

**SOCIAL MEDIA USE, UNIVERSITY BRAND PERSONALITY, ATTITUDE
AND STUDENTS' BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS' TO ENROL FOR
POSTGRADUATE STUDIES IN SELECTED UNIVERSITIES IN KENYA**

BY

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MOI UNIVERSTY

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DECLARATION

Declaration by Candidate

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to the Almighty God the creator and provider of all things, the foundation of knowledge, wisdom, and understanding, to my son Philip, my lovely parents, siblings, uncle Ben Wafubwa, aunty Everlyn Nangila and the late Leah Nasaka Makhanu, Mr. & Mrs. George Wambulwa, Mr. & Mrs. Zablon Makhanu, my nieces Annet, Antonnette, Terry, my nephews Steph and Brian for their love, patience, kindness and continuous encouragement which strengthened me through the entire process of this work.

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ABSTRACT

There is an increase in interest from scholars and practitioners to understand students' behavioral intentions and how they make decisions about which university to enroll. This is due to a drop-in number of students enrolling in these institutions of higher learning. The purpose of this study was to examine how social media, brand personality and attitude affects students' behavioral intentions to enroll in universities for postgraduate studies. Specific objectives were to examine the effect of; social media, brand personality and attitude on students' behavioral intentions to enroll, to determine the effect of social media on brand personality, the mediating effect of brand personality on the relationship between social media and students' behavioral intentions, the moderating effect of attitude on the relationship between; social media and brand personality, social media and students' behavioral intentions, brand personality and students' behavioral intentions. Finally, the study sought to determine the moderating effect of attitude on the strength of the indirect relationship between social media and students' behavioral intentions via brand personality. The study was guided by the Theory of Planned Behavior, Technology Acceptance Model and Self Congruity Theory. Positivism research philosophy and explanatory research design were adopted, employing Multistage, simple random and systematic sampling techniques in collecting data from a sample size of 504 undergraduate finalist students in universities located in Western Kenya, using a self-administered questionnaire. Cronbach alpha and factor analysis were applied to test reliability and validity of research instrument, respectively. Hierarchical and multiple regression models using Hayes Process macro were used to analyze data obtained and to test the hypotheses. The study found that; social media ($\beta = .40, p = .00, R^2 = .25, \Delta R^2 = .20$), brand personality ($\beta = .25, p = .00, R^2 = .31, \Delta R^2 = .06$) and attitude ($\beta = .09, p = .04, R^2 = .32, \Delta R^2 = .006$) positively and significantly affects students' behavioral intentions. In addition, results show that social media directly influences brand personality ($\beta = .36, p = .00, R^2 = .22, \Delta R^2 = .13$), brand personality mediates the relationship between social media and students' behavioral intentions ($\beta = .11, CI = .06, .15$), attitude moderates the link between; social media and students' behavioral intentions ($\beta = -.16, p = .003, R^2 = .34$) and university brand personality and students' behavioral intentions ($\beta = .13, p = .007$). Finally, attitude was found to moderate the strength of the indirect relationship between social media and students' behavioral intentions via university brand personality, and the conditional indirect effect is much stronger at higher levels of attitude ($\beta = .11, CI = .06, .18$). The study contributes to knowledge by revealing a complimentary mediation and that brand personality mediates the relationship between social media and students' behavioral intentions. Additional contribution to knowledge is evident in the moderation model of attitude between the variables of the study. Finally, the study brings new insights that attitude moderates the indirect links between social media and students' behavioral intentions, thus, provides greater predictive power than when testing the direct, mediating, and moderating effects alone. University management and policy makers should therefore develop effective strategies, policies and techniques that attract potential students through unique university brand personality dimensions and social media platforms. This will help students and universities to reach out to one another in an easier and quicker way. The study used quantitative data; future studies may consider using mixed approaches as these may uncover other issues which could affect the behavioral intentions of students to enroll in higher learning institutions in general.

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OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

- Attitude** is about a person's continued evaluations, feelings, liking or disliking of a particular product, person or entity (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975).
- Brand Personality** It is the human characteristics that consumers associate with the brand (Aaker, 1997).
- Social Media** Use is defined as online use of applications and platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram which aim to facilitate interactions, collaborations and sharing of content, thus it is an important medium to socialize (Richter & Koch, 2007).
- Students Behavioral Intention** is a student's perceived likelihood or subjective probability that he or she will engage in a given behavior-for this case- Enrollment (Ajzen, 1991)
- University Brand Image** it is a symbolic construct created in students' minds, consisting of all expectations and information associated with university services and products, including functional, symbolic and experiential benefits (Chen, 2015).
- University Brand Personality** - refers to the extent to which students consider the personality traits of the university in terms of being friendly, stable, practical, and warmth (Balaji *et al.*, 2016).

ABBREVIATIONS

CUE	Commission for University Education
JKUAT	Jommo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology
KNBS	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
KUCCPS	Kenya Universities and Colleges Central Placement Service
MMUST	Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation
RWOL	Results from Data with Outliers
RWOTL	Results from Data without Outliers
SBI	Students' Behavioral Intentions to Enroll
TAM	Technology Acceptance Model
TPB	Theory of Planned Behavior
TRA	Theory of Reasoned Action
UoE	University of Eldoret
UoN	University of Nairobi

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

This chapter sets out the background to the study, the problem statement, the objectives of the study, the hypotheses, significance of the study and the scope of the study.

1.1 Background to the Study

In today's competitive market situation, marketers and organizations have engaged in a cutthroat competition in scrambling for customers for their survival in the market, thus consumer's behavioral intention has been at the center of every managers' mind in devising new marketing strategies that would outperform competitors. New marketing techniques, such as mobile social media marketing (Wong *et al.*, 2020) and the use of emojis as an emerging communication language form that is increasingly being used across platforms and cultures to convey persuasive messages to customers (Ge & Gretzel, 2018). All these are being used by organizations to position themselves in the mind of customers to influence their buying behavioral intentions. There is marketing to gain attention and increase the buying intention of customers towards the firm's offerings (Rind *et al.*, 2015). This has not been exceptional to institutions of higher learning, especially the universities (Hemsley & Goonawardana, 2007; Solikhah *et al.*, 2016).

According to the Theory of planned behavior, intention refers to a person's action towards certain behavior (Teo & Chwee, 2010). This argument is based on Ajzen (1991) who points out that a person's action is determined by his behavioral intentions, which are influenced by an attitude toward the behavior and subjective norms. Van and Wooldridge (2007) define behavioral intention as the likelihood to act in order to

achieve meaningful objectives to satisfy ones' needs and wants which can only be abandoned if a person believes that the intention has either been achieved or is unachievable.

From a global perspective, studies in different contexts have shown that behavioral intentions are the best predictors of actual behavior. For example, Al-Emran *et al.*, (2020)'s study in the United Arab Emirates of continuous intention to use m-learning found that perceived ease of use, attitude, perceived behavioral control, and subjective norms are significant predictors of the continued use of m-learning. In addition, a study in the United States of America by Kalnicky *et al.*, (2019) on predictors of participation in invasive species control activities found that the intention to participate in future control efforts was best predicted by attitudes towards practices. This is also confirmed by a study in Taiwan by Teng *et al.*, (2018) on consumer behavioral intentions towards green hotels, which indicated that the intention to display a certain behavior (to stay in green hotels) depends on the attitude towards that behavior.

Idinga (2015), state that the intention captures the motivational factors influencing behavior so that people are willing to engage in a certain behavior before they perform. From the Theory of planned behavior, a consumers' behavior is as a result of ones' intention to perform such an act, while the willingness or unwillingness to perform or act is as a result of the attitude towards a behavior (favorable or unfavorable assessment), subjective norms (perceived social pressure) and perceived behavioral control (a person's perception of easy or difficulty in doing the behavior, Ajzen 1991).

Several studies in consumer behavior (Al-Emran *et al.*, 2020; Cheng & Chu, 2014; Idinga, 2015; Miller, 2017) have proved Ajzen's theory and the interrelationships between behavioral intentions and actual behavior which is positively influenced by

attitudes towards behavior, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control through direct models. Most of these studies have looked at the direct effect of student personality, motivation, satisfaction, loyalty, university naming on preferences, credibility, image and enrollment intention (Guido *et al.*, 2009; Solikhah *et al.*, 2016), factors influencing enrollment in higher education (Bolin, 2014; Daud *et al.*, 2012; Eidimtas & Juceviciene, 2014; Migin *et al.*, 2015), choice behavior for higher education (Padlee *et al.*, 2010), and the use of Facebook in influencing student intentions to enroll for foreign degree programs (Idomi *et al.*, 2017). Idinga (2015) argues that higher learning institutions are becoming more market oriented, they require research based tested models to give information on how students (customers) make decisions on their carrier progression which is the essence of this study.

With the emergent of the Internet students use social media networks sites when searching for information about programs, universities, and also to check comments from graduates (alumni) who have attended a university of interest (Gray *et al.*, 2003). Eder *et al.*, (2010), postulates that the use of social network sites such as Instagram, Facebook, university webs, blogs, and YouTube has replaced the traditional way of interactions and communication, and that it seems to be the most common medium to inform oneself not only about the general issues in the world but also concerning education. This has enabled students and universities in reaching out to each other in a better and quicker way (Bonilla, 2021). This is also supported by studies done by Trusov *et al.*, (2009) and Bong (2017) on social media and traditional marketing communications which indicates that the former has a higher persuasion or influence on members purchasing behavioral intention than the later.

Rauschnabel *et al.*, (2016), argues that the increased competition between universities for limited number of students who qualify for higher learning has heightened the need for institutions to understand, manage, and leverage a strong brand position, hence the application of common marketing techniques like building strong brand image components like personality are a must for them to compete effectively (Chapleo, 2011, Hemsley *et al.*, 2006). Thus, universities can gain competitive advantage by improving and enhancing their brand image components as they attract and influence student behavioral enrollment intention (Alavijeh *et al.*, 2014).

According to Pinna *et al.*, (2018), and Japutra *et al.*, (2021) the more attractive an individual perceives an organization's personality; the stronger the person will want to be identified with it. As a result of increased competition (Nuseir & El Refae, 2021), universities have been pushed to brand themselves as having a set of unique and desirable attributes that appeal to potential students (Pinna *et al.*, 2018). To measure university brand image attractiveness, Sung and Yang (2008) proposes a model that with three dimensions, namely, university reputation (public perceptions of an institution shared over time by its multiple constituents), perceived external prestige (individuals belief of an institution having high esteem by outsiders) and university brand personality (assessing an university based on human characteristics or traits). The study adopted a single dimension of university image, university brand personality, which has not been extensively studied in the university context as a mediating variable based on literature (Gordon *et al.*, 2016; Ramaseshan & Stein, 2014; Zotos *et al.*, 2011).

Aaker (1997) describes brand personality as human characteristics (openness, extraversion, conscientiousness, competence) that consumers associate with the brand. Several studies have indicated that consumers can build relationships with brands /

institutions in almost the same way they build relationships with one another in a social context (Bouhleb *et al.*, 2011; Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006; McAlexander *et al.*, 2002; Thomson *et al.*, 2005). Brand personality can be used to differentiate and create competitive advantage in the consumer's minds for brands that are indistinguishable from their competitors (Freling & Forbes, 2005).

Additionally, Bouhleb *et al.* (2011) argues that brand personality is an inanimate object correlated with a personality line arising from experiences with or through marketing communication between the consumer and the brand. The authors assert that a well-established brand personality influences consumer's buying behavioral intention, preference, patronage, develops stronger emotional ties, trust, and attachment with the brand. Studies done by Fournier (1998), Kapferer (2012) and Lin (2010) all indicate that brand personality plays an important role in generating consumers' buying behavioral intention, engagement with the brand, helps to create, develop and maintain strong brands.

According to Balaji *et al.*, (2016) university personality refers to the extent in which students feel that the personality traits of the university are friendly, stable, realistic and warm. It is also based on the assumption that individuals prefer products or brands that adhere to their own philosophy (Usakli & Baloglu, 2011). A study by Sampaio *et al.*, (2012) suggest that the positive contact of students with academic and administrative staff leads to the creation of a particular university brand personality. Likewise, universities can also build brand personalities indirectly through logos, prospectus, culture, history, architecture and locations that have an effect on the behavioral intentions of both current and prospective students (Melewar & Akel, 2005). In conclusion, Sung and Yang (2008) asserts that when students view the university's

personality as favorable or congruent, a significant positive attitude towards university associations is more likely to develop.

Student attitude was used as a moderator in this study, based on the Theory of Planned Behavior, because it plays an important role in consumer buying decisions. Attitude is described as psychological emotion and favorable or unfavorable assessment that occurs when an individual engages in certain behaviors (Chen & Tung, 2014). Thus, the interaction of students on social media platforms influences university brand personality which in turn affects prospective students' attitude that can either strengthen or weaken their intentions to enroll to a specific institution for postgraduate program. The choice of attitude as a moderator is also based on literature (Bilal & Idrees, 2017; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Kanouse, 1984).

According to Teferra and Altbachl (2004), African governments declared the twenty-first century as a knowledge era which plays a greater role in socio-economic development of a country. The establishment and advancement of university education in Kenya began in 1961, when the then Royal College, Nairobi, became a university college under a special arrangement with the University of London (Mulinge & Arasa, 2017; Oketch, 2003). It was, however, until 1970 that the University College of Nairobi was given university status.

Bailey *et al.*, (2007) and Nyangau (2014) posts that Kenya has experienced massive growth in university education. By the year 2013 Kenya had witnessed the number of universities raised from only one to 22 fully-fledged universities after the government, to meet the rising demand for university education, upgraded 15 University Colleges into fully-fledged universities (Mulinge & Arasa, 2017). Today, Kenya has a total number of 31 fully-fledged Chartered Public Universities and 6 Public University

Constituent Colleges. Garissa University is the newest of the fully-fledged Universities having been chartered in 2017 (CUE, 2017).

Mulinge and Arasa (2017) reveals that the Kenya Government sees the country's future as a prosperous and internationally competitive nation to be dependent on the university education system hence recognizes that education and training of all Kenyans is fundamental for socio-economic development. It is on this basis that the purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of social media, brand personality and attitudes on students' behavioral intentions of enrolling in postgraduate studies in the Republic of Kenya.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

Students' behavioral intentions to enroll for postgraduate studies is not only important for universities but to the nation at large. This is because university education has been identified as the most essential component in the socio-economic development of any country as it plays a greater role by training skilled manpower, producing and disseminating the knowledge required for a knowledge-driven economy (Bailey *et al.*, 2013; Nyangau, 2014). It is on the basis of such convictions about and anticipations on university education that many Governments have labored over the years to improve access, quality and relevance of university education of which Kenya is not exceptional (Mulinge & Arasa, 2017).

However, universities are confronted with growing and complicated challenges which require a broader understanding of the information sources that potential students use in order to enroll for postgraduate studies (Simões & Soares, 2010). In Kenya, a report from the Commission of University Education published in 2018 (KNBS, 2018) indicates that postgraduate enrollment in Kenyan universities has dropped by more than

a half (51.07%), piling more pressure on institutions struggling with strained cash flows due to a dip in Privately Sponsored Students Programs (PSSP) and Government funding. According to the released statistics, Maseno University, University of Nairobi, and Moi University postgraduate enrollment dropped with 94.1%, 37.8% and 11.2% respectively (summary in Appendix 2).

Increasingly, statistics have shown that students are becoming extremely critical and analytical when choosing their educational institutions (María *et al.*, 2006). Students are now more cautious in their selection of universities (Nuseir & El Refae, 2021). Faced with heightened consumer sophistication, Hassan and Sheriff (2006) points out that higher learning institutions are faced with challenges of increasing their student enrollment to break-even and sustain their market share.

The existing literature tends to focus on direct effects of factors influencing students' decision to enroll in particular higher education institution of choice (Eidimtas & Juceviciene, 2014; Ismail *et al.*, 2007; Nuseir & El Refae, 2021; Sia, 2013), the influence of social media marketing strategies on student study selection and university choice (Constantinides & Stagno, 2013), the role of Facebook in determining student intentions to enroll for foreign degree programs (Idomi *et al.*, 2017), the impact of students personality, motivation, brand image, and environment on students' intention in choosing university (Solikhah *et al.*, 2016), the role of student satisfaction and loyalty on intention to return to the specific university (Myslivec, 2016), the influence of communication strategies on enhancement of student enrollment (Odero, 2012), and the impact of brand personality on student enrollment intentions: the mediating role of brand engagement (Banahene *et al.*, 2018).

Tests for mediation and moderation conducted separately have dominated the research field; very few marketing studies have employed methods to test for moderated mediation effects. These models provide robust and precise results to the extent that they simultaneously include the different effects, providing an overall vision of the process studied (Borau *et al.*, 2015). It is in response to this perplexing scenario, that this study adopted the use of a moderated mediation model to fill this gap by investigating the effect of social media use, university brand personality and attitude on students' behavioral intentions to enroll for postgraduate studies in selected universities in the Republic of Kenya.

1.3 Research Objectives

The following were the objectives of the study:

1.3.1 General Objective

The main objective of this study was to examine the influence of social media use, university brand personality and attitude on students' behavioral intention to enroll in postgraduate studies in selected universities in Kenya.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

- i. To determine the effect of social media use on students' behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies.
- ii. To examine the effect of university brand personality on students' behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies.
- iii. To assess the effect of attitude on students' behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies.
- iv. To analyze the effect of social media use on university brand personality

- v. To examine the mediating effect of university brand personality on the relationship between social media use and students' behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies.
- vi. To explore the moderating effect of attitude on the relationship between social media use and university brand personality
- vii. To examine the moderating effect of attitude on the relationship between social media use and students' behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies.
- viii. To establish the moderating effect of attitude on the relationship between university brand personality and students' behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies.
- ix. To determine the moderating effect of attitude on the strength of the indirect relationship between social media use and students' behavioral intentions to enroll via university brand personality.

1.4 Research Hypotheses

H₀₁: Social media use has no significant direct effect on students' behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies.

H₀₂: University brand personality has no significant effect on students' behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies.

H₀₃: Attitude has no significant direct effect on students' behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies.

H₀₄: Social media use has no significant direct effect on university brand personality.

H₀₅: University brand personality has no mediating effect on the relationship between social media use and students' behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies.

H₀₆: Attitude has no moderating effect on the relationship between social media use and university brand personality.

H₀₇: Attitude has no moderating effect on the relationship between social media use and students' behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies.

H₀₈: Attitude has no moderating effect on the relationship between university brand personality and students' behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies.

H₀₉: Attitude has no moderating effect on the strength of the indirect relationship between social media use and students' behavioral intentions to enroll via university brand personality.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study contribute knowledge into the existing social media, brand personality, attitude, and enrollment intention marketing literature. The models, theories, research methods, approaches adopted, and findings benefits future scholars in knowledge creation and further research who would wish to investigate similar or related phenomena in this research area.

Secondly, this study informs university management, marketing firms and associations to appreciate the usefulness of social networking sites and the most relevant university brand personality attributes that can be used to attract prospective students. The results may also help the policy makers at both national and institutional levels to develop effective strategies and techniques to attract and communicate with potential students as it is not enough to merely establish connection with prospective students but also to attract their attention, participation, and to establish proactive connection with them. Having knowledge on the dimensions of university personality, managers and marketers could act upon them to attain a favorable image in the eyes of its students and other stakeholders.

Finally, the findings may benefit students in terms of universities' use of effective marketing techniques and availability of student-university communication channels. Apart from relying on traditional information sources about learning institutions, students also rely on social media sites for academic and other related information. The social media platforms act as an interacting avenue for learning and referrals; hence the aspects of brand personality are built and strengthened due to word of mouth by the experience of past satisfied students (Alumni). These interactions help students in their decision-making process on their purchase intention of the institution's programs they may want to enroll in future.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The purpose of this research was to examine the effect of social media, brand personality and attitude on students' behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies in the Republic of Kenya. The study was guided by the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Self-Congruity Theory. The study hypotheses were tested using a hierarchical and multiple regression model using Hayes (2018) model 4 for mediation and model 59 for moderation and moderated mediation hypotheses. The key respondents in this study were the undergraduate finalist students from selected public and private universities in Western Kenya Region. The institutions included University of Eldoret, Kibabii University, Mount Kenya University and Catholic University of East Africa. The study was conducted between the months of April and May 2019.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents empirical literature review that forms the basis of this study. The chapter discusses the concept of students' behavioral intention to enroll in postgraduate studies, social media, brand personality, attitude, theories guiding the study, empirical review, summary of literature, research gaps and presents a conceptual research framework which forms the basis for the research hypotheses.

2.1 The Concept of Students' Behavioral Intentions to Enroll

Behavioral intention has been widely studied in health behavior, consumer behavior and psychology. The concept originates from the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) by Fishbein & Ajzen (1975) who defined it as a measure of the strength of a person's willingness to perform a given behavior. The authors relate intention to individuals' beliefs as to what they intend to do in a given situation. According to Gibbons (2006), TRA reflects a process thought to precede all behaviors. Gibbons argues that decisions to act or not to act are the outcome of an evaluation of the probability of specific outcomes correlated with the act, as well as the subjective value assigned to such outcomes. When a positive judgement is made, a decision is taken to act and that decision is a behavioral intention which is the only proximal antecedent of behavior in the TRA and the TPB (Gibbons, 2006). The basic antecedents of behavioral intention in the TRA and TPB are social norms (what others want to do) and behavioral attitudes (an effective response to behavioral performance).

According to Ajzen, (1991) and Ajzen & Fishbein, (1977), intentions can be used to describe a self-prediction to engage in a behavior. Bae *et al.*, (2014) also points out that, once an intention is formed in a person, the actual behavior is expected. Ajzen points

out that a person's intention to perform a certain behavior is a key element, as intentions are presumed to capture the motivational factors that influence a behavior. Intentions are; therefore, measures of how hard people are willing to work and how much effort they expect to make in order to perform their behavior and it is the single best predictor of actual behavior (Bagozzi *et al.*, 1989).

The predictive validity of intentions on actual behaviors is also supported by Stage and Hossler (2000) who built their argument on behavioral intentions' model by Fishbein and Ajzen's (1975). According to the authors, the most important aspect of intention model is the psychological aspect of human agency- the person, in this case, the student exercising control over what they want to do, based on what is within their power and their capability (motivation) to try and generate course of actions to suit a given purpose which is enrollment for postgraduate studies.

This study acknowledges that students are not the sole controllers of their behaviors; they always interact with individuals in their network, family members and institutions (role of social pressures influencing motivation to perform, Fishbein & Ajzen 1975). Fishbein & Ajzen states that behavioral intentions of individuals are preceded by intentions to perform those behaviors. They further pointed out that behavioral intentions are influenced by attitude towards the behavior (beliefs of respondent about performing the act) and subjective norms concerning the behavior (social environment). The social environment may include cultural issues, finances, parents, peers, and teacher encouragement which shape the student beliefs and aspiration or intentions to seek advice, search information and enroll for the study. This is also supported by Idomi *et al.* (2017), who states that student intention to enroll can be influenced by psychological and sociological forces; which include interest, desire and willingness of an individual that has been developed due to information and experience gained through

social networking site interaction which can influence their behavior to enroll in particular institution of higher learning or program.

Ajzen & Fishbein (2010) defined behavioral intention as the strength of an individual's subjective probability that the person will perform the behavior in question. In consumer behavior, intention has been used to predict the initial stage of the consumer buying decision making process (pre-purchase). This study conceptualizes intention to enroll as the amount of effort a student is willing to exert to attain a goal (Ajzen, 1991). Thus, an increase in intentions to enroll indicates an increase in the likelihood that the student will enroll for the Postgraduate study program.

Behavioral intention has been studied as an important concept in tourism industry (Ali *et al.*, 2016; Liu *et al.*, 2017; Su & Hsu, 2013), hotel industry (Konstantinos *et al.*, 2002; Ryu *et al.*, 2008), destination (Wang & Hsu, 2010), public engagement (Kang, 2014), health care (Sweeney *et al.*, 2015), hospitality industry (Gao *et al.*, 2016), social exclusion and inclusion (Pfundmair *et al.*, 2015) transport sector (Kuo & Tang, 2013), retail industry (Ho, 2017), environment concern (Ho, 2017), and in education (Rahimizhian *et al.*, 2009).

Finally, the construct of intention to enroll has been operationalized in literature as an individual students' intention to apply, to get into and complete the program (Idinga, 2015), but it can go beyond the prospective student's intention to enroll as it may include their plan to investigate the possibility of enrollment from the institution of interest, ask others about enrollment and if they would enroll if accepted into the institution or if given financial assistance. A more comprehensive measurement on enrollment intention was proposed by Ajzen (2011) which includes; whether a student intends to enroll, plans to enroll, expects to enroll, will try to apply and enroll and is

willing to enroll. This study operationalizes intention to enroll according to Ajzen (2011) and Zehua (2014).

2.2 The Concept of Social Media Use

This competitive age has witnessed a drastic change in consumers buying process and behavior, largely due to their changing needs and wants plus the numerous new emerging ways of marketing and communication channels devised by marketers (Nuseir & El Refae, 2021; Wang *et al.*, 2012). With the advent of the internet, there is an increase in number of consumers embracing the internet, spending more time searching for information through social media platforms as well as do their shopping online (Alam & Khan, 2015). According to Neti (2011), social media is an internet-based medium for sharing and exchanging knowledge between individuals, so it is all about networking and networking in a way that fosters trust between the parties and the communities involved.

Social media is further defined by Richter and Koch (2007) as online apps and networks that seek to promote connections, collaborations and content sharing are therefore an important tool for socialization. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) define it as any form of internet-based application that creates and exchange contents that are used to generate value to members of the online community. This is also seen as web-based services that give users a chance to create a profile within a defined system in order to share a common view (Mensah & Nizam, 2016). Lastly, Neti (2011) defines social media as any website which allows user to share their content, opinions, views and encourages interaction and community building. The use of social media platforms such as Facebook, Blogs, Twitter, Myspace and LinkedIn are therefore all geared towards communicating with others (Lusk, 2010).

According to Bartosik *et al.*, (2017) the impact of information and communication technologies is now seen in almost every area of human activity, ranging from information searching, decision making-processes, buying of products and services, entertainment and professional issues in education where traditional styles and methods are no longer viable as they have been replaced with modern ones that are designed to support and facilitate timesaving, effort and costs in everyday routines. This is also seen in the work of Wang *et al.* (2012) who argue that social media websites provide a public forum which gives individual customers their own views, as well as access to product information that encourages their purchasing decisions.

Ekstam and Bjurling (2018) postulates that social media evolved in the late 1970's when the first worldwide discussion forum, Usenet, (which allowed internet users to post images), was created. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) points out that today's social media emerged when the first blog forum emerged approximately 20 years ago due to the growing availability of high-speed internet access that led to the creation of many new social networking sites, such as Facebook and Myspace in the early 2000s, which in turn coined the term social media.

The creation of social media platforms on the Internet has therefore changed the way people communicate and share information (Bong, 2017). The 21st century has witnessed the emergence of a new generation, the Millennial and the Centennial cohorts, which are powerful and sophisticated consumers who are savvy, difficult to influence, persuade, and keep (Menezes & Devi, 2016; Nanji, 2017). Bong (2017) points out that this cohort is heavily active on social media networking sites and always hungry for information a fact that has forced the entire marketing landscape of the traditional marketing to shift towards social media marketing (Erdoğan & Cicek,

2012) resulting to more businesses being active on social media compared to the past (Hainla 2017).

Gupta *et al.*, (2017) argue that the development of the internet-based economy has changed the way things are done at the marketplace. This shift requires new marketing strategies to influence the consumer decision making process towards a firm's offering. Sharma (2019), argues that the Millennial and Centennials are the kings and queens of this era. Hence, the only organization that talks their language will thrive and survive. They have broad thinking, open minds, and know when to say no and when to raise their voice for their right. According to Lin (2011), this cohort makes buying decisions with mentality of wanting to be different from others. This is a generation that worships their technology. They make all kinds of sacrifices for its sake, including money, time, effort, friends, and family. They depend on technology for their every need: food, comfort, pleasure, communication, shopping, dating, planning, reading, telling time and so on. Technology therefore reigns supreme and unquestioned in their day today lives and it is the one thing that this cohort can't do and live without, thus creating an opportunity for those who embrace the change in the marketing situation.

Bong (2017) argues that consumers look beyond pricing for the product when they are researching for it over the internet. They use social media platforms as the source to look for product information such as the brand, manufacturer background, and retailers when deciding to buy it (Ler, 2014). Bong (2017) states that behavioral buying decisions are highly influenced by the electronic word of mouth on the social media sites which gives an opportunity for businesses to influence consumers by using various methods to influence them on buying decisions.

According to Zahoor and Qureshi (2017), social media platforms have become an integral part of everyday life as approximately one-third of the world's population is using it. The sharing of information through these forums has immensely affected consumer decision making process and their buying behavior as opinion leaders can influence purchase decisions through recommendations distributed via social media (Hennig *et al.*, 2013; Labrecque *et al.*, 2013). This therefore means that it is hard for brands (institutions) to control their marketing messages within social media due to the power shift from brand to the consumer as the internet has empowered consumers through increased information access, choice and options (Labrecque *et al.*, 2013).

Evans *et al.*, (2017) argues that brands can use social media sites by engaging with their target audience, through paid advertisements or sponsored posts, brand pages and eWOM. Virtanen *et al.*, (2017) refers eWOM as any positive or negative statement made to a large number of people on the Internet by past, actual or potential customers about a brand or its goods. The authors argue that customers who are happy with a brand or product have the opportunity to spread positive eWOM to a large number of other consumers. On the other hand, a dissatisfied consumer has the same possibility to spread negative eWOM to millions of other consumers if the post goes viral.

Ekstam and Bjurling (2018) points out that social media are widespread tools for consumers to find and talk about products, brands, or service providers. This has increased active participation among users and a strong level of interconnectedness resulting to consumers having increased power and the change of their behavior in the marketplace. Thus, Jobs and Gilfoil (2014) states that it is important to incorporate social media into companies' marketing strategies in order to gain trust from consumers. Sudha and Sheena (2017) supports this argument that it is essential for a brand to know what their consumers find enjoyable, interesting and valuable in order

to develop content to fit their needs, this leads to the development of effective social media marketing strategies that have an impact on customer behavioral intentions.

Dwivedi *et al.*, (2018) argue that today, social media brands are generating favorable experiences for consumers in a technology-mediated environment that were not possible in a time without social media. Consumers are increasingly seeking favorable brand experiences across consumption domains (Brakus *et al.*, 2009), social media brands are ideally positioned to provide rich sensory, affective and cognitive experiences to their users (Dwivedi *et al.*, 2018), It is therefore based on this argument that the study sought to explore the effect of social media on students' behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies in Kenya.

Dwivedi *et al.* (2018) suggests that social media interaction plays a role in the emotional attachment of users, which contributes to the continued use of social media platforms. Several studies have observed that users of social media platforms experience diverse favorable emotions, such as enjoyment, fun and physiological arousal, when engaging with web-based technology. For example, organizational social networking sites users demonstrated positive emotional responses (happiness and comfort) when using the organization's social media websites (Koch *et al.*, 2012). Furthermore, Chiu *et al.*, (2013) reveals that users of Facebook experience pleasant emotions when in Facebook which affects user loyalty towards the platform. This is also supported by Köhl and Götzenbrucker (2014) who found that social media users tend to experience positive emotions such as warmth and coziness (comfort) when interacting with their preferred social media platforms and that these platforms allow users a form of self-expression. We can therefore agree with Oh *et al.*, (2014) that social media use has favorable psychological implications as positive emotions experienced by social media users is positively associated with perceived life satisfaction.

2.3 The Concept of Brand Personality

According to Mutinda (2016), the word brand comes from Norwegian old English word 'brandr' which means 'to burn or mark'. This practice was used and is still used by farmers to identify and differentiate their animals (Keller 2008). Decker (2016) defines a brand according to the American Marketing Association, as a name, term, design, symbol, or any other attribute that distinguishes the goods or services of one seller as distinct from those of other sellers. The author argues that the most important aspect of branding is to build product identification, allowing marketers to distinguish their products from similar products sold by competitors. Thus, to remain relevant in the minds of potential students, universities need to invest enough resources in university branding in order to differentiate themselves from competitors as this has an influence on their enrollment intention.

Mallya (2012) defines branding as the ability of an entity to align all its actions and messages with core values, the promise that it keeps to its customers and the sum of all customer experiences with it. This is supported by Whisman (2008) who points out that brand development in university context derives from the creation of corporate identity standards where institutions integrate their marketing communications by determining how best to compete in the noisy marketplace of higher education. The author argues that a well-established brand is an imaginary world-an idiosyncratic way of interpreting everything that we mentally connect to a college or university and the people that make up its culture.

The essence of brand management as an essential element of marketing strategy involves creating a brand image that engages the hearts and minds of customers which helps in differentiating similar products (Duncan 2005). Brand personality refers to a marketing strategy that portrays brands in terms of human attributes. It is a broad

concept that incorporates all the tangible and intangible aspects of the brands (Aaker 1997). It is a tool that helps customers express themselves in terms of their brand preferences and perceptions (Mutinda, 2016). Customers' preference on products increases when their personalities match with brand personality, (customers prefer products that matches with their self-image), thus, consumers choose their brands the same way that they choose their friends; in addition to their abilities and physical characteristics, they genuinely like them as individuals (Mallya, 2012).

According to Mallya (2012), the concept of brand personality was found to be in use as early as 1958 by P. Martineau who used the word to refer to the non-material dimensions that make a store unique, its character. Brand personality construct originates from human personality theories based on the Big Five model. Numerous psychologists (Cattell 1946, Norman 1963, Goldberg 1983 and Costa & McCrae 1985) led to the reduction of multiple personality traits into five core measurements, which were seen as the main descriptors of human personality, namely: Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness and Neuroticism/Emotional Stability. Mallya (2012) asserts that this framework was used as the foundation for brand personality frameworks created by consumer behavior researchers, and Many of the main dimensions within these structures have attributes similar to those found in Aaker's (1997) original Big Five model.

Decker (2016) argues that when defining brand personality of any institution or organization, one helpful exercise is to describe how the brand would think, act, and feel as a person. Brand personality emanates from the work of Aaker (1997) who defines it as a set of human traits linked to a brand. In relation to this, the author identified a range of characteristics including sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication, and ruggedness. According to Grumbein (2013) brand personalities can

parallel human personality in many ways, as humans often describe brands using demographics, psychographics, and human personality traits.

Most previous studies have generally measured brand personality using Aaker's "Big Five" dimensions of brand personality as mentioned, but Decker (2016), suggests that organizations may choose to identify adjectives that describe their brand specifically, rather than choose to measure brand personality using the standard scale. This study adopts brand personality dimensions from Sung & Yang, (2008) and Rauschnabel *et al.*, (2016), personified as, This University is sincere (Trustworthy, Friendly, fairness, helpfulness), This University is cosmopolitan (networked, international), This University is conscientious (organized, competent, structured, effective), This university is sophisticated (Upper class, Glamorous, Charming) and This university is exciting (Innovative, Trendy, unique and up to date).

According to Mallya (2012), the immense competition in the education sector has forced most universities to implement the concept of associating themselves with human personality traits as engaging, beautiful, friendly, big, bold, comprehensive, unique, passionate, competitive, loyal, progressive and innovative to convey the authentic personality of the university which leads to enrollment intentions of prospect students.

Prior studies have shown the concept of brand personality being applied to different contexts, specifically in tourism destinations and non-profit organizations. These studies indicate that destinations can be described using human traits; for example, Spain is friendly and family oriented, whereas London is open-minded and vibrant (Hosany *et al.*, 2006, Morgan & Pritchard, 2002), but there are limited studies that specifically deal with brand personality in a university context (Mallya, 2012). It is in

relation to the above review that this study argues that social media interaction can help build or damage a university brand personality that has an effect on students' behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies in Kenya.

2.4 The Concept of Attitude

The term attitude is derived from the Latin word *aptus*, which is a mental or psychological state of readiness for action. One of the earliest psychologists to employ the term attitude was Herbert Spencer in 1862. He argued that making correct decisions on disputes depends a lot on the attitude or mindset that we hold when listening to, or taking part in, controversy: and in order to maintain a correct attitude, it is important for us to know how real, and yet how false, average human beliefs are (Allport, 1935). According to Asiegbu *et al.*, (2012), an attitude is a mental and neural state of anticipation, organized by experience, the expression of a command or a complex effect on the individual's reaction to all the objects and circumstances with which it interacts. This means that consumer's perception of a product, a person or an entity determines the consumers' readiness to accept, adopt, or engage with a product or an entity.

Attitude is therefore a cognitive trait demonstrated by assessing a particular organization with some degree of favor or disfavor (Eagley & Chaiken 2007). Attitude is about a person's continued evaluations, feelings, liking or disliking of a particular product, person or entity (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). According to Vishnumolakala *et al.*, (2017), attitude is an overall evaluation of a highly specific behavior that is defined in terms of action, target, context, and time. For example, "I enrolling in a postgraduate study would be good/bad". Vishnumolakala *et al.* (2017), posts that the social psychologists proposed a three-component model to explain the *psychological* nature of attitudes namely, cognitive (belief-based); affective (emotion-based) which can be

measured using *psychometric* tests (questionnaires) and behavioral (observable reaction) which is measured through observations.

In consumer behavior, an attitude is a learned predisposition to act in a consistent manner towards an object based on feelings and perceptions towards other persons, goods, concepts, actions and other objects in their environment resulting from an evaluation of the object's understanding (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). According to Asiegbu *et al.* (2012), a consumer is a psychological being that thinks, perceives, and learns, thus, a consumer has motives, personalities, and attitudes. Such psychological forces influence consumers' buying decisions and their behavioral intentions, thus marketers seek to influence and capitalize on them. This is supported by Asiegbu *et al.* (2012) who asserts that behavioral intentions may be changed by companies and business institutions by altering the consumer's attitudes towards a commodity, service or activity and these alterations can result in injurious or beneficial consumption decisions. This is why organizations and marketers are concerned with attitude of customers because it shapes the customers' tastes, preferences and determine their buying decision making behavior.

Kotler and Gertner (2004), observes that people have attitudes toward almost everything: institutions, persons, religion, politics, food, music, clothes, and others. Attitudes, therefore, put people in a frame of mind that prefers or dissimulates an object, shifts towards it or away from it, and is influenced by our learned values and beliefs. According to Asiegbu *et al.* (2012), values are common beliefs and cultural norms of what is important or right. The authors argue that values such as the need to belong or to succeed, represent important objectives to which consumers subscribe. They are transmitted to the person via immediate and remote environments such as the parents, organizations (school, religious, institutional, business) and others (community, social

environment). Values affect the goals that people pursue, and the actions used to achieve those goals. As Asiegbu *et al.* (2012) puts it, marketers are interested in the beliefs that people formulate about specific products, services and entities because these beliefs make up product and brand images that affect buying behavioral intentions. Thus, if some of these beliefs are wrong or negative, they may prevent a purchase, the marketer will want to launch a campaign to correct it in order to manipulate the buying decisions or behavioral intentions of the customer.

