

# **EFFECTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA INTERACTIONS ON REPUTATION MANAGEMENT OF SEMI-AUTONOMOUS GOVERNMENT AGENCIES: A CASE OF KENYA NATIONAL BUREAU OF STATISTICS**

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**International Academic Journal of Human Resource and Business Administration  
(IAJHRBA) | ISSN 2518-2374**

**Received:** 20<sup>th</sup> October 2017

**Accepted:** 31<sup>st</sup> October 2017

Full Length Research

**Available Online at:**

[http://www.iajournals.org/articles/iajhrba\\_v2\\_i4\\_49\\_66.pdf](http://www.iajournals.org/articles/iajhrba_v2_i4_49_66.pdf)

**Citation:** Mwanyika, T. W. & Mberia, H. (2017). Effects of social media interactions on reputation management of semi-autonomous government agencies: A case of Kenya National Bureau of Statistics. *International Academic Journal of Human Resource and Business Administration*, 2(4), 49-66

## **ABSTRACT**

This study sought to fill the existing gap by investigating the effects of social media interactions on reputation management in semi-autonomous government agencies in Kenya: A case of Kenya National Bureau of Statistics. The specific objectives were to determine the effects of social media awareness and knowledge levels, social media use and social media monitoring on reputation management in semi-autonomous government agencies in Kenya. A descriptive research design was used. The target respondents included 228 staffs from the head offices of KNBS in Nairobi categorized through top level, middle level and low level management. This research used stratified random sampling where a sample of 30% was selected from within each stratum. This generated a sample of 68 selected for observation. The researcher used questionnaires as data collection instruments for the research. The questionnaire was administered through drop and pick method. The quantitative data obtained from the questionnaires were coded and keyed into SPSS (Version 22.0) software. Descriptive analysis technique was utilized to analyze the results which were interpreted in terms of percentages and mean score and presented in tables and figures. In addition, to quantify the strength of the relationship between the variables, the researcher conducted a multiple regression analysis to determine the effects of social media interactions on reputation management of KNBS. The study found that the KNBS involves in the use of social media in their operations to a great extent.

Awareness and knowledge levels of social media, social media usage in KNBS, social media monitoring and communication policies affect reputation management of KNBS. The study concludes that the utilization of social media affects reputation management of KNBS. The study further concludes that the level of social media awareness, social media use, social media monitoring and communication strategies and policies affects reputation management of KNBS. The study recommends that KNBS should also engage their employees to capacity-building, professional training and IT skills and competencies prior to and during the implementation of these technological innovations in the organizations. KNBS needs to ensure that their employees get the required training with regard to IT and its usefulness. Since social media monitoring affect the use of social media platforms and hence reputation management of public sector institutions, the study recommends that there is need to review the government policies to provide for more legal certainty as well as guarantee betterment of such institutions in Kenya. KNBS should set their communication policies and objectives and then pair these with strategies for social media interactions, in order to increase their adoption of social media and enhance their reputation management.

**Key Words:** *social media interactions, reputation management, social media awareness, social media use, social media monitoring, communication policies*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Social media are media for social interaction, using the highly accessible and scalable web and mobile technology to turn communication into interactive dialogue. It is a group of Internet-based applications that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content (Tapscott & Williams, 2008). Social media sites play a central role in building one's reputation online, and many users are learning and refining their approach as they go--changing privacy settings on profiles, customizing who can see certain updates and deleting unwanted information about them that appears online (Tapscott & Williams, 2008). Rather than relying on one-way, mass media messages only, social media allows for more interactive approaches that build targeted two-way customer relationships. Becoming part of the conversation between consumers is infinitely more powerful than handing over information. People today want a voice and a role in their brand experiences; they want co-creation (Kotler & Armstrong, 2012).

Social media has turned into a buzzword in the corporate world. On the one hand, corporate communication practitioners embrace the concept as a cost-efficient solution to seek direct communication with consumers and interact with various stakeholder groups, and, thus, influence the reputation of companies in a positive way (Pfeiffer & Zinnbauer, 2010). On the other hand, it is argued that the contemporary distribution of information in the Web entails reputation risks and risk dynamics that are outside the control and management of companies (Aula, 2010; Scott, 2009). For instance, Dell had to experience the effect of negative viral conversations in 2005, when a consumer complained publicly about Dell's services in his blog, which led to a reputation crisis of the company (Espen, 2007; Geoliv, 2007). This increasing interest in social media has created a need to examine social media in more detail and shed light on the debate of its business and reputation impact.

