have brought collaborating in brands development and shaping the future of the brand and the business.

Whereas numbers of internet penetration and social media uptake may be available on sites such as Socialbakers.com, limited research existed that pointed out specific platforms that attract the different demographic groups (Duggan and Brenner, 2012). Further, gaps of knowledge existed in knowing which group was likely to use which social networking platform. This made it difficult for businesses to craft a targeted approach when wooing customers via social media.
As a result, while it was clear that the future required organizations to be present online and while there had been numerous studies about online advertising, there was little academic research focused on what types of digital marketing strategies are preferred by different cohorts and which ones influenced their behavior and their propensity to make purchase decisions (Smith, 2012).

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to identify the demographics of the social media users in Nairobi, Kenya with a view of coming up with social media strategies that businesses can adopt when dealing with different generational cohorts and demographic groups that form part of their targets.

1.4 Research Questions

To realize the purpose of the study, the study was steered by the following research questions;

1.4.1 Do different genders and age groups have different social media engagement levels?

1.4.2 Does Social Media have an effect on businesses by influencing consumer decision making and the propensity to make a purchase or recommend of an organization or a product? To what extent is this influence across the different age cohorts?

1.4.3 What social media platforms should organizations leverage to reach and influence the different targeted demographic groups to drive their (organizational) growth and build their businesses through social media?

1.5 Justification of the Study

The study provides an in-depth understanding of the demographics of the social media users in Nairobi, a factor key in business strategy making process. The following stakeholders will benefit from the findings;
1.5.1 Entrepreneurs, Business strategists and Investors

For those entrepreneurs and businesses seeking to better understand the Social Media landscape in Kenya, this research offers insights on which platforms to focus on and which elements they need to dial up in order to gain competitive advantage and expect organizational growth and return on investment.

1.5.2 Marketing Consultants and Senior Managers

The study will help the industry understand the prevailing trends brought about by all the attention that social media has gained and will arm strategists with the information needed to engage the different generational cohorts with tools that will trigger positive response. The study bests aids to direct marketing consultants in their investments for maximum impact.

1.5.3 Academicians and researchers

The study contributes to the body of knowledge by adding information around Social Media and the impact it has on organizational growth with respect to the current Kenyan social media situation.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The study was carried out within Nairobi during the period of June 15th to July 9th 2013. The study focused on the 5362 of United States International University students registered in summer 2013 and the 163 Coca Cola Company employees stationed in Nairobi.

Limitations to the study included; focusing on only two communities within Nairobi other than the entire population of the city. However, as it was a cohort study focusing on age and gender, the population identified well represented the categories of interest. Additionally, the outcome was subject to respondents’ level of social media knowledge and awareness.

Limited proceeding research on social media in Kenya also posed a limitation. This made it difficult to build on existing studies or to avoid previous mistakes. Inferences were thus made to research done in the United States and Europe to derive the principles used in those studies for making conclusions.
1.7 Definition of Terms

1.7.1 Social media

It is the act of creating and posting content in any and all of the following hosted environments: It is also a medium. Like print, broadcast, radio, it is a method of communication on-line, mobile or virtual (Agresta, Bough and Miletsky, 2011).

1.7.2 Demography

This is statistical data relating to a population and the groups within it (Pol and Thomas, 1997). Demography can also be defined as quantifiable statistics of a given population (Norval, 2005). Examples include age, gender, income and Level of education.

1.7.3 Cohort

Is an aggregate of individuals within some population definition who experienced the same event within the same time interval (Norval, 2005).

1.7.4 Generation X

This is the generation born between 1965 and 1979 (Anantatmula and Shrivastav, 2012; Glass, 2007; Calabrese, 2010).

1.7.5 Generation Y

Also globally referred to as millennials, this is the generation born between 1980-1988 (Anantatmula and Shrivastav, 2012; Glass, 2007; Calabrese, 2010).

1.8 Chapter Summary

The chapter started by reviewing existing studies on social media usage and social media penetration in Africa. The problem identified was the knowledge gap that organizations face when trying to decide whether to have a social media strategy and how to design it for maximum engagement with their target audience. The purpose was to study the demographics of existing social media users and suggest strategies for different cohorts, so that organizations operating in the current dynamic social media environment would be
guided in their pursuit for a winning social media strategy for their different demographic targets.

Chapter two presents the literature review Social media and its usage in business. Subsequently chapter three will focus on the research methods adopted for this study, this will include the research design, the population of study, data collection and analysis methods used. Chapter four captures the findings of the study while chapter five presents a discussion in a manner such as to answer the research questions raised.
CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will review available literature on the social media usage, its significance to businesses with the aim of giving insights on the suitable social media strategies under the prevailing conditions.

The first section addresses the general overview of the social media usage in Africa and the other parts of the world; the second section addresses the demographics of social media users, market segmentation and social media users decision making profiles; and lastly the third section addresses the social media business strategies.

2.2 The Demographic of Social Media Users

According to Ruleman A.B., although social media may have been created to allow individuals to develop personal, social relationships, it has been adopted by businesses to attract new customers and build brand loyalty. Many companies have Facebook pages and anyone can “like” them in order to keep up-to-date on the latest information and to receive special offers (Ruleman, 2012). The challenge for businesses is to determine which of the emerging technologies customers will embrace and which ones they prefer to keep separate.

Although it is easy to assume that generation Y and the net-generation who have grown up with digital technology are avid and proficient users of technology that is not necessarily true. Waters (2011) points out that “even among your 20-something’s, there are those who are very tech-savvy and those who are not. The term [digital native] is a generalization, and the reality is much more nuanced”. There can be wide variations within groups. Therefore there is need for businesses to create a profile of their customers as they may have different needs and use technology in different ways. Booth (2009) warns that reliance on data from national surveys can lead to developing technology services tailored to other climates and not well integrated, functional or operable in your own. The characteristics of your local user group should determine the services developed.
Ruleman (2012) studied and highlighted several interesting demographic trends that did not necessarily fit any preconceived expectations (Ruleman, 2012). This therefore calls for effective market segmentations to address the needs of the various market segments. Themba and Mulala (2012) describe the concept of market segmentations as an integral part of modern marketing. Themba and Mulala (2012) further described a market segment as a group within a market that is clearly identifiable based on certain criteria and where the consumers in each sub market have similar needs, characteristics and behaviour.

Lin (2002), described market segmentation as the process of dividing a market into several market groups with consumers in each market segment having similar product needs. Themba and Mulala (2012), state that each segment requires a different mix of marketing strategies to satisfy its special consumer needs. Business strategists divide a market into homogenous groups so that marketers can aim to satisfy the specific needs of each group based on their wants and interests. Lin (2002), states that the purpose of market segmentation is therefore, two fold; to divide a market into several homogeneous submarkets and to formulate a proper marketing mix for each sub-market.

Themba and Mulala (2012) stated that by utilising market segmentation, companies can increase profitability. Literature from (Lennon et al, 2012) suggests that an effective market segmentation technique depends on selecting the relevant segmenting base descriptors. The variables to be considered for segmentation of the market are their measurability, availability, reliability and ability to uncover the characteristics of each market segment. On the other hand Kotler (1997) proposes an approach that divides the market based on geographic, demographic, psychographic, and behavioural variables.

Lin (2002) considers demographics to be the building blocks of market segmentation. He states that typically variables considered as demographic include gender, age, level of education and marital status and these provide the basis for segmentation.

Demographics are an important element in market segmentation. Therefore, marketers who intend to use social media for marketing should understand the demographic of their social media users. Pradiptarini, (2011) suggests that marketers need to recognize the characteristics of social media marketing target market to ensure the effectiveness of their campaigns.
2.2.1 Gender Differences

Ruleman (2012) found contradictory results to the traditional theory that males are more comfortable with and use more technology. In line with this finding was Pew Internet study (Madden and Zickuhr, 2011) where it was also found that social networking sites are more popular with women among the internet users. (Madden and Zickuhr, 2011) also found that since 2009, young adult women aged between 18 to 29 are the power users of social networking and they have more likelihood than men to use social networking sites. Another common trait women share is engagement. Whether you believe that women are innately better communicators than men or not, they do talk more and text more than men every month, 28% and 14%, respectively, according to Nielsen data, and use social features of their mobile devices like SMS, MMS and social networking more when compared with men (NSMR, 2012). “Online, women are more engaged than men, spending more time on fewer sites during a single sitting—a valuable attribute to advertisers. They also visit more social and community sites (NSMR, 2012).

A study released by comScore in 2010 indicated that despite the fact that women are half the global population at 46%, their online behaviours is vastly differentiated from that of the male population. (Vangrove, 2010). The study showed that women visit social networking more than men and spend 30% more time per month. In addition, monthly, women spend more time online than men. There were various reasons that were stated for using the social web that further divided the genders since nearly 56 percent of women indicated that they use the Internet to stay in touch with people as compared to only forty six percent of men. In summary the behaviour of adult women spend about sixteen point three percent compared to eleven point one percent of time spent by men online on social networks and this percentage continues to rise month on month. (Vangrove, 2010).

