

**GENDER PERCEPTIONS AND UTILIZATION OF FACEBOOK BY STUDENTS AT
ONE CHRISTIAN BASED UNIVERSITY IN KENYA**

BY

KENDAGOR RUTH

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DECLARATION

DECLARATION BY THE CANDIDATE

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Kendagor Ruth

Date

SHRD/PGC/45/10

DECLARATION BY SUPERVISORS

This Thesis has been submitted for examination with our approval as the University Supervisors.

Name of Supervisor: Dr. Lusike Mukhongo
Department of Communication Studies
School of Human Resource Development
Moi University, Eldoret, Kenya

Signature

Date

Name of Supervisor: Dr. Abraham Mulwo
Department of Communication Studies
School of Human Resource Development
Moi University, Eldoret, Kenya

Signature

Date

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to all university students, the youth in Kenya and all the organizations utilizing social media in their communications. It is also dedicated to my brothers and sisters, so that it can act as an inspiration as they pursue their careers.

ABSTRACT

Social Media is a modern form of communication used by the young people across the world. This has been enhanced by the use of cell phone as a modern form of technology with 34% using it in Kenya to access internet out of 78% who own a mobile phone. The frequency at which it is used in Kenya, has attracted several individuals' and organizations such as local media stations, local manufacturing companies, real estate and construction companies, tourism organizations, and many more who are streaming in to propagate their ideas or market their products through it. Research on gender and communication has demonstrated that language use and communication styles between men and women vary mainly due to gendered socialization. However, research on social media has not focused on ways in which this gendered socialization is manifested on it as a communication platform. An understanding of gender and social media use is critical as it will enable those who seek to utilize it for various purposes to understand the user characteristics, hence structure their communication accordingly. This study examined the differences and similarities between the perceptions of men and women towards the use of Facebook, and how gendered socialization is manifested on its usage. Specifically, the study aimed to answer the following questions: How do the culturally constructed norms affect the perceptions of Facebook use by men and women? How do socially constructed norms affect the way men and women communicate through Facebook? What is the nature of influence of gendered use of language on Facebook communication by men and women? Case study research design was employed to investigate Facebook usage among students in one private university in Kenya with multi-stage sampling techniques involving stratified and purposive sampling used to identify 70 out of 250 students enrolled in the school of language and communications. Sequential Mixed-method approach involving open-ended questionnaires, online focus group discussions (FGDs), and content analysis of selected Facebook posts were then used to generate data. The data generated from various instruments was triangulated and organized into emerging themes to validate the findings. Study findings show that Facebook communication is influenced by the socio-cultural backgrounds of the communicators. It emerged that, men and women often perceived Facebook differently. While men perceived it mainly as a tool for socialization activities such as chatting, on the other hand, women treated it as a medium of socialization and networking. It also emerged that women spent more time on Facebook than men. At another level, the socially constructed norms of men and women were manifested in the use of Facebook in the manner that women often commented on religious and social issues while men mainly commented on political and business issues. The socially constructed norms therefore influenced how men and women perceive and utilize social media. This study therefore recommends that individuals and organizations utilizing social media for their various communications need to clearly understand how men and women perceive and utilize social media so that they can restructure their communications to suit their appropriate audiences for effective communications.

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OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Gender - It is the socially constructed norms that vary among different individuals exposed to various cultures over a period of time. It can be enhanced through the day to day communications with diverse people and through the environment we are exposed to.

Facebook Communication - This is the passing of information from one person to one or more individuals both in words and photographs. This can be through Facebook chats, wall postings, tagging etc.

Culture - This is the environment at which the respondents are exposed to which in turn influence their perceptions and how they utilize the various media in their communications in this instance Facebook

Socialization – It is a process by which we learn and express what is expected of us as a result of our day to day interpersonal encounters with various individuals and as per the different environments we are exposed to

Perception - This is an individual's attitudes, views and opinions which might be true or false. They are developed through a creative process which depends on one's differences, past experience and present circumstances.

Facebook - It is a social network site which was developed in 2004 by former Harvard undergraduate student named Mark Zuckerberg, and it allows users to add friends, send messages through posts and chats, and update personal profiles to notify friends and peers about themselves.

Social Media - These are Websites that build on the Web 2.0 that has created a converging point where users can interact with various forms of online expressions ranging from picture sharing, videos, emoticons and texts in a bid to create personal relationships and community building opportunities.

Gendered speech communities - these are groups of individuals who share the same beliefs and understanding on what communication is all about as per the goals, strategies and interpretations.

Feminine - These are women and also some men who emphasizes the quality of life and so socializes individuals to be modest and to emphasize close relationships and support among themselves and to others. They are likely to use communication to enhance support, sympathy, care and relationship building.

Masculine - These are men and some women who emphasize success and so individuals are socialized to be assertive, ambitious and competitive. They tend to regard their conversations as a way to accomplish concrete plans, exercise control, safeguard independence and argument their status

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

Social media, as a growing global means of communication, is attracting the young people, who are utilizing it in their day to day communications. This study is situated in the field of Communication and Media to explore gender perception and the utilization of Facebook by university students with specific focus on a Christian based private University in Kenya. This Chapter provides the background on the key issues that motivated the study, statement of the problem, research questions, justification, scope and limitation, significance of the study, theoretical framework and the conclusion of the chapter.

1.1 Background to the Study

Internet as a tool of communication has had a transformative influence on how information is accessed and shared around the world. At present it is a very important tool of communication to most people in the world, ranging from being a tool of connecting people to being an information repository. Indeed, the internet has now become a social networking vehicle that is changing the way people around the world communicate with each other (Parent and Cruickshank, 2009). Different people use the internet to satisfy their specific needs ranging from academics, leisure and business (Krishnatray et. al., 2009). Today, people are constantly logging into online sites to meet new people or reconnect with old friends; chat with friends and keep in touch with family; or access information on issues such as fashion, health, finances and politics. Consequently, interaction with the internet is now a daily affair for most Kenyans,

especially the young people, with 62% of its users using it for up to 5 times a day (Kariuki, 2010). The internet is everywhere today. It is in our homes, schools, restaurants, workplaces and everywhere we turn. We can access it from the privacy of our cell phones, iPads, Laptops and for others it can be accessed in cyber cafes and libraries. However, there is a high demand for mobile phones used for browsing than desktop computers, and laptops. Statistics show that 50% of Kenyans who own a mobile phone, access the internet through it. This is because of its portability, therefore most people can access the internet wherever they are (Wachira, 2010).

Internet and World Wide Web are frequently used interchangeably, although World Wide Web is the graphical user friendly end of the internet that came to the fore in the mid-1990s and is widely used for social activities. Social media therefore refers to websites which build on Web 2.0 technologies to provide space for in-depth social interaction, community formation, and the tackling of collaborative projects. In addition, Web 2.0 describes the current generation of interactive websites which build on databases, AJAX (Asynchronous JavaScript and XML), and RSS (Really Sample Syndication) to offer a highly personalized, flexible Web experience (Bruns and Bahnisch, 2009; Baines et. al., 2002; Kariuki, 2010). Therefore, web 2.0 powers social media in a way that is profound, by enabling users to generate their own content and also interact with content generated by others at the click of a button. It therefore has been credited with the emergence of what is commonly referred to as virtual communities and digital cultures.

This study defines social media as an umbrella term, covering all of the activities that come together in a utility that uses multiple communication media of words, pictures, or videos to create visual displays, picture-sharing opportunities, connection points, and the creation of personal meaning and community building opportunities. Examples of social media

applications are Google (reference, social networking), Wikipedia (reference), My Space (social networking), Facebook, twitter (social networking), Club Penguin (children's social networking), iTunes (personal music), YouTube (social networking and video sharing), Second Life (virtual reality), and Flickr (photo sharing) (Peck, 2008).

The use of social media applications is constantly evolving and changing as people are gradually discovering and identifying new things they can employ to a particular social media. Web-based information is today used to obtain both business and personal information within seconds after something new comes up. For example Facebook, MySpace and Twitter are used to transfer immediate information to users via Blackberries, I-phones and laptops. Businesses use them for communication, advertising and various transaction activities and to market their expertise and legitimacy of their products. Students on the other hand use them for educational activities, for intimacy as well as socializing (Ross et. al., 2009).

This study specifically focused on gender and social networking through Facebook as one of the leading social media. Social networking refers to the utilities that create collaboration through activities that people use to connect, develop relationships and create personal myths (Peck, 2008). These sites and activities allow for self-identification and discovery; as well as self-expression through words, pictures and other media of communication. They base primary interactions around a user's profile, an individual homepage that provides an opportunity to customize their page with self-directed information, pictures, quotes, and widgets that help craft their online identity (*Ibid*, 2008).

Although it is still a relatively new technology, social networking is already becoming a global phenomenon, in regions around the world and in countries with varying levels of economic

development as several young people are using the internet for social networking (Pew, 2010). However, use of social media also varies from one country to the other. For example, it has been estimated that, Americans use websites like Facebook and My Space at 46%. This is followed by three countries behind the United States and these are Poland who uses it at (43%), Britain at (43%) and South Korea at (40%); at least four-in-ten adults say they use such sites in the three mentioned countries. The other countries include France who use it at (36%), Spain at (34%), Russia at (33%) and Brazil at (33%), Germans at 31% and lastly Japan, at 24% (*Ibid*, 2010).

In Kenya, most young people access the internet widely for social activities more than academic, entertainment and any other activity. Research conducted by Kariuki (2010) showed that 89% use it for messenger chats, 85% visit social network sites, 72% for uploading and downloading of photos, 65% become a member of an online group, 58% visit a blog, 48% post comments in other peoples blogs, 47% meet someone new via the internet, 47% make or receive an internet phone call, 36% visit dating sites and 33% play online games (Kariuki, 2010).

Facebook is noted by various researchers as the leading social media which was developed in the year 2004 by former Harvard undergraduate student, Mark Zuckerberg for students at Harvard University and was expanded in the first year to include other elite undergraduate students. From then, Facebook has shifted dramatically for being a platform for students to stay connected with one another into a global institution that facilitates communication and interaction across a wide range and array of social dimensions (Wachira, 2010; Quan-Haase and Young, 2010; Ellison et.al., 2007; Schoon and Cain, 2011). Facebook derived its popularity by allowing users to interact, flirt and network. Its engine queries the users for

information on schools attended, places lived along with dates so that it can suggest contacts to form social networks. Further, it also allows users to add friends, send messages, and update their personal profiles to notify friends and peers about themselves. In addition, Facebook users can also form and join virtual groups, develop applications, host content, and learn about each other's interests, hobbies, and relationship status through users' online profiles (Hirschorn, 2007; McMahon, 2010).

Facebook is currently the popular social media used in Kenya among those who can access internet with an estimated 96% of social networkers. Among these, 25% spend 5+ times a day, 19% 2-4 times a day, and 33% one time a day. 50% of the social net workers have more than 100 contacts on their favourite site. Some of the noted reasons why young people use Facebook is to learn about social events, to keep in touch with friends and as a diversion from school work (Wachira, 2010; Quan-Haase and Young, 2010).

Students in particular were noted to be heavy users of Facebook as per the research conducted by Ellison, Steinfield, and Lampe, (2007). They found that 94% of undergraduate students at Michigan State University were Facebook users who spent approximately 10 to 30 minutes on the site per day and who had between 150 and 200 friends on average listed on their profile. These students were said to have joined Facebook primarily because a friend suggested it and also to keep in touch with friends and family in a convenient manner (Ibid, 2007). Consequently, young people are joining Facebook, with the intention of using it as a platform where they can share information with their friends and families. Facebook therefore, has created a cultural shift in how we share information and with whom we choose to share our information. It plays an important role in mediating the boundaries between individuals and

groups and in setting the boundaries between personal and public life in the different communications (Schoon and Cain, 2011).

This is also manifested in the language that Facebook users opt to use in the process of sharing information online and on what they choose to share. For instance, the manner that users express themselves online is affected by many factors, and the focus of this is particularly on gendered communication on Facebook. A study on gender and Communication, by Wood (2007) found that men and women communicate differently because they have been engendered into different styles of communication by the society (Wood, 2007).

Children for example are engendered into different styles of communication through the interactions they make with people in the society. A study that focussed on children playing, established that boys' games cultivate four communication rules: Use of communication to assert ideas, opinions and identity, use of talk to achieve something such as solving problems or developing strategies, use of communication to attract or maintain others attention and use of communication to compete for the talk stage. On the other hand, girls' games teach four basic rules of communication: Use of communication to create and maintain relationships, use of communication to establish egalitarian relations with others, use of communication to include others and the use of communication to show sensitivity to others and relationships (Ibid, 2007 pg. 124-125).

From the above example, it can therefore be noted that girls tend to engage in more affiliative, cooperative play whereas boys tend to engage in more instrumental and competitive play. These lessons are carried forward into adulthood. Therefore, the rules of communication that men and women employ are redefined and elaborate versions of those learned in childhood

games (Harris, 1998; Clark, 1998). Gender also influences the interpretations of experience. For instance, men and women perceive different realities, have different expectations set for them and exhibit different communication styles (Gamble and Gamble, 2002).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Facebook is a useful communication tool which is being adopted by the young people for various communications globally. As discussed in the preceding section, research on gender and communication has shown that in ordinary communication, men and women communicate differently both in the use of verbal and non-verbal communications. Of importance to note, is that, the differences noted in the day to day communications of men and women have been enhanced through gender socialization. Wood (2007) argues that men and women express gendered identities through their communications because they tend to be socialized into different gender speech communities. With this, they learn different rules for the purposes of communication and different ways to express support, interest and involvement which is propagated through their interactions with various communities, language groups and the various environments they are exposed to (Ibid, 2007).

With this being evident in normal human communications and with young people increasingly adopting Facebook as a communication medium, there is need to understand how gendered language is manifested in online communications and interactions, with particular emphasis being on the use of Facebook. Specifically, it is important to study the differences and similarities of men and women's perceptions on Facebook and the language used. For instance, history of media use and access has also shown that men not only have early access to technology, but also have tended to use and appropriate it more than women (Wajcman, 1991).

This, however seems to have changed, as currently both men and women use social media for their communications (*Ibid*, 1991). This therefore calls on the need to understand how men and women use social media in terms of the time they spend online, the specific activities they undertake on social media and their reasons for joining social media such as Facebook.