Tejas and Marteen (2015) explored the effects of social media on college students in India. The research problem was based on the fact that College students in these days are always very busy with their handset and laptops. Most students access the Internet and they spend considerable time on chatting, checking their email, their Facebook profile, updating their Twitter accounts and their LinkedIn account, and it does not happen only once a day. Some do all night browsing.

Natascha and Ute (2014) conducted a research titled 'social media and its effects on individuals and social systems. Their study illustrated the current situation of social media in terms of facts and figures before deepening selected aspects of new forms of virtual interaction. There is a broad range of diverse interpretations related to the usefulness of social media as a powerful source of communication and learning. Through examining several advantages and disadvantages we will highlight the circumstances for responsible handling of social media. Kailer, Mandl and Schill (2013) carried an empirical study on the usage of social media in German B2C-Online stores. The study focused on the social media features of the 115 highest-grossing German B2C-online stores from the years 2010 and 2011. The study categorized the results of the observational study into the seven building blocks of social media to understand

what areas of social media are used the most in these online stores. The results of the study showed that the average online store implements about five social media features and that the majority of the features are placed on product pages. The most common features were customer reviews and ratings and the sharing and liking of product details.

In Kenya, Yator (2014) carried out a study on the use of social media network sites on service delivery in hotels in Nakuru Town and established that there are various platforms provided by the social media networks such as Facebook, Google plus, LinkedIn, YouTube, Skype, mysite, WhatsApp and Twitter in the strategic marketing of products and services for the hotel industry. Stratified proportionate sampling procedure was used to select 190 permanent employees working with the hotels in Nakuru. The study used questionnaires to collect data. The study showed that a huge percentage of employees used social media. There was also a higher usage of the social media among the younger age groups compared to their old counterparts. Facebook and twitter usage topped the list of the highly used social media networks in the hotel industry. The outcome of the study showed that there is different prevalence of the usage of diverse social media networks for different purposes such as marketing, sales, customer service and giving of information which enhanced service delivery. The study recommended that organizations in Kenya should embrace the use of social media networks for marketing and branding. This would raise the brand awareness, brand loyalty, customer services and shall lead to increase in sales and lower operation cost.

Onyancha (2013) did a research on social media and customer service at the Kenya Commercial Bank (KCB). The research study was a descriptive study. The main focus of this study was qualitative. Primary data collected from interview guides and analyzed using content analysis technique. The study found out that at least Fifty (50) customer enquiries are handled in a day through social media by the staff at KCB. This was an indication that customers were turning into social media for customer service. This proved that social media was a tool of customer service and matched Zeithmal and Bitner (2003) literature that customer service is the service provided in support of a company's core product. In conclusion Social Media has changed the way people across the globe communicate with one another. However, it is worth noting that social networking has been there right from the beginning of humanity. KCB has embraced social media since the inception of its contact centre in the year 2009. Since then, social media has moved KCB from one level to another in customer service. The study has revealed that KCB has effectively embraced social media to enhance service delivery to its customers not only in the region but those in the Diaspora.

Adoption of technological platforms in KNBS has contributed to the best of societal activism. Staffs of KNBS have also taken full advantage of the enhanced communicative capabilities of new technology (KNBS, 2016). Social media has changed the way business is conducted such that business interactions can be conducted from anywhere at any time on a mobile device. KNBS has been reaching its stakeholders through social media such as Facebook, twitter, you

tube, website page, among other sites. This has increased customer loyalty as well as improved customer service through giving immediate feedback resulting to the Bureau to improve its performance and dominance in the market.

These platforms have in several occasions been used to correct the image of the Bureau and have proved to be effective. In May 2016, pictures of KNBS staff purported to be criminals, circulated in the social media (KNBS, 2016). KNBS management, in consultation with the communications department used the same social media platforms to correct the situation, and restore the public's confidence on KNBS staff. Social media can be used to destroy the image of any institution if not well managed, but it can also be used to restore, and create a positive/favorable image.

