

**USAGE OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ON THE PERFORMANCE
ASSESSMENT OF SMEs IN UGANDA: A CASE STUDY OF
KABALE MUNICIPALITY**

BY

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DECLARATION

I, Charity Kiconco, declare that this is my original work and it has never been submitted to any Institution for any academic award.

Signature  Date..... 24/5/2022

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APPROVAL

This research report titled 'Usage of social media marketing on the performance assessment of SMES in Uganda: a case study of kabala municipality' has been conducted under our supervision and it is ready for submission.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this report to my entire family for sacrificing in thick and thin and enabling me to complete my education. Thank you for enabling me to acquire a lifelong investment. May the almighty God reward you abundantly.

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First and foremost, I give my thanks to the Almighty Father whose mercy on me endures forever. I give him all the praise and adoration in Jesus' Name. There are many people that deserve heartfelt thanks for their precious contributions to this study. I say thank you to you all.

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“Glory to the Almighty God”

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CEO	Chief Executive Officer
E-WOM	Expressed as a word of mouth
SEO	Search Engine Optimization
SMEs	Small and Medium Sized Enterprises
SMM	Social Media Marketing
SMPs	Social Media Platforms
SOPs	Standard operating procedures
TV	Television
U. S	United States

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated usage of social media marketing on the performance assessment of SMEs in Uganda: a case study of Kabale municipality. The objectives of the study were to examine the impact of compatibility of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs, to assess the effect of perceived usefulness of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs and to determine the effect of perceived ease of use of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs. The study employed a descriptive study design. The study population of 2,600 respondents was used and a sample size of 335 was used. Data was collected using questionnaires and interview methods. The study findings on the impact of compatibility of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs, respondents were obtained on increase in brand awareness, increase customer relationship, high purchasing power decision, reach wider range of customers and on increased demand of the customers' needs. The study findings on the effect of perceived usefulness of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs, responses were obtained on influence buying decision, increased engagement of business owners with customers, influences electronic commerce and on leads to easy modification in marketing process. The findings on the effect of perceived ease of use of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs, responses were obtained on social media leads to better understanding of customer needs, easy and timely interact with customers, quick in brand modification, low operating costs in marketing processes and on convenient and easy to reach business customers. The study recommended that there should be massive branding of business products so that the awareness of the existing market products can be well known to the potential customers who can increase on their purchasing power hence business performance, business owners should try and ensure that there is a strong relationship between them and their customers so that customers can feel comfortable when buying from them which can lead to better performance of the business and due to availability of social media platforms, business owners should ensure proper use of them so that customers from different areas can be reached in order to provide them with better services which can lead to improved business performance.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the Background of the study, Statement of the problem, Objectives of the study, Research questions, Scope of the study, Justification of the study, Definition of key terms and Conceptual framework. According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), social media is defined as a group of Internet-based applications built on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0. Performance assessment is a set of quantifiable metrics taken from various sources that together with an appropriate analytical process, allows the management of a business to track and assess the current status of a specific business, project or process, (Abouzeedan, 2011).

1.1 Back ground of the study

Historical perspective

In the last two decades, internet innovations have played an important role in business performance (Kim, Li, & Brymer, 2016). Web 2.0 applications provide the opportunity to transfer internet capability to the social environment where individuals are able to interact online by using social media (Sigala & Chalkiti, 2014). Social media is an effective cyberspace for accessing reliable and update information (Sigala, 2012). The popularity and enormous use of social media facilitates the online learning and the sharing information (Hur, Kim, Karatepe, & Lee, 2017). Social media allows the users, without any need to physical presence, to communicate and generate content (Zhang, Guo, Hu, & Liu, 2017). Moreover, social media has been seen as an effective billboard for businesses commercial goals and better business performance (Rapp, Beitelspacher, Grewal, & Hughes, 2013).

Social media has enabled many to many connections of people rather than one too many communication approaches. This has increased interaction, participation and collaboration among people more easily and fastest way (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Also, customer awareness and accessibility has increased among many small and medium enterprises (SMEs) adopted the use of social media. Some of the social media today are such as twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and LinkedIn (Walsh, 2009).

The success and operation of many small and medium sized businesses is as results of social media and e-commerce technology in today's life (Bennett, 2012). The main reason behind is that internet including social media such as Facebook and twitter offers the view of familiarity

and closeness with virtual interaction (Barnes, 2012). Social media is simply an online social interaction with a distribution and exchange of various contents. Hence various firms use such media to build the relationship between producers that are firms and consumers towards the performance of SMEs. Hence social media is an important tool to any business due to its ability to enable business to communicate with customers, listen to the customers and learn from the customers in a more efficient and quick way with less cost utilization than the traditional means of communication (Grewal & Levy, 2013).

Theoretical perspective

This study was guided by Uses and Gratification Theory and Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)'. Uses and Gratifications Theory is a popular approach to understanding mass communication. Uses and gratifications theory was advanced in the 1940s by Lazarsfeld and Stanton (1944), in attempts to explain the reasons people use mass media and the different types of gratification they receive from it. It assumes that members of the audience are not passive but take an active role in interpreting and integrating media into their own lives. The theory also holds that audiences are responsible for choosing media to meet their needs. The theory places more focus on the consumer, or audience, instead of the actual message itself by asking what people do with media rather than what media does to people (Katz, 1974).

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) was proposed by David Fred in 1986 in attempts to provide explanation and prediction of the behavior of the users of new technology. The theory posits that what determines usage of a new technology system is affected either directly or indirectly by the user's attitude, intentions and the user's perception of the usefulness of the system and its ease of use (Davila et al., 2003). Over time, TAM has evolved and the original model has been extended into TAM2 to include aspects of social influence such as image, subjective norms and voluntariness into the explanation of perceived usefulness; cognitive instrumental processes such as result demonstrability, job relevance and output quality are also included in the TAM2 model (Davila et al., 2003). In this regard, the researcher used the theories to provide an explanation on what makes this new form of media to be so enticing and the gratifications received from ongoing use and this is vital in today's communication research because this form of social media is relatively new in relation to internet use has led to business growth.

Conceptual perspective

Social Media Marketing (SMM) refers to the process of disseminating messages, gaining internet traffic or attention through social media websites in order to promote a personality,

cause or business. It involves all methods, strategies, channels and platforms aimed at using social media platforms to communicate and engage a defined target audience in order to meet a defined marketing objective (Kevin, 2009).

Performance assessment of businesses are a set of quantifiable metrics taken from various sources that together with an appropriate analytical process, allows the management of a business to track and assess the current status of a specific business Abouzeedan (2011). Social Media Marketing is a digitalized market with a use of social media as a tool of communication (Mangold & Faulds, 2009). The use of social media marketing like (Facebook, Instagram and twitter) by SMEs today is resulting to mass development in business achievements (David, 2014). These social media channels have penetrated the market and have played a successful role in promoting business brands worldwide via its advertisement services.

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) contribute substantively in the economy of the country especially in Nairobi. An increase in customer accessibility among these business results to an increase in profit, and it is through social media that these businesses can expand their marketing. Businesses in Kenya take advantage of social media by also posting different news and events such as football, rugby and politics that people become interested in visiting the business pages. Entrepreneurs need to understand the use of social to enable their business remain relevant. Business in Nairobi need to copy from large businesses in understanding the importance of advertising through social media for the growth of their businesses (Evans, 2010).

Contextual perspective

Social media channels have appeared as the foremost convenient digital communication mediums through which several consumers can learn, share information, and directly interact with small and medium sized business stakeholders, (Qualman, 2013). With the existence of social media, business marketers will have the opportunity to interact with their existing as well as potential customers using two-way communications to obtain rich and valuable insights quickly and at lower costs. Marketers have also realized the additional values of social media channels through easier collaborations with brand referrals and quality of information sharing (Hudson, Huang, Roth, & Madden, 2016).

Ugandan businesses will be in a better position to enhance their brand image through use of social media. They can plan the use of traditional media and social media to reach out to more people, thus creating a bigger market for themselves. The previous studies show that social media have really huge impact in human lifestyle (Clarfloaty, 2012), thus marketing in the social media is an easy mass communication for the business's marketing.

Effective implementation of marketing programmes on social media can enable businesses to create beneficial relationships with their customers by increasing customer satisfaction and commitment as well as generating positive word of mouth. Greater support was reported by Clark and Melancon (2013), who found that marketing through social media has significant effect on customer satisfaction thus business performance. However, despite the importance of social media marketing in influencing customer satisfaction and business performance, social media seems not to be well used by the business owners of Kabale Municipality to enhance their business performance since the performance of businesses are not to the expected standards. This is evident in Kabale Municipal council report (2020) which indicated that in every 10 businesses that start in Kabale Municipality, 7 businesses do not celebrate their first year in business. The blame can be put on poor marketing of businesses which has led to low customer turn-up due to unknown goods and services offered by the businesses and even there are few business which do marketing of their products on social media. This forced the researcher to carry out a study on usage of social media marketing on the performance assessment of SMEs in Uganda: a case study of kabala municipality.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Good business performance is an obvious target for all Small and Medium Enterprises (Odyssey, 2019). Towards that goal, most SMEs, if not all, spend substantial efforts to market their services and products. In Africa and Uganda in particular, social media marketing has become one of the undoubted marketing approach especially because many consumers of products and services are also subscribers of social media through their mobile Smartphones (Kumar &Jincy, 2017). SMEs are increasingly embracing the usage of social media marketing with a view to enhancing business performance (Olonde, 2017). Koroma, (2012) explained that now days a most successful business use social media marketing to increase customer accessibility and awareness of the product and services that the business offer. Many businesses in Uganda are adopting the use of social media marketing due to its free use and easy adaptation with in an environment, hence many of the businesses have been able to increase customer accessibility more easily hence performance (Qualman, 2010). Despite the effectiveness of social media marketing for improved business performance, still the performance of businesses in Kabale Municipality is still poor as evidenced in (Kabale Municipal council report, 2020) which indicated that in every 10 businesses that start in Kabale Municipality, 7 businesses do not celebrate their first year in business and even those that persist perform poorly. Therefore, this study attempted to investigate the factors that lead to business failure and under performance despite the presence of social media marketing.

1.3 Objectives of the study

1.3.1 General objective of the study

The study attempted to investigate the usage of social media marketing on the performance assessment of SMES in Uganda: a case study of Kabale municipality.

1.1.3 Specific objectives

The specific objectives of this study included;

- i. To examine the impact of compatibility of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs
- ii. To assess the effect of the perceived usefulness of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs
- iii. To determine the effect of perceived ease of use of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs

1.3.3 Research questions

- i. What is the effect of compatibility of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs?
- ii. What is the effect of the perceived usefulness of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs?
- iii. What is the effect of perceived ease of use of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs?

