

**GLOBALIZATION AND CULTURAL IMPACT OF THE MEDIA;  
A WEB ANALYSIS OF THE FACEBOOK SOCIAL NETWORK.**

**By  
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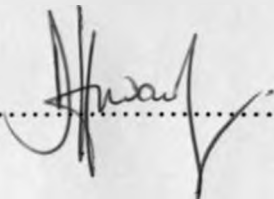


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**A RESEARCH PROJECT PRESENTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF  
ARTS IN COMMUNICATION STUDIES OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

## DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been submitted for a degree qualification in any other University or Institution.

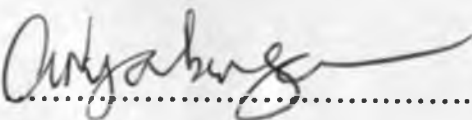
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This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the Supervisor.

Signed.....

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## DEDICATION

*To my father Wilson (Buda), my mother Beatrice (Misty), my sisters and brother, Matilda (Maddie), Judith (Kallie) and David (Time), my wife and my daughters, Lina, Natalie and Tiffanie; you have been my inspiration, and I see your stamp in all my achievements.*

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## ABSTRACT

Globalization is perceived as an influence on indigenous cultures of the world. The Internet and its accessibility are viewed as having contributed to the massive flow of information globally, creating a global village. The study zeros in on the rise of social networks and singles out the Facebook which it subjects to the study. The aims and objectives of the study are determining access to the internet, gauging on the rise of Internet's social networks' and their influence on the users' cultural orientations and also determining the impact of social networks as tools for mass communication. The study gives insights to varied views from scholars over their perceptions of the media and its contribution to perceived cultural imperialism. From the data collected the findings revealed that the internet is accessible but users find it costly. The majority of the internet users on Facebook embraced the social networks as positive communications mode that did not necessarily alter their cultural orientation. The study discovered the widespread uses of Facebook citing it as an effective tool for mass communication. The study recommends that the internet be accessed in all learning institutions, while social networks be used for promoting cultural diversity.

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## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Colin (2007) advances the view that the media is assumed to play a major role in globalization. He acknowledges that globalization, to some, means the transfer of ideas and culture from the developed west to the developing world, resulting in a homogenization of consumerist culture across borders that threaten to disrupt and permanently alter indigenous values. On the other hand, Akinindele et al (2002) suggest that the flow of ideas occurs in multiple directions, resulting in less homogenization and more diversification of ideas and lifestyles. In both views, an assumption is made that globalization has expanded the importance of information and the sharing of this information will continue to have an effect on cultural lifestyles.

Herbert (2000) is in support of globalization however, views it also as a dominant vehicle for the expansion of a homogenous, consumer-based culture extending across borders. This view tends to justify and reinforce the prevailing international trade and finance regime. Most notably, Herbert (2000) points to the growing dominance of consumer-oriented western, media and entertainment products, and how they contribute to a one-way transmission of ideas and values that result in the displacement of indigenous cultures.

Kachawanya (2009) reckons that the Internet has gained widespread use in developed nations and because of its universal accessibility, it has a role in

fostering communication of ideas. Find below a table citing the top ten Internet African Countries.

Table 1.1 Top 10 Internet African Countries

<b>COUNTRIES</b>	<b>USERS IN MILLIONS</b>
EGYPT	10.5
NIGERIA	10.0
MOROCCO	6.6
SOUTH AFRICA	4.6
ALGERIA	3.5
SUDAN	3.5
KENYA	3.0
TUNISIA	2.8
ZIMBABWE	1.4
GHANA	0.9

Sources: Internet World stats – [www.internetworldstats.com](http://www.internetworldstats.com)- (Accessed 28<sup>th</sup> October 2009)

Kachawanya (2009) acclaims Africa for being part of the Internet technology revolution as reflected in the acquisition of the fibre-optic and with this advancement, he is optimistic that the Internet access will increase by a huge margin in five years time.

Eastman (2006) states that trade unions, professional associations, religious groups and social networks, throughout the world own and operate their own websites. Within the widespread of the internet, as indicated in the statistics above, the internet has played the role of opening up the democratic space of

flow of information and expression. Moreover, trade and economic transactions worldwide have been accessed via the internet.

Nonetheless, Marriot (2006) observes its inaccessibility has contributed to the digital divide. This refers to the social set up where there is gap between those who have access to Internet and those who do not and more so, the gap in technological advancements.

With reference to Kenya, Hash (2008) embraces the positivism that has come with the internet communication; however, he argues that the access should be availed at grassroots level. Hash (2008) cites current communication problems with the phone text messages, which are confined to one on one and disputes the traditional media that has its limitations, thus requiring communication technology solutions. Okuttah (2009) alludes the widening of the gap to the fact that most Internet Service Providers (ISPs) opt to provide their services in urban areas. He adds that other contributing factors are illiteracy, age and attitudinal barriers.

In support of Hash's view above, Mutula (2002) furthers the argument that Computer and Internet connectivity still reflect social and economic realities and economic impoverished communities may lack access to Internet facilities. However, Kaloki (2009) is optimistic that Kenya is closing in the gap with the advent of the fibre-optic cables on Kenyan shores.

### **1.1.2 Overview of the Internet in Kenya**

Mweu (2000) accounts for the growth and availability of the internet in Kenya. She traces its availability way back in 1993, when the internet then, was accessed by a small group of technical enthusiasts. She puts it on record

that that the only means in which it was accessed was through a service known as Gopher which offered access to text based information, and the access then was through international leased lines.

Mweu (2000) adds as the internet technology was advancing, subscribers of the first provider of web- based Internet service enjoyed the first ever web browser software-Mosaic, and in 1995, the first commercial Internet Service Provider (ISP), Formnet, began operating. She reckons thereafter that competition increased with the entry of three other ISPs.

Nevertheless due to political factors surrounding the country's relationship and the donor community in the reform agenda on governance, Mutula (2002) cites the slow marked improvement on the pace of the growth of the internet in Kenya, citing limitations such as the withdrawal of aid from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank's enhancement of the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) On the positive note, Mweu (2000) affirms that considerable strides had been made by December 1998 when the Jambonet, an access service for ISPs was launched. With this development, there were more entries of ISPs in the market, which led to more competition for customers.

Mweu (2000) takes the historical account further and puts it on record that in July 1999 the government officially liberalized the telecommunications market in Kenya. This saw the formation of the Communication Commission of Kenya (CCK) that was to regulate the sector. Among the CCK's mandate was to license ISPs and this witnessed the growth of more ISPs in Kenya.

(Affulo 2000 cited in Mutula 2002) accounts for the growth of ISP's in Kenya to over 50 and over 15,000 dial up Internet accounts. He estimates the growth of Internet users to be between 30,000 and 50,000, coupled with a growth rate of over 300 users per month. Kanina (2007) backs these statistics by affirming the growth of more than 50 ISP's and adding further, the growth of 20 public data network operators and 6 Internet backbone and gateway operators.

Nonetheless, the main users of the Internet in Kenya are Multinational corporations, international organizations and NGOs, together making more than 50% of all subscribers. The government and educational institutions make less than 5% of all subscribers, due to the relatively high cost of the service. (Economic Survey, 2005)

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Mutula (2002) affirms the high cost of Internet Services that varies from one provider to another. As result, many deter from subscribing directly to the Internet. Kanina (2007) supports Mutula in the view that there is a high cost tariffs for fixed – lines, dial- up connections.

## **1.2 The statement of the problem**

Kazeniak (2009) reckons that Internet services have become diverse and among the current services, is the rise of Social Networks. He states that more users are subscribing to them. He cites the Facebook social network, as the giant of them all. According to the last survey done on the ranking of these social networking sites, the Facebook was at the top. The survey was conducted on the basis of monthly visits to the site. The following is the ranking on current popularity:

Table 1.2 Top 15 Social Networks

CURRENT RANK	SITE	MONTHLY VISITS	PREVIOUS RANK
1	facebook.com	1,191,373,399	2
2	myspace.com	810,153,536	1
3	twitter.com	54,218,731	22
4	flixster.com	53,389,974	16
5	linkedin.com	42,744,438	9
6	tagged.com	39,630,927	10
7	classmates.com	35,219,210	3
8	myyearbook.com	33,121,821	4
9	livejournal.com	25,221,354	6
10	imeem.com	22,993,608	13
11	reunion.com	20,278,100	11
12	ning.com	19,511,682	23
13	blackplanet.com	1,0173,342	7
14	bebo.com	9,849,137	5
15	hi5.com	9,416,265	8

Sources: blog complete.com (Accessed 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2009)

Kazeniak (2009) advances the view that Social networks' survival depends on the user based activities. This means the more the visits the better for the network. While Kazeniak (2009) observes that the Facebook has excelled, he notes that MySpace's ratings, has down, while the new Twitter's rank improved. The following is a graph comparing visits made on the three social networks.

