FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING
SITES IN IMPLEMENTING CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY
PROGRAMMES IN MOBILE PHONE SERVICE PROVIDERS: A
COMPARATIVE STUDY OF SAFARICOM AND TELKOM KENYA.

BY

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DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been submitted in any other institution for academic credit. All references used have been acknowledged accordingly.

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SUPERVISOR'S APPROVAL

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as the University Supervisor.

24/1/11

Dr. George Nyabuga

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my Father in Heaven, for His provision, protection, guidance and sustenance. Praise be to Him.

To my mother, Regina Kasyoka and my brother, Joseph Nyamai; the two pillars upon which I stand.

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ABSTRACT

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is an integral part of the business strategy. Corporates around the world engage in different forms of CSR which enable them to be part of the community in which they operate. Given the wide variety of the ways in which CSR is practiced and the different parties involved in implementing CSR, the communication tool utilised becomes an important consideration for corporate organisations. There are various communication tools available for corporate organisations to use although their efficacy and suitability is dependent on various factors. The purpose of the study was therefore to establish the factors contributing to the use of social networking sites (SNS) in the implementation of CSR programmes by mobile phone service providers in Kenya. The study compared two mobile phone service providers, Safaricom and Telkom Kenya, and looked at how they utilise CSR in their everyday operations. This study reveals that several factors contribute to the use of SNS as a communication tool. Attracting and engaging the youth, the user friendly features of SNS, the nature of the sponsorships, the location of the beneficiary organisation and the efficiency of the donor organisations are some of the factors that the study unearthed. The study concludes that features of SNS especially their capability for instant feedback, userfriendly characteristics and the fact that users generate their own content is key to their uptake by the corporate organisations. However, the uneven rate of internet penetration and speed in the country where the rural population is not as connected as the urban population is halting the use of SNS as a business communication tool. There should be more sensitization in the business community on the use of SNS, the study further concluded.

CONTENTS

| | Page | |
|---------------------------------------|------|--|
| Declaration | i | |
| Dedication | 11 | |
| Acknowledgement | iii | |
| Abstract | iv | |
| Table of Contents | V | |
| Abbreviations and Acronyms | ix | |
| | | |
| CHAPTER ONE | | |
| INTRODUCTION | | |
| .2 Background to the Study | 1 | |
| .3 Statement of the Problem | 4 | |
| .4 Purpose of the Study | 5 | |
| .5 Objectives of the Study | 5 | |
| .6 Justification of the Study | 6 | |
| .7 Scope and Limitations of the Study | 6 | |

| 1.8 Organisation of the Study | |
|---|-----------|
| | Page |
| CHAPTER TWO | |
| LITERATURE REVIEW | |
| 2.1 Introduction | 9 |
| 2.2 Background of CSR | 9 |
| 2.3 CSR Practice around the World | 10 |
| 2.4 Social Networking Sites | 20 |
| 2.5 Theoretical Framework | 23 |
| 2.6 Conclusion | 25 |
| CHAPTER THREE | |
| RESEARCH METHODOLOGY | |
| 3.1 Introduction | 28 |
| 3.2 Research Design | 28 |
| 3.3 Target Population | 29 |
| 3.4 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size | 31 |
| 3.5 Research Instruments | 32 |

3.6 Data Collection Procedure ----- 32

| 3.7 Data Analysis 33 | | |
|--|--|--|
| 3.8 Conclusions 33 | | |
| | | |
| CHAPTER FOUR | | |
| FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS | | |
| Page | | |
| 4.1 Introduction 35 | | |
| 4.2 Use of SNS (Perspectives from the Mobile Phone Service Providers) 35 | | |
| 4.3 Perspectives from the CSR Beneficiaries 44 | | |
| 4.4 Conclusion 47 | | |
| | | |
| CHAPTER FIVE | | |
| | | |
| SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY. | | |
| | | |
| 5.1 Introduction | | |
| 5.2 Summary48 | | |
| 5.3 Summary of the Findings49 | | |

| 5.4 Conclusions | 50 |
|--|----|
| 5.5 Recommendations | 51 |
| References | 54 |
| Appendix (i) CEO Interview Schedule | 59 |
| Appendix (ii) CSR Manager Interview Schedule | 62 |
| Appendix (iii) Beneficiary Questionnaire | 65 |

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CSR: Corporate Social Responsibility

SNS: Social Networking Sites

CEO: Chief Executive Officer

SRI: Social Responsibility Investment

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study: Approaches to the Practice of Corporate Social Responsibility

The question as to whether a corporation's responsibility to society is purely profit based or whether it should include more social goals has always been contentious. Academic discourse on this debate is wide and varied. This discourse has gone on to produce a three-pronged approach to the concept of CSR: The shareholder approach, the stakeholder approach and the societal approach.

The shareholder approach was fronted by economist Milton Friedman (1962) who posed that the only social responsibility of business was to use its resources to engage in activities designed to increase its profits as long as it stayed within the stated business rules. The stakeholder approach also notes that an organisation is not only accountable to its shareholder but also to its various stakeholders (Branco and Rodriguez, 2007). Stakeholders here refers to all groups who have a stake in the organisation such as employees, government, local communities, customers, business partners, unions, trade associations' investors (Freeman and Donaldson, 1984). The Committee for Economic Development (USA, 1971) contends that in the societal approach an organisation is responsible towards the society as a whole of which it is a part.

Given this diverseness of approach to CSR, organisations have also adopted different ways with which to carry out their CSR which include monetary sponsorships. The monetary sponsorship entails financial support of, for instance, sports teams, TV/radio programmes and events while corporate community involvement entails an organization proactively identifying and working on various projects which are in line with its goals and that of the community. Good examples for such an undertaking are when a wildlife protection agency, for instance, takes on a reforestation project or company employees volunteering their time at a children's home.

The orientation of CSR in Kenya differs across organisations, especially between local and multi-national companies (Muthuri and Gilbert, 2010). Muthuri and Gilbert (2010) further state that firm related drivers such as public relations and performance as well as global institutional pressures explain the form and focus of CSR in Kenya. According to Mbeke (2009) corporate organisations in Kenya see public relations and by extension CSR as an indispensable management tool, with most major corporations having the public relations angle of the corporation operating at the director level in the corporation.

Porter and Kramer (2006) argue that corporate success and social welfare are interdependent hence the need for organizations to develop deep linkages between their business strategies and CSR activities. A corporation's strategies to address different stakeholder groups cannot be determined without communication between the two. Communication helps businesses realize how to define their CSR, strategize and measure success (Ghormley and Falconi, 2010). However how to communicate with stakeholders

cannot be underscored since it is important for the realization of targets for both business strategies and CSR activities.

1.2. Social Networking Sites (SNS) as an emerging form of communication technology

Communication technology, according to Howe (2010), began with the invention of the Gutenberg press and has evolved over the years continually enhancing the way people communicate with a view to minimising the distance and time it takes for communication to occur. The launch of the first satellite, Sputnik, heralded the beginning of the information technology age which we are living in today. In addition, the internet which began as a connection between selected networks has grown to a worldwide network.

Various applications and technologies such as e-mails and social networking sites (SNS) have been platforms through which the internet has facilitated societal communication. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) see social networking sites as part of a group of internet based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 which allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content. Other types of these applications include collaborative projects, blogs and microblogs, content communities, virtual communities and virtual game worlds, picture sharing, vlogs, wall postings, emails, instant messages, music sharing and voice over internet protocol (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010).

Davis (2007) contends that the internet and social networking sites by extension facilitate direct, unmediated communication, thence for organisations utilising the SNS in

implementing their CSR make it a proactive strategic business tool. However, Burson (2009) is in doubt over the internet as the ideal mode of communication. He argues that because of its openness it allows for the transmission of false and even malicious information.

According to the Communication Commission of Kenya Quarterly Sector Statistics Report 2010/2011 there are over 10 million internet subscribers in Kenya and over 25 per cent of the population have access to the internet. This growth may be driven in part because a large majority of those with access to the internet do it via mobile telephony. The mobile phone service providers as well as providing phone services make available other technologies that ensure more of their users are also accessing the internet hence enabling them (the mobile phone service providers) to use SNS as another platform for advancing their CSR programmes.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Corporate success and social welfare are interdependent (Porter & Kramer, 2006). This has seen organisations develop deep linkages between their business strategies and CSR activities. According to Ghormley and Falconi (2010), the goals of CSR are to motivate business to embrace responsibility and encourage a positive impact through their activities on the environment, consumers, employees, communities, stakeholders and all other members of the public. They further assert that for CSR to be effective, communication is important at every stage from inception to completion of programmes. This brings to light a major challenge to the successful implementation of CSR

programmes as they target different categories of people with access to diverse modes of communication.