Prior studies from various fields (Weber *et al.*, 2007; Lin *et al.*, 2011; Bagozzi *et al.*, 2007; Addison & Chou, 2003; Amin & Chong, 2011) indicate that this concept emanates from the theory of TRA (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) which assumes that a person's intention to perform an act is a function of two basic determinants; one of them is personal in nature (individuals' beliefs about an object) and the other reflecting social influence, which reflects a person's beliefs that other individuals or groups think he or she should perform the behavior (subjective norms) (Tan & Laswad, 2006). According to Tan and Laswad (2006), individual behavioral attitudes reflect the degree to which an individual has a positive or negative impression of the behavior in question. Attitudes about behavior are determined by a person's beliefs on the consequences of performing that behavior, and each belief is weighted by the subjective value of the outcome in question (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). For example, Idinga (2015) argues that if a person belief that higher level of studies or qualification (psychological object) leads to better paying jobs or more income (outcome), this becomes an individual belief which is assessed based on the strength of the outcome.

This is supported by Alqasa *et al.*, (2014), who states that attitude toward the behavior explains the individual's positive or negative evaluation of performing an action. Attitude means that individuals with a very positive predisposition to do something

would be more likely to respond favorably, while individuals with a very negative temperament would be more likely to respond negatively (Ajzen, 2011). Therefore, a student's attitude towards a particular university may create a positive or a negative perception which has an influence on the student's intention to enroll for a postgraduate study in the institution.

2.5 Theoretical Review

This study is guided by the Theory of Planned Behavior, Technology Acceptance Model and Self Congruity Theory. These theories have been used extensively in research as discussed below.

2.5.1 Theory of Planned Behavior

According to Grant Cooper (2016), the use of behavioral models is very important because it reveals the salient psychosocial factors that may predict students' intentions to enroll in university and can help us to examine the many beliefs that motivate behavior. This consistent with the Theory of Planned Behavior, which is an extension from the Theory of Reasoned Action developed by Ajzen and Fishbein in 1980 (Ajzen, 2005). TPB has been used in a number of studies on the relationship between beliefs, attitudes, behavioral intentions and behavior in different fields such as health care, information systems, advertisement and so on (Koger, 2010; Stern, 2005). This theory suggests a direct relationship between intention and behavior, which is the primary objective of this research.

TPB is meant to help explain and predict people's intentions and behavior (Ajzen, 2011). This distinguishes between inspiring people who are not likely to participate in actions of interest and enabling people who already have positive intentions to act on those intentions (Ajzen, 2015), which is the primary concern of this research. According

to Montano and Kasprzyk (2015), TPB focuses on theoretical constructs that discuss individual motivating variables as determinants of the probability of a specific behavior being undertaken. The theory assumes that behavioral intent is the strongest predictor of behavior, which in turn is influenced by individual attitudes and social normative behavioral expectations.

As Ajzen (2011) puts it, the TPB theory help us to identify the beliefs that have to be modified in order to produce change in intentions, even if it does not and was not meant to provide guidance on the means, strategies or techniques that can effectively produce changes in these beliefs. Human action is affected, according to the author by a favorable or unfavorable assessment of behavior (attitude towards behavior), perceived social pressure to perform or not to perform behavior (subjective norm) and perceived ability to perform behavior (perceived behavioral control). The combination of the above factors contributes to the formation of behavioral intention. This means that the more favorable attitude and subjective norm, and the greater the perceived behavioral control, the stronger the intention of the individual to perform the behavior in question. This is in line with Ajzen (2011) and Kautonen *et al.*, (2013) who argues that intention is highly predictive of future behavior which is formed by a number of beliefs representing the perceptions that people have about a behavior including its likely consequences, the normative expectations of others, and the likely barriers of performing a particular behavior.

According to Montano and Kasprzyk (2015) argument, the assumption behind TPB is that behavioral intention is the most significant determinant of behavior (**Figure 2.1**) which is determined by the individuals' attitude and their subjective norm associated with behavior. TPB behavioral control, which concerns perceived control over behavioral performance was born (Ajzen, 2002) to take into account circumstances

where an individual may not have complete volitional control over a behavior (**Figure 2.1**). According to Ajzen, behavioral control, which is dictated by an individual's set of control beliefs can help or hinder behavioral performance as it affects the perception of how simple or difficult behavioral performance is (Ajzen, 1991).

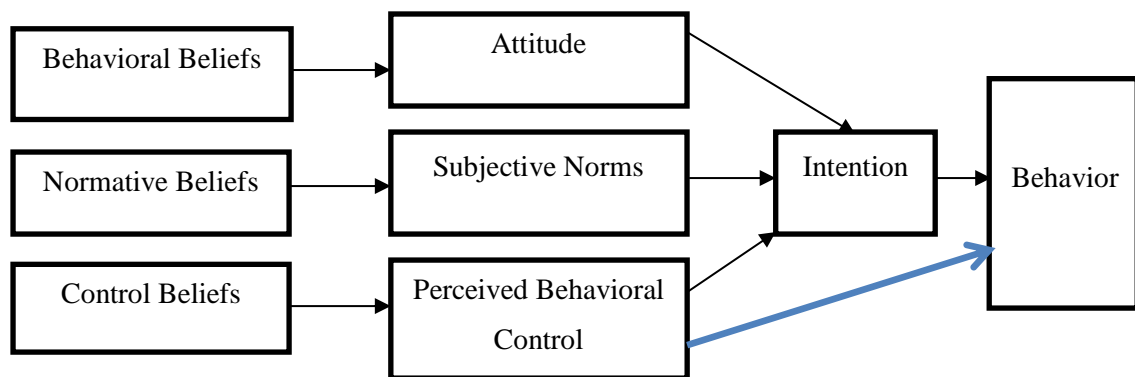


Figure 2.1: The Theory of Planned Behavior

Source: Adopted from Grant Cooper (2016)

A study done by Stockdale *et al.*, (2005) among college students indicates that attitudes toward tobacco for example, play a role in those who begin smoking at age 18 or older. The study shows that smokers have more positive attitude about having a relationship with a smoker and less positive attitudes about smoking bans on campus and other antismoking policies. Martinasek *et al.*, (2013) also points out that students who have positive attitudes towards cigarettes, that is, those who believe it is good, pleasant, and a lot of fun, also have strong intentions to smoke it.

Other studies that have utilized TPB successfully to explain the determinants of a range of behaviors includes; Kautonen *et al.* (2013) who examined intention and entrepreneurial behavior, environmental conservation intent (Wauters *et al.*, 2010), safe sex practices (Fisher *et al.*, 2002), sleeping patterns and intentions (Knowlden *et al.*, 2012), and dangerous driving behaviors (Elliott *et al.*, 2003) with all of them

indicating that TPB can be used to predict and explore reasons for different human intentions and behavior.

In the education context, a number of studies have also used TPB to examine behaviors. For example a study done by Cooper (2011) reveals that TPB is effective in eliciting beliefs, seeking motivations and exploring participants' underpinning attitudes, subjective norms and belief of control in relation to behavior within an educational context. Lee *et al.*, (2010) and Sugar *et al.*, (2004) also used TPB to examine teachers' intentions regarding the use of educational technology and adoption of new technology respectively. This is also supported by Taylor (2015) who conducted a study using TPB on students to understand their subject choices in Senior High School and lastly Cooper (2016) who used the extended TPB model to investigate students' intentions to enroll in university and the results indicate that TPB has a predictive power for different human intentions and behavior hence it's an essential theory in guiding this study.

Ajzen (2002) states that attitude is developed by a set of beliefs and results in a value being placed on the outcome of the actions. In other words, a person's disposition will be more likely to engage in actions if the outcome or result of an action is seen as favorable, useful, helpful, attractive, advantageous, or a good thing. For example, if a student believes that joining a particular institution of higher learning because of its brand personality, good corporate reputation and external prestige and will land him to a great carrier or job, then the student's attitude toward the institution will be favorable, hence influencing his intention to enroll. On the contrary, if the student develops an unfavorable attitude towards it, due to its poor reputation and personality he may end up joining a competitor institution.

As Rah *et al.*, (2004) points out, these attitudes would negatively influence the intention to enroll in such an institution. Based on the above discussion, this study adapts the TPB as the main theory in determining the effect of social media, brand personality and attitude on students' behavioral intention to enroll in postgraduate studies in Kenya.

2.5.2 Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

TAM was introduced by Davis (1989), and has been extensively utilized in studies to predict the use of information technologies (Selim, 2003). Davis (1989) found that perceived usefulness and ease of use toward information technology affects users' intention towards use. It is the assumption in this study that Davis's findings apply to the use of social media. This is because TAM describes the relationship between social media network design variables, perceived usefulness of the social media network, perceived ease of its use, and individual attitudes towards its use in higher education.

Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) states that TAM builds on the theory of reasoned action (TRA) which has its roots in social psychology that attempts to explain why individuals engage into consciously intended behaviors. Al-rahmi and Othman (2013) suggests that the simplicity of this model and its ease of use make it very prominent and well suited to many of the research settings in which behavioral prediction can be interpreted, so it is adapted in this study to predict the influence of social media, brand personality and attitudes on student behavioral intentions.

According to Al-rahmi and Othman (2013), in TAM, a user's motivation to adopt a new technology can be explained by its perceived ease of use (PEU), it's perceived usefulness (PU) and intention to using the social media platforms for educational or informational purposes. Both perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness are beliefs that have an impact on intention to use social media (Davis, 1985). The two variables

determine the intention to use social media platforms for getting relevant information on brand personality, reputation and external prestige of higher learning institutions by prospective students who intend to enroll. Al-rahmi and Othman (2013) argues that besides its direct impact on attitude, the TAM model postulates a positive direct impact of perceived ease of use on perceived usefulness. This is justified in so far as perceived ease of use contributes to better performance, as effort saved due to ease of use can allow the user to perform more tasks and expects no physical and mental difficulties in adopting or even using the technology at hand (Davis, 1985). According to the authors, the user of the social media network perceived usefulness refers to the prospective student's expectation that the adoption or use of a particular technology will lead to better performance in finding and accessing the relevant information.

The importance of TAM in research field has been also emphasized by Venkatesh *et al.*, (2003) who supports Davis (1989) claims that the intention towards social media network among students in collaborative learning holds the key factors in structure technology use models with the theories extended from the fundamental principles of TRA. The principles consider the intention to use the system as a function of attitudes towards individual behavior and social norms that were extended to TPB (Venkatesh & Bala, 2008).

TAM has been widely used in most research studies that deals with users' acceptance of technology (Lai, 2017b; Lee *et al.*, 2003; Luarn & Lin, 2005; Yang, 2005). According to Chau and Hu (2002), TAM was specifically designed to address the factors of users' system technology acceptance and the model can be applied easily across different research settings (Chau & Hu, 2002). The model attempts to help researchers and practitioners to see why a particular technology or process can be acceptable or unacceptable and to take appropriate measures by explanation besides

providing predictions (Lai, 2017a). As illustrated by **Figure 2.2**, attitude and perceived usefulness collectively determine the behavioral intention and the attitude is influenced by perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use.

Literature has shown that the original TAM has been extended to Technology Acceptance Model (TAM2) by Venkatesh and Davis (2000), TAM 3 by Venkatesh and Bala (2008), and Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) by Venkatesh *et al.* (2003) which have high explanatory power (R^2). These models were not selected in this study because attitude which is a moderating variable in the current study was removed as a predictor in the mentioned models, (Chuttur, 2009) thus the current study adopts the original TAM.

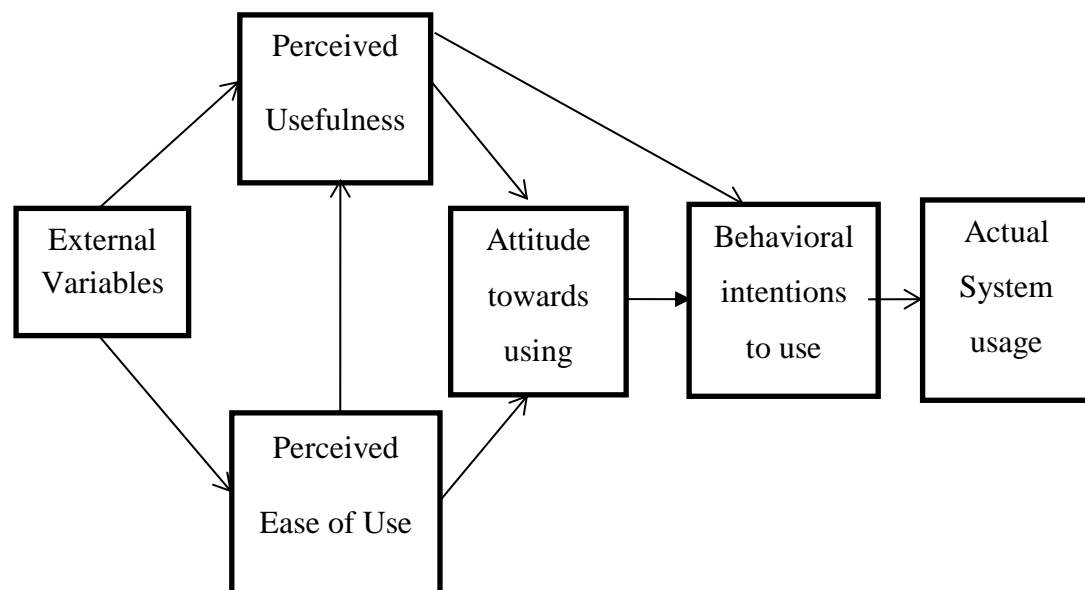


Figure 2.2: Technology Acceptance Model

Source: Davis (1989)

The choice of this model in this study is based on Moon and Kim (2001) argument that persons who find enjoyment in using a web system will perceive positive interactions and form greater behavioral intention to use it.

2.5.3 Theory of Self Congruity

Theory of Self Congruity in relation to consumer behavior came into existence by Gardner and Levy (1955) and later expanded on by Levy (1959). According to Levy (1959) goods or services can be regarded as fundamentally psychological objects, symbolizing our own personal attributes, goals and social patterns and expectations. Levy argues that products have a symbolic character, thus a consumer will always choose products, services or engage with an institution that has a symbolic value set consistent with the way he or she thinks about him/herself.

Levy's assertion is supported by Klipfel *et al.*, (2014) who points out that Congruity Theory is about the extent to which consumers see a brand as having a personality similar to their own self-image, thus influencing the brand's perceived personality. In other words, the theory considers and holds that brand choice reveals the personality of the consumer (Sirgy, 2018). According to Sirgy (2018) it is the match between a brand image and an individual's self-concept (totality of the individual's thoughts and feelings having reference to himself as an object). Thus, the more similar the two concepts, (brand image and an individual's self-concept) the higher the preference for that brand (Japutra *et al.*, 2021), because it's symbolic characteristics reinforce and validate the individual's self-perception (Boksberger *et al.*, 2011).

According to Usakli and Baloglu (2011), self-congruity can be considered a natural extension of self-concept which assumes that a consumer tends to select products or brands that correspond to one's self-concept. This idea suggests that the higher the degree of congruence, the higher the probability of intention to purchase. This supports Hosany and Martin (2012) who claims that the Self-Congruity Theory postulates the congruence arising from a cognitive comparison of the product-user image and the

consumer's self-concept which affects the consumer behavior. The theory suggests that consumer behavior is influenced, in part, by a cognitive connection between the value-expressive characteristics of a product or brand and the consumer's self-concept (Usakli & Baloglu, 2011).

Sirgy (2018) assert that consumer self-concept involves four dimensions, namely actual self-image, ideal self-image, social self-image, and ideal social self-image. The actual self-image refers to how consumers truly see themselves. It is the match between the brand-user image (brand personality) and the consumer's actual self-image or a representation of image attributes of a product, service or an entity that reflects one's personal identity. Thus, consumers purchase and consume goods and services in ways that serve to consolidate and validate their personal identity. The assumption behind this is that consumers tend to buy products/service or engage with an entity that confirm and reinforce their present actual self-image (Klabi, 2020). In this study we argue that students will choose universities whose images marches their values or validate their self-identity (Sirgy *et al.*, 2018).

On the other hand, the ideal self-image is how consumers would like to see themselves or what they would like to become. This is reflected in a set of image attributes that one wishes or hopes to possess. According to Sirgy (2018) people generally do things to enhance their sense of self or to enhance their self-esteem and avoid self-deflation. For example Nghiêm-Phú and Nguyễn (2020) found that students self-image was significantly affected by the perceptions of the attributes of the learning institution. According to the authors, students, as consumers of educational products, will choose appropriate products and providers to achieve the best personal values to project their

desired self-images. Ideal self-image congruity reflects the match between the image of the university and how students would like to see themselves (Li *et al.*, 2020).

The social self-image is how consumers believe they are seen by significant others (Li *et al.*, 2020). In this case, consumers want to buy products/ services or engage with an entity that reflect the way they think others see them. This motivation is driven by a strong willingness to comply with social norms and to avoid any potential threat of social exclusion (Klabi, 2020; Sirgy, 2018).

Lastly the ideal social self-image indicates how consumers would like to be seen by significant others (Li *et al.*, 2020). According to Sirgy (2018) consumers have a social identity based on their identification with groups or social network. Reinforcement of social identity through the purchase of a product or engagement with an institution increases the individual's sense of belonging to specific groups (Sirgy, 2018). For example, intentions to enroll in a particular institution can be influenced by the family, peers, or the networking characteristics of the student. In conclusion, these dimensions of the consumer self-concept are evoked when one makes evaluations about goods and services in the marketplace. We therefore argue that these four dimensions of self-concept may act as referent point in evaluating the relative attractiveness of a university brand image or brand personality to students who intent to enroll for postgraduate studies (Sirgy, 2018). In this study the Self-Congruity Theory is used to show that the greater the match between the university personality and the students' self-concept, the more likely it is that the student will have a favorable attitude towards enrolling in that university or study program (Japutra *et al.*, 2021; Sirgy, 2018).

Self-Congruity Theory has been used and supported in various studies in marketing literature. These includes; product preference (Sirgy, 2015) , retail store choice (Das,

2014) sponsorship events (Close & Lacey, 2013; Quester *et al.*, 2013), the housing market (Klipfel *et al.*, 2014; Opoku & Abdul-Muhmin, 2010), tourism destination (Boksberger *et al.*, 2011; Zhang, Fu *et al.*, 2014), and even organizational career choice or attraction (Nolan & Harold, 2010). This study uses Self-Congruity Theory to examine the relationship between university brand personality and students' behavioral intentions in higher learning institutions in Kenya.

2.6 Empirical Literature Review

2.6.1 Social Media Use and Students' Behavioral Intentions to Enroll

Social media usage by university students has created a great interest in both areas of academic research and social scientists. In this digital era, social media platforms are becoming important places where students interact in their virtual communities freely with members of the community as they share information and study experiences, research projects and job opportunities with each other (Yapıcı & Hevedanlı, 2012). This increase in social media usage at higher education level seems to be fulfilling the prediction of Kelly (2008) who claimed that universities will one time lose their privileged responsibility as the sole disseminator of knowledge, and gatekeeper to it, as knowledge becomes more widely produced and accessed by people in diverse ways through other means and sources.

The emergence of social media has become a global phenomenon and is one of the most important means of communication which allows universities the ability to communicate in a voice that is familiar to the Millennial and Centennial generation (Capano *et al.*, 2010; Constantinides & Stagno, 2012). This is supported by a number of studies that have shown college age students to be on different social media platforms and use them to communicate socially as well as to gain information related to various

educational institutions and study programs offered by institutions (Nuseir & El Rafea, 2021). For example, a study by Zaremohzzabieh *et al.*, (2015), suggests that Facebook has become an important component of almost every university student's daily life, where a very large number of students seem to benefit from Facebook and other social media sites by exchanging information for educational goals, make friends, and other activities. Thus, universities can also use social media to recruit new students or influence the prospects through their sales promotion, advertising or marketing of their academic programs.

The importance of social media use is also supported by Chu and Meulemans (2008) who highlights that majority of graduates use social media platforms like Facebook to communicate with other students about their course, assignment, lecture, and classes. This is also supported by Bosch (2009) who suggests that a large number of students engage in discussion groups on social media platforms, as these channels have the ability to be used as an educational tool for research or group discussions. University institutions can therefore utilize these platforms which offer an attractive avenue to influence the behavioral intentions of potential prospects to enroll in their institutions and study programs (Nuseir & El Rafea, 2021).

According to Constantinides and Stagno (2013), an underlying theme of research in social media usage is the marketing communication, where differences exist between the information that potential students want and that provided by higher learning institutions in their traditional forms of communications can be identified and be improved. Boyd (2007) points out that social media is an enticing, efficient and effective marketing tool for higher education, due to its high level of adoption by the younger generation. This new phenomenon has improved communications by firms

having a one-on-one engagement with their customers which can increase brand loyalty. This is why Constantinides and Stagno (2013) indicates that the inclusion of social media apps as part of university marketing can lead to an increased enrollment in numbers and help prospective students make much better informed choices regarding their choice of study and university selection.

Constantinides *et al.*, (2010) argues that looking at experiences from the business practices and the social media, one could argue that such strategies can provide higher university institutions with new communication possibilities which allow a direct engagement. For example Weiss (2008) says that university websites can provide a basis for an engaging user environment that involve interaction of students with university recruiters or interactions with several other students during the process of searching for their chosen institution and study program.

This is also echoed by Constantinides and Stagno (2013) who says that engaging potential students in the social media domain is inexpensive and can attract and persuade potential ones. The authors' points out that social networks create online presence for the institution and bring together potential students with those already enrolled, others looking for similar information and help plus the alumni. These engagements are very influential in persuading the prospect, particularly through suggestions from peers in blogs, social networks, forums and other forms of social media, thus playing an important role in the decision-making process, especially among young people (Constantinides & Stagno, 2013).

Despite the Constantinides and Stagno (2013) assertions and support for the use of social media marketing by higher learning institutions, their study highlights that future students regard the social media platforms as the last in the list of sources of information

that influence their choice of study and university. They argue that this could be due to lack of relevant content in those platforms. It is based on their recommendations for further studies in line with these interesting results that this study sought to determine the effect of social media, brand personality and attitude on students' behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies in Kenya.

Fujita *et al.*, (2017) assert that social media enable consumers to influence brand meanings and to create marketing opportunities and challenges through customer engagement. Considering the collective and altruistic essence of universities and the fact that students are often at the forefront of the social media trend, Fujita *et al.* (2017) contends that social media marketing provides a significant marketing opportunity for institutions of higher education. This is also supported by Bélanger *et al.*, (2014), who argues that higher learning institutions need to adjust to this new trend by building and managing their presence on social media in order to communicate and exchange ideas with stakeholders, to promote positive student experiences and to manage brand visibility which leads to enrollment intention.

In the age of smartphones and social media, higher learning institutions are now tasked with being able to reach their audiences in this new online environment, in comparison to traditional marketing techniques such as print and in-person advertising. According to Assaad and Gómez (2011), people like to use social media platforms for word-of-mouths communication when they are attached with any product or service thus they share their experiences with other people having common interests and desires. The authors assert that social networks can help spread good news fast but can also spread bad news just as quickly. This means that if customers want to demonstrate their dissatisfaction to any product, service or organization, they can use the social network

account. This is also reinforced by Choudaha (2013) who argues that social media can enable higher education institutions to recruit students to achieve their financial targets and to get out to prospective students to achieve their enrollment expectations. Therefore, social media engagement has a positive and significant effect on students' behavioral intentions.

This argument is also supported by Bélanger *et al.* (2014) who states that social media are established with the recruitment of friends and family members; therefore, consumers engaging in such environments have, to a large extent, already built-in trust. As a result, the online word-of-mouth produced through these social media platforms is generally and easily embraced by consumers because they are perceived as impartial, credible and accurate. We can therefore conclude that opinions and discussions initiated by consumers with their networks through social media have a substantial impact on university brand image, individuals' students' attitude and behavioral intentions, which cannot be overlooked by university and marketing professionals.

A strong social media presence in higher education can help to inform students of on campus opportunities or institutions they may not have been aware of from other forms of marketing. Social media further connects students to a variety of people within a particular institution. Social media therefore is of great value which should be strategically included in a college/university marketing plan in order to effectively recruit students (Bonilla *et al.*, 2021; Rutter *et al.*, 2016). This is because prior studies indicate that prospective students are active on social media platforms and are influenced by social media networking sites when they are searching colleges/universities (Bonilla *et al.*, 2021). Social media can therefore be used by higher education institutions as a recruitment tool to meet and attract future students

(Constantinides & Stagno, 2013), because it directly affects the behavioral intentions of students to enroll in further studies.

2.6.2 University Brand Personality and Students' Behavioral Intentions to Enroll

Previous studies in this subject area have shown that one of the most crucial perspectives for assessing and measuring corporate image is to use human personality traits (Aaker, 1996; Biel, 1993; Davies *et al.*, 2004). According to Alavijeh *et al.*, (2014) universities can gain competitive advantage by improving and enhancing their brand personality components.

A study by Rauschnabel *et al.*, (2016) on the development of brand management in higher education institutions and the university brand personality scale reveals that brand personality correlates to brand love, word of mouth and the intention of students to continue supporting their university after graduation as alumni. According to the authors, prestigious university is like a truly prestigious finance house or prestigious restaurant, which is not meant for everybody but for the top cream or elite in the society. Therefore, if the student body of a university consists predominantly of upper-class, conceited, or snobbish individuals, the conceptions of the institution's personality change as a result, thus influencing students' behavioral intentions to enroll in its academic programs (Rauschnabel *et al.*, 2016).

From the study of Rauschnabel *et al.*, (2016), sincerity as an aspect of brand personality is an essential component in the image of any organization. It is reflected in fairness and helpfulness that arise from the strong interaction between students and universities administration. Another element is appeal which reflects desirable traits of the university as a person and the lively aspect of brand personality is meant for a university that emphasizes on creativity and athletic meanings. The two elements cannot be

ignored in influencing students' behavioral intentions to enroll. The authors argue that university brand personalities, organizational processes, the actions of university staff, and perceived teaching quality can determine the perceived conscientiousness of a university. In view of the increasing rivalry among universities for international students, the personality dimension of cosmopolitanism offers a competitive advantage.

Jane Hemsley-Brown (2012) argues that this dimension plays an important role as students evaluate institutions based on their relationships with companies or other universities. This could signal the potential for students to have a chance to study abroad or to have access to job opportunities via university networks, hence brand personality in higher learning institutions has an effect on student behavioral intentions.

Seimiene (2012) research on the emotional relation between customer personality traits and brand personality traits, describes brand personality as associations in consumer's subconscious level which is created by rational brand image and perception of typical consumer. According to the author brand personality is generated by perceptions of customers about the brand, the image of the company that produces the brand (Corporate Image) and the characteristics of the product, such as distribution channels, packaging and so on. The image of brand users and personnel of the company are also important factors that have impact on perception of brand personality. According to the author the customer will choose the product if the main attributes of both the brand and the consumer are identical and reject the brand if the main features are different.

The above argument is supported by Decker (2016) who argues that an increase in the match between brand personality and the consumers' personality can lead to a positive attitude and a behavioral intention towards the brand. In higher education context this study argues that this might have been the reasons Kenya witnessed a massive inter

university transfer of more than 2000 students from one university to their university of choice (KUCCPS, 2018). That is why Saichaie (2011) and other studies indicate that students make alternative choices of learning institutions based on benefit they will get from them not only concerning their prospects in the future, but the quality of programs offered, number of Professors in the institution, popularity and the ranking of the institution.

Another study done by Banahene *et al.*, (2018), in relation to the impact of brand personality on student enrollment intentions, indicates that a well-established brand personality influences customer's preference, increases patronage, develops stronger emotional bonds, increases trust, and attachment with the brand. The authors assert that brand personality is a key determinant for consumer purchase intention. Banahene *et al.*, (2018), argue that brands that are associated with customer personality leads to customer preference, frequent usage, positive feeling confidence, and relieve into the mind of the customer. This means that positive brand personality of the university as a product leads to an increase in students' future enrollment intention. Students like consumers of the normal product and services will always trust in a university's brand if it is considered as, hardworking, secure, confident, upper class, attractive, and good looking (Banahene *et al.*, 2018). Hence, universities' management needs to invest resources in improving the named dimensions which could obtain more distinction in the minds of students and lead to future enrollment intentions.

According to Rutter *et al.*, (2017) and Sung and Yang (2008), brands can play a vital role in influencing perceptions, and especially those of a major stakeholder group, such as a university's prospective and current students. Several studies have shown that brand management techniques are used to develop strong and loyal relationships and to

distinguish organizations and their product offers from competitors and to enhance performance (Freling & Forbes, 2005; Hoeffler & Keller, 2003; Keller, 2001). That is why Teh and Salleh (2011) argues that as the service choice tends to be more complex and as competition between institutions of higher learning intensifies, university's brand has become a crucial element in student decision-making. The student's decision is influenced by his or her perception of specific institutions brand personality elements, and therefore strong brands have been argued to be positively linked to recruitment performance due to enrollment intention (Rutter *et al.*, 2017; Salleh *et al.*, 2009).

A study by Rutter *et al.*, (2017) on brand personality in higher education reveals that in today's competitive environment of increased competition characterized by choice, decreased differentiation and increased complexity of information, consumers can often find the process of choice confusing, thus a brand and how it is communicated to potential students is now an important differentiator. This argument is also supported by the work of Walsh and Mitchell (2010) and Rosadi and Tjiptono (2013) who states that consumer sovereignty assumes that consumers have adequate product information and are able to understand that information in order to make an informed choice. However, this is not the case when consumers are confused because of the market situation being characterized by increasingly similar brands, having too many slightly different choices, and providing complex information. In buying these products, many consumers find it difficult to differentiate between brands, evaluate over alternatives, and make a good purchase decision. Thus, brand personality acts a guiding tool in the buying decision process.

2.6.2.1 University Brand Personality as a Mediator

In consumer behavior, researchers have proposed that product personality is a medium for consumer self-expression and can be instrumental in helping consumers express their true selves, ideal self, and unique aspects of self-expression (Swaminathan *et al.*, 2008). Brand personality is a set of human characteristics associated with a particular brand that provides more value to consumers' eyes (Aaker, 1997); hence brands which are congruent with consumers' personalities tend to be more impressive and better and have an influence on their final purchasing decisions. This is supported by the study of Banerjee (2016) which points out that the personalities of the individual and the personality of the brand have a significant impact on the preference of the brand to be considered by consumers.

There is scarce literature in this field that has used brand personality as a mediator. The study of Zotos *et al.*, (2011) used brand personality as a mediator on the relationship between online atmospherics and attitudes toward the online site of which their findings were supported. Ramaseshan and Stein (2014) carried out a research on the mediating role of brand personality and brand commitment in the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty. Their findings revealed that brand personality partly mediates the connection between brand experience and both types of brand loyalty.

Lastly Gordon *et al.*, (2016), on unlocking the power of branding in social marketing services: using product personality and brand personality appeal shows that brand personality has a direct and indirect relationship with customer perceptions and behavioral intentions towards both commercial and social marketing services. Based on limited studies and evidence on the mediating function of brand personality in higher learning institutions, this study aims to fill this gap by exploring the mediating role of

brand personality in the relationship between social media and student behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies. The assumption behind this argument is that social media platforms can be used by higher learning institutions to develop, promote and strengthen university brand personality with the ultimate goal being to influence students' behavioral intentions to enroll in their institutions for postgraduate studies.

2.6.3 Attitude and Students' Behavioral Intentions to Enroll

According to Bebetos *et al.*, (2017), attitude towards the behavior (that is, a positive or negative predisposition towards a specific behavior) is one of the variables apart from social norms that determine the likelihood of performing a specific behavior (behavioral intention). Building on Fishbein and Ajzen (1980) work, Bebetos *et al.*, (2017) argues that subjective norms are of two kinds, behavioral beliefs (which affect attitude towards the behavior); and normative beliefs (which reflect social factors). The authors argue that each behavioral belief reflects whether important others would accept or disapprove a specific behavior. The greater the intention of the subject, the higher the chance is that the subject will act in accordance with his or her intention (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1980).

Derived from the TPB, perceived subjective control of the behavior that a person has (how easy or difficult it is for an individual to adopt a certain behavior) is another factor that influences a person's attitude towards a specific behavior (Bebetos *et al.*, 2017). Perceived behavioral control is determined by internal (skills, abilities and differences) and external factors (time, incentive and dependency onto others). In the study of Bebetos *et al.*, (2017) on the relationship among students' attitudes, intentions and behaviors towards the inclusion of peers with disabilities, in mainstream physical education classes, the authors found that non-disabled students' attitudes were proved

powerful in predicting their behavior towards their disabled peers in the physical education class, hence attitude has a significant effect on an individual's behavior that influence behavioral intentions.

Attitudes toward behavior have been reported to affect behavioral intentions in a varied context. In advertising, Raza *et al.*, (2017) found that an individual's attitude is a key determinant of behavioral intention, since it serves as a significant predictor of behavioral intention, as recommended in TPB, while at the same time attitude has been identified as having a significant role in explaining the relationship between behavioral intention and advertising.

Another research by Yeo *et al.*, (2017), shows that behavioral intent is highly predictable by an individual's attitude, as it has a significant positive impact. The authors point out that a person's attitude can affect the response to a stimulant. Furthermore, Yeo *et al.*, (2017), argued that a person who has a favorable attitude towards an action will be more likely to perform that particular behavior. The findings from their study clearly indicate that attitude positively correlates with behavioral intention and is the strongest indicator of consumer behavioral intention to shop online. Attitude and behavioral intent were also examined by Hong *et al.*, (2017) whose results demonstrate that consumer innovativeness in perceived value and continued willingness to use smart watches is strongly influenced by individual attitudes.

In addition, Fang *et al.*, (2017) in relation to pro-environment behavioral intention indicate that normative beliefs positively and directly influence social norms and attitudes, which in turn has an impact on behavioral intentions. Kim *et al.*, (2018) in hotel industry study reveals that attitudes toward selecting a healthy product have a

significant and a positive influence on behavioral intentions for customers' choice on healthy menu items.

In a tourism industry, Hsu and Huang (2010) and Park *et al.*, (2017), found a positive and significant effect of tourist attitude towards their behavioral intention of visiting a particular destination. Kashif *et al.*, (2018), in their research on the effect of attitudes, social norms and perceived behavioral control of Telecom and Bank managers also acknowledge that attitude and the other two variables have a significant impact on ethical behavioral intentions. In addition, Smith (2015)'s study of evidence-based critical thinking teaching strategies for critical thinking development in nursing students, reveals that attitudes emerged as a stronger factor in influencing the intent to use, meaning that nurse educators in the study have strongly valued the use of evidence-based critical thinking teaching strategies that have a positive attitude toward learning.

A study done by Watjatrakul (2014) points out that individual's attitude toward behavior refers to his/her belief that particular behavior leads to a certain outcome and an evaluation of the outcome of that behavior. The author states that the students' beliefs toward intentions to study at universities depends on the quality of the institution's teaching facilities (functional classroom equipment and internet connection), student support services (registration, library, and technology supports), and staff proficiencies (administrators' capabilities and instructors' expertise).

Watjatrakul (2014) argues that if higher education institutions (service providers) understand the patterns that underlie the attitudes and intentions of students (as service recipients) to receive their services, they will be able to anticipate and respond effectively to the needs of their students. In this case, improving educational service quality creates a positive institutional image in the mind of not only the continuing

students but also the prospect as they interact on various social media platforms which in turn shape their attitude that has an effect on behavioral intentions.

Although attitude has been identified as an important factor in influencing behavioral intentions, there is limited literature in the educational context. According to Idinga (2015), students' attitude toward postgraduate study program influences their intentions to study that program with the belief that it will help them improve on carrier development, enhance knowledge and skills required at workplace, get promoted into a better position, improve professionally and academically. This therefore means that the willingness to enroll in a postgraduate study is motivated by the belief in the expected outcomes of the student enrollment. This is also in line with Edmonds *et al.*, (2013) whose study on students' attitude to enroll in law school revealed that expected work enjoyment and job opportunities for students were the main influences to study law degree.

Another research by Bazelais *et al.*, (2018) on the behavioral intentions of pre-university science students towards the use of online learning technologies shows that attitudes play a key role in the behavioral intention of using online learning technologies. These results are also in line with Omotayo and Adebayo (2015) and Alqasa *et al.*, (2014), whose findings indicate that students attitude have significant relationship with students' behavioral intention to adopt internet banking systems in Nigeria and Yemen respectively.

Lastly, a study done by Chen and Yang (2007), to determine attitudes of in-service Kindergarten teachers towards enrolling in a postgraduate study found that attitude had a positive and significant impact on postgraduate study. The study indicates that teachers who had the most positive behavioral beliefs exhibited the strongest intentions

to enroll in the in-service graduate program. This is because their attitude was formed due to beliefs that enrolling in further education would increase the chance of them being in control of their lives, gain new knowledge and teaching information, change their thinking and teaching styles, encourage their future desire to engage in further study, develop their self-realization and achievements, help them in career planning, and understand their intrinsic motivation as kindergarten teachers. Based on the above discussion we conclude that attitude has a significant effect on students' behavioral intentions in enrolling for postgraduate studies.

2.6.3.1 Attitude as a moderator

The choice of this variable as a moderator in this study is based on theory that people have attitude towards objects, products, persons or entities. Attitude is the beliefs that a person may have which could either be in favor or oppose of some object (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Kanouse, 1984). Attitude has been used in several contexts as a moderator. For example, in the work of Parayitam *et al.*, (2010), attitudes were found to moderate the relationship between (i) computer anxiety and stress, (ii) computer anxiety and job satisfaction, and (iii) computer anxiety and career satisfaction.

Furthermore, Bilal and Idrees (2017) also used attitude as a moderator. Their study indicates that attitude moderates the relationship between product harm-crisis and Brand Equity. Lastly, the study of Bourdeau *et al.*, (2013) supports attitude as an important variable that moderated the relationship between service quality, satisfaction and behavioral intentions relationships. Thus, respondents' attitude in this study is believed to either strengthen or weaken the relationship between students' social media interaction experiences and their behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies.

For example, this study relates to student attitudes towards the image of a university brand personality and behavioral intentions of enrollment through social media interaction, engagement or experience where students are more likely to develop a positive attitude towards the image of a university brand as a result of social media interactions or the promotion of a university on platforms.

2.6.4 Social Media Use and University Brand Personality

Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube are some of the most known online social network sites in which users share thoughts, ideas, pictures and other content with friends and family members, and connect with either former or new friends, making the platforms very popular with university students (Jain *et al.*, 2012; Knight-McCord *et al.*, 2016; Zaremohzzabieh *et al.*, 2015) which can be utilized by institution of higher learning for marketing their programs, building relationships with faculty members, alumni, and existing students, thereby strengthening their brand presence, brand identity, brand meaning , and brand personality (Rutter *et al.*, 2016).

This is further confirmed by Beig and Khan (2018) who argue that the tremendous advancement of technology and its sweeping social disruption in the form of social media innovations and advancements has completely changed our world, as this has radically changed our way of life with chat-based applications, blogging forums and websites, communication networks, social gaming networks and social networks. People use social media for entertainment, social networking and professional networking. Thus, institutions can use social media to market their products or service offerings or build their institutions brand presence and brand personality.

This also supports the work of Yunus *et al.*, (2016) who argues that in social media, brand image of a product is important as it can enhance knowledge of consumers about the product and facilitate them to commit in purchasing behavior. Social media has therefore become an effective marketing communication tool which allow online marketers to establish a strong relationship with their consumers as social media users are actively linked to each other through activities such as "like" a brand or a product, posting comments, reposting, contesting or advertising their own products on other profiles (Yunus *et al.*, 2016). These activities are important in building, enhancing, and strengthening university brand personality.