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The functions of social media have and continue to transform into that which was never anticipated. Most founders of social networks are surprised with the diverse and astounding ways users are able to engage and utilize their platform. According to Schulze, Taros, Dirkes, Huer, Rose, Tietmeyer and Constantinides (2015), the social media has empowered the public and weakened the position of businesses by exposing them to negative publicity, customer attacks and reputation damage. As such, managing online identity has become a multimedia affair. Not only can internet searchers type in queries about someone who has aroused their curiosity, they also can seek pictures, videos, and real-time status updates online. In fact, people can easily generate, edit and share content with large numbers of other people. Such interactions and customer generated content can be a threat to organizations since customers take an increasingly active role as market players through social media and are able to reach a wide audience in one click (McKinsey 2009).

According Schulze et. al., (2015), the power of individuals to spread rumors or complaints about companies in very short time is increased and this in turn means that companies have less time to respond to attacks. It can be pointed out that the major threat for businesses is to ignore social media and allow conversations to happen without awareness or participation (Hearn et al., 2009, Mazurek, 2009; Tuten, 2008). In addition to the threat of empowered customers, organizations also face threats from their own employees who often post in social media with the permission of their company and on behalf of the organization (Schulze et. al., 2015). These posts are published either in employee's private accounts or in the company's social media accounts like blogs or social networking sites. Lorenzo-Romero Constantinides (2011) study rightly concluded that online businesses needed to develop strategies and ways of cultivating positive attitudes of online users towards the utility of social users. The study failed, with needed precision and specificity, to bring out the elements that influence online users to engage a social media platform.

Several studies have been done on social media. Nyambu (2012) in a survey of influence of social media marketing on performance of telecommunication firms in Kenya with focus to

Safaricom. She found that social networking and effective customer feedback were some of the influence of social media marketing. Njuguna (2012) did a survey on the effects of social media on performance of Kenya Power and Lighting Company. He found that increased customer base, ROI and improved customer service are significant effect social media toward investing on social media. Maina (2012) she did a survey on effects of M-banking on customer service of Commercial Banks in Kenya. According to Waithaka (2013) the various recommended ways which banks and financial institutions use social media may be through using twitter to engage customers to answer their queries or view job openings, using Facebook for post career opening as well as Youtube to provide personal banking, business and commercial through videos.

In the Western world, studies on social media emerge predominantly from the fields of business technology, marketing, advertising, and strategic management (McKinsey 2009; Hearn et al., 2009, Evans, 2008; Constantinides & Fountain, 2008; Mazurek, 2009; Christopher, 2007; Weber, 2008; Tuten, 2008; Schulze et. al., 2015). The Kenya Vision 2030 strategy is to undertake reforms in key sectors that form the foundation of society for socio-political and economic growth such as infrastructure, science and technology and innovation (STI) (Kenya Vision 2030, 2011). One of the interesting facts about social media interactions is the increase in the mobility of various managerial and professional personnel in organizations such as KNBS. With the rush of social media that has now entered into so many people's daily lives, it is important that employers gain an awareness and knowledge in this area, not only to prevent any negative repercussions that may result from social networking, but also, to embrace this ever-changing and emerging issue in the workplace. This study sought to fill the existing gap on utilizing the opportunity provided by the social media, to help manage the reputation of organizations, in semi-autonomous government agencies in Kenya: A case of Kenya National Bureau of Statistics.

## **GENERAL OBJECTIVE**

The general objective of this study was to investigate the effects of social media interactions on reputation management in Kenya National Bureau of Statistics.

## **SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES**

1. To determine the levels of social media awareness and knowledge on reputation management at the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics.
2. To describe the effect of social media use on reputation management at the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics.
3. To examine the effects of social media monitoring on reputation management at the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics.
4. To establish the intervening effects of communication strategies and policies on social media as a tool for reputation management at the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics.



## **THEORETICAL REVIEW**

### **The Uses and Gratification Theory**

Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) is an approach to understand why and how people actively seek out specific media to satisfy specific needs (Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch, 2011). The driving question of UGT is: Why do people use media and what do they use them for? UGT discusses how users deliberately choose media that will satisfy given needs and allow one to enhance knowledge, relaxation, social interactions/companionship, diversion, or escape. It assumes that audience members are not passive consumers of media. Rather, the audience has power over their media consumption and assumes an active role in interpreting and integrating media into their own lives.