Figure 1.1 Sessions per Monthly visits of new members



Source: blog complete.com (Accessed 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2009)

MySpace is still the clear number two player in the big categories, but its trends in some key areas are not quite as dominating as in Facebook. Other sources indicate there are social networks that were initially branded but were now shutting down in favour of Facebook. 'Verizon', a branded social network is the most recent victim. (Kazeniak, 2009)

An assumption is made that all Internet users, blog or are in some kind of social networking, as supported by the statistics provided above. According to Facebook, they have over 175 million active users, and among them, the fastest growing demographic of users over 30 years old. The impression is that these users are apparently busy on the site. In a month, they upload more than 850 million photos and over 5 million videos (Kazeniak 2009) While these sounds like a lot, the question would be whether these statistics are applicable to the developing world.



Nevertheless, Facebook has also come under criticism. Huliq News (2009) report that the Archbishop of the Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales, Vincent Nichols, sent out a warning that the Facebook and other social networking sites, as well as texting and e-mails were undermining true friendships. This may be translated as interference on individuals' cultural orientation. Pope Benedict the XVI, also raised his concern over the dangers of possibly becoming addicted to technology, specifically social networking. (Huliq News, 2009)

Assumptions derived from the discussions above are that everyone who has access to the Internet is a subscriber to a social network. Moreover, the statistics on popularity of the social networks indicate that they can be powerful tools of media globalization in the developing world.

Since Facebook is believed to gain momentum in the internet lifestyle in Kenya, this study aims at ascertaining or dispelling these assumptions. The study therefore aims at answering three research questions:

1. What are the factors that determine internet accessibility?
2. What influence does the Facebook, a social network, have on the cultural orientation of its users?
3. What impact does the Facebook have as a tool of media globalization?

### **1.3 Objectives**

The purpose of this study is:

- (i) To investigate the factors determining internet accessibility.
- (ii) To determine the influence of Facebook, a social network, on the cultural orientation of its users.
- (iii) To determine the impact of social networks as a tool of mass communication.

### **1.4 Summary of the Research Project**

Chapter 1 gives an Introduction of the research project. It gives the background of the research which is on cultural globalization of the media. In this study, the vehicle for globalization is the Internet. Thus fundamental aspects are raised in this chapter which include its accessibility and how it contributes to massive flow of information globally, creating a global village. The chapter discusses how some critics have perceived this as negative and detrimental to the local cultures. It gives the statement of the problem and the research's aims and objectives. These include determining access to the internet, gauging on the on the rise of internet's social networks' influence on the users' cultural orientations and also determining the impact of social networks as tools for media globalization.

Chapter two reviews current literature. It offers insights into the advanced Internet technology. It discusses the perceptions that the Internet allows a free flow of information resulting to globalization. The chapter advances the arguments surrounding the possible contributions of the Internet to cultural

imperialism and identity crisis for the Third World countries. The discussions in the chapter revolve around the perceptions that the developing countries' issues and concerns are negatively portrayed in the media from the West. The chapter assesses the contributions of the Internet towards globalization and the varied views taken by varied scholars over the process of media globalization. In the process the chapter analyses the aspirations of the New World Information Order, NWICO.

Chapter three discusses methodology. It explains the research design adopted. It gives highlights on the sampling procedures. The entire members of the Mombasa Polytechnic University College were part of the population, from which 300 members were sampled using the stratified random sampling method. The chapter also explains that primary data was collected with the help of questionnaires that were both written and oral. It is also stated in the chapter the SPSS programme was used to analyze the data. It finally points out the limitations observed.

Chapter four analyses and interprets the primary data collected as part of this study. In the analysis, the respondents' access to the internet and their respective demographics are discussed. With reference to this study, the majority of the Internet users are between the ages of 21 – 25. However the study reveals that economic and literacy factors determine internet accessibility. The chapter also highlights the services they seek beside Facebook. It demonstrates the analysis of the influence of Facebook on the cultural orientation of its users. The analysis indicate clearly that 83% of respondents shared the view that Facebook would not alter their orientations and a palsy 17% viewed Facebook as a negative influence on one's cultural

orientation. On the aspect of social networks as tools for mass communication, the analysis indicates that they can be effective tools of mass communication, as out of the 88% of the respondents who had access to internet services, 65% were registered in Facebook.

Chapter five discussed conclusions drawn from the research, and offers numerous recommendations. It gives the discussions that reveal that the internet is accessible but users find it costly. While 17% viewed Facebook as a negative influence on their cultural orientation, the majority 83% embraced it as a positive communication mode that did not necessarily alter their cultural orientation. The chapter reveals the widespread uses of Facebook citing it as an effective tool for mass communication. Conclusions include that the access to and use of the Internet is inevitable to technological development. Facebook as a social network is not considered a threat to peoples' cultural orientation. Instead it should be considered as an effective tool of mass media based on its popularity. The chapter recommends that the Internet be accessed in learning institutions, while social networks be used for promoting cultural diversity.

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is designed to give insights into the advanced Internet technology which by its very nature allows a free flow of information. This chapter starts by looking at the Internet as an advanced communication technology. It proceeds to assess the perceptions that the Internet is either a powerful tool of strengthening a global culture or advancing the loss of indigenous cultural values. Then it discusses globalization and the possible view that it could contribute to 'cultural imperialism'. The chapter then moves onto discussing 'cultural identity' as propagated by varied scholars while having a close reference to the media. It also gives an insight on positions taken by varied scholars over the effects of advanced communication technology. Lastly, it looks at the aspirations and ideals of NWICO in bid to understand whether the communication technological advancements made have lived to the aspirations of NWICO. These issues are discussed in turn.

### 2.1 The Internet Technology

Eastman (2006) advances the view that the world is interconnected through a complex web of transnational networks. Global interconnectedness is also what demarcates the Internet, a medium that allows people to communicate and interact with one another, regardless of physical proximity. Defined as the network of networks, the Internet is said to help in understanding the world people live in, a world in which the growing significance of boundary-crossing networks is forcing people to reconfigure their societies as interdependent parts of a global whole.

Saxena (2004) asserts that more than one billion people use the Internet and therefore benefit from the vast amount of information that is available to anyone who connects. She gives an account of the first area network that was operational in the 1980s, and claims that the Internet gained popularity in the 1990s because of the availability of web browsers. She advances that in the contemporary world, due to web browsers and search engines, Internet users in every country in the world have access to vast amounts of online information. Nevertheless, this argument could be challenged as an assumption made of the Third World countries on Internet accessibility.

Friedman (2007) advances his support that the Internet has changed peoples' lives. He cites that people prefer the efficient digitized mail of the Internet known as e-mail as opposed to the traditional post office that was commonly referred to as the 'snail mail'. The argument posed is that the Internet puts an enormous amount of information at people's fingertips and that all the information on the Internet is available to anyone, anywhere, at anytime.

Nevertheless, Saxena (2004) laments that as much as the Internet has provided an opportunity to build a global information infrastructure that would link together the world's telecommunications and computer networks; it has come with a price. This information superhighway that connects the countries all over the world has considerable amount of information that is undesirable such as pornography and many other social evils. This raises concern over Internet regulation.

On the contrary, Friedman (2007) has a positive view. He affirms that the impact of communications processes on global governance has been made possible by the emergence of dynamic, digital, and instantaneous technology

like the Internet, communications satellites, broadband, cable, and fiber optic. With the emergence of these new communications platforms, communications globalism has enabled both tangible and intangible outcomes. These include the increased flow of ideas globally, reductions in distance between cultures and individuals, reductions in the costs of doing business globally, and the global export of cultural norms and cultural practices, even when these are sometimes perceived to have negative impacts on local cultures.

In support of the view above, Saxena (2004) acknowledges that technology, including the Internet has made it much easier to move information around the world. The Internet has accelerated the speed of transmission and thus made the world smaller. It is much easier for people around the world to access information and share it with others in this global information infrastructure. This argument also does make assumptions that the Internet is accessible globally, yet the in the Third World countries, the scenario may be otherwise. This advances the argument that the Third World is very much part of the process of globalization because of the communication network. At this point then there is need to have an insight on what is meant by 'globalization'.

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## **2.2 The Concept of Globalization**

Varied scholars have defined 'globalization' in their own terms. For instance Fafowora (1998) defines globalization as the process of the intensification of economic, political, social and cultural relations across international boundaries. In his view, it is principally aimed at the transcendental homogenization of political and socio-economic theory across the globe.

Meanwhile, Akinidele et al (2002) define it as an evolution which is systematically restructuring interactive phases among nations by breaking down barriers in the areas of culture, commerce, communication and several other fields of endeavour.