More interesting outcomes relating to age indicates that women over the age of forty five were the most responsible group in social media site usage while fifteen to twenty four year olds and the heaviest users with the greatest reach. The younger crowds have logged more than three hundred and fifty minutes per month on average. (Vangrove, 2010).
This implies that women aren’t interested in the looks or what-it-can-do abilities of technology. Instead, their approach to technology is much more practical, and they’re using technology to do more, to extend themselves as career woman, wife, girlfriend, mother, friend, sister and volunteer (Vangrove, 2010). The next wave of women and technology is not just about catching up, but setting and influencing trends—from social gaming to group buying and more.

As far as showing interest in online purchases by visiting retail sites is concerned, (Vangrove, 2010) reveals in her comScore study that men and women frequent the sites in equal amounts however women spend twenty percent more on online purchases in retail sites. Evidently, women buy more frequently than men. Women spend so much on online purchase of apparel and accessories that in 2010, their dollars accounted for seventy one percent of all dollars spent in that category in the United States. (Abraham et al, 2010). Other online purchases favored by women include books, music and electronics. In her study, (Vangrove, 2010) comes to the conclusion that women are driving growth of sites that offer products and services at reduced prices on condition that a minimum number of buyers purchase the item. These are called group-buying sites. Some of the U.S. sites include GroupOn, Living Social and Gilt Groupe where women make up at least 62% of the visitors.

Lennon et al (2012) state that since the use of social media has exploded worldwide, users range from tech savvy young adults to baby boomers. Therefore other than the influence that gender has on social media usage and engagement age is a significant variable impacting attitudes and reasons for choosing certain social media platforms, (Lennon et al, 2012).

2.2.2 Age Differences

Glass (2007), states that everyone’s life experiences shapes who they are — whether man or woman, and across all races, ethnicities and religions. Not surprisingly, therefore, according to (Glass 2007), people who grew up in different eras have different interpretations, world views, expectations and values, resulting in preferred methods of communicating and interacting with one another.

Different studies identified different time periods and characteristics. While differences exist among studies in the precise years of birth that define the different generations, it is generally
agreed that there are five predominant generations currently. These five generations, ranging from oldest to youngest, are the Veterans (born before 1946); Baby Boomers (1946-1964); Generation X (1965-1979); Generation Y (1980-1988) (Anantatmula and Shrivastav, 2012; Glass, 2007; Calabrese, 2010); and the generation Z (Williams and Page, 2011).

Among all the five groups there exist similarities and differences. Some of the reasons that drive the differences are life experiences and social trends which affect behavior, communication approaches and point of view between older and younger generations. Younger generations are exposed to a massive collection of media and educational opportunities in the global environment. (Anantatmula and Shrivastav, 2012).

With regard to online activities, literature shows various results between generations. Generation Y are in their midlife and boast considerable spending power and are thought to account for around half of the total purchases made online (Smith, 2012). Millennials have grown up in a digital world and frequently use the internet for their shopping activities. They in addition seek news and entertainment and engage with social networking platforms. With their disposable income set to keep increasing, many analysts predict that Millennials will continue to be mainstays of e-commerce.

BazaarVoice (2011) has found that given the widespread adoption of computers, mobile phones, smart phones and other digital devices among this generation, firms are not surprisingly inclined to promote their products via electronic media channels. Digital marketing is regarded as the most appropriate means of connecting with millennial consumers. Research has suggested that Millennials are keen to interact with others on social networking sites in order to exchange information and opinion about products (BazaarVoice, 2011). Peer judgment and evaluation is valued and perceived as more credible than information provided by organizational sources or traditional media. As a result, word-of-mouth (WOM) recommendation from other consumers is highly influential (Keller, 2007). In addition to writing reviews and providing feedback, this generation is also eager to endorse their favourite products through web sites like Google Video and YouTube.

Smith (2012) posits that, reaching Millennials demands careful consideration of what marketing strategies to use. The unique characteristics of this generation means that methods
of communication employed in previous eras are unlikely to succeed. Millennials care about society and the environment and favour companies, which share these concerns. Therefore there is indication that personalizing messages is a way to capture the attention of this cohort. Such a strategy is also a way of increasing customer loyalty levels. Online promotion such as banner advertisements has been proven to be effective in this respect (Smith, 2012).

While these advertising forms might improve understanding and recall of advertisements, participants in some studies commented on their annoyance and intrusiveness. Negative responses to digital marketing can trigger similar perceptions of the advertised brand. The potential to distract from important tasks is another minus, along with overuse of this technique. Total rejection of digital marketing can result under such circumstances (Smith, 2012).

On the other hand members of Generation Z, those now ages 18-23, tend to be indiscriminate with their media choices and are more likely than other generations to embrace and trust online communications such as social and mobile media and email. Raised in the age of technology, Gen-Z audiences know the world only as a digital one—where they can connect anytime, anywhere, and to anyone. They will likely be the first generation to consume more media online than offline (JWT, 2012).

Gen-Z audiences appear to trust online content (e.g. advertisements and promotions) more than other generations. They don’t see it as real-life versus digital-life problems. To them it’s just life. Some 22% of surveyed Gen-Z consumers say they trust somewhat or trust completely posts by companies or brands on social networking sites. That level is roughly 49% higher than other generations. Similarly, Gen-Z consumers are 48% more likely than other generations to trust somewhat or completely the content on mobile applications from brands, as well as text messages from brands (JWT, 2012).

For generation X and the younger boomers, even though they are less tech savvy, they are spending more and more time online in the USA (Bitter, 2010). Bitter attributes this mostly to loneliness and those who are connected and aim at exploring and expanding their networks daily. With the more time spent online, this group is more financially and mentally stable than generation Y and Z, which affects their buying behavior (Pradiptarini, 2011).


2.3 Transformational Impact of Social Media on Business

For organizations, strategic positioning involves not only doing things differently but also devising and delivering unique value to target markets. (Javalgi, Radulovich, Pendleton and Scherer, 2005). Despite the fact that consumers increasingly go online to discuss products and brands, seek advice, and offer guidance the gap that many companies face is where and how to influence these conversations, which take place across an ever-growing variety of platforms, among diverse and dispersed communities, and may occur either with lightning speed or over the course of months. (McKinsey, 2011).

In a Nielsen’s report, social media makes it possible for users to share and have access to the sentiments of a vast audience. This does not decrease the importance of Word of Mouth; however, its scope is restricted to an individual’s immediate circle and those who one talked to frequently. Social media has broken this barrier and given new power to customers. (Nielsen, 2012). That is why today’s businesses are vigorously building digital programs, to successfully exploit the potential of social media, that deliver tangible value in return for customers’ time, attention, endorsement and data. (Baird and Parasnis, 2011)

2.3.1 Social Media and Consumer Decision Making.

Sharma (2011) recognized that the old marketing elements were developed to prescribe a message to the mass market. However, with changes in time, requirements, technology and customer expectations there have been significant transformations in marketing techniques. Marketing has shifted to be more centered on the consumer. It is increasingly difficult to select the precise channel to reach consumers in a specific group. Sharma (2011) acknowledges that the millennial era will be remembered for its contribution to innovative marketing. Despite all the changes the truth remains that social media is transforming the way consumers make decisions across the globe. According to a Nielsen report (2012), around the world, consumers are applying social media in researching other consumers’ experiences, finding more information about brands, products, services and to find deals and purchase incentives. (Nielsen, 2012). The development of internet technology has changed our behaviour, our process of decision making, the inter-personal relations and the way of doing business.
The internet has decreased distances, defied geographical borders and allowed consumers to discard all the old communication techniques.

McKinsey group published a report that indicated that Africa’s consumer facing industries will grow by more than $400 million by 2020 (Hattingh, Russo, Sun-Basorun and Wamelen, 2012). The report, a result of studies carried out on companies in Africa further states that many companies, particularly those new to the continent have little idea of how to translate this opportunity to action. This is attributed to the fact that historically, there has been lack of research on African consumer attitudes and needs. The survey also revealed that internet use in Africa is higher than anticipated. The China Internet Network Information Centre confirms this claim in its 2011 report by stating that “more than fifty per cent of urban Africans claim to have accessed the internet in the past four weeks on par with reported usage in Brazil and China” (China Internet Network Information Centre, 2011).

Despite the high use of the internet as portrayed by the above studies, a study on the social media marketing in South African banks in 2013, found out that social media is still at its infancy level in Africa with a lot of experimentation and observation. Hence there is need for organizations to use social media not only for marketing purposes but for engagement. Companies can take advantage of the system as it can help in product development. It has been argued that social media is a new method that company can use to communicate with customers (Chikandiwa, Contogiannis and Jembere, 2013).

The study showed that perception of social media among customers is still low, since management generally have not fully accepted social media as a marketing tool and that some still regard it as a passing fad. This is supported by the scepticism among management on the benefits of adopting social media especially related to promotion. Hence there is a need for companies to develop strategies on how to measure the return of investment of social media (Chikandiwa, Contogiannis and Jembere, 2013). Mangold and Faulds (2009) advocate integration of social media with the promotional mix. Organizations should not use social media in isolation to other tools but should integrate it with other departments (Chikandiwa, Contogiannis and Jembere, 2013).
It is therefore evident that the digital revolution is set to change the way people do business, the way organizations handle their customer relationship management and ultimately how businesses map their strategy (Moore, 1999).