1.3.4. Research hypotheses

- i. H₁: Perceived usefulness of social media platforms has a significant effect on the performance of SMEs
- ii. H₂: Perceived ease of use of social media platforms has a significant effect on the performance of SMEs

1.4 Scope of the study

1.4.1 Content scope

The study was limited to usage of social media marketing on the performance assessment of SMES in Uganda: a case study of Kabale municipality specifically on the impact of compatibility of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs, effect of perceived usefulness of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs and effect of perceived ease of use of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs.

1.4.2 Time scope

This study covered usage of social media marketing on the performance assessment of SMES in Uganda: a case study of kabala municipality from the period of 2015-2020.

1.4.3 Geographical scope

The study was carried out on SMEs of Kabale Municipality, Kabale District.

1.5 Justification of the study

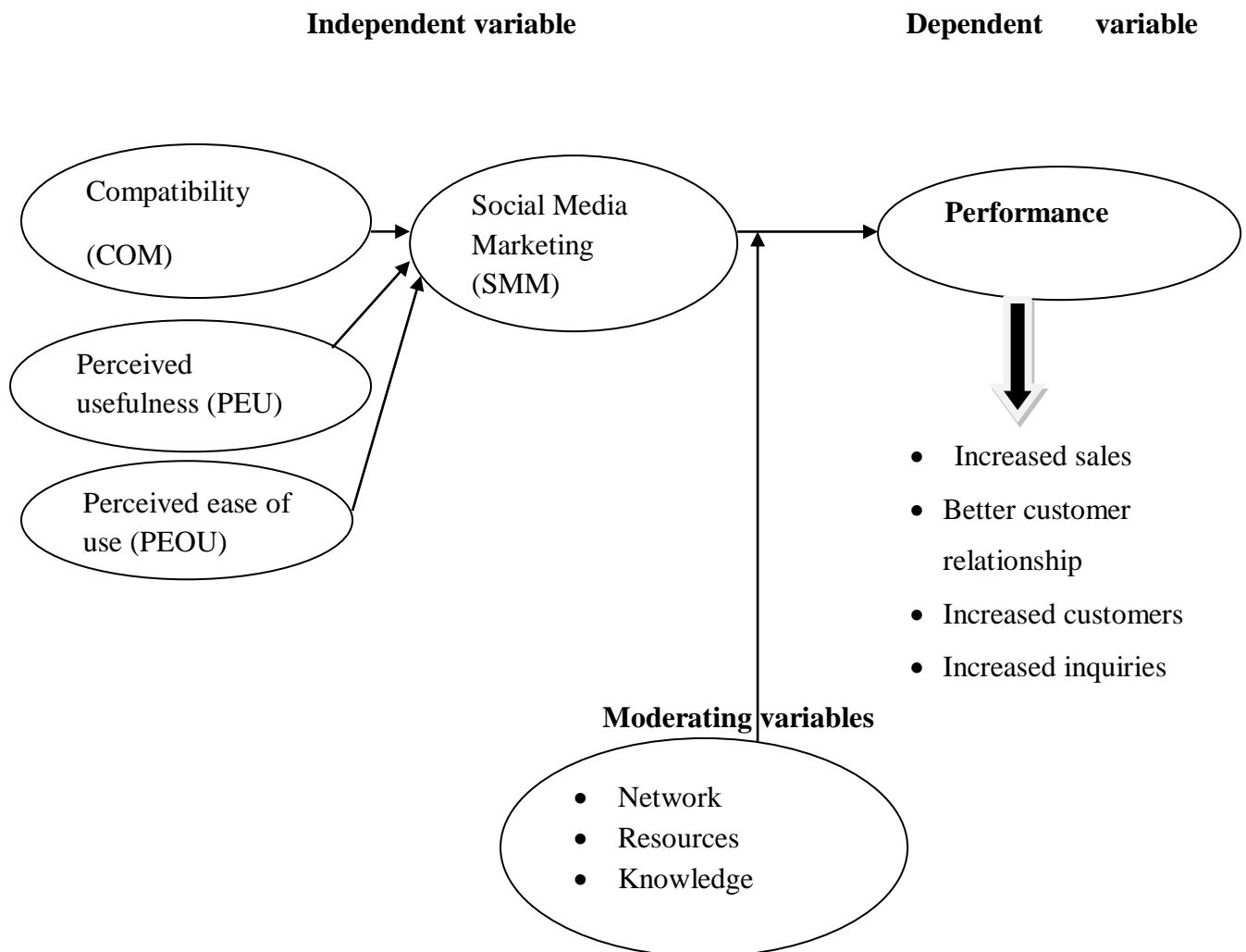
The research information acted as literature review for the future academicians who may write further research papers on related topics.

The study results were very important to business owners and executives in Uganda especially in the face of highly competitive markets with increasing unpredictability.

The study helped the researcher to be awarded a master's degree in business administration of Kabale University after completion

1.6 Conceptual framework

A conceptual framework is an analytical tool with several variations and contexts. It can be applied in different categories of work where an overall picture is needed, Colander, David (2013). Social media marketing was the independent variable and Performance in this study was the dependent variable.



Source: Adapted from Chatterjee and Kumar (2020) and modified by the researcher

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter describes and relates what other scholars had noted down about the topic. The researcher got information from different and related sources or scholars, magazines, articles, journals, websites from all points that were related to this study. These sources of information were believed to contain confidential data that helped the researcher to draw conclusions and recommendations.

2.1 Theoretical framework

Uses and gratification theory

Uses and gratification theory is a popular approach to understanding mass communication. The theory places more focus on the consumer or audience, instead of the actual message itself by asking what people do with media rather than what media does to people (Katz, 1959). It assumes that members of the audience are not passive but take an active role in interpreting and integrating media into their own lives. The theory also holds that audiences are responsible for choosing media to meet their needs. The approach suggests that people use the media to fulfill specific gratifications. This theory would then imply that the media compete against other information sources for viewers' gratification (Katz, Blumler & Garioch, 1974). The researcher agrees with the information that is given above because people use social media to fulfill their desires.

According to Katz, Blumler and Garioch's (1974) research there were five components comprising the uses and gratifications approach. The components are: The audience is conceived as active, in the mass communication process, much initiative in linking gratification and media choices lies with the audience member, the media compete with other sources of satisfaction, methodologically speaking, many of the goals of mass media use can be derived from data supplied by individual audience members themselves, value judgments about the cultural significance of mass communication should be suspended while audience orientations are explored on their own terms.

According to Katz and Blumer (1974), the most frequently found motives for using media are; diversion (the need to escape personal problems and the need for emotional release), personal relationship (the need for companionship and help in social interaction), personal identify (the need for self-understanding and reassurance of one's role in society) and surveillance (the need for information about factors that might affect or help one). This is also agreed to by the

researcher because the media makes aware of the prevailing situations to be understood and get means of living in such situation harmoniously.

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

The technology acceptance model (TAM) was proposed by David Fred in (1986) in attempts to provide explanation and prediction of the behavior of the users of new technology. The theory posits that what determines usage of a new technology system is affected either directly or indirectly by the user's attitude, intentions and the user's perception of the usefulness of the system and its ease of use (Davila et al, 2003).

Over time, TAM has evolved and the original model has been extended into TAM2 to include aspects of social influence such as image, subjective norms and voluntariness into the explanation of perceived usefulness; cognitive instrumental processes such as result demonstrability, job relevance and output quality are also included in the TAM2 model (Davila et al., 2003). This new model has been tested in both mandatory and voluntary settings and the results strongly supported it since it led to 60% user adoption; this study will adopt TAM2 together with TAM as the baseline model (Davis & Venkatesh, 2000). David and Venkatesh (2000) assert that the degree to which the person trusts that a system will advance their performance at work will determine if the individual will adopt the system or not. The authors also observe that the more the individual perceives the technology to be easy to use, the more accepted the technology will be by the users.

Conversely, however, if a technology is perceived to be complex or difficult to use, then its adoption rate will be slow. This theory is suitable to this study since digital marketing is fairly new phenomenon worldwide, these strategies are mostly simple and easy to use by those who are technologically savvy (Minama, 2016). However, TAM asserts that the adoption of a technology, in this case digital marketing, is determined by the perception that the user has on its usefulness and ease of usage (Davis & Venkatesh, 2000). Therefore, the ease of usage of digital marketing strategies and the perceptions that SMEs have on their usefulness determines their adoption and effectiveness as opposed to the continued usage of traditional marketing strategies (Minama, 2016; Davis & Venkatesh, 2000).

2.2 Impact of compatibility of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs

Compatibility is associated with the conception concerning to the extent to which the innovative technology fits appropriately with the earlier practices and current needs along with the existing values of the SMEs (Rogers, 1983). Studies have revealed that the degree of compatibility

prevailing between the existing and the new technology products is considered as an effective and significant evaluation ingredient of the users towards that service (Yoon & Cho, 2016).

COM is concerned as an essential ingredient for adoption of innovative technology like SMM (Wang, Wang, & yang, 2010). If an SME feels that the adoption of the technology, that is adoption of SMM mechanisms, is compatible with the system of work application, the SME usually considers to adopt that technology (Brown & Russel, 2007; Hsu et al., 2007).

Embedding SMM in SMEs is considered to be a best fit concept since it would be able to reach the potential consumers appropriately and it would help to improve the business health of the organizations (Derham et al., 2011). Compatibility of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs is as follows;

Modification in marketing strategies

According to Baker, Buoni, Fee, and Vitale (2011), businesses are changing marketing strategies based on information they find in social media feeds from their competitors. By keeping an eye on competitors, their strengths and weaknesses can determine their marketing efforts. This gathered information that helps to implement things that might be needed to improve such as social media campaigns, contest, giveaways or types of content the followers may be responding to the most. This is in line with the researcher as the process of keeping an eye on competitors, their strengths and weaknesses can determine their marketing efforts where social media platforms are the best ways.

The process of taking a prospect to the point of becoming a customer has slowed down somewhat due to consumers' awareness (Neti, 2011). People want to buy from those businesses which have established credibility and which seem to be totally transparent in their advertising campaigns. Social Media Platforms (SMPs) are changing people's opinions of businesses. By providing messages that are open, transparent and helpful, social audiences will learn that your business cares about its customers and potential customers. One can position their business as a valuable resource by simply sharing information like advice, trips, or just answering questions about the industry (Kim, Jeong, & Lee, 2010). The researcher agrees with the information as SMPs are totally changing peoples' opinions of business by providing messages that are open, transparent and helpful as social audiences will learn that the business cares about customers and potential customers.