Gender remains a significant factor in researching the complexity of men and women communications through social media and therefore, there is need for further research to understand the trends of men and women perceptions of Facebook, how they utilize Facebook and the language used in the various communications. This is with the intention to provide better understanding of the nature of communication within the social media in order to enable better utilization of this platform by those who seek to utilize it for various communications (McQuillan and O’neill, 2009). However, while a lot of research has been done on gender and communication, there is limited empirical evidence on differences in language use on Facebook by both men and women, and therefore, a study in this particular area is justified for academic purposes.

1.3 Research questions

Specifically, the study aimed to answer the following questions:

1. How do socially constructed norms affect the perceptions of Facebook use by men and women?
2. How do socially constructed norms influence the way men and women communicate through Facebook?
3. What is the nature of influence of gendered use of language on Facebook by men and women?

1.4 Scope of the Study and Limitations

The scope can also be referred to as the delimitations of the study which is a description of the boundaries of the study in terms of geographical scope, content scope and methodological scope (Oso and Onen, 2009). Under the Geographical Scope, this study was conducted among selected undergraduate students, enrolled in the various programs in one private University in Kenya¹ located in Nairobi County, specifically focusing on the students at the School of Language and Communications.

On the Content Scope, the study explored how the socially constructed norms affect perceptions of men and women on the use of Facebook. The main focus was on the kind of language men and women use in Facebook, the kind of issues posted by men and women on their Facebook wall and the frequency of Facebook use by men and women. Lastly on the methodological scope the study employed a case study research design to investigate Facebook usage among students at one Christian based private university in Kenya. A multi-stage sampling technique was used to identify undergraduate university students who participated in the study. A total of 70 University students participated in the study and a mixed method approach was used to generate and analyse data.

1.5 Justification of the Study

The trend at which individuals especially the young are joining and utilizing Facebook is high. This has attracted various individuals including politicians, business people, organizations,

¹ The name of the university has been concealed for ethical purposes as per requirements in modern social science research (according to Jwan and Ong'ondo , 2011 which argues that even where explicit written consent is given, researchers should respect and preserve the anonymity of participant identities at all times). However, as stated in the ethics section of the research methodology, both supervisors are aware of the institution within which the research is conducted and the details of participants in the study

media and institutions who are rushing in to create their sites on social media with an aim of reaching out to the young people. Although a lot of research has been done to determine differences in language use by men and women in ordinary communications (see for example Wood, 2007; Johnson, 1996; Pearons, West and Turner, 1995; Alexander and Wood, 2000) little or no research has been done to determine how these differences are manifested in Facebook use. Therefore, a study of this nature is worth being explored.

1.6 Significance of the study

The study is significant in academics because social media is a global media attracting several people who use it for various communications. A study in this area will therefore enhance knowledge on the gendered use of language by men and women through social media. Consequently, the study is significant to stakeholders and organizations who practice online communications especially through social media in widening their knowledge on how to structure communications to suite both men and women using social media in order to achieve effective Communications. Moreover, it is significant in promoting knowledge in the field of communication and especially on online communications as there is need to understand the nature of communication within the social media that could enable better utilization of the platform by those who seek to utilize it for businesses and other purposes.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

My study was guided by the genderlect theory which argues that there are separate languages based on gender. The core of the theory explains how different sets of linguistic features used by males and females develop through the gender acculturation process and how these gender-

linked language features function as identity markers for women or men in their social context (Littlejohn and Foss, 2009).

Some of the scholars associated with this theory include Cheri Kramarae, Robin Lakoff, Marsha Houston and Deborah Tannen. They captured different studies and features that expound more on the Genderlect theory. First, is the area of language and sex, which proposes that men and women when they speak what is considered the same language use it in systematically different ways. Second, is the area of language and woman's place which asserts that women experience linguistic discrimination both through the language they are taught to use and the language used to refer to them. The central idea was that women are taught as girls to use language that is weak and characterized by triviality, compared to men who learn throughout their lives to use more forceful and confident language (Kramer, 1974).

Third, is the aspect of style which was seen as an important avenue for insight into the influences of gender on language and communication. Style was also believed to take on the dimensions of language use more in the area of pragmatics such as interruption behaviours, top control, talk time and turn taking (Stanback, 1985).

Lastly, Tannen (1990) expounded in her book *'You Just Don't Understand'* that women and men fail to understand each other because they speak in different language codes and listen with different priorities. She stressed that the differences needed to be revealed and understood so that communication between the sexes could be improved. She associated the impact of male- female differences in language codes to the challenge of intercultural communication by introducing opposing key concepts that guide women's and men's production and interpretation of language. She asserted that women stress connection and intimacy and men

stress status and independence (Tannen, 1990).The genderlect theory has also been applied in various studies on patterns of language use by lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender groups. Recently increasing attention has been paid to different environment and languages as it was found to reflect and shape gender ideology (Leap, 2004).

1.8 Conclusion

In order to understand how men and women communicate, by exploring their perceptions and how they use Facebook, this chapter served as an introduction of the study which sought to describe the background, statement of the problem, research questions, scope of the study, justification of the study its significance and limitations and the theoretical framework guiding my study. The next chapter explores the literature surrounding the area of study and some of the studies that has been done with an aim of identifying the gap of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

In this Chapter, literature and studies surrounding gender perception and utilization of Facebook is reviewed. The Chapter begins by exploring the general idea of communication as a process of sharing ideas, feelings and information followed by internet and social interaction. Thereafter, literature on gender as a social construction is reviewed, with a focus on gendered language, perception and communication and gender difference in the use of internet. The study then narrows down to a discussion on social media as a global medium of communication, which includes a discussion on the various forms of social media, gender and visual impression in the use of social media and gender difference in the use of social media. Lastly, a summary of key findings from various studies surrounding the area of study is made, followed by the conclusion to the chapter.

2.1 Communication as a ‘Sharing of Ideas, Feelings, Information’

Communication is operationalized in this context as the sharing of information from one person to the other through a specific media with the aim of achieving a mutual understanding. The study argues that the information shared by the sender should be successfully delivered to the receiver; and this can be achieved when there is mutual understanding between the sender and the receiver (Hargie, 2006). Media, in this instance, is a channel where information is conveyed from the sender to the receiver, while allowing for feedback. The sender therefore should strategically plan and organize information so that the type of media chosen will allow successful delivery of information and feedback necessary for effective communication.

Communication however, does not just entail the use of good language and speaking fluently and clearly; but it is all about reaching to the receiver or making the receiver to understand what is being communicated (a shared understanding). Media, therefore, has a very important role to play in effective communication, especially with the revolution of new technology, which has become a necessary component in our daily lives (Ganguly, 2008).

2.2 Internet and Social Interaction

Through media convergence, the internet offers a variety of content from other forms of media, however, in a more interactive way. These include e-mail, chat, net conferencing, e- libraries, voice mail/ net2phone, social forums, internet radio, MP3 music, movies in real time, movies on demand, streaming video, online newspapers, magazines and E-books (Krishnatray et.al, 2009). Despite these varieties, people use the internet differently and this is believed to be influenced by several factors such as their education levels, age, gender, socio-economic factors, personality predispositions and media perceptions (Papacharissi and Rubin, 2000; Ferguson and Perse, 2000). The focus of this study therefore is on how gender as a social construct influences the perception and use of Facebook among men and women.

2.3 Gender as a Social Construct

To begin with, it is important to differentiate sex and gender. Sex is biological (male and female) and gender is a social role behaviour (feminine and masculine) (Wood, 2007). Therefore gender is what culture introduces out of the raw material of being male or female. Most communication behaviour among both men and women is learned within the rules of culture. That is, communication behaviours considered appropriate for male and females are socially constructed (Stewart et.al, 1996; Unger and Crawford, 1992; Rothwell, 2000). The meaning of gender therefore depends heavily on cultural values and practices. Further, it

depends on how a particular culture defines masculinity and femininity, shapes expectations about how individual men and women should communicate; and how it establishes meanings of gender that in turn influence cultural views (Wood, 2007). Because gender is a social construct, it is constructed by the cultures of different communities. Culture consists of structures, primarily institutions and practices that reflect and uphold a particular social order. Culture socialization, therefore, is done by defining certain social groups, values, expectations, meanings and patterns of behaviour as natural and good and others as un-natural, bad or wrong. Gender is thus central to cultural life and the society views of gender are reflected and promoted by a range of social structures and practices (Ibid, 2007).

Different cultures treat boys and girls differently when they are young. Boys and girls are socialised through various institutions in the society such as the family, church, school and the media. Socialization, therefore, is a process by which we learn what is expected of us through our interpersonal encounters with others. Baumrid (1980) cited in wood (2007) defines socialization as; A process by which developing children through insight, training and imitation, acquire the habits and values congruent with adaptation to their culture...p.640

Staton (1990) cited in Wood (2007) also comments that socialization continues throughout our lifetime because we never stop getting information about ourselves. It is commonly referred to as adult socialisation. Parents, as the key agents of socialization, often perpetuate differential perceptions and treatment to both boys and girls throughout their childhood and well into their adult years. For example, boys and girls are treated differently when they are young and this reflects in the behaviours they adopt as they grow up. For instance, boys are more likely to be referred as strong, solid or independent, and girls on the other hand are treated to be loving, cute and sweet (Wood, 2007). Therefore, as they grow up, men are expected to protect and

provide for their families while women are expected to be submissive and nurturers of the family.

2.3.1 Gendered Language, Perception and Communication

Men and women are engendered into different styles of communication through socialization with the gendered speech communities. Speech community refers to a group of people who share norms on how they pass information and they exist when people share understandings about goals of communication, strategies for enacting the goals and ways of interpreting the message. These speech communities can be defined by race-ethnicity, economic class and gender. Socialization therefore is the source of these patterns which are learned and expressed in the different communications as per the different speech communities (Labov, 1972; Tannen, 1990; Wood 2007).

As explained earlier, most girls and women, and boys and men are socialized into distinct speech communities. This study therefore focused on the feminine and masculine speech communities to discuss the general differences because not all women learn and use a feminine style of communication and also not all men learn and use a masculine style of communication (Wood, 2007).

To start off, people socialized into feminine speech communities first tend to regard communication as a primary way to establish and maintain relationships. In this, they engage in conversations to share themselves and to learn about others (Ibid, 2007). Secondly, this group aim to establish equality among people. It is done by matching experiences to indicate that one is not alone in what they are going through. Thirdly, feminine speech foster support for others and this is done by expressing understanding and sympathy with situations of other people.

Lastly, conversations between feminine people tend to be characterized by many questions that probe for more understanding of feelings and perceptions surrounding the subject of talk (Alexander and Wood, 2000; Dunn, 1999; Wood, 2007).

Wood, 2007:128 comments that:

In Masculine speech communities they tend to regard talk as a way to accomplish concrete goals, exert control, preserve independence, entertain and enhance status. The first feature of masculine speech is their effort to establish status and control. They do this by asserting their ideas and authority, telling jokes and stories or challenging others. Second is instrumentality, this is the use of speech to accomplish instrumental objectives. They express this in conversation through problem solving efforts to get information, discover facts and suggest solutions. Lastly masculine speech tends to be more abstract than feminine speech. Men frequently speak in general terms that are removed from concrete experience and distanced from personal feelings.

Therefore women in their conversations aim at establishing support and intimacy through building of relationships and men on the other hand aim to establish status through problem solving as they discover ideas and offer solutions. All these styles are a reflection of cultural differences and way of communication (Tannen, 1990).

Perceptions as per this study are the individual's attitudes, views and opinions developed through a creative process and it depends on individual differences, past experiences and present circumstances. Perception can also be defined as a creative process enhanced by individual differences, past experience and present circumstances (Tannen, 1990). Perceptual process entails lots of creativity and interpretations as people add and subtract from the stimuli they are exposed. In perceiving phenomena, one engages in selection, organization and interpretation. On selection, an individual may not perceive all the phenomena in the environment, instead selects some of the stimuli and ignore the others. Organization on the other hand happens after selection of the stimuli to be attended to, one will attempt to organize

it in some way. Lastly on creativity, the selected and organized stimuli are interpreted. The more ambiguous the stimuli, the more room there is for creativity in the interpretations of it. Therefore both context and comparison are used to interpret the stimuli (Pearson et.al, 1995).

Men and women use of language has a major influence on the way they perceive the world. The reciprocal relationship between their perceptions and the language used to express them is known as the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis. This was an idea advanced by Edward Sapir a linguist and Benjamin Whorf, a fire insurance expert, who argued that language both limits and expands perception. Therefore they believe that language is not merely a reflection of the speakers' thoughts, but instead actually helps shape them by naming certain things and letting others go nameless (Pearson et.al, 1995).

Stereotypes influence men and women perceptions. These are generalizations about an entire class of phenomena based on some knowledge of some members of the class. For example, if most men access internet more than women, one can conclude that internet is for men and not for women and this can prevent one from knowing that women also use internet (Wood, 2007).

Polarized thinking also influences perception. This is the act of conceiving of things as absolute opposites which is not in the case of gender. This is evident on how men and women think about gender; people are divided into two sexes, male and female which are translated into two genders, masculine and feminine. Some individuals are having a number of qualities some of which society designates as feminine and some as masculine. This encourages them not to notice how much variation there is among women and among men because language encourages polarized thinking, men who don't conform to social views of masculinity and

women who don't conform to social views of femininity are often judged negatively (Wood, 2007).

Men and women, therefore, are likely to perceive and look at things differently. For example there is a difference on men and women colour preference where women prefer yellow to orange and men having the reverse preference. Also men seem more constant in colour preference than women who fluctuate from year to year. Caldwell (1982) also found out that women are more influenced by colour than form while men are more influenced by form than colour in making interpretations (Wood, 2007; Caldwell, 1982).

However, there are several stereotypes and perceptions on men and women communications which to some extent is not the truth. One common perception is that women use empty talk in that they seldom say anything of importance and they deal in the trivial and the unimportant talk. This perception may not be true because women also pass important and concrete information in their talk. A study done by Lakoff (1975) showed that women use adjectives such as 'adorable', 'sweet', and 'divine' more than men do, which may be true as such words are noticeable in women conversations. These believes, therefore, that more emotional speech and more extensive use of details characterize women's speech while men's speech on the other hand is viewed as bold and straightforward, focusing on important subjects to some extent may not be true because we still have some men and women who can be grouped as transgendered (Pearson et.al, 1995; Lakoff, 1975).