Unlike other theoretical perspectives, UGT holds that audiences are responsible for choosing media to meet their desires and needs to achieve gratification (Leung, 2013). This theory would then imply that the media compete against other information sources for viewers' gratification. The assumptions of the theory are that the audience is active and its media use is goal oriented; The initiative in linking need gratification to a specific medium choice rests with the audience member; The media compete with other resources for need satisfaction; People have enough self-awareness of their media use, interests, and motives to be able to provide researchers with an accurate picture of that use; and value judgments of media content can only be assessed by the audience. Modern communication scholars such as Tomas E. Ruggiero (2000), highlight the necessity of UGT in understanding the proliferation and success of computer-mediated communication forms.

UGT provides a "cutting-edge theoretical approach in the initial stages of each new mass communications medium: newspapers, radio and television, and now the Internet." Furthermore, Ruggiero argues that new media forms require analysis of potentially new uses and gratifications; for example, interactivity, hyper-textuality, asynchronous communication, and demystification. Scholars like LaRose *et al.* (2001) utilize UGT to understand Internet usage via a socio-cognitive framework to reduce uncertainties that arise from homogenizing an Internet audience and explaining media usage in terms of only positive outcomes (gratifications). LaRose *et al.* (2001) created measures for self-efficacy and self-disparagement and related UGT to negative outcomes of online behavior (like Internet addiction) as well. New Media Examples of UGT: The application of New Media to the Uses and Gratifications Theory has been positive. The introduction of the Internet, social media and technological advances has provided another outlet for people to use and seek gratification through those sources.

Based on the models developed by Katz, Blumler, Gurevitch and Lasswell (2011) individuals can choose to seek out media in one outlet, all falling within the proscribed categories of need. The only difference now, is that the audience does not have to go to multiple media outlets to fulfill each of their needs. The Internet has created a digital library, allowing individuals to have

access to all content from various mass medium outlets (Katz *et. al.*, 2011). In 2007 a study was conducted to examine the Facebook groups 'users'-gratifications in relation to their civic participation offline, a set of level of agreement questions to properly gauge their level of life satisfaction. The study ultimately yielded results through principal components factor analysis with varimax rotation. The results showed that there were four needs for using Facebook groups, "socializing, entertainment, self-status seeking, and information (Katz *et. al.*, 2011).

The growing use of interactive social media gives stakeholders the ability to communicate with one another, to disseminate their own messages about a firm, and finally, to threaten firms' reputations. However, corporate reputations can easily be damaged. The emergence of the knowledge economy and the recognition of knowledge as a key factor in the achievement of competitive advantage are making it critical to understand and develop effective approaches to knowledge management. Zukowski and Brown (2007) found that older Internet users are more concerned about the privacy of personal information than younger users. Some of the younger users publish their own information without the knowledge of the risks that may occur from the misuse of these data. According to Kirungu, (2011) there are serious concerns as to whether the public can afford the end-user devices that they need for their analog devices or the digital receivers. This theory therefore is relevant in examine the effects of social media awareness, use, monitoring and communication policies on reputation management at the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics.

### **Technological Determinism Theory**

Technological Determinism state that media technology shapes how we as individuals in a society think, feel, act, and how the society operates as we move from one technological age to another (Tribal- Literate- Print- Electronic- Social media). The theory was developed by Marshall McLuhan in 1962. It explains that individuals learn and feel and think the way we do because of the messages they receive through the current technology that is available. The radio which was the example used required people to listen and develop a sense of hearing. Television engages both hearing and visual senses. We then transfer those developed senses into our everyday lives and we want to use them again. The medium is then our message. Social media brought about by emerging technology requires people to listen and engaged often.

Whatever society as a whole is using to communicate, they too will use to communicate. Therefore, they will adapt to the medium they are using so that they can send and receive messages like everyone else. We know that there is one truth by observing what has happened over time. As the medium changes, so does society's way of communicating. People can only use the medium for which it was created (phone for talking over lines or electronic mail for talking via computer). If the medium is impersonal (mobile phone) then the message too is impersonal. This theory is objective in that everyone will act and feel the same no matter what the medium they are using provided they are using the same medium. Values are not involved because evidence is seen strictly through observation. The theory explains that when new systems of



technology are developed, the culture or society is immediately changed to reflect the senses needed to use the new technology. The theory predicts that with every new system of media technology, society will change and adapt to that technology. It explains that there is a simple cause and effect analysis between the introduction of new technology and the changes in society's way of thinking, feeling, acting, or believing.