Davis, (2010) mentioned that SMPs are not as much an addition to the modern marketer's toolkit as it is an endemic and ecological change, affecting a wide cross-section of marketing activities

including research, strategy formulation, advertising, promotions and sales. This is mainly due to establishment of social media platforms are for creating, distributing, evaluating, categorizing, modifying information from the shift in control of communications from procedures to consumers hence the subsequent impact on business and marketing strategy is significant (Edwards, 2011). The researcher argues that since customers are able to observe photos of new products on these SMPs, this makes products awareness among them easily which increase business sales.

Influence e-commerce

Pietro and Pantano (2012) explained SMPs are becoming an efficient platform for IT-based business, by providing several services for both consumers and marketers. SMPs have been able to influence consumer purchasing decision under a new technological model whereby posting of products and services for customers to see can cause both impulse purchasing and normal influence purchasing. This is in line with the researcher because posting of products and services for customers to see can cause impulse on purchasing power of the customers.

The social media environment is linked with advanced way of communication and is very easy to apply and to reach the target customer. Posting information could lead their friends to do the same thing or use their information to make decisions. Similar to advertising if customers post good comments about the products will influence their friends to purchase same product these benefits give persons convenience to achieve what they are looking for and people tend to believe in what their friends recommend. SMPs are the most popular social media sites that people share their lifestyle, stories, or even where they went for vacation (Paquette, 2013). The researcher agree also with the given information in here because posting of information could lead to friends to do posting of their businesses also which enables customers to use their information and make the right purchasing decisions.

According to Hubspot (2012), social media platforms have been convenient for many people who are trying to market products and services to people online. Actually, social media marketing has become a very compatible and effective way to drive targeted traffic to businesses' websites or blogs, Search engine optimization (SEO) still plays a significant role in website traffic, but media has opened many new doors, generated an extremely high amount of online traffic. Indeed, social media channels are now providing a huge avenue for business owners, as they have millions of members and make the scope of the reach unlimited. Social media platforms will drive targeted visitors back to the business's website. The more channels the business is using, the more back links and interested referrals will point back to the website.

The researcher also argue that social media channels which are now providing a huge avenue for business owners, as they have millions of members and make the scope of the reach unlimited.

Influence buying decision

Quantitative research was conducted on the number of people who uses SMPs and for consumers if their buying decision is influenced with the use of SMPs. The sample counted 116 respondents and from the statistical perspective, the conclusions were established in terms of the univariate and bivariate analysis. Following the analysis of the research variables we can make a consumer profile that SMPs. Likewise, after doing the complex statistical analysis using SPSS and the analysis offered by the online platform the host of questionnaires, it can be seen how much it is influenced and the real impact of SMPs reflected in the behaviour changes (Loanas & Stoica, 2014).

Perrin (2015) explained that social media platforms (SMPs) became the most important part in social lives that can be linked to a positive association providing instrumental value that assists consumers in making decisions about what, where and when to buy. With social media which is becoming a large portion of promotion mix, it offers a motivation behind buying behaviors and also plays a role in influencing those behaviors (Weigand, 2009). Pawar (2014) opined that the aim of understanding social media trends helps in evaluating the influence of social media platforms on buying behaviors of millennial in today's life. This is in line with the researcher because SMPs are becoming more of a large portion of promotion mix, it offers a motivation behind buying and also plays a positive role in influencing the buyers behaviors.

People use SMPs to share their experience, reviews, information, advice, warning, tips and any kind of issues that are interesting to their connection or friends. This has then made SMPs become an important communication tool that people use to connect to other people and organization. Information is a helpful source, which may influence consumer's decision making. Most of studies showed that people use information on SMPs as the guideline for their future purchase. Also, SMPs is used as adverting for the marketer. Marketers take this advantage and create marketing strategy, which in turn could help them expand the customer base (Paquette, 2013). The researcher agree what SMPs becomes an important communication tool that people use to connect to other people especially in business environment hence increasing their awareness of the products and purchasing power.

Engaging with customers

Before you launch a new product or service, one would like to have some ideas/knowledge about what people think about it. So by engaging with prospects and customers on SMPs, one can actually ask the fans and followers what colors they prefer or what types of features they want. Thus one can involve consumers in valuable free market research, by asking their opinions and can help establish credibility by showing that their opinions matter. After seeing their ideas becoming a reality, business has more than likely just increased their customer base (Mangold & Faulds, 2009)

According to Cvijikj and Michahelleus, (2013) explained that contents such as entertainment and information raises, on average, the number of likes, comments and shares can be done by anyone which brings equal contribution to anyone including customers for the business. The engagement of customers to the business results to an increase in feedback both positive and negative. Thus small businesses should engage their customers by offering different entertainments and comments that people can participate, this will enable feedback on how the business operates (De Vries, Gensler, & Leeftang, 2012). The researcher states that through engaging customers to the businesses online results to an increase in feedback both positive and negative which helps both business people and their customers.

Normally, social media platforms authorize the creation of individual and business/brand profiles which are used as interaction tools/resources. Users can incorporate both personal and professional information, invite friends, upload photos, while brands helps to connect to their customers and publicize marketing related material (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Businesses and brands incorporate contents such as news, photos and videos in seeking to raise more new people in the page, after creating profile to communicate to customers. The researcher states that social media platforms help to connect to their customers and publicize marketing related material.

Neti (2011) opined that SMPs are the best opportunity available to connect brand at a deeper level with a prospective consumer, hence a medium of socialization. Through SMPs, different brands find themselves into a new word of a virtual customers and increase spread in marketing channels. Businesses and social media have become more sophisticated recently, with so many businesses using SMPs to get certain type of customers with specific behavior.

According to Loanas and Stoica, (2014), technology gives consumer the power to investigate products to label them and criticize them in equal measure, and more. Therefore, many

businesses today have pages on social networks to complement the information held about products, held by the feedback of consumers about products and tend to relate more to a business after reading various reviews. The researcher states that SMPs pages for both of them to see customer's comments about products and services they offer which influences the marketing process.

2.3 Effects of perceived usefulness of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs

The perceived usefulness (PEU) occurs in the technology acceptance model (TAM), which is promoted by Davis (1989) and Davis et al. (1989) as the theoretical framework to envisage user quality management system will help them promote achievement (Davis, 1989; Davis et al., 1989). Furthermore, when SMEs look at the benefit of using social media marketing (SMM) to lead to better productivity, there is no doubt that they will adopt this method in their business (Kraus, Gast, Schleich, Jones, Ritter et al., 2019).

Qalati et al. (2021) stated that utilizing SMM will promote the SMEs' performance. Several preliminary works have also highlighted the significant association of PEU with users' intention to engage in new technologies (Akinwale & Kyari, 2020). Recent studies confirmed that the use of social media through the PEU Smartphone device has linear connectivity with the adoption of mobile phone technology (Chatterjee & Kumar Kar, 2020; Kim & Khiu, 2019). Social media platforms are perceived to be usefulness in the following ways;

Efficiency

The main reason behind measuring the performance is to improve the efficiency (Adenso-Diaz, 2002). For instance, Roghanian et al. (2012) defined efficiency as the measure that appraises the ability of an organization to achieve its effective output. In other words, efficiency is the strategy of utilization of resources in such a way that they bring savings in money and time to the enterprise as well as enhancing the performance of the business in the long run. However, an efficiency target aims to increase the added value of the enterprise process and reduce the costs (Aramyan et al., 2007). In this context, one wishes to explore to what extent adopting SMPs since advertisements can help SMEs achieve their goals through value generation and cost reductions. The researcher agrees also because efficiency is the strategy of utilization of resources in such a way that they bring savings in money and time to the enterprise as well as enhancing the performance of the business.

Flexibility

The ability of system to cope with changing circumstance caused by the environment is defined as flexibility (Kumar & Mishra, 2015). It can also be defined as the ability to restructure the

system quickly, and as such flexibility reflects the enterprise's ability to respond to variable environment changes (Persson & Olhanger, 2002), as well as responding with agility to any new or transformed social networks. Accordingly, SMEs in Oman can adopt more effective tools to help react to unstable and inconstant environment that is, to what extent Omani SMEs should utilize social media as a strategic tool to survive in such a volatile environment. The researcher also agree that when there is proper utilization of social media technologies it brings better performance of businesses most especially in these difficult times where marketing is difficult.

Increase in brand awareness

According to Zinnbaue and Honer (2011) explained that the main requirement to connect brands with their user community are information, advocacy, utility, conversation, affiliation and identify. Moreover, marketers need to understand internet user's concerns and social effects before engaging in the marketing process. To consider what people in the society are more concerned with including moral values of what is right and wrong, what considered attractive and basic requirements. Hence using social media platforms as strategic marketing tools to discover the rights and wrongs in the society is a key towards market development (Zinnbauer & Honer, 2011). The researcher also supports the information because it is true that marketers need to understand internet user's concerns and social effects before engaging in the marketing process so that they can satisfy customers' needs.

According to Mathe (2010) explained that with the increase popularity of social media networks, yet there is no research that has been done to examine how SMPs impact brand recognition to the society for business growth. Due to this, March came up with the study that analyze existing SMPs marketing practices and tools and concerns associated with this type of social media marketing that benefits businesses towards brand recognition ad expansion. SMPs have enabled virtual communities of consumers formed around tangle brands such as in cars like jeep and goods like nutella to form a real marketing environment with an online interaction and transaction (Ries & Gavard-Perret, 2011). This is true because social media networks enable online interaction which makes marketing easy on side of business owners.

Environmental preservation

Social media can be considered as a relevant practice in greening retail, many retailers use social media platforms (SMPs) pages to conduct business with less environmental use hence less pollution to the environment. Also with different posts concerning environmental preservation helps the retailers to conduct business under environmental friendly use (Jones, Clarke-Hill, Comfort, & Hill, 2013). Intermediaries play various roles apart from serving as an

interface between producers and consumers; one of it is directly facing up responsibilities in terms of sustainable development such as taking challenges of climate change. Hence intermediaries are the one must use social media for sustainable development as they bear the effect of societal expectations and stakes which go further beyond their original role as simple distributors by providing fertile ground for social debate and allow citizens to express militant position through their choice of purchase (Mathe, 2010). There are various activities promoted by green retailing on SMPS such as energy efficiency of stores, the optimization of transportation, and the carbon footprint of products, the provenance of goods and the reduction of packaging which are all criteria capable of influencing consumers' choices (Shaw, 2006). The researcher do not differ from the authors in their views as different posts concerning environmental preservation helps the retailers to conduct business under environmental friendly use and market their products well.