Women's speech is also viewed as un-assertive and lacking in power. Lakoff (1975) found out that women had a tentative register that indicated they lacked full confidence in the truth of their claims. Consequently, male language is viewed as aggressive, contrasting with women

language which is viewed as passive. Women also are characterized as being more submissive, more susceptible to social pressure, more responsive to the needs of others in their language while opposite traits are attributed to men. These ideas may not be the case today as women are taking the same positions as men in the society and it is being enhanced through women empowerment (Lakoff, 1975; Pearson et.al, 1995).

Moreover, men are believed to be more likely than women to use hostile language and profanity (Pearson et.al, 1995; Lakoff 1975). Still men and women are believed to use different words and discuss different topics. It's closely related to the idea of women and men differing in politeness of their speech. For example men are perceived to use more jargon and also tend to claim authority in areas such as business, politics, and baseball and women speech. While women, besides avoiding harsh language, are viewed as discussing social life, books, food and drinks, caring for their husbands and social work (Kramer, 1978).

In summary, men and women use language differently as they communicate. Men and women vocabularies also differ in some ways. In some instances, women and men differ in the extensiveness of vocabularies used to describe certain phenomena. Men and women also talk about sexuality differently; they may use the same number of expletives although women are perceived to use fewer. Women too use more intensifiers although on their own they may not be precise predictor of speaker's sex. Therefore these differences indicate that women use words and expressions which are more polite and reserved but also less direct and assertive than men (Pearson, et.al, 1995).

2.3.2 Gender Differences in the use of Internet

Research covering a wide variety of social internet activities has found out that women's uses and considerations of the internet to be different than men's (Fallows, 2005; Rainie, et.al, 2000). For example, a presentation conducted by Rainie (2003) during the Youth Net Conference highlighted gender differences in internet use of adolescents. It highlighted the fact that adolescent males focused more on entertainment aspects of the internet while females seemed more interested in relational aspects of social media and were likely to talk to their friends on the internet about romantic relationships, secrets and deep feelings (Rainie, 2003). Therefore, women participated more in self-disclosure during communication on online sites unlike men.

Also, studies conducted on men's and women's games on Internet reported that both genders believe that computer games are a "particularly masculine pursuit" (Selwyn, 2007: 533). However, past media research on gaming has found out that men and women perform in, and perceive games differently (Blumberg and Sokol, 2004). In addition, it was discovered that adult women play online games, including casual and persistent games, and for large numbers of hours weekly. However, a small number are more committed to the game and play for more hours than their male counterparts. Their reasons for playing also are different from that of the males, as actually, women are more likely to play for social interaction while men for achievement. One reason quoted is that women may play more hours than men because of that greater desire to interact with others (Williams et al. 2009).

Men and women also underestimate the amount of time they spent online, most likely because of the social desirability issues associated with both compulsive internet use and video games in general. Females underreport their time at a rate nearly three times that of the males. With

games perceived to be male spaces, these females find it difficult expressing the extent of their involvement. In line with gender theory, it is likely that the difficulty for the women may be because of their desire to remain cognitively consistent about being a woman who is not “too” into games and any perceived male orientation (Ibid, 2009). In the 20th century this might not be the case with modern technology in this instance internet, though traditionally, technology has been designed to match skills with men in mind. History of media use and access shows that men, not only have early access to technology, but also have tended to use and appropriate it more than women (Wajcman, 1991). Gender therefore remains a significant factor in researching the complexity of young people internet use and calls for a multiple theoretical perspective to contribute to further research on this topic (McQuillan and O’neill, 2009).

Research conducted by Rideout and Hamel (2006) found out that, there is no gender difference in how young people use computers. However, research conducted by Skog (2002) on use of mobile phones indicated that gender influences the choice of mobile phone with women preferring colour and design and men foregrounding on performance, logo and brand. In addition, mobile use patterns can be explained by gender difference with men tending to use it as an instrument to do business and women using it, to make longer calls while on the go (Leung and Wei, 2000), perhaps thereby emphasising on their need to use media for socialization purposes as opposed to men.

But more importantly, gender difference have been found in internet use and access. Some of the findings from the various researchers in the US showed that a typical web user is more likely to be a man. Among Americans, female college students used internet less than male but this gap was said to be closing rapidly (Krishnatray et.al., 2009; Kargaonkar and Wolin, 1999; Odell et.al., 2000) as a growing number of women becomes more internet savvy.

On the other hand, research conducted by Krishnatray et.al., (2009) indicates that, the interest that people have on internet content is not related so much to information as one of the perceived benefits arising from acquiring information such as learning web applications, practicing internet- based tests, widening exposure and integrating with the rest of the world. But, much of the internet content therefore inspires people to excel and give them freedom to express opinions. For example, students are said to value internet because it is user friendly, cost saving and its speed of communication. Furthermore, internet social motivations relate to chatting and interacting with people, which they find very appealing to their immediate environment. Individuals therefore, have the ability to develop acquaintances (chatting with everyone) and sharing views with people everywhere and anytime. Internet therefore creates new networks (Krishnatray et.al, 2009).

2.4 Social media as a Global medium of Communication

Social media is best understood as a group of new kinds of online media, which share most or all of the following characteristics. First, is participation which encourages contributions and feedback from everyone who is interested and blurs the line between media and audience, secondly, is openness, because its services are open to feedback and participation. This could be because they encourage voting, comments and the sharing of information. Besides, there are rarely any barriers to accessing and making use of content – password-protected content is frowned on. Thirdly, is conversation (it is better seen as a two-way conversation). Fourthly, is community, it allows communities to form quickly and communicate effectively. Communities share common interests, such as a love of photography, a political issue or a favourite TV show) and Lastly, is Connectedness (they thrive on their connectedness, making use of links to other sites, resources and people) (Mayfield, 2008).

Hence, social media, in the new media environment, is characterized by interactivity, user generated content, and multidirectional communication flows. Broadly, the transition to Web 2.0 marks a shift from a “one-way conversation” to a “multi-way conversation,” in which users participate as both creators and consumers of web content (Hudson, 2010).

The nature of the content produced by users therefore varies considerably across platforms, from passively collected data that can be fed back into the system and reflected back to users in word clouds or other popularity metrics, to content actively created, propagated, and interactively revised by users in wikis, blogs, and video-sharing or social networking sites, on RSS feeds, or through the creation and circulation of “widgets,” “gadgets,” and “badges” that can be embedded in sites across the web (Taubenheim et.al.,2008).

Generally, social media is used to describe an array of new Web 2.0 platforms. Although they are not always clearly distinguished in the literature, the interactivity associated with social media should be differentiated from more generalized forms of online user engagement. For instance, many websites invite users to feed their own information, customize the layout and look of a page, prioritize certain kinds of content, or keep track of their own online activities over time. Social media, on the other hand is characterized by interactivity across multiple horizontal connections, which produce in aggregate, a mutable, collectively generated user experience. Even within a single platform, users explore, to varying degrees, of the opportunities afforded for collaboration and social networking (Scanfield D, Scanfield V and Larson, 2010).

There are six forms of Social media according to Mayfield (2008). They are as follows: First are the Social networks. These sites allow people to build personal web pages and then connect with friends to share content and communication. The biggest social networks are MySpace, Facebook and Bebo. Second are the Blogs. Perhaps the best known forms of social media, blogs are online journals, with entries appearing with the most recent first. Third is the Wikis, this website allowed people to add content to or edit the information on them, acting as a communal document or database. The best-known wiki is Wikipedia, the online encyclopedia which has over 2 million English language articles. Fourth are the Podcasts which are the audio and video files that are available by subscription, through services like Apple iTunes.

Fifth are the Forums which are the areas for online discussion, often around specific topics and interests. Forums came about before the term “social media” and are a powerful and popular element of online communities. Sixth are the content communities. These are the communities which organize and share particular kinds of content. The most popular content communities tend to form around photos (Flickr), bookmarked links (delicious) and videos (YouTube). Last is the Micro blogging which is a social networking combined with bite-sized blogging, where small amounts of content (‘updates’) are distributed online and through the mobile phone network, hence Twitter is the clear leader in this field (Mayfield, 2008).

2.4.1 Facebook as the leading social media

As discussed in the preceding section there are several types of social media, this study however focused on Facebook which is the leading social media attracting millions of users worldwide. As of February (2012) Facebook had over 845 million users who spent more than 9.7 billion minutes per day on the site (Facebook, 2012; Rusli, 2012). This therefore explains why Facebook is by far the leading social media (Kreutz, 2009).

For one to use Facebook first they need to register and they must agree with the terms and conditions which include the provision that Facebook Inc. has the right to collect users' demographic information. Statistics reported by Facebook Inc. included the findings that the average user has 130 friends, contributes to 90 pieces of content per month and is connected on average with 80 community pages, groups and events (Wilson et.al, 2012; Hodge, 2007; Facebook, 2012).

People use Facebook because of certain motivations. These include the external pressure that encourages users to engage in Facebook related behaviors for example birthday reminder or automatic emails sent by Facebook to users, and the internal motivations such as need for social engagement (Viswanath et.al, 2009; Wilson et.al, 2012). Motivations are both prompted by the pressures and opportunities afforded by the external world and driven by internal motives (Murray, 1938).

The most common internal motivation is the desire to keep in touch with friends and social capital which are the benefits received from relationships with other people (Ellison et.al., 2006; Joinson, 2008). A typical Facebook user therefore communicate directly with a small group of friends by posting comments or messages indicating strong ties and then follow the majority of friends through passive means such as viewing the news feed and browsing indicating weak ties (Burke et.al., 2010).

In addition, Facebook use help fulfill social grooming needs such as gossip and small talk which serve as social grooming role (Dunbar, 1998; Gosling, 2009). Facebook popularity therefore may be due in part to the ease with which it allows individuals to satisfy a similar basic desire to monitor other network members and maintain social bonds despite the distance.

It also provides an excellent medium for studying the process like social grooming because of actions that cannot be captured easily through face to face. Besides that, Facebook is also used to minimize loneliness, to relieve boredom and to pass time (Wilson et.al, 2012; Lampe et.al, 2008).

To be identified in Facebook, most individuals use different identities. Identity in this case is a process by which individuals share part of their self with others, it centers on the user profile. New users of Facebook are presented with blank profiles which they personalize by entering information about themselves into a series of standard fields. Interaction with other users plays an important role in shaping identity presentation (Altheide, 2000; Wilson et.al, 2012)

2.4.2 Gender and Visual Impression in the use of Social Media

Communicating and networking with peers through social media is an indivisible part of everyday lives of today's young generation with social media environments becoming popular among them as a medium that not only enables the young generation to explore the social matrix of relating to peers but they also feel safer when trying out and displaying different constructions and reconstructions of their identities. Creating visual impressions and networking online, therefore, has become an integral means of managing ones identity, lifestyle and social relations (Siibak, 2010: 404; Livingstone, 2008: 391).

Effective communication being very important with both online and offline communications, visual impressions are therefore used by various people to obtain information about each other so as to know in advance what to expect and the kind of response to give to the person. Individuals therefore engage in visual impressions in order to convey impressions to others and this is determined by what is in their interests to convey (Siibak, 2010; Golfman, (1959)

1990:4). Furthermore, individuals also tend to accentuate and suppress certain aspects of self depending on the context of the situation. This conversely means that whenever other persons are present, people tend to accentuate these aspects of the self that typically corresponds to norms and ideals of the group the person belongs to or wishes to belong to (Siibak, 2010).

Facebook as one of the social media used by the young people in Kenya for communication allows its users to add friends, send messages, and update personal profiles to notify friends and peers about themselves. Facebook users can also form and join virtual groups, develop applications, host content, and learn about each others' interests, hobbies, and relationship statuses through users' online profiles (Quan-Haase and Young, 2010).

Men and women therefore, perform what they interpret their gender to be based upon, what culture has taught them is the correct interpretation of gender. Even though with the use of Facebook in communication one is allowed to adopt whatever identity one chooses in virtual environments, however, studies have shown that men and women still tend to offer attributes thought to be sought by the opposite sex (Thiel, 2005; Albright, 2001; Schmitt and Buss, 1996).

In the Facebook profile, the photographs used serve to warrant or support claims made in textual descriptions in that people use photographs not only to visualize their looks but to emphasize information about them and their qualities (Ellison, Heino and Gibbs, 2006).

Most people, however, choose photos where they would either look good or that will project a desired image of themselves. Some of the photos may represent an occasion or may include friends. The choice of an accompanying photo therefore is more often than not a conscious and purposeful and deliberate decision (Young, 2008).

Both masculine and feminine images are adopted in Facebook. Masculine images in such instances are used to legitimate male power and dominance (Buchbinder 2004). Nevertheless, findings indicate that compared to women, photos of men portrayed in the media still focus on the face of the man rather than his body. In addition, case studies on facial expressions on the photos of ordinary men and women, women tend to gaze aversion more often than men do. From these findings the study aimed to identify the images used by men and women on Facebook and how gendered socialization has influenced how they use it (Lavesque and Lowe 1999; Price-Rankin, 2001; Larsen and Schackelford, 1996).

A study done by Vigorito and Curry (1998) on some of the popular magazines, found that sex of the target audience influences the gender portrayals and creates contrary expectations among the readers. While men readers are hoping the portrayals of men to confirm the traditional identities of hegemonic masculinity, women on the contrary have more nurturing vision of men in their minds (Vigorito and Curry, 1996).

A study by Siibak (2010) on self marketing strategies of young men also indicated that there is a shift from hegemonic masculinity to a more metro-sexual type of thinking. Therefore, although the biological make up essence of male and female remains as solid and unmovable as ever, their present day constructions of masculinity show signs of the willingness to experiment with outward signs of sexuality (FitzPatrick, 2000).

Social media environments, still, does not encourage expressions of alternative masculinities and eliminate the need for purely stereotypical masculine self- presentations. For example, men in the online community tend to emphasize the aspects previously considered feminine like the awareness of fashion, trends, and hairstyles. Young men therefore do not conform to the

prevailing mental patterns imposed by the society but also initiate their changes in their roles, norms and expectations in the prevailing version of masculinity (Siibak, 2010).

2.4.3 Gender difference in the Use of Social media

Men and women are said to use social media differently. Several studies have revealed that women tend to self disclose more to their good friends and they change the level of disclosure more depending on the intimacy of relationships they have with their friends in social media (Dindia and Allen, 1992). Women are also said to be more sociable and sensitive, have more intimate social networks and are more actively involved in intimate conversations (Deaux, 1976; Wheeler, Reis and Nezlek, 1983). In addition women are motivated to create and maintain relationships in social media by the avoidance of isolation and they form more socio-emotion-oriented social networks (Tannen, 1990; Karweit and Hansell, 1983), in all these, women did more than men.