Chang *et al.*, (2013) argue that the participation of product users on social media platforms, through word of mouth helps in receiving information and delivering that market information to others, and vice versa. The authors further argue that when users get comments about a product from other users on social media, they tend to get more information about the product or brand by visiting the particular websites. Consumers may consider these comments in their purchasing decision which will lead into a real purchase action.

This is further supported by Yunus *et al.*, (2016) who states that opinion seeking behavior of social media users involve searching of reviews, comments or recommendations about a product or a brand from other connected users in the purchasing decision making process. In social media platforms therefore, users usually depend on opinions of previous brand users which is considered as credible to evaluate their purchase intentions or an engagement with a service offering (Chang *et al.*, 2013).

Prior studies of Charo *et al.*, (2015) and Reza *et al.*, (2012), have all shown that recommendations through word of mouth on social media platforms has a massive

effect on brand image or its dimensions. This is because peer users are seen as more objective and credible information sources, which positively affect brand value, brand association, awareness and even brand personality. Additionally, users can be affected with the positive reviews or recommendations related with intention to buy which they obtain from the previous satisfied consumers, and this will directly affect their product choices or association (Yunus *et al.*, 2016).

A good brand image with strong brand personality dimensions will therefore increase consumer loyalty to a brand and enhance consumers' willingness to purchase a product or service (Keller, 1993). This argument can also be applied in higher education context, where word of mouth from the faculty, administrative staff, alumni and existing students on social media in a particular university can have a great impact on university brand personality thereby strengthening the behavioral intentions of prospecting students to enroll in postgraduate studies.

According to Rutter *et al.*, (2016), social media increasingly represents an important part of a brand's communication strategy which if used well can drastically impact a brand's reputation and even its survival. It is on social media platform where brands engage with consumers who actively question, challenge and promote those brands. The higher education sector is no exception due to unclear social media campaigns and misaligned tactics that eventually impede the potential for developing relationships with potential students (Constantinides *et al.*, 2011; Rutter *et al.*, 2016). Students are amongst a demographic group that openly affiliates with a variety of consumer brands, showing their support by following organizations and their brands on social media or by becoming members of brand communities (Rutter *et al.*, 2016).

Curtis *et al.*, (2009), assert that branding is the most appropriate orientation for universities to help establish differentiation and preference which can be done at the organization level rather than at the level of individual products or services offering due to similar titles of degree programs being offered. This therefore shows the difficult times that lies ahead for many institutions, as they have very similar services delivered in very similar ways (Kurre *et al.*, 2012). To solve this threat of increased competition within the higher education sector, there is a need to rework on the university brand architecture, by building and enhancing strong brand personality dimensions (Hemsley & Goonawardana, 2007) as well as rebranding of the universities to better position themselves in the marketplace for survival and attainment of large market size (Jane & Oplatka, 2006).

Davis *et al.*, (2014) noted that social media is a useful tool that reveals how consumers connect to those brands that they have an interest in. The benefits gained from this association may lead to future engagement with those brands of interest by satisfied customers (Yan, 2011). This argument is supported by the work of Rutter *et al.*, (2016) who claims that a brand can improve its relationship by offering engagement and involvement that encourages new viewers to recognize, participate and even lobby for it. Additionally, building a strong connection with brand users, brands also foster a sense of belonging through interaction and engagement through online content that tailor specific users, for example prospective students (Lasorsa *et al.*, 2012).

This is further explained by Foulger (2014) who points out that successful institutions of higher learning should utilize social media as a traditional marketing funnel where they acquire potential students who are followers on their platforms, engage with them through continuous interactions, which may drive them to making inquiries about

programs and their costs, applications, and finally convert them into enrollments. This therefore implies that a brand must consider the level of engagement with its internal audience (existing students and alumni) through interaction as it builds strong brand personality which may attract and have an influence on the external audience (prospective students) who may develop a desire to join these institutions for further studies. We can therefore conclude that social media interaction has the ability of building university brand personality which in turn affects students' behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies.

2.7 Summary of Literature and Research Gaps

After reviewing related literature on social media use, university brand personality, attitude, and students' behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies, several research gaps were identified as indicated in **Table 2.1**.

Table 2.1: Summary of Empirical Review and Gaps in Knowledge Identified

Authors	Topic	Methodology	Findings	Knowledge Gaps
Idomi <i>et al.</i> , (2017)	Effect of Facebook In Influencing Student Intentions to Enroll Foreign Degree Program in Malaysia	This was a Quantitative study, convenience sampling technique in collecting data using questionnaire - sample size of 200 students	Improved advertising on Facebook improves student's intention to enroll foreign degree programs	The reviewed study was done in Malaysia with focus being on the use of only one social media platform (Facebook). The study used convenience sampling technique. Current study was done in Kenya focusing on all social media platforms with a sample size of 504 students using multistage and random sampling technique
Guido <i>et al.</i> , (2009)	Effects of University name Preferences, Credentials, Image and Enrolment Intents of Italian Students	Experimental research study which had a sample size of 200 students at the untested Italian university who have been recruited as potential users living outside the areas tested by 3 different Italian universities.	A city-of-location naming strategy causes a significant increase in the perceived levels of all university personality traits which influences students' enrollment intentions	The reviewed study was done in Italy with a sample size of 200. The study adopted experimental research design. Social media use and brand personality were not part of study variables. The current study was done in Kenya, with main variables being social media use, university brand personality and attitude. The current study used explanatory research design with a sample size of 504. Thus, the current study attempted to fill the conceptual, contextual and methodological gaps
Eidimtas and Juceviciene (2014)	Factors Influencing School-Leavers Selection to enroll in institutions of higher education	Analysis of scientific literature	School leaver's choice of studies is based on: recognition of needs, search for information, evaluation of alternatives, and selection.	Reviewed study did a literature review analysis and the study was done in Lithuania (Western Europe) while the current study collect real primary data; did analysis and inferred the findings. There are content, contextual and methodology gaps to be filled.
Hayes (2014)	Increasing Enrollment: Evaluating College-Choice Factors at a Midwest Christian University	Purposive sampling technique was used to collect data new students from the Midwest Christian University in USA	Interactions of students and management on the University Facebook and Web page has an influence on university choice by students.	The reviewed study was done in USA at a single university using purposive sampling technique and descriptive analysis. The current study was done in Kenya with focus being on social media use, university brand personality and attitude on intentions to enroll for postgraduate studies. Multistage sampling techniques and explanatory research design are adopted and data analyzed using moderated mediation model.

Authors	Topic	Methodology	Findings	Knowledge Gaps
Zehua and Sheikha (2014)	Quantitative research of the intention to apply of foreign students. Social media, WOM, reputation, partnerships & brand image	Used convenience-sampling method targeting students from Tanzania, Sweden and China	social media, partnership and reputation have a positive effect on students' application intention	The reviewed study targeted Tanzania, Sweden & China students, using convenience sampling with brand personality and attitude excluded. Current study incorporated brand personality & attitude in a moderated mediation model to fill the conceptual, contextual & methodology gaps
Constantinides and Stagno (2013)	Higher Education Marketing: Review of the impact of social media on student study selection and college choice	Used exploratory research design	Data analysis reveals that future students rate social media least in the list of information sources that affect their selection of a study, university recommendations from family, friends and acquaintances play a major role in their choice of university and study	The reviewed study was done in Netherlands using exploratory research design. The reviewed study did exclude brand personality and attitude. Current study was done in Kenya with inclusion of social media, brand personality and attitude with the use of explanatory research design to fill the content, contextual and methodological gaps which was filled by the current study.
Idinga, E. Grace (2015)	Moderating influence of Program Awareness on the Relationship between Planned Behavior and Student Intent to Enroll in Postgraduate Studies in Tanzania	Used exploratory research design and clustering sampling techniques	Social influence factors have an impact on student's enrollment intentions and program awareness does not moderate the relationship between planned behavior and students' intention to enroll	The reviewed study was done in Tanzania. The focus was on TPB and intention to enroll moderated by program awareness. Current study done in Kenya with focus being on social media use, brand personality, attitude and intentions to enroll using a moderated mediation, thus there is a content, contextual and methodological gaps to be filled.

2.8 Conceptual Framework

From the summary of literature review, it is evident that there are conceptual, contextual and methodological gaps to be filled as most of the studies done focused on different variables and intentions to enroll using direct effects models, with a few using a single moderation. However, there is little evidence from the literature with focus being on social media use, university brand personality, attitude and students' intentions to enroll with the use of a moderated mediation model between the named variables in these studies. Therefore, this study attempted to fill the identified gaps by developing a conceptual framework shown under **Figure 2.3**.

The diagrammatic drawing reveals the proposed conceptual framework of this study. Its objective is to analyze how social media can influence students' behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies, with brand personality mediating this relationship which can be moderated by students' attitude from all the three sides (social media and brand personality side, social media and students' behavioral intentions side then lastly, brand personality and students' behavioral intention to enroll side).

The conceptual framework is also considered as hypotheses model which embodies:

Four (4) direct hypotheses tested for investigating the effect of:

- i. Social media on students' behavioral intentions to enroll (H_{01})
- ii. Brand personality on students' behavioral intentions to enroll (H_{02})
- iii. Attitude on students' behavioral intentions to enroll (H_{03})
- iv. Social media on brand personality (H_{04}).

One (1) hypothesis, for determining the mediating effect of brand personality on the relationship between social media and students' behavioral intentions to enroll (H_{05})

Three (3) hypotheses testing for the moderating effect of attitude on the relationship between:

- i. Social media and brand personality (H_{06})
- ii. Social media and students' behavioral intentions to enroll (H_{07})
- iii. Brand personality and students' behavioral intentions to enroll (H_{08})

Lastly, one (1) hypothesis model showing the moderating effect of the moderator, attitude, on the strength of the indirect relationship between social media and students' behavioral intentions to enroll via brand personality (H_{09}).

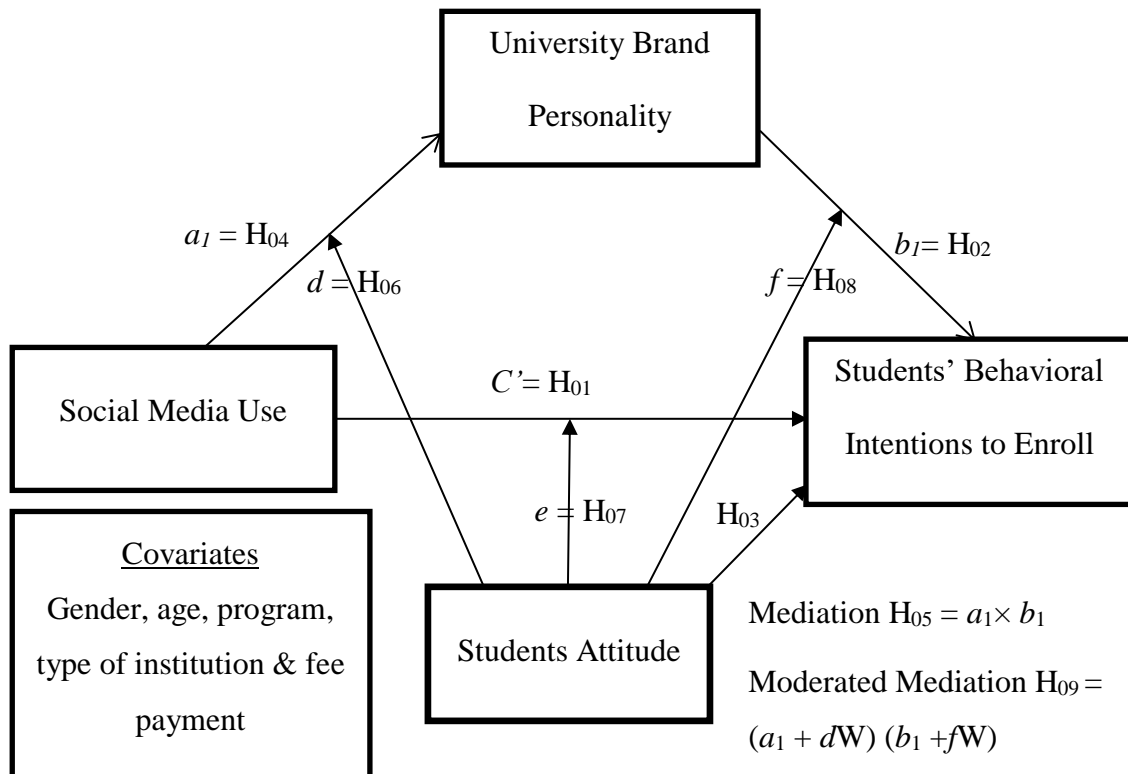


Figure 2.3: Conceptual Framework

Source: Hayes (2018) Model 59 with modifications

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The focus of this chapter is on the research philosophy, research design, study area, target population, sample size, sampling techniques, data collection instruments and procedures, measurements of the variables of the study, reliability and validity of the instruments, data processing, analysis, presentation, and the ethical consideration.

3.1 Research Philosophy

Literature has shown that the epistemologies (the researcher's view regarding what constitutes acceptable knowledge) and ontology (Researcher's view on the nature of reality) chosen to underpin a study must be critically assessed within a research methodology as lack of it can detrimentally impact the quality of research output (Gill & Johnson, 2010; Rutter, 2013).

According to Vukojević (2016) a research philosophy is a belief about the method in which data about a particular phenomenon should be gathered, analyzed and used. The two most predominant philosophies according to Rubin and Babbie (2009) in this area are positivism (researcher and reality are separate) and interpretivism (researcher and reality are inseparable). Positivism believes that research can be undertaken by using well-developed hypotheses derived from literature or existing theory and tested as well as requiring a large number of randomly selected samples (Saunders *et al.*, 2009), thus positivism focuses on quantifiable observation of phenomenon as well as generalizing about the phenomenon through statistical analysis. Positivists view the researcher as existing independently to what is being researched and will not impact upon the topic being investigated or modify reality. A positivist view of science is seen as a way to

identify truths, and if these truths can be understood we may predict outcomes (Rutter, 2013).

The basic assumption underlying interpretivism research philosophy is to uncover meanings and understanding of the issues being studied (Veal, 2005). This paradigm avoids prior assumptions about theory, hypothesis or quantification. It does not develop conceptual frameworks or formulate hypothesis in advance. Interpretivism argues that these issues create bias by directing the researcher to focus on particular areas at the expense of the total picture. Thus, qualitative techniques are used when exploratory theory building, rather than theory testing, is undertaken (Benz *et al.*, 2008).

Since this study involved the development of hypotheses to investigate the impact of social media experiences, university brand personality and attitude on student's behavioral intentions to enroll for postgraduate studies, the underpinning philosophy that guided the study was positivism and the adopted approach was quantitative. Quantitative research is defined as a type of research in which phenomena are explained by the collection and analysis of numerical data using statistically based methods (Vukojević, 2016). This study is consistent with the prerequisites for quantitative research in which social reality is objectively ascertained using strict guidelines in the data collection and evaluation process (Vukojević, 2016).

3.2 Research Design

A research design is the specific method a researcher uses to collect, analyze, and interpret data (Stangor, 2014). It is a master plan that specifies the methods and procedures for collecting and analyzing the needed information (Zikmund *et al.*, 2014). Hence, research design sets the procedure on the required data, the methods to be

applied to collect and analyze this data, and how all of this will answer the research question.

Some of the research designs include descriptive, exploratory, correlational, and explanatory research designs. The aim of a descriptive design is to provide a picture of a situation, person or event (Blumberg *et al.*, 2014). It provides a “snapshot” of thoughts, feelings, or behaviors at a given place and time (Stangor, 2014). This design is used to describe characteristics of a population (Zikmund *et al.*, 2014). On the other hand, exploratory research design is used to gain insights and discover new ideas or when enough is not known about a phenomenon and a problem that has not been clearly defined (Zikmund *et al.*, 2014), while correlational research design is used to assess associations between or among variables or to uncover variables that show systematic relationships with each other (Stangor, 2014).

Finally, the explanatory research design is used to answer questions about the causal relationship between variables. This design looks for reasons and causes, thus providing evidence to support or refute explanations or predictions (Zikmund *et al.*, 2014). Explanatory research design was used in this study as it is appropriate in explaining the nature of certain relationships and investigating the cause effect relationship between study variables used by a researcher (Mark *et al.*, 2009). Lastly the study followed a cross sectional design to investigate and predict intentions of the respondents regarding to whether they would enroll a postgraduate academic program.

Cross-section survey design is used to collect data at one point in time (a short period of time). The key aspect of cross-section design is that it provides a 'snapshot' of the outcome and the characteristics associated with it, at a specific point in time. This helps us to estimate the prevalence of the outcome of interest, as the sample is usually taken

from the entire population (Levin, 2006). Data for the study was collected within a period of one month, beginning from 19th April to 24th May 2019.

3.3 Study Area

This study focused on selected public and private universities found in five counties of Western region of the Republic of Kenya. The choice of this area was based on the representation of major universities in Kenya which are spread across the region. The counties include, Uasin Gishu, Tranzoia, Bungoma, Kakamega and Busia which are all in western Kenya. The region has eight public and seven private universities as indicated in **Table 3.1**. Uasin Gishu County has the largest number of universities in the region (nine) namely, Kisii, Moi, JKUAT, UoE, UoN, University of Eastern Africa Baraton, Catholic University of East Africa, Mount Kenya, and Africa Nazarene University. This is followed by Kakamega County with six; JKUAT, MMUST, UoN, Kenyatta, Mount Kenya and St. Paul’s University. Tranzoia County has four; JKUAT, Moi, Mount Kenya and KAG East University. Bungoma County and Busia County have the least with Bungoma having three; Kibabii, MMUST and Daystar while Busia has only one; Alupe University College of Moi University.

Table 3.1 Universities in Western Kenya Region

PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES	PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES
1. Moi University	1. Mount Kenya University
2. Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology	2. University of Eastern Africa Baraton
3. University of Eldoret	3. Catholic University of East Africa
4. Kisii University	4. KAG East University
5. University of Nairobi	5. Daystar University
6. Masinde Muliro University	6. St. Paul’s University
7. Kibabii University	7. Africa Nazarene University
8. Kenyatta University	

Source: Pre-survey data (2018)

The establishment of universities in this area has witnessed an increase in overall population because of students who enroll for studies, and in the process help in the development process particularly in the already established businesses as well as the setting up of others. For example, most of these universities are unable to accommodate all their students, hence, private hostels are built around this area to provide accommodation thereby bringing along development in the area. It is the number and spread of these universities across the region that prompted its selection for the study with the belief that holding other factors constant, student' behavioral intentions to enroll may not differ much across universities in the country.

3.4 Target Population

The population of interest for this study was the university undergraduate finalist students from two public and two private universities selected randomly from **Table 3.1**. This group was chosen because they were in their final year of study (near completion of their undergraduate studies) and some of them are likely to be seriously considering to furthering their studies (postgraduate) in the near future after graduation. Additionally the majority of this target group is the younger generation which is more well versed with technology (Kulviwat *et al.*, 2014) who spend most of their time using social media platforms, hence the group is a market potential for postgraduate studies. After selecting two public and two private universities from **Table 3.1** in the study area, the researcher further randomly selected two Schools/Faculties from each university which has a target population of 1320 finalist students as shown in **Table 3.2**.

3.5 Sample size

Sampling is the process of selecting several individuals for a study in such a way that they represent the entire population from which they were selected. According to Kibet (2016), the main aim of sampling is to get a representative group, which enables the

researcher to gain information about an entire population when faced with constraints of time, funds and energy. The appropriate sample size of this study was estimated using a standard formula for the known population size for a cross-section research (Takai *et al.*, 2015); based on Yamane's formula given below:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where:

n = sample size

N= population size

e = margin error (the risk the researcher is willing to accept in the study or the error the researcher is willing to accept, Cochran's 1977). For this study, a 3.5% margin of error was considered ideal based on the argument of Kotrlik and Higgins (2001) who states that the general rule to acceptable margins of error in educational and social research should range between 3% to 5%. The 3.5% margin of error was used to increase the sample size of the study. This is further supported by Vukojević (2016), who state that margin of error can be set at 0.1, 0.05 or 0.03, which are ± 10 , 5, or 3% of the true population value, respectively.

Thus, the sample size of this study was:

$$n = \frac{1320}{1+1320(0.035)^2} = \frac{1320}{2.617} = 504$$

Finally, the decision of having a large sample size in this study is also based on suggestions of several authors who posts that detection of conditional indirect effects (moderated mediation), requires high statistical power to avoid Type II errors. This can be achieved by large sample size (Borau *et al.*, 2015; Dawson, 2014; Hayes, 2013; Hayes, 2018; Nyakego, 2017). Since this study takes a quantitative epistemological

paradigm and uses the Hayes moderated mediation model 59 (building on prior studies as elaborated above) the sample size of 504 would give a reliable conclusion and generalization about the population of the study as larger sample size gives more accuracy in the results (Delice, 2010).

3.6 Sampling Techniques

The study used multi-stage sampling technique to obtain its sample size using three stages. According to Sedgwick (2015), multistage sampling technique entails two or more stages of random sampling based on the hierarchical structure of natural clusters within the population. Clusters are groupings of people, for example in this study we have the Universities, Schools/Faculties/programs and students (respondents). In this method, a different type of cluster is randomly sampled at each stage, with clusters nesting each other at successive stages. The final stage of sampling includes the selection of a random sample of people in clusters chosen at the penultimate stage as study respondents (Sedgwick, 2015).

The initial stage involved a simple random sampling technique to identify two public universities from a list of eight and two private universities from a list of seven using random numbers assigned to the universities in Western Kenya as a sampling frame. The selection of two universities from each category was arrived at by dividing the total number of universities in the region by the number in each category ($15/8 = 1.89$ appr. 2 for public and $15/7 = 2.14$ appr. to 2 for private). The second stage involved a simple random sampling of Schools/Faculties from the identified universities to get two from each using random numbers assigned to them from both the public and private universities as shown in **Table 3.2**. Then a survey was done by the researcher (by visiting the institutions) to confirm the programs offered by each Faculty and number

of students registered in each program in the selected universities. The survey revealed the information in **Table 3.2**.

The last stage entailed systematic random sampling to select the respondents of the study from class list of the selected Schools/Faculties. This exercise begun with getting the K^{th} respondent, (interval) which was achieved by dividing the population by the sample size $\left(\frac{N}{n}\right) = \frac{1320}{504} = 2.6$, approximated to 3, implying that the first respondent can be picked between 1 and 3, then questionnaire given to the next respondent at an interval of every 3rd student. To ensure that those who filled the questionnaire were from the classes and Schools/Faculties chosen; the researcher requested (verbally) for nominal lists of the selected groups from the institution management (program coordinators), then randomly selected the respondents in advance by the assistance of the class representatives who later organized for rooms where respondents were given the questionnaire. The researcher/research assistants sought the respondents' consent verbally, in advance before giving them the questionnaire to fill. The questionnaire was handed in immediately after completion with a few instances where some were picked later from class representatives due to the busy schedule of the students because of lectures.

Table 3.2 Target population and Sample size

Selected University	Selected school	Students per School	Student per University	Distribution %	Sample size per school
University of Eldoret	Natural Resource management	220			84
	Environmental studies	103			39
	Sub total	323	323	25%	123
Kibabii University	Business & Economics	196			75
	Education	311			119
	Sub total	507	507	38%	194
Mount Kenya University	Hospitality, Travel & Tourism	67			26
	Business management	163			62
	Sub total	230	230	17%	88
Catholic University	Arts & social science	78			30
	Education	182			69
	Sub total	260	260	20%	99
		Total	1320	100%	504

Source: Survey data (2018)

From **Table 3.2** above it is noted that Kibabii University had the highest number of respondents of 194, with the School of Education taking 119 and School of Business & Economics taking 75. This was followed by University of Eldoret with 123 with School of Natural Resource Management having 84 and School of Environmental Studies 39 while Catholic University of East Africa and Mount Kenya University having the least number of 99 and 88 respondents respectively.

3.7 Data Collection instruments and Procedures

Accurate data collection is essential to maintain the integrity of any research. Both the choice of appropriate data collection methods and the clearly defined guidelines for their proper use reduce the likelihood of errors arising in the final analysis of the results.

3.7.1 Types of data, Sources and Collection Instruments

The study utilized primary sources of data from students at the selected universities and Faculties/Schools to produce quantitative information by the use of a comprehensive, closed ended self-administered questionnaire given to them as the respondents of the study (**Appendix 1**). Thus, the nature of data collected was quantitative. The development of the questionnaire was divided into a number of steps (**section 3.8**) and guided by the objectives of the study.

3.7.2 Data Collection Procedures

Upon the approval of this research thesis, an introductory letter was sought by the researcher from the School of Business and Economics, Moi University which the researcher used to secure a permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) and further institutional permission from respective university authorities and consent of respondents was sought prior to the administration of the questionnaire. Three research assistants who were all PhD students were recruited on the basis of their previous experience in data collection and trained to assist with the delivery of questionnaires to the respondents. The researcher coordinated the process and provided guidance where necessary to the research assistants.

3.8 Measurement of Variables

This study adopted a 7-point Likert scale based on suggestions of prior studies which argue that it provides more varieties of options that may increase the probability of meeting the objective reality of people. A 7-point scale reveals more description about the motif and thus appeals practically to the “faculty of reason” of the participants (Chang, 1994). According to Joshi *et al.*, (2015) respondents’ absolute agreement with the subject of the study may lie between two options provided on a 5 point scale. A 7-

point Likert scale may eliminate this problem by eliminating the dilemma of choosing between two undesirable points on 5-point scale. Hence this dilemma of forced choosing between two equally undesirable point imposed by the 5-point Likert scale may be addressed up to an extent by offering more choices (in between) by a 7-point scale (Finstad, 2010).

Research instruments used in this study were developed using measures from previous studies. The first section of the instrument comprised the variables to be measured. Respondents were asked the extent to which they agreed/disagreed with a series of statements about their perceptions concerning the variables on a 7-point Likert scale of (7) extremely likely/strongly agree to (1) extremely unlikely/strongly disagree. The second section of the instrument comprised the demographic information of the respondents.

3.8.1 Dependent Variable

The dependent variable, students' behavioral intentions to enroll which refers to the prospective students' judgment on the likelihood/unlike-hood of enrolling into postgraduate studies has five (5) items, with two (2) adopted from Ajzen (2011) and three (3) adopted from Zehua and Sheikha (2014) with few modifications to suit the current study. Each question was assessed on a Likert scale of 1 to 7 ranging from 7- extremely likely to 1- extremely unlikely. The questions include;

I plan to enroll for postgraduate studies, I intend to enroll for postgraduate studies in future, My enrollment intention for postgraduate will depend on the institution's general reputation, My enrollment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the University's brand personality, and My enrollment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the University ranking.

3.8.2 Independent Variable

The second variable of this study is social media use which was used as the independent variable. The variable has six items adopted and used in their original form from Zehua and Sheikha (2014) and Constantinides and Stagno (2012) with few modifications. The questions includes; Social media allow people with similar interest to stay connected, Social media (Facebook, WhatsApp) is a necessity in academic studies in this era, the reason I use social media most is it connects me with fellow students worldwide, I normally use social media platforms to get shared experiences through various platforms, I prefer to use social media platforms while searching information on various education programs, I prefer social media platforms due to shared opinions through different forums in relation to education matters.

3.8.3 Mediator Variable

University brand personality variable considered as a mediator in the study has five (5) questions adopted from Sung and Yang (2008) and Rauschnabel *et al.*, (2016). The variable has five dimensions as shown in Appendix 1, personified as, This university is distinctive (unique, curious, & independent), This university is cosmopolitan (networked, international), This university is conscientious (organized, competent, structured, effective), This University is friendly, This university is sophisticated (Upper class, Glamorous, Charming) and This university is exciting (Innovative, Trendy, unique and up to date).

3.8.4 Moderator Variable

The moderator variable, students attitude refers to the degree to which individual student has favorable or unfavorable assessment of the behavior in question (Enrollment). Students were asked on their feelings about enrolling for postgraduate studies after first degree, with the variable measured by seven semantic differential

items to assess attitudes using bipolar evaluative adjectives; For me enrolling for postgraduate study in the near future would be.....” Good - Bad, Wise-Foolish, Useful-Useless, Beneficial-Harmful, Rewarding-Punishing, Desirable-Undesirable and Valuable-Worthless. All items were scored on a 7-point scale, with 7 indicating *extremely*, 6 *quite*, 5 *slightly*, 4 *neither*, 3 *slightly*, 2 *quite*, and 1 *extremely*. These items were adopted from Hennessy, Bleakley, and Fishbein (2012) and Ajzen (2013).

3.8.5 Covariates

Finally, the study had four covariates namely, gender, age, current program of study a student was enrolled in (Education, Business and so on) and the type of institution (Public or Private). For example gender and age have been found to have a significant effect on decision making process (Lee & Kim, 2018; Mortimer & Weeks, 2011). Studies done by Idinga (2015), Awan and Zia (2015), Migin *et al.*, (2015), Levitz (2012) have all indicated that the type and status of an institution have a significant effect on students' enrollment intention decisions, hence should be monitored by being included in the model. Gender was measured as Male and Female. Age was grouped into five categories, types of institution was measured as Public and Private, current study programs were measured in six categories and fee payment in three categories.

3.9 Reliability and Validity of Instruments

The quality of a research study depends to a large extent on the accuracy of the data collection procedures and the instruments used. Reliability and validity measure the relevance and correctness of the data.

3.9.1 Reliability of the Instruments

According to Co-operation and Development (2013) reliability is the ability of the test to consistently yield the same results when repeated measurements are taken.

Reliability is a fundamental component of accuracy; hence it is desirable that the measure produce the same results when carried out under the same circumstances and should also distinguish between changes in the measure due to a genuine change in the condition being measured as opposed to changes that simply represent measurement error (Co-operation & Development, 2013). The questionnaire was tested for reliability by using Cronbach coefficient alpha to determine the internal consistency of the items. In this study, the items were considered reliable if they yield a reliability coefficient of .7 and above. This figure is usually considered respectable and desirable for consistency levels.

3.9.2 Validity of the Instruments

According to Co-operation and Development (2013), validity is the degree to which results obtained from the analysis of data actually represents the phenomenon under study. It is therefore the extent to which an instrument can measure what it ought to measure. This study addressed four approaches to establishing validity: face validity, content validity, criterion-related validity and construct validity. An instrument is considered to have face validity if it provides clear and understandable questions and covers the concept of the study (Co-operation & Development, 2013). To ensure face validity of research tools, the instrument was assessed by research experts (supervisors) on the relevancy of the questions to the research objectives.

According to Creswell (2002), content validity is the degree to which the questions on the instrument and the ratings on those questions reflect all possible questions that could be asked about the content or the construct. This means that the questionnaire contains an adequate range of items that are used to test the concept. According to Mohajan (2018) there is no statistical test to determine whether a measure adequately covers a

content area, content validity usually depends on the judgment of experts in the field which was done in this study by the supervisors and a pilot study done in Moi University. The confusing and vague issues were modified, and the ineffective and non-functioning issues were removed by the recommendation of the reviewers.

Souza, Alexandre, and Guirardello (2017) indicates that criterion validity is the ability of some measure to correlate with other standard measure of similar construct. Criterion validity was established using correlation output as dependent variable is explained by independent variables.

According to Souza *et al.*, (2017), construct valid measures to the extent that the scale measures what it intends to measure (the degree to which a group of items really represents the construct to be measured) and in this study it was established through factor analysis where values greater than .5 were included and those less than .5 dropped from the study.

3.9.3 Pilot Test

Before the actual data collection exercise, a pilot study was carried out in Moi University to ensure the research instrument has appropriate content validity in October 2018. Moi University was randomly picked from a list of eight public universities. The study randomly selected 100 respondents for pre-testing the instrument. According to Van *et al.*, (2010) it is during pre-testing of the instrument that the researcher is able to assess the clarity of the instrument and its ease of use. The study sought opinion from the supervisors and experts in the research field. Items identified as sensitive, confusing, or biased in any way were modified or omitted to increase content validity of the instrument. The results indicated that all items were reliable with Cronbach Alpha

scores above .7 apart from social media use with 6 items scoring .636 (SPSS results attached in **appendix 3**).

3.10 Data Processing, Analysis and Presentation

The basic steps in the analytical process consist of identifying issues, assessing the availability of appropriate data, deciding which techniques are suitable for answering questions of interest, applying relevant methods, evaluating them, summarizing and reporting findings.

3.10.1 Data Processing

Processing of data included coding the responses, cleaning, screening the data and selecting the appropriate data analysis strategy for testing the hypothesis. Coding involved assigning a numeric symbol to enable quick data entry and to minimize errors hence facilitate further analysis. Each item in the questionnaire was assigned a code that, upon completion was entered into a statistical analysis software package SPSS version 23. Cleaning and screening the data included checking for inconsistencies, missing responses, and other errors to ensure accuracy and completeness.

3.10.2 Data Analysis and Presentation

Descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution was done to describe the characteristics of the respondents' general behavior pattern as well as to profile the respondents' personal information. Since this is a study of cause effect relationship, a correlation test was conducted to assess the presence of a relationship between variables. Correlation coefficient test and significant levels were conducted to check the magnitude of the linear relationship between the variables. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was conducted to determine the items reliability and internal consistency of

the instrument. The determinant of correlation matrix was generated to provide the information on the multicollinearity.

A principal component factor analysis with varimax rotation was conducted to cluster the variables of the questionnaire into several factors according to their loadings. Factors with Eigen value less than one were considered insignificant and were excluded from the study. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) criterion and Bartlett's test of statistics were performed as a check to substantiate the appropriateness of conducting a factor analysis and also to examine the sampling adequacy.

3.10.3 Data Transformation

Data transformation was performed to change the data from Likert scale to ratio scale prior to analysis of inferential statistics. This involved moving data from its original data type to a new format using arithmetic method to make it suitable for further analysis. It involved reducing categories, breaking down variables from multiple questions and creating new variables by re-specifying the numerical or logical transformation of data. Means of single scores loaded with items that were used to create composite scores.

Finally, data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 23. Hierarchical and multiple regression analysis using Hayes (2018) model 4 was used to test for direct effects and mediation process, and Hayes (2018) model 59 for testing moderation and moderated mediation effects respectively using Hayes (2019) Process Macro computational tool version 3.4. Findings of the study were then presented through tables, percentages, descriptions, graphs and discussions.

3.11 Assumptions of Regression Model

Before carrying out regression analysis, the researcher tested several assumptions of regression model. This is because, when assumptions are not met, the results may not be accurate or trustworthy, resulting in an error of type I or type II, or an over-or under-estimation of significance or size of effect(s).

3.11.1 Linearity

The first assumption of regression is that all independent variables should have a linear relationship with the dependent variable. This was examined through the use of P-P scatter plot of the scores represented by a straight line (Pallant, 2013) and was also proved through Correlation analysis results.

3.11.2 Normality

Testing for normality is an essential procedure in many parametric tests that are based on the normal distribution (Doornik & Hansen, 2008; Field, 2013). According to Field (2013), a departure from normality is manifested by two measures: Skewness which affect test of means, (it measures the symmetry of a distribution with acceptable range being -2 and +2) while kurtosis largely impacts tests of variance and covariance (used to measure the peakness or flatness of a distribution with acceptable range also being -2 and +2 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007; George & Mallery 2010). Normality was also checked by the use of histogram and finally by using P-P plot which indicate that the data points are close to the diagonal line and do not deviate from it. Finally, since the study used Process Macro with 5000 bootstrapping, none-normality is not an issue as data was resampled several (5000) times.

3.11.3 Homoscedasticity

Homoscedasticity refers to equal levels of variance maintained between independent and dependent variables, which can be tested through Levine's test (Mandil, 2016; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Levine's test examines the null hypothesis which suggests the equality of variances in different groups, however, if the null hypothesis is rejected, the assumption of homogeneity of variances is violated (Field, 2013) and hence should be checked by visual examination of a plot of the standardized residuals (errors) by the standardized predicted value.

3.11.4 Multi-collinearity

This refers to the situation when the independent variables are highly correlated ($R \geq .9$). Multi-collinearity assessment can be carried out using the tolerance and variance inflation factor (VIF). Tolerance addresses the amount of variability in independent variables that is not explained by other independent variables, so the tolerance should be high to minimize the amount of shared variance with the other independent variables (Mandil, 2016). On the other hand, VIF is the inverse of the tolerance value ($VIF = 1/\text{tolerance}$), and its square root \sqrt{VIF} represents the degree to which the standard error has been increased because of multi-collinearity (Hair *et al.*, 2014). According to Garson (2012), if the tolerance value is less than cutoff value .20, the independent should be dropped from the analysis due to multi-collinearity. The rule of thumb is that $VIF > 4.0$ indicates a serious of multicollinearity. Some authors use the more lenient cut-off of $VIF \geq 5$ when multicollinearity is a problem.

3.11.5 Test for outliers

There is a great deal of confusion and contradictory information regarding how researchers are supposed to address issues about outliers (Aguinis *et al.*, 2013). Not all

outliers are harmful, problematic or nuisance that must be fixed by removing them from the analysis (Aguinis *et al.*, 2013; Mahapatra *et al.*, 2020). According to Aguinis *et al.*, (2013) there are three categories of outliers. The first type is error outliers. These are data points which lie at a distance from other data points because of inaccuracies in sampling procedures, observation, recording, data preparation, computation, coding, or error in data manipulation (Aguinis *et al.*, 2013; Mahapatra *et al.*, 2020). Once this error has been identified, the correct procedure is either to adjust the data points to their correct values or to remove such observations from the data set. In addition, the rationale behind the classification of the outlier as an error outlier must be explained in detail (Aguinis *et al.*, 2013).

The second category is called interesting outliers. These are outlying data points that are accurate, which lie at a distance from others, (for example, a group of worst performing students vis-à-vis top performers in a class) which, if studied, may contain valuable knowledge, or lead to novel theoretical insights (Gibbert *et al.*, 2021). Therefore, these type of outliers should not be deleted or removed but further research should be carried out on them as they may contain unexpected knowledge (Aguinis *et al.*, 2013; Leys *et al.*, 2019).

The last category represents influential outliers, which are either model fit or prediction outliers. According to Aguinis *et al.*, (2013), model fit outliers are data points whose presence alters the fit of a model ($R^2, \Delta R^2$) and prediction outliers are data points whose presence alters the estimation of the parameters. Aguinis *et al.*, (2013) suggests that once these type of outliers have been identified, the best way is to either delete or remove them from the data set, use re-specification method by adding additional terms to the regression equation or use of robust approaches which involves a non-OLS

standard such as least absolute deviation, least trimmed squares, M-estimation, and Bayesian statistics (Aguinis *et al.*, 2013). This study identified outliers through Mahalanobis Distance with $p < .001$.

3.12 Model Specification

The purpose of this study was fourfold. First, the study examined whether:

- i. Social media has a direct effect on students' behavioral intentions to enroll (H₀₁)
- ii. Brand personality has a direct effect on students' behavioral intentions to enroll (H₀₂)
- iii. Attitude has a direct effect on students' behavioral intentions to enroll (H₀₃)
- iv. Social media has a direct effect on brand personality (H₀₄)

Secondly, the study analyzed the mediating effect of brand personality on the relationship between social media and students' behavioral intentions to enroll (H₀₅).