SNS are a burgeoning form of communication that is attracting millions of users around the world who are integrating these sites into their lives (Boyd and Ellison, 2008). Their fast adoption by consumers has focused attention on the number of people utilizing the sites, yet there have been scant studies in Kenya to determine the factors that contribute to the use of SNS by organisations. This study was therefore conducted to determine the factors that contribute to the use of SNS by organisations in their quest to implement their CSR programmes.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine factors contributing to the use of SNS in the implementation of CSR programmes by mobile phone service providers in Kenya. This was done with the aim of determining the use and efficacy of SNS on the implementation of CSR programmes.

1.5 Objectives of the study

The study was guided by the following objectives:

- i. To critically review existing literature to determine the use of SNS in CSR programmes.
- ii. To analyze the methods of utilizing social networking sites for CSR programmes.
- iii. To determine the attributes enhancing acceptability of SNS by the beneficiaries.

iv. To examine the merits and demerits of utilizing SNS in implementing CSR programmes.

1.6 Justification of the Study

The study was undertaken to generate information on the factors leading to the use of SNS in corporate organisations given the increasing uptake of SNS in Kenya. The study would contribute to the advancement of SNS as a valid form of business communication. It would also seek to improve the efficiency of communication using SNS. The findings would add to the knowledge on the application of SNS as a means of communication. The study can help those in charge of formulating organisations' CSR policies increase their use of SNS in their CSR plans.

1.7 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The scope of this study covered two mobile phone service providers operating in Kenya; Safaricom and Telkom Kenya, their CSR managers and CSR beneficiaries. The research subjects were limited to the CEOs of the selected mobile phone service providers, the CSR managers of the selected companies and selected CSR beneficiaries.

The study interviewed the CEOs of the selected mobile phone service providers because they are the custodians of the CSR policies. The research was limited to the CSR managers because they are directly involved in implementation of the CSR programmes. The study only considered CSR beneficiaries who are active on SNS. Although other

beneficiaries might have information, they were not considered as they might have little knowledge of the communication process involved. It was not possible to cover the views of all CSR beneficiaries of mobile phone service providers because of time, financial as well as geographical constraints.

1.8 Organisation of the Study

This work is divided into five chapters. Chapter one consists of the background of the study in which approaches to the practice of corporate social responsibility (CSR) are examined and social networking sites (SNS) as an emerging form of communication technology was looked at. The statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives, justification, the scope and the limitation of the study were also tackled in this chapter.

Chapter two reviews the literature on CSR by first tracing the beginning of CSR and then further looks at how CSR is practiced in various areas world wide, including Europe, United States of America, Asia, Africa and also the practice of CSR in Kenya. Then it delves into the usage and impact of SNS on communication trends. The theoretical framework upon which this work is based is also examined in this chapter.

Chapter three provides the map of how the research was carried out. It looks at the research design, establishes the target population, sampling size and technique, the research instruments, data collection and data analysis procedures.

Chapter four is the presentation of the findings. In this chapter, the findings are interpreted and discussed. Finally the fifth chapter contains the summary of the findings as well as the conclusions derived from the study.

This study found out that the corporate society is gravitating towards use of SNS because of their features, such as instant feedback, user interactivity, user friendliness and allowance of multi-tasking. The efficiency and availability of internet also contributes towards the uptake of SNS as a communication tool. The target population and type of sponsorship also influence the communication tool which an organisation uses.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is divided into the background of CSR, the practice of CSR around the world and in Kenya, the SNS and the theoretical framework of the study. It first examines the origins of the practice of CSR and then subsequent adoption and interpretation of the practice around the world with a view to finding out how it is practiced in Kenya. The chapter then examines the emergence of SNS and the impact and effects they have had on society. Finally the chapter looks at the theoretical framework that has guided the study.

2.2 Background of CSR

Wiley (2010) asserts that CSR has been debated and practiced in one form or another for more than 4,000 years. The practice ranges from the time of the inception of Islam's *Zakat* that is wealth tax to the late 19th century, where industrialists like John D. Rockefellar set up philanthropic foundations (Wiley, 2010).

The phrase 'Corporate Social Responsibility' was coined by Howard Bowen in 1953. Bowen's concept was emboldened in the 1960's and 70's through consumer movements, environmental and social activism. For instance, there were major international boycotts of companies which had investments in the then apartheid South Africa such as Barclays Bank and Nestle. Wiley (2010) further states that in the 1990s the practice of CSR

particularly in developed countries was institutionalised with the development of standards like ISO 14001.

Fauset (2006) refers to Bowen as the father of CSR for he posed the question 'what responsibilities to society can business people be reasonably expected to assume?' Corporate organizations also formed coalitions such as the World Business Council on Sustainable Development in a bid to answer the above question. These coalitions lobbied governments to ensure that corporate organisations engaged in voluntary involvement in CSR and that their CSR activities were not government regulated.

According to International Institute for Sustainable Development in USA (2007) corporate failures, scandals and wrongdoing have increased the global drive for CSR. Enron, Shell, WorldCom and Parmalat were involved in various forms of accounting fraud ranging from, overstating oil reserves (Shell) to understating debt (Parmalat). These scandals have impacted on stakeholder and investor confidence on the integrity of the organisations' management thus increasing the impetus for CSR.

2.3 CSR practice around the world

In Europe, Rowlinson and Hassard (1993) say that corporations have had philanthropic traditions based on the convictions of the business leaders. Company philanthropy was also focused on maintaining a loyal and functioning workforce. These philanthropic traditions included the provision of social and economic infrastructure for their workers and families, for example housing, education, bathing and recreational facilities. However, Moon, Kanng and Gond (2010) contend that the advent of the welfare state in

most European countries stemmed the flow of business philanthropy. Although according to Gumbel (2004) business philanthropy thrives in Europe ranging from sponsoring institution of higher learning to anti-smoking campaigns.

European consumers, Michelletti (2003) argues that they have begun to include social estimates in their purchasing choices which in turn have lead corporate organisations to become more proactive in CSR. Some European corporate organisations have also formed institutions which guide their participation in CSR such as 'Fair Trade' (Michelletti, 2003). Others also participate in CSR through business associations and the European Union.

The European focus on CSR is achieved through implementing standards such as ISO 26000 which in effect means that principles of CSR are promoted in all activities and at every point of a company's operations (Hall, 2008). Baker (2004) further supports this by stating that traditionally in the United States, CSR has been defined much more in terms of a philanthropic model. Companies make profits unhindered except by fulfilling their duty to pay taxes. Then they donate a certain share of the profits to charitable causes. It is seen as tainting the act for the company to receive any benefit from the giving. He added that the European model is much more focused on operating the core business in a socially responsible way complemented by investment in communities for solid business case reasons.

In the USA, Matten and Moon (2007) say that the CSR emphasis is on tax law incentives on charitable donations thus prompting philanthropy based form of CSR. This entails voluntary corporate activities outside of a company's core business.

Corporate organisations in the United States for instance; mutual fund companies, banks, non-profits, pension funds and foundations among others have come together through the Social Investment Forum to engage in Social Responsibility Investments (SRI). This forum provides as another avenue through which these corporate organisations practice sustainable and responsible investing promote responsible business practices as well as provide social and environmental benefits (Feignbaum, 2011). SRI strategies include shareholder advocacy, community investing and application of environmental and social governance in business practices. As a result of these strategies nearly 1 out of every 8 dollars under professional management in the United States today is involved in some strategy of SRI (Feignbaum, 2011).

Birch and Moon (2004) state that in Asia CSR performance varies greatly between countries although a wide range of issues such as education, environment and employee welfare are tackled through CSR. Birch and Moon (2004) further say that the form and focus of Asian CSR is driven by foundations, voluntarism and partnerships.

In a survey of CSR reporting in Asia, Chapple and Moon (2005) found that nearly three quarters of large companies in India present themselves as having CSR policies and practices. In Indonesia, only a quarter of large companies are active in CSR. They further surmised that in Asia, community involvement is the most established form of CSR followed by the employment of socially responsible production processes and finally employee relations (Chapple and Moon, 2005).