However, women would form more stable relationships than men in social media, because of the socio-oriented networks develop emotional bonds that build solid relationships (Hirschi, 1969). On the contrary men are more prone to spend time in social media in common activities, to communicate with a purpose of gaining and maintaining social position and they therefore prefer task oriented types of social networks (Tannen, 1990; Karweit and Hansell, 1983). All these results therefore, demonstrate that women tend to be more interested in personal and emotional communications and in building more stable relationships in social media than men (Igarashi et al., 2005).

2.5 Summary of the Reviewed Literature

Feedback is a very important component in a communication process; it determines whether the information was delivered successfully to the receiver or not. This has been enhanced today through the modern technology in this instance the internet which is a global medium of communication. However, people use internet differently, either for entertainment, to pass time, for relaxation and for social information. This is believed to be influenced by factors such as age, levels of education, gender, socio-economic factors, personality predispositions and media perceptions. In addition, the choice of media and how it is used is influenced by perceptions, socialization, psychological characteristics and attitudes with most of these happening through gendered socialization which is a continuous process throughout our lifetime.

It is also enhanced through the gendered speech communities which are defined by race-ethnicity, economic class and gender. A good example is the feminine and the masculine speech communities where men and women exhibit communication differences as per their speech community. For example individuals socialized into feminine speech community tend to regard communication as a primary way to establish and maintain relationships. They do this by engaging in conversations to share themselves and to learn about others. Secondly, they aim to establish equality among people and they do this by matching experiences to indicate that one is not alone in what they are going through. Thirdly, they foster support and they do it by expressing understanding and sympathy with situations of other people. Lastly their conversations tend to be characterized by a lot of questions that probe for more understanding of feelings and perceptions surrounding the subject of talk.

Masculine speech community on the other hand tend to regard talk as a way to accomplish concrete goals, exert control, preserve independence, entertain and enhance status. Some of the

features noted of the masculine speech communities are as follows; first, is their effort to establish status and control and they do this by asserting their ideas and authority, telling stories and challenging others. Second, is instrumentality and they express it through problem solving efforts to get information, discover facts and suggest speech. Lastly, men speak in general terms that are removed from concrete experience and distanced from personal feelings.

Men and women also use language differently in online communications. First, it has been noted that men and women vocabularies differ in some ways, where women and men differ in the extensiveness of vocabularies used to describe certain phenomena. Second, men and women talk about sexuality differently at times they may use the same number of expletives although women are perceived to use fewer. Lastly, women use more intensifiers than men, although, on their own they may not be precise predictor of speakers' sex. Therefore these differences indicate that women use words and expressions which are more polite and reserved but also less direct and assertive than men.

Individuals use internet to create a lot of networks and that has been enhanced through social media which is today one of the global medium of communication. This has been promoted through social media contributions like quick feedback, its level of openness, the two- way conversations; it allows quick formation of communities and its level of connectedness by making use of links to other sites, resources and people.

Women uses and consideration on internet was found to be different from those of men, with men focusing more on entertainment aspects while women seemed interested in relational aspects of social media. Also women are said to self disclose more to their good friends and close friends, more sociable and sensitive, actively involved in intimate conversations and more

so they create and maintain relationships through social media. Men on the other hand are prone to spend time in common activities to communicate with a purpose of gaining and maintaining social position and therefore they prefer tasks oriented networks.

Better still, men and women differ on the use of gendered language. In this instance, women use of language is viewed to be assertive and lacking in power while men's language is viewed as aggressive, contrasting with women language which is said to be passive. Further, men are believed to use hostile and profane language, while women use polite language in their speech though men and women are believed to use different words and discuss different topics in their communications.

With all these differences on the various studies conducted, little has been captured on gendered socialization and the use of social media. This study therefore aimed at examining the differences and similarities between men and women in their perception and use of Facebook, and how gendered socialization is manifested in social media usage. Specifically, the study aimed to answer the following questions: How do socially constructed norms affect the perceptions of Facebook use by men and women? How do socially constructed norms affect the way men and women communicate through Facebook? And, what is the nature of influence of gendered use of language on Facebook communication by men and women? The next chapter will cover the methodology of the study.

2.6 Conclusion

In this Chapter I have explored some of the literature covering the area of study and some of studies which have been done on the same. With the summary of the key findings explained in

the preceding section, it situates the gap of knowledge that the study was positioned. The next chapter therefore explored the methodology used in this study.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This study was set to examine the differences and similarities between men and women in their perceptions and use of Facebook, and how gendered socialization is manifested in social media usage. In this inquiry, I employed a sequential mixed method approach and suitable data generation techniques which helped in generating rich and intensive data. This Chapter explores the philosophical assumptions underpinning the research approach chosen, research design, sampling, data generation analysis and presentation and discussion, triangulation of data, ethical consideration and trustworthiness of the study findings.

3.1 Research paradigm

A Paradigm is a philosophical orientation that may be viewed as a set of basic beliefs or assumptions and perceptual orientations of a researcher, that deals with ultimate of first principles that determines how a researcher view a phenomena and the research methods that should be employed to study the various phenomena. It is also referred to as a worldview which is a general orientation about the world and the nature of research that a researcher holds (Creswell, 2009; Given, 2008).

A philosophical paradigm therefore constitutes a way of looking at the world and interpreting the study to provide a direction on how the research will be conducted and to what degree of involvement and interpretation it will take. This regards to ontology and epistemology philosophical paradigms that guided the study in framing the research process. Ontology in this

instance is the nature of reality or the assumptions we have about reality or knowledge while epistemology refers to the way reality or knowledge is studied (Rubin and Rubin, 2005; Jwan and Ong'ondo, 2011) .

To start with, ontological assumptions in social science research fall into two main categories: realism and relativism. Realism perspective looks at the world as an objective entity that has rules and regulations that govern behaviour while relativism takes a subjective position that is based on the belief that there is no single viewpoint of the world and that reality is internal to and dependent on individual perceptions and experiences, in this case, of social media. In this study the relativist ontology was adopted to examine the differences and similarities between men and women in their perceptions on Facebook usage and how gendered socialization is manifested in their Facebook communications. This is based on the belief that there is no single viewpoint of the world and that reality is internal to and dependent on individual perceptions and experiences on social media. To achieve this, my study sought the individual respondent views on how they perceive and utilize Facebook and data was collected personally through open ended questionnaires and FGD's. The mixed method was therefore introduced to examine the extent to which each participate either men and women utilize Facebook (Jwan and Ong'ondo, 2011; Richards, 2003; Johnson, 2008).

Epistemology is defined by Mason (2002) as “the nature of evidence and knowledge, the rules and principles by which we decide whether and how social phenomena can be known and how knowledge can be demonstrated” (p. 16). There are different types of epistemological paradigms; these include the Postpositivist, advocacy/participatory, constructivism and pragmatism (Creswell, 2009).

This study is a mixed method exploratory sequential design. This therefore led to the use of multiple epistemological paradigms which shifted from one phase to the other. In the first phase (qualitative phase) I used the constructivist paradigm to value multiple perspectives and deeper understanding of gender perceptions and utilization of Facebook (Creswell et.al. 2003; Morse and Niehaus, 2009). The basic consideration in this paradigm is that men and women construct meanings as they engage with the world they are interpreting, also they engage with their world and make sense of it based on their historical and social experiences as we are all born into a world of meaning bestowed upon us by our culture. More so, the basic generation of meaning is always social, arising in and out of interaction of men and women in the society. Data was generated from the respondents themselves within their environment with an aim of getting knowledge on how the socially constructed norms as per the environment they are exposed to and their day to day interactions with various individuals has influenced their perceptions and how they utilize Facebook (Crotty, 1998; Mason, 2002).

In the second phase, (the quantitative phase), the underlying assumptions shifted to postpositivism as a guide in the need for identifying and measuring statistical trends from the results achieved in the first phase. Postpositivism represents the thinking after positivism by challenging the belief of absolute truth of knowledge/ reality of knowledge. They argue that reality can never be fully captured only approximated (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Phillips and Burbules, 2000).

In this study, postpositivism assumed an intersubjective world where reality is a social construction and therefore the aim was to clearly understand gender perception and utilization of Facebook as captured by the respondents during qualitative phase and information was presented using statistics. This was therefore, done by taking note of the key areas after the

qualitative phase which needed to be tested or verified for clear understanding. Content analysis was then conducted to analyse information on the areas noted by counting the number of times the words were used and information presented quantitatively (Mills, Durepos and Wiebe, 2010).

The relativist Ontology and both the constructivist and postpositivist epistemological paradigms shaped the research approach to sequential mixed method, approach as I sought to get each participant views on how they perceive and utilize Facebook. In depth understanding of the participants culture and context was conducted by visiting and gathering information personally through open-ended questionnaire, FGD's and content analysis. Gender being a social, symbolic construction that varies across cultures, the respondents' culture and context informed the individual response in my study (Wood, 2007; Morse and Niehaus, 2009).

3.2 Research Design

I employed a case study design to understand gender perceptions and utilization of Facebook by university students. Its main focus was an institution as case which was selected purposively. The sampled institution was a Christian based institution which tends to encourage their students to emulate Christ in their character and behaviour. This study borrows Yin (2003) definition of a case study cited by Jwan and Ong'ondo (2011: 32) as; "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon or object within its real-life context."

This study focused on this particular Institution as a case to facilitate the understanding of the differences and similarities of men and women perceptions on Facebook usage and how the gendered socialization through a Christian based environment has influenced their use of

Facebook. The case therefore was used to explore if the environment men and women are exposed to influence how they perceived and utilize Facebook.

3.3 Research Approach

Research approach is the plans and the procedures for research that span the decisions from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection and analysis. There are three types of approaches. First, is the qualitative research which is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to social human problems. Second, is the quantitative research which is the means for testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables and last is the mixed methods research which is the combination of both the qualitative and quantitative approaches (Creswell, 2009).

This study employed a sequential mixed method approach. Informing this approach is the relativist ontology and the constructivist epistemology discussed above which views men and women and their interpretations, perceptions, meanings and understandings as the primary sources of data and postpositivism epistemology which believes that knowledge can never be apprehended but only approximated (Crotty, 1998; Denzin and Lincoln, 2005).

Mixed method is a combination of qualitative and quantitative data in a single study at a predetermined stage of the research process be it during the initial study planning, the process of data collection, data analysis or reporting in order to answer the research questions in a better way. My study borrows from Andrew and Halcomb (2009) definition of mixed method as a research that collects both qualitative and quantitative data in one study and integrates these data at some stage of the research process. Mixed method was used in this study for triangulation which will be discussed later in this chapter (Andrew and Halcomb, 2009).

This study utilized the exploratory sequential design which began by prioritizing the collection and analysis of qualitative data in the first phase using both the open-ended questionnaire and FGD, s and data was analysed using thematic analysis. Building from the qualitative results, a second quantitative phase was conducted to test the initial findings. This was conducted through content analysis which will be discussed later in this chapter. All the findings were then triangulated to interpret how the quantitative results build on the initial qualitative results (Creswell, Plano Clark, Gutmann and Hanson, 2003). Results from the first qualitative method therefore informed the second quantitative method. Exploratory Sequential design was mainly used because there were new emergent research questions based on qualitative results that could not be answered by the qualitative data.

To start with, qualitative researchers focus on different set of questions. Rarely is it concerned with the function of biological systems, physiological variables or pathological precursors. Instead it is concerned with the way people give meaning to the world and it assumes that everyone is different in this regard. For example, in this study, it was assumed that each respondent is different and therefore each has his/her own information on how they perceive and utilize Facebook. This inquiry, thus, did not look to sample people who could represent the background population, but it looked for a sample that could provide appropriate and adequate insight into people's experience in social media using respondents who offered in depth richness in their explanations, and could represent a breath of human experience (Nicholls, 2009).

Quantitative methodology on the other hand can be controlled; objective, generalisable, outcome oriented and assumes existence of facts which are external to and independent of the

researcher. This therefore enabled the presentation of numerical data which are amenable to statistical analysis. This was therefore conducted and achieved through content analysis.

3.4 Study area

The study was conducted in Nairobi County in Kenya among the selected students in one Christian based private University. The institution offers both pre-university and daytime undergraduate programmes. It has five schools, these are; school of science and Humanities, Business and Economics, Human and social sciences, science, engineering and health and the School of Communication and Languages where the Research respondents were sampled from.

3.5 Research Population

My target population in this study was the university students in one university in Kenya. The Christian based University selected had a population of about 3,000 students enrolled in various programs offered in the five schools in the University listed in the preceding section. The school of communication and languages was specifically sampled in this study because the students pursuing various programs in the school had a good background and wide knowledge in communication. This was quite unique in comparison to the other schools in the University. The school also is among the largest in the university in terms of student body and number of programs offered. Among the 3,000 students in the University, the school of Communication and Languages had approximately 250 students pursuing different programs offered in the school. A total of 70 students from the first, second, third and fourth year students pursuing different programs offered in the school participated in the study. From the findings collected using the open ended questionnaire only three individuals among the 70 respondents dint have a Facebook account (2 male and 1 female).

3.6 Sampling

Sampling is the process used for choosing the actual Sample of respondents for the study from the larger population, a sample being a set of actual data sources that are drawn from a larger population of potential data sources. The process of sampling therefore began by defining the population that was qualified for inclusion in the sample, in these instance university students in the purposively sampled private University in Kenya. Several sampling techniques were then used to sample one private university, one school in the chosen private University and also the key respondents for the study from the school selected in the private University. Approaches to selecting samples are divided into probability and non-probability where the former uses a group's size in the population as the sole influence on how many of its members will be included in the sample, this study concentrated on selecting sample members using non-probability sampling techniques according to their ability to meet specific criteria (Given, 2008).

3.6.1 Sampling Technique

This study employed multiple sampling techniques; Purposive sampling which was used to sample one private university from all the public and private universities in Kenya and also was used in sampling key respondents for the study from the total population of students enrolled in the various programmes offered in the institution and lastly stratified sampling and purposive sampling were employed to sample key respondents to participate in focus group discussions and also for content analysis.

To start with purposive sampling was used to sample one private Christian University from all the public and private universities in Kenya and also in sampling the key respondents for the

study from the total population of students in the selected university. This was done using the following checklist. One, the university should be offering courses in communication and has a good background on the same stating the level of exposure the students get as they pursue the course. Second, the institution should have a computer lab that is free and open to all students. And lastly the students program should be flexible to allow some extra curriculum activities. The university which qualified as per the mentioned areas was sampled purposively.