Many business face with various responsibilities towards sustainable development, they use social media platforms to communicate such issues and complement the information available via the business's websites (Jones, Clarke-Hill, Comfort, & Hill, 2013). In the promotion of environmental message, businesses use SMPs pages to bring the message to the society on how the business support clean and safe environment people leave and create environmental friendly behavior such as disposable wastes. The public platforms such as SMPs play meaningful communication strategies that promote a socially responsible image and inciting consumers to adopt environmentally friendly behaviors (Mathe, 2010). The researcher agrees with the statement since these social media platforms play meaningful communication strategies that promote a socially responsible image.

Increase customer relationship

According to Viot, (2011) explained that in recent years SMPs have been major key communication tools among most businesses with its leading social media platform that is considered a major source of interactive among people where most of clients share their opinions. Through SMPs, businesses can develop a communication strategy for salable brands as a most component of the promotional mix and hence combined as an essential part of an organization's integrated marketing communications (Mangold & Faulds, 2009). According to (Zinnbauer & Honer, 2011) mentioned that social media sites should promote social currency, on the extent to which people share information about the brand with others in the society as part of social lives. The researcher believes in this information also because when there is a better communication platform consumer together with the business owners find it easy to handle their businesses efficiency which leads to growth in business marketing.

Social media platforms play a vital role in marketing and mostly in creating relationship with customers. There so many countless opportunities that small businesses are missing due to the lack of understanding in using social media as a means of marketing (Chung & Buhalis, 2008). According to (Halligan, Shah, & Scott, 2009) mentioned that social media helps to connect business with customers with motives to understand better needs of customers and build strong relationship. The best way that businessmen can ensure an effective and quick way reach to a wide range of customers is through the use of social media tools in passing of information. Social media platforms bring about numerous opportunities for small businesses to market to consumers and aid to build rapport and provide more profitable interrelationships. The researcher agrees with customers conveniently with a motive to understand better needs of customers and build strong relationship amongst them.

Nonetheless, small businesses still strife to access their customers (Chung & Buhalis, 2008). Hence with a minimum number of small businesses starting operating e-commerce business such as the use of social media marketing towards advertising, yet there is a need of e-commerce knowledge towards advertising. This is true according to the researcher since because when these small scale business operators understand the role of social media in advertising, they will find easy and enable their business performance.

According Mangold and Faulds (2009) social media marketing enables businesses to achieve a better understanding and consideration of customer needs hence build effective relationships. From the definition of social media as activities, practices and behaviors among communities of people who gather online to share information, knowledge and opinions through conversation, social media is seen as a developing platform that can be used by businesses towards interacting with customers. Through social media, small businesses can take the opportunity of sharing information about the goods and services that they offer and targeted customers will get to see and comment about it. Also it is an opportunity for these small businesses to introduce their products and services to completely new clients in the market (Safko & Brake, 2009). The researcher disagree with the information given because social media is not used by all business owners towards interacting with customers because some of the business owners use other means of interacting with their customers like use of mobile phones.

Purchasing power decision

Oyza and Edwin (2015), carried out an assessment into the influence of social media on the purchasing decision towards local small businesses in U.S; found that 62% of the customers do visit different business social media pages to see what they offer before purchasing for products.

The research also was conducted of small business owners to check how often they visit and refresh their business pages. The research showed that thirty percent of the small business owners visit their business pages several times again before setting foot in the business. The researcher agree with the findings of Oyza and Edwin (2015) because in today's digital world where social media is like a basic need among people, business owners find it needful to always check online for the latest information even pertaining their businesses and consumers.

Also different promotions and discounts displayed on the business social media page have paved way towards multiple increase in sales. From the research conducted by Oyza and Edwin (2015) showed that eighty four percent of citizen in US felt that an offer or deal on social media played a large role in their decision to purchase for goods and services. Social media ads might also prove to be quite profitable with fifty eight percent of respondents stating that they engaged with social media for a small business at least once a week. This is true to the researcher as different promotions and discounts are displayed on the business social media page pave way towards multiple increase in business sales.

Safko and Brake (2009) stated that social media as online applications, platforms and media, aim to facilitate interaction, collaboration, and the sharing of content. Nowadays, social networks are becoming increasingly important in consumers' purchasing decisions, mainly because they amplify word of mouth. They may even become more important than to stress the fact that, in social media marketing, marketers have less control over messaging and positioning.

Reaching wider range of customers

According to Walsh and Lipinski, (2009) found that traditionally in marketing their firms; SMEs rely heavily on their personal contact network. Also economic structures favor larger firms; however, today's economy is distinguished by relationships, network, and information, favoring some of the characteristics of SMEs. Instead of relying only on their personal contact network, small businesses rely on the networks of customers as well. Today, these customers can be reached through different social media tools and able to reach customers whom have never met before by simply visiting the site on social media. The researcher agreed that nowadays customers can receive texts form the business owners and be able to observe new products online which makes marketing strategy favourable.

According to Weinberg, (2009) social media is related to the sharing of information, experience and perspectives throughout community oriented websites. Through sharing of information among each other, social media helps to capture a wider range of society due to limitless

passing of information. According to Comm, (2009) said that social media is content that has been created by its audience. Therefore, social media as a tool for social media is one of the effective media that society use to share their viewpoints and businesses should take such an opportunity to target their market and create more awareness of their products and services that they offer with a wider range of consumers. The researcher accepts that social media helps to capture a wider range of society due to limitless of information since it covers a wide range of customers in different areas.

Nowadays, it is very important and crucial to be closer to the customer at all times (Garne, 2010) and this has become possible through social media. Most of the clients are online and use the internet, now they receive a product and un-satisfied with it will go immediately on a social media and leave a comment about that product. Hence one can see the urge for the business owners to be online and respond immediately to the customer, so that they can calm them before the situation can grow and get out of control. For example, one example where we can find many customers complains is trip advisor, a medium hotel, where customers directly tell about experiences they have about the hotels they visited. The researcher agrees because there one can see how the competent persons give answers or excuses about the dissatisfaction their customers might have.

Responsiveness

Responsiveness can be defined as the capability of responding purposefully and in a timely way to the increased demand of the customers' needs in the market place, to maintain their competitive advantage (Holweg, 2005) precisely, responsiveness reflects SMEs' ability to provide customers with accurate information regarding recent products and services. Moreover, the researcher imitates that the ability to engage customers to respond to their concerns swiftly in a short time is through social media use.

2.4 Effect of perceived ease of use of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs

The perceived ease of use (PEOU) framework developed by Davis (1989) and Davis et al. (1989) that has been widely used to understand the adoption of new technology in business and other relevant areas. Some literature believes that perceived ease to use has been linked with the adoption of the internet/e-business technology (Tripopsakul, 2018). The underlying rationale is that the anxiety in using new technology drives new to avoid, while the friendly use of new technology will provide many advantages for SMEs users (Momani & Jamous, 2017)

In the business context, entrepreneurs are more likely to adopt new technology when essential for enterprise development and easily implemented (Ojo et al., 2019). The effective use of

technology in terms of social media can perform a better accomplishment and revenue. This makes SMEs involve and attempt social media to run the business (Sunday & Vera, 2018). With this condition, innovation is more accessible for users to implement, which results in users being perceived ease of use on the performance of SMEs as;

Ease of use is refers to the extent to which a user believes that transformation into electronic purchasing is easy (Alraja & Kashoob, 2019). Social media advertisement act as successful marketing tools for endorsing business through presenting easy information to the consumers, alongside making the content more interactive and entertaining (Paquette, 2013). Similarly, Di Pietro and Pantano (2012) found that social media adverts facilitate presentation of the contents easily and enjoyable using the forms of games, applications contests, polls, and so forth. This further helps businesses to attract large numbers of consumers toward a product or service. In addition, Razak et al. (2016) identified ease of use as one of the most important factors that render social media advertisements preferable by SMEs when marketing their products or services. The researcher agree with the information that is given in here because it is true that social media adverts facilitate presentation of the contents easily and enjoyably using the forms of games, application, contests, polls among others.

Easy reach to customers

Small businesses are generally at an advantage because of their small size which makes it easier to get close to customers and obtain valuable feedback (taylor et al, 2012). Such an advantage enables small businesses to take advantages of the marketing opportunities networking like use of twitter and word of mouth marketing provide. But the researcher states that small business owners face many challenges when it comes to marketing as well such as inability to understand the importance of using twitter to communicate with its clients and other targeted population about the business.

One may question the advantages of having a presence on social networking sites such as twitter when the business already has a website. The answer is to reach as many people as possible. To maximize this reach, a business needs to have a presence where customers are hanging out and mostly people are hanging out on social networking sites (Halligan, et al., 2009). The question becomes: how does the manager decide which strategy is the best for what they want to accomplish. One of the most common tool that consumer recently use to seek for the information on products and services that they consider to buy is through the use of internet specifically through social media. Apart from the opinions of people use social media as a first source of information when making a major purchase decision. Most people hold the

information about the product and services that they use on the internet. Apparently, almost many conversation online refers to brand, product or service (Hubspot, 2021). The researcher states that the use of social media is among the first source information when making a purchase decision among the consumers.

Low operating cost

Use of social networking sites enables firms to engage consumers in a timely and direct manner at low cost and higher levels of efficiency than with more traditional communication tools. This makes social media appropriate for large organizations and for small and medium size businesses as well (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Social media offers a great quantity of services on the internet. This makes it complicated for businesses to know which ones to use and how to use them. The trending social media includes: social networks can be used in a different ways such as news passing, advertisements and connecting with others in the world that cut down the cost of employing others to work physically. Through twitter makes these small businesses easy to meet the required market more easy and quick way with targeting large population (Kim et al, 2010). The researcher states that the use of twitter enables businesses to easily meet the required market more easily and quickly by targeting large population.

Nevertheless, there are numerous open questions and controversies related to social media's actual business potential (Dorbian, 2010), especially due to little research, return on investment measurement issues and a lack of strategic understanding and planning; there are even critics questioning social media's actual future. Furthermore, small and medium sized enterprises seem to have a more severe dilemma, since the lack of necessary resources, people and time have prevented most of them to experiment with twitter (Dickey & Lewis, 2010). The researcher states that it is true to little research, measuring the return on investment issues and a lack of strategic understanding and planning is difficult.