In Africa, Visser (2005) suggests that the values-based traditional philosophy of African humanism (*Ubuntu*) underpins the modern approaches to CSR on the continent. This

philosophy however is not an all encompassing philosophy that can accurately describe the African view and approach to life. Visser (2005) observes that CSR tends to be less formalized or institutionalized in terms of benchmarks commonly used in developed countries. These benchmarks include CSR codes, standards, management systems and reports. The codes standards and benchmarks that are most applicable tend to be issue specific, for instance Fair Trade for flower and horticultural firms and HIV/AIDS. Formal CSR is mostly practiced by large high profile national and multinational companies (Visser, 2005).

In South Africa, CSR is commonly referred to as Corporate Social Investment (Visser, 2005). In 2004 CSI funds were reported to have gone to education and training, health and social development. CSI in South Africa is urban focused with about two thirds of CSI spending targeted towards urban and peri-urban areas (Visser, 2005).

The Meridian Group (2006) say in a report that CSI in South Africa ranges from well articulated employee and community outreach programmes in all mining companies and multinationals to complete lack of mention in company websites. In addition the use of foundations as a vehicle for their CSI activities is popular in many multinationals and local conglomerates.

In terms of socio-economic status and geographical distance, Tanzanian corporate organisations and economic climate are similar to the Kenyan situation although CSR as a concept is not well developed. This is because over 75% of the population work in the informal sector (Meridian Group, 2006). They give examples of CSR practice in Tanzania which include company policies on HIV/AIDS in corporate organisations like

Brook Bond, Standard Chartered, and Tanzania Breweries Ltd. Another example would be the Jane Goodall Institute which operates The Lake Tanganyika Catchment Reforestation and Education Project whose mandate include microfinance, reforestation, community development and health benefits for the villages around Lake Tanganyika.

In Kenya, the first public relations consultancy was established in 1955 and targeted farmers in East, Central as well as West Africa (Mbeke, 2009). Since then public relations and by extension the practice of CSR has been on an upward trend in the country particularly due to the presence of local subsidiaries of international companies. Moreover, Visser (2005) points out that the highest proportion of corporate donations is in workers' health and safety, education and training, HIV/AIDS, food, security and underprivileged children. This is evidenced in Kenya through corporate organisations such as Nation Media Group with its contribution towards education with its project of Newspapers in Education. It donates newspapers to primary schools to promote literacy and also gives annual corporate donations to drought stricken areas in a bid to promote food security (Nation Media, 2011). Houghton (2006) also contends that Kenya enacted the Income Tax Act 2006/2007 as well which provided tax breaks for philanthropic giving on a pilot basis as an incentive for corporate philanthropy.

Company involvement in CSR in Kenya is mostly by multinationals and large local organisations which employ various modes as vehicles for their CSR activities. Information derived from various company websites show that such vehicles include foundations such as the Safaricom Foundation (Safaricom Foundation, 2011), The East Africa Breweries Foundation (East Breweries Ltd, 2011) and Kenya Commercial Bank

Foundation (KCB Bank Group, 2010). Furthermore, other corporate organisations engage in comprehensive community outreach programmes such as Kenya Airways (Kenya Airways. 2011), Airtel (Airtel, 2011) and Bidco Ltd (Bidco Oil, 2011). Corporate organisations regularly give monetary donations towards causes such as drought relief and education scholarships. The company websites indicates that some corporate organisations donate materials instead of giving monetary donations. Examples of such organisations are HP which donates computers (Hewlett Packard, 2011) and Nation Media Group donates newspapers.

Kenya hosts an emerging specialist CSR organisation known as Ufadhili Trust which is a matchmaker and lobbyist for CSR (Meridian Group, 2006). It also offers training on CSR. The Centre for Corporate Governance is another organisation that promotes responsible corporate governance through training, education, awareness raising and research. The Meridian Group (2006) further goes on to state that although these organisations are firmly rooted in their national contexts and tend to focus their efforts on sensitising local stakeholders to CSR, they also have some links to international CSR debates. These specialist organisations complement many other civil society groups working on certain aspects of CSR (albeit not called 'CSR' in most cases). These include trade unions, business support agencies, community development NGOs and human rights and environmental organisations (The Meridian Group, 2006).

Kivuitu, Yambayamba and Fox (2005) have looked comprehensively at the practice of CSR in Kenya and Zambia. They have brought out several key issues in the practice of CSR in these two countries particularly in Kenya. They assert that Kenyan companies

are actively engaged in social issues because they need to meet the expectations of their foreign trading partners in such areas as labour standards and environmental protection. They further add that fair trade standards are playing an increasingly important role in the coffee, tea, flower and food industries which are of particular importance to Kenya.

According to Kivuitu, Yambayamba and Fox (2005) the United Nations programmes have been among the first to introduce the concept of CSR to Kenya. They include the UN Global Compact, the UNDP Growing Sustainable Business Initiative and the UNIDO project for the electrification of rural areas Lighting up Kenya. There are a number of CSR-related initiatives led or funded by multilateral or bilateral development agencies. The United Nations has instigated discussions under the auspices of the UN Global Compact in both Kenya and Zambia. Both countries have been selected for the introduction of the UN Global Compact/UNDP 'Growing Sustainable Business for Poverty Reduction' initiative (Kivuitu, Yambayamba and Fox, 2005).

The concept of CSR has been applied only relatively recently in both Kenya and Zambia. The term is seeing some application within policy debates. For example, 'Corporate Responsibility' was the title of a speech to the Institute of Directors of Zambia given by the Zambian Minister for Commerce, Trade and Industry in May, 2004. But there remains little consensus on the meaning of the term or indeed on its usefulness and it is not applied widely (Kivuitu Yambayamba and Fox, 2005).

Kivuitu, Yambayamba and Fox (2005) have also explored another approach to CSR particularly in Kenya to nurture local socially oriented companies whose business models themselves bring positive development impacts. For instance, Adopt-a-light has

established itself as a viable social enterprise. Under the motto 'Advertising with a purpose', the advertising firm has erected over 185 streetlights along the major highways leading to Nairobi. This rehabilitation has been undertaken by inviting businesses to adopt and rehabilitate a streetlight. In return the business can place advertisements on the streetlight. A further social benefit is that all these projects employ former street children – so far one hundred have been employed through this venture. (Kivuitu Yambayamba and Fox, 2005)

In both countries, the activities most commonly identified by companies themselves as CSR could broadly be described as philanthropy. In Kenya, surveys suggest that the cause receiving the highest proportion of corporate donations is health and medical provision and donations are also directed towards education and training; HIV/AIDS; agriculture and food security; and underprivileged children (Kivuitu Yambayamba and Fox, 2005).

The Partnership Forum (2004) presents a similar picture for Zambia with surveys highlighting donations to orphanages as the most common activity identified as CSR followed by sponsorship of events such as sporting events, cultural ceremonies, education and health provision and donations to religious and arts organisations.

The justification for such philanthropic activities appears to be closely tied to a sense that companies should 'give something back' to the nation and to the communities in which they operate. This is typified by one Zambian company's mission statement which reads in part 'to recognise that we owe our success to the people of Zambia and that it is our

responsibility to give back to the community in appreciation of their continued support' (The Partnership Forum, 2004).

This sense of national duty and pride on the part of business is in part a legacy of state ownership of the means of production. In the 1980s to early 1990s, 80% or more of Zambia's economy was under Government control with the private sector playing a very insignificant role. Vigorous economic reforms since the early 1990s have brought liberalisation and the privatisation of many of the previously parastatal companies. This legacy also plays a defining role in the CSR agenda in Zambia in other ways with attitudes towards the private sector, in particular foreign multinationals remaining mixed (The Partnership Forum, 2004).

According to a survey done by PriceWaterhouseCoopers (2004) another prominent aspect of CSR in both Kenya and Zambia beyond philanthropic activities is action on HIV/AIDS which is widely identified as the most serious health and development issue in both countries. A report on the typical business response to HIV/AIDS in Kenya highlights an attitude of denial and an unwillingness to take proactive steps to deal with the issue. But some companies are addressing HIV/AIDS through strategies including education, awareness raising, medical and counselling support. For example, in Kenya Brooke Bond which is a tea growing and manufacturing firm that employs about 20,000 workers uses these strategies to address HIV/AIDS.

The company published an HIV/AIDS policy in May 2002, distributing copies through the workplace. The company's programme ensures awareness and education, medical care and learning from best practice. Education and awareness raising focuses on peer

education covering the entire workforce and their families, 80,000 people in all. The company distributed about 400,000 condoms in 2002 through dispensers. The programme offers support and provision of anti-retroviral drugs (PriceWaterhouseCoopers, 2004).