People then interpret the messages sent to them from social media in their everyday life. Humans do not have much free will at all. The single most significant technological development in the last 20 years has been the Internet. The Internet makes it possible for individuals to connect, collaborate and share knowledge, information, document, photo, video, etc. continuously with anyone in the world. Furthermore, people are able to make use of social media tools in order to increase range and richness of their networks, gather information and nowadays, increasingly organizations are finding ways of integrating social media into their business processes (Gaál *et al*, 2014). Any provision of content, following action on the profile of another person (depending on privacy settings and platform options) is immediately visible to others. This theory expounds on the relationship of people and the advancements of internet based technologies such as social media and how they influence the integration of social entities. The theory is therefore relevant in investigating the effects of social media interactions on reputation management of organizations, because it explains how the society has changed drastically in the usage of internet assisted networks in communication.

## **EMPIRICAL REVIEW**

The rapidly evolving shift in how we communicate and connect with each other requires companies to rethink how they interact with customers. Companies need a new way to describe and measure the efforts employees make through social media to provide customer service. Social care gives companies a way to reference these efforts. Better-regarded companies appear to strengthen their reputations by offering better quality and more innovative products and services. A firm can use its communication to mould the interpretations and perceptions of stakeholders. Corporate communication can affect corporate reputation because a firm, through their chosen messages, enables stakeholders to appreciate the firm's operations, and it positively loads the perception of the firm's activities, which can lead to an overall positive evaluation of the company (Wiedmann & Prauschke, 2006).

With the advent of Web 2.0, a negative message about an organisation could easily and rapidly spread to a great number of people all over the world (Argenti & Barnes, 2009). Therefore, corporate reputations have become very fragile, as some features of Web 2.0 can generate mistrust and uncertainty (Jarvenpaa *et al.*, 2000), including the lack of face-to-face interaction between suppliers and consumers, the lack of nonverbal cues, and the ambiguity about the real identity of counterpart. Due to the lack of direct contact with firms, consumers build online relationships with firms that have a favourable reputation. In this way, consumers can understand, elaborate and preserve several pieces of information about the firm that they will use

to reduce perceived risks when they decide to buy. Corporate reputation allows for the creation of fiduciary links between consumers and firms and can be considered a “substitute for information” and an important mechanism for reducing uncertainty in virtual spaces (Kotha et al. 2001).