2.3.2 Changing Digital Landscape

Porter (2001) stated that the time has come to take a clearer view of the Internet. Organisations need to see the Internet for what it is: an enabling technology - a powerful set of tools that can be used, wisely or unwisely, in almost any industry and as part of almost any strategy. He further goes on to ask: Who will capture the economic benefits that the Internet creates? Will the entire value end up going to customers, or will companies be able to reap a share of it? What will be the Internet's impact on industry structure? Will it expand or shrink the pool of profits? And what will be its impact on strategy? Will the Internet bolster or erode the ability of companies to gain sustainable advantages over their competitors?

For organizations, strategic positioning involves not only doing things differently but also devising and delivering unique value to target markets (Javalgi, Radulovich, Pendleton and Scherer, 2005). Despite the fact that consumers increasingly go online to discuss products and brands, seek advice, and offer guidance the gap that many companies face is where and how to influence these conversations, which take place across an ever-growing variety of platforms, among diverse and dispersed communities, and may occur either with lightning speed or over the course of months (Hattingh, Russo, Sun-Basorun and Wamelen, 2012).

Over the past decade, the media landscape has dramatically changed with social media outlets like blogs, online discussion forums, and online communities now supplementing traditional media outlets like newspapers, magazines, and television programs. Furthermore, while social media was once the domain of younger, tech-savvy consumers who were faster to adopt new technologies, it is now generally considered to have entered the mainstream and covers a broad demographic spectrum with 75% of Internet-using adults in the United States using online social media regularly (Bernoff, Pflaum, and Bowen, 2008). This large number of users makes it critical to understand how social media influences consumers and how it operates alongside traditional media.
2.3.4 Organizations and the Digital Revolution

Businesses and organizations get into social media because they want customers (or potential customers) to eventually buy their products, feel better about having purchased their products, and have problems with their products resolved more efficiently, and they want to get insight on what might make a customer more likely to buy those products in the future. “The conversation” and “engagement” on social media are just means to that end (Barger, 2012,). Whereas the Longitudinal Study carried out by Smith was a significant step in the right direction, she focused primarily on Millenials (Generation Y) while neglecting the other generational cohorts her study was also centred on websites as the primary digital tool and on-line shopping as the main use of the websites. She studied developmental trends across life spans and through lifetimes and generations by tracking the same individuals over three years (Smith, 2012). The literature available does not articulate clearly how organizations should position their digital strategies to tap into the different cohorts. This study attempts to close this gap by articulating the digital tools that most resonate with the different demographic groups and will propose a framework that organizations can use to have a digital competitive advantage.

According to studies done, more than 90% of teens and young adults in the U.S. use the Internet Pew Internet (2011), and similar statistics are reported from many European countries (Pew Internet 2011). The implications of this are profound for businesses seeking to tap into that demographic. Social Media has become a key medium for people who have access to digital technology and the basic skills to use it. Consumers have countless social sites to choose from, with Blogger, Twitter, WordPress, LinkedIn and Pinterest coming in after Facebook in order of popularity. (Nielsen, 2012).

Today, if you want to discover what your customers and your consumers think about your brand, social media is your earpiece, if you want to change perceptions about your company and improve customer service, social media is your microphone, if you want to find out who the influencers and the advocates are and get them to broadcast your message on your behalf, social media will identify the people in your network whom you should engage with. (Holloman, 2012).
2.4 Social Media Platforms and Business Strategies

The importance of social media cannot be underscored; therefore simply, just using social media is not enough. Successful companies use social media strategically (DiStaso and McCorkindale, 2013). Embracing social media must include buy-in from management, and may signal a fundamental change in how organizations do business. Some organizations may lack resources and are ill-equipped to manage the social media space (Li and Bernoff, 2011); merely creating a space on a social media site does not create value (Culnan, McHugh and Zubillaga, 2010).

According to Aula (2011), social media challenges conventional reputation management strategy in three ways: it is not just a one-way communication channel; it should concentrate on ethics rather than pursuing short-term interests; and it has the effect of presenting a collective truth. Social media helps public relations practitioners develop relationships with stakeholders who impact the success or failure of the organization. These stakeholders are using social media to share, create, and modify content, as well as to buy products and services.

2.4.1 Popular Social Media

Three of the most popular social media platforms organizations are using to communicate information about the organization and engage with their stakeholders are Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. Wright and Hinson’s 2012 survey found Facebook was accessed by 80% of public relations practitioners with some degree of frequency, followed by Twitter (73%), and YouTube (52%). These services have unique features whose adoption highly depends on the organizational needs and social media strategies.

Facebook is the second most popular Internet site after Google (Compete, 2012). Facebook allows users to “friend” and connect with one another while sharing and displaying information. Users typically use the social networking site to maintain close and distant relationships as opposed to meeting new people (Selwyn, 2007; Steinfield, Ellison, & Lampe, 2008).

Twitter on the other hand is a micro blogging site that allows users to give 140-character updates as well as chat and engage with their followers. As of March 2012, Twitter was the
20th most visited site on the Internet (Compete, 2012). Because of Twitter’s high number of influencers, Twitter is increasingly important for companies to listen to stakeholders in a real-life context, with an honest and human voice (Smith, 2010). However, some companies are still only using Twitter as an outlet for disseminating information without engaging or upholding the dialogic loop principle (Bortree & Seltzer, 2009; Lovejoy, Waters, & Saxton, 2012; McCorkindale, 2011; Muralidharan, Rasmussen, Patterson, & Shin, 2011).

YouTube is the most popular video-sharing social media site. More than 4 billion videos are viewed a day, and YouTube has more than 800 million unique visitors each month (YouTube, 2012). YouTube was also the fourth most visited site on the internet in February 2012 (Compete, 2012). Many corporations and businesses are creating branded channels, while music and entertainment channels have the highest number of subscribers (VidStatsX, 2012). YouTube and other video sharing sites have become more important to companies. In public relations, YouTube can be used to kick off a campaign, respond to a crisis, uncover communities, extend a brand, and connect with media and bloggers. Depending on the content, a video that goes viral can either benefit or be detrimental to a company. The other common social sites include; LinkedIn, Pinterest, foursquare, Hi-five and many more.

2.4.2 Customer Relationship Management on Social Media

Literature exists on understanding how businesses view the challenge of how to treat customers on social media platform. Wilson, Guinan, Parise and Weinberg (2011), assessed the strategies and practises of more than one thousand one hundred companies across several industries and geographies, they conducted interviews with seventy executives who were leading social media initiatives. The outcome was four distinct social media strategies, depending on a company’s tolerance for uncertain outcomes and the level of results sought. These included the predictive practitioner, the creative experimenter, the social media champion and the social media transformer. (Wilson et.al, 2011).

The predictive practitioner approach confines usage to a specific area, such as customer service. Businesses that seek to apply methods that avoid uncertainty while delivering measurable results may apply this approach.
The approach of the creative experimenter may be used by businesses that embrace uncertainty while applying small scale tests to find ways to improve discrete functions and practices. The ultimate goal is to learn by listening to customers and employees on social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook.

The social media champion uses large initiatives designed for predictable results. It depends on close collaboration across functions and includes external parties. The social media transformer enables large interactions that extend to external stakeholders.

The social media champion approach involves large initiatives designed for predictable results. It may depend on close collaboration across multiple functions and levels and include external parties. Lastly, the social media transformer approach enables large-scale interactions that extend to external stakeholders, allowing companies to use the unexpected to improve the way they do business. (Wilson, et al. 2011).

2.4.3 Customising Social Media Strategy

As literature that examines the influence of social media – and those using social media – continues to grow, it is crucial for traditional media, retailers, brands and advertisers to understand how different consumer segments use and share content (Nielsen, 2011). It is also key for businesses to understand that consumer attitudes towards social media are still evolving (Nielsen, 2012). Geoffrey Moore’s theory, suggests that “marketers should create programmes for one group of customers at a time, and then use each group to help market to the next group” (Moore, 1999). This will help organizations develop a rapport with customers by tapping into the latent feelings and values (Meredith, Schewe and Karlovich, 2007).

There have been studies that indicate that social networks and blogs reach nearly 80 per cent of active U.S. Internet users and represent the majority of Americans’ time online. The value of the time consumers spend online and on social networks and blogs continues to grow, most visible through the influence on purchase decisions. For instance, 60 per cent of people who use three or more digital means of research for product purchases learned about a
specific brand or retailer from a social networking site. Forty-eight per cent of these consumers responded to a retailer’s offer posted on Facebook or Twitter (Nielsen, 2011).