Social media is one of the cost-effective marketing solution used by the businesses. The social media marketing tools can be freely and easily used compare to other promotion tools (Levinson& Gibson, 2010). The main purposes of using social media marketing are the amplification of word of mouth marketing, market research, general marketing, idea generation and new product development, co innovation, customer service, public relations, employee communications and reputation management. Indeed, to the researcher social networks can increase product and brand awareness, web traffic, customer loyalty, but also improve the business's search engine optimization, and even increase the success of new product launches.

Better understanding of customer needs

Twitter enables businesses to network with customers in order to build relationships and achieve a better understanding of customer needs. To maximize this reach, a business must have a presence where customers are hanging out. Increasing, they are hanging out on social networking sites like twitter (Halligan, Shah, & Scott, 2009). Businesses want their message to reach as many people as possible. Twitter provides multiple opportunities for small businesses to market to consumers and build closer and more profitable relationships. However, the researcher states that small businesses still struggle to reach customers through different possible ways.

Though the traditional media with the three stages of the purchase funnel where first, the audience become aware of the brand, product and service. Then, he considers as eventual future purchase and finally makes purchase decision. The marketers were able to buy market share through awareness focused media (Evans, 2010). Thus marketers have high power of influencing the awareness of the brand, product and service. The main of the marketing message is to make consumer aware of the product and service and what it has to offer, this is easily done through social media. The researcher states that the more the awareness of the consumers of the product, the more likely they are to choose it when making their purchase decision.

The development of information technology and internet has made it easier the communication between the businesses and customers. Twitter has become the most famous factor (Kritis & Karahan, 2011). The old way where we had a chance to send a message to more people, through email or through TV advertising, also called one-to-many communication, needed to expand. Neti (2011) observed that point to point communication was limited in impact to the communication network. Since that time, Pawar (2014) observed that the earliest we start working in a comprehensive communication we would succeed in marketing. The researcher states that through the social media customers communicate also about their discontent in received products, and more than necessary to contact directly with unhappy customers and try to avoid escalation of situations that can be created

Interact with customers

A unique role of twitter is to create buzz marketing, that enabling customers to talk to one another is, in a sense, an extension of traditional word of mouth communication (Mangold & Faulds, 2009). Businesses are faced with the question of how this power can be attached to benefit the organization. Businesses cannot directly control what consumers are saying, however they do have the ability to influence the conversations consumers are having. The

researcher states that the question remains how managers use social media like twitter to influence customer conversation or interact with customers but this can be achieved through use of appropriate means to enhance customer satisfaction.

Networking is a widely marketing activity for SME's and is important during their establishment, development, and growth (Walsh & Lipinski, 2009). In marketing their firms, SMEs rely heavily on their personal contact network. Traditionally, economic structures favor larger firms; however, today's economy is distinguished by relationships, network, and information, favoring some of the characteristics of SMEs. Rather than relying exclusively on their personal contact network, small businesses rely on the networks of customers as well (Walsh & Lipinski, 2009). The researcher states that the network that one builds has a very big influence on owners of the business performance.

Brand modification

Twitter gives chance for consumer to comment or post questions as a form of engagement about the brand. Through the use of twitter, managers can find out what is being said about a brand and they can also connect with consumers (Reyneke, Pitt & Berthon 2011). Consumers can generate new business and promote or help a brand by tweeting. Loyal customers also help generate "online word of mouth" which is very crucial for SMEs. The researcher states that engagement with consumers provides businesses with opportunities to use social media as a tool for their marketing strategies however, many business owners struggle to effectively reach their customers.

According to Hubspot (2012) 57% of small and medium businesses say social media like twitter is beneficial to their business by improving the brand identification to the society. Social media presents many significant benefits for the business's success. Social media helps to foster communication around brands and products and services. The researcher states that any message or piece of information shared on the social media channels can be seen by thousands of people in an extremely short period of time.

According to Stelzner, (2012) explained that the main advantage of implementing social media strategies is an increases in brand exposure. This occurs when the customer becomes aware of a product, service or advertisement through at least one of their five senses, whether or not they paid attention to it. Social media platforms also raise awareness. Although the word of mouth has automatically expanded a rounded the brand, large variety of social media channels has increased brand visibility. The researcher states that businesses can heavily use social media

marketing to build their brand's reputation and enhance their popularity which is also called online reputation management.

2.6 Research gap

The gap that the study aimed at bringing was on the usage of social media marketing on the performance assessment of SMESs in Uganda: a case study of kabala municipality. According to this literature review several studies have been conducted like Oyza and Edwin (2015), carried out an assessment into the influence of social media on the purchasing decisions towards local small businesses in U.S, studies on the use of social media through the PEU Smartphone device has linear connectivity with the adoption of mobile phone technology by (Chatterjee & Kumarkar, 2020) Kim & Chiu, 2019 and Loanas & Stoica, (2014) also carried out a study onto the impact of social media on the behavior changes and none of the studies specifically targeted the usage of social media marketing on the performance assessment of SMES in Uganda: a case study of Kabale Municipality Kabale District therefore there was a big gap to filled by the researcher after carrying out the current study.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter covers the research methodology and description of the methods and techniques that were used in the collection of data. This chapter was organized into subsections as follows; Introduction, Research Design, Study Population, Sampling Procedures, Sample Size, Data Collection Procedures, Data Management, Sampling Techniques, Data Sources, Data Collection Methods, Data Collection Instruments, Data Quality Control, Data Analysis, Ethical Considerations and Limitations of the Study.

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a case study design. A case study is an in depth study of a particular situation rather than a sweeping statistical survey and it is a method used to narrow down a very broad field of research into one easily researchable topic (Robert, 2014). Therefore a qualitative and quantitative research methods were used to collect primary data about the problem under investigation. In addition, qualitative research method was used to complement the quantitative one. Businesses in Kabale municipality were the focus of the study and were expected to provide a description of the usage of social media marketing on the performance assessment of SMES in Uganda: a case study of kabala municipality Kabale District.

3.2 Study Population

According to Ogula (2005), a population refers to any group of institutions, people or objects that have common characteristics and meet the criteria needed by the respondents to provide the information. The target population for this research was 2,600 respondents from the businesses owners and the customers of businesses in Kabale Municipality.

3.3 Sampling Procedures and sample size determination

Sampling is a procedure, process or technique of choosing a sub-group from a population to participate in the study (Ogula, 2005). The random techniques that were used in this study include; cluster sampling that was used to categorize respondents from the different SMEs and stratified sampling was used to classify the respondents by specific characteristics. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), a sample is a smaller group or sub-group obtained from the accessible population and the sample size was determined based on a table for determining sample size as suggested by Krejcie and Morgan, 1970 as attached in the appendix iv and use of proportional allocation of stratification which was got by getting the population size over total population times the sample size.

$$\text{Proportional allocation of stratification} = \frac{\text{Target population}}{\text{Total target population}} \times \text{Total sample size}$$

3.4 Sample Size

Category of respondents in Kabale municipality

Respondents	Target population	Sample	Sampling method
Trade and other business services	1987	256	Simple random
Hotels and restaurants	293	38	Purposive sampling
Transport	300	39	Simple random
Financial services	20	2	Simple random
Total	2,600	335	

Source: Uganda Business Directory

3.5 Data collection Procedures

The researcher requested for an introductory letter from the research coordinator of post graduate at Kabale University to conduct a research on usage of social media marketing on the performance assessment of SMES in Uganda: a case study of kabala municipality Kabale District. A copy of this letter was presented to respondents that were approached in data collection; questionnaires were distributed to the selected respondents, observation and interviews were used and kept to record events that were important in interpretation and analysis of the results.

3.6 Sampling Techniques

In this study, purposive sampling techniques were used and simple random sampling.

3.6.1 Non random sampling technique

A purposive sample is a non-probability sample that is selected based on characteristics of a population and the objective of the study as remarked by Kotler, (2013). Purposive sampling technique was used on hotels and restaurants because of being the most users of social media marketing compared to other businesses.

3.6.2 Random sampling technique

The random techniques that were used in this study included; cluster sampling that were used to categorize respondents from the different SMEs. Stratified sampling was used to classify the respondents by specific characteristics such as age, gender and business. Simple random sampling was used to select respondents from trade and other business services, financial services and transport in order to reduce bias in sampling.

3.7 Data Source

The data for the study was gathered from primary and secondary sources that were generated from the field in order to drive to meaningful interpretation of findings. Data on usage of social media marketing on the performance assessment of SMES in Uganda: a case study of kabala municipality Kabale District was collected in order to achieve the objectives of the study.

3. 8 Data Collection Methods

Bryman (2006) defines data collection methods as the act of collecting data for purposes of making decisions about the study problem. The researcher employed both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods including; questionnaires and in-depth interviews.

3.8.1 Interview

Smith (2012) explains an interview as a face to face conversation between the interviewer and respondents that is conducted for the purpose of obtaining an in-depth understanding of each respondent's perspective on the phenomenon being investigated. The researcher conducted in-depth interviews to collect data on usage of social media marketing on the performance assessment of SMES in Uganda: a case study of Kabala Municipality Kabale District.

3.8.2. Questionnaire

Kothari (2004) states that questionnaires are a formatted set of questions drawn up to meet the objectives of the study. They are predetermined and arranged questions given to the subject respondent. The researcher constructed structured questions which were presented to the respondents for data collection. This questionnaire was composed of open ended and closed ended questions where respondents were able to give their own answers on open ended questions and they were able to tick where applicable to them on closed ended questions. This method was suitable for collecting data from a large population in a short time.

3.9 Data Collection instruments

Data collection instruments refer to the tools used to collect data questionnaire or computer-assisted interviewing system (Canals, 2017).

3.9.1 Questionnaire survey

The researcher used structured questionnaires to gather data from the respondents. Structured questionnaire is a document that consists of a set of standardized questions with a fixed scheme, which specifies the exact wording and order of the questions, for gathering information from respondents. The structured questionnaires consisted of closed ended questions which were administered to clients of businesses in Kabale Municipality. The structured questionnaires as instruments were used due to the fact that they collect information from large population in a short time.

3.9.2 Interview guide

An interview guide is simply a list of the high level topics and questions to be answered in an interview. The interview guide was used by the researcher because this helped her to identify the impact of compatibility of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs, the effect of perceived usefulness of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs and the effect of perceived ease of use of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs.

3.10 Data Quality Control

3.10.1 Validity of the Instruments

Validity is the degree by which the sample of test items represents the content the test is designed to measure (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). Validity is an indication of how sound your research is. The researcher gave the supervisor the research instruments to rate the items that were valid to collect data using content validity. Thereafter, content validity index was calculated and it was 0.75. Amin (2005) puts it that for any instrument to be accepted as valid the overall average index should be 0.70 and above. This was good enough to enable the researcher to collect valid data.

3.10.2 Reliability of the instruments

Reliability is the degree to which an assessment tool produces stable and consistent results, Riordan (2012). The researcher pre-tested the research instruments. The pre-test was done from ten customers of other businesses in Kabale district which enabled the researcher to have reliable tools for the study. For the case of consistence of research results from the study instruments, the researcher used Cronbach coefficient alpha method in order to determine reliability of these instruments. Scores were correlated and since a correlation coefficient of 0.75 which was greater than 0.70 was obtained then it was considered high enough to judge the instruments as reliable for the study.

3.11. Data Analysis

After collection of data from the study site, Questionnaires were sorted to establish whether they were correctly filled. Only questionnaires that were correctly filled were considered. Data was coded using SPSS version 14.0 software to generate information.

Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics which included frequency, distributions, means, correlations and regressions. This method was important in determining trends and interpreting research findings.

Qualitative data was analyzed using content analysis and narrative analysis methods. All information from interviewees were collected, recorded down on a piece of paper according to the stated objectives, interpretation and analysis was done using words. This means that data that was obtained was not only expressed in numerical terms and figures but also description was used.

3.12 Ethical Considerations

Ethical aspects of this study were effectively addressed as proposed by Kimmel (2007) in the following manner: First, consents from participants was obtained before involving them in the study. Secondly, members of the sample group were not subjected to intimidation in anyway. Thirdly, privacy of the research participants was ensured, so that no personal data was collected from respondents. In addition, research participants were briefed about the aims and objectives of the study before the primary data collection process. Lastly, work that does not belong to the researcher of this paper was fully acknowledged.

3.13 Limitations of the study

Time available for research was not enough due to COVID -19 virus which made it hard for the researcher to reach all respondents freely. The researcher tried hard to adhere to the standard operating procedures (SOPs) that were put by the government and reached all the respondents in time.

Finance was inadequate and this had put the researcher into strain as well as stress and forced her to improvise on some expenses like transport, lunch, stationary and secretarial services which added more stress to the researcher. However, the researcher made sure that the stated budget was not exceeded during the study. Rigidity of respondents who were not willing to answer the questions asked. This was due to respondents' attitudes towards the topic. The researcher explained to the respondents the purpose of the study and that data was used for academic purposes only in order to get relevant information.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a detailed description, interpretation and discussion of results based on the objectives of the study namely: to examine the impact of compatibility of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs, the effect of perceived usefulness of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs and the effect of perceived ease of use of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs.

4.1 Response rate

The responses from the interviews and questionnaires were used to analyze the data and write the report for this study.

Table 1: Response rate

Data collection instruments	Respondents	Response rate(%)
Intended questionnaires	297	100
Collected questionnaires	209	70
Interviews	126	100

According to Morton et al (2012), states that a survey response rate of 50% or higher is considered good for reporting. The researcher had a total of 297 survey respondents and managed to collect questionnaires from 209 respondents fully filled. Therefore, this study had a good response rate of 70% which was good enough to be based on in making recommendations and conclusions.

4.1.1 Demographic characteristics of respondents

This section presents the characteristics of respondents who participated in this study including their gender, age, education level and number of years in the business. This is presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2; Survey respondents

The researcher considered the respondents gender, age, educational level and number of years in the business. This demographic data was very essential for the researcher and the study in order

to describe the most relevant respondents that were selected for the study as presented in table 2 below.

Gender	Frequency(f)	Percentage (%)
Female	97	46.4
Male	112	53.6
Age		
18-23	8	3.8
24-29	40	19.1
30-35	54	25.8
36-41	107	51.2
Education		
O-level	17	8.1
A-level	25	12
Diploma	114	54.5
Degree	53	25.4
Number of years in the business		
1- 3	102	48.8
4-6	98	46.9
7- 10	5	2.4
11 and above	4	1.9

Source: Primary data, 2022

The study findings on the gender of respondents indicated that majority of respondents 53.6% (112) were males compared to their female counterparts who comprised 46.4% (97). The researcher got information from both sexes.

The study results on the age of respondents indicated that 51.2% (107) of respondents were aged between 36-41 years, 25.8% (54) of the respondents had 30-35 years, 19.1% (40) of the respondents were between 24-29 years, and 3.8% (8) the lower number of respondents were between 18-23 years of age. The researcher considered the age of respondents with the aim of documenting dependable information based on respondents' age in terms of varying years of life time experience and understanding with the study problem being investigated.

The study findings on the level of education indicated that 54.5% (114), the largest number of respondents had diploma, 25.4% (53) degree, 12% (25) had A-level and 8.1% (17) the least number of respondents had O-level, The researcher considered the levels of education attained by respondents in order to get appropriate data with regards to respondents' levels of literacy and understanding. In as far as the title of study was concerned, the results imply that, the respondents were expected to understand the questionnaire and give valid response since they had better understanding as guided by their levels of education which in this case majority had diploma level of education as the highest level of education.

The study findings on the number of respondents working years in the business, it was found out that 102 (48.8%) of the respondents had worked for 1-3 years, 98(46.9%) of the respondents had worked for 4-6 years, 2.4% (5) of the respondents had worked for 7-10 years and 1.9% (4) of the respondents had worked for 11 and above years. This implied that most of the respondents had been in the business for a considerable period of time which implies that they were in opposition to give credible information relating to this study.

4.2 Impact of compatibility of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs

The researcher recorded the impact of compatibility of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs and the results were presented in Table 3 below where %= percentage and F= frequency.

Table 3: Impact of compatibility of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs

Impact of compatibility of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs	Strongly agree		Agree		Not sure		Disagree		Strongly disagree		Total	
	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F
Increase in brand awareness	25	53	37	77	16	33	12	25	10	21	100	209
Increase customer relationship	38	79	32	67	23	48	7	15	-	-	100	209
High purchasing power decision	41	86	30	62	18	38	8	17	3	6	100	209
Reach wider range of customers	38	79	19	40	26	54	17	36	-	-	100	209
Increased demand of the customers' needs	29	61	41	86	30	62		-	-	-	100	209

Source: Primary data, 2022

The study findings on the impact of compatibility of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs, it was revealed that respondents (53)25% strongly agreed with increase in brand awareness, (77)37% of the respondents agreed with the statement, (33) 16% were not sure, 25(12%) disagreed and 21(10%) strongly disagreed with increase in brand awareness. This implies that increase in brand awareness is very necessary for the performance of small and medium enterprises which can be done through use of social media platforms.

The study findings on increase customer relationship revealed that (79)38% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement, (67)32% agreed, (48)23% were not sure and (15)7% disagreed. The results from the findings concluded that most respondents agreed with increase customer relationship. This indicates that when social media platforms are used among the businesses, the awareness of the business products among the customers becomes easy hence the performance of the business.

The study findings on high purchasing power decision revealed that (41)86% of the respondents strongly agreed, (62)30% agreed (38)18% were not sure, (17)8% disagreed and (6) 3% strongly

disagreed with the statement. The study findings concluded that social media leads to increased purchasing power among the customers of the businesses since they get information from the business's owners instantly.

The field findings on the statement of reach wider range of customers, the respondents (79) 38% strongly agreed with the statement, (40)19% agreed, (54) 26% were not sure and (36)17% disagreed with the statement. This implies that when social media platforms are used, business owners can get information to boost on their stock from customers in different areas which improves on their performance.

From the study findings, on increased demand of the customers' needs, the results revealed that (61)29% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement, (86) 41% agreed and (62)30% of the respondents were not sure. The results conclude that the use of social media in the marketing of small and medium enterprises leads to high demand among the customers to businesses owners which boosts business performance when business owners fulfill their customers' needs.

From the interviews the researcher held with the respondents on the impacts of compatibility of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs, one of the respondents stated that *“social media platforms bridges the gap between me the business owner and my customers because we can text at any time as long as I am not busy and my customers are also not busy, we mostly interact through Facebook, WhatsApp and Radios and I give them the necessary attention to ensure that I fulfill their desires which encourages more customers to my business due to the customer care I give to them through use of social media platforms which makes my business perform well”*. However, other respondents stated that social media platforms were compatible to business performance because they helped to promote customer service, helped in recognition of new products in the market, saves money and time as far as business marketing is concerned, increase customer engagement and brand loyalty and provided the business owners with the first information or complaints from their esteemed customers.

4.3 Effect of perceived usefulness of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs

The researcher considered the effect of the perceived usefulness of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs and the results were presented in table 4 below where %= percentage and F= frequency.

Table 4: Effect of perceived usefulness of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs

Effect of perceived usefulness of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs	Strongly agree		Agree		Not sure		Disagree		Strongly disagree		Total	
	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F
Influence buying decision	33	69	26	54	36	75	5	11	-	-	100	209
Increased engagement of business owners with customers	16	33	21	44	30	63	19	40	14	29	100	209
Influences electronic commerce	41	86	26	54	18	38	15	31	-	-	100	209
Leads to easy modification in marketing process	23	48	18	38	35	73	17	35	7	15	100	209

Source: Primary data, 2022

The researcher investigated on the effect of perceived usefulness of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs and the results revealed that the responses were obtained on the statement of influence buying decision were (69)33% strongly agreed with the statement, (54)26% agreed, (75)36% were not sure and (11)5% disagreed. The results conclude that most of the respondents agreed with influence buying decision since social media platforms avails information to customers in a quick and shortest possible time which is perceived usefulness in influencing customers buying decision.

The study findings on the statement of increased engagement of business owners with customers the responses stated that (33)16% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement, (44)21% agreed, (63)30% were not sure, (40)19% disagreed and (29)14% strongly disagreed with the statement. The results conclude that most of the respondents agreed that there are increased engagements of business owners with customers since business owners can interact freely with the customers in their free time to satisfy their needs and is perceived usefulness to business owners and customers.

The findings from the study on the statement of influences electronic commerce, it was revealed that (86)41% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement, (54)26% agreed, (38)18%

were not sure and (31) 15% disagreed with the statement. The results conclude that most of the respondents agreed with the statement of influences electronic commerce since social media platforms can be used by different people in buying and selling process.

From the field findings on the statement of leads to easy modification in marketing process, (48)23% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement, (38)18% agreed, (73)35% were not sure, (35)17% disagreed and (15)7% strongly disagreed with the statement. The results conclude that leads to easy modification in marketing process since business customers can submit their requests and complaints to the business owners through social media platforms and they become answered.