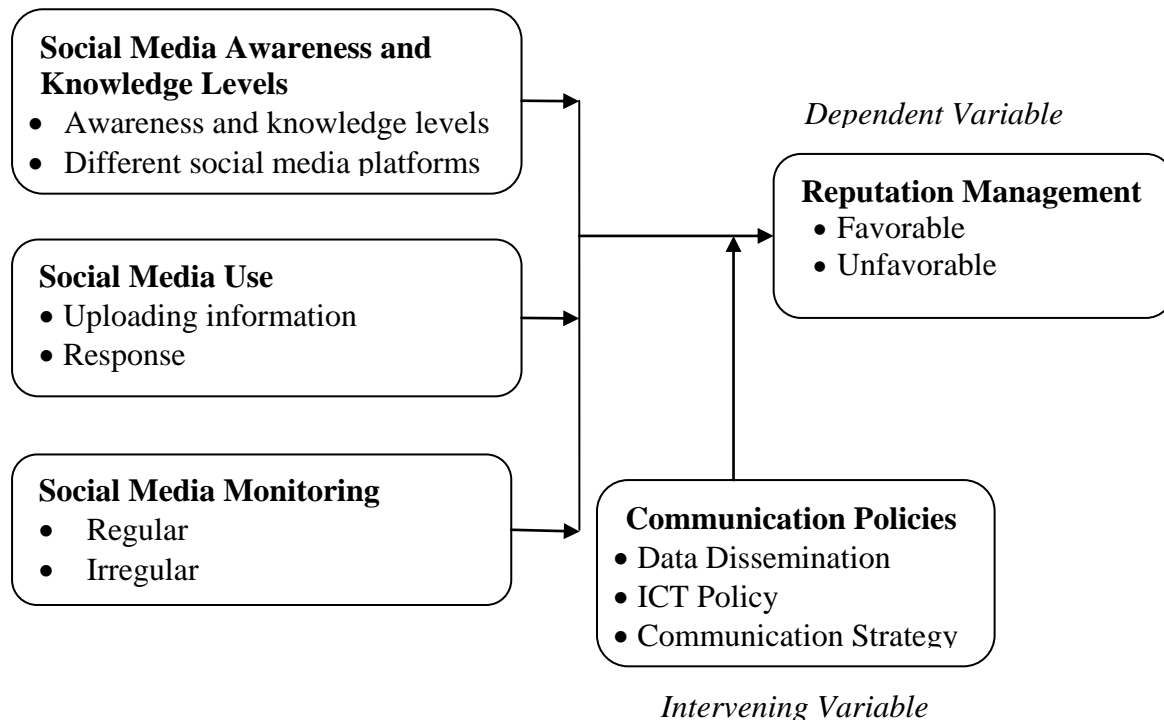
The arrival of social media has brought many new opportunities to the way an organisation communicates (Aula, 2011). Social media allow an active relationship between firms and customers (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010) and cooperation and dialog with stakeholders (Argenti & Barnes, 2009). Social media are considered alternative channels in which firms have to play a pro-active role. These alternative channels can be considered a new source of information both for customers and firms, but they can also increase the complexity of the relationship (Vanbruggen et al., 2010). Moreover, social media allows customers to express their ideas and thoughts and, in this way, can also enhance customer engagement, which is defined as the behavioural manifestation from a customer toward a firm one that goes beyond purchase behaviour (van Doorn et al., 2010). It is important for a firm to understand the strategies, practices, policies and procedures of corporate communication because in this networked environment, corporate reputation can be enhanced or permanently damaged (Jones et al., 2009).

Corporate reputation on the social web is built by the collaboration between firms and Internet users (Weber, 2009). Nyambu (2012) did a survey of influence of social media marketing on performance of telecommunication firms in Kenya with focus to Safaricom. She found that social networking and effective customer feedback were some of the influence of social media marketing. Njuguna (2012) did a survey on the effects of social media on performance of Kenya Power and Lighting Company. He found that increased customer base, Return on Investment (ROI) and improved customer service are significant effect social media toward investing on social media. Maina (2012) did a survey on effects of M-banking on customer service of Commercial Banks in Kenya. Despite the immense contribution of the social media in organization performance, no study has focused on role of social media in reputation management hence the research gap. This study sought to fill this research gap by investigating the effects of social media interactions on reputation management of semi-autonomous government agencies in Kenya with a special focus on KNBS.

## **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

The independent variables in this study are social media awareness and knowledge levels, social media use and social media monitoring, the dependent variable is reputation management while communication policies constitute the intervening variable as illustrated in figure 1.

*Independent Variables*



**Figure 1: Effects of Social Media Interactions on Reputation Management in KNBS**

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive design which aimed at investigating the effects of social media interactions on reputation management of Kenya National Bureau of Statistics. The target population comprised of personnel at the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics. The study targeted personnel in the various departments. From the above population of 228, a sample of 30% was selected from within each group in proportions that each group bears to the study population. This generated a sample of 68 selected for observation. Data collection was via a questionnaire as this is an efficient and convenient way of gathering the data within the resources and time constraints. The structure of the questionnaire included structured and semi-structured questions. The data was collected using self-administered questionnaires.

Prior to the actual study, pilot testing was carried out to test the validity and reliability of the research instruments. The pilot study was carried among 15 respondents purposively chosen from the KNBS offices in Kiambu County and reliability tested using a Cronbach's alpha. A reliability of above 0.7 was achieved and this was considered reliable as recommended by Zikmund and Barin (2012) who recommended that a reliability test which yields a coefficient greater than or equal to 0.7 is sufficient enough. The respondents were also informed that the

research is meant for academic purposes only and that the study had no intention of using the information for personal gains.