Further, this study sought to determine the moderating effect of Attitude on:

- i. The relationship between social media and brand personality (H₀₆)
- ii. Social media and students' behavioral intentions to enroll (H₀₇)
- iii. Brand personality and students' behavioral intentions to enroll (H₀₈)

Finally, the study examined the moderating effect of attitude on the indirect relationship between social media and students' behavioral intentions to enroll via brand personality at different levels of the moderator (H₀₉).

To achieve the first purpose of the study, Hierarchical regression model was used to test for all the direct effects. The hierarchical regression model was considered suitable for direct effects to show if the variables of interest explain the statistically meaningful amount of variance in the dependent variable (the student's behavioral intentions) after

accounting for all other variables. In this framework, several regression models were built by adding variables to a previous model at each step with main interest being to determine whether newly added variables show a significant improvement in R^2 - the proportion of explained variance in the dependent variable by the model (Luo & Azen, 2013; Van Dusen & Nissen, 2019). The Hierarchical model took the form of:

- i. **Model 1:** $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Gender} + \beta_2 \text{Age} + \beta_3 \text{Program} + \beta_4 \text{Institution} + \beta_4 \text{Fees} + \epsilon \dots$. This first model (Model 1) was used to examine how much variance is explained by the demographic characteristics of the respondents (covariates) in the study.
- ii. **Model 2:** $Y = \beta_0 + C + \beta_1 X + \epsilon \dots$. In the next step (Model 2), the independent variable was added to the first model to test how much variance it explains the dependent variable while controlling for the covariates (H_{01}).
- iii. **Model 3:** $Y = \beta_0 + C + \beta_1 X + \beta_2 M + \epsilon \dots$. This model was meant to test the variance accounted for by the mediator in the dependent variable while controlling for the covariates and the independent variable (H_{02}).
- iv. **Model 4:** $Y = \beta_0 + C + \beta_1 X + \beta_2 M + \beta_3 W + \epsilon \dots$. This model was used to test the variance in the dependent variable explained by the moderator while controlling for the covariates, the independent and the mediator variables (H_{03}).

To test for the effect of the independent variable (Social media use) on the mediator (University brand personality) indicated as path a_1 of the conceptual framework, the following equations were applied:

- i. $M = \beta_0 + C + \beta_1 W + \epsilon \dots$ (i) Testing the effect of covariates and moderator on the mediator (University brand personality)
- ii. $M = \beta_0 + C + \beta_1 W + \beta_2 X + \epsilon \dots$ (ii) Testing for the effect of the independent variable (Social media use) on the mediator (University brand personality)

while holding constant the covariates and the moderator variable (students Attitude)H₀₄

Note:

Y= Dependent variable (students' behavioral intentions to enroll)

β_0 = the constant, β_1 , β_2 and β_3 are parameters of estimates, ϵ - error term

C= Covariates (Gender, Age, program, type of institution and fee payment)

X= independent variable (Social media use), M = Mediator (University brand personality), W = Moderator (Students attitude).

To achieve the second objective of the study (mediating effect), Hayes (2018) model 4 was used. The indirect effect was tested using a percentile bootstrap estimation approach with 5000 samples. The study followed the work of Zhao *et al.*, (2010) in relation to the interpretation of the mediation model. According to the authors, Baron and Kenny classification of full, partial, and no mediation is misleading due to a one dimensional conception of mediation. Zhao *et al.*, (2010) identified three patterns consistent with mediation and two with non-mediation;

- i. *Complementary mediation*: Mediated effect ($a \times b$) and direct effect (C') both exist and point at the same direction.
- ii. *Competitive mediation*: Mediated effect ($a \times b$) and direct effect (C') both exist and point in opposite directions.
- iii. *Indirect-only mediation*: Mediated effect ($a \times b$) exists, but no direct effect.
- iv. *Direct-only non-mediation*: Direct effect (C') exists, but no indirect effect.
- v. *No-effect non-mediation*: Neither direct effect nor indirect effect exists.

Zhao *et al.*, (2010) argue that to establish mediation, the indirect effect should be significant. If the indirect path $a \times b$ and direct path C' are of the same sign, they signal

complementary mediation and if the indirect path $a \times b$ and the direct path C' are of opposite signs, they signal competitive mediation.

This therefore means that the first thing for researchers to note is whether the direct effect C' is significant. It tells you what type of mediation or non-mediation you have:

- i. If $a \times b$ is significant but C' is not, you have indirect-only mediation.
- ii. If $a \times b$ is not significant but C' is, you have direct-only non-mediation.
- iii. If neither $a \times b$ nor C' is significant, you have no effect non-mediation.
- iv. If both $a \times b$ and C' are significant, determine the sign of $a \times b \times C'$ by multiplying the three coefficients, or by multiplying C' by the mean value of $a \times b$ from the bootstrap output. If $a \times b \times C'$ is positive, it is **complementary mediation**; if $a \times b \times C'$ is negative, it is **competitive mediation**.

The following equations were used as guided by MacKinnon (2012) that;

- X must influence M... $M = a_0 + C + a_1X + \epsilon_m$
- M must influence Y... $Y = b_0 + C + b_1M + \epsilon_y$
- Direct effect... $Y = C_0 + C + C'X + b_1M + \epsilon_y$
- Indirect effect..... $a_1 \times b_1$ or $C - C'$
- $Y = C_0 + C + CX + \epsilon$ (Total effect)

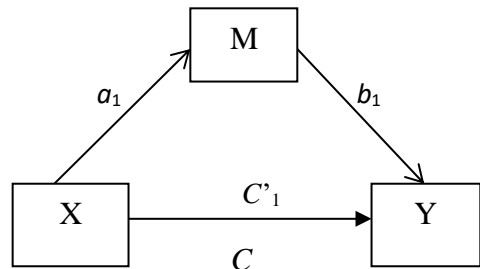


Figure 3.1: Hayes (2018) Mediation Model

To achieve the **third** (moderation) and the **fourth** (moderated mediation) objectives, Hayes (2018) model 59 was used. This is shown by the following statistical equations derived from Figure 3.2 (One direct effect of **X** on **Y**, conditional on **W**- testing for moderation effects).

- i. $M = a_0 + C + a_1X + a_2W + a_3XW + \epsilon = (a_0 + a_1 + a_3W) \dots \dots \dots$ Hypothesis **H₀₆**
(Path indicated as a_1 on the conceptual framework)

ii. $Y = C'_0 + C + C'_1X + C'_2W + C'_3XW + \epsilon = (C'_0 + C'_1 + C'_3W)$
Hypothesis **H07** (Path indicated as **C'** on the conceptual framework)

iii. $Y = b_0 + C + b_1M + b_2W + b_3MW + \epsilon = (b_0 + b_1 + b_3W)$ Hypothesis **H08**
 (Path indicated as **b1** on the conceptual framework)

One indirect effect(s) of **X** on **Y**, conditional on **W**: (**Moderated mediation Model**)

$Y = a_0b_1 + a_1Xb_1 + a_2Wb_1 + a_3XWb_1 + a_0b_2 + a_1Xb_2 + a_2Wb_2 + a_3XWb_2$, hence.....

$Y = a_1b_1 + a_3b_1W + a_1b_2W + a_3b_2W = (a_1 + a_3W)(b_1 + b_2W)$ **H09** indicated as $(a_1+dW)(b_1+fW)$ in Figure 2.2. The following was the statistical diagram and model used for the moderation and moderated mediation analysis.

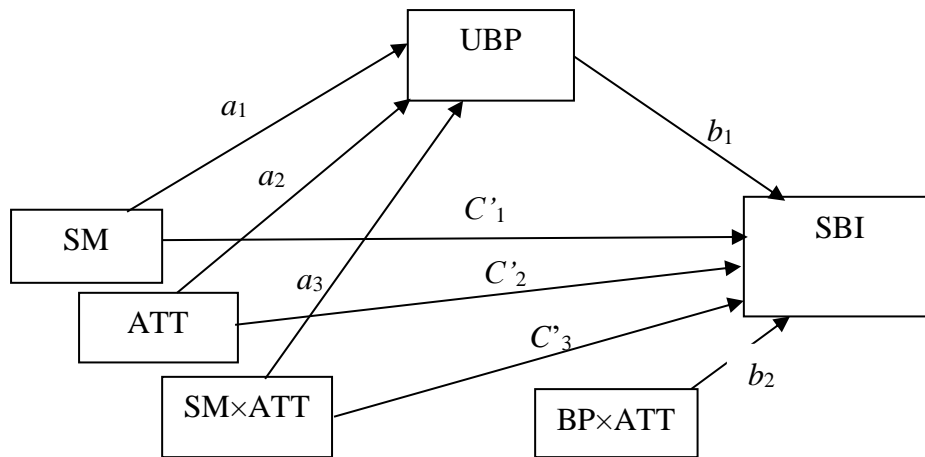


Figure 3.2 Statistical diagram for Hayes Model 59
 Source: Hayes (2018)

Where:

Y= (SBI) is the dependent variable - Students' behavioral intentions to enroll,

X= (SM) Is Independent variable = Social media use,

M= (UBP) Mediator variable = University brand personality

W= (ATT) is the Moderator variable – Students attitude,

C= Covariates (Gender, Age, type of program, institution and fee payment mode),

α_{1-3} and $b_1, b_2, C'_1 - C'_3$ = coefficients of parameter estimate

3.13 Ethical Considerations

To obtain access and collect data from the sampled Universities and Schools/Faculties, permission was obtained from NACOSTI, County Commissioners, County Directors of Education of the respective Counties, Vice chancellors of each Public University and Directors of Education from each Private University (See authorities **Appendix 12**).

Before administering the questionnaire to the respondents, instructions were given to the participants with assurance that the information given out in the questionnaire was purely for academic purposes. They were also informed that their participation was voluntary, and one had a right to participate or end their participation if they so wished. The researcher's individual values of sincerity, honesty and integrity and the treatment of other research subjects (respondents) was based on informed consent, confidentiality, and courtesy (Walliman, 2017).

Respondents' were also guaranteed protection through anonymity. Anonymity and confidentiality of the respondents was respected by ensuring that the research instruments did not bear names of the respondents. Additionally, the researcher adhered to the Privacy Principle in order to ensure openness, fairness and flexibility with the respondents when collecting data (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). Finally, the researcher took the responsibility to only collect, analyze and present data required to fulfill the objectives of the study without any manipulations.

Table 3.3: Statistical tools for Hypotheses Testing.

	Hypotheses	Test statistics	Decision Point
H ₀₁	Social media has no significant effect on students' Behavioral Intentions	$\beta, p\text{-v}, F, \Delta R^2,$ $t\text{-value}$	Sign. at $p \leq .05,$ Or $t \geq 1.96.$
H ₀₂	Brand personality has no significant effect on students' behavioral intentions	$\beta, p\text{-v}, F, \Delta R^2,$ $t\text{-value}$	Sign. at $p \leq .05$ or $t \geq 1.96$
H ₀₃	Attitude has no significant effect on students' behavioral intentions	$\beta, p\text{-v}, F, \Delta R^2,$ $t\text{-value}$	Sign. at $p \leq .05$ or $t \geq 1.96$
H ₀₄	Social media has no direct effect on brand personality	$\beta, p\text{-v}, F, \Delta R^2,$ $t\text{-value}$	Sign. at $p \leq .05$ or $t \geq 1.96$
H ₀₅	Brand personality has no mediating effect on the relationship between social media and students' behavioral intentions	$\beta, p\text{-v}, t\text{-value},$ LLCI and ULCI	Sign. with both LLCI & ULCI are none zeros
H ₀₆	Attitude has no moderating effect on the relationship between social media and brand personality	$\beta, p\text{-v}, F, \Delta R^2,$ $t\text{-value}$	Sign. at $p \leq .05$ or $t \geq 1.96$
H ₀₇	Attitude has no moderating effect on the relationship between social media and students' behavioral intentions to enroll	$\beta, p\text{-v}, F, \Delta R^2,$ $t\text{-value}$	Sign. at $p \leq .05,$ or $t \geq 1.96$
H ₀₈	Attitude has no moderating effect on the relationship between brand personality and students' behavioral intentions to enroll	$\beta, p\text{-v}, F, \Delta R^2,$ $t\text{-value}$	Sign. at $p \leq .05,$ or $t \geq 1.96$
H ₀₉	Attitude has no moderating effect on the strength of the indirect effect of the relationship between social media and students' behavioral intentions via brand personality	$\beta,$ LLCI and ULCI	None zeros in both LLCI & ULCI

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of data related to the study variables derived from the model discussed in the previous chapter. The chapter focuses on the analysis, interpretation, and discussion of the study findings. It involves data processing, response rate, missing data, demographic characteristics for the respondents and presentation of descriptive and inferential statistical results. All results were reported based on APA 2019 manual (2 decimal points).

4.1 Data Processing, Preparation, and Screening

Data processing involved classification and summarization of data in order to make them manageable to analysis. It also involved determining the availability of suitable data, deciding on which methods were appropriate for answering the questions of interest, applying the methods, evaluating, summarizing, and communicating the results.

4.1.1 Data Processing

Processing of data included coding the responses, cleaning, screening the data and selecting the appropriate data analysis strategy for testing the hypothesis. Coding involved assigning a numeric symbol to enable quick data entry and to minimize errors during the analysis. Each item in the questionnaire was assigned a code that upon completion was entered into a statistical analysis software package IBM SPSS version 23. Cleaning and screening the data involved checking for inconsistencies, missing responses, and other errors to ensure accuracy and completeness.

4.2 Response Rate

The researcher with the aid of three research assistants distributed self-administered questionnaire to undergraduate finalist students from four universities, from Western region of the Republic of Kenya (as discussed in the previous chapter). This exercise was done in a period of one month (April 19th to May 24th) in 2019. Five hundred and four (504) questionnaires were distributed to the respondents, out of which four hundred and seventy-three (473) were returned. However, after screening the data only four hundred and sixty-eight (468) were dully filled but five (5) of them were dropped due to the respondents' inability to respond to the questions. This represents a response rate of 93% which shows a good representation of the study population.

4.3 Missing Data

Missing data are observations in the measuring instrument which exist but have not been recorded or recorded and then lost. According to Smuk (2015) the best way to avoid missing data issues is to have a good study design which reduces the chance of missing data occurring. Often the simplest method for handling missing data in the analysis, particularly in a questionnaire, is simply to use only those records which have been fully observed (Smuk, 2015). Missing data affects inference and prediction of the findings (Marlin, 2008).

Consequently, the researcher and his assistants attempted to reduce missing values right from the field at the time of questionnaire collection. Upon receipt of the completed questionnaire, the researcher/research assistants quickly checked by ensuring that all questions were appropriately answered. Attention of the respondents was drawn if a question(s) are ignored and asked kindly to complete filling the questionnaire accurately as guided in the works of Aminu and Shariff (2014). According to Hair, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2013), missing values should be replaced using mean when there

are less than 5% missing values per item. Before data analysis, descriptive statistics were used to check if any values were missing during data entry. Any anomaly was rectified immediately. The researcher received four hundred and seventy-three (473) questionnaires as indicated in **Table 4.1**, however only 468 were used in the final tally. In consultation with the supervisors, the five incomplete questionnaires were removed from the final tally of the study due to non-response.

Table 4.1: Questionnaires Returned for Analysis

Response	No. of questionnaires	Percentage (%)
Effective Questionnaires	468	99%
Returned but Defective	5	1%
Total	473	100%

Source: Research data (2019)

4.4 Respondents' Demographic Information

This section discusses the demographic characteristics of the sample respondents in the study area. This information is used to provide a base for further analysis of the specific research objectives and their findings using descriptive statistics, frequency tables and percentages. The information is vital because it sheds light on the nature and caliber of the respondents from which interpretation would be justifiably made. An examination of the questionnaire responses for each of the 468 respondents pertains to gender, age, type of institution (Public or Private), Faculty and how they pay their fees for the current program revealed the data in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents (N= 468)

Demographic factor		Number of respondents	Percentage number of respondents
Gender:	Female	224	47.9
	Male	244	52.1
	Total	468	100
Age:	Below 20	13	2.8
	21-25	316	67.5
	26-30	105	22.4
	31-35	24	5.1
	Above 36	10	2.1
	Total	468	100
Type of Institution:	Public	292	62.4
	Private	176	37.6
	Total	468	100
Faculty/Program:	Education	175	37.4
	Business & Economics	127	27.1
	Environmental Studies	36	7.7
	Natural Resource Management	79	16.9
	Arts & Social Sciences	27	5.8
	Hospitality, Tourism & Travels	24	5.1
	Total	468	100
Fees Payment:	Privately sponsored	237	50.6
	Government Sponsored	206	44.0
	Sponsored by Employer.	25	5.3
	Total	468	100

Source: Research data (2019)

4.4.1 Respondents' Gender

The gender distribution of respondents shows that majority were male with a 52.1%, (n= 244), while female was represented by 47.9%, (n= 224). These findings show gender sensitive as almost equal number of respondents from the two genders were involved in the study.

4.4.2 Respondents' Age

The findings of this study indicate that majority of the respondents were those whose age ranges from 21 – 25, (n=316) with a (67.5%) which was followed by those aged

between 26-30 years with a 22.4 %, (n=105). The third respondents' group were those of ages 31-35 representing 5.1% (n=24), then those aged below 20 (n=13, 2.8%) and above 36 (n=10, 2.1%) were the least in this study. This implies that most of the respondents in this study are aged between 21-30 representing 90 %, (n=421), hence viewpoints of different age groups from within the population have been captured which is essential in the context of the present study.

4.4.3 Respondents' type of Institutions and Faculty

The demographic statistics further reveals that 292 of the respondents (62.4%) were from public universities while 176 (37.6%) were from private universities, with Faculty of Education and Business having the majority of respondents of 175 and 127 (37.4%, 27.1%) respectively. This was followed by the faculty of Natural resource management with 79 (16.9%) and Environmental studies having 36 (7.7%) while Arts & Social Science and Hospitality, Tourism & Travel had the least with 27 (5.8%) and 24 (5.1%) respectively.

4.4.4 Respondents' Fee Payment Sponsorship

Lastly, in relation to school fees payment, the study indicates that 237 (50.6%) were privately self-sponsored, while 206 (44%) were government sponsored students with only 25 (5.3%) sponsored by their employers.

4.5 T-Test and ANOVA Results

An independent-samples t-test was run on a random sample of the study to determine if there was a mean difference between Female and Male responses on the study variables. Findings in Table 4.3 indicate that in terms of gender, there was no significant difference between Female and Male respondents in relation to students' behavioral intentions to enroll, social media use, university brand personality and attitude as

determined by the t-test with $t = .23$, $p = .82$, $t = .62$, $p = .54$, $t = .09$, $p = .93$ and $t = -.69$, $p = .49$ respectively.

Table 4.3: T-Test for Gender on Study Variables

Variable	Gender	N	Mean score	Std. dev	<i>t</i>	Sig
Students' intentions to Enroll	Female	224	5.74	.86	.23	.82
	Male	244	5.72	.81		
	Total	468	5.73	.83		
Social media Use	Female	224	5.72	.94	.62	.54
	Male	244	5.67	.93		
	Total	468	5.69	.93		
University Brand Personality	Female	224	5.58	.96	.09	.93
	Male	244	5.58	.86		
	Total	468	5.58	.92		
Students Attitude	Female	224	6.09	.79	-.69	.49
	Male	244	6.14	.81		
	Total	468	6.12	.80		

Source: Research data, (2019)

From **Table 4.4** respondents' age gives mixed results. Responses on students' behavioral intentions to enroll and social media use had similar opinions in terms of their age as there were no significant differences in their responses. However, respondents' age statistically shows significant difference in responses and opinions pertaining to university brand personality, $F = 2.79$, $p = .03$ with those aged between 21-25 having the highest mean score of 5.67 and a standard deviation of .86. Similarly, responses relating to students attitude also indicates significant differences with $F = 4.27$, $p = .002$ with those aged above 36 years having the highest mean score of 6.41 with a standard deviation .57. These differences can be derived from the theory of selection, optimization with compensation (Baltes and Baltes, 1990; Baltes and Carstensen, 1996; Baltes, 1997). This theory argues that older individuals continue functioning well by selecting less activities, making sure they carry out these activities as effective as possible and compensate for shortcomings, caused by old age. When we

carry over this argument to brands, the theory predicts a selection of fewer brands, but a stronger relationship with the chosen brands as age progresses (Sikkel, 2013).

These results on students age, attitude and university brand personality is in line with the findings of Munaf *et al.* (2009), whose study reveals that the variables are important predictors of customers' brand loyalty. The findings can be further explained by Sikkel (2013), who argues that when young consumers perceive the future as attractive and full of new possibilities and new products as fun and exciting, brand relations and attitude becomes stronger, but the older feels less excited about the future and the less inclined to innovations, thus differences in age gives different perceptions in relation to university brand personality and individuals attitude.

Table 4.4: ANOVA Test by Age

Variable	Age	N	Mean	Std.dev	F	sig
Students' Intentions to Enroll	Below 20	13	5.32	1.06	1.77	.13
	21-25	316	5.77	.77		
	26-30	105	5.68	.83		
	31-35	24	5.73	1.20		
	Above 36	10	5.30	1.14		
	Total	468	5.73	.83		
Social Media Use	Below 20	13	5.58	.92	1.89	.11
	21-25	316	5.73	.88		
	26-30	105	5.56	1.00		
	31-35	24	6.01	1.09		
	Above 36	10	5.30	1.33		
	Total	468	5.69	.93		
University Brand Personality	Below 20	13	5.03	1.05	2.79	.03
	21-25	316	5.67	.91		
	26-30	105	5.45	.83		
	31-35	24	5.36	1.21		
	Above 36	10	5.48	.83		
	Total	468	5.58	.92		
Students Attitude	Below 20	13	5.43	1.01	4.27	.002
	21-25	316	6.18	.75		
	26-30	105	5.98	.88		
	31-35	24	6.07	.74		
	Above 36	10	6.41	.57		
	Total	468	6.12	.80		

Source: Research data (2019)

Responses on the type of institution students are enrolled also provided mixed results. The findings in **Table 4.5** indicate that there was no statistically significant difference in students' responses regardless of the institution type they were enrolled in relation to university brand personality and their attitude with $F= 2.59, p =.11$ and $F= 2.32, p =.13$ respectively. However, results relating to students' behavioral intentions to enroll shows that there is statistically significant difference in responses with $F= 30.45, p =.000$ with public institutions having the highest mean score of 5.89, and standard deviation of .73 compared to private institutions with mean of 5.46 and a standard deviation of .92. In addition, responses on social media use were also found to have significant differences with $F= 18.56, p =.000$ with public institutions having the highest mean score of 5.83 and a standard deviation of .83 compared to the private institutions which has a mean score of 5.46 and a standard deviation of 1.04.

These findings are supported by prior studies of Idinga (2015), Awan and Zia (2015), Migin *et al.*, (2015), Levitz (2012) who have all indicated that the type and status of an institution affects students' enrollment intention decisions. These differences can be further explained in terms of socioeconomic status of the household, the degree of institution's accessibility, the cost of schooling, parents' perceptions of the institution's quality, and their perceptions of the available employment opportunities in the region.

Type of institution and social media use results is supported by Mingle *et al.*, (2016), whose study indicates that majority of respondents from private institutions spent more hours online (WhatsApp and Facebook) as compared to counterparts in the public. This is further supported by Jessen and DiMartino (2016), who asserts that institutions with high-status and well-funded have developed powerful Web sites, very active social media platforms and YouTube outlets that enhances engagement with their

stakeholders which create a perception of quality (prestige) through marketing. According to the authors, private institutions have Web sites with highly interactive graphics, glossy pictures, and high-quality videos compared to the public institution due to poor funding and minimal support from their government. However, the results of this study show contrary opinion in terms of the mean responses which might be explained in terms of the number of students from both types of institution.

Table 4.5: ANOVA Test by Institution Type

Variable	Institution Type	N	Mean score	Std Dev	F	sig
Students Behavioral Intentions to enroll	Public	292	5.89	.73	30.45	.000
	Private	176	5.46	.92		
	Total	468	5.73	.83		
Social Media Use	Public	292	5.83	.83	18.56	.000
	Private	176	5.46	1.04		
	Total	468	5.69	.93		
University Brand Personality	Public	292	5.63	.90	2.59	.11
	Private	176	5.49	.95		
	Total	468	5.58	.92		
Students Attitude	Public	292	6.07	.86	2.32	.13
	Private	176	6.19	.69		
	Total	468	6.12	.80		

Source: Research data (2019)

Results on the type of current program a student is enrolled in relation to the study variables reveals that responses on university brand personality were not statistically difference among the groups with $F= 1.52$, $p =.18$. However, the findings indicate a statistically significant difference among the responses in relation to the current program and students' behavioral intentions to enroll ($F= 4.01$, $p =.001$) with the Faculty of Environmental studies having the highest mean score of 5.97 and a standard of .66. Additionally, responses on social media also shows significant differences ($F=$

3.48, $p = .004$) with the same Faculty of Environmental studies having the highest mean score of 5.95 and a standard deviation of .78. Finally, responses on students' attitude also showed a statistically significant difference ($F = 3.85$, $p = .002$) with the Faculty of Arts & Social Science having the highest mean score of 6.32 and a standard deviation of .60.

Findings of program type and students' behavioral intentions supported by the argument of Eagan *et al.*, (2013) who states that student's choice of college and study program is based on students' interest which drives future action. The authors argue that individuals predisposed to pursuing advanced education have a much greater likelihood of actually enrolling in advanced degree program. This therefore implies that students' aspiration, career job opportunities or expectations of employment (De Jorge-Moreno *et al.*, 2012; Safian, 2012) will determine the type of program a student will enroll.

Finally, findings on the type of study program in relation to social media use ($F = 3.48$, $p = .004$) and students' attitude ($F = 3.85$, $p = .002$) shows a statistically significant differences in responses among the groups. This can be explained in terms of the influences from families, friends, peers and lecturers guidance or advise to students in choosing a particular study program through social media platforms or one on one interaction (Wagner & Fard, 2009). The findings are supported by Thoene (2012), who indicates that social media platforms are used by students to obtain sales information, adverts and promotions of study programs which may help in their final decision making process. Boateng and Amankwaa (2016) also argue that today, social media is being adopted by institutions of higher learning and has become a significant forum for students to interact with their professors, fellow students, and other higher authorities

across the board. This engagement does not only aid students in choosing their study programs but also shapes and alters their personal beliefs and attitude to choose (Bidin *et al.*, 2018).

Table 4.6: ANOVA Test by Program Type

Variable	Program Type	N	Mean	SD	F	Sig
Behavioral Intentions	Education	175	5.75	.75	4.01	.001
	Business management	127	5.74	.73		
	Environmental studies	36	5.97	.66		
	Natural Resource management	79	5.83	.71		
	Arts & Social Science	27	5.19	1.41		
	Hospitality, Tourism & Travels	24	5.40	1.28		
	Total	468	5.73	.83		
Social Media Use	Education	175	5.61	.93	3.48	.004
	Business management	127	5.81	.72		
	Environmental studies	36	5.95	.78		
	Natural Resource management	79	5.78	.83		
	Arts & Social Science	27	5.57	1.37		
	Hospitality, Tourism & Travels	24	5.10	1.49		
	Total	468	5.69	.93		
University Brand Personality	Education	175	5.62	.88	1.52	.18
	Business management	127	5.60	.93		
	Environmental studies	36	5.49	.85		
	Natural Resource management	79	5.57	.85		
	Arts & Social Science	27	5.16	1.39		
	Hospitality, Tourism & Travels	24	5.78	.66		
	Total	468	5.58	.92		
Attitude	Education	175	6.21	.81	3.85	.002
	Business	127	6.20	.69		
	Environmental studies	36	5.92	.95		
	Natural Resource management	79	5.87	.72		
	Arts & Social Science	27	6.32	.60		
	Hospitality, Tourism & Travels	24	5.82	1.16		
	Total	468	6.12	.80		

Source: Research data (2019)

4.6 Reliability Test of the Research Instruments

This study adopted measures from already tested constructs, but it was necessary to carry out a test of the research instrument by examining if all items could produce consistent and valid results. This is in line with Co-operation and Development (2013) who state that reliability is a fundamental component of accuracy, thus it is desirable

that the measure produce the same results when carried out under the same circumstances and should also distinguish between changes in the measure due to a genuine change in the condition being measured as opposed to changes that simply represent measurement error.

In this study any items that have consistently low correlations across the board were removed from the instrument to make it more reliable. Furthermore, the individual items Cronbach's alpha was considered to determine which item could be deleted to improve the reliability of the questionnaire as suggested by Mun *et al.*, (2015). Hence this study provides the full list of items in the final version of the reliability test output of the instrument (**Appendix 4**)

4.6.1 Reliability Test for Students' Behavioral Intentions to Enroll

Table 4.7 shows the overall Cronbach's *Alpha* for the 5 items of students' behavioral intentions to enroll as .71 which is at the acceptable range. The individual items in the table guide us to decide whether any of them need to be removed to improve the overall Cronbach's *Alpha*. The *Corrected Item - Total Correlation* column reveals how much each item correlates with the overall questionnaire score. Correlations less than $r = .30$ indicate that the item may not belong on the scale, hence should be removed. The Cronbach's *Alpha* column shows how much it will be increased if the item is deleted from the instrument. Results from this table shows that there is no item that looks problematic as all items have $r > .30$ and Cronbach's *Alpha* $< .71$, (Gliem & Gliem, 2003), therefore all items are retained.

Table 4.7: Reliability Test for Students' Behavioral intentions to Enroll

Cronbach's Alpha	Corrected	Cronbach's
Total number of Items	Item-Total	If Item
	Correlation	Deleted
I plan to enroll for postgraduate studies	.35	.70
I intend to enroll for postgraduate in future	.39	.69
My enrollment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the institutions' general reputation	.50	.64
My enrolment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the university's brand personality	.52	.64
My enrollment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the university's ranking	.56	.61

Source: Research data (2019)

4.6.2 Reliability Test for Social Media Use

A reliability analysis was carried out on social media use items scale comprising of 6 items. **Table 4.8** indicates the overall Cronbach's alpha is at the acceptable reliability, $\alpha = .74$. Most items appear to be worthy of retention, resulting in a decrease in the alpha if deleted. The one exception to this was item one (1), which would increase the alpha to $\alpha = .75$. As such, removal of this item should be considered as also the *Corrected Item - Total Correlation* column reveals that it correlates with the overall questionnaire score with the least $r = .32$. The removal of item one (1) will increase the Cronbach's alpha from .74 to .75.

Table 4.8: Reliability Test for Social Media Use

Cronbach's Alpha	.74	Corrected	Cronbach's
Total number of Items	6	Item-Total	If Item
		Correlation	Deleted
Social media allows people with similar interest to stay connected		.32	.75
Social media (Facebook, WhatsApp) is a necessity in academic studies in this era		.48	.71
The reason I use social media most is it connects me with fellow students worldwide		.49	.70
I normally use social media platforms to get shared experiences through various platforms		.55	.69
I prefer to use social media platforms while searching various education programs		.58	.68
I prefer social media platforms due to shared opinions through different forums in relation to education matters		.46	.71

Source: Research data (2019)

4.6.3 Reliability Test for University Brand Personality

Table 4.9 shows the overall Cronbach's *Alpha* for university brand personality 5 items as .75 which is at the acceptable range. The table further guides us to decide whether there are any measuring items that need to be removed using *Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted* and the correlations column for any item that has $r < .30$ which indicate that the item does not belong on the scale. From the table there is no item that looks problematic considering this criterion. This is because the *Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted* column which gives us the improved Cronbach's alpha score that we would get if each item were removed from the questionnaire shows that all the items should be retained since all of them have score less than .75 and at the accepted range.

Table 4.9: Reliability test for University Brand Personality

Cronbach's Alpha	.75	Corrected	Cronbach's α
Total number of Items	5	Item-Total	If Item
		Correlation	Deleted
This university is Distinctive (Unique, curious& independent)		.41	.74
This university is Cosmopolitan (Networked, International)		.50	.71
This university is friendly		.53	.70
This university is Sophisticated (Upper class, Glamorous, Charming)		.55	.69
This university is exciting (Innovative, Trendy, Unique & Up-to-date)		.57	.68

Source: Research data (2019)

4.6.4 Reliability Test for Students Attitude

A reliability analysis test carried out on students' attitude measuring scale comprising of 7 items produced Cronbach's alpha of .86 as indicated in **Table 4.10**. This table further guides us to decide whether there are any items to be removed in order to increase the Cronbach's alpha. Additionally, the *Corrected Item - Total Correlation* column indicates how much each item correlates with the overall questionnaire score. Since all items from the table indicates a lower Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha < .86$) if item deleted from the instrument and the *Corrected Item - Total Correlation* column shows an $r > .50$, all the 7 items are retained.

Table 4.10: Reliability Test for Students' Attitude

Cronbach's Alpha	.86	Corrected	α
Total number of Items	7	Item-Total	If Item Deleted
		Correlation	
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies would be.....good/bad?		.60	.85
For me, enrolling for postgraduatewould be.....wise/foolish?		.64	.84
For me, enrolling for postgraduate.....would be.....useful/useless?		.63	.84
For me, enrolling for postgraduate...would be.....beneficial/harmful?		.65	.84
For me, enrolling for postgraduate...would be....rewarding/punishing?		.63	.84
For me, enrolling for postgraduate...would be....desirable/undesirable?		.68	.84
For me, enrolling for postgraduate... would be.....valuable/worthless?		.59	.85

Source: Research Data (2019)

4.7 Factor Analysis

Before testing the hypotheses, factorability of the 23 items of the study were examined to identify a small number of items which were used to test relationship among interrelated variables, and also to investigate the validity of each construct through measurement purification process, items with factor loadings less than .5 were omitted from the analyses to increase construct validity. According to Souza *et al.*, (2017), construct validity measures the degree to which a scale measures what it intends to measure and it is assessed by factor analysis in this research study.

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was .874, above the commonly recommended value of .6 (Fisher, 2005), and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant with Chi-square of 3235.89, at $df= 253$ and a significant level of $p = .000$. Finally, the communalities were all above .3, with exception of one item (Social Media allows people with similar interest to stay connected) which had a score of .22 (**Appendix 5**), further confirming that each item shared some common variance with other items. Communalities relate to the percentage of variation in the original variable

which is accounted for by the high loading factors. Given these overall indicators, factor analysis was deemed to be suitable with items of the study (**Table 4.11**).

Principal components analysis was used with an objective of identifying and computing the composite scores for the factors underlying the study. Initial Eigen values indicated that the first four factors explained 24.5%, 12.9%, 7.3% and 5.9% of the variance, respectively. Solutions for these factors were each examined using varimax rotation of the factor loading matrix. The four-factor solution, which explained 50.6% of the variance, was preferred because of: its previous theoretical support as discussed in the measurement section of chapter three of this document; the Eigen values scores which is greater than 1 on the screen plot (**Figure 5.1 Appendix 5**) after the four factors; and the insufficient number of primary loadings and difficulty of interpreting the subsequent factors.

Table 4.11: KMO Bartlett's Test and Variance

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy			.874
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Approx. Chi-Square			3235.89
	<i>df</i>		253
	<i>sig</i>		.000
	Initial	Eigenvalues	Cumulative
Component	Total	% of Variance	%
1. Attitude	5.64	24.52	24.52
2. Social media	2.97	12.92	37.44
3. Brand personality	1.67	7.26	44.70
4. Students' behavioral intentions	1.35	5.86	50.57

Source: Research data (2019)

Table 4.12 indicates the factor loading of each item for all the variables of the study sorted by size. Any item that fails to meet the criteria of having a factor loading value of greater than .5 and does not load on only one factor was dropped from the study as

suggested by literature (Souza *et al.*, 2017). The table indicates that only 20 items were sorted and clustered into four components as three (3) items were dropped.

The seven (7) items measuring component one (1) are all students attitude related scales as adopted from Hennessy *et al.* (2012) and Ajzen (2013); component two (2) has five (5) items adopted from Zehua and Sheikha (2014) and Constantinides and Stagno (2012) measuring Social media use , with one (1) item “Social media allows people with similar interest to stay connected” dropped from the study as it did not load.

The table further indicates that all five (5) items adopted from Sung and Yang (2008) and Rauschnabel *et al.* (2016) measuring University brand personality loaded under component three (3). Finally, three items (3) adopted from Ajzen (2011) and Zehua and Sheikha (2014) measuring students’ behavioral intentions to enroll loaded on component four (4) with two items; “I plan to enroll for postgraduate studies” and “I intend to enroll for postgraduate in future” did not load, hence removed from the study (see Appendix 5 for SPSS original results).

Table 4.12: Summary of the Rotated Component analyses for the variables

Variables and measurement items. (Note: 1- 4 component 1 to 4)	1	2	3	4
Students' Behavioral Intentions items loaded under component 4				
I plan to enroll for postgraduate studies (Removed)				
I intend to enroll for postgraduate in future (Removed)				
My enrollment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the institutions' general reputation				.73
My enrolment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the university's brand personality				.70
My enrollment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the university's ranking				.72
Social Media items loaded under component 2				
Social media allows people with similar interest to stay connected (Removed)				
Social media (Facebook, whatsapp) is a necessity in academic studies in this era				.62
The reason I use social media most is it connects me with fellow students worldwide				.71
I use social media platforms to get shared experiences through various platforms				.67
I prefer to use social media platforms while searching various education programs				.69
I prefer social media platforms due to shared opinions thru different forums in relation to education matters				.57
Brand Personality items loaded under component 3				
This university is Distinctive (Unique, curious& independent)				.57
This university is Cosmopolitan (Networked, International)				.62
This university is friendly				.67
This university is Sophisticated (Upper class, Glamorous, Charming)				.75
This university is exciting (Innovative, Trendy, Unique & Up-to=date)				.73
Attitude loaded as component 1				
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies would be.....Good -Bad				.70
For me, enrollingWise-Foolish				.73
For me, enrollingUseful-Useless				.73
For me, enrollingBeneficial-Harmful				.72
For me, enrollingRewarding-Punishing				.71
For me, enrollingDesirable-Undesirable				.78
For me, enrollingValuable-Worthless				.71

Source: Research data (2019)

After deletion of all items that did not meet the criteria from the measurement instrument, it was prudent to re-run factor analysis again to check for any improvement in the variance explained by the remaining 20 items. The study reveals information in Table 4.14 indicating a KMO of .866 and Bartlett's test of sphericity which was significant with Chi-square of 2892.15, at $df = 190$ and a significant level of .000. The results indicate that communalities for all items was above .4 and there was an improvement in the variance explained by each variable with initial Eigen values of the four factors increased from 24.5% to 25.5%, 12.9% to 14.6%, 7.3% to 8.2% and 5.9% to 6.6% of the variance respectively. The cumulative variance explained by the four factors also improved from 50.6% to 54.9% of the variance (**Table 4.13**, see **Appendix 6** for SPSS original results).

Table 4.13: Eigenvalues and Variance of Retained items

Component	Initial Eigenvalues	Total % of Variance	Cumulative %
1. Students Attitude	5.10	25.52	25.52
2. Social Media Use	2.93	14.64	40.16
3. University Brand Personality	1.64	8.18	48.34
4. Students' Behavioral intentions	1.31	6.55	54.89

Source: Research data (2019)

Table 4.14: Rotated Component Analysis for Retained items.