As Africa is considered an emerging market, it is crucial to use existing methods to understand the demographic of the African Social Media user. A review of existing literature indicates that while there have been quite a number of numerous studies about social media stratification, there has been little academic research focused on what types of digital marketing strategies are preferred by the different generational cohorts and how organizations can use these to influence their behaviour in Africa (Smith, 2012).

Companies can no longer tightly control brand messaging; neither can they profile consumers along a linear purchase funnel. Social media has changed the consumer decision journey. (Nielsen, 2012). Now consumers share opinions, tastes and preferences from a global pool of consumers, friends, peers and influencers.

2.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter has provided literature review basing on the social media. The chapter began by giving a general overview of the social media activities in Africa and the other parts of the world. It then went ahead to discuss the demographic characteristics of the social media users. Finally the chapter identified the major social media platforms and the various strategic approaches adopted by organizations towards social media. In Chapter three, the research design and methodology applied will be described.
CHAPTER THREE

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the demographics of the social media users in Nairobi with the aim of identifying the appropriate strategies to be adopted by business as a tool for customer engagement. This chapter details the methods and procedures applied in conducting the study to satisfy the objectives and resolve the research questions. The structure of the chapter is as follows: the research design, population and sample, data collection methods, sampling design and sample size, research procedures, data analysis methods and lastly the chapter summary.

3.2 Research Design

The design of choice was descriptive research design. Research design in this context is the blueprint for fulfilling objectives and providing the insight to answer of a management dilemma (Cooper & Schindler, 2006). Descriptive research describes the present status of people, attitudes and progress. In addition to describing population characteristics, descriptive studies estimate the frequency of the study and can demonstrate associations between variables (Schmidt, 2012).

In order to answer the formulated research objectives, a cross-sectional technique was employed. Cross sectional study is a technique of descriptive research that is best suited to measure differences between or among a variety of people, subjects or phenomena. The study is carried out at once and represents a snapshot of one point in time rather than changes in the population over time (Cooper and Schindler, 2006).

Cross sectional study is best for studying correlations and pointing at areas for further research, for highlighting association between variables as was the case for this study. The main disadvantage is that it cannot measure the changes that occur over time thus it is static and time-bound.
The descriptive design adopted quantitative based on observable and measurable behaviors that established the strength of the relationship between the identified variables. This study applied a survey to collect data from the respondents. Surveys are methods of data collection in which information is gathered through oral or written questioning.

In this study, the variables under review were gender, age and Social Media influence on decision making. Age was the independent variable and influence of Social media on decision making was the dependent variable. Statistical tests were applied to test the relationship of the two variables.

3.3 Population and Sampling Design

3.3.1 Population

The entire accumulation of cases that meet a designated set of criteria is termed a population. Polit and Beck (2004). The target population is the aggregate of cases for which the researcher would like to make generalizations. A population is different from a population element because the former is the total collection of elements about which inferences are to be made. Cooper and Schindler (2006). The target population for this study was the entire 5362 USIU student community enrolled in the summer of 2013 (USIU, 2013) which included; undergraduate and post graduate students; and the entire 163 employees of the Coca Cola Central East and West Africa [CEWA] Business Unit in Nairobi (CEWA, 2013). The target population is primarily urban, have been exposed to digital media and have access to the internet either within the campus, at the office or at home.
Table 3.1: Population Distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Percentage of total population (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Students</td>
<td>837</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate students</td>
<td>4525</td>
<td>81.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent Employees at Coca-Cola</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contractual Employees at Coca-Cola</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>0.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5,525</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: USIU (2013); CEWA (2013)

3.3.2 Sampling Design

3.3.2.1 Sampling Frame

The sampling frame is the list of all the elements from which the sample is actually drawn (Cooper and Schindler, 2006). Although it should include all members of the population, this is not always possible. The sampling framework for this study included the list of the 5362 undergraduate and graduate USIU students (USIU registrar’s office, 2013) and the list of the 163 CEWA business unit staff stationed in Nairobi (CEWA, 2013). The lists were obtained from the USIU registrar’s office and Coca-Cola CEWA internal telephone directory respectively.

3.3.2.2 Sampling Technique

The technique adopted for the study was Stratified Random Sampling. This method of sampling ensures that each stratum is properly represented so that the sample drawn from it is proportionate to the stratum’s share of the population (Fricker, 2007). After the target population to be studied was identified and the variables clarified, the stratification variables in this case graduate and undergraduate students, permanent and contractual employees were
also highlighted. To be able to get the number of respondents the researcher used convenience sampling of the respondents.

The sampling frame was existing, in the case of this study the number of students and their level of study was retrieved from the registrar’s office and the list of employees was retrieved from the employee directory at the Coca-Cola Company.

Respondents were required to disclose on the questionnaire their gender and their age on the questionnaire. This stratification was ideal in dividing the population into distinct, independent demographic pools that would enable the inferences to be drawn about the different subgroups’ interaction with social media. In selecting random stratified sampling it was important to identify the variables for which appropriate, equal representation was required, for this study it was age, gender, source and level of income and education.

Once the sample size was identified, respondents were randomly selected based on those that were available during the period of the study.

3.3.2.3 Sample Size

A sample size represents a subset (any combination of sampling units that does not include the entire set of sampling units that has been defined as the population) of a sampling units from a population (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, 1996). This gives the entire number of population elements from which data is to be actually collected.

Yamane (1973) provides a classical simplified formula for calculating sample size. A 95% confidence level and P = .5 are assumed for the formula.

\[
n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)}
\]

Where:

\(n\) = sample size
\(N\) = population size
\(e\) = 0.05
This therefore means that for a population of 4,688, a sample size of 373 is required. An actual sample of 330 respondents was randomly drawn from the population based on the various categories as shown in Table 3.2. The percentage size was the realistic selection arrived at from assessing the accessible population. Furthermore proportionate sampling was applied in this study as a sampling strategy because the different subgroups had vastly different numbers and thus the number of participants was determined by the number of the entire population.

Table 3.2: Sampling Frame

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Sample Frame</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
<th>Desired Sample Size</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Students</td>
<td>837</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate students</td>
<td>4525</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent employs at Coca-Cola</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contractual employees at Coca-Cola</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5,525</td>
<td>454</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
<td>373</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.4 Data Collection Method

Cooper and Schindler (2006) explain that data are collected by means of monitoring and interrogation/communication. Monitoring includes studies where the researcher inspects the activities of a subject or the nature of some material without attempting to elicit a response. In interrogation/communication, the researcher questions the subjects and collects their responses by personal/ impersonal means. For this study, raw data was collected directly from the respondents by use of structured data collection techniques where a fixed set of pre-defined questions was answered over a specified sequence. The respondents received a structured questionnaire which was administered online or using hard copy.

The advantage of this structured data collection method is that it enhances objectivity. Objectivity is the degree to which two independent researchers can achieve similar scores or
make similar observations regarding the concept of interest, its resourcefulness is an advantage as the respondent can fill it out unsupervised and return it at a later date. The questionnaire was the most appropriate tool for this study as respondents could be allowed to fill in and return the questionnaires and drop them off at their convenience within a specified period. Also, as in the absence of the researcher, it was possible to assign a number of people to issue and collect the questionnaires.

For this study, a questionnaire was distributed in hard copy and email randomly to the respondents for completion. The questionnaire was preferred due to its stability, consistency, and uniformity. This ensured that the responses were gathered in a standardized way and hence more objective than interviews. The responses were not distorted by influence that may have come up from a subjective interview. The questions asked of all the respondents were the same. In addition, the questionnaire made it possible to reach the target number of respondents. And those that were sent online made it possible to reach those who were geographically spread out.

The questionnaire had three sections, section one had a series of closed and open ended questions to get the demographic metrics of interest to this study by asking the respondents to give details about their age, gender, income level. Section two used a series of closed questions to establish the level of interaction that the respondents have with businesses that have an online presence. Finally section three addressed the frequency of usage and regularity of interaction by respondents and the platform of choice.

3.5 Research Procedures

Before the actual study, a pre-test was done to avoid errors in the actual research. The pretest was done using a small sample of 5 respondents. The pre-test pointed out questions that were double barreled, those that are too complex or filled with jargon, the pre-test ensured that vague and incomplete questions were avoided and the sequence done logically. The questionnaire was subjected to scrutiny by a sample of the target population in this case two employees representing each category of employees of the Coca Cola Company and three students at USIU. As part of the questionnaire, the researcher attached an introductory letter
to explain to the respondents the objective of the study and to provide assurance of confidentiality for the comfort of the respondents.

The questionnaires were administered to the sampled respondents from different categories either in hard copy form or email. The respondents, by a means of a small introductory letter attached to the questionnaire were given instructions and assured of confidentiality after which they were given enough time to complete the questionnaires before returning. The whole process of data collection and analysis lasted one month since most respondents had to be reminded and followed up to return the questionnaires and other supplementary respondents had to be contacted to fill the gap when attempts at collecting questionnaires was unsuccessful.