After sampling one University (Private Christian based University), the next step was to pick the specific respondents for the study. Students from the School of Communication and Languages therefore was sampled from the total population of students in the University as it had the longest period in establishment and more so the courses offered in the school had a basis in communication. Knowledge in communication was to inform the study as the key respondents would have an idea of the communications taking place in Facebook.

Purposive sampling also was employed to sample the key respondents for the study from 250 students enrolled in the different programs in the school of communication and languages. Purposive sampling is where one approach a particular group of people thought to share a common experience and sample from the group individuals who are willing and able to talk candidly about their experiences (Nicholls, 2009).

Coordinating with the class representatives from the various groups, the students were requested for 15 minutes after their classes. Each group was briefed by the researcher on what the study was about and those who were willing to participate were provided with an open ended questionnaire to fill. A total of 70 questionnaires were filled and returned. Analysis was then done on the 70 respondents to find the most common users in Facebook. This was defined

by criteria of those who could check their Facebook account at least once a day and 40 respondents out of the 70 respondents were found to match the criteria.

With the 40 respondents selected, purposive sampling was employed again to sample willing participants to participate in online focus group discussions and also Content analysis. This was done by making a phone call to each participant explaining what the second step of the study was all about. Those willing to participate were asked for their email addresses and were emailed detailed information explaining what the second part of the study was focusing on together with a participants' informed consent form with a space where they could sign and email it back to the researcher's email address if he/she agrees to participate.

A total of 24 respondents (13 women and 11 men) agreed to participate in the online focus group discussion and content analysis. A friend request was sent to each of the 24 respondents and all of them accepted to be my friends on Facebook. Since equal number of men and women was important in this part of the study, stratified sampling was then employed to sample equal number of men and women respondents. This is where the researcher orders the sampling frame by one or more characteristics and then he/she selects the same percentage of items or people from each sub group either by using simple random or systematic sampling (Mason, 2002).

A stratum of 11 men and 11 women was developed taking a total of 22 respondents from the 24 respondents i.e. 11 men and 13 women who had accepted to participate in the focus group discussion and content analysis. The 11 women were chosen from the 13 by considering those with who had posted at least three times in one week.

3.7 Data Generation Instruments

In this study, I used an open-ended questionnaire and online focus group discussion to generate data during the first qualitative phase. A questionnaire is a tool for collecting both quantitative and qualitative data, it enables the researcher to organize questions and receive responses without having to talk to every respondent. There are two types of questionnaires i.e. open-ended questionnaire and closed-ended questionnaire. In this respect, this study employed an open ended questionnaire because it could not limit the respondents responses on the various questions asked. Also it gave them an opportunity to express their ideas in detail. This was therefore used to collect data from 70 University students both men and women. This data was then analyzed using thematic analysis, after which the second quantitative phase was conducted based on the findings from the qualitative phase.

Online FGD was the second instrument used to collect data from 22 respondents selected from the 70 respondents who had filled the open-ended questionnaires based on the information they had provided. The main reason for utilizing online FGD was first to appreciate the modern technology, secondly, to capture discussions as the respondents commented on Facebook and also to enable the respondents to respond to and make comments on the group members' responses in their own convenient time. This was therefore, conducted by creating a group in Facebook specifically for the study and all the 22 respondents were requested to be members and they did accepted. Questions were raised from the information collected with the use of an open-ended questionnaire and the respondents were asked to comment on them. To obtain saturated data, more questions were raised from the comments the respondents had made on the previous questions and more comments were made on the same. As the administrator of the group, I controlled the communications so as not to go out of the topic. Questions and

comments raised from what the respondents had posted on the group Facebook wall and they were free to comment and discuss them.

3.8 Data Analysis, presentation and Discussion

Data analysis in qualitative research is defined by Jwan and Ong'ondo 2011:103 as: “A systematic process of transcribing, collecting, editing and reporting the data in a manner that makes it sensible and accessible to the reader and researcher for purposes of interpretations and discussion.”

The qualitative Data collected in this study was analyzed through thematic and Content analysis; first I will start by discussing how data was analyzed using thematic analysis and later on content analysis.

3.8.1 Thematic Analysis

Data generated through the open-ended questionnaires and online Focus group discussion was analyzed using thematic analysis. This study used Braun and Clark (2006) six point thematic analysis procedure explained by Jwan and Ong'ondo (2011: 104).

The first stage they describe it as data transcription. However, this was not applied in this study, and instead data collected through open-ended questionnaires and online focus group discussion was organized into scripts that could be read easily. For the data collected with the use of open-ended questionnaires, this was done by organizing each question and all the answers provided by all the respondents with the use of pseudonyms as numbers with either an “M” and “F” after the number to differentiate male and female respondents. The same also was applied in re- writing data collected through the online focus group discussions.

The second stage after this was re-familiarization of data. This was done on both the data collected through the open-ended questionnaires and from the online focus group discussions.

Data were read through and the general idea of what the data was all about in connection with the initial thought of the research was taken down in a separate note book.

With a clear understanding of what the data was all about, the third stage was then conducted. This stage involved coding of the data. Data from the open-ended questionnaires were the first to be coded into various themes followed by the data from the online focus group discussion. The coding of data was done at three levels. The first being open coding; at this level I went through all the scripts highlighting information that I felt it was addressing similar issues. This was done by referring to the key points in the research questions.

The second level of coding was the axial coding; grouping still of similar codes from the codes selected in the open coding was done. This was done by grouping codes into categories. The number of codes at this stage reduced from the number achieved during the open coding.

The last level of coding was the selective stage where the categories developed in the second level were grouped into themes. This was done as per the key themes developed from the research questions (perceptions, language and socialization). Not all the themes developed emerged from the research questions. Some emerged from the data and still some emerged from the conceptualization process of the literature review. Coding was not easy at all especially in identifying similar codes that could be matched together. A lot of discussions therefore, were made with supervisors and peers, which enabled clear data analysis, interpretation and discussion presented in the next chapter as per the themes developed in the selective stage of coding.

3.8.2 Content Analysis

This study defines content analysis as a method of studying and analyzing communication in a systematic and objective manner (Given, 2008). It is also a process of categorizing the data into clusters of similar entities or conceptual categories so as to identify consistent patterns and relationship between the developed themes (Ibid, 2008). This method can be used both in qualitative and quantitative research, where in quantitative it is helpful in answering the ‘what’ questions and data is presented in percentages while in qualitative it is helpful in answering the ‘why’ questions. This study focused on the quantitative content analysis to understand the difference and similarities men and women have on how they perceive and utilize Facebook and how the gendered variations have been manifested in their Facebook usage. Data was analysed and captured through pie-charts and tables and information latter was presented in percentages to help clearly identify the differences.

This study followed a step by step process to analyze data using content analysis. After choosing the key respondents to participate in content analysis using purposive sampling and stratified sampling explained above, where 22 respondents were sampled, content analysis was then conducted to test the initial findings from the qualitative phase and to understand the language used on Facebook through the daily postings the respondents made on their walls, comments made on various posts on Facebook, and also the profile pictures used. This was conducted from February to March, 2012 when the students had just reported back for a new semester and they did not have much to do. This study borrowed Neuendorf (2002) step by step process of content analysis.

The first step is data preparation; at the start of content analysis, a page was designed where the daily activities performed by each respondent in Facebook was noted down for a period of two

months. This information was re-written into new scripts to enable clarity of the information. This was done by writing down everything that had been captured to have been performed on Facebook by each respondent per day.

The second step taken after data preparation was to define the unit of analysis. This was defined as per the type of profile pictures used be it personal picture, cars and football team, the type of information posted or commented on be it religious, love, games, politics, etc. in the third step categories and a coding scheme was developed. This was done by considering the key points in the research questions raised from the results from the qualitative phase and conceptualization of literature on the field of study.

On the information posted, categories were developed for each of those on religion, politics, love, supportive information, firm and straightforward information, games and music. On the profile pictures, this was categorized under feminine being female pictures, use of flowers, pictures of food and masculine pictures were grouped as those of cars, football teams and jerseys and men pictures.

The next step was to test my coding scheme to make sure that all the information has been captured in all the themes developed. This was done by coding a sample of the data to check on the level of consistency. This was then discussed among supervisors and peers until the coding consistency was achieved, which therefore led to the next step of coding all the text. This was done by indicating the number of times a particular word that fall into particular theme was used. After coding all the information and relevant themes developed, assessment was conducted still to check more on the consistency of the coding made.

Conclusions were then drawn from the coded data by making sense of the themes identified statistically. This was done by checking on the properties and dimensions of the themes, the relationship between the themes and the patterns between male and female respondents. The main aim was to identify their similarities and differences on how they use Facebook, the language used in their communications and how the socially constructed norms have influenced their Facebook usage. Lastly a report on the findings was made and information was presented using statistics. This is captured and discussed in detail in the next chapters.

3.9 Data Triangulation

Triangulation in research is a means of multi-method approach in data collection and data analysis. The method underpinning the conception of triangulation is that the phenomena under study can be understood best when approached with a combination of research methods (research strategies). In this study, it was used in data collection and data analysis. As a mixed method exploratory sequential design, triangulation was used in this inquiry as a strategy to identify, explore and understand different dimensions of the units of study, thereby strengthening the findings and enriching interpretations (Given, 2008). Triangulation in this study was a combination of the results in the qualitative phase collected through open-ended questionnaire and FGDs and analysed thematically and the results from the quantitative phase collected and analysed through content analysis. All used to study the interrelated phenomena from multiple and different angles of perspectives (Denzin, 1989).

Triangulation is comprised of four basics which are; Triangulation of methods of data collection, investigator triangulation, theory triangulation and triangulation of data sources. Triangulation conducted in this study is the Triangulation of methods of data collection. This is

where data collection methods are used to collect data about a research phenomenon from multiple perspectives and in different contexts (Given, 2008).

During the qualitative phase, the study employed open-ended questionnaires to collect data from 70 respondents and then conducted online FGDs to 22 sampled respondents from the 70 who had participated in filling the open-ended questionnaire. This however was a step by step process. Information collected at the first stage brought the need to seek more information on some of the issues that had been raised in the data, this therefore build a basis for FGD. A criterion was therefore set to sample key respondents from the 70 respondents to participate in FGD. From the findings achieved using an open ended questionnaire, respondents who were active in Facebook and who could write on their wall at least once in a day were sampled. A total of 22 respondents were then sampled (11 men and 11 women) to participate in online focus group discussions. Questions arising from the data collected from the open ended questionnaires were raised and detailed information collected on the same.

In order to confirm the findings, qualitative phase, content analysis was conducted on the 22 respondents who had participated on online focus group discussion. This was done by checking what the respondents posted on their Facebook walls each day, the profile pictures used and the comments they could make on their friends posting and any other activity they did on Facebook that could address the study was captured. Participant consent was sought before collecting data meant for content analysis was conducted by asking each participant to sign the consent form if he/ she was willing to participate in the study. Information collected was then analyzed as per the various themes developed by counting the number of times certain words were used and findings were statistically presented

For presentation and discussion of data, similar themes in the data analyzed using thematic analysis (data collected from the open-ended questionnaires and focus group discussion) and content analysis were merged and discussions were made illustrating how the specific information was captured. Unique themes however, were discussed separately and the specific phase where the information was captured was clearly mentioned.

3.10 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is an important concept in mixed methods research which allows the researchers the freedom to describe their study in ways that highlight the overall rigor of qualitative and quantitative research. The terms used include Credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability (Given, 2008).

Credibility in this study was achieved through review of key concepts which was done by clearly defining the operational definitions of the key concepts of the study which was used consistently throughout the study. Supervisors were consulted in reviewing the key concepts to make sure they were operationalized appropriately. Secondly, credibility was achieved through triangulation which was done through the use of chain of evidence emanating from multiple sources of data as explained above under triangulation. This was ensured through three types of data collection; the open ended questionnaire and FGDs followed by content analysis which focused on what individuals posted on their Facebook walls.

Thirdly, member checking was also done by returning the organized data to the respondents for them to ensure the accuracy of the information they provided. This was conducted online through email, where all the respondents were emailed a copy of the data together with consent

of release. All the respondents were satisfied with the transcriptions and they confirmed by signing the consent of release (see Appendix vii).

Transferability is where the researcher provides information surrounding the context of the study to allow the reader to ascertain if the work could be applicable in another context (Mason, 2002). This research was a case study conducted in one private Christian based University at the beginning of a new semester for a period of three months. This allowed a clear understanding and exploration of gender perceptions and utilization of Facebook by University students and how the Christian based environment they are exposed to has influenced how they use Facebook.

I demonstrated dependability in this study by going to the field and collecting the data myself. I distributed the questionnaires and collected them personally, conducted online FGDs as an administrator of the group and lastly conducted a content analysis to analyse the kind of language men and women use in Facebook, the kind of issues posted by men and women on their Facebook wall and the frequency of Facebook use by men and women. This clearly illustrates the step by step process conducted during data collection.

Concerning confirmability, my research data sources and the consent information will be stored securely and will be held for five years as a way of maintaining my respondents' confidentiality. For validity both my supervisors reviewed two scripts of organized data independently which was then contrasted with mine and amended.

3.11 Ethical consideration

First, I sought written informed consent from the respondents before conducting the research and also during the process of research and only included the respondents who voluntarily agreed to participate in this study and share information on the Facebook walls.

Secondly, this study ensured the privacy and confidentiality of the respondents and information obtained through the use of pseudonyms to protect the identity and not put them at any risk. Transcripts were taken back to respondents who verified and confirmed that the information represented in this study did not put them at any risk at all. Anonymity also was maintained by concealing the name of the research site. However my supervisors are aware of it and this was discussed before this step was taken.

3.12 Conclusion

In this Chapter I have explored the philosophical paradigm, the research approach, sampling and the target population, data generation techniques, data analysis, presentation and discussion and the ethical consideration in the study. The next chapter is on data analysis, interpretations and discussions

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

The study was set to examine the differences and similarities between men and women in their perceptions and use of Facebook and how gendered socialization is manifested in social media usage. To answer the research questions of the study, the first research instrument employed was the open ended questionnaire which was used to collect data from 70 selected University students. The questions raised through the open-ended questionnaire covered the accessibility of internet, motivation to join Facebook, Facebook usage, perceptions in the use of Facebook and the influence of gendered socialization on Facebook.

An online focus group discussion was the second instrument used to generate data from 22 (11 male and 11 female) respondents sampled from the 70 who had participated in the open ended questionnaire. Questions captured at this level were raised from the findings collected from the open-ended questionnaire in order to seek more clarifications on some of the issues raised. The data collected using both the open-ended questionnaires and the online focus group discussions were analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings were then presented and discussed in this chapter.

Content analysis was conducted with 22 respondents (11 men and 11 women) to confirm and seek more clarifications on the information that had been collected in the qualitative phase. Basically, this focused on the analysis of the day to day posts made by the respondents on their Facebook walls to study the language used, kind of topics commented on and the type of profile pictures used. This analysis helped in clarifying the information collected earlier by use

of the open-ended questionnaire and online focus group specifically on the language used by men and women in Facebook, the type of postings made by men and women and the number of times respondents could log into Facebook. Data was analysed by counting the number of times a certain word was used and information was then presented quantitatively.

This chapter, explores the key findings of the study triangulated into various themes discussed as follows; the level of access of internet and Facebook by the respondents, motivational factors to join Facebook, perception of Facebook usage, utilization of Facebook, gendered use of language in Facebook and gendered socialization in Facebook usage.

4.1 Level of access of internet and Facebook

In this section, the following sub themes are explored: Access to internet, possession of a Facebook account, technological device used in accessing Facebook and the frequency at which Facebook is accessed.

4.1.1 Access to Internet

The availability of the modern technology today has enabled both men and women respondents to access internet. Out of the 70 respondents who participated by filling the open ended questionnaires, 24 were men and 46 were women. The findings captured on the level of internet access was grouped into those who could access it daily, those who could access weekly and those who rarely accessed internet. The results were as follows; 20 men out of 24 compared to 38 women out of 46 accessed internet daily, 2 of men compared to 5 women could access internet weekly and the other 2 men compared to 3 women rarely accessed internet.

According to the findings, despite the availability of internet connectivity for example, through the Mobile phone, modems and Wi-Fi spots, not all respondents could access internet daily.

Comparing men and women level of internet access measured against the total number of men and women consecutively, the same percentage of men and women could access internet daily, more women than men could access internet weekly and more men than women rarely accessed internet. As reflected in the sampled responses below, the daily access of internet was determined by the availability of network, if one is free and if there was need for doing so.

Participant 1(M): “*I can access internet daily as long as there is network.*”

Participant 2(M): “*I use internet frequently because of research, assignments, checking of emails and Facebook.*”

Participant 3 (F): “*I can access internet when I want to check on something, to log into Facebook or Google a matter that is giving me doubts and this can be 1 to 2 times in a week.*”

4.1.2 Possession of a Facebook account and the device used in accessing it

On whether they possess a Facebook account, 7 out of the 70 respondents who filled the open-ended questionnaire did not have a Facebook account (4 male and 3 female). Therefore, only the 63 respondents who had a Facebook participated in the second and third stages of this study.

Concerning the Technological devise used in accessing Facebook account, findings from the open-ended questionnaire collected from the 70 respondents showed that, mobile phones, laptop computers and desktop computers were some of the devices used by the respondents to access Facebook. It was noted that some respondents could use only one of the devices, and still others used either two or all the three devices on different occasions. The findings on the commonly used devise to the least used were captured by counting the total number of

respondents who could use any of the three mentioned earlier either singly or with any other devices. Results were then quantified in percentages so as to capture the differences.

The Mobile phone was identified as the commonly used technological device in accessing Facebook by both men and women, with 19 of 24 (47%) of men compared to 44 of 46 (45%) of women using it. Some of the reasons noted for its high level of usage was that it is readily available and portable than the computers. The Desktop computer was second with 17 of 24 (43%) of men compared with 37 of 46 (38%) of women using it and lastly laptop computers were third, with 4 of 24 (10%) of men compared to 17 of 46 (17%) using it. Comparing the number of men and women using each of the devices, it was noted from the findings that a slight higher percentage of men used mobile phones and desktop computers more than women, while more women on the other hand used laptop computers than men. These desktop computers were either from the school computer lab or cyber cafe.

4.1.3 Frequency in accessing Facebook

Frequency in Facebook access was captured in three areas; those who could access Facebook daily, those who could access it five times a week, those who did it weekly and lastly those who less often accessed Facebook.

The results were as follows: 74% of men compared to 78% of women accessed Facebook daily, 4% of men compared to 2% of women accessed Facebook 5 times a week, 22% of men compared to 12% of women accessed Facebook weekly and 0% of men compared to 8% of women less often accessed Facebook. When we compare men and women access of Facebook, more women accessed Facebook daily than men while more men accessed Facebook on a weekly basis than women though it is just with a slight difference.

The focus group discussions conducted also highlighted no much difference on the frequency at which men and women accessed Facebook though it was highlighted that the level of Facebook access was high if one was not occupied. This view was upheld during content analysis where the frequency at which the participants posted on their Facebook wall's was slow as they approached the examination period.

On conducting content analysis, it was noted that women could post, comment on Facebook posts or do something on their Facebook wall that could tell they logged in frequently than men who at times could not post or conduct anything on their Facebook wall for a whole week. Although from the open-ended questionnaire findings discussed above and also the sampled responses captured below depict some men respondents using Facebook daily as women do. It may therefore be argued that most men and women respondents access Facebook but only a few would post on their Facebook walls or do any other activity that could tell they had accessed their Facebook account.

Respondent 1 M: "I can access Facebook mostly in the morning and evening especially when i don't have classes"

Respondent 2 F: "I do access Facebook very often especially after class as a means of relaxing."

4.2 Motivational factors to joining Facebook

Some of the motivational factors to joining Facebook captured from the open-ended questionnaire responses include; motivations from friends who were already in Facebook, need for socialization and networking and the need to chat with friends who were already in Facebook. The findings quantified in percentages, of men and women respondents as per each

of the motivations were as follows; 59% of men compared to 47% of women were motivated by their friends to join Facebook, 25% of men compared to 38% of women were motivated by the need of socialization and networking and 8% of men compared to 6% of women were motivated by the need to chat with friends who were already on Facebook. This clearly shows that more men than women were motivated by their friends to join Facebook, while more women than men were motivated by the need of socialization and networking.

The Content analysis conducted on the same showed that women specialize more on socialization and networking more than men. This was illustrated through the number of friend requests women could get and respond to in comparison to men. In this analysis 23% of men compared to 77% of women received and responded to friend requests within a period of February and March months under study. The type of language used on women postings showed the use relationship building words e.g. words of encouragement to tell the readers that they are not alone in what they are going through. Also most women could tag their personal photographs taken when they are smiling and dressed nicely so as to capture people views on how they look, this could enhance their level of connection as it was noticed that the individual could get more than three friend requests and most of them were gladly accepted.

Respondent (1M): "I was motivated to join Facebook so as to have fun with friends through Facebook chats"

Respondent (1 F): "I was also motivated to join Facebook by its aspect of being a social networking tool that enhances the speed of communicating globally."

4.3 Perception of Facebook usage

In human nature, men and women are said to perceive things differently and it is determined by one's cultural background and the environment he/she is exposed to (Wood, 2007). Cultural backgrounds through the socially constructed norms influenced the way men and women used Facebook. Data collected from the open-ended questionnaires on the kind of issues that should not be posted in Facebook according to the respondents' culture and background, were noted to be issues on sex, use of nude photos, use of pornographic materials and anything that is not guided by morals was said not be allowed by their culture to be posted in Facebook. The four issues raised by the respondents are what the Bible speaks against and considers unchristian. Men and women respondents were exposed to a Christian environment where good morals are encouraged. This seemed to have influenced their perception on Facebook usage as highlighted on the selected responses below.

Content analysis was undertaken for two months from February to March. This entailed daily monitoring of the 22 (11 male and 11 female) respondents Facebook walls on the type of posts made, type of comments made on some of the posts in Facebook, the language used and also the type of profile pictures used. The dominant words used by both men and women were religious words which were expressed through bible encouragements, comments on the day's sermon and through lyrics of gospel songs. Detailed findings of content analysis conducted would be presented in the next topics in this chapter.

Participant (1M): "anything that is not guided by morals should not be posted in Facebook."

Participant (2F): "obscene pictures that expose nudity and similar topics that are not meant to enlighten people should not be posted in Facebook."

4.4 Utilization of Facebook

On utilization of Facebook, the following sub themes are discussed;

How often men and women write on their Facebook walls, the kind of issues men and women comment on in Facebook, use of emoticons and managing of friends in Facebook.

4.4.1 How often men and women post on their Facebook wall

Concerning how often men and women write on their Facebook wall, the findings captured using the open-ended questionnaire were grouped into four areas; those who could post more often, those who post weekly, those who could post monthly and lastly those who could post every day. The results were as follows: 38% of men compared to 39% of women more often posted on their wall, 29% of men compared to 33% of women could post weekly, 14% of men compared to 2% of women could post monthly and lastly 19% of men compared to 26% of women could post every day.

From the findings, the frequency at which men and women post on their walls was different with more women posting on their wall everyday than men. Analysis from the focus group discussions depicted that one could post on their wall if he or she has an idea of what he/ she need to share with a friend. Women, however, said they would always have something to post whenever they log into Facebook and if not, when they are spending some time checking their friend posts and status an issue would automatically prompt them to leave comments. Men on the other hand, claimed that they would post if it was perceived to be something meaningful and worth sharing. During content analysis, some of the words men used in their posts were more firm and solution oriented messages; words that portrayed a higher level of status.

Findings from content analysis conducted from the 11 men and 11 women through the month of February to March showed that the frequency at which women could post on Facebook was higher than that of men. Comparing the two months, more posting was experienced in February than in March. This is because in the month of March most students were engaged with lots of assignments and sit-in cats while others were preparing for their end of semester exams. The posts analyzed within the month of February when the students were not busy yet were as follows: during the First week 6 men posted and 11 women posted on their Facebook wall, in the second week 7 men and 9 women posted, in the third week 5 men and 11 women posted and lastly in the fourth week 4 men and 7 women posted on their Facebook wall. These results however, were achieved by counting the number of respondents who posted any day within the week. The results therefore clearly indicate that women post more often on their wall than men. This is supported by findings of the online FGDs where more men than women indicated posting frequently.

Respondent 1(M): "I don't post too often, unless when it is necessary or when there is an issue I would like my friends to know or comment about."

4.4.2 The kind of issues men and women comment on in Facebook

Content analysis conducted showed similarities and differences on the kind of issues men and women comment on. This was done by grouping the various issues into relevant categories they relate to. The categories captured personal issues, spiritual issues, Political issues, Relationship issues and general issues (anything captured and could not be grouped under the categories mentioned above). In that respect, analysis was conducted by counting the number of times an issue was commented on by men and women. The results were then quantified in

percentages to clearly examine the differences and similarities on what men and women comment on Facebook.

Within the study period of February to March, 16% of men compared to 11% of women had commented on relationship issues, 8% of men compared to 23% of women had commented on religious issues, 32% of men and 32% of women had commented on personal issues, 20% of men compared to 7% of women had commented on politics, 0% of men compared to 4% of women had commented on games and lastly, 24% of men compared to 23% of women had commented on general issues.

From the findings, one of the similarities noted between men and women was on life issues where they made same percentage of comments. However, a significant difference was noted on the following issues. (i) Spiritual issues commented on more by women than men. (ii) Political issues commented on more by men than women (ii) Relationship issues commented on more by men than women (iii). Business issues commented more by men than women and lastly women commented more on games than men.

4.4.3 Use of Emoticons

Emoticons are symbols used to express ones feelings and ideas (refer to definition of terms). The findings achieved through the open-ended questionnaire showed that more women used emoticons than men though the frequency of use by both men and women was low. Statistics captured on the same were as follows; 29% of men compared to 54% of women use emoticons. This was clearly depicted also in content analysis conducted in the month of February and March 2012 where only 6 (11) women compared to 1(11) used emoticons.

In addition, results from the focus group discussions featured emoticons being used mostly in one-on-one chat with friends and still it was noted that women used them more than men. From the selected responses below, emoticons are used as an alternative answer to questions, sometimes to express humour and moreover, they are mostly used by individuals who have a close relationship.

Respondent 1(F): "I use emoticons when I have no answer for the questions asked, and also when I want to express my feelings"

Respondent 2(M): "I use emoticons to express humour."

Respondent 3(F): "I use emoticons only when chatting with someone who has a close relationship with me"

Respondent 4 (M): "I use Emoticons to express my feelings when chatting with friends."

4.4.4 Managing of friends on Facebook

All the respondents both men and women had different number of friends ranging from less than a 100 to more than 1,000. Findings from the questionnaires showed that 8% of men compared to 6% of women had less than 100 friends, 75% of men compared to 61% had their friends ranging from 100-500, 4% of men compared to 21% of women had their friends ranging from 500-1,000 and 13% of men compared to 12% of woman had 1,000 and above friends on Facebook. Men therefore had highest number of their friends ranging from 100-500 while most women had the highest number of their friends ranging from 500-1000. When more information was sought on the same through online FGDs interesting findings were found. For example it was noted that women make more friends and maintain contact with them and also

they express themselves on Facebook more than men. These findings are presented below through some of the selected conversations.

Respondent (1F): “Women tend to make more friends and keep contact than men”.

Respondent (2F): “One of the reason why women have more friends than men is because they describe themselves more than men on Facebook e.g. when you look at women profiles they are completely different from that of men. As women do this, each day they get more people who would love to know them more which leads to making more friends”

In order to clarify more on the difference on the number of friends that men and women have on Facebook, an inquiry was sought to understand how men and women manage their friend requests on Facebook. Findings were then grouped into four areas; those who could only accept the friend requests of those they know, those who could check mutual friends before accepting any friend request, those who could check on the Facebook wall of those who have send friend requests before accepting them and lastly those who could accept all the friend requests without any considerations. Findings on the same showed that 50% of men compared to 45% of women accept friend requests of those they know, 9% of men compared to 12% of women could check the mutual friends before accepting their friend requests, 18% of men compared to 33% of women could check on their Facebook wall before accepting their friend requests and lastly 23% of men compared with 10% of women could accept all the friend requests without any much considerations. More men, therefore, accepted the friend requests of those they know and at the same time they could accept all the friend requests without any major consideration while

more women possibly check mutual friends and Facebook walls of those who have requested to be their friends before accepting any friend request.