From the interviews the researcher held with the respondents on the effects of perceived usefulness of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs, it the respondents mentioned that social media platforms was perceived usefulness because it helped customers to know the brands of products more easily, helped business owners to know the products which customers liked to buy when interacting, led to increased and improved purchasing power of the customers due to the awareness of the existing market products to customers and leads to increased business sales.

Hypothesis Testing;

To verify the alternative hypothesis that there is a strong relationship between the perceived usefulness of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs in Kabale Municipality a, the Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient was thus, used to determine the magnitude of the relationship as shown in the table below:

Table 5: Correlation analysis of perceived usefulness of social media platforms**Correlations**

		Performance of SMEs	perceived usefulness of social media platforms
Performance of SMEs	Pearson	1	.315**
	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	209	209
perceived usefulness of social media platforms	Pearson	.315**	1
	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	209	209

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

Source: Primary data, 2022

The table above shows a correlation coefficient of .315** which is significant at the 0.01 level implying a very strong significant positive relationship. A regression analysis was hence, run to determine the contribution of the perceived usefulness of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs in Kabale Municipality. This indicates how much of the variance in the independent variable would affect the dependent variable.

The coefficient of determination of .315 implies that the perceived usefulness of social media platforms has an influence performance of SMEs. Thus, a significant relationship. This means that, the more the, perceived usefulness of social media platforms, the stronger the performance of SMEs. Hence, the perceived usefulness of social media platforms contributes 31.3% to the performance of SMEs in Kabale Municipality.

Table 6: Regression output summary on perceived usefulness of social media platforms
Coefficients

Model	Un standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	2.680	.507		5.282	.000
1 perceived usefulness of social media platforms	.362	.124	.315	2.928	.004

a. Dependent Variable: performance of SMEs

Source: Primary data, 2022

Findings again revealed a regression coefficient of .315 at a 0.01 significant level hence a significant relationship. Results further confirm that the perceived usefulness of social media platforms contributes to the performance of SMEs in Kabale Municipality with a Beta value of 0.315 at 95% of confidence. This implies that the perceived usefulness of social media platforms contributes to the performance of SMEs in Kabale Municipality with 31.5%. Therefore, the researcher upholds the research hypothesis which states that “perceived usefulness of social media platforms has a significant effect on the performance of SMEs in Kabale Municipality”

4.4 Effect of perceived ease of use of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs

The researcher considered the effect of perceived ease of use of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs and the results were presented in table 7 below.

Table 7: Effect of perceived ease of use of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs

Effect of perceived ease of use of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs	Strongly agree		Agree		Not sure		Disagree		Strongly disagree		Total	
	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F
Leads to better understanding of customer needs	31	65	38	79	30	63	1	2	-	-	100	209
Easy and timely interact with customers	11	23	21	44	35	73	20	42	13	27	100	209
Quick in brand modification	28	59	36	75	15	31	15	31	6	13	100	209
Low operating cost in marketing processes	38	79	33	69	10	21	19	40	-	-	100	209
Convenient and easy to reach business customers	21	44	35	73	16	33	28	59	-	-	100	209

Source: Primary data, 2022

The researcher investigated the effect of perceived ease of use of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs and the results revealed that the respondents that strongly agreed on the statement that social media leads to better understanding of customer needs were (65) 31%, (79)38% agreed, (63)30% were not sure and (2)1% disagreed with the statement. The results conclude that most respondents agreed that social media leads to better understanding of customer needs since interactions can go on between the customers and business owners at any time on their convenience.

The study findings on the statement easy and timely interact with customers, it was revealed that (23)11% strongly agreed, (44)21% agreed, (73)35% were not sure, (42)20% disagreed and (27)13% strongly disagreed with the statement. The results conclude that most respondents agreed with easy and timely interact with customers since business customers have chances of interacting with customers freely and at any time.

From the study findings on quick in brand modification, the results from the findings, those that strongly agreed were (59)28%, (75)36% agreed, (31)15% were not sure, (31)15% disagreed and (13)6% strongly disagreed with the statement. The results conclude that there is quick in brand modification since incase of anything wrong on the business products brands, medication can be done quickly between manufacturers and customers.

The study findings on the statement of low operating costs in marketing processes, the responses revealed that (79)38% strongly agreed, (69)33% agreed, (21)10% were not sure, (40)19% disagreed with the statement. The results conclude that there are low operating costs in marketing processes since social media platforms require less amount of money to purchase bundles which is used business owners to market their business products.

The study finding on the statement of convenient and easy to reach business customers and the responses revealed that (44)21% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement, (73) 35% agreed, (33)16% were not sure, (59)28% disagreed with the statement. The results conclude social media platforms were convenient and easy to reach business customers since it enabled communication between the customers and business owners from different places.

From the interviews the researcher held with the respondents on the effects of perceived ease of use of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs, the respondents mentioned that social media platforms were perceived ease of use because they eased the way how customers communicated with their suppliers, helped the business people to understand the role social media platforms plays on their business performance, there is convince to interact between business customers and business owners and there is low operating cost in marketing processes since social media platforms are cost effective and requires less capital and time to use it in marketing of business products.

Hypothesis Testing;

To verify the alternative hypothesis that there is strong relationship between performance assessment and social media marketing in Kabale Municipality, the Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient was thus used to determine the magnitude of the relationship as shown on the table below:

Table8: Correlation analysis for the perceived ease of use of social media platforms**Correlations**

		Performance of SMEs	perceived ease of use of social media platforms
Performance of SMEs	Pearson Correlation	1	.399**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	209	209
perceived ease of use of social media platforms	Pearson Correlation	.399**	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	209	209

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

Source: Primary data, 2022

The table above shows a correlation coefficient of .399** which is significant at a 0.01 level implying a very strong significant positive relationship.

Table 9: Regression output summary on the perceived ease of use of social media platforms**Coefficients**

Model	Un standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	2.941	.219		13.460	.000
1 perceived ease of use of social media platforms	.299	.054	.399	5.593	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Performance of SMEs

Source: Primary data, 2022

Findings revealed that a regression coefficient of .399 at 0.01 significant level hence a significant relationship. Results further confirm that the perceived ease of use of social media

platforms contributes to the performance of SMEs in Kabale Municipality with a Beta value of 0.339 at 95% of confidence. This implies that the perceived ease of use of social media platforms contributes to the performance of SMEs in Kabale Municipality. Therefore, the researcher upholds the research hypothesis which states that “the perceived ease of use of social media platforms has a significant effect on the performance of SMEs in Kabale Municipality.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a discussion of findings.

5.1 Discussion of findings

5.1.1 Impact of compatibility of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs

The study findings on the impact of compatibility of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs revealed that respondents (53)25% strongly agreed with an increase in brand awareness in line with Zinnbaue and Honer (2011) who explained that the main requirement to connect brands with their user community is information, advocacy, utility, conversation, affiliation and identity. Moreover, marketers need to understand internet user's concerns and social effects before engaging in the marketing process, (77)37% of the respondents agreed with the statement, (33) 16% were not sure, 25(12%) disagreed and 21(10%) strongly disagreed with an increase in brand awareness. This implies that an increase in brand awareness is very necessary for the performance of small and medium enterprises which can be done through the use of social media platforms.

The study findings on increasing customer relationships revealed that (79)38% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement, and (67)32% agreed as in line with Cvijikj & Michahelles, (2013) who explained that contents such as entertainment and information raise, on average, the number of likes, comments, and shares can be done by anyone which brings an equal contribution to anyone including customers for the business, (48)23% were not sure and (15)7% disagreed. The results from the findings concluded that most respondents agreed with increasing customer relationships. This indicates that when social media platforms are used among the businesses, the awareness of the business products among the customers becomes easy hence the performance of the business.

The study findings on high purchasing power decisions revealed that (41)86% of the respondents strongly agreed, (62)30% agreed as also agreed by Oyza and Edwin (2015) who assessed the influence of Social media on the purchasing decisions towards local small businesses in the U.S; found that 62% of the customers do visit different business social media pages to see what they offer before purchasing for products (38)18% were not sure, (17)8% disagreed and (6) 3% strongly disagreed with the statement. The study findings concluded that social media leads to increased purchasing power among the customers of the businesses since they get information from the business owners instantly.

The field findings on the statement of reaching a wider range of customers, the respondents (79) 38% strongly agreed with the statement, (40)19% agreed as in line with Walsh & Lipinski, (2009) who found that traditionally in marketing their firms; SMEs rely heavily on their contact network and also economic structures favour larger firms; however, today's economy is distinguished by relationships, network, and information, favouring some of the characteristics of SMEs, (54) 26% were not sure and (36)17% disagreed with the statement. This implies that when social media platforms are used, business owners can get information to boost their stock from customers in different areas which improves their performance.

From the study findings, on the increased demand of the customers' needs, the results revealed that (61)29% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement, (86) 41% agreed as in line with Perrin (2015) who explained that social media platforms (SMPs) became the most important part in social lives that can be linked to a positive association providing instrumental value that assists consumers in making decisions about what, where and when to buy and (62)30% of the respondents were not sure. The results conclude that the use of social media in the marketing of small and medium enterprises leads to high demand among the customers to businesses owners which boosts business performance when business owners fulfill their customers' needs.

5.1.2 Effect of perceived usefulness of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs

The researcher investigated the effect of perceived usefulness of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs and the results revealed that the responses were obtained on the statement of influence buying decision were (69)33% strongly agreed with the statement, (54)26% agreed as in agreement with Pawar (2014) opined that the aim of understanding social media trends helps in evaluating the influence of social media platforms on buying behaviors of millennial in today's life,(75)36% were not sure and (11)5% disagreed. The results conclude that most of the respondents agreed with influence buying decision since social media platforms avails information to customers in a quick and shortest possible time which is perceived usefulness in influencing customers buying decision.

The study findings on the statement of increased engagement of business owners with customers the responses stated that (33)16% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement, (44)21% agreed as in line with Mangold & Faulds, (2009) who stated that before you launch a new product or service, one would like to have some ideas/ knowledge about what people think about it, so by engaging with prospects and customers on SMPs, one can actually ask the fans and followers what colors they prefer or what types of features they want and thus

one can involve consumers in valuable free market research, by asking their opinions and can help establish credibility by showing that their opinions matter, (63)30% were not sure, (40)19% disagreed and (29)14% strongly disagreed with the statement. The results conclude that most of the respondents agreed that there are increased engagements of business owners with customers since business owners can interact freely with the customers in their free time to satisfy their needs and is perceived usefulness to business owners and customers.