Data collected was purely quantitative and it was analyzed by descriptive analysis. The descriptive statistical tools such as Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and MS Excel were used to extract the outputs. The findings were presented using tables and charts. This generated quantitative reports through tabulations, percentages, and measure of central tendency. In addition, to quantify the strength of the relationship between the variables, the researcher conducted a multiple regression analysis. This offered a quantitative and qualitative description of the objectives of the study.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

The study found that the KNBS involves in the use of social media in their operations to a great extent, the utilization of social media affects the reputation management at KNBS to a great extent and the social media accounts run by KNBS include Face Book, Twitter, Instagram, MySite, Google +, YouTube, Skype, Myspace and LinkedIn. The study established that the use of social media has significant effects on the various aspects of reputation management at KNBS favorably in terms of value outcomes, firms' image, trust and loyalty of stakeholders.

Awareness and knowledge levels of social media are the other aspects that affect reputation management at KNBS. The study established that there is a high level of social media awareness and knowledge levels at KNBS and that social media awareness affects reputation management at KNBS to a great extent. There is a high level of awareness of social media among the staffs working in KNBS. The study confirmed that awareness of various social media platforms and knowledge levels of social media applicability affect reputation management at KNBS to great extents while availability of different social media infrastructure affects reputation management to a moderate extent.

The study found that the level of social media usage in KNBS is very high an indication that KNBS has been in the forefront in utilizing social media in communicating various aspects of its operations and this affects the reputation. The social media platforms used include Facebook, Google plus, LinkedIn, YouTube, WhatsApp and Twitter. The study also found that utilization of social media affects reputation management at KNBS to a great extent. From the results, use of social media in uploading information, giving responses to queries and networking with customers affects reputation management at KNBS to great extents. On the other hand, use of social media in introduction of new products/services affects reputation management at KNBS to a moderate extent.

On examining the effects of social media monitoring, the study found that social media monitoring affects reputation management at KNBS to a great extent. There was agreement that the monitoring team is charged with the responsibility and taking corrective actions on social

media platforms, there is employee training and empowerment on social media and KNBS has digital monitoring formed team to oversee alliances with third parties. The results confirmed that protecting personal information privacy, fostering free and unfettered competition, ensure proper functioning of ICT platforms and inspiring confidence in the social media use affects the utilization of social media. It was evident that the government's interest in regulating the agencies is extreme and disrupts the utilization of social media, there are regulatory agencies charged with taking responsibility and corrective actions on social media platforms, there are teams charged with monitoring the appropriate approaches and applications of social media and that government policies affect the implementation of the social media platforms.

The study found that communication policies in KNBS in relation to social media and reputation management have been very effective. The study also established that organizational communication policies affect social media and reputation management of KNBS to a great extent. From the study ICT policy, data dissemination and communication strategy affect social media and reputation management at KNBS to great extents. The study established that the access points have been instrumental in ensuring that the communication policies of social media are instrumental in dissemination of information. A one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) that provided information about variance levels within the regression model and which formed a footing for tests of significance was used.

**Table 1: ANOVA Test**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	0.135	1	.135	.828	.032
	Residual	7.498	46	.163		
	Total	7.633	47			

Predictors: (Constant), social media awareness and knowledge levels, social media use, social media monitoring and communication policies; Dependent Variable: Reputation Management

All the independent variables were combined and involved in the analysis. The results of Analysis of variance (ANOVA) for regression coefficients are shown in Table 1. The analysis results revealed that the significance of F statistics is 0.032 which is less than 0.05. This implies that there is a significant relationship between social media awareness and knowledge levels, social media use, social media monitoring and communication policies with reputation management at Kenya National Bureau of Statistics. Having established that the model was fit the researcher extracted the model summary which portrays the coefficient of determination.

**Table 2: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.908 <sup>a</sup>	.825	.789	0.752

Predictors: (Constant), social media awareness and knowledge levels, social media use, social media monitoring and communication policies

According to Table 2, the four variables that were studied (social media awareness and knowledge levels, social media use, social media monitoring and communication policies) explain 82.5% of the reputation management at Kenya National Bureau of Statistics as represented by the  $R^2$ . This therefore means that the four variables (social media awareness and knowledge levels, social media use, social media monitoring and communication policies) contribute 82.5% to the reputation management at Kenya National Bureau of Statistics while other aspects not studied in this research contribute 17.5% of reputation management at Kenya National Bureau of Statistics.