Findings from the FGDs were evident on this. In fact, it was found that women check on their friends' status more than men. Some of the responses from some of the selected respondents are presented below

Respondent 1M "I do not check comments made on a post and if I have to, I check the last ten and nothing more"

Respondent 1F "I would go to the extent of looking at what pictures the person have, who are his/her friends, what past comments did he/she made and what their friends say about them"

Respondent 2F "a bigger percentage of women go through their potential friends' walls before they comment or accept a friend request. I personally cannot accept a friend request before I check their profile, know their mutual friends and check their walls as well."

4.5 Gendered use of Language on Facebook

Men and women use language differently in the various communications they make on Facebook. Findings from content analysis conducted among 22 (11 male and 11 Female) University students, depicted a clear difference on the gendered use of language. This was done through the month of February to March, 2012 and it showed differences on men and women use of language in Facebook. This was conducted by counting the number of times a specific set of words was used by men and women on the different posts and comments they made on

Facebook. These set of words were grouped into those words that could enhance relationship, support enhancing words, solution/firm words, feminine pictures and masculine pictures.

The results were then quantified and the results were as follows; 6% of men compared to 52% of women used words that could enhance relationships (such as; ‘ *I was there too but I managed through, so you will dear*’, ‘ *I did supplementary exam in that unit too, be sure you are not alone*’), 0% of men compared to 18% of women used words that enhanced support (such as; ‘ *I am sure things will be better now*’, ‘ *that must have been dramatic*’), 50% of men compared to 0% of women used solution/firm words (such as; ‘ *you should have thought about that before involving yourself in it*’, ‘ *Tokelezea Bwana*’), 6% of men compared to 30% of women used feminine pictures and 38% of men compared to 0% of women used masculine pictures in their profile pictures and also pictures they tagged on their Facebook wall.

Men in their conversations used firm and straightforward words. This was similar when they were commenting on their fellow men posts. The difference was noted on the comments men made on women posts as they used words that were supportive and those enhancing relationships. This difference is clearly captured on some of the sampled responses on some of the comments a man was making on some of the posted pictures by their fellow men and a different one by a woman.

Respondent A (M) to B (M): *Waw! its spectacular*

A (M) to C (F): Waw! Beautiful and wonderful

From the findings noted above, more women than men used relationship building words and words that enhanced support on their posts and comments they made in Facebook. While more

men than women used solution/ firm words in their posts and comments they made on Facebook. On the profile pictures used more women were inclined to use of feminine pictures with none using masculine pictures while more men on the hand used masculine pictures and still some of them could utilize feminine pictures.

4.6 Gendered Socialization

Results from the content analysis and FGDs conducted depicted gendered socialization on how men and women communicate in Facebook. Under gendered socialization the following sub themes are discussed; religious environment, masculinity and femininity.

4.6.1 Religious Environment

The sampled private University is a Christian based institution whose aim is to encourage their students and staff to emulate Jesus Christ in behaviour, lifestyle and speech. The students' respondents were exposed and nurtured in a Christian based environment. In the findings from the open ended questionnaire, FGDs and content analysis, it was clear that the gendered socialization through the environment at which the students are exposed to influence the way men and women communicate and use Facebook. For example, in responses from the open ended questionnaire it was noted from the respondents that anything that is not Godly was not to be posted in Facebook, this include nude photographs, pornographic materials, use of vulgar language etc. Findings from the content analysis also depicted the dominance of religious words. Some of the sampled religious words from the comments and posts made on Facebook were as follows *'be still and know that He is God'*, *Our Identity always refers back to God'*, *'Dear brethrens, there are six things that the Lord hates: Proverbs 6:15 '*, *'it is by the grace of God that I have managed this far'*, *God will never let me down'*. However, difference between men and women use of religious words was also noted with women using them more than men.

4.6.2 Masculinity and Femininity

The findings from content analysis conducted showed the use of masculine pictures by men and feminine pictures by women on the Facebook wall. As captured in the preceding section 30% of women compared to 6% of women used feminine pictures while 38% of men compared to 0% of women used feminine pictures. Feminine pictures were grouped into pictures of women, flowers, food, pictures of dolls. The tagged pictures by women also were counted and grouped accordingly. Masculine pictures on the other hand comprised of pictures of men, football jerseys. Despite this difference some men used some feminine pictures and at times could tag some of the feminine pictures. However sampled responses from the FGDs below showed that an individual would use a particular profile picture because there is a reason behind it and more so it depends with the relationship they have with the particular person.

Participant 1F- the use of a particular profile picture depends on the relationship I have with that particular person for example I can use my brothers pictures instead of my own personal picture.

Participant 1M- I would prefer if one could use their close friends' pictures but avoid pretending to be the owners of the picture

4.7 Discussion of Findings

This study explored the differences and similarities of perceptions of men and women towards use of Facebook and the gendered use of language in Facebook communications. This section presents a discussion of the findings as discussed in this chapter.

From the findings, it emerged that the same percentage of men and women could access internet daily though it was said to be determined by three main factors. These included: The

availability of the internet network, if one was free and lastly if there was need to access internet at that particular moment. However, the findings also revealed that more women accessed Facebook daily than men, though more men than women accessed Facebook weekly but with a slight margin. This is a major finding with regard to gender and media access, because previous studies carried out on Gender and mass media access (Mukhongo 2006; Wajcman 1991), revealed that more men than women had access to Mass media in Kenya. For instance, Wajcman, 1991 argued that the history of media use and access has shown that men not only have early access to technology but have also tended to use and appropriate it more than women. However, in this study it was noted that both men and women did not have much differences with regard to access to Facebook. Therefore, findings from this study set a new benchmark with regard to gender and social media access.

However, a slight difference was noticed with regard to technological devices used to access Facebook. The mobile phone was identified as the commonly used technological device used to access Facebook accounts both by men and women, though more men used it than women. Therefore, as noted before, while more women accessed the internet on a weekly basis, more men accessed it on their phone. A major point to note here then is that access of internet on a phone is closely linked to the type of phone, which is often a more advanced and more costly phone in terms of price. Therefore, the element of access to technology in the form of cell phones is still dominated by more men than women. The high level of usage of cell phones to access the internet was because it is readily available and portable than computers. The desktop computers were second and lastly the laptop computers.

When the question of Facebook account was raised, the findings revealed that only 7 respondents out of 70 who filled the open ended questionnaire did not have a Facebook

account. A key indicator here being that a majority of young people in colleges and Universities have a Facebook account and therefore, as researchers, we cannot afford to ignore Facebook as a form of communication for young people. In addition, both men and women also had different motivational factors to joining Facebook. More men indicated that they were motivated by their friends while more women than men were motivated by the need for socialization and networking through Facebook. This was then noted on how men and women used Facebook with women specializing more on socialization and networking than men. This supports the idea that societal norms socialise women to enhance relationships while men are socialized to be firm, independent and focused. These norms therefore seem to have played a role on the level of Facebook access and also on the motivations to join Facebook.

This study found that men and women also used language differently in Facebook which supports the idea of Genderlect theory which argues that men and women when they speak what is considered the same language used it in systematically different ways. It was noted that women used more of supportive and relationship building words and men used more of firm and strait forward words. This idea supports the Genderlect theory which believes that women use words that stress connection and intimacy and men on the other hand use words that stress status and independence. All these differences are as a result of gendered socialization through culture which can be enhanced through the day to day communications with different people and the different environments we are exposed to. Another important finding that came up with regard to language use was the use of silence in communication. For instance, it is easier to know when women have logged into Facebook because they will post or comment on a post. However, it was revealed that more men will log into Facebook but will simply read the posts and comments but will not post or comment on a post. However, this can be explained in

relation to the concept of self-preservation. Men prefer not to “expose/reveal” themselves and their activities on Facebook as a way of maintaining a certain aspect of independence and control over their lives and what they engage in. For them, it is a way of editing their public profile with regard to what is available for people to know and what is kept in their private spaces. This is with relation to the genderlect theory which notes that men stress on independence in the process of communication, and therefore, by choosing to “gaze” at the sites and not participate, they retain their personal autonomy/independence. Men and women perceptions on the usage of Facebook were noted to be influenced by the gendered socialization through the environment men and women were exposed to. In this case the respondents were exposed to a Christian environment and this influenced their perceptions. Use of religious words therefore was dominant in both men and women posts and comments on Facebook.

The frequency at which men and women posted and commented on Facebook was high among women than men. It was also noted that women could express themselves more than men on Facebook. As a result, this is said to be one of the reasons why women had more friends than men on Facebook. In the day to day communications women communications are fostered towards enhancing relationships, and this was the case also with their communications through Facebook.

On the profile pictures used in Facebook, women used more of feminine pictures while men used masculine pictures with a few of them using feminine pictures. This supports the idea of Wood (2007) that men and women portray their identities according to the different groups of speech communities we identify ourselves with. Some male respondents therefore in this study identified themselves with the feminine speech communities and this led to the use of Feminine pictures.

4.8 Conclusion

This Chapter therefore provided a summary of the key findings grouped into various themes such as the level of access of internet and Facebook, motivational factors to joining Facebook, perception of Facebook usage, utilization of Facebook, gendered use of language in Facebook and gendered socialization in Facebook usage. The next chapter therefore will provide a summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

Men and women share some similarities and still perceive and utilize Facebook differently. This has been enhanced by the manifestation of gendered socialization through the environment different individuals are exposed to, society socialization and through the day to day communications with different people. This study was conducted in one private University which is a Christian based institution. Every member in this University therefore is encouraged to emulate Jesus Christ in behaviour, lifestyle and speech. The Christian environment of the institution influenced the way men and women used Facebook in their day to day communications.

This Chapter provides a summary of the findings discussed as per the key themes from the research questions. This includes a discussion on the overview of the aim of the study, discussion on the influence of the socially constructed norms, men and women perceptions on the use of Facebook and Facebook utilization by men and women.

5.1 Overview of the of the Study

This research aimed to explore gender perceptions and utilization of Facebook among University students. This was conducted by first exploring literature and studies surrounding the area of media and communication that helped in identifying the gap of the study. A population was identified and multiple sampling techniques employed to sample the respondents for the study. A pilot study was then conducted with a different population to check on the tools selected for collecting data. Data collection was done in three months and

later data was analysed using thematic analysis and content analysis and the results presented in the previous chapter.

In normal human communications as discussed by Wood (2007), some of the socially constructed norms in men and women conversations are as follows. To start with, women are socialized to be loving, caring and smart. The socially constructed norms surrounding their conversations include their regard of communications as a primary way to establish and maintain relationships, establish equality among people by matching experiences to indicate that they are not alone in what they are going through, show support for others by expressing understanding and sympathy with situations of other people and seeking understanding of feelings and perceptions surrounding the subject of talk by asking many questions.

Men on the other hand are socialized to display their strength and independence through the use of gendered language. The socially constructed norms surrounding their communications include their regard of talk as a way to achieve tangible goals, exercise control, safeguard their independence, enhance status, establish status of control by exerting ideas and authority, challenging others by showing instrumentality through problem solving efforts to get information, discover facts and suggest solutions and speaking in general terms that are removed from concrete experiences and distanced from personal feelings (Wood, 2007).

The study was conducted in a Christian based institution. Christians base their guidance and beliefs in the bible. Some verses in the bible guide on how one should live as a Christian. For example in the book of Ephesians 5:1 Christians are urged to live in the light. It says;

Since you are God's dear Children you must try to be like him, your life must be controlled by love, just as Christ loved us and gave his life for us as a sweet smelling offering and sacrifice

that pleases God. Since you are God's people, it is not right that any matters of sexual immorality or indecency or greed should even be mentioned among you. Nor is it fitting for you to use language which is obscene, profane or vulgar, Rather you should give thanks to God. You may be sure that no one who is immoral, indecent or greedy will ever receive a share in the kingdom of Christ and of God, (Good News Bible)

This study set out to examine the differences and similarities between men and women perceptions and language use on Facebook, and how gendered socialization through the day to day communications in the different environments the respondents are exposed to is manifested in their language use on Facebook. Specifically, the study aimed to answer the following questions: How the socially constructed norms affect the perceptions of Facebook use by men and women, how the norms affect the way men and women communicate through Facebook and what is the nature of influence of gendered use of language on Facebook communication by men and women.

This inquiry employed a case study design to investigate Facebook usage among students in a Christian based private University in Kenya. A multi-stage sampling technique involving stratified and purposive sampling was used to identify 70 undergraduate university students who participated in the study. A mixed method approach involving an open-ended questionnaire survey, online focus group discussions, and content analysis of selected Facebook posts were then used to generate data. The data generated from the various instruments was organized into emerging themes which enabled data triangulation. In the following sections, I will provide a summary of the key findings as presented in detail in the previous chapter.

5.2 Influence of Socially constructed Norms on Facebook Usage

In exploring the influence of the socially constructed norms on Facebook usage, the main focus was on the status updates, postings, time spend on Facebook and the profile pictures used. An open- ended questionnaire and content analysis were used to collect data on the same. The findings showed that, the socially constructed norms, preferences and the relationships with their friends influenced how men and women use Facebook.

The responses from the Open-ended questionnaire and Content analysis conducted on the postings and comments made by the respondents on their Facebook walls, showed that most of the words used were religious, and the frequency was high among women than men. The University being a Christian based institution had socialized the respondents in a Christian direction, hence had influenced what they post and comment on Facebook. As defined earlier socialization is a process through which we learn what is expected of us as a result of interpersonal encounters with other people. The Christian University sampled nature their students to embrace Christianity, through this socialization, it has influenced the way the respondents used Facebook. In addition, from the FGDs conducted it was noted that individuals post and use particular profile pictures as per their own desires and at times the comments made on some posts depends on the relationship they share with the particular person.

The Findings in this study supported Labov (1972) and Tannen (1990) ideas that men and women are engendered into different styles of communication through verbal and non-verbal communications through socialization with the gendered speech communities. It was found that men and women also have been socially engendered into different styles of communication in online communications in this instance through Facebook.

The gendered communication styles on Facebook were grouped into masculine and feminine speech. As discussed above one of the socially constructed norm of the feminine speech communities is that they tend to regard communications as a primary way to establish relationships through engaging in conversations to share themselves and to learn about others. From the content analysis conducted in this study, women respondents' posts and comments in Facebook depicted enhancement of relationships and support. Women also through the focus group discussion and open-ended questionnaire results were found to engage in several activities to learn others in the process of building relationships. It was discovered that Women log into Facebook to check on what has been posted by their friends on Facebook wall and also before accepting any friend requests they would first check on the Facebook wall and mutual friends of their prospective friends.

Men on the other engaged in masculine communication styles. The socially constructed norms of Men's conversations discussed above showed that Men have three features in their communications, first is their effort to establish status and control, second is the use of speech to establish instrumental objectives and lastly they speak in general terms that are removed from concrete experience and distanced from personal feelings. These socially constructed norms were depicted on what men posted and commented on Facebook. Despite the fact that men made posts on personal information, they were distanced from their personal feelings.

Society beliefs and several studies captured earlier in chapter two argued that men engage in computer games more than women. Wood (2007) also comments on the same idea on how boys and girls are socialized in the society discussed in the background statement. Women respondents in this study posted and commented more on games than men. This difference

shows that the perception of games as dominated by men than women might be slowly changing with women using Facebook to post and comment on games more than men.

However, from the findings discussed earlier men used firm/ solution giving words and also employed masculine profile pictures. Despite this some men respondents still used words that enhance relationship building and at times some used Feminine profile pictures. This therefore shows that men and women having been socialized into the different speech communities through the day to day interactions with friends, parents, and the community in general plus their own interests and needs has influenced the way they communicate on Facebook.

5.3 Gendered Perception on Facebook Usage

The gendered perceptions of men and women on what Facebook is, has influenced how they use Facebook. Gender as defined by Wood (2007) is a social symbolic construction that varies across cultures over time within a given culture over the course of individuals' lifespan and in relation to the other gender. The way men and women have been engendered in the society has changed their perceptions on what Facebook is. It was found that the respondents used Facebook for different purposes which included socialization, politics, business, relationships, religion etc.

From the results collected through the open-ended questionnaires it was found that each participant perceived Facebook differently and this influenced how they used it. This however was found to be changing with time as the individual gets more exposure in Facebook. For example men and women joined Facebook because of one particular reason but this could change after some time and some at times end up quitting Facebook. For example, at the start of the data collection stage four respondents said they had quit Facebook because what they

perceived it to be at first, had changed and they did not like it. In addition, from some of the results from the focus group discussions, some of the respondents said that after some time what they had perceived about Facebook had changed and because they did not want to quit Facebook they had to hide some of their personal information from being public. Currently, some individuals, who had perceived it as a medium of socialization, have gradually come to view it as a business opportunity. Therefore, there were cases where they embraced it as a marketing tool and used to promote their ideas. While others quit or hide key information about themselves, others use to look for jobs and internships. Therefore, their perceptions of Facebook change over time. Consequently, perceptual process therefore is said to be creative and interpretive where people add and subtract from stimuli in which they are exposed to.

From the results collected through the open-ended questionnaires and content analysis it was found that men and women perceived Facebook differently. Most of the women respondents perceived Facebook as a tool for socialization and making more friends, encouraging different people through bible verses and for updates on how their friends are fairing on. Men respondents on the other hand perceived Facebook as a political and business tool.

5.4 Facebook Utilization by men and women

Men and women use Facebook differently, results from the open-ended questionnaire showed that men embraced Facebook earlier before women. Among the 70 respondents who participated in the study most men joined Facebook in 2008 and most women joined Facebook in 2009. To add on the devise they use to access Facebook mobile phone was the most used devise used to access Facebook as it was said to be more accessible and portable than desktop computers and laptops. This was followed by the use of a desktop computer as the second

device either from the computer lab in the university, cyber cafe or personal. Laptops was also being used by the respondents, the difference is that women used them more than men.

From the findings collected through the open-ended questionnaires, content analysis and focus group discussions, women used Facebook more than men. This was seen on the posts they made on their Facebook wall as they were more than what men could post. Though it was identified that some people log in into Facebook but they do not necessarily post anything or do anything that will show that they logged into their Facebook wall, both men and women log in to their Facebook walls but women will do a lot of activities like posting, tagging pictures, change status and also make comments on their friends posts which was found to be low among men.

It was also found that women spend more time on Facebook than men which was said to be dependent on whether one was free or not. The respondents spend a lot of time on Facebook when they resumed back to session. This was distinguished by the number of posts and comments they made per day, but this slowly reduced as the semester progressed towards the examination period. More research therefore should be conducted to determine the frequency at which students' access Facebook during examination days.

5.5 Gendered use of language in Facebook Communications

Content analysis conducted on the respondents' postings and comments on their Facebook wall showed that both men and women used words such as sweet, adorable and divine more than men but the difference was noted when men made comments on their fellow men posts or tagged pictures where they utilized more straightforward and bold language or words. They

only used these words when they made comments on women posts. Both men and women respondents used religious words; however this was utilized by more women than men.

In addition, women are believed to express emotions and more extensive use of details in their speech which was found to apply in their communications with both men and women. While men are believed to use bold, straightforward speech, at times they also used emotional and supportive language as they commented on women posts depending on the issue they were addressing. When commenting on Facebook posts of their fellow men, such language was used but it was distanced from their personal feelings.

5.6 Conclusion

Social media is a global medium of communication used mostly by the young people. This has been enhanced through the use of mobile phone as a modern form of technology. This study therefore found that men and women perceive and utilize social media differently and it has been enhanced by gendered socialization through the day to day communications in the various environments' we are exposed to. In addition the language used in social media communications is similar to what is used on face to face communications. It is hoped therefore that the study will add more knowledge on the field of study and also as a basis of knowledge to individuals and organizations utilizing social media in their communications.

This chapter provided an overview of the study and a summary of the key findings in the study which were grouped into; the influence of the socially constructed on Facebook usage, gendered perceptions on Facebook usage and Facebook utilization by men and women.

5.7 Recommendations of the study

First, social media is a global media of communication attracting various individuals who are utilizing it for various purposes. This study therefore recommends that these individuals should first understand how men and women perceive and use social media so that they can restructure their information for successful communications.

Secondly, this study was conducted in a Christian based University, further research should be conducted in a different University with an environment that may not be clearly defined in order to address the differences they might have as compared to a Christian based private University.

Lastly, more research should also be conducted to determine the extent to which Facebook is being used in addressing politics, business and crisis management and the level of its effectiveness in the society. In addition the language used in various communications should be analyzed in detailed to find clearly identify the extent to which it is addressing how men and women perceive and utilize Facebook.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: CLEARANCE LETTER FROM THE SCHOOL



MOI UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
DEANS OFFICE

P.O. Box 3900
ELDORET
KENYA.

Fax 254-053-43153/43620 Ext.434

REF: MU/SHRD/PG/77

9th September, 2011


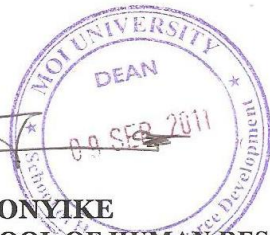
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: RUTH KENDAGOR - SHRD/PGC/45/10

The above named is an Mphil. student at Moi University, School of Human Resource Development, Department of Communication Studies.

It is a requirement of her Mphil. studies that she conducts a research and produces a Thesis. The topic of her Thesis is ***“Gender Perception and Utilization of Face Book by University Student in One University in Kenya”***.

Any assistance accorded to her will be highly appreciated.



DR. J. KWONYIKE
DEAN, SCHOOL OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

APPENDIX II: RESEACH AUTHORIZATION LETTER

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Telegrams: "SCIENCETECH", Nairobi
Telephone: 254-020-241349, 2213102
254-020-310571, 2213123.
Fax: 254-020-2213215, 318245, 318249
When replying please quote

P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA
Website: www.ncst.go.ke

Our Ref:

Date:

NCST/RRI/12/1/SS-011/1329/4

27th September, 2011

Ruth Kendagor
Moi University
P. O. Box 3900
ELDORET

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on "*Gender perception and utilization of facebook by students in one university in Kenya*" I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in Nairobi Province for a period ending 31st December 2012.

You are advised to report to the Vice Chancellor, University of Nairobi before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit one hard copy and one soft copy of the research report/thesis to our office.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. N. Nyakundi'.

P. N. NYAKUNDI
FOR: SECRETARY/CEO

Copy to:

The Vice Chancellor
University of Nairobi
P. O. Box 30197
NAIROBI

APPENDIX III: RESEACH AUTHORIZATION CARD

PAGE 2

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:

Prof./Dr./Mr./Mrs./Miss..... RUTH KENDAGOR

of (Address) MOI UNIVERSITY
P.O BOX 3900, ELDORET

has been permitted to conduct research in

.....Location,

..... NAIROBIDistrict,

..... NAIROBIProvince,

on the topic GENDER PERCEPTION AND
UTILIZATION OF FACEBOOK BY

STUDENTS IN ONE UNIVERSITY
IN KENYA .

for a period ending 31st DECEMBER, 20 12

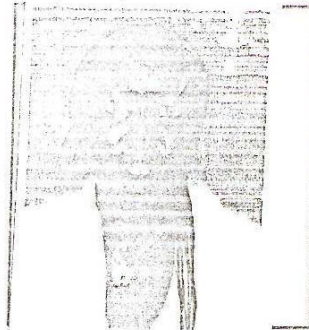
PAGE 3

NCST/RRI/12/1/SS011/1329

Research Permit No.....

Date of issue... 27th SEPTEMBER 2011

Fee received..... KSHS. 1000



Ruth Kendagor
Applicant's
Signature

[Signature]
Secretary
National Council for
Science and Technology

APPENDIX IV: OPEN ENDED QUESTIONNAIRE

Personal Information

Name:..... Mobile No:.....

Gender:..... Email.....

Course Year of study.....

QUESTIONS

1. How often do you have accesses to internet?
2. Do you have a Facebook account? If yes when did you open it?
3. What motivated you to join Facebook?
4. Which Technological Devises do you use to access your Facebook Account?
5. How often do you access it?
6. What do you Love about Facebook? And why
7. What do you do most in Facebook and why?
8. How often do you write on your Facebook wall?
9. What kind of issues Do you Comment in Facebook?
10. Do you use Emoticons? e.g. 😊 ❤️ 🌟
11. If yes why and how often do you use them?
12. Do you have friends in Facebook? If Yes How many?
13. How do you handle the friend requests in Facebook?
14. Do you read comments posted by your friends in Facebook? What kind of comments?

15. Do you make Comments on your friends' postings? If yes what do you consider before making any comments?
16. According to your culture or Background or society, what are some of the things you think one should not post in Facebook?
17. Are you a member of a group in Facebook? How many groups?
18. What motivated you to join the groups?
19. What type of profile pictures do you use in Facebook and why?
20. Do you tag some of your photos? What is your take on the comments made on the same?
21. Do you find any Difference as you communicate with men and women in Facebook? If yes in which way do you experience that?
22. What don't you love about Facebook?
23. Is there anything you think if improved on you may enjoy using Facebook more?

APPENDIX V: CONTENT ANALYSIS GUIDE

Content analysis in this research focused on the following;

1. The respondents profile pictures
2. Their postings in Facebook
3. Their responses to postings in Facebook
4. The tags and comments made on them
5. The emoticons they use

APPENDIX VI: INFORMED CONSENT FORM



Informed Consent for University students, whom I am inviting to participate in the research project titled **“Gender perception and Utilization of Facebook by students in one private University in Kenya.”**

Principal Researcher: Ms. Ruth Kendagor

Moi University

Department of Communication Studies

This Informed Consent Form has two parts:

- **Information Sheet (to share information about the study with you)**
- **Certificate of Consent (for signatures if you choose to participate)**

PART I: INFORMATION SHEET

Introduction

I am Kendagor Ruth from Moi University undertaking a research on Gender perception and Utilization of Facebook by Students in one private University in Kenya. I am going to give you information and invite you to be part of this research. You do not have to decide today whether or not you will participate in this research. Before you decide, you can talk to anyone you feel comfortable with about the research.

Purpose of the Study

The aim of this study is to explore the differences and similarities male and female university students have on how they perceive and utilize Facebook with the aim of adding knowledge to the field of communication and media and proposing ways in which organizations can communicate best to their clients.

Participant selection

You are among the 24 respondents who have been selected to participate in this study because I feel that your experience in the use of Facebook may provide me with information that will be useful in generating an understanding gender perception and how they utilize Facebook. During the course of study, you may be asked to participate either in the interview or focus group discussion.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. It is your choice whether to participate or not.

Procedures

I am asking you to help me to understand the similarities and differences of male and female perception and how they utilize Facebook. If you choose to participate in this study, I do request you to be my friend in Facebook as my first instrument I will use to collect my data is content analysis which entails monitoring your day to day postings and activities on Facebook. Which will thereafter be followed by a focus group discussions on some of the key points raised on what has been collected earlier. This will be conducted online through Facebook chat, or one on one interview.

Duration

I expect the study to take about one month. During this time, two to three weeks will be used to monitor your wall and the fourth week for a focus group discussion if I will require more information from you.

Benefits

There will be no direct benefit to you for participating in this research. I am not going to share any information that you give me today with anybody outside this research. If I choose to use the information you give me today in my Thesis, I will not mention your name or reveal your identity in any way. The Knowledge that I will get from this research will be shared with you and your colleagues before it is made widely available to the public.

However, the kind of information you give me will help in adding knowledge to media and Communication

Sharing of Information

Right to Refuse or Withdraw

Even though you have been identified as a participant in this study, your participation is entirely voluntary. You reserve the right to decline to participate or withdraw at any stage and this study and this will not, in any way, have any negative consequences on you.

Confidentiality

As the researcher I will protect all the information about you and will not discuss any information that I learn about you with anyone outside the research. All study information will be identified only by individual participant code numbers and will be kept confidential in a locked file.

If You Have Questions

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, you may contact me

Ms. Kendagor Ruth

Department of Communication Studies,

Moi University,
P.O Box 3900,
Eldoret,
Kenya.
Cell: 0726 551 663
Email: kenruth.research@gmail.com

PART II: CERTIFICATE OF CONSENT

I have been asked to participate in a study which seeks to explore Gender perception and utilization of Facebook by University students.

I have read and clearly understood the information provided in the consent form and I am willing to participate in this research.

Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

APPENDIX VII: AUTHORITY FOR THE RELEASE OF INFORMATION

(This form will be held for a period of five (5) years)

I confirm that I have had the opportunity to read and amend the transcripts of the questionnaires, focus group discussions and content analysis conducted with me.

I agree that the edited transcripts and extracts from this may be used by the researcher, Kendagor Ruth in reports and publications arising from the research.

Signature