As well as HIV/AIDS, other workplace issues are also significant CSR concerns, particularly in Kenya, where the export-processing sector is more developed. Local campaigns have focused attention on labour rights and abuses in Kenyan export sectors such as textiles, cut flowers and horticulture. Some companies are taking a positive lead on labour standards – for example, Cirio Delmonte is now accredited to the SA8000 standard. Managed by Social Accountability International, a non-profit organisation, SA8000 is a voluntary standard for workplaces based on ILO (International Labour Organization) and other human rights conventions (Kivuitu Yambayamba and Fox, 2005).

They further advocate for the creation of space to explore the relationship between business and society at the regional, national or local level. For instance the East African Summit for business leaders from Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. This summit has been held annually since 2002. Each year participants discuss issues and pass resolutions related to CSR (Kivuitu, Yambayamba and Fox, 2005).

For example, participants at the 2003 Summit resolved to increase their sourcing of inputs from small and medium sized enterprises with a target of 25% of their total inputs. The Summit has provided a focus for local civil society engagement with businesses. In the last two years, Ufadhili has placed adverts in the national media on the day of the

Summit to encourage participants to address wider CSR issues rather than narrow enabling business environment issues (Kivuitu, Yambayamba and Fox, 2005).

CSR is practiced in Kenya in an environment fraught with disparities. This is evidenced by the wide range of CSR practice from standardized practice through fair trade to donations guided by humanism. A study on a new emerging communication trend that seemingly unites these disparities would enhance the clarity of the practice of CSR in the country.

2.4 Social Networking Sites

Since their introduction, Ewers (2006) says social networking sites (SNS) such as MySpace, Facebook and Twitter have attracted millions of users. Beginning from 2003 many SNSs have been launched such as *Orkut* for Portuguese speaking Brazilians, *MiXi* in Japan, *Lunarstorm* in Sweden, Dutch users embraced *Hyves*, *Grono* captured Poland, *Hi5* was adopted in the smaller Latin American countries, and Europe, *Bebo* took root in the UK, New Zealand and Australia and *Cyworld* took the Korean market (Ewers 2006). China's *QQ* is the largest SNS worldwide with one billion registered user names as of June 2009 (Telco2research 2010).

Established as a Harvard membership only SNS, Facebook began in early 2004 and by September 2005 had expanded its membership to allow anyone interested in joining to do so (Boyd and Ellison, 2008). Facebook allows users to comment on other user's posts creating a conversation visible to all users. By users posting information on their sites or other users sites, having real-time conversations, Facebook enhances interaction between

users. It also has the ability for outside developers to build applications which allow users to personalize their profiles and perform other tasks such as compare movie preferences.

Twitter is another fast growing SNS with almost 200 million users and about 460,000 new Twitter accounts are being opened on a daily basis (Carlston 2011). Established in 2008, the site is about sending small bursts of information called tweets which are limited to 140 characters. Carlston (2011) further adds that the appeal to Twitter is that increasingly news stories that arise such as a tsunami or a plane crash arrive in tweets from people that users follow on Twitter. This allows everyone to essentially create their own newspaper or newscast and to do so instantaneously.

According to Carlston (2011) SNS like Facebook and Twitter have changed how business and politics are conducted. To begin with, political messages used to be controlled by a handful of powerful gatekeepers but with SNS the messengers are diverse hence the messages are also varied and more diffuse. When it comes to business, Carlston (2011) asserts that one way transmission of information is quickly changing into a two-way interaction. Businesses can now communicate real-time messages to the customers they want to reach. Conversely, when customers are unhappy with a product or a service they can spread the word and do damage with a few tweets.

2.4.1 SNS Usage in Kenya and their impact on communication trends

In Kenya SNS are increasingly on the uptake among Kenya's internet users. According to statistics drawn from www.alexa.com, among the top ten most active sites in Kenya, Facebook is the third most active site in Kenya with YouTube as the fifth, Twitter as the

eighth and LinkedIn rounds up the top ten sites. This is due to the fact that of the 10 million Kenyans accessing the internet, over 98% of them use their mobile phones to access the internet. (Communication Commission of Kenya Quarterly Sector Statistics Report, 2010/2011)

SNS's key attractions are their ability to enable users to generate and control content as well as enable user-interactivity in real time. According to Green (2001) the introduction of mobile phones (which are also platforms for accessing SNS) into everyday life has wrought some sociological changes such as encouraging a tendency of short conversations, the introduction of 'timeless time' where users are accessible all the time and introducing opportunities for new conversation that were not there before. These increase the opportunity for organisations to develop meaningful CSR programmes due to the increased accessibility and opportunities for new conversation with the beneficiaries.

Mavonavich (2001) also notes the ability for new media such as SNS to bring previous private mental processes such as reflection, problem solving and recall become available to the public sphere. He further defines the issue of user interactivity as the ability of the internet based technologies such as SNSs to communicate ideas, knowledge and art in much the same way people have always communicated. He contends that because of the choice available on the internet users invariably go in unpredictable directions therefore, interactivity calls for the need for greater commitment to planning, usability and to making the pieces work together than communication has ever demanded before.

The issue of user control over content although much touted should be approached with caution. Sunstein (2000) raises a red flag on this as he declares that when the power to filter is unlimited, people can decide with perfect accuracy what they will and will not encounter (on the internet); they can therefore design very much their own communication universe. This can lead to users being alienated from key issues.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

One of the purposes of literature review is to facilitate the development of a theoretical framework for a study (Nyagah 1995 as cited in Orodho 2009). The importance of a theoretical framework is to bring order, unity and simplicity to what is being investigated. The theoretical background and its knowledge help in clarifying the statement of the problem and the development of plausible explanations (Orodho, 2009). Theoretical framework is made up of a theory or a set of theories which form the background and guide to the investigation in question. Orodho(2009) goes further to define a theory as a reasoned statement or proposition which attempts to explain and predict a general characteristic of a phenomenon. A theory presents a proposition that present a systematic view of a phenomenon.

The use of SNS to communicate falls under computer mediated communication (CMC). CMC is defined by Bubas (2001) as the exchange of information in textual, audio and or video formats that are transmitted via computer and telecommunications technology. In addition he states that the approaches to the study of CMC fall under interpersonal, group and mass communication. Key theories to these approaches include the social presence theory and the media richness theory which shall be applied to this study.

The social presence theory was developed by John Short, Ederyn Williams and Bruce Christie in 1976 and was put forward to explain the effects telecommunications media can have on communication. They defined social presence as the degree of salience which is the quality or state of being there between two communicators using a communication medium. They posited that communication media differ in their degree of social presence and that these differences play an important role in how people interact. From their perspective people perceive some media such as video as having a higher social presence and other media such as audio as having a lower degree of social presence. In essence a medium with a high degree of social presence was seen as being warm, sociable and personal whereas a medium with low degree of social presence was seen as less personal.

In applying the aspects of this theory to SNS, one observes that they enable the user to generate their content and choose which information to absorb. They also enable users to give instant feedback in real time hence enhancing a high state of 'state of being there' between the communicators utilising them. Since SNS users generate their own content. this means that each user utilises these sites for different purposes therefore for each user the experience of being on SNS is unique to them. This makes SNS personal mediums of communication.

The media richness theory was developed by Daft and Lengel in 1984. The theory focuses on the information carrying capacity of media. They expound that this capacity is determined by the extent to which the medium meets four criteria namely: feedback capability, multiple cues/communication channels utilised, language variety and personal

focus (Daft and Lengel, 1984). From the above, one infers that SNS which have instantaneous feedback, which enable users to utilise multiple channels and which enable users to become the primary source of information rather than the target make them a medium rich communication channel because they meet the four criteria of the required information carrying capacity.

These theories put forward the need for communicators to think critically about the means of communication they are going to employ especially in the face of the wide variety of communication channels available in the CMC spectrum. The richer the medium one chooses to employ their communications the more likely a message is to be received in the manner intended.

Daft and Lengel (1984) also posit that high performing middle and upper level managers were those who made more sensitive selection of media in their communication. Since CSR managers are in middle and upper level management, this study based on the social presence and media richness theory will be useful in enhancing their performance.

On the basis of these two theories therefore, SNS would be an effective communication channel in the implementation of CSR programmes of mobile phone service providers.

2.6 Conclusion

CSR has been in practice for more than 4,000 years in some form although the phrase itself came into existence in 1953. Corporate organisations around the world have embraced the practice. In Europe, corporate engage in business philanthropy (Gumbel, 2004). They have also established benchmarks and standards through which

organisations measure their participation in CSR. These benchmarks include standards such as ISO 26000 (Hall, 2008). In the United States tax law incentives and voluntary corporate activities outside of a company's core business are the norm (Matten and Moon, 2007).