**Table 3: Regression Coefficients**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.376	0.415		3.316	0.002
Social media awareness and knowledge levels	0.338	0.151	0.615	3.119	0.003
Social media use	0.362	0.183	0.151	1.847	0.000
Social media monitoring	0.426	0.198	0.236	1.828	0.003
Communication policies	0.471	0.224	0.172	1.902	0.062

Predictors: (Constant), social media awareness and knowledge levels, social media use, social media monitoring and communication policies

As per the SPSS generated table above, the equation  $\beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \varepsilon$  becomes:

$$Y = 1.376 + 0.471\beta_{iv} + 0.426\beta_{iii} + 0.362\beta_{ii} + 0.338\beta_i.$$

The regression equation above has established that holding all factors (social media awareness and knowledge levels, social media use, social media monitoring and communication policies) constant at zero reputation management at KNBS will be 1.376. The findings presented also show that taking all other independent variables at zero, a unit increase in communication policies would lead to a 0.471 increase in the scores of reputation management at KNBS, a unit increase in the scores of social media monitoring would lead to a 0.426 increase in the scores of reputation management at KNBS, a unit increase in the scores of social media use would lead to a 0.362 increase in the scores of reputation management at KNBS while a unit increase in the scores of social media awareness and knowledge levels would lead to a 0.338 increase in the scores of reputation management at KNBS. Overall, communication policies and social media monitoring had the greatest effect on the reputation management at KNBS. All the variables were significant ( $p < 0.05$ ).



## **CONCLUSIONS**

The study concludes that the utilization of social media affects reputation management of KNBS. KNBS operate various social media accounts like Face Book, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn for the purposes of networking with customers, publicising the Firm's products, introduction of new products/services and to elaborate on the product features.

The study further concludes that the level of social media awareness and knowledge levels affects reputation management of KNBS. Awareness of various social media platforms, knowledge levels of social media applicability, availability of different social media infrastructure have a great influence on reputation management at KNBS. In this regard, employee training in IT skills and competencies, professional training and capacity-building affect the utilization of social media platforms in the firms.

The study also concludes that there is a high level of social media use and the utilization of social media affects reputation management at KNBS. This implies that the utilization of social media has a significant effect on reputation management in the semi-autonomous government agencies. From the findings uploading information, giving responses to queries, introduction of new products/services and networking with customers have considerable effect on reputation management at KNBS.

The study deduces that social media monitoring affects reputation management of KNBS. The utilization of social media requires regular monitoring and to ensure efficient monitoring there is employee training and empowerment on social media, the Organization has digital monitoring formed team to oversee alliances with third parties, the Digital team is charged with choosing the appropriate approaches and applications of social media and the monitoring team is charged with the responsibility and taking corrective actions on social media platforms.

The study finally concludes that communication strategies and policies affects reputation management of KNBS and the communication policies in KNBS in relation to social media and reputation management have been very effective. Accordingly, ICT policy, data dissemination and communication strategy affect social media and reputation management at KNBS

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The study recommends that semi autonomous government agencies should engage in social media awareness. The institutions should engage in reinforcing awareness structures and participate in team building activities and lectures with other institutions in the public sector to increase their awareness and hence facilitate their growth. KNBS should also engage their employees to capacity-building, professional training and IT skills and competencies prior to and during the implementation of these technological innovations in the organizations.

For the KNBS to successfully use social media and effectively enhance their reputation management, they need to ensure that their employees get the required training with regard to IT and its usefulness. As such the organizations should engage their employees to capacity-building, professional training and IT skills and competencies prior to and during the implementation of these technological innovations in the organizations.

Since social media monitoring affect the use of social media platforms and hence reputation management of public sector institutions, the study recommends that there is need to review the government policies to provide for more legal certainty as well as guarantee betterment of such institutions in Kenya. There is also need for legal and policy reforms on how the government relates with the public sector institutions in Kenya especially in sectors requiring social media platforms and outlay.

The study recommends that KNBS should set their communication policies and objectives and then pair these with strategies for social media interactions, in order to increase their adoption of social media and enhance their reputation management. The building of social media infrastructure could be a government's main agenda in conjunction to service providers such as ISPs, especially in the regulation of activities and operations of KNBS.

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