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of sampling Adequacy					.866
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square				2892.149
	<i>df</i>				190.000
	Sig				.000
Variables and measurement items. (Note: 1- 4 component 1 to 4)	1	2	3	4	
Students' Behavioral Intentions items loaded under component 4					
My enrollment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the institutions' general reputation					.78
My enrolment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the university's brand personality					.72
My enrollment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the university's ranking					.75
Social media use items loaded under component 2					
Social media (Facebook, whatsapp) is a necessity in academic studies in this era		.61			
The reason i use social media most is it connects me with fellow students worldwide		.71			
I use social media platforms to get shared experiences through various platforms		.68			
I prefer to use social media platforms while searching various education programs		.72			
I prefer social media platforms due to shared opinions thru different forums in relation to education matters		.59			
University Brand Personality items loaded under component 3					
This university is Distinctive (Unique, curious& independent)			.58		
This university is Cosmopolitan (Networked, International)			.64		
This university is friendly			.67		
This university is Sophisticated (Upper class, Glamorous, Charming)			.75		
This university is exciting (Innovative, Trendy, Unique & Up to date)			.72		
Students' Attitude loaded as component 1					
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies would be... Good -Bad	.71				
For me, enrollingWise-Foolish	.73				
For me, enrollingUseful-Useless	.74				
For me, enrollingBeneficial-Harmful	.72				
For me, enrollingRewarding-Punishing	.71				
For me, enrollingDesirable-Undesirable	.79				
For me, enrollingValuable-Worthless	.72				

Source: Research data (2019)

4.8 Reliability Test after Factor analysis

Reliability test was done on the retained items after deletion of all items that did not meet the required criteria. **Table 4.15** shows the composite results of the study variables

with Cronbach's alpha in all the remaining 20 items indicating higher than .7 and overall reliability of items being .84 the questionnaire is acceptable for the study (see **Appendix 7** for SPSS results)

Table 4.15: Composite Reliability Results for the Constructs

Construct	Number of items	Cronbach's alpha
Students' behavioral intentions to enroll	3	.73
Social media use	5	.75
University brand personality	5	.75
Students' attitude	7	.86
Overall items and their Reliability	20	.84

Source: Research data (2019)

4.9 Descriptive Statistics for the Measurement Items

According to Garson (2012) all forms of quantitative analysis presume sound measurement which is relatively free from coding errors. It is therefore good practice to run descriptive statistics on one's data in such a way that one is sure that the data is generally as anticipated in terms of means and standard deviations, and that there are no out - of-bound entries beyond the expected range. Descriptive statistics analyses were performed on all variables after factor analysis on the retained items measuring students' behavioral intentions to enroll (3 items), social media use (5 items), university brand personality (5 items) and students' attitude (7 items). The descriptive statistics include means and standard deviations.

4.9.1 Descriptive Statistics for Students' Behavioral Intentions to Enroll

This variable is used in this study as the dependent variable measured using the three retained items after factor analysis on a seven Likert scale. **Table 4.16** indicates the results of the analysis which confirms that, most respondents had the same opinion that their enrollment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the institutions'

general reputation as this item had the highest mean of 5.69 with a standard deviation of 1.25.

Literature has pointed out that a university with good reputation has a good public relation, attracts excellent students, top academic faculty, thus universities need to build a strong reputation to achieve these goals. Ranking of universities seem to have a great impact on students' behavioral intentions to enroll for postgraduate studies as this item scored a mean of 5.50 and a standard deviation of 1.40. Finally, the item "My enrolment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the university's brand personality" scored a mean of 5.49 and a standard of 1.27. The composite mean for the three items was 5.56 and standard deviation = 1.31. Results shows a minimum value of 1 and maximum value of 7. Thus, universities need to invest in their personality as students evaluate the university personality as favorable or congruent before making their final decision to enroll.

Table 4.16: Mean and Standard Deviation for Students' Behavioral Intentions

Students' Behavioral Intentions to enroll	Min	Max	M	SD
My enrollment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the institutions' general reputation	1	7	5.69	1.25
My enrollment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the university's ranking	1	7	5.50	1.40
My enrolment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the university's brand personality	1	7	5.49	1.27
Average Value	1	7	5.56	1.31

Source: Research data (2019)

4.9.2 Descriptive Statistics for Social Media Use

Social media use variable is used as the independent variable in this study. The variable is measured using the five retained items on a seven Likert scale. Results in Table 4.17 shows that most respondents prefer using social media platforms due to the shared

opinions they get through different forums in relation to education matters. This is evident as the item had the highest mean of 5.76 with a standard deviation of 1.34. Descriptive statistics further indicate that majority of students agree that they normally use social media platforms to get shared experiences through various platforms as this item scored a similar mean of 5.76 and a standard deviation of 1.30. Descriptive statistics results also indicate that the reason why students use social media most is because it connects them with fellow students worldwide. This item scored a mean of 5.69 and a standard deviation of 1.36 indicating that majority of the respondents had the same opinion over the item.

Findings further reveals that students prefer to use social media platforms while searching various education programs as this item scored a mean of 5.68 and a standard deviation of 1.31. Finally, majority of the students had the same opinion that social media (Facebook, WhatsApp) is a necessity in academic studies in this era as the item scored a mean of 5.56 and 1.32. The study shows a composite mean of $M = 5.69$, $SD = 1.33$ with minimum value of 1 and maximum being value 7. Based on the above findings, universities need to invest in social media because it is an effective marketing tool for higher education due to its high adoption rate by the younger generation who are the focus of this study. Furthermore, these platforms are important places where students interact with each other as they share information and study experiences, research projects and job opportunities with each other.

Table 4.17: Mean and Standard Deviation for Social Media Use Items

Social media use items	Min	Max	M	SD
I prefer social media platforms due to shared opinions through different forums in relation to education matters	1	7	5.76	1.34
I normally use social media platforms to get shared experiences through various platforms	1	7	5.76	1.30
The reason I use social media most is it connects me with fellow students worldwide	1	7	5.69	1.36
I prefer to use social media platforms while searching various education programs	1	7	5.68	1.31
Social media (Facebook, WhatsApp) is a necessity in academic studies in this era	1	7	5.56	1.32
Average Value	1	7	5.69	1.33

Source: Research data (2019)

4.9.3 Descriptive Statistics for University Brand Personality

Table 4.18 indicates the results of descriptive statistics for university brand personality items. Five items of this variable were measured using seven Likert scale. The statistics indicate that majority of the respondents agree that they will choose to enroll in a university with a Distinctive (Unique, curious & independent) personality as this item scored the highest mean of 5.77 and a standard deviation of 1.18. Respondents also agree that they would wish to enroll in a university that is friendly as this item scored a mean of 5.63 with a standard deviation of 1.27. Universities being friendly can be reflected in fairness and helpfulness that arise from the strong interaction between students and universities administration.

The findings also indicate that respondents are highly influenced by a Cosmopolitan (Networked, International) university as the item had a mean of 5.61 and a standard deviation of 1.24. In view of the increasing rivalry between universities for international students, the cosmopolitanism personality dimension offers a competitive advantage, as this may signal the possibility for students to have the opportunity to study abroad

or to have access to employment opportunities through university networks. University management should therefore invest resources in collaborations with international universities to strengthen this element.

The results of the study further show that students would prefer to enroll in a university that is exciting (Innovative, Trendy & Up to date). This item scored a mean of 5.55 with a standard deviation of 1.45. This means that universities that emphasizes on innovation and creativity will have an upper hand in attracting prospective students in their programs.

Finally, majority of the respondents have the same opinion that they would wish to enroll in a university that is sophisticated (Upper class, Glamorous, Charming) as this item scored a mean of 5.34 and a standard deviation of 1.34. The mean average for the items was $M = 5.58$, $SD = 1.30$ with minimum value being 1 and maximum 7. Based on the descriptive statistics, universities' management needs to invest resources in improving the named dimensions which could obtain more distinction in the minds of students and lead to future enrollment intentions.

Table 4.18: Mean and Standard Deviation for Brand Personality Items

Brand personality items	Min	Max	M	SD
This university is Distinctive (Unique, curious& independent)	1	7	5.77	1.18
This university is friendly	1	7	5.63	1.27
This university is Cosmopolitan (Networked, International)	1	7	5.61	1.24
This university is exciting (Innovative, Trendy, Unique & Up to date)	1	7	5.55	1.45
This university is Sophisticated (Upper class, Glamorous, Charming)	1	7	5.34	1.34
Average Value	1	7	5.58	1.30

Source: Research data (2019)

4.9.4 Descriptive Statistics for Students' Attitude

Students' attitude variable used as a moderator in this study was measured using all the seven items on a seven Likert scale. **Table 4.19** shows the descriptive statistics for all items. The findings indicate that all the seven items scored a mean above 6.0, with majority of the students having same opinion that enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be a "valuable thing". This item had the highest mean score of 6.25 with a standard deviation of 1.07. This was followed by the items "For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be... Good (mean 6.16, with standard deviation of 1.03) and Beneficial (mean 6.15, with standard deviation of 1.09), respectively.

This implies that students perceive postgraduate studies as something that is good and of great benefit in their future life; hence investing their time and resources in it is worth. The items that deals with enrollment for postgraduate being "Rewarding, mean = 6.08, standard deviation = 1.08", "Useful, mean = 6.06, standard deviation = 1.06", "Desirable, mean = 6.06, standard deviation = 1.12" and "Wise, mean of 6.03 and a standard deviation of 1.09" also received a great support from the respondents based on their mean scores as students agree that enrollment in postgraduate studies is believed to be rewarding, useful, desirable and a wise decision.

The above statistics supports literature that attitudes are formed by series of beliefs and result in a value being placed on the outcome of the behavior (Ajzen, 2002). According to the author a person's attitude will be favorable with a greater likelihood of the person engaging in the behavior if the outcome of a behavior is seen as being positive, valuable, beneficial, desirable, advantageous, or a good thing. Results indicate composite score of $M = 6.11$, $SD = 1.08$ with minimum value of 1 and maximum of 7. Thus, university

management should put strategies in place that are aimed at altering the attitude of the prospective student through several marketing techniques like posting unique, marketable programs on social media platforms and investing in research on what influences students' attitude in choosing institutions or study programs.

Table 4.19: Mean and Standard Deviation for Students' Attitude Items

Students' Attitude items	Min	Max	M	SD
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies...would be Good	1	7	6.16	1.03
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies...would be...Wise	1	7	6.03	1.09
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies ...would be useful	1	7	6.06	1.06
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies...would be beneficial	1	7	6.15	1.09
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies would be Rewarding	1	7	6.08	1.08
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies would be desirable	1	7	6.06	1.12
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies...would be valuable	1	7	6.25	1.07
Composite Value	1	7	6.11	1.08

Source: Research data (2019)

4.10 Transformation of Data

Data transformation was done after component factor analysis using the remaining items that met the required criteria by loading on only one construct as intended by the study. Single construct in the questionnaire was measured by multiple items; it was prudent to get the average score of the multi-items for each construct which was used in the final analysis of correlation and multiple regression analysis. Students' behavioral intentions to enroll which is the dependent variable has three items $(EL3+EL4+EL5)/3$. The second variable, Social media which is used as an independent variable in the study has five items $(SM2+SM3+SM4+SM5+SM6)/5$. Brand personality, the mediating variable has all the five items retained after factor analysis,

$(BP1+BP2+BP3+BP4+BP5)/5$. Lastly, the moderator of the variable, Attitude has all its seven items also retained $(ATT1+ATT2+ATT3+ATT4+ATT5+ATT6+ATT7)/7$.

4.11 Analysis of outliers

Before further analysis, it was prudent to check for any outliers in the data. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2013b), an outlier is defined as a case with an extreme value on one variable (a univariate outlier) or a strange combination of scores on more than two variables (multivariate outlier) that can statistically distort the data. They are observations in the data that deviate markedly from the rest, which often cause important changes in substantive conclusion (Aguinis *et al.*, 2013).

This study detected two categories of influential outliers, model fit outliers and prediction outliers. Prior studies (Aguinis *et al.*, 2013; Aguinis *et al.*, 2010; Gibbert *et al.*, 2021; Mahapatra *et al.*, 2020; May *et al.*, 2013) have highlighted the usefulness of reporting results with and without outliers and the chosen handling technique, which involves explaining any differences in research results as the presence of influential outliers causes a dilemma in assessing right inferences for a sample-based population. The absence of such a report may lead to improper inferences about a population, thus, both results should be reported to place the burden of determination for the most accurate conclusions on the reader and ensure complete transparency so that the handling technique does not appear to have been chosen because it supported one's hypotheses.

In this study, eight (8) cases of influential outliers were identified through Mahalanobis distance greater than the critical χ^2 value of 20.52, where $p < .001$ and df was 1,3 (Aguinis *et al.*, 2013; Daigle, 2019). The df = degree of freedom represented number of variables against the dependent variable. Two sets of analysis were carried out, one

from data with outliers (RWOT) using $n = 468$ and another analysis from data without influential outliers (RWOTL) with $n = 460$ which produced different regression results as shown in **Tables 4.24 to 4.28** by revealing differenced R^2 , ΔR^2 and parameter estimates (slope and intercept coefficients). Although results of the two sets have been presented on respective tables, the findings of this study are all discussed, and inferences made based on the data set without outliers using $n = 460$ as all the eight cases of identified outliers were deleted from the data set.

4.12 Descriptive Statistics for the Constructs

Table 4.20 describes the summary statistics for the variables of the study with all variables having a mean score above 5.6. Results indicate that students' attitude had the highest mean of 6.14 and a standard deviation of .73 (Skewness = -.98, Kurtosis = .92) with responses ranging from 3.29 to 7.00. This signifies that majority of the respondents have the same opinion and positive attitude towards enrollment intentions for postgraduate studies. Moreover, the study shows that respondents also concur on the statements describing behavioral intentions to enroll with a mean of 5.75 and a standard deviation of .80 with responses ranging from 2.60 to 7.00 (Skewness = -1.00, Kurtosis = 1.41). This was followed by social media construct with a mean of 5.70 and a standard deviation of .91. The response of this variable ranged from 2.40 to 7.00 (Skewness = -1.00, Kurtosis = .87) showing the power of social media influencing students' behavioral intentions to enroll. Respondents also agree that brand personality influences their decision on behavioral intentions with a mean of 5.60 and a standard deviation of .88 (Skewness = -.93, Kurtosis = .84). The response ranged from 2.00 to 7.00 on a 7-point Likert scale.

Table 4.20: Summary of the Descriptive Statistics for the Constructs

Variables Name	Range	Min	Max	M	SD	SK	KS
Students' Behavioral Intentions	4.40	2.60	7.00	5.75	.80	-1.00	1.41
Social Media Use	4.60	2.40	7.00	5.70	.91	-1.00	.87
University Brand Personality	5.00	2.00	7.00	5.60	.88	-.93	.84
Students' Attitude	3.71	3.29	7.00	6.14	.73	-.98	.92

Source: Research data (2019), N= 460 *Seven-point Likert scale: 7= strongly agree to 1= strongly disagree, M = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation = Skewness, KS = Kurtosis

4.13 Testing Assumptions of Regression Analysis

Before carrying out correlation and regression analysis, the researcher tested several assumptions of the regression model. This is because if the assumptions are not met the results may not be trustworthy, resulting in a Type I or Type II error, or over- or under-estimation of significance or effect size(s).

4.13.1 Testing for Linearity Assumption

The first assumption of regression is that all independent variables should have a linear relationship with the dependent variable. Research have shown that the standard multiple regression can only accurately determine the relationship between dependent and independent variables if the relationship is linear in nature (Garson, 2012; Osborne & Waters, 2002). These authors have argued that if the relationship between independent variables (IV) and the dependent variable (DV) is not linear, the results of the regression analysis will under-estimate or overestimate the true relationship which leads to an increased chance of a Type II error or Type I errors.

In this study, linearity assumption was examined through the use of simple inspection of P-P plot of the scores represented by a straight line (Pallant, 2013) and also proved through coefficient of determination (R^2) as indicated in **Figure 4.1**. This regression equation is very useful for making predictions since the value of R^2 is close to 1

(Garson, 2012). Figure 4.1 indicates R^2 Linear = .995 implying that 99.5% of the variation in students' behavioral intentions to enroll is accounted for by the three variables of this study (social media use, university brand personality and students' attitude), thus the assumption of linearity has been fulfilled.

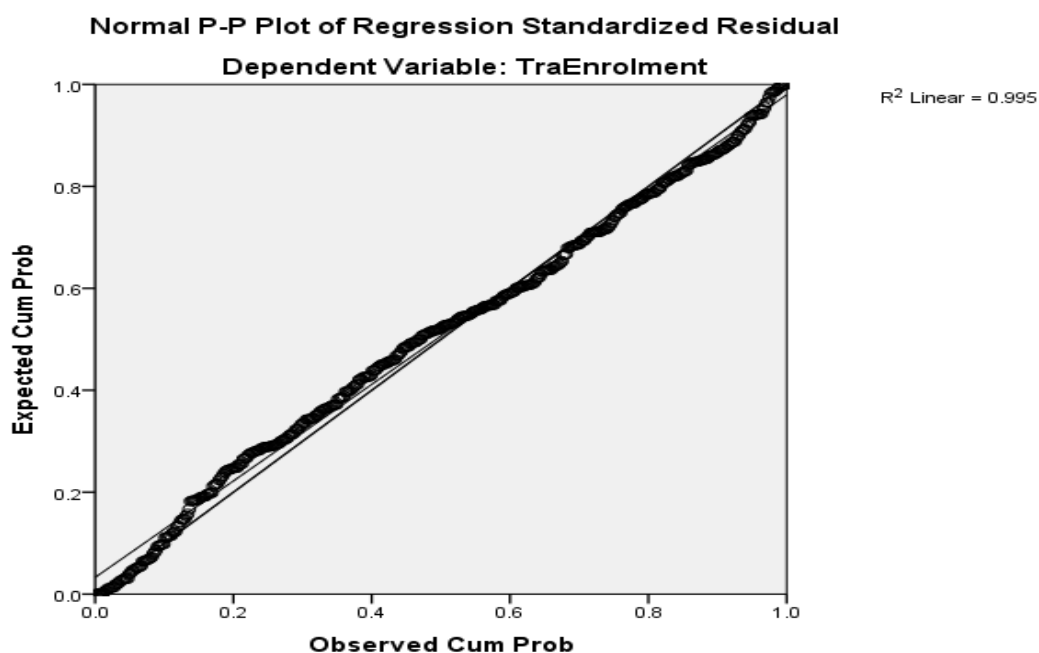


Figure 4.1: Linearity and Normality Plot

4.13.2 Testing for Normality Assumption

In order to make valid inferences from one's regression results, the residuals of the regression should follow a normal distribution. The residuals are simply the error terms, or the differences between the observed value of the dependent variable and the predicted value. This can be done by examining a normal Predicted Probability (P-P) plot. If they are normally distributed, they will conform to the diagonal normality line indicated in the plot. Based on the regression standardized residual indicated by **Figure 4.1** the observed and expected values were found along the diagonal line, without any significant departures from it, hence normality assumption is fulfilled.

Additionally, normality was also tested using Histogram Figure 4.2 which displays the shape and spread of distributions in the data. According to Garson (2012) the histogram of standardized residuals should show a roughly normal curve when the assumption of regression and most other techniques are met that error terms are normally distributed. The author states that in any predictive technique, the expectation is normal distribution of error, with the largest number of predictions being at or near zero and then trailing off into "high prediction" and "low prediction" tails.

Normality test was also checked by examining the skewness and kurtosis values. According to Kline (2011); Tabachnick and Fidell (2013a) skewness measures the symmetry of a distribution while kurtosis is used to measure the peakness of a distribution. The values of skewness and kurtosis of the study variables indicated in Table 4.20 reveal that the data was normally distributed where the skewness values were in the range of -1.00 to -.93. The value for kurtosis, on the other hand, was in the range of .84 to 1.41 which was well within the threshold of -3 to +3 (Kline, 2011).

In addition, this study used PROCESS Macro that uses bootstrapping which does not require a normal distribution in the data (Hayes 2018) with 5000 number of bootstrap samples. Bootstrapping is a computer-intensive, non-parametric approach to statistical inference. Instead of making assumptions about the distribution of sampling statistics, bootstrapping uses variability within a sample to estimate the distribution of sampling empirically. This is done by randomly resampling with replacement from the sample many times in a way that mimics the original sampling scheme. It therefore allows us to compute credible intervals for the sampling distribution consistently regardless of the underlying distribution (Lavrakas, 2008).

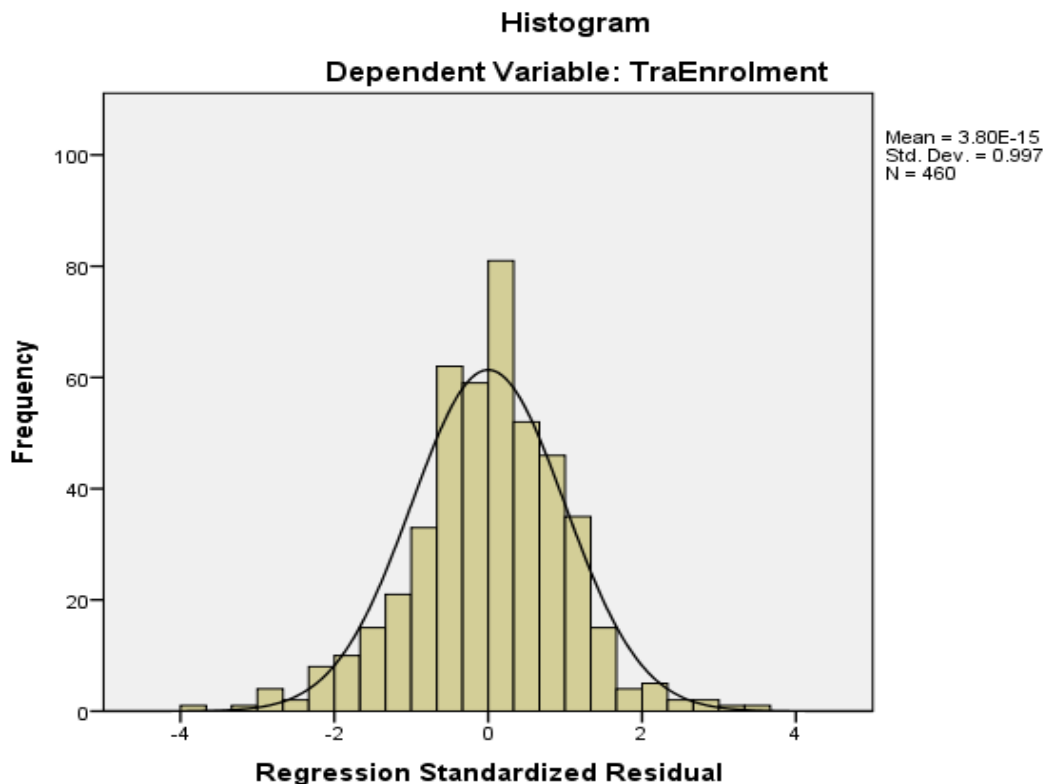


Figure 4.2: Normality Test Histogram

4.13.3 Testing for Homoscedasticity Assumption

Homoscedasticity implies that the relationship under analysis is the same for the entire spectrum of the dependent variable. The absence of homoscedasticity is indicated by higher errors (residuals) in some portions of the range compared to others. When the homoscedasticity assumption is met, residuals will form a pattern-less cloud of dots (Garson, 2012). This is also supported by Osborne & Waters, (2002), who states that residuals should lie between -2 and/or +2 points. The data plot (**Figure 4.3**) of standardized residuals vs standardized predicted values showed no obvious signs of funneling and most residuals are within the recommended threshold, hence suggesting the assumption of homoscedasticity has been met.

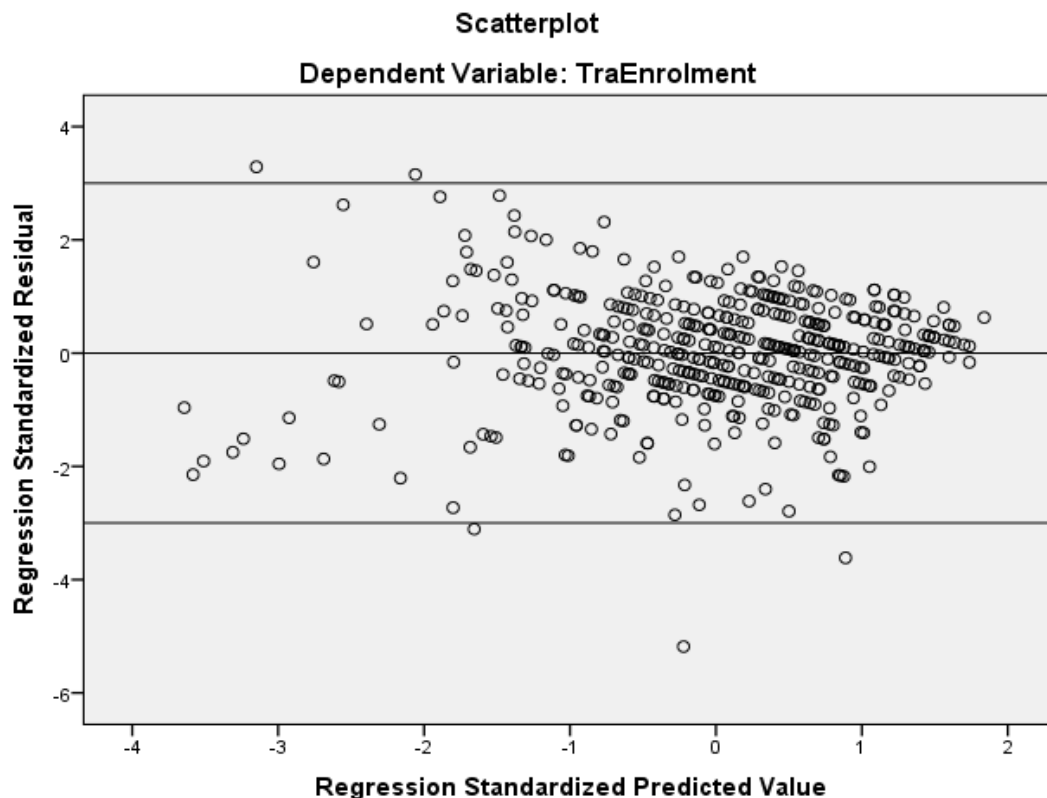


Figure 4.3 Homoscedasticity Test Plot

4.13.4 Testing for Multi-collinearity

Multi-collinearity is an unreasonable level of inter-correlation between the independents, so that the results of the independents cannot be differentiated (Garson, 2012). This is essentially the assumption that the study predictors are not too highly correlated with one another. Multi-collinearity was tested through examination of tolerance and VIF using regression results provided by the SPSS collinearity diagnostics results. According to Garson (2012), if the tolerance value is less than cutoff value .20, the independent variable should be dropped from the analysis due to multi-collinearity. The rule of thumb is that $VIF > 4.0$ when multi-collinearity is a problem.

From Table 4.21 the tolerance ranges between .78 and .90 substantially greater than .20 and VIF ranges from 1.11 to 1.29, thus, it is acceptable as being less than 4.0. In line with suggestion of Garson (2012), Hair, Anderson, Babin, and Black (2010) and Aminu

and Shariff (2014) these result show that multi-collinearity does not exist in this study, since tolerance values are above .20 and VIF values are less than 4.0.

Table 4.21: Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and Tolerance

Predictor Variables	Unstdized		Stdized	<i>t</i>	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	<i>Coeff</i>	Std Error	<i>Coeff</i>			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	2.23	.31		7.21	.000		
Social media use	.31	.04	.35	7.99	.000	.80	1.25
University brand Personality	.23	.04	.26	5.81	.000	.78	1.29
Students' Attitude	.07	.05	.07	1.61	.108	.90	1.11

Source: Research data (2019), Dependent Variable: Students' Intentions to Enroll

4.13.5 Testing for Data Independence

Most statistical tests assume that you have a set of independent findings that ensure that the value of one observation does not affect the value of the other observations. Non-independent observations can make your statistical test give too many false positives predictions; hence errors are assumed to be independent. This assumption was tested by Durbin-Watson statistic which should lie between 1.5 and 2.5 for independent observations (Garson, 2012). In Table 4.22 the Durbin-Watson statistic showed that this assumption had been met, as the obtained value was close to 2 (Durbin-Watson = 1.70).

Table 4.22: Data Independence

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of Estimate	Durbin-Watson	
1	.54	.30	.29	.67	1.70	

Source: Research data (2019)

4.14 Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation coefficient analysis is used to evaluate the direction of linear relationship and the level of strength between variables in the study. According to Gogtay and Thatte (2017), correlation is a term used to indicate the correlation or relationship between two or more quantitative variables. It also measures the strength or magnitude of the association between the variables and their direction. The value of the coefficient can range from -1 to +1, which shows a positive or negative correlation. In this study, Pearson's Correlation was used to analyze the co-variation of students' behavioral intention to enroll and the three variables: social media, brand personality and attitude.

Table 4.23 presents the correlation results of the study which shows that all variables were positively associated with students' behavioral intentions to enroll with social media having the highest relationship with $r = .48$, $p < .01$, followed by brand personality with $r = .43$, $p < .01$, while attitude had the weakest but positive association with $r = .23$, $p < .01$. Since the highest correlation coefficient is .48 which is less than .8, there is no multicollinearity problem in this research.

Table 4.23: Pearson Correlation results

Variable (N = 460)	1	2	3
Students' Behavioral Intention	1		
Social Media Use	.48**	1	
University Brand Personality	.43**	.43**	1
Students' Attitude	.23**	.24**	.29**

Source: Research data (2019), ** Correlation is significant at $p < .01$ (2-tailed)

4.15 Hypotheses Testing

As discussed in the previous chapter, this study adopted hierarchical regression model to test the effect of the covariates in the study and all direct effect hypotheses, multiple regression model using Hayes (2018) Model 4 to test for mediation and Hayes Model 59 for testing moderation and moderated mediation hypotheses. In all the models, both results from data with outliers (RWOL) and without outliers (**RWOTL**) were presented/reported in respective tables but interpretation, discussion and inferences were made based on results from data without influential outliers which indicates improved coefficient of determination (R^2) and parameter estimates (apart from few cases).

4.15.1 Effect of the Covariates in the study

Before testing for the direct effect hypotheses, the researcher sought to examine the effect of the covariates in this study. Results from Table 4.24 column 1, (M1a and M1b) shows the study findings of the covariates from both data with outliers (M1a, RWOL) and data without outliers (M1b, **RWOTL**) against students' behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies. The study shows that the type of institution a student is enrolled, significantly predicts students' behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies using both data sets (RWOL with $\beta = -.42, p = .000$, **Appendix 10**) and RWOTL having a $\beta = -.38, p = .000$, (**Appendix 11**). However, results indicate that gender, age, current study program, and mode of fees payment were insignificant in both cases. Results from data with outliers (RWOL, **Appendix 10**) indicate that the model explains 7% of the variance ($R^2.07$) with significant $F(5,462) = 6.73, p = .000$. On the other hand, results from data without outliers (**RWOTL, Appendix 11**) shows that the model explains 6% (a reduction of 1%) of the total variance in students' behavioral intentions

to enroll in postgraduate studies with $R^2.06$ which is statistically significant with $F(5,454) = 5.59, p = .000$.

4.15.2 Effect of Social Media on Students' behavioral intentions to enroll (H_{01})

The second part of **Table 4.24**, M2a and M2b shows the inclusion of the independent variable in the first model to test the direct effect of social media on students' behavioral intentions to enroll while controlling for gender, age, type of institution, current study program and mode of fee payment. Results from both data reveals that the type of institution covariate significantly affects students' behavioral intentions to enroll with RWOL showing $\beta = -.27, p = .000$ (**Appendix 10**) and RWOTL indicating $\beta = -.23, p = .001$ (**Appendix 11**) as the rest of the covariates were found to be insignificant in both data sets. The findings further show that social media use has a direct significant effect on students' behavioral intentions to enroll in both data sets, with RWOT showing $\beta = .39, p = .000$ with $R^2.25$, and $\Delta R^2.19, F(1,461) = 114.24, p = .000$. Results from data without outliers (RWOTL) shows an increase in the parameter estimate in relation to the effect of social media use on students' behavioral intentions to enroll with $\beta = .40, p = .000$ with the model explaining a similar 25% of the total variance in students' behavioral intentions to enroll ($R^2.25$) but with an increase in $\Delta R^2.20$ with an improved and statistically significant $F(1,453) = 117.94, p = .000$. This implies that social media use explains 20% of the total variance in students' behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies. Based on the above results, **Hypothesis H_{01}** is rejected.

4.15.3 Effect of University Brand Personality on Students' Behavioral Intentions

The second hypothesis (H_{02}) postulated that brand personality has no significant effect on students' behavioral intentions to enroll. **Table 4.24**, M3a and M3b, indicates the results of the hypothesis while controlling for the covariates and social media use using both data sets. The findings reveal that the type of institution a student is enrolled

significantly affect their behavioral intentions to enroll in both cases of data sets with RWOL having $\beta = -.27, p = .000$ and **RWOTL** $\beta = -.23, p = .000$. The rest of the covariates were found to be insignificant in both cases. In addition, social media use was also found to influence students' behavioral intentions in both cases with RWOT indicating $\beta = .30, p = .000$ and **RWOTL** showing a reduced $\beta = .29, p = .000$. Most importantly, the findings indicate that university brand personality significantly and positively affects students' behavioral intentions to enroll in both cases with RWOT showing $\beta = .24, p = .000$ with $R^2 = .32$ and $\Delta R^2 = .062$, with a significant $F(1,460) = 41.31, p = .000$.

Findings from **RWOTL** shows an increased $\beta = .25, p < .05$, with a reduced $R^2 = .31$ and $\Delta R^2 = .060$ which had a significant $F(1,452) = 39.60, p = .000$. This implies that the model explains 31% of the total variance in students' behavioral intentions to enroll. Additionally, with R-square change of .060 implies that brand personality explains 6% of the total variations in students' behavioral intentions while holding covariates and social media constant. Based on these findings, **H₀₂** is rejected by the study.

4.15.4 Effect of Attitude on Students' Behavioral Intentions to Enroll (**H₀₃**)

In the fourth model of **Table 4.24**, (M4a and M4b) the study sought to examine the effect of attitude on students' behavioral intentions to enroll while controlling for covariates, social media use and university brand personality. The findings in this model reveal that the type of institution significantly influences students' behavioral intentions to enroll with RWOL indicating $\beta = -.30, p = .000$ and **RWOTL** $\beta = -.25, p = .000$ as the rest of the covariates indicated insignificance effects with $p > .05$. The study also shows that social media use and university brand personality in both data sets were significant with similar parameter estimates as social media had $\beta = .28, p = .000$, and university brand personality $\beta = .23, p = .000$, (RWOL) and **RWOTL**

showing social media use ($\beta = .28, p = .000$) and university brand personality ($\beta = .23, p = .000$).

In addition, the findings from both data sets shows that attitude directly affects students' behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies with RWOL revealing $\beta = .13, p = .003, R^2.33, \Delta R^2.013$, with a significant $F(1,459) = 9.21, p = .003$. The analysis of **RWOTL** also indicated that students attitude had a positive and significant, but reduced parameter estimates $\beta = .09, p = .041$ and $R^2.32, \Delta R^2.006$ which was statistically significant with $F(1,451) = 4.18, p = .041$. The R^2 change of this model shows that attitude as a moderator accounts for .6% of the total variance in students' behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies. Based on the findings discussed above, **hypothesis H₀₃** is rejected by the study.

Table 4.24 Results for Covariates and Direct Effects Hypotheses

Var.	M1a	M1b	M2a	M2b	M3a	M3b	M4a	M4b
	(SBI) RWOL	(SBI) RWOTL	(SBI) RWOL	(SBI) RWOTL	(SBI) RWOL	(SBI) RWOTL	(SBI) RWOL	(SBI) RWOTL
	β	β	β	β	β	β	β	β
Ge	-.01	.01	.01	.03	.01	.03	-.001	.02
Age	-.03	-.05	-.02	-.04	-.002	-.03	-.01	-.03
Instit	-.42***	-.38***	-.27***	-.23***	-.27***	-.23***	-.30***	-.25***
Prog	-.04	-.02	-.03	-.02	-.03	-.01	-.02	-.01
Fees	-.06	-.06	-.02	-.01	-.01	-.002	-.01	-.002
SM	-	-	.39***	.40***	.30***	.29***	.28***	.28***
UBP	-	-	-	-	.24***	.25***	.23***	.23***
ATT	-	-	-	-	-	-	.13**	.09*
R ²	.07	.06	.25	.25	.32	.31	.33	.32
ΔR^2	.07	.06	.19	.20	.062	.060	.013	.006
F	6.73***	5.59***	114.24***	117.94***	41.31***	39.60***	9.21**	4.18*

Source: Research data (2019). Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Where;

- β = unstandardized parameter of estimates coefficients, Var = Variable Names

- Ge= Gender, Instit = Institution type, prog = Current program type,
- SBI = Students' behavioral intentions to enroll, SM = Social media use,
- UBP = University brand personality, ATT = Students' Attitude
- M1a, M2a, M3a and M4a's (RWOL) = Results from data with outliers
(Appendix 10)
- M1b, M2b, M3b and M4b's (RWOTL) = Results from data **without** outliers
(Appendix 11)

4.15.5 Effect of Social Media Use on University Brand Personality (H₀₄)

Findings in **Table 4.25** (M1a and **M1b**) show that in the first model, results of the covariates from both data sets indicated that the type of institution had a significant effect on university brand personality as the rest of the covariates were found to be insignificant. In addition, attitude was also found to have a direct effect on university brand personality in both cases. RWOL showed that the type of institution had $\beta = -.19$, $p = .033$, attitude $\beta = .29$, $p = .000$ and $R^2 = .07$ which had a significant $F(6,461) = 6.07$, $p = .000$. On the other hand, **RWOTL** findings indicated that the type of institution had $\beta = -.20$, $p = .015$ and students attitude showing an increased parameter estimate of $\beta = .36$, $p = .000$ with an improved $R^2 = .10$ which had a significant $F(6,453) = 8.35$, $p = .000$. This model explains 10% of the total variance in brand personality compared to the RWOT model which explains 7% of the variance in university brand personality.

In the second model, M2a and **M2b**, the study findings show the inclusion of the independent variable, social media use, while controlling for the covariates and students' attitude. The study reveals that all covariates were insignificant in both data sets, but respondents' attitude was positively found to influence university brand personality with RWOL showing $\beta = .18$, $p = .000$. In addition, social media use was

found to have a direct effect on university brand personality with $\beta = .33$, $p = .000$, $R^2.17$, $\Delta R^2.10$, with a significant $F(1,460) = 53.95$, $p = .000$.

The findings of **RWOTL** on the other hand, showed an improved parameter estimate for students' attitude, $\beta = .24$, $p = .000$ and social media use, $\beta = .36$, $p = .000$ with both having a significant direct effect on university brand personality. This model explains 22% of the total variance in university brand personality as indicated by $R^2.22$ which was statistically significant with $F(1,452) = 72.68$, $p = .000$. Additionally, results indicate R^2 change of .13 showing the amount of variance in university brand personality accounted for by social media use. Based on these results, **H₀₄** is rejected the study.

