

**ASSESSING THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN INTERNAL COMMUNICATION IN
HIGHER EDUCATION AGENCIES: THE CASE OF COMMISSION FOR
UNIVERSITY EDUCATION AND HIGHER EDUCATION LOANS BOARD**

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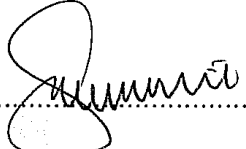
DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for award of degree in any other university or institution of higher learning

Signed  Date 10/11/2016

MUTETHIA MBERIA

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

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DEDICATION

I wish to dedicate this research work to Almighty God because I strongly believe He was and is the major enabler of the tasking work that it demanded. Also, special dedication to my sister Catherine Mberia, my lovely ones Feiza & Karani, my brothers and my parents for their encouragement and support in the entire demanding process of working on this project. May God bless them and make their work fruitful.

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ABSTRACT

This study sought to explore the use of social media in higher education agencies, focusing on the Commission for University Education (CUE) and Higher Education Loans Board (HELB). The study made use of a case study design with mixed methodologies in data collection which comprised of content review of the agencies' social media platforms, questionnaires to members of staff across departments of CUE and HELB, and key informant interviews to the two agencies' Corporate Managers. Findings indicated the presence and use of social media as communication platform in higher education agencies which had been integrated with other corporate communication platforms such as websites, branded materials, seminars & conferences, outreach programmes for synthesized and mainstreamed corporate message. However, in the integration process, the findings informed that it should carefully be done so as not to lose the distinct respective corporate identities. An intra and inter working approach need also to be devised for ownership and inclusivity in the management of the social media platforms. Communication Offices were viewed as best suited to champion management of the higher education agencies' respective social media platforms. The study also found out the need to constitute Corporate Communication Advisory Committees whose membership should be drawn from functional areas of the higher education agencies as per the agencies organizational structures. The Management (decision makers) of the higher education agencies having been found not to be fully supporting the management of social media platforms, there was need for the Management to be part of the team driving the use of social media in the agencies under their leadership. The decision makers would participate by such means as membership to the Advisory Committees, commit the necessary resources as well as designate a team with clear terms of reference to be fully responsible in the managing their respective social media platforms. Further, the study established that there was general lack of knowledge of social media related policies despite them being in place in the HE agencies with majority not adhering to the requirements of the social media related policies. The study also identified various benefits to the higher education agencies in their use of social media to communicate. Such included them being a vital feedback tool, resolve inquiries and complaints and communicate higher education agencies' various services and events. A number of challenges and risks such as cyber attacks, staff apathy, lack of requisite infrastructure were identified to affect the use of HE agencies' social media. Measures such as regular monitoring, putting in place guidelines on social media operations, lobbying for Management support, training of staff, provision of requisite hard and software infrastructure were proposed to mitigate against the challenges and risks to better corporate communication efforts of using social media communication in higher education agencies.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BoMs:	Boards of Management
CHE:	Commission for Higher Education
CUE:	Commission for University Education
EAC:	East Africa Community
HE:	Higher Education
HELB:	Higher Education Loans Board
ICT:	Information Communication Technologies
IUCEA:	Inter- University Council of East Africa
KNBS:	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
KUCCPS:	The Kenya Universities and Colleges Central Placement Service
LIA:	Letter of Interim Authority
NACOSTI:	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
NCS &T:	National Council for Science and Technology
NGOs:	Non-Governmental Organisations
PEoU:	Ease of Use
PR:	Public Relations
PRSA:	Public Relations Society of America
PSSIs:	Post-Secondary School Institutions
PU:	Perceived Usefulness
S, T& I:	Science, Technology and Innovation
SNS:	Social Network Sites
SP:	Strategic Plan
TAM:	Technology Acceptance Model
TVET:	Technical and Vocational Training
UE:	University Education

CHAPTER ONE

OVERVIEW SOCIAL MEDIA AS CORPORATE COMMUNICATION PLATFORM

1.1 Background of the study

Social media has turned out to be an accepted way of communication. Ellison & Boyd (2007) define social networking sites as web-based service that allows users to: create public or semi-public profile in a system, share a connection, view and cross-list their relationship with others in a system. Social media applications are classified according to their functions such as blogs (word press), intranets, podcasts, video sharing (You Tube), photo sharing (Flickr), social network (Facebook, My Space) wikis (Wikipedia), micro blogging (twitter) among others (Hearn et al, 2008). The complete.com website in 2009 ranked Twitter and Facebook as one of the top social media platforms worldwide with most active users being youngsters recording a monthly usage of 180 billion members with a consumption of 180 terabytes worth of data annually.

Social media came into the fore after introduction of web 2.0 technologies. Hamza & Mustafa (2011) notes that social media has resulted into new forms of social interaction in the cyberspace that has ability to transmit multimedia content and ease interaction between the creators and the target audience. These new media further observes Van Dijk (2006), have led to a new way of communication that consolidates mass and interpersonal communication into new interactivities like chat groups, virtual groups and online communities. The new media platforms have changed human communication. Hamza & Mustafa (2007) further observe that social media can afford users ability to easily “consume (read, listen, watch, download, search, buy), create (personalize, aggregate, contribute), share (publish, upload) facilitate (tag, recommend) and communicate (send, post comments, chat, rate)”.

Through various platforms like blogs, portals, forum, galleries, Ellison & Boyd (2007) observes that users can connect with each other thereby creating an online community. This community further progresses through connection into a communities in the cyberspace. This, Ellison & Boyd notes becomes a utility for people with similar interests to connect with each other creating new relationships as well as expanding existing social networks. Social media further argues Ellison & Boyd, is an area that has attracted interest from scholars from varied disciplines. Hamza & Mustafa (2011) agree with this assertion noting that social media has

provided a modern platform for mass participation that “besides being a reference ‘library’ for all forms of knowledge, this medium is also used as an effective social interaction”.

Technological advancement has played a key role in hosting social media as McLuhan points out in the four eras of technological evolution (McQuail, 2001). This evolution, especially the fifth emerging era; electronic phase, has been observed to be transforming all aspects of human life with the help of computerized and digital technology.

Social media uptake has lately registered upsurge in numbers. Statistics from internetlive.com in August 2016, recorded that there were over 3.4 billion internet users with over 1.3 billion internet traffic daily. Additionally, there were over 2 billion active users of Facebook and Twitter with Facebook accounting for over 1.7 billion active users while Twitter had 306 million users. ComScore world matrix records in April 2016, over 734 million users were using at least one social networking site. Comscore in 2008 further recorded over two thirds of global internet users visiting networking sites. VisualEconomic.com report records countries with most internet usage with 80% in Brazil, 73% Italy, 75% Spain, 70% Japan, United States at 67%, same with France, 69 % in United Kingdom and Germany and Switzerland sharing a 51% mark.

A report released by social bakers in August 2014, (www.socialbakers.com) indicates social media usage by various personalities and brands in respect to their membership on social media. Kenyan media houses online platforms led the rest with Nation Media Group having a following of 1,733,2013, KTN with 1,587,471, Citizen TV with close to 1.4 million with digital TV, Zuku accounting for over 1.5 million.

Personalities in Kenya also had a share of online ‘fan base’ with Actress Lupita Ngong’o having over 1.3 million while Kenyan comedian Daniel Ndambuki had over 1.2 million. It is evident that social media has moved from individual use to corporates. Corporates have now shifted to enhance communication efforts by using the new media. The social media platforms have given corporates an opportunity to directly and instantly engage its publics for varied reasons. Companies around the globe are embracing and adopting social media for many different intentions. Some of which being: customer service, marketing, internal communication, public relations and social responsibility (Vasquez, 2011). Social media has created opportunities for organizations to have interactive conversations with stakeholders (Sweetser, 2010) which also accords as noted by Argenti (2006) the companies means to gauge effectiveness of communication process. In today’s world, notes Matthews (2010), the success or failure of any company hinges on the way it communicates to the key stakeholders such as investors, consumers, employees and members of immediate community.

HE agencies in Kenya play a pivotal role in the economy (CUE S.P., 2014). Vision 2030 places ST&I at the centre of Kenya’s social economic transformation. The changing environment calls for the higher education to embrace new platforms such as social media in order to meet communication expectations of their target audience particularly the youth. Higher education agencies have varied mandate. For instance, CUE is mandated to promote the objectives of university education, by regulating and accrediting universities and programmes by setting standards and guidelines. HELB is charged with management of funding of higher education sector. In order for HE agencies to satisfactorily discharge their mandate, the agencies have to keep pace with changing education environment. One of the major changes that the higher education has to contend with is the technological advancement. To meet this expectation it is therefore vital that the agencies embrace technology in their operations.

Social media is a new technological platform higher education agencies need to leverage on. One of the major recipients of services of higher education agencies are students aged between 18-25 years most of which are undergraduate students. Studies show such an age group is versatile and optimistic and is always eager to try something new. Hamza & Mustafa (2011) in a study found out that online activities such as play games, use applications, send private messages, discussion over various topics are predominant online activities among the youth. Further a US online study by Horrigan (2009), www.pewinterest.org reported 70 % of youth between 18 and 30 years use social media as part of communication activities, 93% of which are teenagers, 65% of which use SNS daily. The older generation of above 50 years has also embraced social media. A study by Madden (2010) in the US showed that the social media use by over 50 year olds had nearly doubled from April 2009 and May 2010; from 22% to about 42 %. The study notes persons above 50 years rely on social network platforms as a primary means of communicating to friends, family and colleagues. Further, silicon.com in 2010 report recorded that there were more 10 billion social media accounts, 4.5 billion being active. In the Kenyan market, smart phones, tablets and iPads and other internet enabled gadgets have also become widely available. Corporate managers have therefore a task to tap into the new platform of communication.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Scholars have recorded social media as a key platform for corporate communication. Matthews (2010) notes that social media has revolutionised corporate communication, rapidly changing its strategies especially on how corporate messages are distributed and measured. Platforms such as Twitter, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, Badoo, and Instagram among others had registered increased subscriptions since their invention. Lately, social media have been a preferred electronic mode of communication among the youth with young adults between 18-29 years, 81% being active users (Lerhart, Purcell, Smith, & Zickuhr, 2010).

Hamza & Mustafa (2011) note that new media has expanded space and time of communication by stretching interaction with individuals and groups outside confines of physical environment to create, maintain and enhance their social relationships. Citing ComScore, Hamza & Mustafa (2011) indicated the prevalence of active users of social media by

the youth with Facebook leading accounting for over 370 million, My Space 123 million, Orkut 55 million, Twitter 52 million.

Ellison & Boyd (2011) noted that new media was involved in vital avenues for corporate communication as it provided users abilities for collaboration, participation, interactivity and engagement between the organization and its stakeholders.

However, the important role social media play to communicate corporate messages; studies have pointed some pitfalls that befell social media use. For instance, Matthews (2010) found out in his study of 900 respondents on how social media has been used for corporate communication that most questions still remain to be answered by public relations practitioners. Such concerns were on which best tactics to employ and on the proper way to perpetuate the ever changing industry of corporate communication. Gomez & Velez (2011) further identify another concern in the social media communication noting that despite the wealth of communication opportunities of the social media communication, they have not been fully utilized by higher education institutions. Ellison & Boyd (2007) further recommended that there is need for scholars to study social media which they term as “still waters that still remain to be explored.” Ellison & Boyd further add, “Scholars still had a limited understanding of who is and who is not using these sites, why and for what purpose ...”

In the context of Kenya, from reviewing the content of the target HE agencies, the study found out that HE had active social media accounts that they were utilizing to communicate their various messages mostly via Facebook and Twitter platforms. However, there were relatively low numbers of users and level of activity as further confirmed by their Corporate Communication Managers and also demonstrated. This pointed to a possible underutilization as compared to other corporate institutions such as telephony industry, banking sector, media houses and even personalities whose upon the review of their respective accounts indicate huge numbers of following and up to date content.

These concerns pointed out in this problem statement section point to a gap in the overall internal management of the HE’s social media platforms. The observations therefore gave the reason to carry out the study to explore the use, benefits as well as the challenges of HE agencies use of social media as a platform for corporate communication. This is reiterated by Gomez &

Velez (2011) who pointed out the fact that higher institutions had underutilized their social media platforms.

1.3 Objectives of the study

1.3.1 General objective

The general objective of the study was to assess the use of social media in internal communication in higher education focusing on CUE and HELB.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study were:

- i) To examine the utilization of social media platforms in higher education agencies in Kenya
- ii) To assess the benefits of social media use to the higher education agencies in Kenya
- iii) To explore challenges higher education agencies face in utilizing social media as a corporate communication tool

1.4 Research questions

The study's research questions were among others the following:

- i) In what ways are social media platforms being used by higher education agencies in Kenya?
- ii) What are the benefits of using social media platforms by higher education agencies in Kenya to their stakeholders?
- iii) What challenges do higher education agencies experience in using social media platforms?

1.5 Limitation of the study

Lack of assessment from external publics which would have given an assessment from an external publics' perspective is one of the limitation of the study. The approach to take the internal publics perspective was to appraise state of affairs in the use of the social media platforms as their internal corporate communication tools. It was also to manage the scope of the study. Time was also a limiting factor to the study especially because of the widespread of the stakeholders of Higher education agencies. If there were sufficient resources, much more external publics would have been studied. In that respect, financial resources was also identified a limiting factor to the study.

1.6 Scope of the study

The main purpose of this study was to assess the use of social media as an internal communication platform in higher education focusing on CUE and HELB. The study examined the social media use of the two institutions from an internal publics' perspective. Specifically, the study investigated aspects such as which social media platforms are in place, how they are managed, who is responsible for their daily operations, what have they been used for, what benefits have higher education agencies gained as well the challenges CUE and HELB have experienced in using the social media platforms. Data of the study was obtained from Communications Managers, content review of the social media accounts and responses from a representative sample of members of staff across divisions, departments and units of CUE and HELB.