3.6 Data Analysis Method

Data gathered from the field was then coded and entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and Microsoft Excel to run descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentages and to facilitate the representation of the responses to the research questions in tables and graphs. Frequency distributions and percentages were utilized in the descriptive part of this study to analyze most of the items so as to draw conclusions. The statistical treatment of the data included descriptive and inferential statistics. The analysis also included multivariate analysis like chi square analysis in order to determine the relationship between the variables and the outcomes that were recorded to assess whether there was significance in the relationships or it was just chance.

3.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the various methods and procedures that were adopted in conducting the study in order to answer the research questions raised in the first chapter. The methods used are descriptive since the study was investigating existing characteristics in the population. The research design was cross sectional and the method applied was random stratified sampling. In addition, the sampling frame was sourced from the population of Coca Cola CEWA and USIU students within the period of June to July 2013, sampling technique used to arrive at the sampling size of 330. Questionnaires were used to collect data and SPSS
and Excel applied in the data analysis. The next chapter presents an analysis of the research findings of the primary data collected from the field.
CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 RESULTS AND FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The chapter commences with brief introduction on how the whole research process was carried out. It's then followed by segments outlining the demographic characteristics of the social media users within the population of study. Also included in this chapter is a section showing the influences of social media on decision making among different age groups. Finally the chapter closes with a segment that outlines the most common and preferred social media platforms that organizations targeting members of the population of study should use to reach different targeted demographic groups to drive their organizational growth and build their business through social media.

The study was conducted across all the 5362 students at USIU and 163 employees at Coca-Cola based in Nairobi. The data was collected between June 15th and July 9th 2013. 454 questionnaires were sent out in order to get the targeted 373 responses. However 330 individual responses were received from those whom the questionnaires were sent translating into 72.7% response rate.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Social Media Users

4.2.1 Gender

This study tested whether an individual’s gender influenced their choice of social media platform and usage rate. Pew Internet (Madden & Zickhur, 2011) found that social networking sites are popular with women. In this study the objective was to define what specific platform resonates with the different genders.

A hundred percent of the respondents reported as having heard about the term social media. Table 4.1 below shows that across genders, male and females were equally familiar with the term social media.
Table 4.1: Social Media Awareness According to Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Targeted No of Respondents</th>
<th>% Target of total</th>
<th>Actual No of Respondents</th>
<th>% respondent of total</th>
<th>Aware of Social Media</th>
<th>% awareness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>54.5%</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>45.5%</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>373</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.1.1. Source of Social Media Knowledge by Gender

To address the source of social media knowledge for the respondents, Table 4.2 shows that a majority of the respondents at 69.3% learnt about the social media through friends, followed by other sources at 24.2% and finally 6.4% through family members. It also shows that a higher percentage of women (76.7%) learnt about social media through friends than men (63.3%). The other sources of awareness mentioned by the respondents included, school, internet, television and other media sources.

Table 4.2: Source of Social Media Knowledge According to Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>Count % within gender</td>
<td>114 63.3%</td>
<td>115 76.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Count % within gender</td>
<td>16 8.9%</td>
<td>5 3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other sources</td>
<td>Count % within gender</td>
<td>50 27.8%</td>
<td>30 20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count % within gender</td>
<td>180 100.0%</td>
<td>150 100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A chi-square test of independence was performed to test whether the observed difference between men and women was purely by chance or of real significance. The results showed that the p-value, 0.46 is above 0.05 or the 95% level of significance indicating that the difference in the influence of friends between men and women is statistically significant.
Thus it is clear with 95% confidence level that women are more likely than men to learn about social media through friends.

4.2.1.2 Social Media Interaction by Gender

More females (42.9%) plus than men (28.6%) reported to having used social network sites networks mentioned in the study such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Google as illustrated in Table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3: Social Media Interaction by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within gender</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>35.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within gender</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>29.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within gender</td>
<td>28.60%</td>
<td>42.90%</td>
<td>35.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within gender</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A chi-square independence test was performed to test whether the difference between the observed interaction by gender and the expected interaction was significant, and the resulting probability \( p = 0.497 \), greater than 0.05 presenting a significant relationship, hence it was concluded with a 95% level of confidence that women are more likely than men to have used a social media network.

Other than the earlier mentioned platforms, other social media sites indicated by the respondents were Instagram, Pinterest and Whatsapp. The respondents when asked whether they had a social media account with any social media platform, 100% of the men responded yes with 96.8% of women being affirmative. This may mean that even though a majority of the men (42.9%) had never used the mentioned sites (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Google plus) they have accounts with other sites other than these such as blogs, Instagram, Pinterest and Whatsapp.
4.2.1.3 Reasons for having Social Media Accounts by Gender

Figure 4.1 shows that more women than men have social network accounts for the purpose of meeting friends (52.5%), meeting new people (65.2%), and learning about new products (58.3%) while a majority of men have social media accounts to get new information (59%). This partly explains why few men have accounts with the five major social networks (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Google plus) which focuses mainly on relationships and networks rather than on non-relationship based new information.

![Reasons for Having Social Network Accounts by Gender](image)

**Figure 4.1: Reasons for Having Social Network Accounts by Gender**

4.2.2. Age

Early studies conducted by Pew Internet Research revealed that social networking sites were very popular with young adults 18-29 years. (Zickuhr & Madden, 2013). To build on that knowledge this study sought to understand how different age groups learn about social media.

Results indicate that respondents under 30 years of age learnt about social networks more from their friends (60% and more) than the older respondents. Apart from family and friends other sources (school, internet, television and other media sources) contributes a significant source (>25%) for the older generations (31 years and above) as illustrated by Table 4.4.
The p value for the calculated Chi-square test indicates p =0.221. Being greater than the acceptable probability value of 0.05, it presents a significant relationship between the variables; age and source of media knowledge. It can be concluded with 95% degree of confidence that the source of people’s knowledge of social media is influenced by their age. For users under the age of thirty, the probability to get information from friends is higher than users over the age of thirty where family and other sources like mainstream media increasingly become sources.

4.2.2.1 Social Media Usage by Age

Table 4.5 below shows that the usage of the mentioned social network sites (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Google plus) declines with the increase in age. 100% of the respondents aged between 15-20 years indicated having used these sites. 66.7% of those aged 21-30 years responded in the affirmative and 16.7% of those aged 31-40 years responded yes to the question.

Meanwhile older respondents reported using other social platforms with Whatsapp being the most frequently mentioned among 66.6% of those aged 31-40 years and 50 % for those aged above 40 years.
This difference may be partly attributed to what it is that younger people look for online media. By examining what each platform offers one can establish what it is that the young adults are interested in that fundamentally differs from the interests of their older counterparts.

Table 4.5: Usage of Social Media Sites according to Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>15-20 years</th>
<th>21-30 years</th>
<th>31-40 years</th>
<th>Over 40 years</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Age</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>66.70%</td>
<td>16.70%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Age</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>33.30%</td>
<td>16.70%</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Age</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>66.60%</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Age</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.2.2 Reasons for Having Social Network Account by Age Groups

Figure 4.2 further stresses variation of usage of social networks according to age. Age group 21-30 years is the most active on social media. The activities reported by the respondents include spending most of their time (58%) connecting with friends, (80%) meeting new people, 67% getting new information, and 67% learning about new products. Their level of activity is followed by those aged 31-40 years then those between 15-20 years and finally those aged above 40 years.
Figure 4.2: Reasons for Having Social Network Account According to Age

4.3. Influence of Social Media on Purchase Making Decisions

To test whether social media has an effect on consumer decision making process, the respondents were presented with four questions. The results of the findings were collapsed into three main categories of Agree, Neutral and Disagree as illustrated in Table 4.6.

The table shows that out of the four questions, not more than 50% of the respondents indicated that social media has an influence on their purchase making decisions. 46.9% indicated that they would buy a company’s product if their connections post positively about the product, while only 25% of the respondents agreed that they will purchase a product if the company sends them a message on social media, 16.4% will buy a product they have only heard of on social media and 33.3% say that they will refer to social media before buying a product.

From the responses, we established that 40% of the respondents would be neutral if an organization reached out to them on social media regarding its products. 35% would definitely not purchase products if an organization contacted them on social media. The more than 50% of either neutral or disagree in all the 4 questions indicates a weak association of social media and purchase making decision among the population studied.
Table 4.6: Influence of Social Media on Purchase Making Decision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If my connections post positively about a product I will buy it</td>
<td>155 (46.9%)</td>
<td>88 (26.6%)</td>
<td>87 (26.5%)</td>
<td>330 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If an organization sends me a message on Social Media I will buy</td>
<td>82 (25%)</td>
<td>132 (40%)</td>
<td>115 (35%)</td>
<td>330 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>their products</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will buy a product that I have only heard about on Social</td>
<td>54 (16.4%)</td>
<td>86 (26.2%)</td>
<td>189 (57.3%)</td>
<td>330 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I want to buy a product, I refer to Social Media for more</td>
<td>110 (33.4%)</td>
<td>78 (23.8%)</td>
<td>141 (42.9%)</td>
<td>330 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As to whether the respondents would recommend a product on social media networks, 49.7% of the respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that they would if they are happy about the product. 18.8% were neutral and 31.3% either disagreed or strongly disagree as illustrated in figure 4.3 below.

![Figure 4.3: Propensity to recommend a product on a social media network](image)

To analyze the extent to which internet and social media influences the decision making of different age cohorts, the respondents were subjected to four questions. Table 4.7 shows that out of the 330 who responded, the percentage of those who agreed that they would buy a product if their connections commended positively on them decreased with increase in age. Sixty percent of those aged 15-20 years responded in the affirmative followed by 49% for
those aged 21-30 years and thirty nine percent of those aged 31-40 years. Despite that thirty three percent of those aged above 40 years agreed to the question, it's worth noting that a similar percentage of the group are either neutral of disagree with the statement.

Chi square test shows that \( p = 0.957 \). In this case, the observed \( p \) value of 0.957 is greater than 0.05 presenting a significant relationship, hence it can be said that 95% level of confidence observed differences on whether different age groups respond differently to product endorsements by peers is real i.e. the younger generations are more likely to buy endorsed product compared to older cohorts as illustrated in Table 4.7.

This data shows that the influence of connections’ recommendations have limited influence on the older generation’s purchasing decision compared to the younger people.

**Table 4.7: Influence of Social Media Connection on Purchase Making Decision**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If my connections post positively about a product I will buy it</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15-20 years</td>
<td>68 (60%)</td>
<td>23 (20%)</td>
<td>23(20%)</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-30 years</td>
<td>65 (49%)</td>
<td>34 (25.6%)</td>
<td>34(25.6%)</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40 years</td>
<td>33(39%)</td>
<td>25(30.8%)</td>
<td>25(30.8%)</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 40 years</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1(50%)</td>
<td>1(50%)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>155(46.9%)</td>
<td>88(26.6%)</td>
<td>87(26.6%)</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similarly, for the question as to whether one would buy a product when the organization directly sends a message to them, Table 4.8 shows a declining trend with increase in age. Thirty point two percent of those aged 21-30 years responded yes while those aged 31-40 years polled at eighteen percent. This tends to corroborate the answer as to whether the recommendation from connections has influence on different age cohorts. The table also shows an interesting angle that those aged 15-20 years like those aged above forty are not influenced by messages from the organizations.
Table 4.8: Influence of Online Organizational Messaging on Purchase Decision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If an organization sends me a message on Social Media I will buy their products</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15-20 years</td>
<td>0(0%)</td>
<td>85(75%)</td>
<td>28(25%)</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-30 years</td>
<td>40(30.2%)</td>
<td>49(37.2%)</td>
<td>43(32.6%)</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40 years</td>
<td>15(18.2%)</td>
<td>30(36.4%)</td>
<td>39(45.5%)</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 40 years</td>
<td>0(0%)</td>
<td>1(50%)</td>
<td>1(50%)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>82(25%)</td>
<td>132(40%)</td>
<td>115(35%)</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Very few respondents indicated that they would buy products they have only heard about on the social media but the younger generations are more likely to buy compared to their older counterparts. Forty percent of those in age group 15-20 years responded in affirmative, followed by 21-30 years at fourteen point six percent with those above 40 years appearing indifferent with fifty percent agreeing, fifty percent disagreeing. Table 4.9 shows that despite this level of agreement, majority of the respondents in all the age categories were non-committal when it came to buying products they have only heard in social media. The most frequent response for all age groups was 3 (neutral).

Table 4.9: Likelihood to Buy Products One Has Only Heard About On Social Media

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I will buy a product that I have only heard about on Social Media</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Most Frequent response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15-20 years</td>
<td>45 (40%)</td>
<td>45(40%)</td>
<td>23(20%)</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-30 years</td>
<td>19 (14.6%)</td>
<td>35 (26.8%)</td>
<td>77 (58.6%)</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40 years</td>
<td>7 (8.3%)</td>
<td>14 (16.7%)</td>
<td>62 (75%)</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 40 years</td>
<td>1(50%)</td>
<td>0(0%)</td>
<td>1(50%)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>54 (16.4%)</td>
<td>86 (26.2%)</td>
<td>189 (57.3%)</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lastly, it is also evident as indicated by Table 4.10 that the tendency to refer to social media for information before making a purchasing decision declines with advancement in age. Fifty percent of those age 15-20 years agreed, similarly thirty seven point two percent for those aged 21-30 years, and twenty three point one percent for 31-40 years within those over 40 years ranking zero percent.

The analysis represented in Table 4.7, 4.8, 4.9 and 4.10 in this section indicate that there is a link between the influence of social media on purchase decision making and the age cohort.
The findings reveal that younger people are more influenced by social media compared to the older generation. The findings have shown a declining level of influence with the increase in age.

Table 4.10: Likelihood of Referring to the Social Media Before Making a Purchase Decision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When I want to buy a product, I refer to Social Media for more information</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Most Frequent Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15-20 years</td>
<td>57 (50%)</td>
<td>28 (25%)</td>
<td>28 (25%)</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-30 years</td>
<td>49 (37.2%)</td>
<td>37 (27.9%)</td>
<td>46 (34.9%)</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40 years</td>
<td>19 (23.1%)</td>
<td>13 (15.4%)</td>
<td>51 (61.6%)</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 40 years</td>
<td>0(0%)</td>
<td>0(0%)</td>
<td>2(100%)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>110 (33.4%)</td>
<td>79 (23.8%)</td>
<td>142 (42.9%)</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4 Social Media Platforms

From the findings as illustrated by figure 4.4, Seventy three percent of the respondents refer to Facebook as the platform they visit more than once a day. This was followed by email having sixty seven percent of the respondents and twitter at thirty two percent more than once a day.

On the other extreme, of the respondents Pinterest was the platform never visited by seventy six percent of the respondents. My Space and Instagram at sixty percent and thirty seven percent of respondents never visiting these platforms.

Seventy six percent of those polled have never used Pinterest, sixty four percent have never used MySpace, while sixty percent, thirty seven percent, twenty five percent and twenty three percent have never been on Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter and Google+ respectively. Interesting to note was that only eight percent and two percent has never neither been on Facebook and email services respectively.
To further investigate the social media platforms, we sought to know whether among those who use social media several times a day there was any variation depending on age. As demonstrated in figure 4.5, those aged 21-30 were the most active users of social media platforms. Eighty percent reported using twitter more than Instagram at seventy seven percent and Facebook at seventy four percent.
4.5 Chapter Summary

The findings reveal that all those who responded have heard about the social media. Of which friends stood out as the main source of information followed by other sources like school, television, internet and other main stream media sources. It’s worth noting that males and females have fundamental differences on how they learn about social media, which media platforms they visit, what they use it for and the usage rate. Similarly the study also reveals variations with age differences.

On the issue of influence of social media on decision making, the study shows very limited effects. Finally the study shows that most frequently used social media platform within the population of study is Facebook, followed by email services, then Google+, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Myspace and lastly Pinterest.

The following chapter presents discussions of the findings in a manner that answers the research questions.
CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to identify the demographic characteristics of the social media users in Nairobi, Kenya with a view of coming up with social media strategies that businesses can adopt when dealing with different generational cohorts and demographic groups that form part of their targets. Chapter four of this study brings together the findings and analysis of the study. It gives an insight on the demographic characteristics, effects of social media on purchase decision and the mostly used social media sites.

This chapter’s aim is to address two major areas. The first being providing a summary of the findings presented in chapter four in a manner that answers the research questions in chapter one. Secondly compare these findings with the previous studies as presented in chapter two of this study.

5.2 Summary

To address the purpose of this study, the study was organized around three research questions. The research questions were; do different genders and age groups have different social media engagement levels? Does Social Media influence the propensity to make a purchase or recommendation of an organization or a product? And to what extent does internet and social media influence the decision making of the different age cohorts? Lastly, what social media platforms should organizations use to reach different targeted demographic groups to drive their (organizational) growth and build their businesses through social media?

The study adopted a quantitative descriptive research design approach. This was appropriate to offer the present population characteristics and status. A cross sectional technique was applied because the study sought to measure differences between different age cohorts and gender. The study population comprised of the entire 5362 USIU students registered in summer 2013 and the 163 employees of the Coca-Cola Central East and West Africa Business Unit in Nairobi during the same period. The total sample size required was three
hundred and seventy three, four hundred and fifty four questionnaires were issued online and on hard copy however the actual data was retrieved from three hundred and thirty questionnaires. The data was collected between June 15th and July 9th 2013 by use of a standardized questionnaire due to its stability, consistency and uniformity to collect data from the target sampled size. The data collected was analyzed using SPSS. The information was presented in bar graphs, pie charts and frequency tables.

The study showed that different gender and age groups have different social media engagement levels. Women (76.7%) are more likely than men (63.6%) to learn about social media from friends. Similarly more women (42.9%) use social media sites more than men (28.6%). The study also revealed that younger people learn about social networks more from their friends than the older people. Apart from family and friends, older generations learn about the social media significantly from other sources (school, internet, television and other media sources). The usage of social media also declines with age. Age group 21-30 years is the most active at 58% with most of their time spent on getting new information, meeting new people, connecting with friends, and learning about new products in the order. Their level of activity is followed by those aged 31-40 years (26%) then those between 15-20 years (8%) and finally those aged above 40 years (8%). Those aged above 40 years mostly spend time to learn about new products.

The study showed that for a majority of the respondents (53.1%), social media has no influence on their purchase making decision as well as their intention to recommend a product but younger cohorts are likely than older people to recommend a product on line. Older people are less likely to buy recommended products than the young ones.

The current study points out that the most frequently used social media platform within the population of study are Facebook (73%), followed by email services (67%), then Google+ (37.1%), Twitter (32%), Linkedin (11.5%), Instagram (15%), Myspace (9.7%) and lastly Pinterest (5%).

Chi square tests showed that with 95% level of confidence age influences the likelihood to buy endorsed products endorsed on social media.
5.3 Discussion

5.3.1 Demographic Characteristics of Social Media Users

The study indicates fundamental differences on demographic characteristics of social media users. These differences are exhibited based on gender and age difference. They support the earlier findings by Lennon, Rentfro and Curran (2012) that people antecedent’s beliefs and attitudes toward social networks differ based on gender, age, marital status and parenthood. Thus the demographic variables are associated with differences in beliefs about social networking, attitudes toward social networking, and reasons for choosing and using specific social networks. The differences are exhibited on how the different genders learn about social media, what social media platforms they use, social media platform account ownership and the frequency of usage of the sites.

From the study, a majority of the respondents at sixty nine point eight learnt about the social media through friends, followed by other sources such as school, internet, television and other mainstream media at fifteen per cent and finally six point three per cent through family members. Though with regard to gender, it shows that a higher percentage of women (76.7%) learnt about social media through friends than men (63.6%). The high score for women is primarily dependent on the nature of women. Abraham et al (2010) describe women as communicators, networkers and facilitators. In this light they are more likely to socialize than their male counterparts and thus gain more information from friends more than men do. Men on the other hand scored higher (27.3%) with the less interactive sources like television than women (20%).

The other aspect is on what type of social media sites are being used mostly by either gender. This study showed more females (42.9%) reported having used social network sites mentioned such as Facebook, Twitter, Linkedin, and Google plus than men (28.6%). These sites are basically social network sites (Ruleman, 2012). The current study therefore tend to be in agreement with the arguments of Abraham et al (2010) that as more women go online to connect with people while men are primarily engaged in downloading software, experimenting with new technology and using it as a form of entertainment. They go ahead to note that Sports, Automotive, and Online Trading sites remain male strongholds online.
The purpose of being online therefore partly explains why women would engage more with the dormant social sites such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Google plus than men.

According to the study, these sentiments are supported by the fact that more women than men have social network accounts for the purpose of meeting friends (52.5%), meeting new people (65.2%), and learning about new products (58.3%) while a majority of men have social media accounts to get new information (59%). This partly explains why few men have accounts with the five major social networks (Facebook, Twitter, Linkedin, and Google plus) which focuses mainly on relationships and networks rather than on non-relationship based new information.

Lenhart (2009) states that social network users are relatively young, with 75% of online adults ages 18-24 owning a social network profile. Similarly according to PEW internet (2013), 83% of those aged 18-29 years use the social media and for 30-49 years it is at 77%, 50-64 years at 52% and 65+ at 52%. This indicated a declining usage trend with advancement in age. This study also showed a similar trend with 100% of the respondents aged between 15-20 years indicate having used either Facebook, Twitter, Linkedin or Google Plus social media sites. 66.7% of those aged 21-30 years responded in the affirmative and 16.7% of those aged 31-40 years responded yes to the question.

The other difference demonstrated by the current findings is how different age cohorts learn about social media sites. People (under 30 years) learn about social networks more from their friends (60% and more) than the older people. A part from family and friends other sources (school, internet, television and other media sources) contributes a significant source (>25%) for the older generations (31 years and above). This could be attributed to how different age cohorts perceive sources of information. Piktialis and Greenes (2008) assert that how people perceive and receive information is to a large extent a function of age and mode of delivery. Personal dynamics and communication between source and receiver can make or break the transfer of information. Older people are known to be more comfortable with tested and trusted traditional sources of information such as print media than the younger people who are more experimental. Baby boomers in particular like hard copy sources of information while for generation Y, connectivity is a hallmark, Piktialis and Greenes, (2008). Gen Y loves to connect via instant messaging, social media sites, blogs, and other online services.
This study also illustrated that there exists a difference in what different age groups do online. The 21-30 years age cohort is the most active and scored the highest when it comes to connecting with friends (58%), meeting new people (80%), getting new information (67%), and learning about new products (67%). Those aged 31-40 years then those between 15-20 years have declining online presence on social media and finally those aged above 40 years.

5.3.2 Influence of Social Media on Purchase Making Decision

Themba and Mulala (2013) note that consumer involvement in brand related electronic word of mouth via social media is reflected by three set of behaviours: The Opinion Seeking consumers who search for information and advice when making purchase decisions. There are the Opinion Giving consumers share information, opinions and thoughts with others online. Finally, the Opinion Passing consumers are often liaisons of the two because these are those that receive information online and forward it to others, Themba and Mulala (2013). A single person can play all three roles, the cyberspace allows for this dynamism.

Since it is evident from previous studies that consumers use social media to create, disseminate and share information about brands, this positively influences their purchase decisions, Themba and Mulala (2013). In recent years with the advent of technologies sites Social Media Sites such as YouTube, Twitter and Facebook have grown in relevance. On these sites platforms allow users to create and share brand related information online in their established social networks which comprise of friends, family classmates and other acquaintances. Themba and Mulala (2013) posit that such interactions influence consumers’ purchase decisions, shape brand attitudes and affect marketing decision. The electronic word of mouth communication is created and delivered by consumers directly thus making it a more credible non-commercial source of information for consumers. Despite the fact that consumers increasingly go online to discuss products, brands and experiences, many companies face the challenge of where and how to influence these conversations which take place across and ever growing variety of platforms( Hattingh et al, 2012).

In light of this increasing relevance of e-word of mouth, strategic companies are developing platforms and online tools to facilitate the spread of the positive word of mouth relating to their brands. These include discussion boards, customer reviews and other tools that enable
consumers to share information about products and services, Themba and Mulala (2013) note.

Organisations are also seen to be moving towards using more consumer-to-consumer advocacy communications as opposed to company-to-consumer communications for online broadcast about their own products and services. Other tactics applied are organizations allowing direct posting of reviews and ratings of products by consumers on their web sites. Such online product reviews are thought to increase customer loyalty and provide competitive advantage for companies that offer them, Themba and Mulala (2013).

The analysis of this survey has highlighted several interesting trends that did not necessarily fit any preconceived expectations. More than fifty per cent of the respondents indicated that social media has no influence on their purchase making decision. Only 46.9% indicated that they would buy a company’s product if their connections post positively about the product, while only 25% of the respondents agreed that they will purchase a product if the company sends them a message on social media, 16.4% will buy a product they have only heard on social media and 33.3% say that they will refer to social media before buying a product. The more than 50% of either neutral or disagree in all the 4 questions indicates a weak association of social media and purchase making decision among the population studied.

Similarly only forty nine percent agreed that they would recommend a product online if they are happy about the product indicating that a majority would not even if they are impressed but interestingly, the percentage of those who agree that they would buy a product if their connections commended positively on them decrease with the increase in age. Sixty percent of those aged 15-20 years responded in the affirmative followed by 49% for those aged 21-30 years and 39% of those aged 31-40 years. This data shows that the influence of connections recommendations have limited influence on the older generation’s purchasing decision compared to the younger people.

Important to note is that the impact of social media differs from country to country and by geography depending on the level of internet infrastructure development and government control (Ngini, Furnell and Ghita, 2002). With this in mind, the outcomes of this study
provide room to address different social media approaches where infrastructure is still evolving.

5.3.3 Social Media Platforms

A variety of online tools make up social media for example, Information sharing platforms like Facebook, MySpace, and Google plus, creativity works-sharing sites like You Tube and Flickr, collaborative websites like Wikipedia and micro blogging sites like twitter. (Mangold and Faulds, 2009). Of the different types of social networking sites that have emerged as the most important tools for interacting and socializing, social networks sites have also emerged as a major channel for brand-related consumer-to-consumer conversations. Chu and Kim (2011).

Over the recent years, social media usage has generated much research interest. Studies show that social media usage varies across different demographic groups, social media sites and national contexts. Young users aged between 18 and 30 are the most active users of social media a group largely comprising of college and university students.

Among this demographic of college and university students, Facebook has been found to be the most popular social media sites (Quan-Haase & Yound, 2010). Over ninety percent of undergraduate students are Facebook users (Ellison et al. 2007). Madge, Meek, Wellens & Hooley (2009, cited in Themba and Mulala, 2013), stated that the majority of students who use social media network sites do so for social reasons rather than for academic purposes.

Developing countries are lagging behind developed economies in terms of internet infrastructure development and penetration (Ngini et al., 2002). The foregoing studies indicate Facebook as the leading social media platform. 73% of the respondents indicated having used this site. This is in line with previous studies (DiStaso and McCorkindale, 2013; Chikandiwa, Contogiannis and Jemberere, 2013). This corroborates the words of Martin (2012) who said that “currently, Facebook is the most well-known social networking site and is considered by many to be the “face” of social media”.

According to PEW Internet (2013), Facebook remains the most-used social networking platform, with more than two-thirds of online adults being Facebook users. Women are more
likely than men to be Facebook users, and Facebook use is especially common among younger adults. The Pew internet study (2013) further states that Facebook allow users are allowed to create profiles with pictures and basic information about their school, work, and interests. They are able to communicate with other users, groups, and businesses by writing on their public “wall” or through private messages similar to email. Users are also given media sharing capabilities, which allows them to create and share photos, videos, music, and web links. This study indicate email services as the second most used at 66% followed by Google+ (37.1%), Twitter (32%), LinkedIn (11.5%), Instagram (14.8%), Myspace (9.7%) and lastly Pinterest at (5%).

5.4 Conclusions

5.4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Social Media Users

It is evident from this study that the majority of primary social media users are people of 21-30 years of age. This group also acquires knowledge of the platforms from friends as the key source. Companies that want to tap into this age cohort may want to fashion strategies that involve friends connecting and tactics that reward those that bring on the most friends. Women are more likely than men to learn about social media from friends while also being most likely to use the top four platforms Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Google plus. Younger people learn about social networks more from their friends than the older people who get the information from family and friends other sources the usage of social media also declines with age.

For those above the age of thirty the primary sources of knowledge include, school, internet, television and other main stream media sources suggests that even with the growing usage of social media, mainstream media still has a place to play in reaching customers. Ideally, digital strategies should not stand alone but should be linked to main stream media to avoid alienating other potential users. Those aged above 40 years mostly spend time to learn about new products while the other groups spend most of their time on getting new information, meeting new people, connecting with friends, and learning about new products in the order.

5.4.2 Influence of Social Media on Purchase Making Decision
The study revealed that contrary to preconceived expectations, for majority of the respondents social media has no influence on their purchase making decision with less than fifty percent indicating that they would buy a company’s product if their connections post positively about the product. For organizations interested in Social Media strategies this tool should be used more to build awareness, inform of availability, offer a platform for conversation, that is to ask for and receive feedback from customers and consumers rather than to push for purchases and online sales.

5.4.3 Social Media Platforms

Since the most frequently used social media platform within the population of study is Facebook, followed by Email with women being more likely than men to be Facebook users. It is necessary for organisations to profile their consumer communication on Social Media, by working with the service providers communication can be more targeted to the audience most likely to be influenced by certain messaging.

5.5 Recommendations

5.5.1 Recommendations of the Study

5.5.1.1: Demographic characteristics of Social Media Users

There being fundamental difference in the usage of social media cross gender and age groups, it imperative for those organizations that want to effectively reach members of this population through the media to clearly have a segmented digital strategy specific to each cohort and based on the predominant group differences with respect to usage of social media. Since the service providers collect information, it is possible to profile within the confines of what is legally acceptable and target specific communication to specific users who will most likely respond to the messaging. This can be applied particularly on Facebook which has stood out as the most used social media platform.
5.5.1.2: Social Media Platforms

Strategic organizations should not only promote the use of social media but also incorporate social media in their marketing tools by identifying the most used platform and to what market category does it appeal the most. It is not enough for Social Media management to be a part time job for organizations, a full time resource Social media strategist is required to manage and lead consumer conversations.

5.5.1.3: Influence of Social Media on Purchase Making Decision

Based on the findings, social media has limited influence on consumer decision making. However, social media is a powerful information tool that can be used to build awareness and hence advocacy of products and brands. By running concurrently with mainstream media, social media can be used to drive conversations with consumers and customers online, to get feedback and to share strategic direction. Social media also offers organizations a prime ground to test opinions of consumers new products and strategic direction.

Strategic organizations need to recognize that it is not enough to post material and be silent; the online community requires an ongoing conversation that follows the communication loop that involves receiving and giving feedback.

5.5.2 Further Studies

This study was more exploratory and further research is recommended on the effects of social media on purchase making decisions and advocacy. An in-depth understanding is required to guide organizations on strategies that will ensure incremental purchases among the targeted consumers for the various within and across group variations.
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Zickuhr, K. & Madden, M. (2013). Older Adults and Internet use. Pew Research Center
APPENDICES

Appendix A: Cover Letter

MIRIAM LIMO

UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY-AFRICA (USIU-A)

P.O. BOX 14634, 00800.

NAIROBI.

DATE:

Dear Respondent,

REF: PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH STUDY FOR MIRIAM LIMO ID 617101

I am carrying out research on the strategies on social media users demographics in Nairobi. This is in partial fulfillment of the requirement of the Masters of Science in Business Administration program at the United States International University.

This study uses USIU and Coca-Cola company communities as the case study from which you have been selected as one of the lucky respondents. The result of this study will provide the management with the necessary information for developing effective strategies for engaging with its stakeholders through the social media.

This is an academic research and confidentiality is strictly emphasized, your name will not appear anywhere in the report. Kindly spare some time to complete the questionnaire attached.

Thank you in advance,

Yours sincerely,

Miriam Limo
Appendix B: Questionnaire

This study is a requirement for the partial fulfillment of the Master of Science in Business Administration program at the United States International University Africa (USIU-A). The purpose of this study is to investigate the social media users’ profiles and the various platforms that they use.

This study uses USIU and Coca-Cola company communities as the case study organization; the findings of this study will provide the organization with information that can be used to design strategies for engaging with its stakeholders through the social media. This is an academic exercise and all information collected from respondents will be treated with strict confidentiality.

SECTION 1: General Information

Kindly answer all the questions either by ticking in the boxes or writing in the spaces provided. Note that the evaluation will be considered incomplete if you do not answer all the questions

1. Indicate your gender

☐ Male

☐ Female

2. Indicate your age category

☐ Below 15 years

☐ 15-20 years

☐ 21 – 30 years

☐ 31-40 years

☐ Over 40 years
3. Indicate your highest level of Education

☐ Primary
☐ Secondary
☐ College
☐ University Degree
☐ University Post Graduate Degree

4. Indicate your level of monthly income

☐ No formal income
☐ Less than Kshs 5,000
☐ Kshs 5,000 to Kshs 13,674
☐ Kshs 13,675 to Kshs 50,000
☐ More than Kshs 50,000

5. Indicate your marital status

☐ Single
☐ Married or Living with a partner
☐ Divorced
☐ Separated
☐ Widowed

6. Indicate your current employment status

☐ Student
☐ Self Employed
☐ Employed
☐ Not- Currently employed
☐ Not employed in the last 12 months
SECTION 2:

1. Have you heard of the term Social Media?
   - Yes
   - No

2. Through which sources did you come to know of social media
   - Friend
   - Child
   - Sibling (Brother or Sister)
   - Spouse
   - Other (if so, state which one)

3. Have you ever used any of these Social Networking Sites like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google plus etc.......?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Other (please state which one)

4. Do you have an account with any Social Media platform
   - Yes
   - No

5. If so, which one (give a list if there is more than one)

6. What is the primary reason to have the account stated in (4) above
   - Connect with Friends I know
   - Meet new people
   - Gives me information I did not know
   - Learn about new products and services
   - Other (please state)
7. Are you familiar with any companies that have a social media presence
   □ Yes
   □ No

8. If yes, which one(s)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>With Social Media I follow companies that have products I use</td>
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<td>I post messages on companies walls</td>
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<td>I get regular updates from companies on new products and activities</td>
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<td>If I am unhappy with service I post it on the Social Media</td>
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<tr>
<td>If I am happy with a service or product I Post it on Social Media</td>
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<td>I like and Share company updates on Social Media</td>
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<td>If my connections post positively about a product I will buy it</td>
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<td>When considering a product or service I check for posts about it on Social Media</td>
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<td>Over the past one year the amount of time I spend on Social Media Has increased</td>
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<td>If I am unable to check my posts in a day I will look for the nearest internet point to check my account</td>
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<td>If an organization sends me a message on Social Media I will buy their products</td>
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<td>I read the advertisements that are posted on the social media sites</td>
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<td>I visit social media sites to find out about brands and company information</td>
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<td>I will buy a product that I have only heard about on Social Media</td>
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<td>When I want to buy a product, I refer to Social Media for more information</td>
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</table>
SECTION 3:

The following is a set of questions that may reflect regularity of access and the tools you use for social networking.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Several times a Day</th>
<th>Once a day</th>
<th>Once every two days</th>
<th>Once a week</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Never</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How often do you access the Facebook</td>
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<td>How often do you send or receive email</td>
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<td>How often do you access Twitter</td>
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<td>How often do you access LinkedIn</td>
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<td>How often do you access Instagram</td>
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<td>How often do you access Pinterest</td>
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<td>How often do you access MySpace</td>
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<td>How often do you access Google +</td>
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