Table 4.25: Results for Social Media Use on University Brand Personality

Variable Names	M1a (UBP) RWOL	M1b (UBP) RWOTL	M2a (UBP) RWOL	M2b (UBP) RWOTL
	<i>coeff</i>	<i>coeff</i>	<i>coeff</i>	<i>coeff</i>
Gender	-.02	-.06	-9.49E-5	-.03
Age	-.09	-.04	-.08	-.03
Institution	-.19*	-.20*	-.05	-.05
Type of program	.004	.002	.002	-.002
Fees payment	-.09	-.07	-.06	-.03
Students' attitude	.29***	.36***	.18***	.24***
Social media use	-	-	.33***	.36***
R ²	.07	.10	.17	.22
ΔR^2	.07	.10	.10	.13
F	6.07***	8.35***	53.95***	72.68***

Source: Research data (2019). Note: * $p < .05$, *** $p < .001$

Where;

- β = unstandardized parameter of estimates coefficients
- UBP = University Brand Personality

- M1a and M2a's RWOL are results from data **with** outliers (**Appendix 10**)
- M1b and M2b's **RWOTL** are results from data **without** outliers (**Appendix 11**)

4.15.6 Testing for the Mediating Effects of University Brand Personality on the Relationship Between Social Media Use and Students' Behavioral Intentions (**H₀₅**)

MacKinnon (2012) four- steps procedures plus the total effect were followed to analyze all the direct and the mediation effect. This procedure requires;

- a significant association between social media and brand personality represented by equation $M = a_1X + \varepsilon$ (side a_1 of the conceptual framework)
- a significant association between brand personality and students' behavioral intentions represented by equation $Y = b_1M + \varepsilon$ (side b_1 of the conceptual framework)
- Testing an association between social media and students' behavioral intentions to enroll while controlling for brand personality represented by equation $Y = b_1M + C'X + \varepsilon$ (side C' of the conceptual framework. This does not need to be significant for mediation to take place).
- a significant coefficient for the indirect path between social media and students' behavioral intentions to enroll via brand personality (The product of $a_1 \times b_1$ or $C - C'$). The bias-corrected percentile bootstrap method determines whether the last condition is satisfied (**H₀₅**)
- The total effect (C) is represented by equation $Y = C X + \varepsilon = (a_1 \times b_1) + C'$. In all analyses, this study included students' gender, age, current program, type of institution and fees payment mode as covariates.

Table 4.26 reveals the results of multiple regression analysis using Hayes (2019) PROCESS Macro version 3.4 (Model 4) from both data sets, all covariates were found to be insignificant with $p > .05$ in both cases. The findings from RWOL (M1a₁) indicates that in the first step, social media use had a significant direct effect on university brand personality with $\beta = .37$, $p = .000$, $R^2 .15$, with a significant $F(6,461) = 13.25$, $p = .000$. This implies that this model explains 15% of the variance in university brand personality.

Additionally, results from the data without outliers (**RWOTL**, M1a₂) also found that social media use had a significant direct effect on university brand personality with an increased $\beta = .42$, $p = .000$, and an improved $R^2 .19$ which had a significant and improved $F(6,453) = 17.47$, $p = .000$, hence the first step is confirmed. This model explains 19% of the total variance in university brand personality.

In the second step, the study examined whether university brand personality has a direct effect on students' behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies. Findings from RWOL (M2=b₁) indicate that the type of institution had a significant effect on student' behavioral intentions with $\beta = -.27$, $p = .000$. In addition, the study established that university brand personality positively and significantly affects students' behavioral intentions to enroll with $\beta = .24$, $p = .000$, $R^2 .32$ which had a significant $F(6,461) = 30.16$, $p = .000$. This model explains 32% of the variance in students' behavioral intentions to enroll.

Results from **RWOTL** (M2 = b₂) in the same **Table 4.26**, shows that the type of institution significantly affects students' behavioral intentions with $\beta = -.23$, $p = .001$ as the rest of the covariates were insignificant. In addition, university brand personality is positively associated with students' behavioral intentions to enroll with $\beta = .25$, $p = .000$,

thus confirming the second step. This model accounted for 31% of the total variance as indicated by $R^2.31$ which was statistically significant with $F(7,452) = 29.39, p = .000$.

To determine the results for the third step, “effect of social media use on students’ behavioral intentions to enroll, while controlling for university brand personality”, the same **Model 2** was used. Results from RWOL ($M2 = C'_1$) shows that social media use had a significant direct effect on students’ behavioral intentions to enroll with $\beta = .30, p = .000$. The study findings of **RWOTL** ($M2 = C'_2$) also showed that social media use was significantly associated with student’ behavioral intentions to enroll with, $\beta = .29, p = .000$. Thus, step three is also confirmed.

Finally, applying Zhao *et al.*, (2010) steps discussed in the previous chapter on mediation to the present study findings, the study found the mean indirect effect from the bias-corrected percentile bias bootstrap analysis as positive and significant from both data sets with RWOL $M3 = a_1 (a_1 \times b_1) = .37 \times .24 = .09, SE = .02, 95\% CI = [.05, .14]$ which was significant with both CI being none zero.

The total effect using data with outliers **M4** = C'_1 , RWOL (direct + indirect effect) = $.30 + .09 = .39$ implying that the two paths contribute to the total effect, hence giving rise to a complimentary mediation with this model explaining 25% ($R^2.25$) with a significant $F(6,461) = 26.02, p = .000$. Results of the covariates indicate that the “type of institution” was significant with $\beta = -.27, p = .000$.

However, results from data without outliers **RWOTL** indicated an improved mediation effect with $(a_1 \times b_1) = .42 \times .25 = .11, SE = .02, 95\% CI = [.06, .15]$ with a 95% confidence interval excluding zero (.06 to .15) as indicated in **Table 4.26 Model 3 (M3=a2)**. The direct effect C' (.29) is also significant while holding constant brand personality. Since $a \times b \times C' = .42 \times .25 \times .29 = .03$ is positive, these results show a **complementary**

mediation. These means that the two paths, (direct plus indirect effects) both contributes to the Total effect; $(a \times b) + C' = .42 \times .25 = .11 + .29 = .40$ with the model explaining 25% ($R^2.25$) which is significant with $F(6,453) = 25.52, p = .000$ (**Model 4, M4 = C'2, RWOTL**).

Results of the covariates indicate that only the type of institution was statistically significant with $\beta = -.23, p = .001$. From the above results, there is evidence that the confidence intervals for the indirect effect does not straddle a zero in between, which supports the presence of mediation effect (Memon, Cheah, Ramayah, Ting, & Chuah, 2018), hence **Hypothesis H05** is rejected by the study.

Table 4.26: Results for Mediation and Total Effect

Predictors	M1= a_1	M1= a_2	M2= b_1	M2= b_2	Mediation	M4= C_1	M4= C_2
Names	(UBP)	(UBP)	(SBI)	(SBI)	M3= $a_1 \times b_1$	(SBI)	(SBI)
	RWOL	RWOTL	RWOL	RWOTL		RWOL	RWOTL
	β	β	β	β		β	β
Gender	.01	-.01	.01	.03		.01	.03
Age	-.07	-.03	-.002	-.03		-.02	-.04
Institution	-.004	-.001	-.27***	-.23***		-.27***	-.23***
Program	-.01	-.02	-.03	-.01		-.031	-.02
Fees	-.05	-.03	-.01	-.002		-.018	-.01
SM	.37***	.42***	$C_1.30$ ***	$C_2.29$ ***	$a_1=.37 \times .24=.09$.39***	.40***
UBP	-	-	$b_1.24$ ***	$b_2.25$ ***	$a_2=.42 \times .25=.11$		
R ²	.15	.19	.32	.31	a_1 -CI=.05,.14	.25	.25
F	13.25***	17.47***	30.16***	29.39***	a_2 -CI=.06,.15	26.02***	25.52***

Source: Research (2019). Note: *** $p < .001$

Where;

UBP = University Brand Personality

SBI = Students' Behavioral Intentions to Enroll

SM = Social Media Use

CI = Confidence intervals

B = Unstandardized parameter estimates coefficients

M1=Model 1- To determine the effect of Social media use on university brand personality in equation:

$$M = a_1X + \varepsilon \dots\dots$$

Where; M= University Brand Personality, X= Social Media Use

- $M1 = a_1$ - Results from data with outliers (RWOL)
- $M1 = a_2$ - Results from data without outliers (**RWOTL**)

M2=Model 2- To determine the effect of University brand personality on Students' behavioral intentions to enroll in equation: $Y = b_1M + \varepsilon$

Where;

Y= Students' behavioral intentions to Enroll

M = University Brand Personality

- $M2 = b_1$ - Results from data with outliers (RWOL)
- $M2 = b_2$ - Results from data without outliers (**RWOTL**)

Social media on Students' behavioral intentions while controlling for university brand personality in equation: $Y = b_1M + C'X + \varepsilon$

- C'_1 = Results from data with outliers (RWOL)
- C'_2 = Results from data without outliers (**RWOTL**)

M3=Model 3 for determining the mediating effect ($a_1 \times b_1$)

- $M3 = a_1$ - Results from data with outliers (RWOL), a_1 - CI confidence intervals for testing significance
- $M3 = a_2$ - Results from data without outliers (**RWOTL**), a_2 - CI confidence intervals for testing significance level **for H₀₅**

M4=Model 4 the Total effect:

- $M_4 = C_1$ - Results from data with outliers (RWOL)
- $M_4 = C_2$ - Results from data without outliers (RWOTL)

4.15.7 The Moderating Effect of Students' Attitude on the Relationship between Social Media Use and University Brand Personality (H₀₆)

The study adopted Hayes (2018) Model 59 to test this Hypothesis (H₀₆). Results in **Table 4.27**, shows the conditional process analysis of the study using PROCESS Macro version 3.4. In the first multiple regressions (**Model 1-M1 = a₁** and **M1 = a₂**) the researcher tested whether students' Attitude moderates the path from social media use to university brand personality (depicted as path "a₁" in **Figure 2.2** of the conceptual framework). Results from RWOL (M1a₁) indicates that none of the covariates were significant as all had $p > .05$. However, the findings indicate that social media use and students' attitude had a significant effect on university brand personality with $\beta = .33$, $p = .000$, and $\beta = .20$, $p = .000$ respectively with $R^2 = .17$ which was significant with $F(8,459) = 12.05$, $p = .000$ which implies that the model explains 17% of the variance in university brand personality. However, results of the interaction of students' attitude between social media use and university brand personality was found to be insignificant with $\beta = .06$, $p = .057$, $p = .192$.

Model1, M1= a₂ reveals the results of **RWOTL**. All covariates were included in the model, but none were found to be statistically significant. The findings further indicate that social media use and students' attitude both have a direct but increased significant effect on university brand personality with $\beta = .36$, $p = .000$ and $\beta = .24$, $p = .000$ respectively with the model accounting for 23% ($R^2 = .23$) of the variance in brand personality with a significant $F(8,451) = 16.32$, $p = .000$. However, the interaction

results reveal that students' attitude does not moderate the relationship between social media use and university brand personality with $\beta = -.02, p = .692$. These results are further supported by **Figure 4.4** which reveals two parallel lines indicating none interaction of students' attitude on the link between social media use and university brand personality. Based on these findings we fail to reject **Hypothesis H₀₆**.

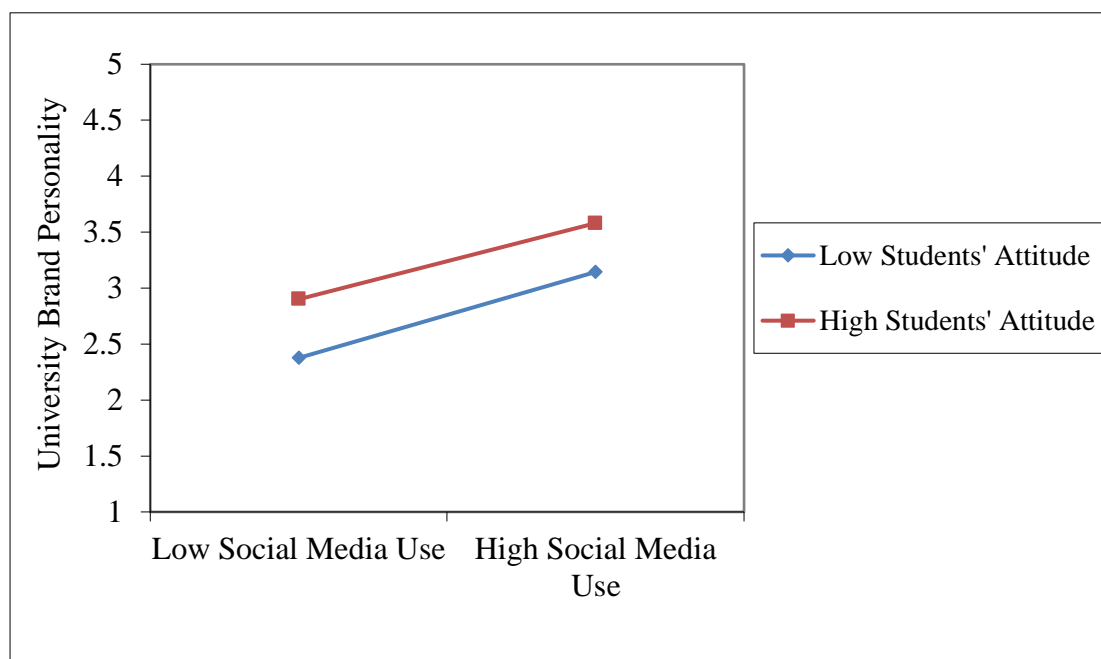


Figure 4.4: Graphic representation of the moderating effect of students' Attitude on the relationship between social media use and university brand personality

4.15.8 The Moderating Effect of Students' Attitude on the Relationship between Social media Use and Students' behavioral intentions to Enroll (H₀₇)

In the second regression analysis we tested whether students' attitude moderates the path from social media use to students' behavioral intentions to enroll (depicted as path *C'* of the conceptual framework). The first results of **Table 4.27**, $M2 = C'_1 \& b_1$ indicates the results of RWOL which shows that the type of institution has a significant effect on students' behavioral intentions to enroll with $\beta = -.30, p = .000$ as the rest of the covariates were found to be insignificant with $p > .05$. In addition, the findings reveal

that social media use = .27, $p = .000$, university brand personality, $\beta = .23$, $p = .000$ and students' attitude, $\beta = .13$, $p = .003$ all have a significant direct effect on students' behavioral intentions to enroll. Additionally, the results of the moderation indicates that students' attitude moderates the relationship between social media use and students' behavioral intentions to enroll with $\beta = -.08$, $p = .031$. This model indicates $R^2 .34$ which was significant with $F(10, 457) = 23.91$, $p = .000$ implying that it explains 34% of the variance in students' behavioral intentions to enroll for postgraduate studies.

The findings of **RWOTL** ($M2 = C'2 \& b2$) are also shown in the same **Table 4.27**. The study reveals that the type of institution a student is enrolled was found to be statistically significant with $\beta = -.26$, $p = .000$, but the rest of the covariates were insignificant. Furthermore, results indicate that social media use $\beta = .28$, $p = .000$, university brand personality $\beta = .23$, $p = .000$ and students' attitude $\beta = .11$, $p = .023$ were all found to have a significant direct effect on students' behavioral intentions to enroll. Most importantly, the interaction of students' attitude on the relationship between social media use and students' behavioral intentions to enroll (path C' of the Conceptual framework) appears to be statistically significant ($\beta = -.16$, $p = .003$). This model accounted for 34% of the total variance with an $R^2 .34$ which was statistically significant with $F(10, 449) = 22.68$, $p = .000$. Based on the highlighted results, **Hypothesis H07** is **rejected** by the study.

The above results are further illustrated and explained by **Figure 4.5** which reveals that at low levels of social media engagement/experience, students' behavioral intentions to enroll for postgraduate studies is high for those students with high levels of attitude than those with low levels of attitude. However, as social media use/engagement/experience increases, students' behavioral intentions to enroll

increases for both groups but the increase is high with those students with low levels of attitude than those with high attitude.

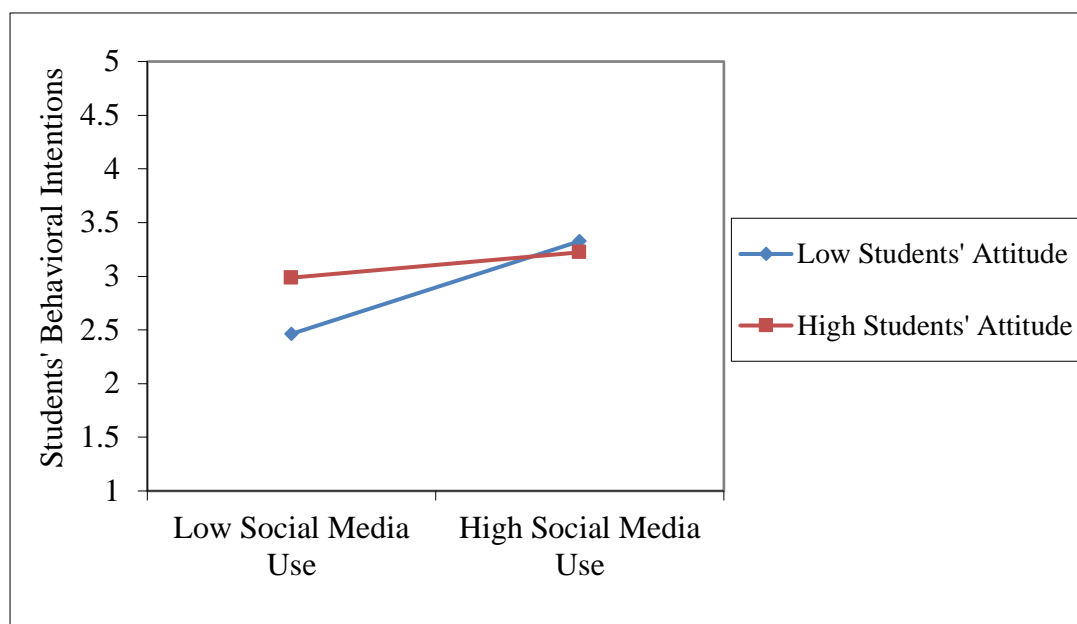


Figure 4.5 Graphic presentation of the moderating effect of students' attitude on the link between Social media use and Students' behavioral intentions to Enroll

4.15.9 The Moderating Effect of Students' Attitude on the Relationship between University Brand Personality and Students' Behavioral Intentions to Enroll (H₀₈)

In the same second regression analysis (Model M2-C'₁b₁ and M2-C'₂b₂) the researcher tested whether attitude moderates the link between university brand personality and students' behavioral intentions to enroll (path "b₁" of the Conceptual framework). The findings in **Table 4.27**, Model M1-C'₁& b₁-RWOL reveals that attitude moderates the link between brand personality and students' behavioral intentions to enroll with $\beta = .12, p = .004$.

This is also confirmed from data without outliers (M2-C'₂ & b₂-RWOTL) which shows that the interaction of attitude on the link between university brand personality

and students' behavioral intentions to enroll has a significant effect with $\beta = .13$, $p = .007$. Since the $p < .05$, **Hypothesis H₀₈** is also **rejected**. The findings are further supported by **Figure 4.6** which reveals that at low levels of university brand personality the two groups of students, with both low and high levels of attitude have the same behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies. However, as university brand personality increases, students' behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies increases drastically with those students having high levels of attitude compared to those having low levels of attitude which records a minimal increase in students' behavioral intentions to enroll.

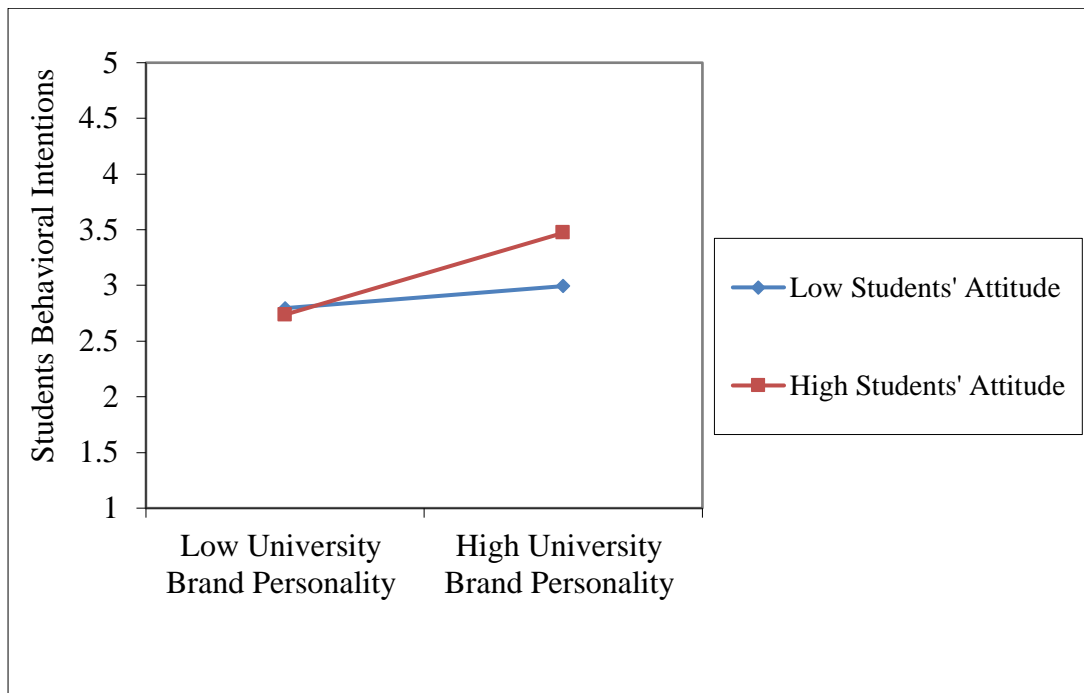


Figure 4.6: Graphic presentation of the moderating effect of Students' Attitude on the relationship between University Brand personality and Students' behavioral intentions to enroll.

Table 4.27: Results for Moderating effect of Students' Attitude on Study Variables

Predictors Name	M1a ₁		M1a ₂		M2C' ₁ &b ₁		M2-C' ₂ &b ₂	
	(UBP)		(UBP)		(SBI)		(SBI)	
	RWOL		RWOTL		RWOL		RWOTL	
	β	<i>t</i>	β	<i>t</i>	β	<i>t</i>	β	<i>t</i>
Gender	.01	.12	-.03	-.41	-.02	-.26	.001	-.02
Age	-.07	-1.31	-.03	-.57	-.01	-.28	-.03	-.58
Institution	-.04	-.48	-.05	-.68	-.30***	-4.36	-.26***	-3.87
Program	.001	.02	-.002	-.07	-.01	-.60	.003	.14
Fees	-.06	-.83	-.02	-.38	-.01	-.23	.01	.11
SM	.33***	7.45	.36***	8.49	.27***	7.01	.28***	7.13
UBP	-	-	-	-	.23***	6.15	.23***	5.88
Attitude	.20***	3.76	.24***	4.62	.13**	3.02	.11*	2.28
SM×ATT	.06	1.31	-.02	-.40	-.08*	-2.16	-.16*	-2.97
BP×ATT	-	-	-	-	.12**	2.91	.13*	2.71
R ²	.17		.23		.34		.34	
F	12.05***		16.32***		23.91***		22.68***	

Source: Research data (2019). Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Where;

- β = unstandardized parameter estimates coefficients
- SBI=Students' behavioral intentions
- SM = Social media, BP = Brand personality, ATT = Attitude,
- SM × ATT and BP × ATT= Moderations/Interactions of the moderator and study variables

Column;

- M1, a₁ -RWOL= Results from data with outliers
- M1, a₂ -**RWOTL**= Results from data without outliers **H₀₆**
- M2, C'₁ & b₁ -RWOL= Results from data with outliers
- M2, C'₂ & b₂ -**RWOTL**= Results from data without outliers **H₀₇ & H₀₈**

4.15.10 The moderating effect of Student' Attitude on the indirect relationship between Social Media Use and Students' Behavioral Intentions via University Brand Personality (H₀₉)

Finally, we hypothesized that different pathways would operate between social media, brand personality and students' behavioral intentions to enroll, with varying levels of the respondent's attitude. Testing the data at three levels of attitude, **Table 4.28**, results from data with outliers (Left side of the table) shows the findings of the conditional indirect effect of attitude on the relationship between social media and students' behavioral intentions. The findings indicate that the conditional indirect effects were not found between social media and students' behavioral intentions via brand personality with one standard deviation below the mean of attitude ($\beta = .04$, $SE = .03$, $CI = -.003, .10$), but was found to be significant at the mean level ($\beta = .08$, $SE = .02$, $CI = .04, .12$) and the higher levels of attitude with $\beta = .13$, $SE = .04$, $CI = .06, .20$.

Results from data without outliers (the right side of **Table 4.28**) also confirms that the conditional indirect effect was insignificant at the lower levels of attitude ($\beta = .05$, $SE = .03$, $CI = -.01, .11$) but was found to be statistically significant at the mean level ($\beta = .08$, $SE = .02$, $CI = .05, .13$) and at the higher levels of the respondents Attitude. However, findings indicate that the conditional indirect effect was much stronger with those students having high levels of Attitude ($\beta = .11$, $SE = .03$, $CI = .06, .18$). Based on these findings, **Hypothesis H₀₉** is rejected.

Table 4.28: Conditional Process Analysis of the Indirect Effects at Three Levels of Students' Attitude

Levels of the Attitude	Results with outlier				Results without outliers = H_{09}			
	β	SE	LLCI	ULCI	β	SE	LLCI	ULCI
Low levels of Attitude (-1)	.04	.03	-.003	.10	.05	.03	-.01	.11
Mean levels of Attitude (0)	.08	.02	.04	.12	.08	.02	.05	.13
High levels of Attitude (+1)	.13	.04	.06	.20	.11	.03	.06	.18

Source: Research data (2019).

Note: CI = 95% confidence interval for indirect effect: if CI does not include zero, the indirect effect is considered statistically significant.

These findings are further illustrated by **Figure 4.7**. By examining this Figure, we see the role that higher levels of attitude play in strengthening the positive indirect effect of social media use on students' behavioral intentions to enroll via university brand personality. Such information provides university managers with an understanding of how to best harness the various levers at their disposal. For example, if a university seeks to improve enrollment by investing in greater social media engagements, it would also be important to consider investing in attractive, marketable study programs that would make students' attitude to be favorable towards their institutions due to the university personality elements. These efforts enhance social media engagement which positively impacts on students' behavioral intentions to enroll.

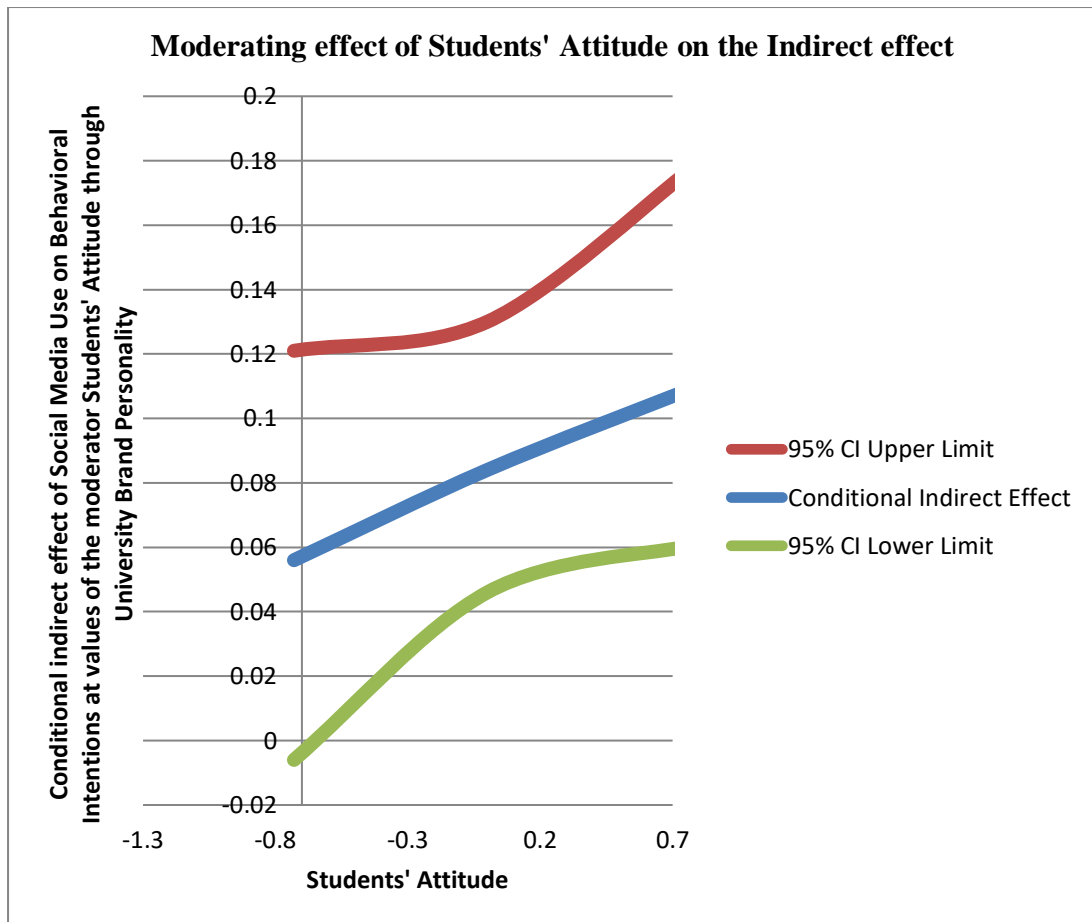


Figure 4.7: Conditional Indirect effects of Social Media on Students' behavioral intentions at values of the moderator, Attitude via Brand personality

Table 4.29: Summary Results of Hypotheses Tests

	Hypotheses	β	p -v	LLCI	ULCI	Decision
H ₀₁	Social media has no significant direct effect on students' behavioral intentions to enroll	.40	.000	-	-	Rejected
H ₀₂	Brand personality has no significant effect on students' behavioral intentions	.25	.000	-	-	Rejected
H ₀₃	Attitude has no significant direct effect on students' behavioral intentions	.09	.04	-	-	Rejected
H ₀₄	Social media has no significant direct effect on brand personality	.36	.000	-	-	Rejected
H ₀₅	Brand personality has no mediating effect on the relationship between social media and students' behavioral intentions	.102	-	.06	.15	Rejected
H ₀₆	Attitude has no moderating effect on the relationship between students' behavioral intentions to enroll and brand personality	-.02	.69	-.13	.09	Fail to Reject
H ₀₇	Attitude has no moderating effect on the relationship between social media and students' behavioral intentions to enroll	-.16	.003	-.26	-.05	Rejected
H ₀₈	Attitude has no moderating effect on the relationship between brand personality and students' behavioral intentions to enroll	.13	.007	.04	.23	Rejected
H ₀₉	Attitude has no moderating effect on the strength of the indirect effect on the relationship between social media and students' behavioral intentions via brand personality	.08 .11	- -	.05 .06	.13 .18	Rejected

Source: Research data (2019)

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of study findings, a review of how they relate to theory and prior research, and their consistencies or inconsistencies with the literature. Implications for practice are then discussed, as well as limitations of the study and recommendations for future research.

5.1 Summary of Research Findings

The main objective of this study was to examine whether social media use, university brand personality and students' attitude have an impact on students' behavioural intentions to enrol in postgraduate studies. The study findings indicate that social media use (H_{01} , $\beta = .40$, $p = .000$), university brand personality (H_{02} , $\beta = .24$, $p = .000$) and students' attitude (H_{03} , $\beta = .09$, $p = .041$) all have a significant direct effect on students' behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies. In addition, social media use was found to have a significant direct effect on university brand personality (H_{04} , $\beta = .36$, $p = .000$).

The study further examined the mediating effect of university brand personality on the relationship between social media use and students' behavioral intentions to enroll. Results reveal that university brand personality mediates this relationship (H_{05} , $\beta = .11$, $SE = .02$, $CI = .06, .15$). Finally, the study sought to determine the moderating effect of students' attitude on the relationship between; social media use and university brand personality, social media use and students' behavioral intentions to enroll, university brand personality and students' behavioral intentions to enroll and finally, the

moderating effect of students' attitude on the strength of the indirect relationship between social media use and students' behavioral intentions to enroll via university brand personality. The study findings indicate that students' attitude does not moderate the relationship between social media use and university brand personality (H_{06} , $\beta = -.02$, $p = .692$). However, students' attitude was found to moderate the link between; social media use and students' behavioral intentions to enroll (H_{07} , $\beta = -.16$, $p = .003$) and university brand personality and students' behavioral intentions to enroll (H_{08} , $\beta = .13$, $p = .007$). Finally, the results of the conditional indirect effects (H_{09}) were also found to be significant at the mean level of students' attitude ($\beta = .08$, $SE = .02$, $CI = .04, .12$) and the higher levels of students' attitude with $\beta = .13$, $SE = .04$, $CI = .06, .20$).

5.1.1 Effect of Social Media Use on Students' Behavioral Intentions to Enroll

The study examined whether social media has a significant direct effect on students' behavioral intentions to enroll. Hypothesis **H₀₁** results indicate that social media is a predictor of students' behavioral intentions to enroll with $\beta = .40$, $p = .000$ with the model explaining 25% ($R^2 .25$) of the total variance in students' behavioral intentions.

Literature has shown that social media has a high rate of adoption among younger generations (Bonilla *et al.*, 2021), making it an enticing and successful advertising tool for higher education that could lead to a rise in enrolment numbers and help prospective students make better informed choices about their choice of study and university selection (Boyd, 2007; Constantinides & Stagno, 2012, 2013). Thus, social media has improved communications by enabling universities to have a one-on-one engagement with not only their existing/continuing students but also with prospects too.

The study results supports prior studies of Gray *et al.*, (2003) who points out that the internet is an essential tool for learning in this 21st century. This is because students use

social media networks sites when searching for information related to various study programs, universities of interest and information on the graduates who have attended a university of interest through shared comments posted on university websites or other social media platforms. All these engagements have an influence on students' behavioral intentions to enroll. This is supported by the argument of Weiss (2008), Constantinides and Stagno (2013) that social media engagements are very effective in persuading the prospect students through recommendations of peers in blogs, social networks, forums, and other forms of social media, hence playing a vital role in the enrollment decision making process by students which is supported by the current study findings.

The findings of this study also concur with the arguments of Idomi *et al.*, (2017) whose study on the effect of Facebook in influencing students intention to enroll in foreign degree program in Malaysia shows a significant influence of social media platforms on student intention to enroll. According to Idomi *et al.*, (2017), social media is very crucial to promote higher learning education due to its impact in influencing students behavioral intentions.

Prospective university students come from a generation that is immersed in social media and digital technologies which acts as a source of information that guides them to choose their future university (Nuseir & El Refae, 2021). The growth rate of social networks has extensively become popular among students which should be tapped by universities. According to Mahadi *et al.*, (2016), students are actively involved in social media more than any other group which affects their daily life as well as their attitudes towards performing certain behavior, in this case enrollment intentions, hence research in this area require one to employ network thinking to understand students social

experiences and how it influences their behavior in their final decision making process (Mahadi *et al.*, 2016).

However, the study results are in contrary with the findings of Constantinides and Zinck Stagno (2011) which indicates that prospective students rate social media last in the list of knowledge sources that affect their choice of study program and university. The authors argue that one possible explanation for the low importance of social media as a source of influence for prospective students could be the lack of relevant content. Furthermore, lack of attractive, exciting, and innovative applications, like online communities, blogs, forums, and bulletin boards make it difficult for universities to connect with future students. This requires the allocation of resources, an organizational structure and a consistent policy that keeps these applications up-to-date and utilizes the customer input which most universities lack.

5.1.2 Effect of University Brand Personality on Students' Behavioral Intentions to Enroll

The results of this study reveal that brand personality has a direct and a significant effect on students' behavioral intentions to enroll with $\beta = .25$, $p = .000$. This finding supports previous literature on brand personality, which has shown that meaningful interaction of students with academic and administrative staff leads to the development of a specific brand personality in their minds (Melewar & Akel, 2005, Sampaio *et al.*, 2012). Furthermore, Sung & Yang (2008) argues that when students evaluate the university personality as favorable or congruent, they are more likely to develop a supportive attitude of belongings to the university.

The findings also support the work of Pinna *et al.*, (2018) who points out that the more attractive an individual student perceives an institutions' personality; the stronger the

person will want to be identified with it. Hence, universities have to brand themselves by having a set of unique and desirable attributes that appeal to potential students and gain competitive advantage against their competitors. This is further supported by Rauschnabel *et al.*, (2016) whose findings indicate that the application of common marketing techniques like building strong brand personality dimensions are a must for universities to compete effectively for the limited number of students who qualify for higher learning. There is therefore the need for institutions to understand, manage, and leverage a strong brand position by improving and enhancing their brand image components as they attract and influence students' behavioral intention (Alavijeh *et al.*, 2014; Mallya, 2012). According to Rauschnabel *et al.*, (2016) brand personality is directly linked to brand love, word of mouth and the intention of students to support their university after graduation as alumni. The authors further argue that a prestigious university is like a truly prestigious finance house or prestigious restaurant which attracts the top cream from the society.

Brand personality has been found to have a direct effect on brand engagement (Banahene, 2017), attitudes towards product and travel to particular destination (Kumar & Nayak, 2018). Brand personality has also been found to have a positive effect on product evaluation, uniqueness and brand association (Freling & Forbes, 2005). Furthermore our findings support the work of Freling *et al.*, (2011) which shows that three brand personality appeal dimensions of favorability, originality and clarity have a positive influence on consumers' purchase intention.

Finally, it has also been noted that a well-established brand personality influences customer's preference, increases patronage, develops stronger emotional ties, increases trust, and attachment with the brand (Banahene *et al.*, 2018). The authors suggest that

positive brand personality of the university as a product leads to an increase in students' future enrollment intentions. This is because students like consumers of the normal product and services will always trust in a university's brand if it is considered as, hardworking, secure, confident, upper class, attractive, and good looking.

5.1.3 Effect of Students' Attitude on Students' behavioral Intentions to Enroll

The study formulated a hypothesis to determine the effect of students' attitude on their behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies. Results of the study shows that attitude positively and significantly affects students' behavioral intentions with $\beta = .09$, $p = .000$. The finding of this study is in line with the existing literature which has reported that attitude toward a behavior affects behavioral intentions and decision making. In advertising, Raza *et al.*, (2017) found that attitude of an individual is the essential determinant of the behavioral intention as it serve as the considerable predictor suggested in TPB. Yeo *et al.*, (2017), also found that behavioral intention is highly predictable by an individuals' attitude which may influence the response to a stimulant.

In addition, Yeo *et al.*, (2017), postulates that a person who holds a favorable attitude towards an action will be more inclined to perform a particular behavior. The findings from their study reveal that attitude positively correlates with behavioral intention and is the strongest indicator of consumer behavioral intention to shop online. This is further supported by Hong *et al.*, (2017) whose findings indicate that consumer innovativeness on perceived value and the desire to keep using smart watches are strongly influenced by individual attitudes.

The study findings is further supported by a research study done by Bazelais *et al.*, (2018) on the investigation of pre-university science students' behavioral intentions towards using online learning technologies which indicated that attitude plays a key

role on decision making to use the online learning technologies. Furthermore, these results are supported by Omotayo and Adebayo (2015) and Alqasa *et al.*, (2014), whose findings show that the attitude of students has a positive relationship with their behavioral intention to embrace internet banking systems in Nigeria and Yemen, respectively.