The findings from the study on the statement of influences on electronic commerce, it was revealed that (86)41% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement, (54)26% agreed as in line with Pietro and Pantano (2012) who explained that SMPs are becoming an efficient platform for IT based business, by providing several services for both consumers and marketers and SMPs have been able to influence consumer purchasing decision under a new technological model where buy posting of products and services for customers to see can cause both impulses purchasing and normal influence purchasing., (38)18% were not sure and (31) 15% disagreed with the statement. The results conclude that most of the respondents agreed with the statement of influences electronic commerce since social media platforms can be used by different people in buying and selling process.

From the field findings on the statement of leads to easy modification in the marketing process, (48)23% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement, (38)18% agreed as in line with Baker, Buoni, Fee, & Vitale, (2011) who explained that businesses are changing marketing strategies based on information they find in social media feeds from their competitors and by keeping an eye on competitors, their strengths and weaknesses can determine their marketing efforts., (73)35% were not sure, (35)17% disagreed and (15)7% strongly disagreed with the statement. The results conclude that leads to easy modification in marketing process since business customers can submit their requests and complaints to the business owners through social media platforms and they become answered.

5.1.3 Effect of perceived ease of use of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs

The researcher investigated the effect of perceived ease of use of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs and the results revealed that the respondents that strongly agreed on the statement that social media leads to better understanding of customer needs were (65) 31%, (79)38% agreed as in line with Halligan, Shah, & Scott, (2009) who stated that Twitter enables businesses to network with customers in order to build relationships and achieve a better understanding of customer needs and to maximize this reach, a business must have a presence where customers are hanging out. Increasingly, they are hanging out on social networking sites

like twitter, (63)30% were not sure and (2)1% disagreed with the statement. The results conclude that most respondents agreed that social media leads to better understanding of customer needs since interactions can go on between the customers and business owners at any time on their convenience.

The study findings on the statement easy and timely interact with customers, it was revealed that (23)11% strongly agreed, (44)21% agreed as in line with Mangold & Faulds, (2009) who stated that A unique role of twitter is to create buzz marketing, that enabling customers to talk to one another is, in a sense, an extension of traditional word of mouth communication, business are faced with the question of how this power can be attached to benefit the organization and businesses cannot directly control what consumers are saying, however they do have the ability to influence the conversations consumers are having, (73)35% were not sure, (42)20% disagreed and (27)13% strongly disagreed with the statement. The results conclude that most respondents agreed with easy and timely interact with customers since business customers have chances of interacting with customers freely and at any time.

From the study findings on quick in brand modification, the results from the findings, those that strongly agreed were (59)28%, (75)36% agreed as Reyneke, Pitt & Berthon (2011) stated that Twitter gives chance for consumer to comment or post questions as a form of engagement about the brand. Through the use of twitter, managers can find out what is being said about a brand and they can also connect with consumers and consumers can generate new business and promote or help a brand by tweeting, (31)15% were not sure, (31)15% disagreed and (13)6% strongly disagreed with the statement. The results conclude that there is quick in brand modification since incase of anything wrong on the business products brands, medication can be done quickly between manufacturers and customers.

The study findings on the statement of low operating costs in marketing processes, the responses revealed that (79)38% strongly agreed, (69)33% agreed as in line with Kaplan & Haenlein, (2010) who stated that use of social networking sites enables firms to engage consumers in a timely and direct manner at low cost and higher levels of efficiency than with more traditional communication tools and this makes social media appropriate for large organizations, and for small and medium size businesses as well, (21)10% were not sure, (40)19% disagreed with the statement. The results conclude that there are low operating costs in marketing processes since social media platforms require less amount of money to purchase bundles which is used business owners to market their business products.

The study finding on the statement of convenient and easy to reach business customers and the responses revealed that (44)21% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement, (73) 35% agreed as in line with Hubspot, (2012) who stated that social media platforms have been convenient for many people who are trying to market products and services to people online. Actually, social Media Marketing has become a very compatible and effective way to drive targeted traffic to businesses' website or blogs, (33)16% were not sure, (59)28% disagreed with the statement. The results conclude social media platforms were convenient and easy to reach business customers since it enabled communication between the customers and business owners from different places.

CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations

6.1 Summary of findings

6.1.1 Impact of compatibility of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs

The study findings on the impact of compatibility of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs, respondents were obtained on increase in brand awareness, increase customer relationship, high purchasing power decision, reach wider range of customers and on increased demand of the customers' needs.

6.1.2 Effect of perceived usefulness of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs

The study findings on the effect of perceived usefulness of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs, responses were obtained on influence buying decision, increased engagement of business owners with customers, influences electronic commerce and on leads to easy modification in marketing process.

6.1.3 Effect of perceived ease of use of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs

The findings on the effect of perceived ease of use of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs, responses were obtained on social media leads to better understanding of customer needs, easy and timely interact with customers, quick in brand modification, low operating costs in marketing processes and on convenient and easy to reach business customers.

6.2 Conclusion

6.2.1 Impact of compatibility of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs

The study findings on the impact of compatibility of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs, social media platforms are found to be compatibility to business performance since there is an increase in brand awareness, increase in customer relationship and leads to high purchasing power decision among the business customers due to social media platforms.

6.2.2 Effect of perceived usefulness of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs

The study findings on the effect of perceived usefulness of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs, it was found out that social media platforms were perceived usefulness on the performance of SMEs since social media platforms influence buying decision, increased engagement of business owners with customers, influences electronic commerce and there is easy modification in marketing process depending on the decisions of business owners and the customers' requests to their sellers. On testing the hypothesis, it was revealed that a correlation

coefficient of 315** which is significant at the 0.01 level implying a very strong significant positive relationship

6.2.3 Effect of perceived ease of use of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs

The study findings on the effect of perceived ease of use of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs, it was revealed that social media platforms were perceived ease of use on the performance of SMEs since social media leads to better understanding of customer needs, there is easy and timely interact with customers, quick in brand modification and there are low operating costs in marketing processes which makes it easy for the suppliers to conveniently reach all their potential customers online. The findings revealed that a regression coefficient of 339at 0.01 significant level hence a significant relationship.

6.3 Recommendations

Basing on the study findings, the following recommendations were made:

There should be massive branding of business products so that the awareness of the existing market products can be well known to the potential customers who can increase on their purchasing power hence business performance.

Business owners should try and ensure that there is a strong relationship between them and their customers so that customers can feel comfortable when buying from them which can lead to better performance of the business.

Due to availability of social media platforms, business owners should ensure proper use of them so that customers from different areas can be reached in order to provide them with better services which can lead to improved business performance.

Although there is increased engagement of business owners with their customers, business owners should not take it for granted to use other business marketing channels like use of televisions and radios which can reach many customers to boost the performance of their businesses.

Due to the fact that business use of social media platforms leads to low operating cost in marketing processes, business owners should ensure that they use these platforms well since they are cost effective in marketing process to boost their businesses performance.

Business owners should ensure that they use better advertisings on social media platforms like radios, Facebook and WhatsApp so that their customers can be convinced to buy their products.

6.4 Areas of further study

- i. Effectiveness of social media marketing in small business performance in Uganda
- ii. Challenges encountered in social media marketing on business growth

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: CONSENT FORM FOR RESPONDENTS (BUSINESS OWNERS AND CUSTOMERS)

Dear respondent,

I am Kiconco Charity a student of Kabale University offering a Masters of Business Administration. I am conducting a study on effect of social media marketing on the performance of the businesses in Kabale Municipality Kabale District

You are kindly requested to spare me a moment of your precious time to participate in the study. Your answers will be treated with at most confidentiality. The information you provide will be used for academic purposes only. Thanks for your co-operation.

Signature..... Date.....

KICONCO CHARITY

APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE

I am Kiconco Charity, a student of Kabale University offering Masters of Business Administration. I am carrying out my research on ‘performance assessment of SMES on the usage of social media marketing in Uganda: a case study of Kabale municipality SMES Kabale District’. I kindly request you to provide the necessary information having chosen you to be one of the respondents to enable me complete my research successfully. This questionnaire is for academic purposes only and will be kept confidential.

Thank you in advance.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA OF RESPONDENTS

You are kindly requested to tick your most appropriate option

1. Gender

(a). Female ☐

(b). Male ☐

2. Age

(a) 18- 23 ☐

b) 24-29 ☐

(c). 30-35 ☐

(e) 36-41 ☐

3. Education level

(a) O-Level ☐

(b). A-Level ☐

(c).Diploma ☐

d) Degree ☐

Others specify.....

4. Number of years you have been in present business

a). 1-3 ☐

b). 4-6 ☐

c). 7-10 ☐

d). 11 and above ☐

SECTION B

5. Please respond to the following statements provided. Tick appropriately using SA- Strongly agree, A- Agree, N- Not sure, D- Disagree and SD- Strongly disagree the boxes that most closely fit your opinion

	A. Impact of compatibility of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	Increase in brand awareness					
2	Increase customer relationship					
3	High purchasing power decision					
4	Reach wider range of customers					
5	Increased demand of the customers' needs					

Do you think there are other impacts of compatibility of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs?

- a) Yes ☐
- b) No ☐

If yes mention them?

.....

.....

.....

	B. Effect of perceived usefulness of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	Influence buying decision					
2	Increased engagement of business owners with customers					
3	Influences electronic commerce					
4	Leads to easy modification in marketing process					

Do you think there are other effects of perceived usefulness of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

If yes mention them?

.....

.....

.....

	C. Effect of perceived ease of use of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	Leads to better understanding of customer needs					
2	Easy and timely interact with customers					
3	Quick in brand modification					
4	Low operating cost in marketing processes					
5	Convenient and easy to reach business customers					

Do you think there are other effects of perceived ease of use of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

If yes mention them?

.....

.....

.....

Thank you for your cooperation

APPENDIX II: INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. What are the impacts of compatibility of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs?
2. What are the effects of perceived usefulness of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs?
3. What are the effects of perceived ease of use of social media platforms on the performance of SMEs?

**APPENDIX IV: SAMPLE SIZE DETERMINATION USING KREJCIE AND MORGAN
TABLE**

N	S	N	S	N	S
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	100000	384

Note;” N” is population size and “S” is sample size.

Source: Krejcie and Morgan, 1970.

APPENDIX V: REGISTERED SELECTED SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES

Trade and other business services

Meeting point shopping center

Jojo shopping center

Knite wear

J&M shopping center

Step by Step shopping center

Hotels and restaurants

Moon rays group of hotels

Kings Hotel Uganda LTD

Manhattan and Kirigime Hotels

Cephas Inn ltd

Kings Hotel

Transport

Ktoda

Miami Tours and Travel LTD

Financial services

Centenary bank

Stanbic bank

DFCU bank

Rukiga SACCO

Equity SACCO