1.7 Justification of the topic

Given the critical mandate the sector plays in economic and social- economic being of the nation, the study sought to explore how social media has been used by CUE and HELB to attain their HE mandate. The day's national government has placed a lot of premise on streamlining and transforming higher education sector. One of the key way is using modern communication technologies in their operations hence communication becomes an enabler of higher education agencies' attaining their mandate. Social media communication has emerged to further this endeavor. The study therefore, was premised on the fact that this is the moment to gauge the extent to which this has been done. HE agencies have also a mandate drawn from various national policies among them the *Kenya Vision 2030* and the *Sessional Paper No. 14 of 2012*

which places communication central in transforming higher education sector. These, in addition to specific the objectives of the study were the reasons this study was undertaken.

1.8 Value of the study

The findings of the study recommended interventions to mitigate against key gaps identified. Such were: To inform ways enhancing the management of the commonly used social media platforms by HE agencies, to tap immense opportunities social media has on the corporate communication while blending the other traditional communication avenues. The study also sought to inform ways of enhancing the HE agencies identity and brand by ways of standing out as social communicators. The study also intended to guide on measures to be put in place to align social media communication with the communication policies of higher education agencies. The study too sought to take stock of the state of affairs of professionalism and training in handling corporate social media platforms in HE agencies as well as to recommend the role of HE agencies' Management (the decision makers) in appropriately and effectively utilizing social media as communication avenues.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Overview of the chapter

The chapter examines information from various information sources such books, peer reviewed journals and articles in the area of interest, relevant legislation, related policies and various guidelines related to the topic. Specific areas of focus in the chapter included the overview of education sector, the higher landscape and its link with ICTs and social media, the corporate communication and its universal roles and the relationship between social media and corporate communication. The chapter also details the theoretical framework that informed the study.

2.1 The higher education agencies used in the study

There are a number of higher education agencies in Kenya. Sessional paper no. 14 of 2012 categorizes the agencies as the ones that manages technical, vocational and university education sub-sectors. Such in Kenya includes CUE, HELB, The Kenya Universities and Colleges Central Placement Service, The National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation, The Technical and Education Vocational and Training Authority, The National Qualification Framework Authority, The National Research Fund among others. They are legal higher education agencies established by Acts of Parliament as body corporates and common seal. Their respective legal framework allows the higher education agencies to legally undertake functions under their laws of establishment.

CUE was established by the Universities Act, No. 42 of 2012. CUE is a successor to the CHE which existed immediately before the enactment of the Universities Act in December 2012. This was after the repealing of the Universities Act Cap.210B of 1985, the law that had established CHE (Universities Act, 2012).

Enactment of the Universities Act expanded the mandate of CUE to regulate both private and public universities. Public universities before the coming into effect of the Universities Act operated under their respective Acts of Parliament. This regulatory function is enshrined under the functions of CUE which are fourteen in total as stipulated in Section 5 of the Universities Act, 2012.

The mandate of CUE is to ensure the maintenance of standards, quality and relevance in all aspects of university education, training and research. This mandate is steered by the mission of CUE “to regulate and assure quality university education by setting standards & guidelines and monitoring compliance to achieve global competitiveness,” (CUE Strategic Plan 2014-18).

CUE views itself as a key partner with stakeholder which it engages with in all its operations in discharging its mandate as part of consultative process. Among the main stakeholders and partners are: universities, university students, researchers and research institutions, development partners, investors in UE, service providers, professional bodies and aligned government agencies which are of interest to this proposed study (CUE Service Charter, 2015-2016). CUE currently regulates sixty seven public universities categorised as private, public universities, university constituent colleges and universities operating with LIAs.

HELB was also the other HE agency that study targeted. HELB is a body corporate established under the Higher Education Loans Management Act, Cap 213A of 1995, laws of Kenya. The law was revised in 2012. According to information available on HELB website (www.helb.co.ke), the Board is mandated “to disburse loans, bursaries and scholarship to students pursuing higher education in recognized institutions”. Key among the responsibilities of the Board is sourcing funds, establishing, managing and awarding loans bursaries and scholarships to Kenyans pursuing higher education in recognized institutions.

Among HELB’s key functions is to grant loans and bursaries to assist Kenyan students pursue higher education in recognised institutions of higher learning within and outside Kenya (HELB Act, 2012). Section 11 of the HELB Act establishes Higher Education Loans Fund which has now been turned into a revolving fund to ease dependence of funds from the exchequer (www.helb.co.ke). The kitty according to article 7 of the Act is operationalised through a standing Committee, The Loans, Disbursement and Recovery.

2.2 Overview of education sector in Kenya

Education is the primary means of social mobility, national cohesion and social economic well-being. The Kenyan government since independence has strived to provide quality education to the citizenry (Sessional Paper 14, 2012). To equip learners with necessary skills to compete

favourably with their counterparts across the world, the government has continued the reform agenda in education and training to respond to the emerging issues in the sector.

Education and training in Kenya according to Sessional paper no. 14 of 2012 is broadly categorized as basic education, TVET and university education. In terms of period of study, education and training is apportioned as follows: Pre-school-two years, primary education- eight years, secondary education- four years, TVET education- 2-3 years and UE- 4 years. The structure is a result of numerous changes proposed in the education system since Kenya's independence. This has been worked out through various Commissions, Task Forces and specialized Committees.

Among the highlight of the reports from the working teams that has made impact on education and training include: Kenya Education Commission report of 1964 (to shape education form colonial masters responsive to the need of independent Kenya), The Mackay report of 1981 (led to the expansion of PSSIs, establishment of a second university in Kenya and introduction of 8-4-4 system), The report on the Presidential Working Party on Education and Manpower Training for the Next Decade and beyond/ Kamunge report of 1988 (focused on improving financing, quality and relevance, introducing cost-sharing concept), Koech Report of 2000 (focused on fostering national cohesion through education and sought means of accelerating technological and industrial development in education) and the final one being the Sessional Paper No 1 of 2005 which led to Sector Wide Approach to Planning (SWAP) which emphasized on equity, quality, relevance and strengthening governance and management (Sessional Paper no. 14, 2012).

The study concerned itself with higher education which lies in the category of TVET, UE and the institutions that service the higher education sector. The Kenya's Vision 2030 which seeks to make Kenya a newly industrializing, middle income country, providing high quality life for all citizens (Vision 2030). HE sector sits at the core in realizing this commitment of the country's roadmap. Furthermore, the Kenyan Constitution requires of the HE sector. For instance, Schedule 4 of the Constitution mandates National Government to develop education policies, standards, curricula, examinations, granting of university charters among others (Constitution of Kenya, 2010). Under the fundamental rights as stipulated in Bill of Rights, Chapter 4, specifically articles 20, 35, 42 and 43 of the Constitution amplifies the fact that every

Kenyan has a right to education as well as access to education including the marginalized groups (women, youth and persons with disabilities).

2.3 The Higher Education Landscape

The higher education sector in the recent past has witnessed unprecedented transformation not only in Kenya but also across EAC partners states. IUCEA report (2014) records among the key achievements made by the partner states which work under the coordination of the IUCEA, is ensuring a highly trained and innovative academic staff in the region. The report further notes a lot still remain to be done and the focus in the next two decades will be to transform human resources, capacity and create vibrant research and innovation systems.

Among the regional efforts that have been made to transform the sector include: development of Mutual Recognition Academic Qualifications Protocol thereby creating mobility of students and faculties across the partner states, development of Credit Transfer Systems (CATS) which create s minimum requirements for transfer of learners' credits across recognized institutions of higher learning in the region, development of East African Qualification Framework for Higher Education (ECQFHE), joint research ventures, capacity building for staff in HE among others (IUCEA draft report EAQFHE, 2014; HR Development Report, 2014).

A draft IUCEA study report in 2014 defines higher education institutions in Kenya to include teacher training colleges, trade, technical and vocational institutions, pre-university academic offering institutions, chartered private and public universities, NGOs, regulatory, admission, research and financial agencies among others.

2.4 ICT in Higher Education

ICT has been singled out a key driver of education advancement in higher education to keep pace with the 21st century trend characterized knowledge, innovation and skills development. Sessional paper No. 14 of 2012 notes ICTs play a key role in transforming education access and address challenges of access, quality and relevance. The ICTs in higher education the Sessional paper states, have two key objectives: (1) to promote research, innovation and knowledge creation and sharing and (2) to increase access to higher education through e-learning and e-services. From the emphasis laid here it is apparent that the entire

education sector depends on ICTs in their service to their clients. It is the interest of the study to seek the extent to which the target higher education institutions have lived up to this expectation in respect to social media use in their corporate communication efforts.

2.5 Corporate Communication

Corporate communication is said to be at the core of organizational existence. It is the medium through which companies access resources they need for operation (Riel & Fombrun, 2007). Corporate communication has varied definitions, the study adopted the definition that corporate communication “as a set of activities involved in managing and orchestrating all internal and external communications aimed at creating favorable stand points with stakeholders on which the company depends” (Riel & Fombrun, 2007).

The definition invites Jackson, (1987) argument which he warns that the concept should be corporate “communication”; singular form and not “communications” as the latter implies proliferation of methods in telling the corporate story which defeats the key focus of an integrated approach that is the essence of corporate communication. This integrated approach gives chance to the application of corporate communication tools. Hatch, Scultz and Larsen, (2001) highlights them as: visual systems (sometimes referred as house style), integrated marketing communications, reliance of coordinating team and adoption of centralized planning system.

The tools, the writers note play a key role expressing organisation’s distinct messages thereby achieving common stand points in projecting corporate identity, brand and strategy to the stakeholders. Corporate communication according to Riel & Fombrum (2007), has its roots to the word “corporate” derived from Latin word “corpus” meaning “body” or “the whole” (Riel & Fombrun, 2007, p. 22). It therefore follows that corporate communication should be pursued by looking at the problems of the organisation as a whole. If this is the perspective, the authors observe corporate communication becomes handy in attaining organizational objectives.

Corporate communication has evolved over the years. In 1980's it was inspired by consulting firms focusing on image campaigns in order to appeal to audiences recommending increased uniformity in communication policies Riel & Fombrun (2007) observes. At this phase, corporate communication was synonymous to "monolithic identity" depending on advertising as the single strategy of strengthening corporate brands. This later gave way to the realization that "uniformity" is not the only means of overall communication and companies begun to take lead in having in house communication specialists who better understands their respective corporate environments (Riel & Fombrun, 2007).

2.5.1 Tasks of Corporate Communication

Corporate communication rests on the corporate communication officers. Key among the specific tasks of corporate communication as Riel & Fombrun (2007) further highlights are: to flesh-out company profile (corporate branding), to develop strategies that minimize discrepancy between organizational desired identity and brand features, to assign tasks in the field of communication, to formulate corporate communication policies as well as to rally internal and external public in supporting corporate objectives.

Two-way communication is very important in an organization's communication strategy, further argues Riel & Fombrun (2007). The authors note that two-way communication enable organization tap into all its primary resources (capital, labour, raw materials) and its secondary resources (legitimacy and reputation). The authors observe the organizations must guard against these resources through various means including lobbying, directly communicating to the relevant stakeholders and building alliances. This they note creates a hospitable and enabling environment in which organisation operate.

Corporate communications also sits at the heart of organizational performance. The success of an organization is dependent on how well and professionally a company communicates with the key stakeholders (Riel & Fombrun, 2007). This is aided by the choice of organization's communication system. A communication system is defined as a "multiple tactical and strategic media an organization relies on to communicate with its stakeholders, as well the message it chooses to diffuse through those media". The communication should be encompassing including marketing communications, public relations, investor relations and employee relations. It also includes the kinds of institutional communications an organization makes that are created to influence how issues are framed and public debate that results to it, (Riel & Fombrun, 2007). In general, the authors note communication strategy demonstrates "social responsibility" and "good citizenship"; key deeds crucial in helping a company build favourable and welcome social environment for its routine undertaking.

Corporate communication can be viewed as "coherent approach to development of communications in an organisation, one that communication specialists advise can be adopted to streamline their own communication activities by working from a centrally coordinated strategic framework, (Riel & Fombrun, 2007 p.22). This can be achieved by borrowing what scholars have noted as "pushers" of corporate brands to visibility and relevance. They include: Information availability, media mania, advertising saturation, production commoditization and globalization.

2.6 Evolution of social media

Social media can largely be attributed to invention of web 2.0 technologies. Web 2.0 as noted by Visser, (2010) was a term coined by IT consultant Darcy DiNucci in 1999 and popularised in 2004 by O'Reilly. Hamzah & Mustafa (2011) refers to the second generation of web development to host social media platforms. Today the era of numerous SNSs have attracted millions of users worldwide who have integrated them into their daily activities (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). The social networking sites have attracted varied audiences based on a number of factors such as: shared interests, political persuasions, common language, shared racial, sexual, religious or even national identities.

SixDegrees.com was recorded as the first recognisable SNS launched in 1997. This platform allowed users to create profiles, list friends, most of which was used for online dating. Six Degrees.com initially gained a lot of popularity attracting millions of users but failed to sustain business and forced to terminate its services in 2000. To Boyd & Ellison, the period between 1997 and 2001 a host of other SNS were invented. Such were AsianAvenue, BlackPlanet, Migente and Live Journal. Most of these were used as dating sites just like the SixDegrees, besides allowing creation of personal and professional profiles. Live Journal which is one-directional connection could allow connected friend access journals of each other. In 2001 Korean-based Cyberworld was launched same year the Swedish LunarStorm joined the SNS fraternity. Skog (2007) observes LunarStorm could additionally afford users to list friends in guest books and diarise friends in diary pages.

The next wave of SNS entry was fashioned on business. This was upon invention of Ryze.com in 2001. Ryze.com according to Scott (2007) was meant to help people of San Francisco leverage on their business networks. Interestingly, other SNS joined Ryze.com as they viewed each other closely intertwined to support each other without competing (Festa, 2003). The three were Tribe.net, LinkedIn, and Friendster. These targeted different niche market. Over time the three recorded completely contrasting successes, Tribe.net becoming an attraction passionate niche base, LinkedIn becoming a powerful business platform while Friendster as Chafkin (2007) observes “Friendster became the most significant, if only as one of the biggest disappointments in internet history”. This is in reference to Friendster hit by myriad technical and social difficulties. Some of which were occasioned by ill-equipped servers and databases thereby frustrating users most of which replaced it with email (Boyd, 2006).

Friendster which is also an online dating platform had more features than other online dating SNSs. One of the main distinct features was the design to allow “friend-of- friends” meet based on the assumption that parties who initially knew each other could make better romantic partners as compared to other SNS which allowed strangers to meet (Abrams, 2007). This feature as Boyd (2004) puts, made Friendster grow in numbers to about 300,000 users. MySpace was launched in Santa Monica, California in 2003. MySpace took advantage of difficulties experienced by Friendster adopting most of its users. MySpace further differentiated itself by allowing users to personalise their pages without restricting users from adding HTML into forms that framed their profiles (Perkel, in press). Different SNSs had users in different regions/ countries. For instance MySpace had majority users in the US, Friendster in Pacific Islands, Orkut in Brazil and India (Madhavan, 2007). LunarStorm had major attraction in Sweden.

The year 2003 onward, many new SNSs were launched with Shirky (2003), a social software analyst coining the term YASNS- “Yet Another Social Networking Service” to describe the phenomenon. The entry of MySpace and Facebook joining already existing Friendster as noted by Boyd & Elison (2007) are arguably the defining moments for social media platforms that has shaped business, culture and research landscape. Most of the new SNSs were niche-based which later spread to broader audiences. Facebook is such a SNS. Facebook was formed to serve a distinct Harvard College in 2004 (Cassidy, 2006). This later changed in 2005 when Facebook expanded to include high schools, professional inside corporate networks and eventually, to everyone.

Twitter, the name inspired by the photo-sharing site, Flickr, and other considerations was invented in 2006 by programmers who worked at the Odeo Inc. in San Francisco, California. Twitter has emerged as one of the next revolution after FB becoming one of the most popular social media platform that even creators did not know the magnitude of the site. “It was just looking for a way to send text messages on their cell phones and a way to reinvent a somewhat dying company (socialeconomics.com, 2013).

It began with a programmer's tweet and within no time "It would be the beginning of a revolution (Boyd & Elison, 2007). Now people from all over the world of different fields and professions have twitter as a platform for communicating". It should be noted while most of the SNSs focus on growing numbers, there are others that seek narrower audiences. Such include SmallWorld and BeautifulPeople which intentionally restrict their users to the elite and selective few. Others are CouchSurfing, BlackPlanet, My Church-Demographic targeted with Ning which encourages users to create their own SNSs (Boyd & Elison, 2007). Instant messaging inventions like WhatsApp, 2go, have lately joined the media platforms and have since become popular with many users (Matthews, 2010).

2.7 Categories of social media

Television Bureau of Advertising, Inc., 2009 cited in Matthews (2010) categorises social media into blogs (blogger, word press), intranets, podcasts, video sharing (You Tube), photo sharing (Flickr), social network (Facebook, MySpace), wikis (Wikipedia), micro blogging (twitter), video conferencing, instant message chats (Whatapp, 2go), book marking sites (Delicious, Digg) among others.

The complete.com website in 2009 ranked Twitter and Facebook as some of the top social media platforms worldwide with most active users being youngsters recording a monthly usage of 180 billion members with a whooping consumption of 180 terabytes worth of data annually.

2.7.1 Internet use scenario

World over, more people are using internet for various reasons. World Internet Statistics (www.internetworldstat.com) record in 2016, over 3.6 billion users were using internet accounting for 42% of the global population. In Africa, according to the world internet statistics in the same period close to 440 million users were on the internet representing 28.6 % of the world population.

Kenya fairs fairly well among the leading countries in Africa in internet use. Internet Statistics further record that in 2016, there were over 31 million internet users representing 68% of the estimated 46 million population. This ranks Kenya at position 4 of the top 10 countries Africa with highest number of internet users. Nigeria leads in Africa with over 70 million users, Egypt 2nd with 46 million users, South Africa being third with close to 25 million users with Morocco closing the top five countries in the continent with over 20 million users.

2.8 Social media and corporate communication

Social media has injected new blood into the corporate communication scenery (Laura, 2010). Corporates have now turned to social media in relaying their corporate messages directly and instantly to stakeholders. This as Laura observes, has afforded a shift from tradition one-way communication to an expanded dialogical engagement between the company and the stakeholders. Corporate communication via social media platforms as concurs Vasquez & Velez (2011) has resulted into companies around the globe embrace and adopt social media for customer service, marketing, internal communication, public relations and even corporate social responsibility.

Social media has afforded companies to respond to the active consumers of their services and operations. Vasquez & Velez (2011) notes that social media today has changed the engagement terms on how companies and stakeholders communicate on daily basis. The authors further observe social media has become a strategic communication partner providing new and unique possibilities organisations converse with stakeholders to cater for new digital era of active consumers.

A number of studies point to this direction, a phenomenon that the study sought to put into context. For instance a study by Vasquez & Velez (2011) involving content analysis of 400 locally owned Puerto Rican companies in 2009 to determine the extent to which Puerto Rican companies use social media as strategic tools for enhancing corporate communication and promoting interactivity with stakeholders. Results of the study indicated most of the studied companies were not fully utilising their social media accounts. It was noted from the study though many Puerto Rican companies used their FB and Twitter accounts, they merely posted information without constantly responding to “tweets” and “posts” from their stakeholders. The study recommended need to have two-way symmetrical communication model (Rybalko and Seltzer, 2010) and “companies must monitor their own social media presence to ensure consistent brand messages and also measure impact of their social media engagement.

Burson Marsteller study in 2010 (www.bursonmarsteller.com) sought to establish social media presence among global corporate organisations. Of the 100 companies studied, 79% of the global companies and 86% of US companies had at least one social media account. The same study conducted in Latin America and Caribbean organisations showed that 49% of the Latin and Caribbean organisations have one or more social media platform.

The way corporate organisations communicate through social media has also been studied. A longitudinal study of over 4 years by Wright & Hinson (2010) sought to find out how emerging technologies had had an impact on corporate communications. The study found out that 83% of the respondents indicated their social media had greatly improved corporate communication contrasted with their previous studies which had 73% in 2009, 61% in 2008 and 58% in 2007.

Additional studies on how effectively companies use social media to engage stakeholders further cement the importance of social media platforms. Sweetser (2010) noted that social media platforms create opportunities for companies to have real conversations with internal and external stakeholders. Sweetser further notes that social media accords a company a chance to be the watchdogs and track organisational behaviour. Sweetser concludes “is a good reason why companies cannot fail to use social media channels, they need to be present ever than before to promote conversations with stakeholders”. Burston Marsteller, (2010) concurs with this conclusion noting that “the value of social media is that users are highly engaged and wanted to be heard”. Communication practitioners’ perspective also point to the direction of the need to have social media as an important communication tool (in the context of this study, Corporate Communication Managers). According to an online PRSA survey which sought find out the usage of various social media platforms, in their communication efforts titled “perception on the growth of social media trends in public relations practice,” Among the key findings of the study was the fact that social media technologies allow the practitioners an opportunity to reach out, engage their publics and also to strengthen media relations. The study also found out SNSs made the practitioners job easier allowing them reach a broader spectrum of audiences and expeditiously circulate corporate information by intranets, blogs, videoconferences and podcasts (Elyrich, Padman & Sweetser, 2008). Jobs too have resulted out of influx of social media in corporate communications as observed by Gunderson, Jones & Scanland (2004). In their study comparing most in-demand jobs in 2004 and 2010, they concluded that companies hiring PR practitioners are not contented with traditional tools of trade like news releases instead the prospective PR practitioners must also have deep understanding of how social media works in corporate communications.

2.9 Theoretical framework

A theory provides constructs that underpins a certain concept (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999, p. 15). The study adopted Technology Acceptance Model, a theory that sought to explain acceptance and use of computer communication systems and Corporate Story model seeking to contextualise how corporate messages are conceived, composed, delivered and evaluated. The reason for the study's adoption of the theoretical foundation was in a bid to conceptualise the aspects of the study: the social media platform higher education agencies use, how they have been accepted and utilised and the how they are able to carry the corporate message. The theories of the study are as below:

2.9.1 Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

This theory was developed by Davis in 1986 which is termed as an influential extension of Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA). It is one of the various theories of technology acceptance which explains motivations to accept and use certain technologies. The theory helps to explain and predict user behaviour of information technology (Legris, Ingham, & Colletette, 2003). To the proponent of the theory, TAM is premised on the belief that actual use of a technology system is influenced directly or indirectly by user's behavioural intention, attitude, perceived usefulness (PU), perceived ease of use (PEOU) of the said technology.

The theory has been revised over time for instance TAM2 extended the original theory to factor in the social influence aspect and performance (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000). If users perceive the information technology useful and easy to use, they believe little effort will be incurred.

The theory however, has been criticised largely because of limited explanatory and predictive power. It has been observed that the theory has diverted researchers away from the core research issues to an illusion of progress in knowledge accumulation (Chuttur, 2009). The various revisions of the theory has been observed as another inadequacy in that it has led to some confusion especially in the constantly changing IT environment (Benbasat & Barki, 2007).

This study has adopted the origin version of the theory.

2.9.2 Relevance of the TAM theory

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) helps HE agencies to understand how and why its varied publics stakeholders require and the use of a given communication system. The theory provides a guide to the HE on the factors to consider when putting up an information technology system such as social media. These among other perspectives of the theory is the reason the study has adopted the theory as it incumbent for HE agencies to be mindful of the information communication systems they put in place that both internal and external publics perceive useful, beneficial to the users performance and easy to use with little or no effort .HE agencies ought to utilise technological systems that are easily adoptable and are fashioned to meet expectations of its publics' operational and performance needs.

2.10 The model to the study

2.10.1 Corporate Story model

This model was developed by Van Riel (2001). The model sits on the principle that corporate story is in the frame of corporate communication. It creates integrated corporate messages harnessing internal and external resources to create a synthesised corporate story. Van Riel identifies positioning the company, linking the corporate story to the company's identity, linking the story to the reputation, plotting the corporate message, implementing the corporate story and monitoring the effectiveness of the corporate stories as the key steps a company need to follow for the message to reach intended publics.

2.10.2 Relevance of the Corporate Story model

The effectiveness of any communication channel will be attained if the right strategies to the content are used. The Corporate Story model offers a step-by-step guide to higher education agencies on crafting their messages to reach their publics as well as to establish a mutual understanding between them and the publics. Riel & Fombrun (2007), note if the corporate story is correctly done, the company's communication efforts will be: relevant (activities appear to add value), realistic (what the company really is and does), sustainable (balancing competing demands of multiple stakeholders) and responsive (open dialogue).

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Methodology is the roadmap through which a study is based on. A study methodology outlines the procedures that have been followed in conducting the study (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003, p. 41). The procedures explain where and how the study has been carried out (Parahoo, 1997). This chapter presents details pertinent to the methodology such as the choice of the location, the design, the technique of sampling, units of analysis, data method and tools used, verifiability of the data instruments and ethical considerations that the study observed. The procedure informed the basis of data analysis and presentation whose findings and discussions were largely narrated and backed with frequency illustration tables.

3.2 Location of the study

The geographical location of the study was at the HE agencies head offices in Nairobi. The choice was made as the headquarters are the main command centres of the agencies especially for HELB as it has its service points at Huduma Centres which too rely on the communication commands from the Anniversary towers office. For CUE, it has only one main office located in Gigiri hence its choice.

3.3 Research design

Research design is the roadmap upon which a study is based which ensures control of factors that may interfere with the validity of the study (Burns & Grove, 2013). It has also been as Parahoo (1997) notes, as the overall plan that details how, when and where the data is to be collected and collated.

To develop and implement the study plan as stated, the study adopted a case study design. The case study design was study ideal to the study as notes Jack & Pemela (2008), it allows study of contemporary issues within its context with Yin (2004) concurring that a case study enables a researcher investigate a phenomenon to its deepest understanding possible . A case study further notes Hancock & Algozinne (2006) synthesizes the multiple data sources into one meaningful finding. The strength of case study as Soy (1997) points out is the fact that the method uses multiple sources of data and that a researcher is able to determine beforehand what evidence to gather and what techniques to employ in meeting the study objectives.

The case study fitted on this research as the means to assess perspectives from Corporate Communication Managers responding through key informant interviews, members of staff across departments as responded through questionnaires as well as the content on the social media accounts reviewed in line with the objectives. The study's resolve to make use of the identified respondents was because they were experienced actors and conversant with the context, a key ingredient of case study as Lee (1989; Galliers, 1991) have noted.

3.4 The study sample

The study featured two Corporate Communication Managers of CUE and HELB, the target HE agencies and a sample of 60 members of staff of CUE and HELB whose total population were about 160 members of staff. The choice of the two Corporate Communication Managers was informed by the fact that they were in charge of all aspects of communication at their respective institutions. The representative sample of the members of staff at CUE and HELB were drawn from all divisions, departments and units of CUE and HELB. The two institutions had 10 divisions, five in each of the two agencies with CUE having 13 departments while HELB had 12 departments and units.

3.5 Sample scope

The sample scope of the study was CUE and HELB as the representative of the HE agencies. The rationale for this was based on for instance, CUE formerly Commission for Higher Education (CHE) is the longest serving higher education agency formed in 1985. Also, CUE's principal legal, the Universities Act no 42 of 2012 has informed the creation of a host of other higher education agencies such as The Kenya Universities and Colleges Central Placement Service (KUCCPS), The Technical and Education Vocational and Training Authority (TVETA), The National Qualification Framework Authority (NQFA), The National Research Fund (NRF) among other higher education agencies. CUE is also represented in the agencies Boards of Management by virtue of their establishment and complementary mandate the HE agencies play to CUE. CUE's by its law is obliged to mentor and offer advisory services to the stated HE agencies. The above reasons therefore warrant the choice of CUE as a representative higher education agency. On the other hand, the choice HELB was informed besides the year of establishment in 1995, its cross-cutting role in management of financing aspects of the entire HE sector.

The above reasons then provide grounds for CUE and HELB to form a representative sample which according to Mugenda & Mugenda (2003) notes should largely contain characteristics of the study population. This, the authors further points out minimizes sampling error which is the discrepancy between the sample characteristics and population. The focus of all aspects of social media communication with a representation of all division, departments and units of each of the target higher education as intended has also ensured a representative sample among the staff used.

3.6 Sampling technique

Purposive sampling was used in selecting the study population. Mugenda & Mugenda (2003) state that purposive sampling technique is technique that utilizes cases that are deemed having required information as intended. Patton (2002) further notes that purposive sampling allows a researcher to consider information-rich cases. Arising from the above, purposive sampling was an ideal technique to use in this study in selecting the two Communication Managers in charge of communication departments, 60 members of staff and the content reviewed to provide the required information on the use of social media in the operations of HE agencies.

Selection of the respondents was drawn from 10 Heads of Divisions of CUE and HELB and the in charge of departments and units under each of the divisions. CUE accounted for 13 heads departments as respondents while HELB had 12 heads departments and units responding. To get the perspectives of the officers directly involved in the affairs of the departments and units from the two agencies, an officer from each of the department and unit of CUE and HELB was chosen as a respondent. This totaled to 60 members of staff of CUE and HELB as respondents to the staff questionnaire. This accounted for more than 1/3 of the staff population which has been proven statistically representational. This added to the Corporate Communication Managers thereby an ideal representative sample.

3.7 Data collection instruments

The study tools used to collect the data were self-administered questionnaires (see appendix 2), informant interviews (see interview guide appendix 3) and content review of the HE agencies social media accounts to achieve the objectives identified in the study.

Simple and concise self-administered questionnaires were used to collect data from the targeted members of staff of CUE and HELB. Informant interviews provided HE Communication Managers' perspectives on the use of social media as their corporate communication platforms while content review of CUE and HELB's social media accounts provided an actual situation of the HE agencies active social media, how and what they have been used and level of interactivity of the social media platforms.

3.8 Validity and reliability of the data collection instruments

The three units of analysis in this study; the key informant interviews, self-administered questionnaires and content review of the target HE social media accounts provided a wide diverse sources and perspectives of data to address the identified objectives. The key informant interviews guide and the questionnaires were carefully formulated to cover a wide spectrum of the topic as well as a variety of questions such as closed and open-ended questions, contingency questions as well thought-out interview guide to collect accurate and insightful information required for the study. Additionally, a thorough scrutiny of the data collection instruments by this study's Supervisor, the questionnaires were further evaluated for suitability by the Heads of Divisions in charge of research as part of the request to conduct the study at the CUE and HELB to ensure that they are consistent with their respective research standards and communication needs.

3.9 Ethical considerations

The researcher followed all the steps of undertaking research as guided by University of Nairobi Plagiarism Policy. The researcher presented a proposal to this study which was defended and passed. After the proposal stage, the researcher obtained certificate of field work (see appendix 4) which was duly authorized by the study's Supervisor, the school of Journalism's Associate and Director. The researcher also sought upfront permission to conduct the study at CUE and HELB as per the laid down procedure (see appendix 1). The anonymity of respondents was observed living up to the commitment of strict confidentiality. There were also no incentives given to respondents to provide the study's information. The researcher personally presented the project report before a panel of examiners' who subjected the study to intense scrutiny. The corrections and amendments suggested by the defense panel were incorporated hence the obtainment of the certificate of corrections (see appendix 5) signed by the Supervisor as well as School of Journalism's Associate and Director. The study was further subjected to plagiarism test by the School's Quality Department (see appendix 6) and found devoid of plagiarism. This led the researcher to obtain a declaration of originality (see appendix 7) based on the plagiarism report of the Schools' Quality department. Lastly, the study has and will strictly be used only for the pursuant of the academic endeavour and will also be shared with the HE agencies to operationalise the value attached to this study.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter covers data presentation, analysis and interpretation which were generated by the study in line with the study's main objective of assessing use, benefits and challenges of social media as an internal communication platform in higher education agencies in Kenya with focus on CUE and HELB. The data presented covered use of social media, benefits and challenges of higher education agencies in using social media as a tool for corporate communication.

The study was based on the following specific objectives:

- i) To examine the utilization of social media platforms in higher education agencies in Kenya
- ii) To assess the benefits of social media use to the higher education agencies in Kenya
- iii) To explore challenges higher education agencies face in utilizing social media in as a corporate communication tool

The chapter also presents analysis and findings of the study as set out in the research methodology. The study findings were presented showing the use of social media as an internal communication platform in higher education agencies in Kenya. The data was gathered using content review of social media platforms, questionnaires as well as key informant interviews. The instruments were designed in line with the objectives of the study. The results largely narrated with aid of frequency table illustrations.

4.2. Response Rate

The study targeted 60 employees across the divisions, departments and units of CUE and HELB. From the study, 55 respondents duly filled and returned the staff questionnaires accounting for a response rate 91.67%. According to Mugenda & Mugenda (2003), a response rate of 50% is adequate for analysis and reporting; a rate of 60% is good while a response rate of 70% and over is excellent; therefore, the response rate attained was sufficient grounds to inform analysis, interpretation, discussions and recommendations to this study.

4.3 Content Review of CUE and HELB Social Media Accounts

The material review sought to appraise the actual state of the situation of social media accounts of CUE and HELB's in respect of ones in place, the number of users as well as the purpose from the content posted. Results at the time of writing this chapter revealed that that Facebook and Twitter were the CUE's and HELB main social media accounts with a 'fan base' of the following on their two main social media accounts as shown in the table below:

Table 4.1 Twitter and Facebook Content Analysis of CUE and HELB

Institution	No. FB likes	Twitter followers
CUE	1247	299
HELB	14,866	37,900

Source: CUE and HELB's social media accounts, 2016

From the 4.1 above, HELB had most of followers and frequent updates. Content posted on the HELB's social media platforms generally revolved around clients seeking higher education loans. The content also concerned inquiries on loans applications, loan repayments, penalties to defaulters, disbursements. CUE's social media content majorly revolved around its activities such workshops & seminars, press conferences, media interviews. There were also stakeholders' inquiries and few complaints regarding the services of offered at CUE. Inquiries on recognition and equation of qualifications obtained from foreign institutions in which according to CUE website (www.cue.or.ke), such qualifications need to be recognised in order to be in line with Kenyan grading system. Most of the complaints were from learners and general public raising concerns about unaccredited local and foreign institutions as well as unapproved academic programmes. Another main concern from a number of stakeholders was them observing the perceived deteriorating standards of quality of university education especially in the wake increased enrolled and number of universities in Kenya.

There was a designated unit is in place at HELB to post and respond to users of social media. This according to the unit has made the updates and responses on social media real time. This had also helped stakeholders, largely loan beneficiaries and applicants, conveniently interact with HELB. A contrary situation was established at CUE, where there was no such a

team but instead its social media accounts were managed by two officers of the Corporate Affairs Office who had other duties and responsibilities.

4.4 The role of Corporate Managers in Using Social Media as a Corporate Communication

To respond to this aspect, the researcher conducted 15 minute interviews with CUE and HELB Corporate Managers to get first-hand information and history of social media in their respective institutions.

The interview findings revealed that both Corporate Managers viewed social media as a key platform in reaching out their publics for diverse needs. It was common that CUE and HELB use Facebook and Twitter as common social media platforms of communication. Another commonality established by the interviews was that there were officers to manage social media platforms though they had not been formally designated. The team in both agencies were responsible for the day to day running of their respective agencies' social media platforms. The management of CUE's and HELB's social media platforms differs in that for instance, at CUE, social media platforms were being managed by Officers at the Corporate Affairs on delegated authority from the head of department (Corporate Affairs Manager) while that of HELB there was a unit under the leadership of the Corporate Communication Manager. The HELB's unit also comprised of officers drawn from across the departments while that of CUE social media was being handled only by officers from Corporate Affairs department.

It was also shared that CUE and HELB have a policy that guides the social media both domiciled in other related policies. For instance at HELB, its social media policy is domiciled on the Communication Policy while that of CUE the social media policy is embedded in the ICT Policy published in June, 2015.

Users are at all times required to exercise their sense of good judgement when interacting through social media. It is expected that users will observe the same safeguards or standards of conduct in online matters as they would in offline communication matters about the Commission in the public domain. In particular, users are to abide by all the principles outlined in other sections of this ICT policy document as well as other CUE policies, when interacting through social media... Such principles include: Users should not communicate on social media on CUE's behalf unless duly authorized. Corporate

Affairs department will manage content on social media platforms that are associated with CUE, (CUE ICT Policy, 2015).

Regarding the extent to which the social media policies are implemented, CUE Corporate Affairs Manager said efforts had been made to implement the policy as way of safeguarding the excesses that may arise. In particular for instance, the policy states that “employees should be aware that any use of social media sites may be monitored and, where breaches of this policy are found, action may be taken under CUE Disciplinary and Grievances procedures” (CUE ICT Policy, 2015).

The HELB’s Communication Manager pointed out that:

‘At HELB, we are always guided by policy on matters relating to social media. This has helped in streamlining and having a structured and unified way of sending out messages. This has also ensured the information released is accurate, verified and of good taste. Where this is not adhered to, disciplinary action is instituted for those found culpable’ (Research data, 2015).

The interviews also revealed that CUE and HELB had made some efforts in integrating their social media platforms with other avenues of their corporate communication. It was observed that social media in both institutions acted as a complementary avenue to other avenues such as websites, publicity materials (brochures, newsletter, posters, and pamphlets), CSR activities, exhibitions & trade fairs, workshops & seminars as will be demonstrated by questionnaire analysis. The two clusters of communication avenues have also been used in getting feedback from stakeholders. In both institutions, the Corporate Communication Managers noted that social media was one of the most preferred avenue for receiving feedback. One of the reasons stated was the interactivity nature of social media thereby affording instant response and whenever a need arose, a one-one conversation with whoever is providing feedback. The feedback function had also been optimized by popularizing the social media sites. One of the common ways CUE and HELB had was to prominently display social media accounts on the websites and share their social media account names in their in publicity materials. Such interactions was noted a key boost in service delivery of the two HE agencies occasioned by speedy response to various concerns and inquiries. For instance, CUE service delivery Charter

stipulated that response and acting on correspondence that should have taken two weeks. However, CUE Corporate Communication Manager noted that the period had reduced to as much time as less than a minute due to social media and other technologies. HELB's loan application process, for instance, that was taking a month, had been shortened by online application with up to date information available on social media. The Corporate Communications Manager noted this has been received very favourably especially by the university students.

The long queues that have been common place at HELB in the past either to just make an inquiry or drop a letter for various a service is a thing of the past once the online and social media platforms were introduced and fully operationalized. This has also greatly eased work load for my colleagues who are now able to serve more customers efficiently by use of these technologies (Research data, 2015).

CUE's content that received most feedback for the last two quarters as indicated by its Corporate Manager was inquiries regarding recognition and equation of qualifications while that of HELB's matters relating to loan such as applications, repayments, penalties and disbursements. Some of the general key benefits of using social media common for CUE and HELB identified by Corporate Communication Managers were: Speedy means of sharing information and responding customers concerns, providing an alternative avenue for customer complaints, means of advertising and showcasing services and providing an additional platform to mutually engage stakeholders.

Some of the common challenges outlined by the two Officers in charge of communications at CUE and HELB were: Threat of cyber crime, lack of Management support particularly in providing constant information for updating social media platforms, releasing unvetted information that would be potentially incorrect and risk of receiving unauthenticated claims.

CUE's and HELB's recommendations to better social media platforms as corporate communication avenues were: The need to have Corporate Managers involved in Management deliberations to keep them abreast of information needed to be shared through social media platforms, the need to have regular capacity building for officers handling social media

platforms, need to have a dedicated action team drawn from across the departments to help instantly respond to concern raised especially the technical ones and the need to secure social media against cyber-attacks with assistance from respective departments in charge of ICT.

4.5 Questionnaire responses and analysis

This section presents analysis and findings of questionnaires filled by respondents from CUE and HELB.

4.6 Demographic information

The table 4.2 shows demographic characteristics. Majority 35(63.63%) of the respondents were females while 20(36.36%) were males. Majority 18(32.73%) of the respondents were aged between 31-35 years old with a mean of 33 years. The second age group had a mean of 42 years accounting for those between 41-45 years. The other group had a mean age of 28 years and was between 25-30 years. The other group was characterized by mean of 37 years which was found in the range of 36 – 40 years and finally range of 46- 50 years with a mean of 46 years.

The researcher further sought to find out the work experience of the respondents. The findings showed that most 25(45.45%) had worked for 4-6 years, 12(21.82%) worked for 1-3 years, 11(20%) worked for 7-9 years and 7(12.78%) had worked for more than ten years. This means that the experience of the respondents was adequate evidence by the spread of experiences across age brackets. On the aspect of the academic qualification of the respondents, majority 25 (45.45%) of the respondents were bachelor’s degree holders, 13(23.64%) were diploma holders, 11(20%) were masters, 4(7.27%) were PhD holders, 1(1.82% was a certificate holder and 1(1.82) had only completed high school A – level. These findings indicated the spread of social media use age, work experience and level of education notwithstanding.

Table 4.2 Consolidated demographic characteristic of respondents

Demographic Characteristics parameter	Indicators	Frequency	Percentages
Gender	Male	20	36.36
	Female	35	63.63
Age	25 -30 years	9	16.36
	31-35 years	18	32.73
	36 -40	7	12.73

	41 -45	10	18.18
	46 - 50	5	9.09
	Above 51	6	10.90
Work Experience	1 -3 Years	12	21.82
	4-6 Years	25	45.45
	7-9 years	11	20
	>10 years	7	12.78
Academic Qualification	Phd	4	7.27
	Masters	11	20
	BSc	25	45.45
	Diploma	13	23.64
	certificate	1	1.82
	Others	1	1.82

Source: Research data, 2015

Objective 1: To Examine the Utilization of Social Media Platforms in Higher Education Agencies in Kenya

4.7 How did respondents know about social media

On this aspect at CUE, internet and friends were the main sources of information about of knowing CUE social media platforms. Learning the social media through seminars was least favoured by the respondents.

At HELB, internet and seminars were rated high as the sources HELB's social media. For both CUE and HELB, friends, internet were the two highest sources of HE social media. The finding calling for HE agencies to mindful of the alternative communication avenues they chose to inform of their respective social media platforms. The findings also indicating that marketing or awareness creation of the HE agencies social media directly contributes to the extent of usage. The choice of alternative corporate communication avenues is key in mobilizing the social media usage. The findings underscoring social media use in most facets of human interaction hence the more need for HE agencies to fashion them not only to the benefit of their users as they champion their corporate messages, but also add value to the users' needs. It also portrays the complementary working relationship social media could be having with other avenues of

information sources as will be detailed in a later section in this chapter. These findings concur with Djik (2006) who found that social media accounts are highly valued and used in organizations in the higher education sector.

4.8 Period of use social media

At CUE, respondents indicated having utilized CUE social media platforms for a period averaging at 5 years. There was also high frequency of usage with majority of the respondents saying they at least visit the platforms every day.

Respondents at HELB had a similar usage pattern with high usage concentrated on majority having been users who had used social media for over 10 years.

The results from both CUE and HELB indicated high duration use of their social media at with majority of the respondents having utilised the platforms between ‘over 5 years’ and ‘over 10 years’ mark.

The findings in this category indicating that popular social media of the HE agencies were being embraced by users for varied users’ needs. The findings lead to the fact that social media are sustainable corporate communications avenues that need to be enhanced over the time to maximize benefit of the intended users. From this finding, it can also be argued that presence of popular social media equals to better communication efforts for the HE agencies that have embraced them while the agencies that have not encompassed social media could be missing out on the benefits of these sustainable communication avenues. The findings ties with Horrigan (2009) finding that, people from teenage to old age have embraced social media as a primary means of communication. However, adoption of social media by men was a bit higher at 58% compared to that of females at 42%.

4.9: Awareness of corporate social media platforms

This aspect sought to find out the respondents awareness of the stated social media platforms in their respective agencies as a communication platform. This was meant to confirm whether or not CUE's and HELB's commonly used platforms corresponds with the content review that had indicated them as most popular platforms. The details of the outcome were as shown on tables 4.3 (a) and (b) below:

Table 4.3(a): Social media platforms at CUE

Category label	Code	Count	Pct of Responses	Pct of Cases
Facebook	1	28	30	93
Twitter	2	28	30	93
You tube	3	23	22	67
Google+	4	17	18	63
		-----	-----	-----
	Total responses	95	100	317

Source: Research data, 2016

On the extent to which respondents at CUE were aware of the given platforms, as indicated on table 4.10 (a), most them were aware of existence of Twitter and Facebook receiving the highest mentions of social media platforms standing at 93% of the mentioned cases.

Table 4.3 (b) Social Media Platforms at HELB

Category label	Code	Count	Pct of responses	Pct of Cases
Facebook	1	23	24	92
Twitter	2	24	26	96
YouTube	3	17	18	68
Google+	4	16	17	64
Linkedin	5	7	8	28
Blogs	6	6	7	24
		-----	-----	-----
	Total responses	93	100	372

Source: Research data, 2016

For respondents at HELB, as indicated the table 4.3 (b) above, Twitter and Facebook were the most known platforms at 96% and 92% respectively. YouTube (68%) and Google+ (64%) were relatively highly ranked. LinkedIn and blogs were the least known avenues with slightly ¼ of the total cases.

Facebook and Twitter were the most common social media platforms in both institutions among the respondents. The finding showing HE agencies can focus on the popular social media use capitalizing into their regular usage and awareness levels to maximize their corporate communication efforts. The finding bringing out the potential danger that many communication avenues could pose in their management if the avenues are not streamlined.

4.10 Ranking of Social Media Platforms

Related to the awareness levels, Facebook was the highest ranking (in the high and highest category) social media platforms, Twitter and You Tube followed at a larger margin of difference while Google+ had was rated closely third. LinkedIn and blogs were the least ranked social media platforms by respondents at CUE

The ranking at HELB had a similar trend of ranking with Facebook, Twitter, You Tube Google+ was rated the highest (in the high and highest category) in that order. LinkedIn was highly rated at HELB than CUE. Blogs was the lowest ranked social media platform.

The similarities in rating largely points to the important role such social media platforms could play in communication efforts of such HE agencies. The slight differences indicated could point varied stakeholder needs of each of the agencies. It also underscores there should be discretion in the choice of social media to use for their respective HE agencies so as to meet the need of their communication needs.

4.11 Frequency of use of Social Media

The results on this aspect for both institutions were consistent with the ranking of the social media as well as the level of awareness.

Overall on this aspect, CUE and HELB indicated a uniform pattern of frequency of usage an indication that the social media platforms are common platforms of communication and useful in the modern day. The findings consistent with earlier finding that well-known and popular social media agencies are likely to be used more regularly and therefore should be

maintained by HE agencies as their communication tools. The finding agrees with that of Madhavan (2007) who found out in his study that uniformity in the frequency of use of social media platforms across gender.

4.12 Users Description on How Useful Social Media

Response on this regard was sought from descriptive statistics as guided by the statements given. The finding shown that most respondents deemed social media useful terming them “powerful tools for communication” and “useful tools for both individual and corporate communication”.

Similarly, majority of respondents at HELB had of same view in agreeing with the description that social media platforms being “powerful tools for communication” and “useful tools for both individual and corporate communication”

In general, both CUE and HELB respondents were collectively of the opinion that there was need for their respective institutions to make use of social media to tap their “powerfulness” as corporate communication tools. The same was cemented by very minimal number who viewed the social media in both institutions as “unnecessary evil” and “passing wave”.

The findings, an indication of the fact that social media has largely been embraced in many facets of human interaction. It also affirms the assertion that is a popular tool of corporate communication that HE agencies could tap into its potential and benefits.

Objective two: To Assess the Benefits of Social Media Use to the Higher Education Agencies in Kenya.

4.13 Beneficial Rating of Social Media Use in Higher Education Agencies

This aspect sought to find out the beneficial rating as well whether or not social media was of any corporate communication benefit to HE agencies. It was also to assess whether the agencies have other avenues of communication and the extent to which such have been integrated with social media. Majority of the respondents at CUE rated high social media use. Most of them indicated social media as “beneficial” and “highly beneficial”. The overall impression of the respondents attached benefits to the use of social media. The result signifying how popular the social media platforms have been utilized by the HE agencies.

The overall score for respondents was also high at HELB with majority at 76 % agreeing social media is “beneficial” and “highly beneficial” as tools of corporate communication. The results of both agencies indicating majority were of the opinion that social media plays an important role as a carrier of corporate communication messages. The findings for both agencies consistent with earlier review of the two main social media platforms that showed various roles the social media communication had played to their stakeholders. The finding also indicating a direct relationship between the popularity of given communication avenue and the benefits accrued by users. These finding disagreed with those of (Perkel, 2010) that social media platform such as Twitter is not always beneficial because many people do not know how to use it.

4.14 Other Avenues of Corporate Communication

This sub-section sought to find out the relationship between social media and other listed avenues of communication. It also sought respondents’ take on how social media platforms and other communication avenues should be used; whether each on its own, or complementing one another. The outcome of the relationship was as illustrated on the tables 4.4 (a) and (b) below.

4.4 (a): Avenues of Communication Complementary to Social Media at CUE

Category label	Count	Pct of Responses	Pct of Cases
Outreach programmes	9	8	30
Website	30	19	100
Publications	32	20	107
Face to Face	30	19	100
Meetings	28	18	93
Workshops/Seminars	30	19	100
	-----	-----	-----
Total responses	159	100	530

Source: Research data, 2016

On finding out other avenues available at the HE agencies, majority of respondents as shown on table 4.4 (a) above, indicated the presence of the listed avenues of communication at CUE. Publications, CUE website, face to face, meetings, works/seminars were viewed as the best other avenues that can be used together with social media with a range of scores of between 19 and 20%. Outreach programmes were rated at 8%. The study indicated that publications, CUE website, face to face, meetings and workshops/seminars can be used as other avenues of communication besides social media platforms. These findings concurs with Wright & Hinson (2010) in his study of Latin America and Caribbean organisations showed that 49% of the Latin and Caribbean organisations have one or more social media platforms and they as well use website, face to face, meetings and workshops/seminars can be used as other routes of communication.

4.4 (b): Avenues of Communication Complementary to Social Media at HELB

Category label	Count	Pct of Responses
Outreach programmes	7	5
Website	25	19
Publications	27	21
Face to Face	25	19
Meetings	23	17
Workshops/Seminars	25	19
-----		-----
-----		-----
Total responses	132	100

Source: Research data, 2016

At HELB as shown on table 4.4 (b) above, demonstrated evidence of other avenues of communication such as branded publications, HELB website, face to face, meetings, workshops/seminars which were rated high on the list of other avenues used with social media avenues. Outreach programmes was the least favoured platform. The study indicated that publications, CUE website, face to face, meetings and workshops/seminars were being used as other routes of communication in addition to social media platforms.

The spread and low mentions, a possible indication of the diverse methods of sharing information such as television, magazines, road show, exhibitions, open days and others that the institutions make use of as indicated by the Corporate Managers. The findings call for deliberate effort for HE agencies to consolidate and comprehensively undertake need analysis of their publics need analysis to better gain from the diverse avenues of corporate communication. The finding also calling for enhancement of integration of the available corporate communication avenues to deliver a streamlined communication the basic tenet underpinning corporate communication as reviewed in the earlier chapters.

4.15 Comparison of Social Media with Other Avenues of Communication

The aspect sought to show the working relationship between social media and others available avenues of communication. Specifically, this question sought to gauge whether the avenues work in complementary, in isolation or one is better than the other. The outcome was that the two have worked to complement each other. However, a section among CUE respondents favoured social media to traditional media.

At HELB, there was a mix reaction with some saying social media had complemented other avenues. Others viewed social media better than traditional media with minority in the category noting social media should be used in isolation.

The results for both scenarios revealed majority favouring a complementary role of social media with other avenues for communication efforts. They further suggested the need for HE agencies to blend social media with other avenues of corporate communication like outreach programmes, seminars, websites, meetings to better their communication endeavor. The findings indicated the need for CUE and HELB to devise all-inclusive means of passing information about HE agencies. If such effort is not done, there could be a possibility of social media or any other isolated avenue to selectively serve a given publics and locking out others who in one way or the other not be receptive of the avenue(s). This therefore, calls for HE agencies to strategize on how complement the use of communication platforms such as face to face, television, magazines, newsletter, road show, public forums as suggested by the majority respondents.

4.16 Who Should Manage Social Media at CUE and HELB?

On this question, results shown office responsible for the running of social media sites at CUE correlated with the respondent's preference of the office they deem best suited to manage the social media platforms. Communication Office referred as 'Corporate Affairs' was the most popular office in managing social media at CUE. This was followed by ICT department, Communication Committee and CEO's Office in that order. Communication Office was further suggested as the best suited office to manage social media. There were also suggestions of Communication Committee to play an advisory role for social media platforms, with a minority choosing none of the said entities. These results concur with Riel & Fombrun (2007) who indicated that corporate communication also sits at the heart of organizational performance. This is aided by the choice of organisation's management and communication structure. The results are as illustrated on table 4.5 (a) below.

Table 4.5 (a): A Depiction of the Office Responsible in the Management of Social Media at CUE and Suggested best Suited Office

		Which office is suited to manage social media?				Total
		Communication office	Communication committee	Non of the listed		
Which office that manages social media in your institution?	Communication office	13	2	4	19	
	CEO's office	68	11	21	100	
		2	0	0	2	
		100	0	0	100	
	Communication committee	2	2	0	4	
Total	ICT department	50	50	0	100	
		2	3	0	5	
		40	60	0	100	
		19	7	4	30	
		63	23	13	100	

Source: Research data, 2016

Table 4.5 (b): A Depiction of the Office Responsible in the Management of Social Media at HELB and Suggested Best Suited Office

			Which office is suited to manage social media?			
			Communication office	Communication committee	None of the listed	Total
Which office that manages social media in your institution?	Communication office	Count	10	2	4	16
		%	40	8	16	64
	CEO's office	Count	2	0	0	2
		%	8	0	0	8
	Communication committee	Count	2	2	0	4
		%	8	8	0	16
	ICT department	Count	2	1	0	3
		%	8	4	0	12
Total		Count	16	5	4	25
		%	64	20	16	100

Source: Research data, 2016

Respondents at HELB as shown on Table 4.5(b) above, had a comparable trend. At the Board, Communication Office referred as “Corporate Communication” had majority saying that it is the current office that manages social media at 64% with the least being the CEO’s Office at 2%. Corporate Communication Office was further suggested the most preferred by respondents as the office that should manage social media at a score of 64%. Communication Committee was distant in the preference list at 20%.

The findings from the agencies on this aspect portrayed a consensus of respondents indicating that Communication Offices should be tasked with the overall management of social media platforms of the institutions. The results meaning the need to domicile the management of the social media avenues at respective communication offices. The findings further indicated that management of communication channels be assigned to specific Officers owing to the management function Communication Office ought to play in the agencies. CUE and HELB are could therefore borrow a cue from this finding. To the majority of the respondents, Corporate Communication Office should always manage social media platforms. The outcome agreeing with Vasquez & Velez (2011) study which found out companies around the globe embrace and

adopt social media for customer service, marketing, internal communication, public relations and even corporate social responsibility. The said activities therefore may need to be domiciled in the communication offices of HE agencies for better delivery of communication and related efforts.

4.17 Main Reasons for Social Media Use

The main uses of social media use at CUE and HELB were as summarized on the tables 4.6 (a) and (b) below.

Table 4.6 (a): Main Reasons for Social Media Use at CUE

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
To receive inquiries		13	13	13
To receive and resolve complaints		13	13	27
To inform stakeholders	4	13	13	40
Seek views	4	7	7	47
To release news	4	10	10	57
All mentioned	13	43	43	100
Total	30	100	100	

Source: Research data, 2016

Table 4.6 (a) indicated that informing stakeholders, seeking of views and communicating news items were the main reasons CUE used social media as its corporate communication tool. Among these, releasing of information was the highest ranked at 57%. CUE mainly uses social media to keep stakeholders well informed and to seek suggestions and views of people about its operations and services. Wright (2010) noted that most organizations use social media to keep stakeholders well informed and seek their views on pertinent organizational matters.

Table 4.6 (b): Main Reasons for Social Media Use at HELB

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
To receive inquiries	4	16	16	16
To receive and resolve complaints	4	16	16	32
To inform stakeholders	4	16	16	48
Seek views	2	8	8	56
To release news	3	12	12	68
All mentioned	8	32	32	100

Source: Research data, 2016

Results from HELB as indicated on the table 4.6 (b) showed releasing of information and seeking views from stakeholders as the main reasons for using social media scoring 68% and 56% respectively. The rating of all categories for both CUE and HELB at 38.1% of mentions across the reasons is an indication that the listed reasons are all vital to be factored in while reaching out various targets. Arising from the divided opinion on both institutions on this aspect, it is therefore, necessary to customize messages to achieve the intended communication purpose. The study findings showed that releasing of information and seeking views from stakeholders were the main reasons for using social media. The finding pointing to one-way communication in terms determining what is to be communicated. This potentially deprived the stakeholders an opportunity to interact real time with the agencies on the social media platforms. This therefore calls for CUE and HELB consider factoring in discursive topics on their social media and other avenues of corporate communication platforms that would be key in getting perspectives of their stakeholders as well as instantly iron out issues that stakeholders may have tapping into the interactivity ability inherent in social media and other avenues.

4.18 Management's Role in the Use of Higher Education Agencies Social Media platforms

This aspect sought to ascertain whether the Management of HE agencies had any role in their institution's utilizing social media. Majority of respondents admitted CUE's Management support and input in the management of social media sites. However, a number expressed dissatisfaction that Management had not fully supported efforts of using social media.

At HELB, there was a slight drop of those who indicated the Management's input and a slight increase from those of CUE that there was no Management input in the running of social media platforms. Arising from the two institutions responses on the aspect, it can be deduced that there is need for Management support in handling of corporate social media platforms to realize its potential as indicated in the earlier chapters. According to these findings, the input of the Management in running organizational social media platforms was deemed important. Management need to be actively involved in the management of social media accounts if they are to be successful.

4.19 Rating of Design and Appeal of the Social Media Accounts

In respect to the appeal of social media, majority of the respondents perceived social media design and appeal attractive. A small margin however, had some reservations them observing the accounts not attractive thereby lacking appeal.

For HELB, the appeal and design rating of both ends was comparable those of CUE with most approving of its design and appeal.

Overall, a significant number CUE's and HELB respondents noted accounts not attractive and further, and another non-committal was a concern the study identified that may need to be taken up by the managing offices. If this is addressed as suggested by the respondents, the respective social media accounts could live up to the enthusiasm that it should cause AND.

Of concern also was the number of respondents who raised concerns about unattractiveness of the social media calling for institutions to work on the appeal of social media platforms to meet their stakeholders' needs.

4.20 Impact on Social Media on Corporate Communication

This aspect gauged on the improvement levels social media had on HE agencies as their communication platforms. CUE's and HELB's respondents indicated that the platform had a positive impact on the communication efforts with majority observing a "notable "and great improvement" to the communication endeavours of the agencies. This resonated with earlier finding of the agencies social media account review that revealed various beneficial uses of social media.

4.21 Availability of Policy to Guide CUE's Social Media, its Adherence and Penalties in Place

This segment sought to find out existence of policies on social media, adherence levels as well as safeguards in place for those that do not adhere. The outcome as indicated had a divided opinion for both male of those that indicated knowing existence of social media policy with those saying they were not aware of such. At both agencies majority of both gender indicated they were not aware of social media policy despite actual existence of such as informed by the interview with the Corporate Manager.

Generally, a substantial number indicated the lack of knowledge of the subject. This was an indication of the need for some remedies in the institutions such as awareness creation for members to appreciate such policies. This indicated knowledge of social media varied from individual to individual. Males had an upper hand on the awareness of the policies to manage social media than females. The finding concurred with that of Cassidy (2006) who observed that people may not know existence the policies that guide communication platforms despite their existence. This gives the study validity to access this aspect.

4.22 Adherence to Social Media Policy Guidelines

The study assessment on actual compliance to the social media related policies indicated a general low level of adherence and implementation. Majority of the respondents indicated low levels of adherence is largely attributed to casual nature of implementation of the policies.

The low implementation level of social media policy as demonstrated by results of the two HE agencies could mean that such policies are just on paper to meet certain obligatory requirements such as Performance Contracts. It could also might have been caused by low level of sensitization of among users, complexity of such policies, lack of ownership to the policies among others. This is an aspect if let go, could get out of hand and lead to reversal of communication gains as highlighted in this chapter. This calls for the need to enforce penalties to those who disregard policies in the use of media platforms.

4.23 Penalties for not Implementing Social Medial Policy

Lack of adherence could lead to some ramifications to the users. The study sought to ascertain which consequences had been put in place to mitigate against the violation of the policies. Findings on this aspect found that majority indicated there were no strict punishment to those who did not adhere to social media policy. This was consistent with casual adherence the respondents observed.

The results of the two agencies indicated a trend of users not bearing any consequence for not implementing the policies. The findings, portends the need HE agencies to establish the causes of such breeches by staff as there could be underlying reasons to it. This done, the agencies can institute appropriate remedies including penalties to the staff championed by the responsible office in support of the institutions' Management.

4.24 Integration of Social Media with Other Avenues of Corporate Communication and Image and Reputation Improvement

The extent to which social media platforms had been blended with other available avenues of communication was sought. Its outcome is as indicated on tables 4.7 (a) and (b) below.

Table 4.7 (a): CUE’s Social Media Integration Into other Avenues of Communication and Organization Improvement of Image and Reputation

			Social media integration with other avenues		
			Yes	No	Total
Improvement of image and reputation of organization	Yes	Count	18	5	23
		% of Total	60.0	16.7	76.7
	No	Count	4.0	3.0	7.0
		% of Total	13.3	10.0	23.3
Total	Count	22.0	8.0	30.0	
	% of Total	73.3	26.7	100.0	

Source: Research data, 2016

A majority of CUE’s respondents as demonstrated on the table 4.7 (a) indicated that CUE had integrated social media platforms with other avenues of communication and same has resulted into improvement of CUE’s image and reputation. The score for the aspect were 73% and 76% respectively. A contrary opinion was at a combined score of 49%. These results indicated that CUE has integrated social media platforms with other avenues of communication and same has resulted into improvement of CUE’s image and reputation. This had enhanced CUE’s communication efforts.

Table 4.7 (b): HELB’s Social media Integration into Other Avenues of Communication and Organization Improvement of Image and Reputation

			Social media integration to other avenues		
			Yes	No	Total
Improvement of image and reputation of organization	Yes	Count	15	5	20
		% of Total	60	20	80
	No	Count	3	2	5
		% of Total	12	8	20
Total	Count	18	7	25	
	% of Total	72	28	100	

Source: Research data, 2016

There was a slight drop of rating at HELB’s compared to those of CUE as demonstrated on the table 4.7 (b) above indicating integration of social media platforms into other avenues corporate communication at 72% while those noted an improvement of HELB’s image and reputation were at 80%.

The finding showing respondents’ consensus on the need to integrate social media platforms with other avenues corporate communication. The finding also indicated the direct relationship between integration and image and reputation building. Arising from the finding, it can be deduced that the more there is a seamless use of varied corporate communication platforms the better for the HE agencies standing in terms of their image and reputation.

Objective 3: To Explore Challenges that Higher Education Face in Utilizing Social Media as Corporate Communication tool

4.25 Challenges and Corporate Risk in Using Social Media

Views on the common challenges were sought from the respondents at CUE and HELB on the open-ended questions. They were ranked separately as shown on tables 4.8 (a) and 4.8 (b) representing CUE and HELB respectively. On CUE, lack elaborate guidelines for social media use was ranked highest while lack of Management support ranked the least with 11% of the cases. These challenges as they have at a number of times been singled out by the findings on

this chapter could be a major barrier in attaining the gains of social media identified. Key recommendations on the way forward have been proposed in the next chapter.

Table 4.8 (a): CUE’s Main Challenges in use of Social Media

Category label	Pct of responses	Pct of cases
Lack of social media awareness	24	89
No guidelines for social media use	27	100
Lack of management support	11	39
Sticking to the old media (reluctant to change)	14	54
Ignorance	24	89
	100	371

Source: Research data, 2016

Table 4.8 (b): Identified Main Challenges of Using of Social Media at HELB

Category label	Pct of responses	Pct of cases
Lack of awareness	25	87
No guidelines for social media use	29	100
Lack of management support	8	26
Sticking to the old media (reluctant to change)	13	44
Ignorance	25	87
	100	344

Source: Research data, 2016

Table 4.8 (b) above indicates the HELB’s outcome that identified: lack of clear guidelines to use social media as the most challenging at 29% of the cases. Sticking to the old media and lack of awareness was rated second most challenging at 25% while of Management support least at 8% of instances recorded.

4.25.1 Specific Challenges in Use of Social Media in the Higher Education

The specific challenges unique to each of the HE agencies were summarized as indicated on tables 4.9 (a) and (b) below.

Table 4.9 (a): Specific Challenges in Use of Social Media at CUE

Category label	Pct of responses	Pct of cases
Lack of Management goodwill	22	73
Time wastage	28	90
Lack of personnel to respond and update daily	18	60
Postage of erroneous or wrong information to publics	4	13
Lack of technical know how	28	90
Total responses	100	327

Source: Research data, 2016

Table 4.9 (a) above singled out time wastage as one of the specific challenge of using social media. The findings indicated that time wastage may result when officers tend to spend lot of time on social media thereby compromising other tasks. Lack of technical knowhow was rated at similar rating at 28% of the cases. The least of the cases was postage of erroneous information.

Table 4.9(b): Specific Challenges in Use of Social Media at HELB

Category label	Pct of responses	Pct of cases
Lack of Management goodwill	22	68
Time wastage	28	88
Lack of personnel to respond and update daily	17	52
Postage of erroneous or wrong information to the publics	5	16
Lack of technical knowhow	28	88
Total responses	78	312

Source: Research data, 2016

Lack of technical knowhow and time wastage topped HELB specific challenges as indicated on the table 4.9 (b) above.

4.25.2 Challenges of Social Media Use Compared to Traditional Avenues

This aspect sought to know what challenges social media have brought compared to traditional communication avenues. Common challenges identified as unique to social media at

the CUE and HELB compared to the traditional were lack of privacy occasioned by their nature of being public networks, widespread audience, fluid demographics were some of the specific challenges identified. Other challenges identified were lack of privacy, exposure to unpleasant material, authenticity, demand for timely updating and real-time responses which called for more work force as observed early in the management of the social media avenues.

These multi-faceted challenges portend the unique nature social media as new avenues of corporate communication pose that ought to be addressed differently and uniquely. Such may call for a representative team drawn from across the departments of the agencies to address and eventual advise the Managements of the HE agencies. The outcome of such a comprehensive inquest can also be issued in form of an advisory to members of staff and appropriate stakeholders.

4.25.3 Risks Identified with Social Media Use as Communication Means of HE Agencies

In the wake of risk-based management in all respects of corporate management, the study sought to assess the extent to which CUE and HELB is exposed to risk resulting from the use of social media use as a communication avenue. Generally, respondents of the two agencies indicated a moderately low score in the risk appetites. Some of the key potential risk areas identified were posting of incorrect information, threat of malware, lack of information confidentiality, uncoordinated inquiries and responses and sharing of non-streamlined information.

4.25.4 Measures to Mitigate Challenges of Using Social Media

Table 4.10 (a): Measures to Mitigate CUE’s Challenges in the Use of Social Media

	Valid Percent
Designated team	30
Social media policy in place	40
Appropriate ICT safeguards	30
Total	100

Source: Research data, 2016

As indicated on the table 4.10 (a) above, the categories provided were favorably scored as a combination of safeguards of the general and specific challenges identified. However, having policies in place to guide social media was most favoured garnering 70% among CUE respondents. The study also emphasized enforcing social media policy adherence was necessary to guide social media to counter the challenges.

Table 4.10(b): Measures to Mitigate HELB’s Challenges in the Use of Social Media

	Valid Percent
Designated team	32
Social media policy in place	40
Appropriate ICT safeguards	28
Total	100

Source: Research data, 2016

CUE’s scenario was replicated among HELB as indicated on table 4.10 (b) above. Having social media policy was similarly the highest ranked with having appropriate ICT safeguards least though all categories were too favorably regarded among HELB’s respondents. These outcomes of the two agencies indicating the need for safeguards enforced at Management level in order to attain the intended purpose of utilizing social media not to the detrimental to the HE agencies.

4. 25.5 Controls to Mitigate Against Social Media Related Risks

The listed as shown on tables 4.11 (a) & (b) below were some of the common controls identified to mitigate against social media use related risks. The common areas were ranked with CUE’s social media policy identified key at 90% as identified in the earlier discussion. Content verification at 90%, securing of social media sites with firewalls and controls at 69% and controlled access and authentication at 66% were identified as the other leading measures. Further controls proposed were: development of social media policy and its strict adherence, staff training on internal quality controls and specialized team to manage social media.

Table 4.11 (a): CUE’s Controls to Mitigate Social Media Related Risks

Category label	Code	Count	Pct of responses	Pct of cases
Development of social media policy and strict adherence	1	26	19	90
Controlled access and authentication	2	19	14	66
Content verification	3	27	20	93
Firewall	4	20	15	69
Staff training in internal quality controls	5	14	10	48
Specialized team in use of social media	6	29	22	100
Total responses		135	100	466

Source: Research data, 2016

Table 4.11 (b): HELB’s Controls to Mitigate Social Media Related Risks

Category label	Count	Pct of responses	Pct of cases
Development of social media policy and strict adherence		26	83
Controlled access and authentication		23	75
Contents verification		14	46
Firewall		7	21
Staff training on internal quality controls		30	96
Specialized team in use of social media		-	-
Total responses		100	320

Source: Research data, 2016

In HELB’s ranking as shown on table 4.11 (b) above, staff training on internal usage controls at 96% and development and strictly adhering to social media policy at 90% were identified best measures.

The findings both at CUE and HELB, are closely related to the challenges respondents earlier identified. This means there is need to always conceive challenges in the eyes of risks and impact each of them is likely to bring in the communication efforts of the HE agencies.

4.26 Suggested ways of improving social media as a corporate communication tool

To add to the recommendations made in this study, respondents suggested general ways on how higher education agencies can improve their communication efforts using social media. The suggestions are as summarized on tables 4.12 (a) and (b) below.

Table 4.12 (a): CUE’s Suggestions to Improve Social Media Communication

Category label	Pct of responses
Regular monitoring of social media platforms	25
Dealing with staff apathy	23
Training staff on social media use	16
Increased Management input	8
Provision of tools for social media use	28
Total responses	100

Source: Research data, 2016

As indicated on the table 4.12 (a) above, respondents on this aspect responded via open ended questions in the questionnaire, some of the key suggestions recorded were: regular monitoring of social media platforms, addressing staff apathy, provision of requisite tools of use and training of staff as ways of improving corporate social media use at CUE.

Table 4.12 (b): HELB’s Suggestions to Improve Social Media Communication

Category label	Pct of responses
Regular monitoring of new social media platforms	25
Dealing with staff apathy	11
Training staff on social media use	24
Increased Management input	30
Provision of tools for social media use	10
Total responses	100

Source: Research data, 2016

The respondents similarly singled the above listed on table 4.12 (b) above as possible areas of improving social media use at HELB. Of the five specific areas, regular monitoring of social media platforms (80%), training of staff (70%), increased management involvement (96%) were ranked leading from summarized outcome.

The findings points not only to the areas that need the attention of the HE agencies' responsible officers but also indicates the rich and diverse insights internal publics can provide in enhancing means and ways of social media communicating. Such suggestions can also be used to inform capacity building of officers in charge of social media in HE agencies. The suggested ways too could be key starting points crucial in enhancing not just the use of social media but the corporate communication in its entirety.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of findings, conclusions drawn from the findings and suggestions of some of the ways identified to better social media use in internal communication in HE agencies. This study sought to assess CUE's and HELB's use, purposes and challenges of their social media as a corporate communication avenue. The findings, conclusions and recommendations therein were achieved through the outcome content review of social media platforms CUE and HELB, perspectives of Communication Managers and responses of sampled members of staff of the sampled HE agencies.

5.2 Summary of the study outcome

The findings revealed that all levels of academic scholarship were prevalent and frequent users of social media with bachelors and masters levels of education holders leading the usage. There was a uniform spread of use of social media across gender. Informational material was the common content on the social media of HE agencies. Such information included common services offered in the day to day activities of CUE and HELB.

There was a mixed information source about social media among the respondents. Sources such as media, friends, internet and seminars were the common sources. However, friends, internet and seminars were the highest rated of the sources. There was generally long period of usage of social media platforms among the respondents with majority at 97% having used social media for over 10 years.

Facebook and Twitter were the most common social media platforms HE agencies used as corporate communication tools. This was based on the knowledge of respondents and ranking of the social media by both male and female. Social media platforms were viewed as a powerful tools and carriers of corporate communication messages. A further 76% viewed social media very beneficial to their institutions.

Corporate communication offices were the common offices responsible for managing social media. This aspect was cemented by a majority suggesting that communication office should be responsible in the day-to-day managing of social media recording at score of 63.7%. A

Committee to be steered by Communication Offices was further suggested necessary to complement in advising Communication offices and in order to source input to improve the overall management of social media from across institutions' departments. Some of the key reasons identified for using social media in corporate communication were: to handle complaints, to inform stakeholders, the easiest, fastest & convenient way in linking higher education agencies with their stakeholders and to handle inquiries emanating from the services offered.

There was average involvement of HE agencies Management in handling of social media by way of advising or providing content. It was found that Management lacked general good will, with 40% score across all levels of education. There was an average rating of the design and appeal of social media pages standing at 54%. A fair share of the users were apprehensive of the visiting the pages based on the minimal attractiveness.

There was a favorable rating on the impact of social media to better deliver corporate messages with over 60% recording them having a great improvement. This was viewed having improved the respective institutions' image and reputation with over 70% recording this view. Respondents also noted in order to fully live up the expectations of stakeholders in linking them with the corporates, there was need to integrate social media with other avenues of communication such as seminars, meetings, websites, and publicity materials with over 90% favoring the view.

There was low knowledge on social media related policies despite them being developed in the HE agencies with only 40% indicating being aware of such policies. There was also an apparent disconnect between the availability of social media policies and their actual implementation and adherence with majority indicating a casual implementation of the policies. The researcher found out that there was no clear-cut punitive measures for not implementing social media policy with over 50% indicating no measures taken to those who failed to adhere to the stipulations of the policies.

Some of the challenges that was found to be hindering social media to fully attain the potential of effectively carrying corporate messages were: cyber-attack, lack of Management goodwill, lack of dedicated and designated team in handling day to day the HE agencies' social

media platforms to live up its interactivity and instantaneity corporate social media which may lead to uncoordinated approach in general handling of HE social media platforms. Other challenges were: postage of unvetted information that may potentially be erroneous thereby leading to corporate embarrassment and loss of credibility some lacked the technical know-how to handle minor hitches arising from by social media, demographic dynamics that has resulted into some age groups treating their agencies social media avenues with low regard. The key findings can be summarized as shown on table 4.13 below.

Table 4.13: Summary of key findings as per each objective

Objective	Key findings
i) To examine the utilization of social media in higher education agencies in Kenya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Most members of staff had embraced use of their respective institutions’ social media accounts ▪ Facebook and Twitter were the most common social media platforms higher education agencies for both male and female. ▪ Corporate Communication offices were the common offices responsible for managing social media. The same were suggested as best suited to handle social media ▪ Some HE had no designated Units/Offices to manage social media though most had Communications Offices which managed headed by Communication Managers ▪ Representative Communication Committees were further observed needed to complement in advising Communication Offices to improve the overall management of social media ▪ HE agencies had integrated social media with

	<p>other communication avenues such as website, branded publications, seminars, outreach programmes to which had achieved integrated communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There was average involvement of HE institutions' Management in management of social media platforms ▪ HE agencies had social media policies although they were not fully adhered to despite them being key better way in managing social media
<p>ii) To assess the benefits of social media use to the higher education agencies in Kenya</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Informational material such as activities, services, inquiries, complaints were common content on the social media of HE agencies though most this was found embracing one-way communication ▪ Social media platforms were viewed as a powerful tools and carriers of corporate communication messages. Hence termed very beneficial to their institutions. ▪ Social media use was found to have a positive impact to HE communication efforts as was noted had achieved notable improvement and highly beneficial. Consequently, its use had enhanced the agencies' corporate image and reputation ▪ Use of social media enhanced delivery of services especially on turn-around times of the services rendered as stipulated in their Service Charters as well as enhancing intra-working relationships for service delivery
<p>iii) To explore challenges higher</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Challenges identified : cyber-attack threat, lack of

<p>education agencies face in utilizing social media as a corporate communication tool</p>	<p>Management goodwill & support, lack of dedicated and designated team, postage of unvetted information, some lacked the technical, demographic dynamics, minimal adherence to guiding policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ways to better HE social media were: Regular monitoring and evaluation of use and policies, minimizing staff apathy, regular training & sensitizations of staff, lobbying for Management support, provision of requisite hardware and software, controlled access and provision of budget to run the Office and activities regarding media use in HE agencies
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5.3 Conclusion

The study concludes that HE agencies had embraced social media use to communicate to their varied stakeholders through their established and functional social media platforms. The favourable ranking of social media in respect of them being appropriate carriers of corporate messages, them complementary to traditional media of communication, being faster and more efficient attests to the fact that the agencies had embraced social media as a key avenue for communication. A number of benefits had been accrued from the use of social media especially in responding to inquiries and complaints that otherwise would have taken a longer period to resolve. This research concludes the use of social media in higher education agencies in the following specific areas:

On Management of social media, the study concludes that social media if fully embraced by the respective leadership of the HE agencies can be of great help to enhance leadership especially for effective and efficient communication of varied information needed by the stakeholders.

The study also concludes that all efforts must be made to ensure that various communication avenues are streamlined for consistent, controlled and unified corporate

message; a fundamental tenet of corporate communication. This was exemplified in the literature review section through the Van Riel (2001), Corporate Story model which asserts the principle that corporate story is in the frame of corporate communication which creates integrated corporate messages harnessing internal and external resources to create a synthesised corporate story for the varied corporate's publics. This would also enable the HE agencies to fully take advantage of the numbers of the virtual community social media commands.

The study established that social media use deliberate close-knit relationship between the HE agencies and their stakeholders will be key to marshal support and initiate conversations that are mutually beneficial.

Arising from the several benefits accrued by the use of social media as indicated in the findings, social media use can be escalated to the Boards of Management of the HE agencies. Social media can provide an insight and inform strategic BoM's decisions based on the feedback received via institutions' social media users. Social media can also be useful amongst members of the Board and the Secretariat to initial and share conversations relevant to the strategic direction of their institutions.

On Evaluation of social media feedback, the study concludes that there was no deliberate effort to periodically take stock of the social media use in HE agencies. This can be done by maintaining a repository of messages. The repository can in turn inform the trends ultimately informing the HE agencies' appropriate remedial actions.

Arising from the discussions and findings in this research, such conclusive statements can be made. Among them are:

- i. Social media being a new and powerful tool of communication, could provide a paradigm shift in the communication efforts would be necessary for HE agencies
- ii. Higher Education agencies could adopt immediate strategies suggested to tap into social media use to enhance the linkages between them and stakeholders hence fostering better relations and support by stakeholders
- iii. Social media could be an enabler of the HE agencies to discharge their mandate particularly in today's demand of customer-oriented service that is efficient and effective. This would be

made possible if members of staff fully embrace the new media to reach out to the large virtue community as it has been noted by statistics earlier presented.

- iv. Social media should be professionally managed by well trained staff with guidance from the designated office for corporates to make their presence in the key digital space.
- v. The HE agencies should also be mindful of the existing and emerging challenges and risks which if not managed can potentially damage reputation that is very costly to redeem once tarnished.

In summation, the foregoing on this research affirms that HE agencies in Kenya have made gains in utilizing social media though they need to take note of the issues raised in this study to fully gain from social media that is key in modern time's social business.

5.4 Recommendations Based on Research Findings

Based on the findings made in the course of this study, the following recommendations are hereby suggested:

There is need for HE agencies to focus on the highly rated social media platforms in order to tap into the numbers and their popularity which the study has found to enhance image and reputation. To achieve a unified and streamlined corporate message as the tenets of corporate so advises, the HE agencies need to devise strategies to blend social media and other avenues of corporate communication such as seminars, publicity materials, advertisements, meetings in order to maximize communication effort as they have been established by this research to work best in complementary arrangement.

The findings of the study have also informed the need to institutionalize functional social media offices or teams to be fully in charge of handling of social media of HE agencies. Members of such a unit should also be regularly trained in order to acquaint themselves with the fast changing trends in social media. The managing team can comprise of Communication Office to champion the social media use with an encompassing complementary Committee drawn from across functional areas playing an advisory role to the championing offices to enhance intra and inter management corporate communication using social media.

The findings having found out that majority having assessed HE agencies being dull, there is need for HE agencies to consider re-design their social media accounts to attain the designed attractiveness. This however, should be done in mind of the institutions' corporate identities so that image is brandished. To address the non-uniform appeal designs of the various HE agencies communication platforms a content analysis revealed, there is need to map out and adopt a uniform design concept of the communication avenues to easily identifiable and better the agencies' brand to the stakeholders.

There is need to have a well thought-out staff sensitization programme and implementation schedules of the social media policies in order to cure the apathy among members of staff as well as have policies that are well aligned with the specific communication needs of respective higher education agencies.

The glaring gap between the Communication Offices and the HE Management was a matter that higher education agencies need to take up. If this is not addressed has potential to undo the gains of using social media. The study therefore, recommends the Management of HE agencies to always factor in communication as an agenda of their deliberations in order to fully utilize social media as an avenue for corporate communication.

Finally, a well-thought out safeguard measures was needed in higher education agencies in order to safeguard the social media platforms against the challenges and threats such as cyber-attacks and ever fluid dynamics of social media use.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Research

Due to the limited scope of this study, there is still a lot to interrogate regarding the specific issues of social media and corporate communication: Some of the possible areas for further future research could be:

Assess stakeholder's perspective of the use of social media in service delivery by the higher education agencies, the impact of now popular "hashtags" on twitter in delivering higher education agencies campaigns and possibly the place of social media in advertising: a cost benefit analysis.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

19th August 2015

The Commission Secretary/ CEO

Commission for University Education

P.O. Box 54999-00200

Nairobi

Dear Prof. Some,

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA FROM CUE

Hope this finds you well.

I am currently undertaking a study on the topic “Assessing the place of social media as a corporate communication tool in higher education agencies in Kenya”. I have selected Commission for University Education (CUE) being one of the central higher education agencies in Kenya to generate data to inform the study.

This is therefore, to request your kind approval to collect data from CUE.

I commit that the data collected towards this effort shall be used for academic purposes only and shall be treated with strict confidentiality.

Thank you.

Yours Faithfully

Mutethia Mberia

19th August, 2015

C/o 54999-00200

Nairobi

To:

The Chief Executive Officer and Secretary

Higher Education Loans Board (HELB)

Anniversary Tower 19th floor, University Way

P.O. Box 69489-00400

NAIROBI-KENYA

Dear Sir,

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA FROM HELB

Hope this finds you well.

I am currently pursuing a Master of Arts in Communication Studies at the University of Nairobi. Part of the requirement towards this, is to undertake a research project. Consequently, I'm conducting a study on the topic "Assessing the place of social media as a corporate communication tool in higher education agencies in Kenya". I have selected Higher Education Loans Board (HELB) being one of the central higher education agencies in Kenya to generate data to inform the study.

This is therefore, to request your kind approval for HELB members of staff selected across departments to fill in the data questionnaire (attached) for purposes of the study. The outcome of the study will also be beneficial to HELB as it will inform the extent to which it has leveraged on social media to communicate to its varied publics.

I commit that the data collected towards this effort shall only be used for academic purposes and shall be treated with strict confidentiality.

Thank you.

Yours Faithfully,

Mutethia Mberia

Appendix 2

Staff questionnaire

This questionnaire seeks to collect data to inform the study that seeks to assess the place of social media as a corporate communication tool in higher education agencies in Kenya. This is part of the requirements in pursuant of Master of Arts in Communication Studies, University of Nairobi.

Your organization, being a significant agency in the higher education sector has been selected to inform this study. The data collected shall be used for academic purposes only and shall be treated with strict confidentiality and every effort will be made to safeguard the anonymity of the respondents. I kindly request your honest response to the questions on this questionnaire.

Your participation in facilitating the study is highly appreciated.

Demographic information

Please tick and fill in the blank spaces provided as appropriate

Part one: About the respondent

Name of your Institution.....(optional)

Gender: Male [] Female []

Which of the following best describes your age?

25-30 [] 41-45 []

31-35 [] 46-50 []

36-40 [] 51 and above []

How long have you worked in your institution?

- Less than a year [] 7-9 years []
1-3 years [] Over 10 years []
4-6 years []

Designation

Highest level of education

- Doctorate (PhD) [] Masters []
Bachelors [] Diploma []
Certificate []

Others

.....
.....
.....

Part 2: Knowledge and extent of social media use

1. Does your organization have social media account (s)?

Yes [] No []

2. How did you first come to know of social media?

Through media []

Friends []

Internet []

Seminars/workshops []

3. Do you have a personal social media account(s)?

Yes [] No []

4. Approximately how long have you used social media?

Over 10 years []

Over 5 years []

Over 1 year []

Less a year []

5. Which social media platforms are you aware of in your institution?

Platforms	Aware	Not Aware
Facebook		
Twitter		
You tube		
Google +		
Linkedin		
Blogs		

If others, please specify

.....

.....

6. Rank below listed social media usage from lowest (1) to the highest (6)

Social media	Ranking
Facebook	
Twitter	
You tube	
Google +	
Linkedin	
Blogs	

7. How frequently do you use social media?

Daily

2 days in a week

Weekly

Need based

Indicate any other frequency.....

8. Which of the following statements best describes the social media use in your institution?

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Powerful tools					

of communication					
Useful tools for both individual and corporate communication					
They are unnecessary evil					
They are a passing wave					
No comment					

Part 3: Benefits of social media in your institution

9. Have you visited any social media of your institution?

Yes [] No []

If No, briefly state the reason

.....
.....

10. How do you rate the use of social media in your institution?

Highly beneficial [] Beneficial [] Fairly beneficial [] Not beneficial

I do not know []

11. Does your institution use other avenues to communicate as indicated below? Tick as appropriate

Avenues	Yes	No
Outreach programmes		
Website		
Publications		
Face to face		
Meetings		
Workshops/ seminars		

12. How would compare social media use with other avenues stated in 11?

Complement each other

No relationship

Social media be used in isolation

No idea

More efficient than traditional media

13. Who manages social media in your institution?

Communication office

CEO's office

Communication Committee

ICT department

None is assigned []

Among the listed in 13, which office do you think is best suited to manage social media platforms? (pick at utmost two)

.....

14. What are the main reasons of using social media in your institution?

To receive inquiries []

To receive and resolve complaints []

To inform stakeholders []

Seek views []

To release news []

Others.....

.....

.....

15. Are you aware of Management's input on social media use in your institution?

Yes [] No []

If yes, briefly explain how

.....

.....

16. How do you rate the presentation (design and appeal) of your institution's social media pages?

Very attractive [] Attractive [] Somewhat attractive [] Not attractive []

17. How would you agree that social media is better than traditional media?

Strongly Agree [] Agree [] Slightly agree [] Disagree []

18. How has social media improved corporate communication in your institution?

No improvement []

Slight improvement []

Moderate improvement []

Notable improvement []

Great improvement []

19. Has usage of social media as communication tool in your institution enhanced your

work?

Yes [] No []

If No, briefly explain

.....
.....
.....

20. Briefly explain mechanisms in place in your institution to optimize social media use?

.....
.....
.....
.....

21. Do you have any policy to guide social media use in your institution?

Yes [] No []

If yes, how is it implemented?

Strictly []

Moderately []

Casually []

Disregarded []

22. What penalties are in place for not implementing social media policy?

Verbal reprimand []

Warning letter []

Demotion []

Specify other

23. Has social media been integrated into other avenues of communication in your institution?

Yes [] No []

24. Has social media use improved your organization image and reputation?

Yes [] No []

25. Briefly suggest ways of generally improving social media use as a corporate communication tool in your institution?

.....
.....
.....

Part 5: Challenges and corporate risk in using social media

26. Generally, what are the main challenges in the use of social media in your institution?

.....
.....
.....

27. What are the specific challenges experienced in social media in your institution?

- (a)
- (b)
- (c)
- (d)
- (e)

28. What measures are in place to mitigate the challenges stated in 27?

Designated team []

Policy in place on social media []

Appropriate ICT safeguards []

Others

.....

.....
.....

29. Briefly explain the challenges of using social media compared to traditional avenues of communication?

.....
.....
.....

32. What controls are in place to mitigate against the social media use related risks?

.....
.....
.....
.....

Appendix 3

Guide to informant interview questions-Corporate Communication Managers

1. Does your institution have social media account(s)?
If yes, List the commonly used ones in your institution
If no, state the reason
2. Are you responsible for day to day running of social media accounts of your institution or you have delegated?
Give reasons for either answer
3. Is social media use in your institution guided by any policy? Are these policies social-media specific?
4. To what extent are the social media policies adhered to in your institution?
5. What is the main reason for utilizing social media as a corporate communication avenue in your institution?
6. How would you compare feedback from social media with other avenues of corporate communication in your institution?
7. What type of content has received most feedback on social media?
8. Briefly explain how social media has improved interaction with stakeholders and overall service delivery in your institution
9. What would you say are the key benefits that social media use has afforded your institution
10. What are the key challenges of social media use in your institution?
11. Outline key risks posed by social media use in your institution
12. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of social media use in your institution?
13. Briefly explain if social media has strategic importance as a means of corporate communication in your institution?

14. What general recommendations would advise in improving social media as corporate communication tool in your institution as well as other public institutions

Appendix 4

Certificate of field work



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES
SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM & MASS COMMUNICATION

Telegram: Journalism Varsity Nairobi
Telephone: 254-02-3318262, Ext. 28080, 28061
Director's Office: 254-02-2314201 (Direct Line)
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Email: director-soj@uonbi.ac.ke

P.O. Box 30197-00100
Nairobi, GPO
Kenya

REF: CERTIFICATE OF FIELD WORK

This is to certify that all corrections proposed at the Board of Examiners' meeting held on 10/07/2015 in respect of M.A/Ph.D final Project/Thesis defence have been effected to my/our satisfaction and the student can be allowed to proceed for field work.

Reg. No: KSD/09997/2013

Name: MUTITHIA NBERIA JOHN

Title: ACCESSING SOCIAL MEDIA USE IN

INTERNET COMMUNICATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION AGENCIES

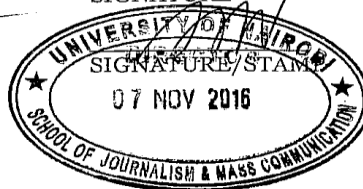
Ganuse Kamau
SUPERVISOR

Samuel De Siringi
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

Dr. Ndetei Ndetei
DIRECTOR

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SIGNATURE



03/7/2015
DATE

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Appendix 5

Certificate of corrections



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COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES
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Telegram: Journalism Varsity Nairobi
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P.O. Box 30197-00100
Nairobi, GPO
Kenya

REF: CERTIFICATE OF CORRECTIONS

This is to certify that all corrections proposed at the Board of Examiners meeting held on 10th Nov, 2016 in respect of M.A/PhD. Project/Thesis Proposal defence have been effected to my/our satisfaction and the project can now be prepared for binding.

Reg. No: USD/69997/2013

Name: MUTEITHA MBERIA JOHN

Title: ASSESSING SOCIAL MEDIA USE IN INTERNATIONAL

COMMUNICATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION AGENCIES

Dr. Samuel Kamau
SUPERVISOR

Samuel
SIGNATURE

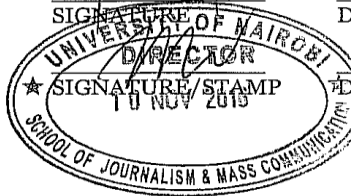
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Dr. Samuel Siringi
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

Siringi
SIGNATURE

10/11/2016
DATE

Dr. Ndeti Ndeti
DIRECTOR



10.11.2016
DATE

Appendix 6

Plagiarism report

11/10/2016

Turnitin Originality Report

Turnitin Originality Report

ASSESSING THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN INTERNAL COMMUNICATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION AGENCIES: THE CASE OF CUE AND HELB by Mutethia Mberia John Registration Number: K50/6999

From Mass media and Technology (MA Communication theory)

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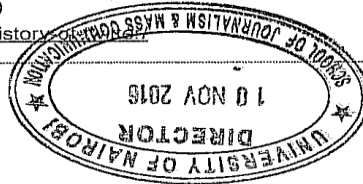
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- 6 < 1% match (student papers from 29-Sep-2015)
Submitted to University of the Arts, London on 2015-09-29
- 7 < 1% match (Internet from 13-Sep-2016)
<http://socialnomics.net/2013/01/23/the-history-of-mass-communication/>



Appendix 7

Declaration of originality

Appendix I Declaration Form for Students

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI Declaration of Originality Form

This form must be completed and signed for all works submitted to the University for examination.

Name of Student	<u>MUTETHIA MBERIA JOHN</u>
Registration Number	<u>K50/69997/2013</u>
College	<u>HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES</u>
Faculty/School/Institute	<u>OF JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION</u>
Department	<u>MA JOURNALISM & MEDIA STUDIES</u>
Course Name	<u>MASTER OF ARTS, COMMUNICATION STUDIES</u>
Title of the work	<u>ASSESSING USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN INTERNAL COMMUNICATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION *ENCE</u>

DECLARATION

1. I understand what Plagiarism is and I am aware of the University's policy in this regard
2. I declare that this PROJECT (Thesis, project, essay, assignment, paper, report, etc) is my original work and has not been submitted elsewhere for examination, award of a degree or publication. Where other people's work, or my own work has been used, this has properly been acknowledged and referenced in accordance with the University of Nairobi's requirements.
3. I have not sought or used the services of any professional agencies to produce this work
4. I have not allowed, and shall not allow anyone to copy my work with the intention of passing it off as his/her own work
5. I understand that any false claim in respect of this work shall result in disciplinary action, in accordance with University Plagiarism Policy.

Signature JP

Date 10/11/2016