Giddens (1999) views it not only as an economic process but also political, technological and cultural that has been influenced by development in systems of communication. He defines it as the intensification of world wide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa (Giddens 1990: 4 cited in Curran: 1996)

(Tandon 1998 cited in Akinidele et al 2000) views globalization as a means of removing all national barriers to the free movement of international capital. The process is accelerated and facilitated by the transformation in information technology, principally aimed at the universal homogenization of ideas, cultures, values and even life styles. Expanding on this, Gordmer (1998), argues, that it is principally concerned with the expansion of trade over the oceans and airspace, beyond traditional alliances which were restricted by old political spheres of influence.

A critical analysis of all the definitions of globalization above indicates that it is synonymous to liberalization and greater openness. Both domestic and foreign liberalization are said to imply globalization, since the former brings domestic markets more in conformity with forces operating in markets abroad, and the removal of administrative barriers to international movement of goods, services, labour and capital, increases economic interaction among nations and the communication network.



Curran (1996) claims that access to electronic media has turned the world into a global audience, a view disputed for its perceived social negative effects and influence. A critic, Hamelink (1983) poses arguments in favour of the Third World countries that the process of globalization is likely to lead to the loss of indigenous culture. In the advent of globalization, there are notions that its immutable central and primary focus is to exploit the Third World resources, disintegrate its economies, cultures and incorporate it into the international capitalist economy.

Schiller (1976) supports Hamelink's view above. Schiller, a major proponent of the cultural imperialism view of the early 1970's expresses fear for the cultures of the Third World countries as a result of domination of media content from the West. This is on account of globalization of the media that allows free flow of information disregarding national barriers. He implies that the West imposes on the Third World its western cultures.

However, McQuail (2001: 62) disputes this argument and advances the view of interdependence between the media and society. These two continue to interact and influence each other. The media represents the cultural industry which responds to the demand from society for information and entertainment, stimulating innovations and contributing to a changing socio-cultural climate which sets off new demands for communication, which perhaps has prompted the rise of the social networks such as Facebook.

In dispute of McQuail's approach, Schiller (2002) advances the argument that the media can help in 'modernization' by introducing Western values at the expense of a breakdown of traditional values and the loss of 'authentic' local cultures. The view demonstrates an imperialistic process, in a

conscious and deliberate systematic subordinate of smaller and developing countries to the interests of the Western media.

The free flow of information resulting from globalization has attracted lots of criticism and has also generated a lot of debate both for and against. A scholar such as Alhaji Kromah has argued against the unfavourable portrayal of the Third World in the Western media. He asserts that the Third World has impressive credentials especially Africa yet he wonders why Africa in the minds of some parts of the world, especially the West, seem to be that of scourge of poverty, disease and savagery. He questions the rationale that could have contributed to such a view. He argues that there is a perpetual negative exaggerated image of the Third World created in the Western media. Kromah strongly feels that the West lives with the selective perception that Africa is still struggling to get out of the Paleolithic and Stone ages. (Kromah cited in Chandra 2004)

Herbert (2000) joins in the debate and thus faults the global news flow, especially from the West, which constantly antagonizes the Third World. He observes that the news content has an overemphasis on 'bad' news reflecting social disruptions (riots and coups) and natural disasters (famine, crop failure, earthquakes) international conflict is another high list covered by global journalists. (Herbert 2000:45) In the process, he concludes that the Third World bears a distorted identity.

### **2.3 Cultural Identity**

While the Third World is struggling for recognition and restoration of its identity, Hall (1997) has a different view of what he terms as crisis of 'identity'. The argument he poses is that identity is merely a celebration of

one set of ideas while dismissing 'others'. Hall's perspective disputes Schiller's approach. His view on identities is that they are constituted within and not outside representation, and that there is no pre-existing 'essential self' who is represented or expressed. Instead subjectivity and identity are constructed within discourse. He refutes a unitary identity approach and argues that every self is unique in his own right and that identity is always unstable, fragmented and contingent, since it is dependent on the exclusion of that which is 'other'.

Said (1994) also examines the relationship between the West and its imperial conquests within the context of culture. Said does not view imperialism as a contained era of history, but rather as something more fluid. He systematically addresses colonial and postcolonial forms of communication through the construct of the Western literary canon. He specifically addresses the way in which subjugated peoples are represented within literary works and other forms of communication. He claims that these works have negatively affected both the peoples and also the cultures in which they live. In his view, imperialism is not about a specific moment in history, but rather a continuing interdependent dialogue between subject peoples and the dominant super powers. His argument demonstrates that the end of imperialistic influence upon communication forms did not end with colonial rule. They have continued to exist within postcolonial culture because of the circumstance in which subjugated peoples have been placed. Throughout his analysis of culture, he focuses on the limitations of subjugated peoples within Western culture and the reasons for their continued oppression.

On the question of identity, Said (1994) does not view identity as affirmations of roots, cultural pride and nationalism but rather a defence of peoples and identities threatened with extinction or subordinated because their cultures are considered inferior without really having to focus on a past he believes to have been deliberately invented for present reasons.

Hall (1997) acknowledges that the recovery and celebration of 'roots' is an important phenomenon. Contrary to Said's view, Hall believes that history does play a significant role in the emergence of many social movements. In Hall's own interventions in the debate about identity, he recasts the terms in which identity is understood. Identity is not a hidden essence to be uncovered, but an active process of representation or discursive construction.

In cultural studies, culture is broadly understood in terms of 'shared meanings'. In the modern world, the media are of paramount significance in the circulation of these 'meanings'. Hall represents them as being shared through language in its operations as representations (signifying) system. (Hall 1980 cited in Talbot 2007: 4)

Reality exists outside language but it is constantly mediated by and through language, and what we can know or say has to be produced through discourse. Discursive 'knowledge' is the product not of transparent representation of the 'real' in language but of the articulation of language on real relations and conditions. (Hall 1980: 131)

## **2.4 The Influence of the Media**

Talbot (2007) says that the importance of the media in the modern world is incontrovertible. She writes off old institutions such as the church or trade unions which were perceived as primary sources of understanding the world. She asserts that discourse plays a vital role in constituting people's realities and that the implications for the power and influence of media discourse are clear.

In the same vein, Phelan (1980) concurs that the media is an avenue for any discourse. First the media has a format of mass mediated programming that has or at least a determining effect on whatever is said or shown and second, it has the integrated technological organization that invites or discourages certain types of messages, programming, or content, based on the media's own internal needs. These needs to a large extent will control the content. He assumes the strengths of the 'sender - message- receiver' model. Going by this view, an assumption is made that the global media has total impact on its recipients.

Hall (1980) differs with Phelan's view above. He disputes the assumptions inferred from the simplistic model of sender – message – receiver model but puts a special emphasis on the importance of specific cultural conditions at every stage of any communication process. Creators of media texts produce them in particular contexts, drawing on shared knowledge frameworks, professional norms etc. The same media texts are engaged with audience in different cultural contexts where resources drawn upon to understand them cannot be assumed to be the same. The process involved in encoding the meanings of media texts are not necessarily the same as those involved in

decoding. (Talbot 2007: 4) Each recipient decodes independently and meanings will / may differ to a great extent. Assumed 'meanings' by producers should not be assumed to be similar to audiences. This argument collides with Schiller's views.

Schiller (2002) asserts that there is a large trend in the conscious dissemination of western attitudes and values which he describes as cultural imperialism and which in his view, involves more than simple consumer goods but other principles such as freedom and democracy. Schiller fears that many cultures around the world are and would gradually disappear due to overwhelming influence of corporate and western cultural influences. Nevertheless this view could be perceived as too extreme with regard to the improved technology and other developments which in actual sense have reinforced resistance to these cultural infusions and dominations.

Talbot (2007) views it slightly differently. She identifies three distinct sites of interactions involving the media. One level is the interaction between the production communities who perceive the audience as demographics and not interlocutors. Audiences are more of commodities to be sold to advertisers. The second level is the interactivity between producers and audiences and the last one is audience interaction with each other. Nevertheless, she affirms that new technologies of cable, satellites and the internet have greatly enhanced the interactive potential of broadcast media, live web chats and user generated content. (Hall 1980 cited in Talbot 2007:4)

On the other hand, Rothkopf (1997:38) celebrates the decline of cultural distinctions as a measure of progress in civilization which is a sign of

enhanced communications and understanding. This argument, however, is debatable. Most nations in the world do have their individual development and progress agendas without necessarily having to shed off their cultural heritage. Rothkopf (1997:39) implies that Schiller is in denial that with the advancement of information technologies, the world is taking a rapid new communication outfit and that the new technologies are transforming the world into a global village. McLuhan (1989) furthers the argument that with the advent of improved satellite communications, the world has become a global village, thus advancing the argument that conservatism may not thrive.