Looking at Asia, Birch and Moon (2004) contend that the form and focus of Asian CSR is driven by foundations, voluntarism and partnerships. Community involvement was also found to be the most established form of CSR in Asia.

The African approach to CSR is employed differently across the continent. In South Africa, multinationals and local conglomerates are the biggest proponents of CSR (Meridian Group, 2006). Kenyan corporate organisations engage in variety of CSR activities such as donations and application of benchmarks such as Fair Trade.

The study also traced the emergence of SNS, their unique features such as enhancement of user interactivity and user generated content which promote their uptake. It also examined the effects the SNS has had on communication trends. It has been revealed that SNS are becoming increasingly popular in Kenya. This is due to the fact that SNS are accessible over the mobile which majority of Kenyans use to access the internet.

The social presence theory and the media richness theory formed the theoretical framework of this thesis. The social presence which explains the effects of media on communication emphasizes the quality of being there between two communicators that a medium of communication creates. The media richness theory focuses on the information

carrying capacity of media based on certain criteria. SNS have a high degree of social presence and also fulfil the criteria for medium richness.

In the next chapter the research methodology, which maps out how the research will be carried out, outlining aspects such as sample size and research instruments was tackled.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The chapter presents and justifies the research design, target population, sampling procedure and sample size, research instruments, data collection procedure, data analysis and presentation methods.

3.2 Research Design

Research design is the strategy, the plan and the structure of conducting a research project (Carriger, 2000). Qualitative research is concerned with developing explanations of social phenomena. Hancock (2002) explains that it aims to help us to understand the world in which we live and why things are the way they are. It is concerned with the social aspects of our world and seeks to answer questions about, why people behave the way they do, how opinions and attitudes are formed, how people are affected by the events that go on around them, how and why cultures have developed in the way they have (Hancock, 2002).

In sociology the word survey refers to the study of a population through observation of its members as it has been carried out for ages in censuses. In modern times, most surveys use a sample of members to measure population characteristics as is defined by Jansen (2010). He further describes the survey as a systematic method for gathering information

from (a sample of) entities for the purpose of constructing quantitative descriptors of the attributes of the larger population of which the entities are members.

There is also a qualitative way of defining and investigating variation in populations, however. According to Jansen (2010) the qualitative type of survey does not aim at establishing frequencies, means or other parameters but at determining the diversity of some topic of interest within a given population. This type of survey does not count the number of people with the same characteristic (value of variable) but it establishes the meaningful variation (relevant dimensions and values) within that population (Jansen, 2010).

This study adopted a qualitative survey research design in order to fully explore the research question. The perspective for this study was the modified analytic induction approach to qualitative research. According to Wiersma (1995) in this approach, the researcher starts with specific research questions, identifies virtually all instances of the phenomenon under investigation and explores each case until the researcher arrives at a suitable comprehensive descriptively rich narrative.

The qualitative research interview seeks to describe the meanings of central themes in the life world of the subjects (Hancock, 2002). The main task in interviewing is to understand the meaning of what the interviewees say. A qualitative research interview seeks to cover both a factual and a meaning level though it is usually more difficult to interview on a meaning level. Interviews are useful for getting the story behind a participant's experiences. The interview can pursue in-depth information around the topic. This

research therefore employed standardized, open-ended questions in interview schedules and questionnaires where similar open-ended questions were asked to all the respondents.

3.3 Target Population

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) defines target population as the set of individuals, cases or objects with some form of observable characteristics to which the researcher wanted to generalize the results of the study. The target population consisted of the CEOs of the mobile phone service providers, the CSR managers who run the CSR programmes and the various beneficiaries of the CSR programmes.

The study targeted the CEOs of the mobile phone service providers because they conceptualize and authorize the CSR programmes and the means of communication. The CSR managers were also targeted as they are the personnel in charge of the day to day running of the CSR programmes and the beneficiaries as they are crucial to the success of the programmes.

There are four mobile phone service providers in Kenya all of which have a CSR manager. The beneficiaries for the CSR programmes were selected based on their access and usage of SNS.

The study targeted two mobile phone service providers, Safaricom and Telkom Kenya. This was because the two organisations possessed the various characteristics that were needed for the research. Chief among these was the need for the organisations to be

actively engaged in CSR, which both of these companies is. The study also intended to compare between a mobile service provider with a wide subscriber base and another mobile phone service with a fewer number of subscribers. The other mobile phone service provider such as Yu. is not active with CSR, while Airtel was not forthcoming with information.

Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

Orodho (2009) defines sampling as the process of selecting a sub-set of cases in order to draw conclusions about the entire set. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) further define purposive sampling as a sampling technique that allows a researcher to use cases that have the required information with respect to the objectives of the study. They further state that cases of subjects are therefore handpicked because they are informative or because they possess the required characteristics.

Purposive sampling was therefore used to select the two CEOs and the two CSR managers of the selected mobile service providers because the researcher was interested in collecting information from a mobile phone service provider with a large subscriber base and a mobile phone service provider with a small subscriber base.

Purposive sampling based on accessibility to SNS and guidance from the two mobile phone service providers was used to select the beneficiaries from each mobile service provider. The total sample size was nine respondents.

The researcher's intent was to interview the CEO's of the selected mobile phone service providers. Due to time constraints, the researcher was however referred to appropriate

conversant and involved with the policy making activities of the organisations and provided the requisite information necessary to the researcher. These individuals were the Chief Research Manager at Telkom Kenya and a Trustee of the Safaricom Foundation.

The researcher selected the beneficiaries who are normally active on the internet. Telkom had one such beneficiary organisation namely Text to Change while Safaricom provided four such beneficiaries namely Ennablis, Gender Violence and Recovery Centre, Rhino Ark and Lewa Wildlife Conservancy.

3.4 Research Instruments

The research instruments used in data collection by the researcher were interview schedules and questionnaires. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) explain that interview schedules are a set of questions that an interviewer asks when interviewing. They further state that interview schedules make it possible for a researcher to obtain data required to meet specific objectives of the study. Interviews using interview schedules were conducted with the officials representing the CEO's of the selected organisations and with the CSR managers of the selected mobile phone service providers.

Due to geographical constraints and financial limitations, the researcher could not interview each beneficiary directly but with the CSR managers' assistance issued them with questionnaires with open-ended questions via e-mail. For verification of data, the researcher communicated with the beneficiaries via e-mail.

The researcher used interview schedules to solicit for information from the selected officials representing the CEO's on factors contributing to the use of SNS in the

implementation of CSR programmes (see Appendix I for details of the interview schedule).

This research also used interview schedules to solicit from the CSR managers their experience on the use of SNS in their day-to-day implementation of CSR programmes (See details of the interview schedule in Appendix II).

Questionnaires with open-ended questions were used by the researcher to get information from the beneficiaries on their preference and views on the use of SNS as a tool of communication with the donor organization (see details of the questionnaire in Appendix III).

3.6 Data Collection Procedures

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) state that there are three methods usually used to collect data. The first method is by direct observation where the required behaviour is observed in a particular setting. The second method is participant observation where data are collected by an observer who is a regular, full time participant in the activities being observed. A researcher then compiles long term data through long term interaction with the subjects in the context of their everyday lives. The third is the interview method. This is face-to-face interaction between the researcher and the subjects and the researcher uses an interview schedule.

Mugenda and Mugenda(2003) also define questionnaires with open-ended questions as questions that give respondents complete freedom of response. These free responses permit an individual to respond in his or her own words. They go on further to assert that

respondent's responses give an insight into his or her own feelings, background, hidden motivation, interests and decision. This greater depth of response makes them useful for a qualitative analysis.

Therefore for this research data was collected through the use of interview schedules and questionnaires with open-ended questions. The researcher made arrangements with the officials representing the CEOs and CSR managers to establish rapport with the study participants before the actual date for data collection. The researcher liaised with the CSR manager in selecting the respondents among the CSR beneficiaries.

3.7 Data Analysis Procedures

The qualitative data collected was examined through in-depth description and analytical content analysis. It was then categorised according to the two parties involved in the use of SNS. These are the mobile phone service providers on one side and on the other, the beneficiaries. This data was then presented in narrative form. This means that all the respondents' views were coalesced to fit the above categories.

3.8 Conclusion

The study adopted a qualitative research method. This enabled the researcher to gather holistic data and provide a narrative description. In this case the researcher would be able to find out the factors contributing to the use of SNS in implementing CSR programmes in mobile phone providers from the perspective of the two parties involved: the mobile phone service providers and the beneficiaries.

From the target population of the mobile phone service providers operating in Kenya, the researcher purposely sampled two of the organisations: Safaricom and Telkom Kenya Ltd. In the organisation the researcher intended to interview the CEO's, CSR manager and respective beneficiaries. Due to time constraints the researcher was able to interview officials representing the CEO's and the CSR managers. The researcher could not conduct face to face interviews with the beneficiaries due to geographical constraints. They were therefore issued with questionnaires with open-ended questions.

The data was analysed and presented in narrative form. The following chapter looks at the data gathered, its presentation and interpretation and proceeds to discuss the findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with presentation, interpretation and discussion of findings. The analysis was done based on the use of SNS and consists of two sections; mobile phone service providers and the CSR beneficiaries. The chapter also discusses the findings and how they link with the theoretical framework.

4:2 Use of Social Networking Sites

4.2.1 Perspectives from mobile phone service providers

The researcher interviewed an official representing the CEO from each of the selected mobile phone service providers. These were the Chief Research Manager at Telkom Kenya and a Trustee of the Safaricom Foundation which spearheads Safaricom's CSR activities. The researcher also interviewed a CSR manager from each of the selected mobile phone service provider. These interviews were conducted in each of their respective offices.

A Trustee of the Safaricom Foundation, Mr. Joseph Ogutu was interviewed in his office on 4th August 2011. During the interview, the researcher found out that the Safaricom Foundation engage in CSR as part of the organisations core activities. The Safaricom Trustee pointed out that the Safaricom Foundation has spent over Ksh1 billion since its establishment in 2003 in various CSR projects across the country. The Foundation also has a website which is separate from the company's website. In addition it writes and

distributes an online journal and has a Facebook profile. Profiles on SNS are also created specific to particular programmes to create more awareness for example, Lewa Marathon, where participants engage in games (at that particular period when the race is on) on a site created for that marathon only. "At Safaricom we are involved in the internet and would be very glad to conduct our entire business and philanthropy solely on internet should the circumstances allow. This is a scenario we are working hard to make a reality," the Safaricom Trustee emphasized. Safaricom Foundation, moreover, uses the internet and especially Facebook to implement their CSR programs. "We have found Facebook to be a timely and reliable tool whenever we want to communicate with our beneficiaries," said the Safaricom Foundation Trustee.

The Safaricom Foundation Trustee further revealed that the use of Facebook to implement their CSR is advantageous in many ways. To begin with, it allows for instant feedback from the beneficiaries. For instance, when organising for the annual gala for the Gender for Recovery Centre, communicating on Facebook with the officials in real time on logistics enables the event to be in tandem with what the beneficiary desires, the interviewee further revealed.

Through its presence on SNS sites, the Foundation has been opened up to the reach and accessibility of the younger generation. This is evidenced by the number of inquiries, offers of voluntary services and participation in the Foundation's activities by the younger generation which is mostly done through the SNS sites. It has also broken down a lot of the bureaucracy that would normally clog its operations and created an avenue for new and creative ways for CSR. "It's amazing how a conversation with a beneficiary goes for at least thirty minutes on a chat on Facebook and you have an idea, a plan of

action and you are good to go. Before Facebook, this could even take a month of back and forth writing letters and emails," the Safaricom Foundation Trustee said.

The disadvantage to the use of SNS is that the internet penetration is not uniform across the country. Rural areas such as Nkubu and Isiolo where Safaricom Foundation has ongoing projects have unreliable internet access. Therefore the foundation utilizes other media such as radio and TV to carry out its CSR messages.

The Safaricom Foundation Trustee further added that the "use of SNS will grow exponentially in the next few years as more and more people go online. The youth in Kenya are the majority population and they use the internet almost daily."

The researcher was able to interview the Safaricom Foundation Manager Ms. Sanda Ojiambo in her office on 11th August 2011. She provided invaluable information and added greatly to the research.

In the response to the query on the media used to communicate with the CSR beneficiaries, she revealed that Safaricom had diverse modes of communication. They utilize letters and emails for formal communication. Furthermore they also use Facebook and Twitter for the day-to-day communication with many beneficiaries.

"I have found that whenever I want to create a buzz about a project, I simply put it on Facebook and Twitter and watch the news spread like a wild bush fire," the Foundation Manager said. The interview found out that the sites give 'a real life' feel which enriched the communication experience. "It's almost like sitting in the same room with the person for a chat", the interviewee further added. She went on to explain that using the sites enables the foundation to balance many projects at the same time," I can be going to

Nandi for a project supervision while in the car I'm planning and organising for the another project through these sites which are accessible on my phone." She said.

The disadvantage to Safaricom's use of SNS is the fact that only literate and urban populations have access to the sites and this locks out the rural population who are also crucial beneficiaries of their programs. For instance the Foundation's programmes in disaster relief in northern Kenya whose beneficiaries are in rural Kenya and most of whom are illiterate. "The Ustawi initiative which is based in northern Kenya, the key beneficiaries are mostly illiterate and of course northern Kenya is very disadvantaged in terms of location and infrastructure, therefore we have to engage in communication methods such as local radios which will encompass these communities," the Foundation's Manager explained.

The interview also brought out the fact that CSR beneficiaries are indeed embracing the use of SNS. "Those in a position to do so (use SNS), prefer it to all other modes of communication." The Safaricom Foundation Manager asserted. Nevertheless, the Safaricom respondent felt that there was a misconception that Facebook and Twitter are for teenagers and the like, yet these were great communication tools for all age groups. "Awareness and education on these sites and the use of internet in general as a business tool and not only as a research or entertainment tool as is widely known is sorely needed," the Safaricom Foundation Manager said.

The researcher interviewed the Chief Research Manager Mr Stephen Kirui at Telkom Kenya in his office on 02 August 2011. At the interview, he pointed out that Telkom Kenya engage in CSR as part of the organization's core activities. Telkom Kenya's CSR

is sponsorship oriented with various beneficiaries. The sponsorship ranges from sports teams, music concerts to golf tournaments as well as water provision services in the rural areas.

It was further revealed that the Telkom Kenya's foray into internet is minimal, concentrating mainly on digital marketing which is focused on the youth group, although the organization also maintains a profile on Facebook and Twitter. It has employed staff to regularly update these sites and respond to enquiries, posts and comments from the public. However, The Chief Research Manager of Telkom added that they have not raised awareness on the existence of those sites and the traffic on them is not as they had expected.

The interview also brought out the fact that Telkom mainly uses the mass media as opposed to the internet as it was revealed by the Chief Research Manager. "Since we are a new entrant in the market, we want to create as much noise as possible about our products, therefore our focus is more on radio, TV and the press," he said.

Having cited the use of radio, TV and the press as the media to implement their CSR, he goes further to say that the main advantage of using these media is that they provide a greater reach to the desired audience. The officer further expounds that with these media, there is a certainty in reaching desired target numbers of audiences and the messages can also be distributed according to demographics established by media planners. The disadvantage of this form of media is the lack of personal touch and interaction with the beneficiaries "once you place your message on the radio, TV or newspaper, there is no

possible way of telling how your audience reacts to the message unless you carry out a survey," the Chief Research Manager said.

In agreement with the Safaricom's Trustee's opinions, the Chief Research Manager said that the way forward in the use of SNS is to increase the access and internet penetration to ensure all age groups; both rural and urban populations can easily and affordably access the internet.

"The biggest drawback in us turning to internet completely is that very few people can access it and then only in towns. Making the internet, Facebook and Twitter a primary communication tool would lock out a lot of our potential recipients," the Chief Research Manager of Telkom Kenya said.

The researcher secured an interview with Mr. Tom Odhiambo a communication officer in charge of CSR at Telkom Kenya on 02 August 2011. He was very forthcoming during the interview and provided valuable information. He explained Telkom Kenya's strategy on communicating with their CSR beneficiaries, "Our aim is to reach to those people who are in need and we therefore prefer face to face communication as often as possible to be able to do away with many misconceptions," he said. Some of the CSR initiatives which Telkom engages in, such as blood drive initiatives and national clean-up exercises were sensitive programmes which were better organised using face to face communication.

The disadvantage for Telkom Kenya with the face to face communication that they employ is the time wasting. "A lot of time is spent on the journey itself and meetings. A lot more would be achieved if we could get the benefits of a face to face meeting without enanging location." the Telkom Communication Officer said.

He reiterated that Telkom does have an SNS profile. Although he clarified that this was limited to Facebook and the site was tailored to suit a certain market (the youth) and therefore it was more used as a marketing tool. "The Facebook page we have is updated regularly with information geared to attract a younger market segment and does not necessarily figure solely into our CSR corporate strategy," the Telkom Communication Officer explained.

He concedes that CSR beneficiaries are indeed embracing the use of SNS saying "SNS's are daily being seen as cheaper ways of communicating, especially on mobile phones."

He also offered to the researcher suggestions on the ways to improve the use of SNS. Noting the uneven internet penetration, he stated his opinion saying, "internet penetration is the key to make it cheaper and easily accessible and the results will surprise you." He also added, "the corporate organisations should always have appropriate information at their sites and personnel to man those sites and give instant responses."

4.2.2.1 Findings and Theoretical Framework

The interviews brought out the following findings. First it was revealed that CSR is an integral part of the mobile phone service providers' corporate strategy as both respondents were emphatic that CSR is a critical component of their respective business strategy.

For the larger mobile service provider (in terms of subscriber base) the study revealed that it is deeply involved in the internet, running several websites including SNS while on the other hand the smaller mobile phone service provider (in terms of subscriber base) still largely relied on TV, newspapers and radios. However it does maintain a profile on

an SNS and has staff that maintains and updates the site. This shows that use of the internet and SNS as communication tools can no longer be ignored by corporate organisations.

The study revealed that the need to target and communicate with the key market segment of the youth is a major determining factor as to why corporate organisations are venturing into SNS. It also emerged that the features of SNS are a major contributing factor for their continued uptake. Some of these features include their ability to allow for instant feedback. This feature is particularly amenable as it creates an environment whereby business is conducted quickly and effectively. This feature also gives a 'real-life' experience where users engaged in communication with each other feel as though they are in the same room.

Another contributing factor to the use of SNS that emerged from the study is that SNS enable users to multi-task. This ensures that more work is done in the same amount of time. The nature of CSR programmes also determine the communication tool to be used. Sensitive programmes resort to face to face communication to curtail misunderstanding.

Although acknowledging that SNS are increasingly becoming the preferred mode of communication, it also emerged that the inadequate internet penetration across the country curtails the use of SNS. Since the majority of rural areas cannot access internet, their use of SNS is limited and thus the mobile phone service providers cannot utilise SNS in entirety.

4.2.2.2 Link with Theoretical Framework

Kerlinger 1973 (as cited in Orodho 2009) has defined theory as a set of interrelated constructs, definitions and propositions that presents a systematic view of phenomena by specifying relations among variables with the purpose of explaining and predicting the phenomena. Orodho (2005) goes further to explain that a theory is a generalization or series of generalizations by which we attempt to explain some phenomena in a systematic manner.

Theory provides a guide for systematizing views of the factors under study; it also helps identify gaps, weak points and inconsistencies that serve to alert the researcher about the need for additional research. This study employed the media richness theory and the social presence theory as the theoretical framework. These theories are part of computer mediated communication theories. The media richness theory explains the information carrying capacity of media. It postulates that feedback capability, use of various communication channels for instance audio, video, language variety and personal focus are the criteria through which a communication must possess to be able to effectively communicate.

From the findings, it is clear that SNS have information carrying capacity as based on the theory. Their feedback is instantaneous, one can also utilise various communication channels, as one can post videos, audio and write on the sites and since they depend on user generated content they have language variety and are personal to each user as each user determines who to communicate with.

These features are contributing to the use of SNS in implementing CSR programmes particularly for the larger mobile phone service provider. Yet the study also brought out the fact the nature of CSR programmes also plays a key role in determining which media to use. The smaller mobile service provider still preferred to use face to face communication. This shows that even though a medium can have the capacity to carry information it cannot fully convey human nuances and hence the need to still rely on non-mediated communication.

4.3 Perspectives from the CSR Beneficiaries

The researcher communicated and distributed open-ended questions to Text to Change, a beneficiary of Telkom Kenya. The beneficiary revealed that the primary mode of communication with Telkom apart from face to face meetings is through e-mail. The beneficiary also has a profile on Facebook with which it sometimes communicates with Telkom. On further probing, the beneficiary revealed that there are several advantages to these modes of communication: using e-mails and Facebook makes sending messages instantaneous, it is easy to update and keep track of communication exchanges particularly with e-mail. E-mail and Facebook are also affordable ways of communicating.

Nevertheless their location hinders effective internet connection (their Africa headquarters is in Uganda) and this makes this type of communication unreliable since the connection is inconsistent. The speed of internet connectivity is not also as fast as they would like it to be, therefore face to face meetings becomes a reliable means of communication. The beneficiary recommended that reliable internet connection would

enable it to turn more towards SNS as a form of communication with Telkom Kenya. It was further revealed that, corporate profiles on Facebook and other SNS should be made more interactive and appealing to users, in order to generate more traffic to the sites.

The feedback from the four selected beneficiaries from Safaricom: Ennablis, Gender Violence and Recovery Centre (GVRC), Rhino Ark and Lewa Wildlife Conservancy were informative and added to the research. The organisations revealed that their primary mode of communication with the Safaricom Foundation is through e-mail, Facebook and Twitter profiles.

Through their responses each organisation clarified that they maintained active Facebook and Twitter profiles, with Rhino Ark operating more than one profile. They explained that they usually establish profiles based on the projects they are running to pass certain messages and create awareness. For instance the Rhino Charge project which operates its own website and Facebook profile.

The use of e-mails and SNS was presented as advantageous because they are effective, fast and as the Lewa Wildlife Conservancy respondent put it, 'it brings the Foundation (Safaricom) to my fingertips'. Ennablis revealed that they use Facebook and e-mail because majority of their members are on their organisation's site and these members therefore also keep track of the communication that is going on between the officials and the donor organisation.

This study found that despite the overriding advantages there are also disadvantages of using e-mail, Facebook and Twitter by the Safaricom beneficiaries just as it is with the Telkom beneficiary. The issue of slow internet connection, the need for literacy for one to

be able to use these modes of communication which locks out the illiterate part of the population and monopoly of the SNS by young people are some of the disadvantages across the board. "If older people who have the ability to make and enforce decisions would join the discussions on these sites it would bring a quick closure to most issues which the centre addresses," the Gender Violence and Recovery Centre respondent said.

The beneficiaries also offered suggestions on what could be done to improve the use of

SNS in implementing CSR programmes. One beneficiary suggested that internet connection be improved and be evenly spread across the country. Another beneficiary suggested that awareness be created among older users to encourage them to use SNS. This can be done by the use of mainstream media to encourage people to use SNS.

4.3.1 Findings and Theoretical Framework

The study found that instantaneous feedback is a contributing factor on the use of SNS by the beneficiaries. Affordability was another factor that the study brought out. SNS enable having long conversations which when conducted over SNS are more cost effective.

It also emerged that SNS were effective in getting messages across thus this contributed to their uptake. The fact that users owned the content in the SNS site was a contributing factor as they could monitor and decide what information to share and upload on their sites.

The study also brought out the need for fast and reliable internet connection which if well done would contribute to the increased uptake of SNS. The older generation also need to be made aware of the use of SNS to enable the sites to be an all encompassing medium of communication.

The sense of ownership to the content and form in the chosen communication medium plays an important role in determining what medium to use. The social presence theory defines social presence to be the 'state of being there' between two communicators using a communication medium. Users prefer using a medium with a high social presence. This medium is perceived to be warm, sociable and personal.

Instantaneous feedback and user generation of content make SNS a medium with a high social presence, hence their uptake by the beneficiaries. Lack of access to the medium is the only drawback to the users from wholly adopting SNS as the major communication tool.

4.4 Conclusion

The researcher was able to interview four respondents and e-mailed questionnaires to five respondents. From this information various factors came into light as being the contributing factors to the use of SNS in the implementation of CSR programmes in mobile phone service providers.

The need to reach and access the youth market segment came out as a key factor in the uptake of SNS, the accessibility to the sites was another factor, the affordability of using the sites and the features of SNS such as instant feedback mechanism, they enable users to multi-task and they are driven by user generated content are some of the factors that emerged as leading to the use of SNS.

The study also revealed that internet penetration influences speed of uptake of SNS. Uneven internet penetration and slow connection speeds impede the use of SNS. Lack of awareness by the business community about the use of SNS as a business communication

tool and the exclusion to a large extent of the older generation in the use of SNS were found to also slow down the use of SNS.

The next chapter gives a summary of the above research findings and the conclusions to be drawn from the findings.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

OF THE STUDY

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the research findings. It then gives conclusions derived from the study, the factors contributing to the use of SNS in implementing CSR programmes and finally suggestions for further study.

5.2 Summary

The purpose of this study was to establish the factors that contribute to the use of social networking sites in implementing corporate social responsibility programmes in mobile phone service providers. It was done through comparing mobile firms: Safaricom and Telkom Kenya.

From the background information it was established that Kenyan corporates view CSR as an indispensable management tool. The advances of communication technology have not left Kenyan corporate organisations behind and they utilise the internet in their operations despite the low internet penetration especially in rural Kenya. Mobile phones have enabled access to the internet to the majority of Kenyans.

The literature review explored the practice of CSR around the world. It became clear that the practice of CSR is varied around the world, ranging from standardized benchmarks where CSR is incorporated in an organisation's every operation to corporate philanthropic donations and corporate involvement in community voluntary activities.

The literature review also looked at the emergence of SNS which have revolutionised the way people communicate and how business is conducted. Their features which focus on user generated content and which enable instant feedback as well employment of various communication utilities such as uploading of video and audio have made them popular across the globe enabling them to command hundreds of millions of subscribers and users.

The study was also anchored in a theoretical framework which set out two CMC theories; the social presence theory and the media richness theory. Both theories are concerned with the reason why certain media is preferred over others and they approach this issue from two different angles. The social presence theory approaches this from the aspect of the perception the consumers have of a certain media. This perception is of course created by the features of the media in question. Whereas the media richness theory approaches the question from the angle of the media's capacity to adequately enable communication to occur.

The research was then carried out through interviews and distribution of questionnaires with open-ended questions. This yielded qualitative data which was then analysed and presented in a narrative form and whose findings are summarised below.

5.3 Summary of the findings

The analysis of the data revealed that various factors have contributed to the use of SNS in implementing CSR programmes in mobile phone service providers in Kenya. The most significant factor that attracts users is the SNS feature of instant feedback. This eliminates the bureaucratic processes of communication and hastens the speed of communication.

Another factor that is contributing to increased uptake is the fact that they enable user generated content whereby the user determines their level of engagement and the content that goes into their profiles. SNS also give flexibility of work as they can be accessed on mobile phones and hence enabling users to access them on the go.

The efficiency of the available internet access also encourages users to use the SNS and this is more so reinforced for the beneficiaries when donor organisations become accessible on the SNS. This encourages the beneficiaries to engage with them on that forum. Increased awareness of the use of SNS as a business communication tool is another contributing factor to their use. The type of sponsorships also determine which communication tool to use as some sponsorships deal with sensitive areas and should be handled with caution and therefore hinder their implementation on SNS.

Affordability is another factor that contributes to the use of SNS. Compared to other communication tools, SNS enable users to have long and meaningful conversations without incurring a great expense. They can also engage with several people at the same time at the same cost as communicating with one person.

Attracting and engaging the youth contributes significantly to the mobile phone service providers engaging in SNS as a communication tool. The beneficiary's location also determines whether it will utilise SNS to communicate with donor organisations. Those located in the rural areas where internet connection is not as reliable may not utilises SNS as compared to those based in the urban areas.

5.4 Conclusions

This study draws several conclusions. The features of SNS are enhancing their acceptability and use by the corporate society. These features include their instant feedback mechanism, interactivity, user-friendliness and allow multi-tasking.

Internet penetration and speed in the country is crucial to how corporate organisations and their target beneficiaries use SNS. From the study it is clear that in Kenya, there is a huge disparity between the urban and rural population with the urban areas having access to a much higher speed and variety of internet connection than rural areas. This disparity is causing the corporate organisations to pause in their uptake of SNS as a primary communication tool.

The use of SNS as a communication tool should also be more publicized especially in business forums so as to clear the misconceptions that SNS are for the youth in their pursuit of entertainment. The message should be reinforced that SNS are a reliable business communication tool and the older generation should be encouraged to take up the use of SNS in their communication.

There is need to attract to the youth population which is the large percentage of the population. This is driving the mobile phone operators to engage more actively in SNS as a business communication tool.

In their need to attract the younger population, corporate organisations should not also forget to engage the older generation who are key policy makers and are also an important market segment. They should also be included in the organisations uptake of new communication technologies to ensure that all market segments are included

whenever the organisation is having a conversation. The type of sponsorship also determines which communication tool the mobile phone service providers will use. Sensitive aspects of the sponsorship hinder the use of SNS.

5.5 Recommendations

Various recommendations arise from this study. Firstly, it has been established that corporate success and social welfare are interdependent hence the need for organizations to develop deep linkages between their business strategies and CSR activities (Porter and Kramer, 2006). A corporation's strategies to address different stakeholder groups cannot be determined without communication between the two. Communication helps businesses realize how to define their CSR, strategize and measure success (Ghormley and Falconi, 2010).

The findings show that there is a need for fast and effective communication to occur with both citing the advantages of the instant feedback that SNS provide. This is a key feature that enables SNS to overtake other media in terms of uptake that cannot sustain real time conversation to occur. The study has also shown that usage of SNS is on an upward trend with most sites reporting daily increases of new members. This indicates that SNS as communication tools are not about to decline soon.

It is recommended that corporate organisations increase awareness of their involvement on SNS. Usage of mainstream media to create this awareness is recommended as this will drive traffic to their sites. The organisations should also be in the forefront to lead conversations in these sites. Hence they should ensure the sites are properly manned by

personnel who can engage in meaningful conversation in the sites to maintain credibility in the eyes of the users.

From the study it is clear that majority of the 10 million Kenyans accessing the internet, over 98% of them use their mobile phones to access the internet. (Communication Commission of Kenya Quarterly Sector Statistics Report, 2010/2011) hence mobile phone service providers are strategically positioned to ensure that the disparity of internet connection which hinders complete use of SNS by users is reduced as they also provide internet access on the mobile phones.

The following issues emerged from the study and were suggested for further investigation.

- 1. A study on the impact of SNS on communication trends in Kenya.
- 2. An investigation into the impact of user generated content to corporate organisations communication strategies.
- 3. A study on the effects of the use of SNS has had on mainstream media's media ability to attract revenue from corporate organisations.
- 4. An investigation on how SNS can be utilised as a profitable business communication tool.

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APPENDIX 1

CEO INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

This study aims at finding out some of the factors that contribute to the use of social networking sites in the implementation of corporate social responsibility programmes by mobile phone service providers in Kenya. Your organisation has been selected to participate in this study. The information you provide will be strictly used for the purpose of this study and your identity will be kept confidential. The researcher is grateful for your cooperation.

| • | Does your organisation engage in CSR activities? Please explain your answer. |
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| | Does your organisation use the internet in conducting its communication? |
| | Does your organisation use the internet in conducting its communication: |
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| answer. |
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| Does your organisation have a profile on a social networking site such as facebook of twitter? Please explain your answer. |
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| What are the advantages of the media you are using to implement the CS programmes? |
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| 7. | In your opinion what is the way forward in the use of social networking sites in implementing CSR programmes. |
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APPENDIX II

CSR MANAGER INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

This study aims at finding out some of the factors that contribute to the use of social networking sites in the implementation of corporate social responsibility programs by mobile phone service providers in Kenya. Your organisation has been selected to participate in this study. The information you provide will be strictly used for the purpose of this study and your identity will be kept confidential. The researcher is grateful for you cooperation.

| 1. | Which media do you use to communicate with the CSR beneficiaries? | | | | | | |
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| 2. | Which social networking sites do you use to communicate? Please explain. | | | | | | |
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| 3. | Indicate the advantages of the media you use to implement CSR programmes. | | | | | | |
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| 4. | Indicate the disadvantages of the media you use to implement CSR programmes. |
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| 5. | In your opinion are CSR beneficiaries embracing the use of social networking sites? |
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| 6. | What can be done to improve the use of social networking sites in implementing CSR programmes. |
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APPENDIX III

Beneficiary Questionnaire

This study aims at finding out some of the factors that contribute to the use of social networking sites in the implementation of corporate social responsibility programmes by mobile phone service providers in Kenya. Your organisation has been selected to participate in this study. The information you provide will be strictly used for the purpose of this study and your identity will be kept confidential. The researcher is grateful for you cooperation.

| 4. Do you utiliorganisation? | ize social | networking | g sites in | n your | commi | unication | with | the | donor |
|-------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|--------|--------|-----------|--------|-----|-------|
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| 5. Indicate the organisation. | advantages | s of the r | media yo | u use | to com | municate | with | the | donor |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| 6. Indicate the organisation. | disadvanta | ges of the | media y | ou use | to con | nmunicate | e with | the | donor |
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