In education context, the current study is in line with Bebetos *et al.*, (2017). The results of their study on the relationship among students' attitudes, intentions and behaviors towards the inclusion of peers with disabilities in mainstream physical education classes revealed that students' attitude was a powerful predictor in influencing their behavior towards their disabled peers in the physical education class. This is also in line with a study done by Chen and Yang (2007), who indicated that attitudes of in-service Kindergarten teachers towards enrolling in a postgraduate study found that attitude had a positive and significant impact on postgraduate study.

5.1.4 Effect of Social Media Use on University Brand Personality

The study findings indicate that social media has a significant direct effect on brand personality as revealed by $\beta = .36, p = .000$. This study supports previous studies in this field which have shown that the relationship between human and brand personality impacts users' preferences, satisfaction and their social interactions with others. For example, a study by Tritama and Tarigan (2016), reveals that social media provides a marketing communication strategy for a company to create awareness of its brands, products, service offerings to social media users. Their study indicate that social media gives a significant influence on a company's brand awareness on the community, enhancement of the product attraction through word of mouth by satisfied customers as they share information on social media platforms. This not only creates brand

awareness, brand association but it also builds the entire brand image dimensions inclusive of brand personality.

This is further supported by Zhang *et al.*, (2014) who found that companies can obtain consumers' attention by building their brands through broadcasting different messages on social media platforms in relation to their product/service offerings which has an impact on brand personality. Beig and Khan (2018), and Filo *et al.*, (2015) are in agreement of this statement as they also point out that social media provides marketers with an effective mechanism for promoting their business and interaction with their customers which enhances relationships and strengthens brand personality of the organization.

Filo *et al.*, (2015) argue that social media plays a key role in cultivating relationships among and between brands and customers. This interaction and engagement with brands play a crucial role in cultivating strong relationships and enhancing brand personality dimensions. This is not exceptional in an education context. This study argues that the interactions and engagement of university management, faculty and administrative staff with existing and prospective students plus the alumni on social media platforms aids in building and strengthening university brand personality which enhances students' behavioral intentions to enroll for specific study programs in their institutions.

According to Bélanger *et al.*, (2014), education institutions are introducing social media strategies as a means of promoting their offerings and services, with the main purpose of increasing their market share or market segment, which may include students, research grants, philanthropic donations or other performance enhancing outcomes. As such, social media networks have a significant influence on a university's brand

awareness, brand personality and brand equity on online community as it gives enhancement of the product attraction to the potential students on social media.

Since social media is an important tool for branding, acquisition, and retention, (Bélanger *et al.*, 2014; Sampaio *et al.*, 2012; Yunus *et al.*, 2016) there is need for university brands to adopt these new marketing techniques, by embracing social media which has large audiences where various study programs can be displayed to increase recognition and embed expectations in prospective students' minds. Furthermore, social networking sites can help university brands to have direct conversations and interactions with both existing and prospective individuals' students which enhance brand personality.

5.1.5 Mediating Effect of University Brand Personality on the Relationship Between Social Media Use and Students' Behavioral Intentions to Enroll

The finding from this study reveals that university brand personality has a mediating effect on the relationship between social media use and students' behavioral intentions to enroll. This finding brings new insights in literature as the combination of the two constructs increases the total effect of social media on students' behavioral intentions to enroll for postgraduate studies from 29% (direct effect only) to 40% (direct effect plus mediation). This model reveals a complimentary mediation based on the suggestion of Zhao *et al.* (2010) who argues that if the indirect path $a \times b$ and direct path C' are of the same sign, it signals complementary mediation. This is evident from our results for $a \times b \beta = .11$ and direct effect, $C' = .29$ with both paths being significant with a positive sign.

We therefore argue that the engagement of students on social media platforms with their peers, alumni, administrative and academic staff has an effect on university brand

personality which in turn can influence their enrollment intentions to a particular university or study program. From the literature reviewed, although brand personality has been used as a mediator in different context (Gordon *et al.*, 2016, Ramaseshan & Stein 2014, Zotos *et al.*, 2011) little is known on its mediating role in higher education context, particularly between social media use and students' behavioral intentions to enroll for postgraduate studies. This study finding therefore provides new knowledge in the literature of social media use, university brand personality, students' attitude and behavioral intentions to enroll.

5.1.6 The Moderating Effect of Students' Attitude on the Relationship Between Social Media Use and University Brand Personality

Hypothesis **H₀₆** postulated that attitude has no moderating effect on the link between social media and brand personality. The study findings indicate that social media use ($\beta = .36, p = .000$ and attitude ($\beta = .24, p = .000$) both have a direct significant effect on university brand personality, however, our data on the interaction of the moderator (students' attitude) reveals that attitude does not moderate the relationship between social media and brand personality with $\beta = -.02, p = .692$, therefore **we fail to reject** this Hypothesis (**H₀₆**). This finding reveals an antagonistic moderation which reversed the effect of the predictor (social media use) from being significant on the outcome (university brand personality) to insignificant as shown by the results of the direct effect.

It was an assumption in this study that social media interaction creates an impact on the way the university's brand is viewed by students. This is because social media platforms provide a forum in which universities can position their brands in the mind of prospective students, which can create a strong university brand personality

(Rauschnabel *et al.*, 2016). Despite social media being an attractive and effective marketing tool for higher education due to its high adoption rate (Boyd, 2007; Constantinides & Stagno, 2013), facilitates and strengthens existing and new relationships (Chugh, 2012), the findings of this study shows the contrary. This may imply that universities might not be doing enough in terms of positioning and branding their products or services using these platforms that can alter students' attitude towards their brands.

These results can be supported by the findings of Constantinides and Stagno (2013) which shows that students rank social media platforms last in a list of information channels that influence their choice of a study or university. They argue that this could be due to lack of relevant content in those platforms. University managers should therefore consider students as not only customers but also brand ambassadors who can help build the university's brand through their personal social networks in terms of likes, tweets and re-tweets which enhances social media marketing (Bélanger *et al.*, 2014).

5.1.7 The Moderating Effect of Students' Attitude on the Relationship Between Social Media Use and Students' Behavioral Intentions to Enroll

The study findings indicate that attitude moderates the link between social media and students' behavioral intentions to enroll ($\beta = -.16, p = .003$). **Figure 4.4** indicates the nature of the interaction which reveals that at low levels of social media engagement, students' behavioral intentions to enroll is high for those students with high attitude than those with low attitude. However, as social media engagement increases, students' behavioral intentions to enroll increases for both two groups of students but the increase is high with those students with high levels of attitude than those with low attitude. This

is a partial and enhancing moderation as both the direct and moderation effects were found to be significant with moderation model having an increased R^2 .34 (moderation model) compared with direct effect model with R^2 .25.

The findings of this interaction can be argued in line with the work of Spackman and Larsen (2017), whose study shows that when social media (Facebook) advertising was highly entertaining, very interactive, and widely shared by followers, the perceived value of the study program, the prestige of the institution, and the closeness of the relationship between the institution and the student improved considerably, thus leading to increased purchase intention. Their study also shows that when social media (Facebook) marketing was not entertaining, nor interactive, and was not widely shared, there were significant decreases in perceived value, reputation, relationship closeness, and purchase intention.

University management should integrate a strategic approach to the use of social media and use it for engagement and interaction with their students. This is because social media offers a unique opportunity to use word-of-mouth advertising to a wide audience, to encourage consumer-to-consumer interaction and to promote brand awareness through a large-scale social network that has an effect on their decision-making process by altering their attitudes (Kozinets *et al.*, 2010). It is therefore imperative for university management to acquire a more complete understanding of this generation's attitudes (students) in response to social media marketing communications and behavioral intentions to enroll for academic programs.

This is also supported by Duffett (2017) who postulates that the primary objectives of online marketing communication include creating brand awareness; generating consumer demand; providing information; stimulating traffic; building relationships;

promoting two-way communication; giving customer service; establishing brand loyalty; creating word of mouth; generating leads; and increasing sales. All these objectives denote various elements of attitude components. Hence, university management can target students with low attitude and those intending to enroll through social media platforms by influencing them towards university products and enrollment.

5.1.8 The Moderating Effect of Students' Attitude on the Relationship Between University Brand Personality and Students' Behavioral Intentions to Enroll

In Hypothesis **H₀₈**, the researcher tested whether attitude could strengthen the relationship between brand personality and students' behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies. The findings indicate a statistically significant and a positive interaction with $\beta = .13, p = .007$. Results of the study also reveal a partial but enhancing moderation as both direct and interaction effects were found to be significantly affecting students' behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies, but with an increased moderation model with $R^2 .34$ compared with direct effect model of $R^2 .31$.

This finding supports the TPB which indicates that an individual's attitude is a crucial element in decision making process (Ajzen, 2011). The theory assumes that the best predictor of a behavior is behavioral intention, which is determined by attitude toward the behavior, social normative perceptions regarding it and perceived capability to perform the behavior (perceived behavioral control). That means a person's attitude will be favorable with a greater likelihood of the person engaging in the behavior if the outcome or result of a behavior is seen as being positive, valuable, beneficial, desirable, advantageous, or a good thing and vice versa (Ajzen, 2002).

Based on these results we can argue that if a student believes that joining a particular university because of its brand personality or good corporate reputation will land him to a better job, then, the student's attitude toward the institution will be favorable, hence influencing his intention to enroll. On the contrary, if the student develops an unfavorable attitude towards it, due to its poor personality he may end up joining a competitor institution (Rah *et al.*, 2004).

This might be further argued that students' attitude propels them to make choices on learning institutions based on the benefit they will get from them, particularly, because of the quality of programs offered, number of Professors in the institution, popularity and the ranking of the institution which is embodied in brand personality (Saichaie, 2011). Hence, match between university brand personalities and students' expectations could lead to positive attitude and behavioral intentions to enroll towards them (Decker, 2016). Thus, the stronger the attitude the stronger the behavioral intentions to enroll and the weaker the attitude the weaker the intentions to enroll as illustrated by **Figure 4.6**.

The results of the study also support Self Congruent Theory which shows that a consumer will choose products, services or engage with an institution that has a symbolic value set consistent with the way the consumer thinks about him/herself. As revealed in **Figure 4.5**, we argue that students will choose a university brand if its main traits and the students' personalities are similar, and will reject a university brand if its main personality traits are different (Decker, 2016). This is further supported by Banahene *et al.*, (2018) who argue that students will always trust in a university brand if it is considered as, hardworking, secure, confident, upper class, attractive, and good looking. Based on these results, there is enough evidence which qualifies attitude as

moderator that strengthens the relationship between social media, brand personality and students' behavioral intentions to enroll. This study therefore supports theory and provides new knowledge in the marketing research field.

5.1.9 Moderating Effect of Students' Attitude on the Strength of the Indirect Relationship Between Social Media Use and Students Behavioral Intentions to Enroll via University Brand Personality

To test this Hypothesis (**H₀₉**), the study combined two research questions to form a moderated mediation model which can address both mediation (how social media influences students' behavioral intentions to enroll via brand personality) and moderation mechanisms of attitude (under what conditions) underlie the relationship between social media and students' behavioral intentions to enroll as suggested by Hayes (2018).

This study provides new knowledge that different pathways would operate between social media, brand personality and students' behavioral intentions to enroll at the varying levels of students' attitude. Results show the mechanisms and conditions under which brand personality and students' attitude can increase their behavioral intentions. The conditional indirect effects were found to be insignificant with students having low attitude ($\beta = .05$, $SE = .03$, $CI = -.01, .11$), significantly weak with moderate attitude ($\beta = .08$, $SE = .02$, $CI = .05, .13$) and significantly stronger with higher levels of attitude ($\beta = .11$, $SE = .03$, $CI = .06, .18$).

This may suggest that the engagement of students in social media platforms and recommendations from the important others in the students' cycles in social media networks, plays an important role in building university brand personality in the mind of the student which leads to an increase in behavioral intentions to enroll. This is

further strengthened by students' attitude which can be altered as a result of university service quality in terms of institution's teaching facilities in relation to functional classroom equipment and internet connection, student support services in terms of registration, library, and technology supports, and staff proficiencies in terms of administrators' capabilities and instructors' expertise (Rauschnabel *et al.*, 2016).

5.2 Conclusion of the Study

The purpose of this study was fourfold. First the study examined the direct effect of; social media, brand personality and attitude on students' behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies and the direct effect of social media on brand personality. Secondly, the study analyzed the mediating effect of brand personality on the relationship between social media and students' behavioral intentions. Furthermore, the study examined the moderating effect of the respondents' attitude on the relationship between social media and brand personality, social media, and students' behavioral intentions to enroll and brand personality and students' behavioral intentions to enroll. Finally, the study assessed the moderating effect of attitude on the strength of the indirect relationship between social media and students' behavioral intentions to enroll via brand personality.

The findings of the study conclude that social media, brand personality and attitude all have a positive and a significant direct effect on students' behavioral intentions to enroll. Additionally, social media positively and significantly affects brand personality. This study further reveals a complimentary mediation and concludes that brand personality mediates the relationship between social media and students' behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies. Furthermore, results indicate that although students' attitude towards a particular university has a direct effect on brand personality,

it does not moderate the relationship between social media and brand personality. However, the study reveals that attitude moderates the link between social media and students' behavioral intentions to enroll and also the link between brand personality and students' behavioral intentions to enroll. Finally, the findings confirm that the respondents' attitude moderates the strength of the indirect relationship between social media and students' behavioral intentions to enroll via brand personality in such a way that it is low when students' attitude is moderate and much stronger when students' attitude is higher.

5.3 Theoretical Implications of the Study

Theoretically, this study supports theory and contributes to the existing literature. First, it supports what has already been established by other scholars that social media, brand personality and attitude have a significant direct effect on students' behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies. Furthermore, the study adds some new knowledge that brand personality and social media complementarily mediate students' behavioral intentions to enroll. Secondly, the study reveals that attitude is a powerful moderating variable as described by the Theory of Planned Behavior in enhancing social media engagement, brand personality and students' behavioral intentions to enroll. Finally, the study findings support the Theory of Self Congruity which claims that people could form relationships with brands/Organizations in a similar manner they form relationships with each other in a social context (Bouhleb *et al.*, 2011; Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006; McAlexander *et al.*, 2002; Thomson *et al.*, 2005).

The study findings therefore give important theoretical contributions to the scholarly literature by including university brand personality and students' attitude as mediator and moderator respectively into the model, which detects effects that would not have

been known without the moderated mediation analysis thus providing greater predictive power than when testing the direct, mediating and moderating effects alone.

5.4 Policy Implication of the Study

The findings of this study may help the efforts of policymakers regarding policy and strategy formulation in institutions of higher learning in enhancing students' behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies. Results of the study reveal that social media use influences students' behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies. Thus, policy makers at both national and institutional levels should develop effective strategies, policies and techniques that attract potential students through social media platforms.

This is because social media use has become a necessity in academic studies in this era as most students use it to connect with fellow students worldwide to get shared experiences in relation to education through the various platforms. In addition, the emergence of COVID-19 has changed the way we do things and interact. The use of the internet is now a must-have asset for every industry to survive and thrive (Weber & Badenhorst, 2018). Policy makers need to consider new approaches like investing in technology to fulfill the changing demands, behaviors, preferences and expectations of students and lecturers as face to face learning and interaction has been really affected because of the pandemic (Gallino & Moreno, 2019; Shetty *et al.*, 2020) and due to the concerns about their own health more than anything else (Hwang *et al.*, 2020). Policymakers need to race against time to develop and test flexible systems by applying new technologies and environmental developments to breathe life into their institutions (Panigutti *et al.*, 2020), and also develop policies to facilitate the adoption of these technologies to remain relevant in the current situation.

Furthermore, results of the study indicate that university brand personality influences students' behavioral intentions. Policies should be developed to enhance research into innovation and networking with renowned reputable international universities. This will create a distinctive image for all stakeholders. In addition, policies should be put in place to ensure that all academics and administrative staff abide by the rules on processes of fairness and helpfulness for all students, as these elements enhance the personality of university brands in the minds of students as consumers of university services (Rauschnabel *et al.*, 2016).

5.5 Managerial Implications of the Study

This study provides important implications for practice for university managers. The use of social media has become integral part of every business which aids interconnectivity and interaction of not only the existing students but also with the alumni, prospects, and the organizations staff. The engagement and recommendations from satisfied students (Alumni) have a great impact on prospect's attitude. University management should therefore develop effective strategies that attract potential students through social media platforms. This will help both students and universities to reach out to each other in a simpler and faster manner (Bong, 2017; Trusov *et al.*, 2009).

Findings further indicates that social media allows students to get in touch with each other globally and it is seen as an essential tool in academics which aids students in searching for information on various education programs, university managers need to build and use these platforms because it gives new communication possibilities which allow a direct engagement. This is in line with Constantinides and Stagno (2013) who state that social networks creates online presence for the institution and brings together potential students with those already enrolled, others looking for similar information

and help, plus the alumni, thus influencing their behavioral intentions to enroll in their institutions.

In this technological era, social media provides a unique opportunity and inexpensive platform that can significantly change the marketing efforts in higher education and influence the ways in which students are recruited (Bonilla *et al.*, 2021). University managers should therefore invest enough resources in building a strong presence on certain platforms based on the interest level of the target market which if used effectively, may ultimately help to influence which university a prospective student chooses to attend. Additionally, marketers can use such social media platforms to advertise and promote their unique and marketable education programs, hence influencing students' behavioral intentions by altering their attitude towards the university's products.

Additionally, studies have indicated that building, improving and enhancing university brand personality components gives a competitive advantage to an institution over competitors (Alavijeh *et al.*, 2014; Freling & Forbes, 2005). According to Rauschnabel *et al.*, (2016), brand personality correlates with brand love, word of mouth and students' intention to support their university after graduation as alumni, university managers need to build strong sincerity element of brand personality as it is an important aspect to any institution's image. Sincerity is reflected in fairness and helpfulness that arise from the strong engagement between students and universities administration. In addition, the organizational procedures, the actions of university staff and the perceived quality of teaching can contribute to the perceived conscientiousness of a university brand personality (Rauschnabel *et al.*, 2016). These processes should be adhered to by

all university personnel as they create strong university brand personalities in the minds which may increase students' behavioral intentions to enroll.

It is evident from the results of the study that marketing managers need to know what improves stakeholder interaction with higher education institutions. University managers need to recognize the particular interests and needs of the target audience and to create specific content around those interests and needs (Garza *et al.*, 2019). Social networking channels allow businesses to improve their brand identities, so marketing and university administrators need to know what enhances the interest of stakeholders (students, teaching staff, administrative and support staff, agencies, and the general public) in the university (Bonilla *et al.*, 2021).

Results indicated that attitude does not moderate the relationship between social media use and university brand personality. This implies that universities are missing out on the potential that social media platforms can offer and there is still ample room for improvement. Marketing and university managers should concentrate their efforts on creating desirable and engaging content that can be communicated through multiple touchpoints of social networks and enhanced by monitoring the output of each channel through low-cost analytical tools (Clement, 2020; Quesenberry & Coolson, 2019).

5.6 Limitations and Recommendations for Further Studies

This study was done in five Counties of Western Kenya targeting finalist students from two public and two private universities with a target population of 1320. Due to the limited geographical scope and target population, this study should be replicated in other areas or Countries with a wide scope and large target population as it might present different results. Secondly, the study used a closed ended questionnaire in collecting quantitative data. Further studies should consider using mixed methods by

collecting and analyzing both qualitative and quantitative data as these may reveal other issues that may influence students' behavioral intentions to enroll in particular institutions of higher learning.

Lastly, this study looked at students' behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies at one point in time (cross sectional); a longitudinal time span study would be recommended to ascertain the results. Furthermore, only one antecedent of university brand image (university brand personality) and one element of the Theory of Planned Behavior (attitude) were used. Future studies should consider using other university brand image elements like reputation or perceived external prestige and the complete antecedents of the TPB which includes subjective norms and perceived behavioral control to ascertain how they can influence students' behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies. In addition, results of this study indicated that students' attitude does not moderate the relationship between social media use and university brand personality. These findings should be further explored in other contexts as it might offer valuable insights.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Survey Questionnaire

Dear respondent,

I am a Postgraduate student at Moi University School of Business & Economics pursuing a PhD degree in Business Management (Marketing option). The purpose of this research is to examine the effect of Social media, Brand personality and Attitude on Students' behavioral intentions to Enroll in Postgraduate Studies in Kenya. This information is being sought solely for academic purposes and will be treated with strict confidence.

I humbly request for a few minutes of your time to answer the following few questions.

Thank you for your kind participation.

With regards,

Simiyu Gabriel.

School of Business & Economics

Moi University,

Kenya.

Instructions

All questions in this study adopt a 7 scales rating. The statements refer to your enrollment intention in postgraduate studies in the near future. Kindly circle the number that most reflect your opinion. The answers are on a continuous scale, with middle point (4) being neutral. **For example**, if you are asked to rate “The Climate of Eldoret Town” on such a scale, the rating on these 7 scales should be interpreted as follows:

The Climate of Eldoret is:

Good: _7_: _6_: _5_: _4_: _3_: _2_: _1_: Bad
 Extremely Quite Slightly Neither Slightly Quite Extremely

In this case if you think the Climate of Eldoret is *extremely good*, then you circle *number 7*. If you think the climate in Eldoret is *quite bad*, then you circle *number 2*. If you think the climate of Eldoret is *neither good nor bad*, then you circle the *number 4*.

NOTE: In making your ratings, kindly *answer all items* and *do not circle more than one number* on a single scale.

Section 1 (a): Please circle a number that best describe your *intentions* on the possibilities of enrolling in postgraduate studies (Ajzen (2011, Zehua & Sheikha 2014)

EI1	I plan to enroll for postgraduate studies	Extremely Likely	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Extremely unlikely
EI2	I intend to enroll for postgraduate studies in future	Extremely Likely	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Extremely unlikely
EI3	My enrollment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the institution’s general reputation	Extremely Likely	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Extremely unlikely
EI4	My enrollment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the University’s brand personality	Extremely Likely	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Extremely unlikely
EI5	My enrollment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the university ranking	Extremely Likely	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Extremely unlikely

Section 1 (b): Indicate your level of agreement with the following statements on social media interactions/experiences (Zehua & Sheikha 2014, Constantinides & Stagno 2012)

SM1	Social media allows people with similar interest to stay connected	Strongly Agree	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Strongly Disagree
SM2	social media (Facebook, whatsapp) is a necessity in academic studies in this era	Strongly Agree	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Strongly Disagree
SM3	The reason I use social media most is it connects me with fellow students worldwide	Strongly Agree	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Strongly Disagree
SM4	I normally use social media platforms to get shared experiences through various platforms	Strongly Agree	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Strongly Disagree
SM5	I prefer to use social media platforms while searching information on various education programs	Strongly Agree	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Strongly Disagree
SM6	I prefer social media platforms due to shared opinions through different forums in relation to education matters	Strongly Agree	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Strongly Disagree

Section 1 (c): Think of a university you would wish to enroll for your postgraduate studies and indicate the level of your agreement by circling any of the statement listed in the table below in relation to: University Brand personality (Sung & Yang 2008, Rauschnabel *et al.* 2016).

BP1	This university is Distinctive (unique, curious & independent)	Strongly Agree	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Strongly Disagree
BP2	This university is cosmopolitan (networked, international)	Strongly Agree	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Strongly Disagree
BP3	This university is friendly	Strongly Agree	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Strongly Disagree
BP4	This university is sophisticated (Upper class, Glamorous, Charming)	Strongly Agree	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Strongly Disagree
BP5	This university is exciting (Innovative Trendy, unique and up to date)	Strongly Agree	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Strongly Disagree

Section 1(d): Overall views on enrolling for postgraduate studies

Please circle a number on each line that best indicates *your current feelings* about enrolling for postgraduate studies. *For me, enrolling in postgraduate studies in the near future would be...*” (Hennessy *et al.*, 2012, Ajzen 2013).

ATT1	Good	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Bad
ATT2	Wise	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Foolish
ATT3	Useful	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Useless
ATT4	Beneficial	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Harmful
ATT5	Rewarding	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Punishing
ATT6	Desirable	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Undesirable
ATT7	Valuable	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Worthless

Section B: Demographic Profile

Please place a tick “√” for each of the following:

1. Gender: Male Female

2. Age: Less than 20 21 – 25 26 – 30 31 – 35 Above 36

3. Type of institution

Public Private

4. Which program are you currently enrolled in?

Education Business Environmental studies Human Resource Management

Computing and Informatics Hospitality, Tourism and Travel Library & inform.
Science

5. How do you pay fees for your current education program?

Privately sponsored (self, spouse, parents, Guardian)

Government sponsored Sponsorship from employer (Any other organization)

Thank you for your time.

Appendix 2: Summary of Postgraduate Enrollment Statistics- 2016/17 -2017/18

Name of University	Yr-2016/17	Yr-2017/18	Difference	% Drop	% Increase
General Enrollment	67,407	32,977	34430	51.07	
Maseno University	1,937	114	1823	94.1	
University of Nairobi	16,639	10,357	6282	37.8%	
Moi University	2,878	2,556	322	11.2%	
Kenyatta University	11,927	14,879	2952		24.8%
Egerton University	114	206	92		80.7%
TUK	202	222	20		9.9%
UOE	104	110	6		5.8%

Source: KNBS (2018). Statistical Abstract, page 266 -271

Note: TUK- Technical University of Kenya, UOE - University of Eldoret

Appendix 3: Pilot Study Reliability and Construct Validity SPSS Output

Composite Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.868	33

Reliability Statistics for Enrollment Intentions

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.721	5

Reliability Statistics for External prestige

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.756	4

Reliability Statistics for Social media

Reliability Statistics for Brand Personality	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.710	5

Reliability Statistics for Institution Reputation

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.728	6

Reliability Statistics for Attitude

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.854	7

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.715
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	1466.223
Approx. Chi-Square	
df	528
Sig.	.000

Rotated Component Matrix^a

	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
I plan to enroll for postgraduate studies	.598					
I intend to enroll for postgraduate in future				.638		
My enrollment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the institutions' general reputation				.626		
My enrolment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the university's brand personality						
My enrollment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the university's ranking				.667		
Social media allows people with similar interest to stay connected						
Social media (Facebook, whatsapp) is a necessity in academic studies in this era						
The reason i use social media most is it connects me with with fellow students worldwide					.653	
I normally use social media platforms to get shared experiences through variousplatforms					.583	
I prefer to use social medai platforms while searching various education programs					.760	
I prefer social media platforms due to shared opinions thru different forums in relation to eduaction matters					.632	
This university is Distinctive (Unique, curious& independent)						.603
This university is Cosmopolitant (Networked, International)						.686
This university is friendly						.535
This university is Sophisticated (Upper class, Glamorous, Charming)						
This university is exciting (Innovative, Trendy, Unique & Up-to=date)						
I would check if the academic programs run by the university are reputable						.583
The university graduates are easily employable						
This university looks like one with a strong prospect for future growth						
I believe this university is well managed			.693			
This university is socially esponsible to its diverse stakeholders			.613			
I believe this university is financially sound			.696			
This university is seen as a prestigious institution by the overall society		.674				
I think my acquaintances think highly of this university		.665				
This university successfully retains a prestigious place in various university ranking system		.689				
Media coverage about this university is very postive		.704				
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	.738					
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	.779					
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	.644					
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	.731					
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	.622					
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	.514			.600		
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	.599					

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	7.210	21.848	21.848	7.210	21.848	21.848	4.722	14.308	14.308
2	4.056	12.292	34.140	4.056	12.292	34.140	3.758	11.386	25.695
3	2.141	6.488	40.628	2.141	6.488	40.628	3.210	9.729	35.423
4	1.820	5.514	46.142	1.820	5.514	46.142	2.733	8.283	43.706
5	1.725	5.227	51.369	1.725	5.227	51.369	2.282	6.914	50.620
6	1.423	4.314	55.683	1.423	4.314	55.683	1.671	5.063	55.683
7	1.410	4.274	59.957						
8	1.169	3.543	63.500						
9	1.021	3.095	66.595						
10	.985	2.985	69.580						
11	.887	2.688	72.268						
12	.825	2.501	74.769						
13	.781	2.367	77.135						
14	.755	2.286	79.422						
15	.671	2.034	81.456						
16	.640	1.938	83.394						
17	.568	1.721	85.115						
18	.522	1.582	86.696						
19	.512	1.553	88.249						
20	.495	1.499	89.748						
21	.420	1.274	91.022						
22	.409	1.241	92.263						
23	.358	1.085	93.348						
24	.347	1.051	94.398						
25	.321	.972	95.370						
26	.302	.916	96.286						
27	.250	.758	97.045						
28	.229	.695	97.740						
29	.193	.586	98.326						
30	.169	.511	98.837						
31	.161	.489	99.326						
32	.122	.371	99.697						
33	.100	.303	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Appendix 4: Reliability Results before Factor Analysis

Reliability Statistics for Students Behavioral intentions

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.706	.702	5

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
I plan to enroll for postgraduate studies	22.59	13.629	.352	.177	.698
I intend to enroll for postgraduate in future	22.72	12.676	.393	.204	.685
My enrollment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the institutions' general reputation	22.94	11.549	.497	.299	.644
My enrolment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the university's brand personality	23.14	11.285	.515	.295	.636
My enrollment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the university's ranking	23.14	10.311	.561	.349	.613

Reliability Statistics for Social Media

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.743	.741	6

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Social media allows people with similar interest to stay connected	28.46	21.735	.322	.112	.746
Social media (Facebook, whatsapp) is a necessity in academic studies in this era	28.87	19.457	.480	.254	.706
The reason i use social media most is it connects me with with fellow students worldwide	28.73	19.143	.486	.251	.704
I normally use social media platforms to get shared experiences through variousplatforms	28.66	18.936	.547	.306	.687
I prefer to use social medai platforms while searching various education programs	28.74	18.542	.579	.373	.677
I prefer social media platforms due to shared opinions thru different forums in relation to eduaction matters	28.66	19.535	.463	.274	.711

Reliability Statistics for Brand Personality

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.746	.745	5

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
This university is Distinctive (Unique, curious& independent)	22.13	15.718	.408	.736
This university is Cosmopolitant (Networked, International)	22.29	14.709	.498	.707
This university is friendly	22.27	14.288	.529	.695
This university is Sophisticated (Upper class, Glamorous, Charming)	22.56	13.703	.547	.688
This university is exciting (Innovative, Trendy, Unique & Up-to=date)	22.35	12.880	.574	.677

Reliability Statistics for Attitude

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.862	.862	7

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Deleted	Scale Variance if Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	36.64	24.171	.595	.379	.847
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	36.77	23.379	.636	.438	.842
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	36.74	23.631	.632	.418	.842
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	36.65	23.280	.645	.461	.841
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	36.72	23.506	.628	.433	.843
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	36.75	22.711	.683	.510	.835
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	36.55	23.905	.594	.427	.848

Appendix 5: Factor Analysis before Deletion of Unloaded Items

Communalities		
	Initial	Extraction
I plan to enroll for postgraduate studies	1.000	.322
I intend to enroll for postgraduate in future	1.000	.349
My enrollment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the institutions' general reputation	1.000	.593
My enrolment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the university's brand personality	1.000	.554
My enrollment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the university's ranking	1.000	.607
Social media allows people with similar interest to stay connected	1.000	.223
Social media (Facebook, whatsapp) is a necessity in academic studies in this era	1.000	.480
The reason i use social media most is it connects me with with fellow students worldwide	1.000	.515
I normally use social media platforms to get shared experiences through variousplatforms	1.000	.522
I prefer to use social medai platforms while searching various education programs	1.000	.548
I prefer social media platforms due to shared opinions thru different forums in relation to eduaction matters	1.000	.431
This university is Distinctive (Unique, curious& independent)	1.000	.429
This university is Cosmopolitant (Networked, International)	1.000	.469
This university is friendly	1.000	.525
This university is Sophisticated (Upper class, Glamorous, Charming)	1.000	.584
This university is exciting (Innovative, Trendy, Unique & Up-to=date)	1.000	.591
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	1.000	.541
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	1.000	.544
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	1.000	.552
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	1.000	.575
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	1.000	.550
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	1.000	.615
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	1.000	.513

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.874
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	3235.890
	df	253
	Sig.	.000

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
	1	5.639	24.516	24.516	5.639	24.516	24.516	4.007	17.420
2	2.973	12.924	37.440	2.973	12.924	37.440	2.784	12.103	29.524
3	1.670	7.262	44.702	1.670	7.262	44.702	2.518	10.950	40.473
4	1.349	5.864	50.566	1.349	5.864	50.566	2.321	10.092	50.566
5	.996	4.330	54.896						
6	.923	4.013	58.909						
7	.841	3.654	62.563						
8	.804	3.496	66.059						
9	.734	3.192	69.251						
10	.715	3.107	72.358						
11	.650	2.826	75.184						
12	.615	2.675	77.859						
13	.583	2.536	80.395						
14	.563	2.448	82.843						
15	.535	2.327	85.170						
16	.515	2.238	87.408						
17	.484	2.103	89.511						
18	.483	2.100	91.611						
19	.458	1.989	93.600						
20	.401	1.743	95.343						
21	.380	1.650	96.993						
22	.371	1.615	98.608						
23	.320	1.392	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

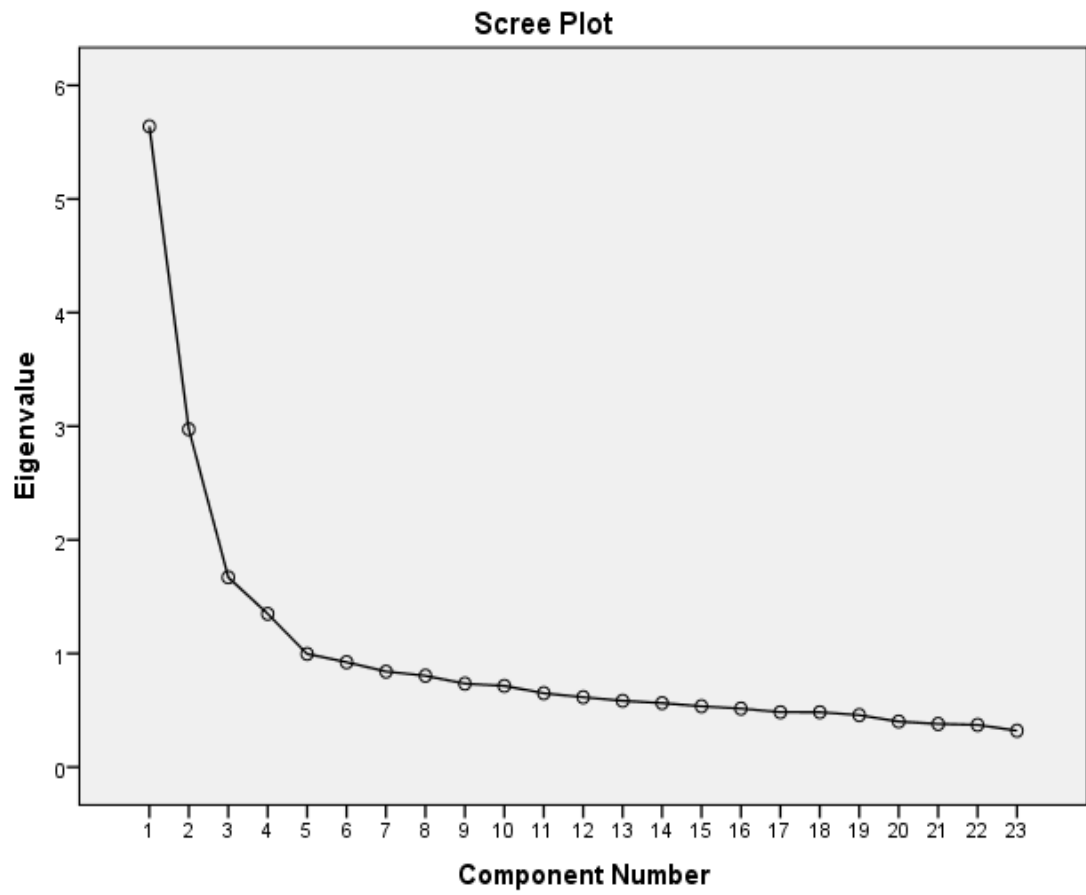


Figure 5.1: Screen Plot

Rotated Component Matrix^a

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
I plan to enroll for postgraduate studies				
I intend to enroll for postgraduate in future				
My enrollment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the institutions' general reputation				.734
My enrolment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the university's brand personality				.703
My enrollment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the university's ranking				.722
Social media allows people with similar interest to stay connected				
Social media (Facebook, WhatsApp) is a necessity in academic studies in this era		.622		
The reason i use social media most is it connects me with with fellow students worldwide		.706		
I normally use social media platforms to get shared experiences through various platforms		.672		
I prefer to use social media platforms while searching various education programs		.694		
I prefer social media platforms due to shared opinions thru different forums in relation to education matters		.568		
This university is Distinctive (Unique, curious& independent)			.567	
This university is Cosmopolitan (Networked, International)			.623	
This university is friendly			.669	
This university is Sophisticated (Upper class, Glamorous, Charming)			.750	
This university is exciting (Innovative, Trendy, Unique & Up-to=date)			.725	
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	.699			
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	.726			
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	.733			
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	.721			
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	.713			
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	.782			
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	.713			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 6 iterations.