With reference to improved technology, Galeota (2004) claims that the World Wide Web (www) acts as another vehicle for the worldwide propagation of western influence. However, Rothkopf (1997) disputes the claim. He views the new 'information economy' as proof that the world domination is in decline. He argues that global accessibility of this decentralized medium has decreased the relevance of the "core periphery" theory of global influence. The theory describes inherent imbalance in the primarily outward flow of information and influence from stronger, more powerful "core" nations such as the United States to the peripheral ones in the developing world.

Yet Schiller (2002) strongly believes that the advancement of telecommunications, computer networks, and other communication systems have allowed a more fluid management of resources from virtually anywhere on earth, finding this as a big threat since more influential media houses are increasingly instituting controls and limiting the choices in the

area of media and cultural creativity. Nevertheless, this view can be challenged as it is posed in the background of the assumptions made in the hypodermic needle / magic bullet theory, which assume total influence on the consumer.

Rothkopf (1997) disputes that culture is not static but grows out of systematically encouraged reverence for selected customs and habits. The media therefore should not be an advocate of culture preservation. Rothkopf's argument however, can be challenged that not all cultures are inherently bad and thus should be eliminated. Rothkopf (1997) reinforces that successful multicultural societies, be they nations, federations, or other closely interrelated states, discern those aspects of culture that do not threaten union, stability, or prosperity. But they counteract or eradicate the more subversive elements of culture. Rothkopf (1997) claims that history has shown that bridging of the gaps successfully and serving as a home to diverse peoples requires certain social structures and laws. Integrative models, though not perfected, exist in multicultural societies such as in the European Union, India, South Africa, and the United States.

Riddled with issues revolving around the Internet, and the perceived loss of identity of the Third World countries, there were perceptions that globalization of the media contributed to a large extent gross misrepresentations and imbalances in the international flow of information. Other concerns included inequality in information resources, cultural and commercial values of information and unfair distribution of news distribution. This sparked a new wave of protest that sheltered itself under the umbrella of the New World Information Communication Order,



(NWICO). Its objectives were to reorganize the structure of information geared towards national development of communication systems, and defining the role of mass media in the international sphere. (Ojo 2003) Based on these perceptions, this chapter now seeks to analyse the issues of NWICO with reference to the arguments advanced on globalization and identity of the Third World within the environment of an improved communication technology.

## **2.5 The NWICO Debate**

As outlined above, the NWICO debate revolved around the nature of media coverage. The developing world had a notion that the national and international flow of culture and news was unbalanced and always in favour of the developed world. The perceptions the Third World countries had over the portrayal of their issues and concerns in the media from the West, was purposively negative. However, there is an assumption that the status quo of an imbalance in news flows between the developed and developing countries, is as a result of the military, economic and political power distribution in the world. The news makers do not find the developing world worth a positive mention or portrayal as it is usually lumped up as the 'Dark Continent'(Ojo 2003)

Even as Herbert (2000) explains that global news flow is all about journalists and their ability to find out what is happening in countries that are not their own, there are factors that perhaps influence the trend in reporting.

Galtung and Rouge (1992) outline the factors that influence newsworthiness. One of the major determinants is 'frequency'. This involves an event whose

frequency in occurrence makes it worth a news item. In the case of an event occurring with an immense intensity, the greater the impact on the perception, the more chances of it priming on news. Galtung and Rouge refer to it as 'threshold'. Another raised factor is that an event 'devoid of any ambiguities' easily makes it to the news menu. It is important too to consider cultural 'meaningfulness' in the selection of news items since cultural differences affect reception of news. Among other factors is 'consonance'. This is when the news selector predicts or wants something to happen, therefore forms a mental image of an event which then increases its chances of becoming news. For 'continuity' purposes once an event makes the headline it remains the media's spotlight for some time, even when its amplitude has decreased. (Galtung and Rouge cited in Herbert 2000:32)

A country's proximity is another factor forwarded as a likely explanation for uneven coverage. Rosengren (1994) suggests a correlation between reader interest and the physical distance between countries. Galtung and Rouge (1992) postulated that the distance should be conceptualized in terms of cultural distance or proximity.

Other studies found that the imbalance of news is not limited to the relationship between developed and developing countries. Galtung (1992) proposes that there is a centre – periphery pattern in the flow of international news. He hypothesizes that news flows mainly from the centre or dominant countries to the periphery or dependent regions. He also states that the elitism of country as a news source was the most important criterion for news selection. However, the study may be disputed as 'relevance' stands

out as the most important factor for the criterion of news selection and not elitism.

### **2.5.1 The 1980 MacBride Commission**

Carlson (2003) states that the arguments posed above intensified the NWICO debate, resulting to the 1976's UNESCO General Conference formulating a declaration on mass media and promptly setting up the MacBride Commission. Its mandate was to study all manner of communication problems.

In bid to capture as much as possible the NWICO's aspirations, the Commission strongly expressed that there was need to nurture capacity of developing countries to achieve improvement of their own situations, among them, improving their infrastructures and by making their own information and media suitable to their needs and aspirations. The developed countries were to demonstrate sincere will to help the developing countries achieve those objectives, maintain the respect for each other's people's cultural identity and the right of each nation to inform the world public about its interests, its aspirations and its social and cultural values. (UNESCO 1980)

The Commission came up with 82 recommendations; however, clarifications were made on the nature of NWICO it was recommending. These were analysed in four parts, which included the assessment of the 'Communication perspective', as the first one, where a study of all levels of forms of communication and the developments in technology was undertaken. The second was the 'Development perspective'; the commission was to determine the role of mass media in society with reference to the

concerns raised by the third world countries in their demand for NWICO. (Carlson 2003: 17) Last but not least, a 'Third World perspective' where focus was on the extent of support from the recommendations in the demands for development, democratization, decolonization and demonopolization. These demands were for both divides; the developing and the developed world. Lastly, an analysis was made from a 'Practical perspective' that looked at what extent the recommendations were practical (Carlson 2003: 18)

The Commission also undertook measures to guarantee human rights, acceptance of the right to communicate, abolishment of censorship, editorial independence, limits on media concentration and monopolization, and lastly, the reinforcement of international cooperation. The measures in this category aimed at collaboration between professional organizations and research centres in the planning of information and communication. (Carlson 2003)

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Much as there were some opposing forces from the USA and UK, NWICO's major focus was on the respect for all right of people's to participate in international exchanges of information on the basis of equality and justice and mutual benefit; respect for the right of the public, of ethnic and social groups to and of individuals to have access to information sources and to participate actively in the communication process. (UNESCO 1980)

## 2.5.2 Discussions from attributes in support of NWICO

Going by the remedies proposed by the McBride Commission above, it is likely to concur with the argument Phelan (1980) advances. He cites that NWICO resented the perceived lack of respect for the Third World people's cultural identity as reflected in the Western media in bid to sell its news. He attributes this as a result of vast market for news and increasing commercialization of the media. The argument posed is that it has proven difficult to provide a balanced view of any scenario because the media wants to sell.

Herbert (2000) supports Phelan's view though from another perspective. He makes a claim that the internet and online journalism differ considerably from traditional media approaches. He puts it on record that during the early 1970's and 1980's, developing world's countries contended that international news agencies controlled the flow of information often forcing the countries to view themselves and their neighbours through the eyes of Western journalists. Nevertheless, the internet and online journalism gives the user the advantage of a more interactive opportunity by creating linkages through provision of alternative sources and views (Herbert 2000: 51) This argument is in support of the rise of social networks which create a lot of independence and flow of information for the users.

On the hand, Schiller (2002) maintains his traditional outlook towards the media. He views the deliberate concentration of media related industries into the hands of a few controlling companies as not only monopolistic, but also as a filter of cultural ideas and expressions. If the media represents the largest segment of our collective cultural expressions then it is truly one of

corporate culture, left for the heads of corporation to dictate “acceptable” forms of cultural representations. This view perceives the public as passive and willing to accept these controls as social norms. Again Schiller’s perception may be challenged as observed from other communication studies such as the gratification theories of communication’ that state people use the media for individual specific needs and not from the media’s needs perspective. (McQuail 2001: 387)

### **2.5.3 The Challenges to NWICO**

From the discussions above there are a clear gains for the developing countries as advanced by the pro NWICO arguments. Nevertheless, the NWICO ideals did not go unchallenged. Ojo (2003) notes that there was a walk out on the debate and a revocation of membership by Britain and the US, resulting to political and financial weakening of UNESCO. The clauses on censorship and the media accountability were perceived too ambiguous. As a result, rather than a serious treatment of the concerns raised, the demands were trivialized and treated as a wave of protests from a handful of the third world’s elites perceived to be an under representation of the masses and also as a direct attack on capitalism. In summary, the call from developing countries for a more balanced flow of information and the remedial of the negative portrayal of the Third World countries by the media in the developed world, seemingly made NWICO’s aspirations an uphill task.

### **2.6 Conclusion**

Citing all the discussions advanced above, Chong (2008) reckons that it is impossible then to directly measure “cultural globalization” or the extent to

which cultural values and ideas are diffused across national borders. It is necessary therefore to seek out proxy signifiers, which indicate the extent to which beliefs and values are moving across national boundaries. The most likely proxy, then, would be the vehicles by which culture is most typically transmitted. Although there are a number of symbols of globalization, Chong (2008) proposes in his view that the best manner of measuring cultural globalization would be to chart the movement of popular media. In the case of this study, it is the Internet. The reason is that the Internet has perhaps more effect than other symbols of globalization, due to the heavy presence of cyber cafes and computer laboratories in most learning institutions which provide Internet accessibility.

As it has been suggested that cultural globalization be measured by consumption of mass communication products, the likely indicator for this particular study would be in engaging in 'Facebook', a social network. This empirical choice is consistent with the established wisdom that mass media have a powerful effect on the development of culture.

This study is therefore based on the framework of theories of media and society. (Mcquail 2000:5) advances that there is a relationship between the media and society, as he views the media as a social institution within society having its own terms of reference, yet very dependent on society. Mcquail (2000) examines this relationship and advances that it depends on the circumstances of time and place. He furthers the argument that the mass media are experienced differently in societies with 'non Western' characteristics. Mcquail (2000) advances the view that the media institution is concerned with the production and distribution of knowledge that enable

people make sense of their personal experiences even though accommodation of meaning is diverse. The point he is emphatic on is the degree to which the media have interposed themselves between individuals and experiences of the world beyond them. Mcquail (2000) poses arguments revolving around global mass communication in relation to cultural imperialism and he perceives it as a process of cause and effect as the media transmits ideas, meaning, and cultural forms from place to place and sender to receiver.

Thus in summary, this chapter has discussed the growth of the internet and globalization and how it is perceived as a possible contributory factor to the derailment of cultural identity of the Third World. While acknowledging advancement in technology, the chapter has also given in depth highlight on the rise and fall of NWICO in the assessment of free flow of information, and the theory framework upon which the study is based.



## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Research Design**

Research design is the plan with which the research project is executed. The research problem posed was studied using both the quantitative and qualitative survey methods. The quantitative method was executed by use of questionnaires while the qualitative was done through interviews. The simple random sampling was adopted to determine the classes that were going to be included in sample for survey. Once the classes had been identified, they were subjected to the systematic random sampling procedure. In this case, the number of the sample required per class was 27; therefore this was divisible by the total number students in the identified classes to get the  $K^{\text{th}}$  number which was used to determine the sample. As for the staff population they were randomly selected.

### **3.2 Population**

The population of interest was the entire Mombasa Polytechnic University College fraternity. This consisted of about 5,000 student population and a staff population of 250. As a training institution, it was assumed that it had ample access of ICT facilities for both the students and workers, citing this as quite relevant for it to be part of the study that would be representative.

### **3.3 Sampling**

The sampling size of the study was 270 students and 30 members of staff giving the sample a total of 300. The 270 students were selected through stratified random method. The sampling considered 27 students from each department, bringing a total of 270 students from all the 10 departments.

Meanwhile 30 workers were randomly drawn from all the departments. The units of study were selected using the systematic random sampling. All classes in every department were included and drawn for selection. The selected classes were subjected to the systematic random sampling where every student within the sample had equal chances of being included in the study.

### **3.4 Data Collection**

The study used primary data only. This data was collected using the questionnaires and interview methods. The questionnaires had been piloted and adjusted accordingly. There were two sections: Section A, which had both open and closed ended questions, was administered to all respondents by requesting them to individually fill in their responses. Section B was an oral interview, administered to 10% of the total respondents from the sample, resulting to a total of 30 respondents. These ones too were randomly selected.

The respondents in this study included the students, the teaching staff and the non – teaching staff. This was justified from the fact that the institution has provision for internet access but individuals may or may not take advantage of the facility.

### **3.5 Data Analysis**

Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the data collected through the use of the Statistical Package on Social Science (SPSS)

### **3.6 Limitation**

A total of 300 questionnaires were sent out but only 266 were returned. A cross section of the sampled employee population was reluctant to respond to the questionnaire because the institution had just been upgraded to a degree awarding status, prompting some to be suspicious that it was a survey on determining their computer skills competencies which they had viewed as a mode perhaps to be used for scaling down employees' work force, irrelevant to the new institution status.

## CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

### 4.0 Introduction

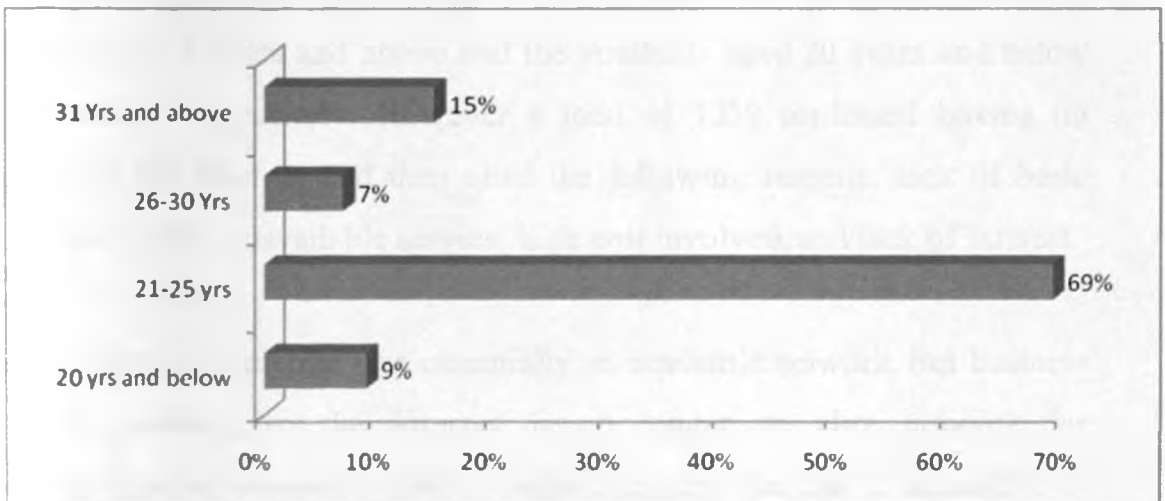
All completed questionnaires were edited for completeness and consistency before analysis. In this chapter the results are presented through tables and graphs. The presentation is in order of objectives. A total of 300 members of the institution were targeted from the sampling. Three hundred questionnaires were sent out but only 266 were received back thus giving a response rate of 89%.

### 4.1 Factors determining internet accessibility

#### 4.1.1 Respondent's Age

This section of the study sought to establish the age of the respondents. Respondents indicated their ages as follows:

**Figure 4.1: Respondent's Age**



The study revealed that the majority of the respondents, 69% were aged between 21 and 25 years. This was followed by 15% who were the eldest

respondents; thirty one years old and above and 9% who were the youthful respondents; twenty years old and below. The minority, 7% were aged between 26 and 30 years.

#### 4.1.2 Information on access to the Internet

Table 4.2: Age bracket \* Access to the internet. Crosstabulation

		Do you have access to the internet?					
		Yes		No		Total	
Age bracket		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
	20 years and below	21	8	3	1	24	4
	21-25 years	166	63	16	6	181	68
	26-30 years	17	6	2	1	19	7
	31 years and above	28	11	12	5	40	15
Total		233	88	33	12	265	100

The study revealed that majority of the respondents, 63% aged between 21-25 years had access to the internet. Eleven percent and eight, represented the eldest-aged 31 years and above and the youthful- aged 20 years and below respondents respectively. However a total of 12% confessed having no access to the internet and thus cited the following reasons; lack of basic computer skills, unavailable service, high cost involved, and lack of interest.

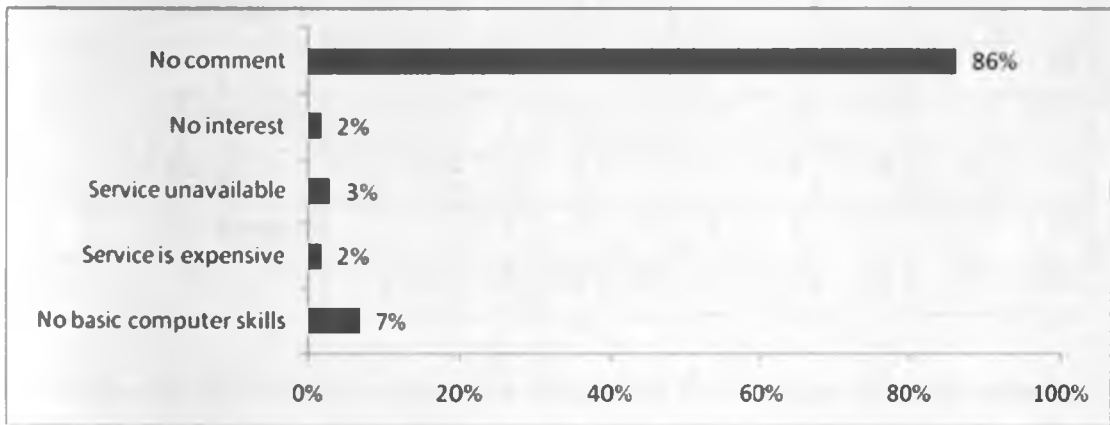
Historically, the Internet was essentially an academic network, but business use is growing, so the Internet is no longer an elite network for communication between eminent research centers, but also is accessible to small colleges, small businesses and libraries throughout the world. These findings were consistent with Saxena (2004) who gives an account of the

first area network that was operational in the 1980s, and claims that the Internet gained popularity in the 1990s because of the availability of web browsers.

### 4.1.3 Reasons for internet inaccessibility

The respondents were asked to state their reasons for internet inaccessibility. The responses were as follows;

Figure 4.3: Reasons for internet inaccessibility



Due to the fact that most respondents, 88% had earlier indicated that they had access to the internet, 86% gave no comment while 2% had no interest in internet accessibility. However, 7% stated that reasons for internet inaccessibility was that they had no basic computer skills, 3% indicated that the service was not available, whereas 2% cited the high cost involved.

#### 4.1.4 Services sought from the Internet

Table 4.4: Age bracket \* service looked for from the internet?

		Age bracket								
		20 years and below		21-25 years		26-30 years		31 years and above		Total
What service do you look for from the internet?		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
	E-mail	12	5	90	34	12	5	24	9	138
	academic information	8	3	55	21	6	2	3	1	72
	News	0	0	9		1	1	2	1	12
	Entertainment	2	1	16	6	0	0	1	1	19
	Others	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	2
	No comment	2	1	10	4	0	0	10	4	22
Total		24	4	182	67	19	7	40	15	265

This section of the study was done to determine the services the respondents looked for in the internet. Majority of the respondents, 34% aged between 21-25 years indicated that e-mail was the services they looked for in the internet, followed by 21% who sought for academic information, and then 6% who sought for entertainment. Nine percent of the eldest respondents aged 31 years and above showed that e-mail was the services they looked for in the internet, while 4% gave no comment. Those aged between 26-30 years and 20 years and below and indicated that e-mail was the services they looked for in the internet, each constituted 5%.

Others included academic information, entertainment, blogging, chatting and meeting with friends, networking, business tips, and interacting with other culture, sport highlights of various sites, love poems, scholarship application, spiritual matters and job adverts.

This shows that there is much hype concerning the Internet and its potential to provide a virtual experience in a wide range of different areas of society. This finding supports Saxena (2004) and her view that it is much easier for people around the world to access information and share it with others in the global information infrastructure. It can also be affirmed that the youthful age of between 20 and 25 which represented 63% in this study, do have more access to the internet as revealed.

#### 4.1.5 Other Internet services

The other internet services that the respondents sought for were found to be; Blogging, chatting and meeting with friends, networking, business tips, and interacting with other culture. Further, Sport highlights of various sites, love poems, scholarship application, Spiritual matters and job adverts were viewed as the other internet services the respondents sought for.

#### 4.1.6 Facebook Registration

Table 4.5: Age bracket \* Facebook Registration - Cross tabulation

		Are you registered on Facebook?					
		Yes		No		Total	
Age bracket		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
	20 years and below	18	7	6	2	24	4
	21-25 years	129	49	54	20	182	67



Table 4.5 Continued.....

	26-30 years	11	4	8	3	19	7
	31 years and above	14	5	26	10	40	15
<b>Total</b>		173	65	94	35	266	100

The study disclosed that most of the respondents, 49% aged between 21-25 years were registered on Facebook, contrasting the 20% who denied. The youthful respondents aged 20 years and below who indicated that they were registered on Facebook were comprised of 7%. Meanwhile, only 4% of those aged between 26-30 years were registered on Facebook. Among the eldest respondents aged 31 years and above, majority, 10% denied that they were registered on Facebook.

**4.2 Individual assessment of Facebook’s influence on the cultural orientation.**

The respondents were asked to state their opinion on the influence of the Facebook social network on their cultural orientation.

**4.2.1 Influence of Facebook**

The findings are discussed soon after the table that shows response on the influence of Facebook.

Table 4.6: Influence of Facebook

<b>Influence of Facebook on cultural orientation of its user.</b>	<b>Yes</b>		<b>No</b>	
	<b>Freq</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Freq</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Negative influence	5	17	25	83
Positive influence	18	60	12	40
both positive and negative influence	7	23	23	77

The study revealed that majority of the respondents, 60% was of the opinion that Facebook could not alter their cultural orientations; instead they viewed it as positive influence on cultural globalization. Nevertheless, 17% of respondents felt that Facebook could alter peoples' cultural orientation thus viewed it more of a negative influence. However, 23% of the respondents were indifferent in their opinion on Facebook's influence.

The majority respondents had nothing against Facebook, and were of the opinion that the social network had a positive influence in affirming global culture. This strongly supports Friedman (2007) and his view that propagates the increased flow of ideas globally, reductions in distance between cultures and individuals and the global export of cultural norms and cultural practices. It also supports Mcquail (2000) and his view that society and the media are interdependent.

Nevertheless, 17% cited its negative influence, while 23% were neutral citing both negative and positive cultural influences of the social network on the developing world. The 17% that were against recommending Facebook to others felt that the social network was not important, since it was viewed to corrupt the mind of innocent people by encouraging pornographic accessibility, a source of immorality. Besides, they also viewed Facebook as a vehicle of cultural erosion.

This view is supported by Schiller (1976) where he expresses fear for the cultures of the Third World countries as a result of domination of media content from the West. He is against globalization of the media that allows free flow of information disregarding national barriers. Saxena (2004) also

raises her concern over the information superhighway that connects the countries all over the world with considerable amount of information that is undesirable such as pornography and many other social evils. These respondents perceived the social network as unproductive and lacking privacy. They felt the immorality attached to it lowered the integrity and principles of people as well as eroding the culture of the developing world. Some respondents acknowledged their addiction to Facebook, terming it as a negative impact as most of the addicts, used most of their study time to socialize.

Nonetheless, Facebook is not viewed as a threat to the cultural orientation of its users as revealed by 60% of the respondents. The study disputed Phelan (1980) and his argument that the media has a format of mass mediated programming that has or at least a determining effect on whatever is said or shown. This view assumes the strengths of the 'sender - message- receiver' model.

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In contrast to Phelan (1980) and Schiller (2002) the majority respondents shared the opinion that Facebook not only represents a trend towards a "people search" engine, but also used as a tool for resource discovery and the articulation of one's information need. Besides, a proportion of 13% of the respondents indicated that the strength of Facebook was on its platform for cultural diversity.

#### 4.2.2 Knowledge about Facebook

Respondents were asked to disclose how they knew about Facebook

Table 4.7: Age bracket \* How registered respondents knew about Facebook.

		If registered, how did you know about it?										Total
		Friends		Computer Adverts		Radio		Others		No comment		
Age bracket		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
	20 years and below	16	6	1	1	1	1	0	0	6	2	24
	21-25 years	101	38	15	6	4	2	4	2	59	22	182
	26-30 years	10	4	1	1	0	0	1	1	7	3	19
	31 years and above	10	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	27	10	40
Total		138	52	18	7	6	2	6	2	99	37	266

Those who indicated that they were registered on Facebook were further asked to state how they got to know about Facebook. Majority of the respondents, 38% who knew about Facebook from friends were aged between 21-25 years. Moreover, 6% who were aged 20 years and below got to know about Facebook from friends. Meanwhile, 6% who knew about Facebook from computer adverts were aged between 21-25 years. Radio was not a major source of information on Facebook, since only 2% who were aged between 21-25 years admitted that they knew about Facebook via radio. Further, only 2% of the respondents who were aged between 21-25 years admitted that they had other sources of information on Facebook. As expected, a proportion of 37% gave no response since 35% of the respondents were not registered on Facebook.

### 4.2.3 Other sources of Facebook information

The other sources of Facebook information among the respondents were found to be; television, and the modern techniques within the global dynamic world, such as literature materials and video shows.

### 4.2.4 Reasons for Facebook membership

Table 4.8: Age bracket \* Why are you on Facebook? Crosstabulation

		Age bracket									
		20 years and below		21-25 years		26-30 years		31 years and above		Total	
Why are you on Facebook?		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	
		Social Networking	8	3	81	31	10	4	9	3	109
		Information/News access	5	2	14	5	1	1	2	1	22
		Entertainment/Leisure	5	2	18	7	0	0	1	1	24
		Academic	0	0	9	3	0	0	0	0	9
		No specific reasons	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	1	3
		No comment	6	2	60	23	8	3	26	10	100
<b>Total</b>		<b>24</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>266</b>	

There were several reasons cited by the respondents behind subscribing to Facebook. The majority, 31% who were aged between 21-25 years stated that social networking was the reason why they had subscribed to Facebook. Further, a proportion of 3%, each, aged 20 years and below and 31 years and above indicated that social networking was the reason why they were on Facebook. Meanwhile, 4% who were aged between 26-30 years indicated

that social networking was the reason why they were on Facebook. Seven percent who were aged between 21-25 years stated that they were on Facebook for entertainment/leisure, whereas 5% cited information/news access. Only 3% was aged between 21-25 years and stated that the reason why they were on Facebook was academic. This meant that the respondents valued social networking more than other reasons of Facebook subscription.

### 4.3 Impact of Social Networks as a Tool for Mass Communication

#### 4.3.1 Facebook Log-in frequency.

Table 4.9: Age bracket \* How often do you log onto Facebook?  
Crosstabulation

		Age bracket								Total
		20 yrs and below		21-25 yrs		26-30 Yrs		31 Yrs and above		
How often do you log onto Facebook?		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
do you log onto Facebook?	Everyday	15	6	65	24	4	2	2	1	87
	Twice a week	3	1	42	16	5	2	9	3	59
	After two weeks	0	0	13	5	2	1	1	1	16
	Once a month	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	1	3
	No comment	6	2	61	23	8	3	27	10	102
Total		24	4	183	69	19	7	40	15	266

The frequency of Facebook log in was sought amongst the respondents. The responses were as follows; the frequency of logging into Facebook was found to be very high, such that most respondents did this frequently and on a daily basis. Majority, 24% who were aged between 21-25 years stated that

they logged onto Facebook on a daily basis, followed by 16% who indicated that they logged in twice a week. The youthful respondents who logged onto Facebook on a daily basis and aged 20 years and below constituted 6%. Three percent of the respondents logged into Facebook twice a week and were aged 31 years and above. A proportion of 2%, each, of those aged between 26-30 years indicated that they either logged onto Facebook on a daily basis or twice a week.

The study revealed that the internet is used alot for varied reasons. Eighty eight percent of the respondents accessed the internet. These statistics support Talbot (2007) that the Internet technology has greatly enhanced the interactive potential of broadcast media, live web chats and user generated content. The majority of the respondents, 34% aged between 21-25 years indicated that e-mail was the services they looked for in the internet, 21% sought for academic information, and 6% entertainment. Nine percent represented the eldest respondents aged 31 years and above whose internet service was e-mail. Those aged between 26-30 years and 20 years and below and indicated that e-mail was the services they looked for in the internet, each constituted 5%. The other internet services that the respondents sought for were found to be; Blogging, chatting and meeting with friends, networking, business tips, and interacting with other culture, sport highlights of various sites, love poems, scholarship application, spiritual matters and job adverts.

On the knowledge of Facebook, majority, 38% who knew about Facebook from friends, were aged between 21-25 years. Moreover, 6% were aged 20

years and below and knew about Facebook from friends. Meanwhile, 6% who knew about Facebook from computer adverts was aged between 21-25 years. Radio was not a major source of information on Facebook, since only 2% who were aged between 21-25 years admitted that they knew about Facebook via radio. This then dismisses Talbot (2007) who advances the view that audiences are more of commodities to be sold to advertisers. Further, only 2% of the respondents who were aged between 21-25 years admitted that they had other sources of information about Facebook such as; television and the modern techniques.

The study established that the 21- 25 age brackets stated that they could recommend Facebook to others and these constituted 42%. This was followed by the youthful respondents-aged 20 years and below, 7% and then the eldest respondents -aged 31 years and above, 6%.

Further, Facebook was seen as a diverse means of communication to wide range of people. Moreover, Facebook was viewed to be entertaining, enjoyable and very exciting. Still Facebook was viewed to be a site for job opportunity and advertising, educative, research and academic purpose. This strongly supports the argument posed by McQuail (2001: 62) where he advances that the view of interdependence between the media and society, which constantly continue to interact and influence each other. The media represents the cultural industry which responds to the demand from society for information and entertainment. Besides, stimulating innovations and contributing to a changing socio- cultural climate which sets off new demands for communication such as the social networks.



The findings on the views above also dispute Schiller (2002) who harbours a strong belief that the advancement of telecommunications, computer networks, and other communication systems have allowed a more fluid management of resources from virtually anywhere on earth, citing allegations that it is a big threat. He reckons more influential media houses are increasingly instituting controls and limiting the choices in the area of media and cultural creativity.

The study also revealed that all the respondents, 100% acknowledged that the strength of Facebook was its ability to social network locally and internationally. Sixty percent indicated opportunity for information exchange, and 23% high entertainment value.

#### 4.3.2 Facebook Recommendation

Table 4.10: Age bracket \* Would you recommend Facebook to others?

Cross tabulation

		Would you recommend Facebook to others?						Total
		Yes		No		No comment		
Age	bracket	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
	20 years and below	18	7	3	1	3	1	24
	21-25 years	112	42	23	9	48	18	183
	26-30 years	7	2	4	2	8	3	19
	31 years and above	15	6	13	5	12	5	40
<b>Total</b>		<b>152</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>266</b>

Those who stated that they could recommend Facebook to others and also aged between 21-25 years constituted 42%. This was followed by the youthful respondents-aged 20 years and below, 7% and then the eldest respondents -aged 31 years and above, 6%. However, 9% of those aged between 21-25 years denied that they could recommend Facebook to others. Meanwhile, 18% of those aged between 21-25 years gave no response as to whether they could recommend Facebook to others or not.

#### **4.3.4 Reasons against recommending Facebook to others**

Majority of the respondents indicated that they did not know or rather had no idea on why not to recommend Facebook to others. This could be due to the fact that the respondents had no knowledge on Facebook. Meanwhile, some respondents saw Facebook to be of no importance, since it was viewed to corrupt the mind of innocent people by encouraging pornographic accessibility-a source of immorality. Some respondents were not interested in Facebook since it was used for unproductive issues. This lowers the integrity and principles of people as well as eroding the culture. Those who had not been accessing a computer hence unable to access Facebook assumed that others too could be faced with the same challenge, thus no need for proposing Facebook to others.

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Due to Facebook addiction, most students found themselves using their study time to socialize, consuming a lot of time only on socialization. At work place, there was inefficiency as a result of much time spent on Facebook. Still, lack of privacy, leading to many people taking advantage of banking into peoples account and posting their comment into their profiles was a factor against recommendation.

#### **4.3.5 Reasons for recommending Facebook to others.**

Facebook was seen as a place where one could be informed in all areas of life. Global communication was viewed to enrich and positively challenge others by developing mature reasoning capacity. Consequently, one could at least get update on information that cannot be got from life experience. Human beings are social beings and need to socialize with others. As a way of socializing in Facebook, people are able to connect, interact and share with friends more easily and frequently, and meet new people. Keeping in touch with old friends and knowing what and how they are doing and how the life is affecting them was very important. The world has become global village hence the need for social networking through Facebook. Connecting people of different parts of the world with different backgrounds helps in embracing diversity in culture and lifestyle and promoting unity.

Due to the dynamics in technology advancement, Facebook was seen as a good experience to venture into. In fact as a new concept in the technological field some respondents saw it wise to recommend it for a trial. Further, Facebook was seen to the cheapest means of communication to wide range of people. Moreover, Facebook was viewed to be fun and enjoyable and very exciting. As a site for job opportunity and advertising, Facebook had contributed to people finding jobs. Still, some respondents indicated that the reason for suggesting that other people join Facebook was for research and academic purposes.

### 4.3.6 Time spent on Facebook

Table 4.11: Time spent on Facebook

Time spent on Facebook	Frequency	Percent
30 Minutes	9	30
1 Hour	7	23
2 Hours	6	20
3 Hours	1	3
4 Hours	3	10
6 Hours	2	7
12 Hours	2	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

This study also revealed that the respondents were generally reluctant to consume more than thirty minutes on Facebook, citing high cost for the service. The majority, 30% indicated that they took the shortest time - 30 minutes, 23% who took one hour, 20% who took six hours and 10% took four hours to Facebook. The minority, 3% took 3 hours to Face book, while those who took more time of twelve hours constituted 7%. This was an indicator that despite availability of internet, the cost was still high as reflected by the 12% of the respondents.

### 4.3.7 Justification of time spent on Facebook

This section of the study sought the reasons for time usage in Facebook. The findings were as presented in table 4.9 below.

**Table 4.12: Justification of Time Spent on Facebook**

Justification of time spent on Facebook	Yes		No	
	Freq	Percent	Freq	Percent
Interacting with friends and making new friends (social networking)	30	100	0	0
Accessing current affairs both locally and internationally	7	23	23	77
Academic purposes	2	7	28	93
Accessing news	2	7	28	93
Addiction to Facebook	6	20	24	80
Affordable mode of communication	3	10	27	90
Professional networking	3	10	27	90

There were several reasons justifying the time spent on Facebook. Interestingly, all the respondents, 100% indicated that interacting with friends and making new friends (social networking) was the reason for spending time on Facebook. Twenty three percent indicated that their reason for the time spent on Facebook was to access current affairs both locally and internationally. Still, 20% stated that due to Facebook addiction they spent their time on Facebook. A proportion of 10% each stated that they spent time on Facebook for professional networking or due to its affordability in terms of communication. The minority, 7%, each indicated that their reason for the time spent on Facebook was for academic purposes or accessing news.

### 4.3.8 Strengths of Facebook

Table 4.13: Strengths of Facebook

Strengths of Facebook	Yes		No	
	Freq	Percent	Freq	Percent
A social network locally and internationally	30	100	0	0
Platform for cultural diversity	4	13	26	87
Opportunity for information exchange	18	60	12	40
Educative forum	8	27	22	73
Strength in business dimension	4	13	24	87
Job advertisements	2	7	28	93
A high entertainment value	7	23	23	77
Interaction with media houses	2	7	28	93
Technology motivation (Computer skill acquisition as a result of Facebook)	1	3	29	97
Easy to use	2	7	28	93
No specific reason	1	3	29	97

The study revealed that all the respondents, 100% acknowledged that the strength of Facebook was its ability to network individuals locally and internationally. Sixty percent indicated that opportunity for information exchange as a strength. This was followed by 23% who stated that it had a high entertainment value. A proportion of 13%, each, indicated that its strength was either its platform for cultural diversity or business dimension system. However, the minority, 3%, each, either had no specific reason for Facebook strength, or stated it motivated them to acquire basic computer skills for them to use for Facebook

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

This chapter gives the conclusions gathered from analysis of data, alongside the objectives of the study and the recommendations for actions given.

#### **5.1 Conclusions**

##### **5.1.1 Internet accessibility**

The study concludes that access to and use of the internet is inevitable in the technological development. This was evident in the 88% who had access, especially within the age bracket of between 21-25 years who were the majority. Amongst other several services sought for in the internet, the e-mail was the main service. This was followed by search for academic information and entertainment. However, the other internet services that were sought for include; blogging, chatting and meeting with friends, networking, business tips, and interacting with other culture, sport highlights of various sites, love poems, scholarship application, spiritual matters and job adverts.

The study also concludes that the Internet is still an expensive venture as evidenced from the logging in time. The respondents were generally reluctant to consume much time on social networks such as Facebook, due to its high cost.

### **5.1.2 Influence of Facebook, a social network, on the cultural orientation of its users**

The study concludes that the Internet has no significant effect on the cultural orientation of its users. Instead it is a major means of socializing and linking people all over the world. People were able to interact with friends more easily and frequently, reducing stress, boredom, idleness, while embracing diversity in culture, lifestyle and promoting global unity.

### **5.1.3 Impact of social networks as a tool for mass communication**

The study concludes that social networks are effective tools of mass communication. This is derived from the percentage rate of registration on Facebook where most respondents, especially those aged between 21-25 years were members, unlike just a handful of the eldest respondents aged 31 years and above. Support for this conclusion is also based on the transmission of knowledge of 'Facebook' as a communication concept. Majority of the respondents knew about Facebook from friends and computer adverts. However, radio was not a major source of information on Facebook, although television and other modern techniques were cited.

This conclusion is supported by the frequency percentage rate of Facebook members log in, which was very high and where most respondents logged in frequently and on a daily basis. Most members cited were those aged between 21-25 years.

The study also affirms its conclusion that the Internet is an effective tool for mass media on the basis of several reasons cited from users' for being subscribers to the social network. Facebook was acclaimed for its ability to



network people of all ages both locally and internationally, creation of opportunity for information exchange, high entertainment value, and also a platform for cultural diversity and business dimension system. Other reasons included academic purposes, professional networking and addiction to Facebook.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

There is need to reinforce internet accessibility amongst all age brackets, due to the efficiency and effectiveness that it produces. It is also recommended that institutions invest more on ICT and also increase accessibility to internet. Communication is very vital in any organization; institutions are encouraged to network with other institutions through Facebook as it is instant and an effective platform of information exchange and academic information.

In spite of the fact that the main reason for being in Facebook was for social networking and entertainment, among all the age groups, there are other constructive reasons that it should be embraced. It is a good platform for cultural exchange and cultural events can in future be organized through Facebook, as this will arrest the indigenous cultures through sharing and understanding the positives of global cultures. Though there are numerous benefits obtained from Facebook, caution should be taken to ensure morality, privacy, efficiency and integrity is maintained.

Facebook has its impact reaching a very large audience, transmitting tacit knowledge. Still, there is need to educate the public on the positive influence

of social networks (Facebook) as a tool for mass media in the developing world, rather than concentrating on its negative influences.

Since this study concentrated on the globalization and cultural impact of mass media a web analysis of the Facebook network, further studies should be carried out on students' perception on the social network (Facebook) on its influence on their academic performance.

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University of Warwick

SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM

The Faculty of Arts, University of Warwick, is pleased to announce the appointment of a new Head of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication (SJMC).

The successful candidate will be responsible for the academic and cultural life of the School and will report to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor. The purpose of this research is

to investigate the relationship between the media and society.

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Dr. M. Talbot  
Head of School

## APENDIX I: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION



### University of Nairobi

Towards World Class Excellence

### SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM

I am Daniel K Mwaringa, a Masters Student at the University of Nairobi in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication (SOJ).

My research is based on the topic, '*Globalization and Cultural impact of the Media; A web analysis of the Facebook social network*'. The purpose of this research is:

- (i) To investigate the accessibility of internet services.
- (ii) To determine the influence of Facebook, a social network, on the cultural orientation of its users.
- (iii) To determine the impact of social networks as a tool of mass communication

This questionnaire is administered to members of the Mombasa Polytechnic University College and the research will extensively be used for academic purposes. I therefore guarantee the anonymity of all respondents.

Respondents can contact the University of Nairobi, School of Journalism and Mass Communication (SOJ) to ascertain the authenticity of this research. I may be contacted at Mombasa Polytechnic University College, in the Department of Media Studies through: Tel (041) 2492222/3/4 Ext 121 or through the following email address: [mwaringa@yahoo.com](mailto:mwaringa@yahoo.com)

I wish to sincerely thank you in advance for finding time to fill in this questionnaire.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Mwaringa', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

**DANIEL K MWARINGA**  
(K50/70588/2007)



## APENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE

TICK IN THE BRACKET ( ) PROVIDED FOR YOUR MOST APPROPRIATE RESPONSE.

### SECTION A

1. How old are you?
  - (a) 20 Years and below ( )
  - (b) 21 – 25 Years ( )
  - (c) 26 – 30 Years ( )
  - (d) 31 Years and above ( )
  
2. Do you have access to the internet?
  - (a) YES ( )
  - (b) NO ( )
  
3. If NO, why?
  - (a) No basic computer skills ( )
  - (b) Service is expensive ( )
  - (c) Service unavailable ( )
  - (d) No interest. ( )
  
4. What services do you look for from the internet?
  - (a) Email ( )
  - (b) Academic Information ( )
  - (c) News ( )
  - (d) Entertainment ( )
  - (e) Other(s) ( )
  
5. If (4) above is 'other(s)', please explain your answer  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....
  
6. Are you registered on Facebook?
  - (a) YES ( )
  - (b) NO ( )

7. If YES, how did you know about it?
- (a) Friends ( ) (b) Computer Adverts ( )
- (c) Radio ( ) (d) Others ( )

8. If (9) above is 'others', please explain your answer .....

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9. Why are you on Facebook?
- (a) Social Networking ( ) (b) Information / News access ( )
- (c) Entertainment / Leisure ( ) (d) Academic ( )
- (e) No specific reason ( )

10. How often do you log onto Facebook?
- (a) Everyday ( ) (b) Twice a week ( )
- (c) After two weeks ( ) (d) Once a month ( )

11. Would you recommend Facebook to others?
- (a) YES ( ) (IF 'YES' SKIP TO 13) (b) NO ( )

12. If NO, please explain your answer .....

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13. Please explain why you would recommend Facebook to others.

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**SECTION B**

**(ORAL INTERVIEW)**

14. Could you account and justify the amount of time you stay logged onto Facebook?

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15. In your personal opinion what are the strengths of the Facebook as a social network?

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16. In your opinion do you think social networks like Facebook interfere with your cultural orientation?

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