Appendix 6: Factor Analysis after Deletion of Unloaded Items

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.866
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2892.149
	df	190
	Sig.	.000

Communalities

	Initial	Extraction
My enrollment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the institutions' general reputation	1.000	.655
My enrolment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the university's brand personality	1.000	.584
My enrollment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the university's ranking	1.000	.658
Social media (Facebook, whatsapp) is a necessity in academic studies in this era	1.000	.463
The reason i use social media most is it connects me with with fellow students worldwide	1.000	.522
I normally use social media platforms to get shared experiences through variousplatforms	1.000	.546
I prefer to use social medai platforms while searching various education programs	1.000	.581
I prefer social media platforms due to shared opinions thru different forums in relation to eduaction matters	1.000	.443
This university is Distinctive (Unique, curious& independent)	1.000	.434
This university is Cosmopolitant (Networked, International)	1.000	.484
This university is friendly	1.000	.525
This university is Sophisticated (Upper class, Glamorous, Charming)	1.000	.574
This university is exciting (Innovative, Trendy, Unique & Up-to=date)	1.000	.585
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	1.000	.549
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	1.000	.554
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	1.000	.555
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	1.000	.574
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	1.000	.551
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	1.000	.622
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	1.000	.517

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
	1	5.104	25.521	25.521	5.104	25.521	25.521	3.868	19.340
2	2.928	14.638	40.159	2.928	14.638	40.159	2.588	12.942	32.282
3	1.636	8.180	48.339	1.636	8.180	48.339	2.521	12.606	44.888
4	1.309	6.547	54.886	1.309	6.547	54.886	1.999	9.997	54.886
5	.854	4.268	59.154						
6	.826	4.128	63.282						
7	.731	3.656	66.938						
8	.696	3.478	70.416						
9	.659	3.293	73.710						
10	.615	3.073	76.783						
11	.583	2.915	79.698						
12	.554	2.770	82.468						
13	.520	2.599	85.067						
14	.512	2.560	87.627						
15	.490	2.449	90.076						
16	.486	2.428	92.504						
17	.412	2.061	94.564						
18	.388	1.942	96.507						
19	.373	1.864	98.371						
20	.326	1.629	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotated Component Matrix^a

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
My enrollment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the institutions' general reputation				.778
My enrolment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the university's brand personality				.723
My enrollment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the university's ranking				.749
Social media (Facebook, whatsapp) is a necessity in academic studies in this era		.609		
The reason i use social media most is it connects me with fellow students worldwide		.708		
I normally use social media platforms to get shared experiences through various platforms		.681		
I prefer to use social media platforms while searching various education programs		.717		
I prefer social media platforms due to shared opinions thru different forums in relation to education matters		.593		
This university is Distinctive (Unique, curious& independent)			.575	
This university is Cosmopolitan (Networked, International)			.641	
This university is friendly			.674	
This university is Sophisticated (Upper class, Glamorous, Charming)			.745	
This university is exciting (Innovative, Trendy, Unique & Up-to-date)			.722	
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	.709			
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	.734			
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	.735			
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	.719			
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	.713			
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	.786			
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	.716			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

Appendix 7: Reliability Test for Retained Items after Factor Analysis

Reliability Statistics For Students' Behavioral intentions

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.725	.725	3

Item-Total Statistics For Students' Behavioral intentions

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
My enrollment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the institutions' general reputation	10.99	5.270	.542	.296	.643
My enrolment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the university's brand personality	11.19	5.225	.529	.280	.657
My enrollment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the university's ranking	11.19	4.560	.571	.327	.608

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
16.68	9.925	3.150	3

Reliability Statistics For Social Media

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.746	.746	5

Item-Total Statistics For Social media

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Social media (Facebook, whatsapp) is a necessity in academic studies in this era	22.90	15.235	.462	.237	.718
The reason i use social media most is it connects me with with fellow students worldwide	22.77	14.802	.485	.248	.710
I normally use social media platforms to get shared experiences through variousplatforms	22.70	14.695	.540	.295	.690
I prefer to use social medai platforms while searching various education programs	22.78	14.145	.597	.373	.668
I prefer social media platforms due to shared opinions thru different forums in relation to eduaction matters	22.70	15.097	.468	.271	.716

Reliability Statistics For Brand Personality

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.746	.745	5

Item-Total Statistics For Brand personality

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
This university is Distinctive (Unique, curious& independent)	22.13	15.718	.408	.176	.736
This university is Cosmopolitan (Networked, International)	22.29	14.709	.498	.255	.707
This university is friendly	22.27	14.288	.529	.293	.695
This university is Sophisticated (Upper class, Glamorous, Charming)	22.56	13.703	.547	.307	.688
This university is exciting (Innovative, Trendy, Unique & Up-to-date)	22.35	12.880	.574	.334	.677

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
27.90	20.952	4.577	5

Reliability Statistics For Attitude

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.862	.862	7

Item-Total Statistics For Attitude

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	36.64	24.171	.595	.379	.847
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	36.77	23.379	.636	.438	.842
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	36.74	23.631	.632	.418	.842
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	36.65	23.280	.645	.461	.841
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	36.72	23.506	.628	.433	.843
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	36.75	22.711	.683	.510	.835
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	36.55	23.905	.594	.427	.848

Scale Statistics For Attitude

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
42.81	31.283	5.593	7

Composite Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.842	.844	20

Composite Reliability Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
My enrollment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the institutions' general reputation	110.16	139.747	.380	.353	.837
My enrolment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the university's brand personality	110.36	139.320	.385	.341	.837
My enrollment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the university's ranking	110.36	136.394	.434	.407	.835
Social media (Facebook, whatsapp) is a necessity in academic studies in this era	110.30	137.293	.436	.295	.834
The reason i use social media most is it connects me with fellow students worldwide	110.16	139.187	.357	.276	.838
I normally use social media platforms to get shared experiences through various platforms	110.09	136.392	.477	.371	.832
I prefer to use social media platforms while searching various education programs	110.18	135.935	.487	.397	.832
I prefer social media platforms due to shared opinions thru different forums in relation to education matters	110.09	137.857	.411	.314	.836
This university is Distinctive (Unique, curious& independent)	110.09	141.468	.342	.232	.838
This university is Cosmopolitan (Networked, International)	110.25	138.006	.447	.289	.834
This university is friendly	110.22	138.012	.433	.332	.834
This university is Sophisticated (Upper class, Glamorous, Charming)	110.51	138.550	.384	.339	.837
This university is exciting (Innovative, Trendy, Unique & Up-to-date)	110.31	133.875	.493	.383	.832
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	109.69	141.537	.403	.402	.836
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	109.82	140.051	.436	.451	.835
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	109.79	141.304	.399	.428	.836
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	109.71	138.452	.500	.487	.832
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	109.78	139.699	.454	.445	.834
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	109.80	140.495	.404	.525	.836
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	109.60	142.086	.363	.445	.837

Appendix 8: Descriptive Statistics after Factor Analysis

Descriptive Statistics For Students' Behavioral intentions

	N	Range	Min	Max	Mean	Std.dvn	Variance
My enrollment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the institutions' general reputation	468	6	1	7	5.69	1.246	1.553
My enrollment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the university's ranking	468	6	1	7	5.50	1.398	1.955
My enrolment intention for postgraduate studies will depend on the university's brand personality	468	6	1	7	5.49	1.273	1.621
Valid N (listwise)	468						

Descriptive Statistics For Social Media Use

	N	Range	Min	Max	Mean	Std. dvn	Variance
I prefer social media platforms due to shared opinions thru different forums in relation to education matters	468	6	1	7	5.76	1.335	1.782
I normally use social media platforms to get shared experiences through various platforms	468	6	1	7	5.76	1.296	1.679
The reason i use social media most is it connects me with with fellow students worldwide	468	6	1	7	5.69	1.362	1.854
I prefer to use social media platforms while searching various education programs	468	6	1	7	5.68	1.308	1.712
Social media (Facebook, whatsapp) is a necessity in academic studies in this era	468	6	1	7	5.56	1.320	1.742
Valid N (listwise)	468						

Descriptive Statistics For University Brand Personality

	N	Range	Min	Maxi	Mean	Std.	Variance
This university is Distinctive (Unique, curious& independent)	468	6	1	7	5.77	1.184	1.403
This university is friendly	468	6	1	7	5.63	1.266	1.603
This university is Cosmopolitan (Networked, International)	468	6	1	7	5.61	1.236	1.527
This university is exciting (Innovative, Trendy, Unique & Up-to-date)	468	6	1	7	5.55	1.450	2.103
This university is Sophisticated (Upper class, Glamorous, Charming)	468	6	1	7	5.34	1.344	1.806
Valid N (listwise)	468						

Descriptive Statistics For Students' Attitude

	N	Range	Min	Max	Mean	Std	Variance
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	468	5	2	7	6.25	1.072	1.149
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	468	5	2	7	6.16	1.033	1.067
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	468	5	2	7	6.15	1.093	1.195
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	468	5	2	7	6.08	1.084	1.175
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	468	4	3	7	6.06	1.061	1.127
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	468	6	1	7	6.06	1.123	1.262
For me, enrolling for postgraduate studies in the near future would be.....?	468	5	2	7	6.03	1.092	1.192
Valid N (listwise)	468						

Appendix 9: Correlation Analysis Results

Correlations

		TraEnrolment	TransSocialmed	Brandperson	Attitude
TraEnrolment	Pearson Correlation	1	.480**	.430**	.228**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	460	460	460	460
TransSocialmed	Pearson Correlation	.480**	1	.431**	.244**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	460	460	460	460
Brandperson	Pearson Correlation	.430**	.431**	1	.291**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	460	460	460	460
Attitude	Pearson Correlation	.228**	.244**	.291**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	460	460	460	460

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Appendix 10: SPSS Regression Results for Direct Effects - With Outliers (RWOL)

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.261 ^a	.068	.058	.80765	.068	6.730	5	462	.000
2	.503 ^b	.253	.243	.72380	.185	114.239	1	461	.000
3	.561 ^c	.315	.304	.69409	.062	41.313	1	460	.000
4	.573 ^d	.328	.316	.68797	.013	9.214	1	459	.003

a. Predictors: (Constant), Feespayment, Gender, Age, Institution, Program

b. Predictors: (Constant), Feespayment, Gender, Age, Institution, Program, TransSocialmed

c. Predictors: (Constant), Feespayment, Gender, Age, Institution, Program, TransSocialmed, Brandperson

d. Predictors: (Constant), Feespayment, Gender, Age, Institution, Program, TransSocialmed, Brandperson, Attitude

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	6.558	.215		30.447	.000
	Gender	-.011	.075	-.007	-.149	.882
	Age	-.030	.053	-.026	-.564	.573
	Institution	-.421	.078	-.245	-5.367	.000
	Program	-.037	.025	-.068	-1.478	.140
	Feespayment	-.056	.064	-.040	-.871	.384
2	(Constant)	4.004	.307		13.033	.000
	Gender	.009	.067	.006	.139	.890
	Age	-.019	.047	-.016	-.394	.694
	Institution	-.269	.072	-.157	-3.755	.000
	Program	-.031	.023	-.056	-1.362	.174
	Feespayment	-.018	.058	-.013	-.314	.754
3	(Constant)	3.085	.327		9.421	.000
	Gender	.007	.064	.004	.102	.919
	Age	-.002	.045	-.002	-.039	.969
	Institution	-.268	.069	-.156	-3.901	.000
	Program	-.028	.022	-.051	-1.293	.197
	Feespayment	-.005	.055	-.003	-.087	.931
	TransSocialmed	.303	.038	.339	7.993	.000
BRANDPERSON	.244	.038	.269	6.428	.000	
4	(Constant)	2.573	.366		7.032	.000
	Gender	-.001	.064	-.001	-.019	.985
	Age	-.007	.045	-.006	-.156	.876
	Institution	-.297	.069	-.173	-4.323	.000
	Program	-.019	.022	-.035	-.874	.382
	Feespayment	-.008	.055	-.006	-.143	.886
	TransSocialmed	.280	.038	.314	7.316	.000
	BRANDPERSON	.225	.038	.248	5.892	.000
ATTITUDE	.129	.042	.124	3.035	.003	

a. Dependent Variable: TraEnrolment

Effect of Social Media on Brand personality From Data with outliers (RWOL)

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.271 ^a	.073	.061	.88705	.073	6.068	6	461	.000
2	.413 ^b	.170	.158	.84011	.097	53.954	1	460	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), ATTITUDE, Age, Gender, Institution, Feespayment, Program

b. Predictors: (Constant), ATTITUDE, Age, Gender, Institution, Feespayment, Program, TransSocialmed

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4.436	.393		11.280	.000
	Gender	-.022	.082	-.012	-.268	.789
	Age	-.086	.058	-.068	-1.487	.138
	Institution	-.185	.086	-.098	-2.143	.033
	Program	.004	.028	.007	.150	.881
	Feespayment	-.088	.071	-.057	-1.248	.213
	ATTITUDE	.285	.052	.248	5.469	.000
2	(Constant)	2.927	.425		6.882	.000
	Gender	-9.490E-5	.078	.000	-.001	.999
	Age	-.075	.055	-.059	-1.358	.175
	Institution	-.046	.084	-.024	-.546	.586
	Program	.002	.027	.003	.074	.941
	Feespayment	-.057	.067	-.037	-.858	.392
	ATTITUDE	.184	.051	.161	3.605	.000
TransSocialmed	.325	.044	.331	7.345	.000	

a. Dependent Variable: BRANDPERSON

Mediation Results from Data with outliers (RWOL)

Written by Andrew F. Hayes, Ph.D. www.afhayes.com

Documentation available in Hayes (2018). www.guilford.com/p/hayes3

 Model : 4
 Y : TraEnrol
 X : TransSoc
 M : BRANDPER

Covariates:
 Gender Age Institut Program Feespaym

Sample
 Size: 468

 OUTCOME VARIABLE:

BRANDPER

Model Summary

	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
	.383	.147	.724	13.246	6.000	461.000	.000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	3.764	.361	10.419	.000	3.054	4.473
TransSoc	.367	.043	8.510	.000	.283	.452
Gender	.011	.079	.143	.886	-.144	.167
Age	-.069	.056	-1.240	.215	-.178	.040
Institut	-.004	.084	-.047	.962	-.170	.162
Program	-.011	.027	-.425	.671	-.064	.041
Feespaym	-.055	.068	-.804	.422	-.188	.079

 OUTCOME VARIABLE:

TraEnrol

Model Summary

	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
	.561	.315	.482	30.158	7.000	460.000	.000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	3.085	.327	9.421	.000	2.441	3.729
TransSoc	.303	.038	7.993	.000	.228	.377
BRANDPER	.244	.038	6.428	.000	.170	.319
Gender	.007	.064	.102	.919	-.120	.133
Age	-.002	.045	-.039	.969	-.091	.088
Institut	-.268	.069	-3.901	.000	-.403	-.133
Program	-.028	.022	-1.293	.197	-.071	.015
Feespaym	-.005	.055	-.087	.931	-.114	.104

***** TOTAL EFFECT MODEL *****

OUTCOME VARIABLE:

TraEnrol

Model Summary

	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
	.503	.253	.524	26.023	6.000	461.000	.000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	4.004	.307	13.033	.000	3.400	4.608
TransSoc	.393	.037	10.688	.000	.320	.465
Gender	.009	.067	.139	.890	-.123	.141
Age	-.019	.047	-.394	.694	-.112	.074
Institut	-.269	.072	-3.755	.000	-.410	-.128
Program	-.031	.023	-1.362	.174	-.075	.014
Feespaym	-.018	.058	-.314	.754	-.132	.095

***** TOTAL, DIRECT, AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y *****

Total effect of X on Y

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
.393	.037	10.688	.000	.320	.465

Direct effect of X on Y

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
.303	.038	7.993	.000	.228	.377

Indirect effect(s) of X on Y:

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
BRANDPER	.090	.023	.050	.138

***** ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS *****

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:

95.0000

Number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals:

5000

NOTE: Variables names longer than eight characters can produce incorrect output.

Shorter variable names are recommended.

----- END MATRIX -----

Moderation Results from Data with outliers (RWOL)

Run MATRIX procedure:

***** PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Version 3.2 *****

Written by Andrew F. Hayes, Ph.D. www.afhayes.com
Documentation available in Hayes (2018). www.guilford.com/p/hayes3

Model : 59
Y : TraEnrol
X : TransSoc
M : BRANDPER
W : ATTITUDE

Covariates:

Gender Age Institut Program Feespaym

Sample
Size: 468

OUTCOME VARIABLE:

BRANDPER

Model Summary

	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
	.417	.174	.705	12.049	8.000	459.000	.000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	.295	.228	1.294	.196	-.153	.743
TransSoc	.332	.045	7.454	.000	.244	.419
ATTITUDE	.195	.052	3.764	.000	.093	.296
Int_1	.057	.044	1.307	.192	-.029	.143
Gender	.010	.078	.122	.903	-.144	.164
Age	-.072	.055	-1.313	.190	-.180	.036
Institut	-.040	.084	-.477	.633	-.205	.125
Program	.001	.027	.024	.981	-.051	.053
Feespaym	-.056	.067	-.833	.405	-.187	.076

Product terms key:

Int_1 : TransSoc x ATTITUDE

Test(s) of highest order unconditional interaction(s):

	R2-chng	F	df1	df2	p
X*W	.003	1.707	1.000	459.000	.192

OUTCOME VARIABLE:

TraEnrol

Model Summary

	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
	.586	.343	.464	23.911	10.000	457.000	.000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	6.218	.186	33.510	.000	5.854	6.583
TransSoc	.268	.038	7.009	.000	.193	.344
BRANDPER	.233	.038	6.146	.000	.159	.308
ATTITUDE	.129	.043	3.020	.003	.045	.213
Int_1	-.079	.037	-2.161	.031	-.151	-.007

Int_2	.122	.042	2.908	.004	.040	.204
Gender	-.016	.064	-.259	.796	-.142	.109
Age	-.013	.045	-.280	.780	-.100	.075
Institut	-.298	.068	-4.364	.000	-.432	-.164
Program	-.013	.022	-.596	.552	-.055	.030
Feespaym	-.013	.054	-.233	.816	-.120	.094

Product terms key:

Int_1 : TransSoc x ATTITUDE
 Int_2 : BRANDPER x ATTITUDE

Test(s) of highest order unconditional interaction(s):

	R2-chng	F	df1	df2	p
X*W	.007	4.669	1.000	457.000	.031
M*W	.012	8.458	1.000	457.000	.004

Focal predict: TransSoc (X)
 Mod var: ATTITUDE (W)

Conditional effects of the focal predictor at values of the moderator(s):

ATTITUDE	Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
-.799	.332	.045	7.383	.000	.243	.420
.000	.268	.038	7.009	.000	.193	.344
.799	.205	.051	3.999	.000	.104	.306

Focal predict: BRANDPER (M)
 Mod var: ATTITUDE (W)

Conditional effects of the focal predictor at values of the moderator(s):

ATTITUDE	Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
-.799	.136	.050	2.741	.006	.038	.233
.000	.233	.038	6.146	.000	.159	.308
.799	.330	.052	6.400	.000	.229	.432

***** DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y *****

Conditional direct effect(s) of X on Y:

ATTITUDE	Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
-.799	.332	.045	7.383	.000	.243	.420
.000	.268	.038	7.009	.000	.193	.344
.799	.205	.051	3.999	.000	.104	.306

Conditional indirect effects of X on Y:

INDIRECT EFFECT:

TransSoc -> BRANDPER -> TraEnrol

ATTITUDE	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
-.799	.039	.026	-.003	.098
.000	.077	.021	.041	.123
.799	.125	.035	.064	.201

***** ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS *****

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:

95.0000

Number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals:

5000

W values in conditional tables are the mean and +/- SD from the mean.

NOTE: The following variables were mean centered prior to analysis:

ATTITUDE TransSoc BRANDPER

NOTE: Variables names longer than eight characters can produce incorrect output.

Shorter variable names are recommended.

----- END MATRIX -----

**Appendix 11: SPSS Regression Results for Direct Effects-Without Outliers
(RWOTL)**

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.241 ^a	.058	.048	.77933	.058	5.592	5	454	.000
2	.503 ^b	.253	.243	.69496	.195	117.940	1	453	.000
3	.559 ^c	.313	.302	.66711	.060	39.601	1	452	.000
4	.565 ^d	.319	.307	.66478	.006	4.183	1	451	.041

a. Predictors: (Constant), Feespayment, Gender, Age, Institution, Program

b. Predictors: (Constant), Feespayment, Gender, Age, Institution, Program, TransSocialmed

c. Predictors: (Constant), Feespayment, Gender, Age, Institution, Program, TransSocialmed, Brandperso

d. Predictors: (Constant), Fees, Gender, Age, Institution, Program, Transsocialmed, Brandperson, Attitude

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	6.519	.209		31.146	.000
	Gender	.007	.073	.004	.096	.923
	Age	-.048	.052	-.043	-.929	.353
	Institution	-.381	.076	-.231	-4.999	.000
	Program	-.020	.025	-.038	-.806	.421
	Feespayment	-.058	.062	-.043	-.926	.355
2	(Constant)	3.934	.302		13.006	.000
	Gender	.028	.065	.017	.427	.669
	Age	-.036	.046	-.032	-.771	.441
	Institution	-.233	.069	-.142	-3.364	.001
	Program	-.015	.022	-.029	-.699	.485
	Feespayment TransSocialmed	-.008 .395	.056 .036	-.006 .451	-.141 10.860	.888 .000
3	(Constant)	3.098	.319		9.703	.000
	Gender	.030	.062	.019	.478	.633
	Age	-.029	.045	-.026	-.650	.516
	Institution	-.233	.067	-.141	-3.499	.001
	Program	-.011	.021	-.020	-.506	.613
	Feespayment	-.002	.054	-.001	-.030	.976
	TransSocialmed Brandperson	.293 .246	.039 .039	.334 .272	7.606 6.293	.000 .000
4	(Constant)	2.714	.369		7.349	.000
	Gender	.022	.062	.014	.355	.723
	Age	-.030	.044	-.027	-.682	.495
	Institution	-.252	.067	-.153	-3.767	.000
	Program	-.005	.021	-.009	-.214	.831
	Feespayment	-.002	.053	-.001	-.036	.972
	TransSocialmed	.280	.039	.320	7.199	.000
	Brandperson Attitude	.229 .093	.040 .046	.253 .086	5.739 2.045	.000 .041

a. Dependent Variable: TraEnrolment

Effect of Social media on Brand personality From Data without Outliers (RWOTL)

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.316 ^a	.100	.088	.84338	.100	8.346	6	453	.000
2	.474 ^b	.224	.212	.78366	.125	72.679	1	452	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), ATTITUDE, Age, Gender, Institution, Feespayment, Program

b. Predictors: (Constant), ATTITUDE, Age, Gender, Institution, Feespayment, Program, TransSocialmed

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.887	.405		9.608	.000
	Gender	-.055	.079	-.031	-.700	.485
	Age	-.042	.056	-.034	-.743	.458
	Institution	-.203	.083	-.111	-2.453	.015
	Program	.002	.027	.004	.082	.935
	Feespayment	-.067	.068	-.046	-.998	.319
	ATTITUDE	.362	.055	.300	6.624	.000
2	(Constant)	2.246	.422		5.318	.000
	Gender	-.028	.074	-.016	-.379	.705
	Age	-.030	.052	-.024	-.573	.567
	Institution	-.052	.079	-.029	-.659	.511
	Program	-.002	.025	-.004	-.088	.930
	Feespayment	-.025	.063	-.017	-.397	.691
	ATTITUDE	.242	.053	.201	4.606	.000
TransSocialmed	.363	.043	.375	8.525	.000	

a. Dependent Variable: BRANDPERSON

Mediation Results from Data without Outliers (RWOTL)

Run MATRIX procedure:

***** PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Version 3.4 *****

Written by Andrew F. Hayes, Ph.D. www.afhayes.com

Documentation available in Hayes (2018). www.guilford.com/p/hayes3

Model : 4
 Y : TraEnrol
 X : TransSoc
 M : BRANDPER

Covariates:

Gender Age Institut Program Feespaym

Sample

Size: 460

OUTCOME VARIABLE:

BRANDPER

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.433	.188	.642	17.465	6.000	453.000	.000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	3.394	.349	9.736	.000	2.709	4.079
TransSoc	.415	.042	9.895	.000	.333	.498
Gender	-.008	.075	-.110	.912	-.156	.139
Age	-.028	.053	-.519	.604	-.133	.077
Institut	-.001	.080	-.018	.986	-.158	.156
Program	-.019	.025	-.750	.454	-.069	.031
Feespaym	-.025	.064	-.394	.693	-.152	.101

OUTCOME VARIABLE:

TraEnrol

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.559	.313	.445	29.393	7.000	452.000	.000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	3.098	.319	9.703	.000	2.471	3.725
TransSoc	.293	.039	7.606	.000	.217	.369
BRANDPER	.246	.039	6.293	.000	.169	.323
Gender	.030	.062	.478	.633	-.093	.153
Age	-.029	.045	-.650	.516	-.117	.059
Institut	-.233	.067	-3.499	.001	-.363	-.102
Program	-.011	.021	-.506	.613	-.052	.031
Feespaym	-.002	.054	-.030	.976	-.107	.104

***** TOTAL EFFECT MODEL *****

OUTCOME VARIABLE:

TraEnrol

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.503	.253	.483	25.517	6.000	453.000	.000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	3.934	.302	13.006	.000	3.339	4.528
TransSoc	.395	.036	10.860	.000	.324	.467
Gender	.028	.065	.427	.669	-.100	.156
Age	-.036	.046	-.771	.441	-.127	.055
Institut	-.233	.069	-3.364	.001	-.369	-.097
Program	-.015	.022	-.699	.485	-.059	.028
Feespaym	-.008	.056	-.141	.888	-.118	.102

***** TOTAL, DIRECT, AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y *****

Total effect of X on Y

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
.395	.036	10.860	.000	.324	.467

Direct effect of X on Y

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
.293	.039	7.606	.000	.217	.369

Indirect effect(s) of X on Y:

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
BRANDPER	.102	.024	.059	.151

***** ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS *****

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:

95.0000

Number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals:

5000

NOTE: Variables names longer than eight characters can produce incorrect output.

Shorter variable names are recommended.

----- END MATRIX -----

Moderation and Moderated Mediation Results From Data without Outliers

Run MATRIX procedure:

***** PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Version 3.4 *****

Written by Andrew F. Hayes, Ph.D. www.afhayes.com
Documentation available in Hayes (2018). www.guilford.com/p/hayes3

Model : 59
Y : TraEnrol
X : TransSoc

M : BRANDPER
W : ATTITUDE

Covariates:

Gender Age Institut Program Feespaym

Sample

Size: 460

OUTCOME VARIABLE:

BRANDPER

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.474	.225	.615	16.324	8.000	451.000	.000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	.205	.214	.957	.339	-.216	.625
TransSoc	.362	.043	8.491	.000	.278	.446
ATTITUDE	.240	.053	4.540	.000	.136	.344
Int_1	-.022	.056	-.397	.692	-.132	.088
Gender	-.030	.074	-.413	.680	-.176	.115
Age	-.030	.052	-.571	.568	-.133	.073
Institut	-.053	.079	-.676	.500	-.209	.102
Program	-.002	.025	-.068	.946	-.051	.048
Feespaym	-.024	.063	-.379	.705	-.148	.100

Product terms key:

Int_1 : TransSoc x ATTITUDE

Test(s) of highest order unconditional interaction(s):

	R2-chng	F	df1	df2	p
X*W	.000	.158	1.000	451.000	.692

OUTCOME VARIABLE:

TraEnrol

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.579	.336	.433	22.677	10.000	449.000	.000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	6.146	.180	34.105	.000	5.791	6.500
TransSoc	.275	.039	7.134	.000	.199	.351
BRANDPER	.233	.040	5.884	.000	.155	.310
ATTITUDE	.105	.046	2.278	.023	.014	.195
Int_1	-.157	.053	-2.969	.003	-.260	-.053
Int_2	.134	.049	2.708	.007	.037	.231
Gender	-.001	.062	-.018	.985	-.123	.121

Age	-.026	.044	-.582	.561	-.112	.061
Institut	-.257	.066	-3.871	.000	-.387	-.127
Program	.003	.021	.143	.887	-.039	.045
Feespaym	.006	.053	.107	.915	-.098	.110

Product terms key:

Int_1	:	TransSoc x	ATTITUDE
Int_2	:	BRANDPER x	ATTITUDE

Test(s) of highest order unconditional interaction(s):

	R2-chng	F	df1	df2	p
X*W	.013	8.815	1.000	449.000	.003
M*W	.011	7.331	1.000	449.000	.007

 Focal predict: TransSoc (X)
 Mod var: ATTITUDE (W)

Conditional effects of the focal predictor at values of the moderator(s):

ATTITUDE	Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
-.732	.390	.053	7.295	.000	.285	.495
.000	.275	.039	7.134	.000	.199	.351
.732	.161	.056	2.883	.004	.051	.270

 Focal predict: BRANDPER (M)
 Mod var: ATTITUDE (W)

Conditional effects of the focal predictor at values of the moderator(s):

ATTITUDE	Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
-.732	.135	.052	2.584	.010	.032	.238
.000	.233	.040	5.884	.000	.155	.310
.732	.330	.055	6.027	.000	.223	.438

***** DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y *****

Conditional direct effect(s) of X on Y:

ATTITUDE	Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
-.732	.390	.053	7.295	.000	.285	.495
.000	.275	.039	7.134	.000	.199	.351
.732	.161	.056	2.883	.004	.051	.270

Conditional indirect effects of X on Y:

INDIRECT EFFECT:

TransSoc -> BRANDPER -> TraEnrol

ATTITUDE	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
-.732	.051	.031	-.007	.113
.000	.084	.021	.047	.131
.732	.114	.030	.064	.183

 ***** ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS *****

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:

95.0000

Number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals:

5000

W values in conditional tables are the mean and +/- SD from the mean.

NOTE: The following variables were mean centered prior to analysis:

ATTITUDE TransSoc BRANDPER

NOTE: Variables names longer than eight characters can produce incorrect output.

Shorter variable names are recommended.

----- END MATRIX -----

Appendix 12: Letters of Authority to Collect Data



MOI UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS

Tel: (0321) 43620
Fax No: (0321) 43360
Telex No.35047 MOI VARSITY

Box 3900
Eldoret
KENYA

RE: SBE/DPHIL/BM/002/17

DATE: 16th APRIL, 2019

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

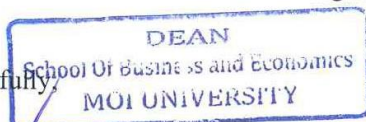
RE: SIMIYU GABRIEL – SBE/DPHIL/BM/002/17

The above named is a bonafide student of Moi University School of Business and Economics, undertaking a Doctor of Philosophy in Business Management degree, specializing in Marketing & Logistics.

He has completed coursework, defended his proposal, and is proceeding to the field to collect data for his research titled: *“Effect of Social Media, Brand Personality and Attitude on Students Behavioral Intentions to enroll in Postgraduate Studies, Western Kenya”*

Any assistance accorded to him will be highly appreciated.

Yours Faithfully,





Joel K. Tenai
DR. JOEL K. TENAI


Ag. DEAN, SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:
MR. GABRIEL - SIMIYU
of MOI UNIVERSITY, 2533-50200
BUNGOMA, has been permitted to
conduct research in Bungoma, Busia,
Kakamega, Transzoia, Uasin-Gishu
Counties
on the topic: EFFECT OF SOCIAL MEDIA,
BRAND PERSONALITY AND ATTITUDE ON
STUDENTS BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS TO
ENROLL IN POSTGRADUATE STUDIES,
WESTERN KENYA
for the period ending:
25th March,2020

Permit No. : NACOSTI/P/19/84245/29068
Date Of Issue : 26th March,2019
Fee Received :Ksh 2000



Applicant's Signature




Director General

National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation

THE SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION ACT, 2013
The Grant of Research Licenses is guided by the Science, Technology and Innovation (Research Licensing) Regulations, 2014.

CONDITIONS

- 1. The License is valid for the proposed research, location and specified period.**
- 2. The License and any rights thereunder are non-transferable.**
- 3. The Licensee shall inform the County Governor before commencement of the research.**
- 4. Excavation, filming and collection of specimens are subject to further necessary clearance from relevant Government Agencies.**
- 5. The License does not give authority to transfer research materials.**
- 6. NACOSTI may monitor and evaluate the licensed research project.**
- 7. The Licensee shall submit one hard copy and upload a soft copy of their final report within one year of completion of the research.**
- 8. NACOSTI reserves the right to modify the conditions of the License including cancellation without prior notice.**

National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
P.O. Box 30623 - 00100, Nairobi, Kenya
TEL: 020 400 7000, 0713 788787, 0735 404245
Email: dg@nacosti.go.ke, registry@nacosti.go.ke
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

RESEARCH LICENSE
Serial No.A 23754
CONDITIONS: see back page



**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,
TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION**

Telephone: +254-20-2213471,
2241349,3310571,2219420
Fax: +254-20-318245,318249
Email: dg@nacosti.go.ke
Website : www.nacosti.go.ke
When replying please quote

NACOSTI, Upper Kabete
Off Waiyaki Way
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref No. **NACOSTI/P/19/84245/29068**

Date: **26th March, 2019**

Gabriel Simiyu
Moi University
P.O. Box 3900-30100
ELDORET.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on *“Effect of social media, brand personality and attitude on students behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies, Western Kenya”* I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **selected Counties** for the period ending **25th March, 2020.**

You are advised to report to **the County Commissioners and the County Directors of Education of the selected Counties** before embarking on the research project.

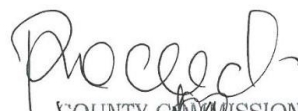
Kindly note that, as an applicant who has been licensed under the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 to conduct research in Kenya, you shall deposit **a copy** of the final research report to the Commission within **one year** of completion. The soft copy of the same should be submitted through the Online Research Information System.


BONIFACE WANYAMA
FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO

Copy to:

The County Commissioners
Selected Counties.

The County Directors of Education
Selected Counties.


COUNTY COMMISSIONER
UASIN GISHU COUNTY
17/4/2019


FOR COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
UASIN GISHU COUNTY
P.O. Box 9843, ELDORET
Tel: 0719-127 212/ 053-2063342
19/4/2019

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



**OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AND COORDINATION OF NATIONAL GOVERNMENT**

Telephone: 055- 30326
 FAX: 055-30326
 E-mail: ccbungoma@yahoo.com
 When replying please Quote

Office of the County Commissioner
 P.O. Box 550 - 50200
BUNGOMA

23rd April, 2019

REF: ADM.15/13/VOL.II/150

Deputy County Commissioner
BUNGOMA SOUTH

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION – GABRIEL SIMIYU

Reference is made to the letter Ref NOCOSTI/P/19/84245/29068 dated 26TH March, 2019 on the above subject matter.

The above referred has been authorised by the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation to carry out a research on "***Effect of social media, brand personality and attitude on students behavioural intentions to enrol in postgraduate studies, Western Region Kenya***".

Gabriel will be carrying out the said research in Bungoma South Sub County of Bungoma County for a period ending 25th March, 2020

This is therefore to introduce him and ask for your cooperation and support as he undertakes the research.

Anne N. Wilson
 For County Commissioner
BUNGOMA COUNTY





REPUBLIC OF KENYA

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
State Department of Education – Bungoma County

When Replying please quote
e-mail: bungomacde@gmail.com

County Director of Education
P.O. Box 1620-50200
BUNGOMA

Ref No: BCE/DE/19/VOL.III/150

Date: 23rd April, 2019

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

**RE: AUTHORITY TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH – GABRIEL SIMIYU
NACOSTI/P/19/84245/29068**

The bearer of this letter Gabriel Simiyu of Moi University has been authorized to carry out research on *“Effect of social media, brand personality and attitude on students behavioral intentions to enroll in postgraduate studies, Western Kenya ”* a period ending **14th January, 2020.**

Kindly accord him the necessary assistance

For: COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
BUNGOMA
P. O. Box 1620,
BUNGOMA - 50200

PO Omondi

CALLEB OMONDI

For: COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
BUNGOMA COUNTY



KIBABII UNIVERSITY
Knowledge for Development

Tel: 020 – 2028660 / 0708 – 085934 / 0734 - 831729
 P.O. Box 1699 – 50200
 Bungoma
 Kenya

E-mail: enquiries@kibu.ac.ke /
 administration@kibu.ac.ke
 Website: http://www.kibu.ac.ke

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY REGISTRAR (ADMINISTRATION & HUMAN RESOURCE)

Ref: KIBU/ADM/CORR.90/VOL.2-2014/08

Date: 13th May, 2019

Mr. Simiyu Gabriel,
 P.O. Box 2533-50200,

BUNGOMA.
 12541725 B03 040

Dear Mr. Simiyu,

**RE: PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA ON THE EFFECT OF SOCIAL MEDIA,
 BRAND PERSONALITY AND ATTITUDE ON STUDENTS' BEHAVIOURAL
 INTENTION TO ENROL FOR POSTGRAGUATE STUDIES, WESTERN KENYA.**

Reference is hereby made to your letter dated 24th April, 2019 on the above subject.

I am pleased to inform you that your request for permission to collect data on The Effect of Social Media, Brand Personality and Attitude on Students' Behavioral Intention to Enrol for Postgraduate Studies, Western Kenya was approved.

I take this opportunity to wish you success as you undertake this academic assignment within our University.

Yours sincerely,

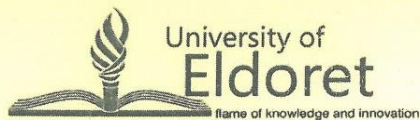
Martin Shikuku,
AG. DEPUTY REGISTRAR (ADMINISTRATION & HR)

Copy to: - Vice Chancellor
 - Deputy Vice Chancellor (AF&D)

To note on file



Kibabii University ISO 9001:2015 Certified
 Knowledge for development



P. O. Box 1125 - 30100, Eldoret, Kenya
 Tel: +254 53 2063257 / 2033712/13 Ext. 2352/3
 Mob: 0736 493555; Fax: +254 53 206 3257
 E-mail: dvcpre@uoeld.ac.ke
 Website: www.uoeld.ac.ke

**OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR
 (PLANNING, RESEARCH & EXTENSION)**

REF: UoE/D/DVPRE/LOS/075

15th May, 2019

Simiyu Gabriel
 P.O. Box 2533-50200
 BUNGOMA

Dear Sir,

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN UNIVERSITY OF ELDORET

We refer to your application to carry out research on '*Effect of Social Media, Brand Personality and Attitude on Students' Behavioural Intentions to Enrol in Postgraduate Studies, Western Kenya*' at University of Eldoret and are pleased to inform you that your request has been approved.

You are advised to report to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (PRE) on arrival at the University to commence your research. The permission is also granted on condition that you will share the findings with the University once you complete your studies.

Yours Faithfully,

**Deputy Vice Chancellor
 Planning, Research & Extension
 University Of Eldoret**

**PROF. P. O. RABURU
 DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR
 (PLANNING, RESEARCH & EXTENSION)**





MOI UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS

Mount Kenya University
 ELDORET CAMPUS
 DEPUTY DIRECTOR
 Academics
 Approved to conduct
 his research
 24/4/19

Tel: (0321) 43620
 Fax No: (0321) 43360
 Telex No.35047 MOI VARSITY

Box 3900
 Eldoret
 KENYA

RE: SBE/DPHIL/BM/002/17

DATE: 16th APRIL, 2019

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

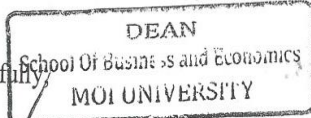
RE: SIMIYU GABRIEL – SBE/DPHIL/BM/002/17

The above named is a bonafide student of Moi University School of Business and Economics, undertaking a Doctor of Philosophy in Business Management degree, specializing in Marketing & Logistics.

He has completed coursework, defended his proposal, and is proceeding to the field to collect data for his research titled: *"Effect of Social Media, Brand Personality and Attitude on Students Behavioral Intentions to enroll in Postgraduate Studies, Western Kenya"*

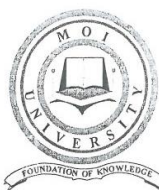
Any assistance accorded to him will be highly appreciated.

Yours Faithfully,



DR. JOEL K. TENAI

Ag. DEAN, SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS



MOI UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS

Approved to conduct his research to SBE and students
Ofina
Calab Oprova

Tel: (0321) 43620
Fax No: (0321) 43360
Telex No.35047 MOI VARSITY

Box 3900
Eldoret
KENYA

RE: SBE/DPHIL/BM/002/17

DATE: 16th APRIL, 2019



TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

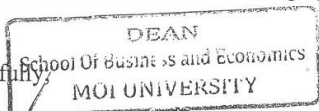
RE: SIMIYU GABRIEL – SBE/DPHIL/BM/002/17

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He has completed coursework, defended his proposal, and is proceeding to the field to collect data for his research titled: *“Effect of Social Media, Brand Personality and Attitude on Students Behavioral Intentions to enroll in Postgraduate Studies, Western Kenya”*

Any assistance accorded to him will be highly appreciated.

Yours Faithfully,



W DR. JOEL K. TENAI
Ag. DEAN, SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS