

**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

**UNIVERSITY BRANDING ON SOCIAL MEDIA: ANALYSING THE  
IDENTITY AND IMAGE OF UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA.**



**MASTER OF ARTS**

**2022**

**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

**UNIVERSITY BRANDING ON SOCIAL MEDIA: ANALYSING THE  
IDENTITY AND IMAGE OF UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA.**

**MABEL NKRUMAH**



**A dissertation in the Department of Strategic Communication,  
School of Communication and Media Studies, submitted to the  
School of Graduate Studies in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements for the award of the degree of**

**Master of Arts  
(Strategic Communication)  
in the University of Education, Winneba**

**December, 2022**

## DECLARATION

### Student's Declaration

I, **Mabel Nkrumah** hereby declare that, except for references to other people's work which have been duly acknowledged, this research work consists entirely of the research and data from the research conducted within University of Education-Winneba.

Signature:.....

Date:.....

### Supervisor's Declaration



I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work were supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of dissertation as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

**Name:** Miss Abena Abokoma Asemanyi

Supervisor's Signature:.....

Date:.....

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to my family, guardians and friends who assisted me immensely throughout the entire research period.



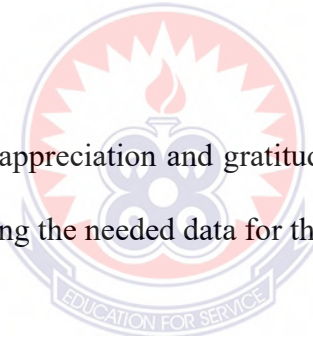
## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research work, but for the Almighty, could not have been accomplished. I therefore express utmost gratitude for the knowledge, wisdom and life given unto me to enable this idea to be transformed into reality.

I wish to also express profound gratitude to my supervisors, Miss. Abena Abokoma Asemanyi and Miss Belinda Osei-Mensah, who gave me the necessary guidance and encouragement to complete this project. Through her supervision and patience, this project was a success.

I extend my appreciation to all lecturers, especially Dr. Mavis Amo-Mensah of the School of Communication and Media Studies for their guidance and counseling throughout the study period.

I also express my profound appreciation and gratitude to all respondents for their kind gesture expressed by providing the needed data for the research.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

| <b>Content</b>                                   | <b>Page</b> |
|--|-------------|
| DECLARATION                                      | iii         |
| DEDICATION                                       | iv          |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS                                 | v           |
| TABLE OF CONTENTS                                | vi          |
| LIST OF FIGURES                                  | ix          |
| ABSTRACT   | x           |
| <b>CHAPTER ONE:</b>                              |             |
| INTRODUCTION                                     | 1           |
| 1.1 Background of Study                          | 1           |
| 1.2 Overview of University of Education, Winneba | 4           |
| 1.3 Statement of Problem                         | 5           |
| 1.4 Research Objectives                          | 7           |
| 1.5 Research Questions.                          | 8           |
| 1.6 Significance of Study                        | 8           |
| 1.7 Scope of the Study                           | 8           |
| 1.8 Limitations of the Study                     | 9           |
| 1.9 Definition of Terms                          | 10          |
| 1.10 Organization of Study                       | 11          |
| <b>CHAPTER TWO:</b>                              |             |
| LITERATURE REVIEW                                | 13          |
| 2.0 Introduction                                 | 13          |
| 2.1 University Branding                          | 14          |
| 2.2 Social Media as a Concept                    | 17          |
| 2.2.1 Importance of Social Media Technologies    | 19          |



|   |    |
|---|----|
| 2.3 Social Media's Role in Branding                                       | 20 |
| 2.3.1 Brand Awareness   | 21 |
| 2.3.2 Brand Reputation  | 22 |
| 2.3.3 Brand Loyalty   | 24 |
| 2.4 Brand Identity  | 25 |
| 2.5 Brand Image   | 26 |
| 2.6 Social Media and Higher Education Institutions Branding               | 27 |
| 2.7 Social Media Presence and Enrolment in Higher Education Institutions  | 29 |
| 2.8 Effects of social media on Students in Higher Education Institutions. | 31 |
| 2.9 Conceptual Framework  | 33 |
| <b>CHAPTER THREE:</b>   |    |
| <b>METHODOLOGY</b>  | 34 |
| 3.0 Introduction  | 34 |
| 3.1 Research Approach   | 34 |
| 3.2 Research Design   | 36 |
| 3.3 Sample  | 37 |
| 3.4 Sampling Technique  | 38 |
| 3.5. Sources, Types of Data and Data Collection Methods                   | 39 |
| 3.5.1 Sources and Types of Data   | 39 |
| 3.5.2 Data Collection Methods and Instrument                              | 41 |
| 3.6 Validity and Reliability of the Research                              | 44 |
| 3.8 Presentation of Data  | 47 |
| 3.9 Ethical consideration   | 33 |
| <b>CHAPTER FOUR</b>   |    |
| <b>FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION</b>  | 50 |



|   |    |
|---|----|
| 4.0 Introduction  | 50 |
| 4.1 RQ1 How is UEW Using Facebook to Brand Itself?                          | 50 |
| 4.1.1 Brand awareness through text and images.                              | 51 |
| 4.1.2 Brand reputation through Events                                       | 56 |
| 4.2.3 Brand loyalty through Photos  | 60 |
| 4.2 RQ2 What are the Reasons for UEW's use of Social Media?                 | 62 |
| 4.2.1 Student Recruitment and Support                                       | 65 |
| 4.2.2 Communication and Engagement  | 66 |
| 4.2.3 Marketing and Branding  | 67 |
| 4.2.4 Research and Collaboration:   | 68 |
| 4.3 RQ3. What is the brand image and identity presented by UEW on Facebook? | 70 |
| 4.3.1 Use of Facebook among Students of UEW                                 | 72 |
| 4.3.2 Impact of UEW's brand identity on enrollment                          | 73 |
| 4.3.3 How Significant is Social Media Branding on Promoting UEW's image.    | 75 |
| <b>CHAPTER FIVE:</b>  |    |
| <b>SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>                              | 81 |
| 5.0 Introduction  | 81 |
| 5.1 Summary of Major Findings   | 81 |
| 5.1.1 How UEW Uses Facebook to Brand Itself                                 | 81 |
| 5.1.2 Purposes for the Use of Social Media by UEW                           | 82 |
| 5.1.3 Impact of Facebook Promotion on UEW Brand Image and Identity          | 82 |
| 5.2. Conclusion   | 83 |
| 5.3 Recommendations   | 84 |
| <b>REFERENCES</b>   | 87 |



## LIST OF FIGURES

| <b>Figures</b>   | <b>Page</b> |
|--|-------------|
| 1: Facebook post by the university on admission                  | 54          |
| 2: Facebook post by the university on accommodation              | 55          |
| 3: Facebook post by the university on admission                  | 55          |
| 4: Facebook post by the university on Chemistry Festival         | 58          |
| 5. Facebook post by the university on Stem Training Workshop.    | 58          |
| 6: Facebook post by the university on admission                  | 59          |
| 7: Facebook post by the university on admission                  | 60          |
| 8. A Cross section of photos on the University's page            | 61          |
| 9: Facebook post by the University on Enrollment                 | 65          |
| 10: Facebook post by the University on campus news               | 66          |
| 11: Facebook post by the University on upcoming events           | 68          |
| 12: Facebook post by the University on the promotion of research | 69          |
| 1. Impact on Enrollment  | 74          |
| 2. Significance of Facebook impact on UEW brand image.           | 76          |

## ABSTRACT

This study sought to analyze the role Facebook branding plays in promoting the identity and image of University of Education, Winneba (UEW). The study made use of the social identity theory and employed the qualitative method of research which was guided by the research objectives and questions. The study examined University of Education, Winneba's brand on Facebook and how Facebook help promote the brand of UEW. That is, the effect of Facebook branding on their enrolment decisions. In total, the researcher sampled 5 UEW social media managers and 100 students. The data collection methods were interviews, qualitative survey and observation. The study revealed that Facebook aids the UEW to gain a competitive edge in the highly competitive higher education market thereby, making UEW a keenly sought-after teacher education university in Africa. The study also revealed that some students' decision to enroll in UEW was influenced by the Facebook page. The study therefore recommends constant and consistent efforts at branding on Facebook by UEW and other educational institutions in order to gain a positive identity and image among target audience and the general public.



## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of Study

Changes in society at the turn of the 21st century have had an outsized impact on universities. Globalisation has led to competition among universities and the standards expected of students have both intensified. The globalisation of the economy and the increasing reliance on a college degree have increased the stakes in higher education and fuelled fierce competition among institutions. As a result, universities have begun to employ the use of their online profiles as a way to differentiate and brand their identity in order to attract the public.

The marketing and branding potential of the internet, and especially social media, is not lost on universities and colleges today (Hanna, Rohm & Crittenden, 2011). Studies show that many organisations' uses of social media are fruitless because they don't have a coherent plan for reaching their intended audience (Constantinides & Stagno, 2011). To effectively use Facebook for branding, it is crucial for universities to have a clear and well-defined strategy (Gupta & Cavusgil, 2008). This strategy should take into consideration the unique characteristics of the target audience, the goals and objectives of the branding effort, and the resources available for implementation (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

Additionally, universities should understand that social media platforms like Facebook are not a one-size-fits-all solution for branding (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). The tone, style, and approach used on Facebook should align with the university's brand identity and resonate with the target audience (Grier & Boudreaux, 2010). Furthermore, it is important for universities to regularly monitor and evaluate their Facebook presence, to ensure that their branding efforts are effective and to make

necessary adjustments (Hanna, Rohm & Crittenden, 2011). This can be done through tracking metrics such as the engagement levels of followers, the reach of posts, and the demographics of the target audience (Grier & Boudreaux, 2010).

As of July 2022, global overview, there are a total of 4.70 billion people on the planet who are active on social media. With 2.93 billion active users as of second quarter 2022, Facebook is the most used online network worldwide. The Facebook platform surpassed a two billion active user's milestone in 2017 (Statista, 2022). Ninety percent of these target audience, comprised of current and prospective college students, regularly engages in social media use (Perrin, 2015; Rutter et al., 2016). This huge social media presence has made accomplishment on online networking one of the key objectives of organizations' general marketing and branding procedure. This is because social media provides an effective way for organizations to reach a large and engaged audience, and can be used for a variety of marketing and branding purposes, such as building brand awareness and promoting products or services.

Students in higher education report using social media on a daily basis. According to surveys of current and former college students, the majority of them use social networking sites like Facebook to stay in touch with friends back at school (Ellison, Steinfeld, & Lampe, 2011). Freshmen and prospective students are especially reliant on social media as a means of receiving and processing information from their respective institutions (DeAndrea et al., 2012). In order to make the most of the possibilities and avoid the pitfalls presented by social media, it is necessary to have a thorough understanding of the medium. As a result, universities have been working hard to categorise and define social media sites, as well as investigate their impact on advertising and promotion (Brech et al., 2017).

Universities can communicate regularly with their stakeholders thanks to social media. Successful higher education organisations, according to Foulger (2014), use

social media as a traditional marketing funnel to "acquire prospective students (fanatics), engage with them (interaction), persuade them to submit inquiries and applications (links), and ultimately convert them into enrolments." The vision, successes, and connections with alumni of these higher education institutions are also promoted through social media presence. Due to people's enhanced capacity to access information and express their ideas at any time and from any location, which results in millions of social media posts each day, branding has become more crucial.

Additionally, studies have highlighted the importance of branding in the context of social media, as the medium's ability to allow people to access information and express their ideas at any time and from any location results in millions of social media posts each day (Perrin, 2015; Rutter et al., 2016; Statista, 2022; Hanna, Rohm & Crittenden, 2011; Constantinides & Stagno, 2011).

According to Harvey (2018), university branding is very important, because it makes the concept of higher education more real, promising a certain quality of experience. A university brand reflects the university's ability to fulfil students' needs and creates trust in its capacity to deliver the promised services (Nguyen et al. 2016). Also, universities as service organizations depend on their unique service properties to differentiate themselves from the competition. Over the years, brands have served as effective carriers of functional and symbolic information about goods, services, and experiences (Oh et al., 2020). A brand functions as a powerful differentiator for the business and as a decision-making tool for customers. Brand image and brand identity are vital when creating a presence on social media. The visible elements of a brand such as the colour, design, logo that identifies and distinguishes a brand in minds is known as brand identity. This study suggests that university branding is important for differentiating institutions from competition, establishing trust in the ability to deliver

promised services, and creating a strong brand relationship to increase brand awareness. The use of social media is seen as a crucial aspect of university branding, as it allows universities to create a consistent and recognizable brand image and identity that can be used to communicate with stakeholders and promote their vision and achievements. Brand image is generated by numerous brand associations that consumers form in their thoughts and may be divided into three categories: attributes, benefits and attitudes (Management Study Guide, 2016).

Brand image and identity are not the same thing. While brand image refers to how customers actually view the brand, brand identity is defined by the brand's owner. Brand image refers to consumers' perceptions of a brand. "Brand identity" refers to the organization's view of the brand (Kapferer, 2008). Fleischman et al. (2015) suggested that a strong brand relationship is needed by higher education institutions to increase awareness of their existence or often referred to as brand awareness.

The purpose of the thesis is to analyse how Facebook; a social media platform is used by University of Education, Winneba to promote brand image and identity.

## **1.2 Overview of University of Education, Winneba**

The University of Education, Winneba (UEW) is a renowned institution of higher learning in Winneba, Central Region of Ghana. Established in 1992 through a government ordinance, PNDC Law 322, UEW has established itself as a coeducational, secular university offering a range of undergraduate and postgraduate programs across ten faculties, three schools, three institutes, and over fifty departments. UEW has a key aim of fostering links between the school and the community for the holistic training of teachers and playing a leading role in the

country's drive for producing scholars who are knowledgeable and responsive to the realities and needs of contemporary Ghana and the West African sub-region.

Due to its size, public engagement, and strong online presence on Facebook, UEW was chosen as the focus of this research study to examine how social media presence can promote the university's brand. The researcher was confident in the university's participation in this research given its commitment to supporting academic pursuits and its aim to lead in the higher education sector. The location and proximity of the university also played a factor in the selection process. The results of this study will provide valuable insights into how universities can effectively utilize social media, specifically Facebook, in promoting their brand and increasing their reach.

### **1.3 Statement of Problem**

Academia in Ghana has become increasingly competitive since its liberalisation in 1993 (Atuahene, 2014). From fewer than ten in the late 1990s to 48 in 2010 and 72 by the close of 2014, the number of universities in Ghana has increased dramatically (NCTE, 2015). Thus, the competitiveness among universities is heightened by the growing number of universities. The ability to create a presence and reputation and draw in students looking for higher education has been aided by branding. Brands are more important than ever as a means of differentiating a company's offerings from those of its rivals (Kotler & Armstrong, 2012; Keller, 2013; Sharma et al., 2013; Kotler & Keller, 2018).

Over the past years, there has been a growing fascination over communication. An arena for communication that has exploded in popularity over time is social media with a total of 4.70 billion people on the planet who are active on social media

(Statista, 2022). Communities communicate through social media networking sites. Social media networking is also used by businesses in their branding and marketing strategies. These social networking platforms circulate messages and user reviews of businesses and their products. Social media has a vehement influence of the development of the brand and ability of the company to perform efficiently on the market. (Kotler & Keller, 2012).

Numerous research on the effect of social media on institutional branding have been conducted internationally. In their discussions of the competitive higher education market, Sultan & Wong (2012) and Mazzarol & Soutar (2012) make the case for the significance of image and reputation in framing a university's offering. Casidy (2013) offers empirical data to support her claim that a university benefits from having a strong brand orientation. In her study, she examined the relationship between perceived brand orientation (PBO), satisfaction, loyalty, and post-enrolment communication behaviour in the Australian higher education sector. This study revealed that PBO has a positive and significant relationship with all dependent variables. The research also revealed that students' perception of a university's brand orientation is significantly related to satisfaction, loyalty, and post-enrolment communication behaviour.

Although the importance of university branding is widely acknowledged (Mourad, Ennew, & Kortam, 2011; Sharma, Volkova, Bachrach, & Armstrong, 2015; Pinar, Girard & Basfirinci, 2020), the majority of studies, both empirical and theoretical, have concentrated on the globalisation of the higher education market (Hemsley-Brown & Goonawardana, 2007).



Buer, Owusu-Ansah, & Acquah (2016) research focused on Facebook use among UEW students, while Apeanti & Danso (2014) studied the students' use of social media in higher education in Ghana. The results indicate that higher education students are highly aware of social media and use social media for a variety of reasons which included: connecting with old friends and family members, finding new friends, obtaining or sharing learning materials, receiving update of events, posting information and whiling away time. It was also found that students had concerns about joining or using social media which included concerns about personal privacy, limited computing skills, cost of Internet connectivity and time to use social media. The results of the study also indicated that students had positive views about the academic use of social media. These studies on the topic of social media in Ghana focus more on students' use of social media than institutional branding. The current study however, focuses on the influence of social media on institutional branding. This study seeks to analyse how Facebook promotes the brand image and identity of University of Education, Winneba.

#### **1.4 Research Objectives**

The major objective of this research was to explore how UEW uses social media in branding and marketing the university as an institution.

The specific research objectives of the study are to:

- Examine how University of Education, Winneba brands itself on Facebook.
- Analyse strategies employed by University of Education, Winneba in their branding.
- Determine if Facebook promotes the brand of University of Education, Winneba.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

The general research question of this research was “how does UEW use social media in branding and promoting the university as an institution?”

This research aimed to address the following specific research questions;

1. How is UEW using Facebook social media platform to brand itself?
2. What are the reasons or purposes for UEW use of social media?
3. What is the brand image and identity presented by UEW on Facebook?

### **1.6 Significance of Study**

The purpose of this research is on how social media presence affects university branding. Universities would be asked about how social media usage affects their brand and marketing strategies. Since the findings of the study could be applied to all universities, it would be extremely helpful. Additionally, it would give universities insight into how social media affects their business and help them come up with solutions for their flaws. Government policymakers would also find this study to be very important because it would give them in-depth knowledge and information on the effects of social media usage and branding.

### **1.7 Scope of the Study**

- **Geographic Scope:** This study specifically, focused on the University of Education, Winneba (UEW) and its immediate surroundings. The study did not encompass other universities or institutions, but instead, concentrated on the specific strategies and approaches used by UEW in their branding and marketing efforts. The delimitation of the study to UEW allowed the researcher to delve deeper into the university's methods and activities, providing a more in-

depth analysis and understanding of how they utilize social media, specifically Facebook, in promoting their brand. By limiting the scope to UEW, the researcher was able to produce more relevant and accurate results that were specific to the university, which in turn allowed for a better understanding of the relationship between social media use and university branding.

- Thematic scope: The scope of this study was limited to the University of Education, Winneba and specifically aimed to examine the role and impact of Facebook as a social media platform in the branding and marketing efforts of the university. The research participants consisted of both the social media managers who are responsible for overseeing the university's Facebook presence, as well as students who are actively engaged with the university's Facebook page. This study explored the various strategies employed by UEW in their branding efforts on Facebook, the purposes behind their use of social media, and how the promotion of the university on Facebook has influenced the overall brand image and identity of UEW. Through this examination, the study aimed to provide insights into the effectiveness of using Facebook as a tool for university branding and marketing.

### **1.8 Limitations of the Study**

Every research work has obstacles which hinder the research process. These limitations, if not well managed, have the tendency to affect the quality and final outcome. Limitations encountered in the course of this study were;

- Limited Finance: This was a major hindrance to this research, in that, money was needed to print out questionnaire and the final reports as well as pay for transportation to administer questionnaire and conduct interviews.

- Time Constraints: This was a limitation because the study was expected to be conducted within a limited time span. This made the work schedule stressful and had to work every day including weekends to be able to finish on time.
- Lack of previous research studies on the topic: Finding related research works especially confined to Facebook and UEW was a limitation because not much research had been done on the topic.

The above limitations notwithstanding, all data collected and analysed reflects the true situation in the study area. Therefore, the limitations do not, in any way, undermine the validity of the information presented in the research nor affect the outcome of this study.

### **1.9 Definition of Terms**

In the context of this study, social media refers to a variety of automated communication platforms that allow for user interaction and the exchange of information based on shared interests. These platforms can include both mobile and web-based technologies, and are commonly used for communication, entertainment, and information-seeking purposes.

Social networking sites are a specific type of social media platform that allow users to publish information about themselves for others to view. These sites are typically used to create and maintain personal or professional networks, and can serve as a space for users to share content, communicate with others, and connect with like-minded individuals.

In the academic literature, social media and social networking sites are widely studied and debated in terms of their impact on society, the economy, and individual

behavior. Researchers have investigated topics such as the role of social media in political activism (Kriesi, 2014), the use of social media for marketing purposes (Constantinides & Stagno, 2011), and the relationship between social media usage and well-being (Baumeister & Leary, 1995).

**Social Networking:** The act of creating, sharing and exchanging information and ideas, among a network of individuals with similar interests and/or goals through digital platforms such as social media sites. The term "social networking" encompasses a wide range of activities, from sharing personal information to participating in virtual communities or professional networks.

**Mass Media:** A term used to describe various means of communication that reach a large audience through widespread dissemination. This includes traditional media platforms such as television, radio, newspapers and magazines, as well as digital platforms like the internet, social media and mobile devices. Mass media play a significant role in shaping public opinion, providing information and entertainment, and connecting people to each other and to the world at large.

### **1.10 Organization of Study**

The first chapter provides an overview of the study's context and establishes the basis for the research problem. It outlines the key challenges and gaps in the existing literature and provides a clear rationale for the study. It also presents the research objectives, research questions, significance, and limitations of the study.

The second chapter focuses on the Literature Review, which provides a comprehensive examination of the existing body of research on social media and branding in higher education institutions. This chapter critically evaluates the works

of relevant authors and synthesizes the findings of previous studies to form a theoretical framework and conceptual model. The chapter provides insights into the current state of knowledge and identifies areas for further research.

The third chapter presents the Methodology, including the study design, population of interest, sampling technique, sample frame, data sources, and analytical tools. It provides a detailed explanation of the data collection and analysis methods used in the study, including the rationale for selecting these methods. This chapter provides a clear roadmap for the conduct of the study and establishes the reliability and validity of the results.

The fourth chapter presents the qualitative data and findings of the study. This chapter provides a detailed examination of the data collected, including the results of the analysis and interpretation of the findings. The chapter provides insights into the experiences, perceptions, and attitudes of the study participants, and sheds light on the impact of social media on the branding of higher education institutions.

The final chapter, Chapter Five, provides a summary of the key findings, conclusions, and recommendations for future research. It summarizes the key insights and themes that emerged from the study and provides a synthesis of the results. The chapter concludes with suggestions for future research and provides recommendations for practitioners and policymakers in higher education. The chapter concludes by highlighting the contributions of the study to the existing body of knowledge and its implications for future research.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the focus is on exploring the existing literature on university branding, social media, and their intersection in higher education institutions (HEIs). The purpose of this review is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the relevant concepts and theories that are related to the research objectives. The sub-topics that were explored in this chapter include university branding, social media as a concept, the function of social media in branding, the use of social media by HEIs, the effect of social media on student enrolment, and its impact on students.

The study will highlight the importance of branding in HEIs and the need for universities to have a strong and consistent brand image. This includes the role of branding in attracting students, donors, and other stakeholders. And also covers the different types of social media platforms, their features, and functions. It also highlights the benefits of social media for HEIs, including the ability to reach a wider audience, increase engagement, and enhance brand reputation. It also looked at the impact of social media on student enrolment, including the role of social media in attracting prospective students and enhancing student engagement.

Finally, a conceptual framework was presented that provides a visual representation of the relationships between the key concepts and theories explored in the literature review. This framework helped to guide the research and offered insights into the study's objectives and research questions. The conceptual framework also provided a basis for analyzing the findings and making recommendations.

## 2.1 University Branding

In recent years, with the advancement of digital technology and the proliferation of social media, the concept of brand has evolved to include not only the tangible elements of a brand (such as its logo, tagline, and packaging) but also its intangible elements, such as its reputation, values, and the experiences and emotions it evokes in its target audience (Aaker, 1991). The impact of social media on branding has been widely recognized by researchers and practitioners alike, as it has become an important tool for building brand awareness, engagement, and loyalty among consumers (Wang & Chen, 2011; Huang et al., 2016).

The use of social media by higher education institutions (HEIs) is also growing, as HEIs look for ways to engage with current and prospective students, alumni, and other stakeholders. The literature on social media and branding in HEIs has shown that social media can be an effective tool for building a strong brand and reputation, and for attracting and retaining students (Kirschner & Karpinski, 2010; Junco, 2012; Manca & Ranieri, 2016). However, it is also important for HEIs to have a clear strategy for using social media in order to effectively communicate their brand values, messages, and offerings.

Overall, the research on social media and branding in HEIs highlights the importance of considering both the tangible and intangible elements of a brand, and the role of social media in building and maintaining a strong brand. It also emphasizes the need for HEIs to have a clear and well-planned strategy for using social media to build and enhance their brand and reputation.

The act of marking a farmer's animals is referred to as "branding" in Old Norse. It is clear that strategies have changed today, and a brand now embodies the essence of an



organization. In the early 1800s, a few sororities and fraternities began to literally brand their pledges, according to Branding Strategy Insider (2006). By the middle of the 1800s, branding had become a crucial component of business strategy thanks to the use of it in marketing by consumer companies like Procter and Gamble. Marketing and branding have historically been thought of as strategic tools for businesses that prioritize profit. However, as the understanding and definition of branding has evolved, it has come to be seen as a way for organizations of all types to communicate their values, mission and identity to their audience.

The transition of the concept of branding from the corporate world to higher education took more than a century. Schools implemented branding in the early 2000s after realising that higher education had transformed into a marketplace of buyers and sellers, according to University Business (Sevier, 2009). Due to recent changes in the higher education sector's conditions, universities and other institutions of higher learning have gradually adopted branding concepts and practices. Overall, the study suggests that universities and other institutions of higher learning have gradually adopted branding concepts and practices due to recent changes in the higher education sector's conditions.

Nowadays, many universities and colleges operate in a market similar to a business, where students are "customers," and other institutions are competitors. A school needs to build and market its own brand to stand out from the thousands of other schools vying for students and funding in order to successfully compete. University branding is a tactic that gives a university an enduring identity and a tool that can communicate the university's core values.

In order to analyse the value of education through brand tracking, university branding aims to present a consistent visual identity for the institution. Higher education institutions increasingly use branding to increase "brand awareness" and connect with teenagers and parents. Being associated with a specific university brand is a potent kind of symbolic association that frequently translates to graduates obtaining economic capital, which has led to an increase in funds spent on university marketing to develop branding traits. Because of this, the university's branding aims to win and keep the support of its graduates' and students' customers. Branding is a crucial component of business strategy for higher education institutions, as it serves as a tool to communicate the institution's core values and increase brand awareness among potential students and donors.

Harsha et al (2011) postulates that the strength of a higher education brand is represented by the thoughts, feelings, perceptions, images and experiences linked to the brand in the mind sets of constituents or audiences, and what consumers (audiences) have learned, felt, seen and heard about the institution over time.

The modern version of school branding identifies a school's distinct competitive advantage. Benefits of university or school branding include a rise in school and student pride, clear school identification and recognition, validation of the mission and core values, development of trust and loyalty, and alignment of the internal and external cultures of the institution. This proposes that, university branding is not just about creating a visual identity for the institution, but also about creating positive associations and perceptions in the minds of students, alumni, and other stakeholders, and also aligning the institution with its mission and core values. Additionally, it is a way to connect with teenager and parents.

## 2.2 Social media as a Concept

As a result of its constant evolution, social media is challenging to define precisely. There is no single accepted definition (Jacka & Scott, 2011). But many academics have attempted to define it. Social media, according to Kietzmann & Hermkens (2011), are interactive technologies that make it easier to create and share knowledge, opinions, and other kinds of expression through online groups and networks. Another way to describe social media is as a "communication channel" that is widely used, incredibly quick, and trusted by billions of people. It allows users to share and find content about people, brands, information, entertainment, and expertise (Dearborn, 2014). According to Investopedia (2021), social media is a computer-based technology that makes it easier to share concepts, ideas, and knowledge by establishing online communities and networks. Thus, social media is a computer-based technology that facilitates the sharing of information, opinions, and other forms of expression, and it allows for the creation of online communities and networks. There is some form of online communication, which is something that all of the many definitions have in common. Four characteristics common to then-current social media services were discovered after an examination of well-known social media literature:

1. A Web 2.0 internet-based application is social media.
2. UGC, or user-generated content, is what keeps the social media ecosystem alive.
3. Users create profiles for the website or app, which are created and updated by the social media firm.

4. By linking a user's profile with those of other people or groups, social media aid in the growth of online social networks (*Obar, Jonathan A and Wildman, Steve, (2015)*).

Typically, users access social media services using web-based desktop applications or by downloading apps for their mobile devices (e.g., smartphones and tablets). Users who interact with these electronic services build highly interactive platforms that allow people to share, co-create, discuss, participate in, and edit user-generated or self-curated content that is published online (Schivinski et al., 2020; Boyd and Ellison, 2007; Kietzmann & Hermkens, 2011). This indicates that social media has evolved significantly since its inception and has become an integral part of our daily lives, providing an interactive platform for users to share and engage with content.

According to Kirkpatrick (2011), the evolution of social media started in the late 1990s with uncomplicated platforms. The early social networking platforms were SixDegrees (1997), Classmates.com (1995), and GeoCites (1994). According to CBS News, SixDegrees is "widely regarded as the very first social networking site" since it allowed registered users to use "profiles, friends list, and school affiliations" (Ngak, 2011). Since then, there have been enormous advancements, and today there are countless social networking sites that were either created for local usage, specific purposes, or global use. The following 13 categories of social media are included in social media, according to marketing and social media experts:

- Blogs (e.g. Huffington Post, Boing Boing)
- Business networks (e.g. LinkedIn, XING)
- Collaborative projects (e.g. Wikipedia, Mozilla)
- Enterprise social networks (e.g. Yammer, Socialcast)

- Forums (e.g. Gaia Online, IGN Boards)
- Microblogs (e.g. Twitter, Tumblr)
- Photo sharing (e.g. Flickr, Photobucket)
- Products/services review (e.g. Amazon, Elance)
- Social bookmarking (e.g. Delicious, Pinterest)
- Social gaming (e.g. Mafia Wars)
- Social network sites (e.g. Facebook, Google+)
- Video sharing (e.g. YouTube, Vimeo)
- Virtual worlds (e.g. Second Life, Twinity)

*(Aichner, Thomas and Jacob, Frank H, 2015)*

The fastest-growing web application in the twenty-first century is thought to be social media, and technological development is supporting this rapid growth (Heyam, 2014). It has provided immense benefits to mankind and continues to do so. As a result, its significance for communication cannot be understated.

### **2.2.1 Importance of Social Media Technologies**

Comparing social networks to traditional websites, there are many benefits. One of the key benefits is the potential for swiftly reaching a massive audience. By paying contributions in the beginning, this might be boosted. Direct interaction with social networking users and subsequent comments are additional advantages (Reuben, 2008). By doing this, businesses or organisations can better understand their clients or candidates while also enhancing the services they offer to them. Each post also demonstrates how engaging it is by how many people have seen, commented on, and shared it. Traditional websites are preferable in this regard for a more thorough

presentation of the business and goods. The potential for obtaining unfavourable comments, which can spread quickly and be detrimental (Brech et al, 2017; Felix, Rauschnabel & Hinsch, 2017), is one of the drawbacks of social media. Social media usage is linked to the most recent technological developments. As an illustration, virtual reality (VR) allows a fully immersive infotainment experience. It has even just begun to provide users with the opportunity to connect to motion sensors and interact with items displayed on the screen (Laurell, Sandström, Berthold, and Larsson, 2019). High-end VR developers are striving to fully utilise this new method of content presentation; Facebook and HTC both launched development efforts for VR headsets in this direction, the Oculus Rift and HTC Vive, respectively. HEIs are using chatbots more frequently now than ever before (Moore and Caudill, 2019). Chatterbots, also known as chatbots, are computer programmes that mimic human interaction and act as virtual assistants. They can communicate verbally or by text messages, and they can be included into a variety of messaging platforms to respond to the most frequent inquiries from kids. Initially, colleges mainly employed chatbots for straightforward tasks to assist students in particular subjects, but more and more institutions are trying to use chatbots more extensively for a variety of uses (Adeola, Hinson, and Evans, (2020); Ukpabi, Aslam, and Karjaluoto,(2019)). Thus, highlighting the benefits and potential drawbacks of social media and how it is evolving with new technologies.

### **2.3 Social Media's Role in Branding**

Social media offers institutions a singular opportunity to build their brands, adding value to their businesses by fostering brand recognition (awareness), brand reputation, and brand loyalty.

### 2.3.1 Brand Awareness

"Brand awareness" is the capacity to memorise and remember a brand. Brand awareness is regarded as the initial step toward brand knowledge and attitude, which provide a comprehensive picture of the nature of the product. According to Aaker (1996), brand awareness may be examined from three distinct perspectives, including recognition, recall, initial recall, and dominant, and he also adds that consumers are only interested in recalling the brand name.

Strengthening the brand's existence in consumers' memory and, in turn, influencing those consumers' associations and decision-making processes with regard to a particular brand, is the most significant benefit for businesses in increasing brand awareness. Social media offers businesses an efficient way to raise brand awareness by exposing their products to a large number of consumers. Social media activities go beyond only disseminating marketing messages; they also strengthen relationships with consumers and serve as a crucial tool for building, consolidating, and maintaining brand recognition (Tiago & Verssimo, 2014).

As a result, educating and interacting with customers through an active and integrated brand presence on social media can build brand awareness and increase brand recognition and recall (Hutter, Hautz, Dennhardt, & Füller, 2013; Tsimonis & Dimitriadis, 2014). Businesses can post real-time product reviews and opinions on social media, raising visibility and interest in a novel and simple method (Berger & Milkman, 2012). From this perspective, social media definitely represents a technique to expose consumers to the brand and create brand awareness. Brand awareness comes from everything that causes customers to encounter the brand. Because of this, businesses are actively involving their clients in their social media marketing plans.

As a result, brand awareness will increase the more actively businesses use and manage social media.

Brands should be consistent in their style of communication on different social media platforms, while customizing the content to match the characteristics of each platform (Pozin 2014, 1). The communication should be consistent in visual and textual style. According to Perkins (2014), consistency in the colors which are used on social media “will help consumers become familiar with your brand”. In other words, visual consistency helps in creating brand recognition, with the assumption that the colors match to the overall brand visuals. Furthermore, social media provides a significant opportunity for businesses to increase brand awareness by reaching a large audience, building relationships with consumers, and customizing content to match the characteristics of each platform. Consistency in visual and textual style across platforms, encouraging engagement and dialogue with customers, and tracking and measuring the impact of social media activities are key factors for successful social media marketing efforts in raising brand awareness.

### **2.3.2 Brand Reputation**

Brand reputation is a significant asset for businesses due to its connection to consumers' long-term opinions and relationships with a brand. Brand reputation is the perception that customers have of a company's previous performance, outcomes, and expectations for the future. This perception influences customers' attitudes and behaviour.



Social media is an excellent tool for communicating with different stakeholder groups, therefore it can be utilised to project the desired image and enhance the reputation of the business.

By sharing material and facilitating interactions between brands and customers as well as among consumers, businesses may build and enhance their brand reputation by utilising social media as a potent marketing and communication tool. Consumer preferences and decisions are now influenced by social media, which is "a real, trustworthy voice that resonates with customers" (Jin, 2012). In this context, numerous studies have demonstrated that social media can enhance brand reputation if businesses use and manage it actively as a complementary and integrated component of their communication mix.

The uniqueness and benefit of new media in the context of establishing reputations is that they can enable the development of close relationships with the engaged groups of recipients; the establishment of such a group forces transparency and necessitates an open, honest dialogue that provides the opportunity to increase stakeholder trust. Not only in the framework of building the desired reputation, but also in the context of defending it from new dangers, is social media use essential and justifiable. It comes up that the growth of contemporary media is to blame for the multiplicity of reputation danger. One incorrect rumor or one unfavorable remark from a disgruntled client is all it takes to start a huge avalanche of unfavorable remarks. A timely response on the same channel is required to defend the company's reputation from such attacks and their effects. It calls for a consistent presence in the media, their continuing observation, and the creation of quick-response systems.

### 2.3.3 Brand Loyalty

Businesses have been paying close attention to social media in recent years to see whether and how these new platforms might increase client loyalty. In fact, businesses may interact with their loyal customers on a variety of levels inside the social media ecosystem by building direct, personal relationships and providing distinctive, seamless customer experiences (Krishen, Berezan, Agarwal, and Kachroo, 2016). Using social media's networking, dialogue, and community-building elements, businesses may foster and boost brand loyalty. In particular, information generation, sharing, and social media responsiveness allow businesses to regularly communicate about their brands, build consumer-brand interactions, and minimise customers' efforts to learn more about them. As a result, brand loyalty rises. Businesses that use social media in an engaging, personalized, attentive, and responsive fashion are more likely to engage customers and increase brand loyalty, as previously mentioned by Raab et al. (2016). We can draw the conclusion that brand loyalty will increase if businesses use and handle social media more actively.

According to Montero Torres (2015), through social networking sites, brands may have direct conversations and interactions with individuals. This type of personal interaction may create and strengthen brand loyalty towards brands that are actively participating in conversations on social media. Pozin (2014) claims social media is very useful for creating and maintaining brand loyalty by managing the relationships with the users who are already customers of the brand.

Additionally, social media can be a powerful tool for increasing brand loyalty among customers. By building direct, personal relationships, providing distinctive and seamless customer experiences, and using social media for customer service and support, businesses can foster and boost brand loyalty. Thus, by encouraging

customers to become brand ambassadors, businesses can leverage word-of-mouth marketing to attract new customers and increase brand loyalty among existing ones.

## **2.4 Brand Identity**

Brand identity is described by Aaker (1996) as "the brand associations that corporations aim to generate in consumers' minds." In other words, brand identity is what a brand aspires to be, and the brand owner determines what that identity is. Aaker (1996) asserts that the desired brand associations that make up brand identity embody a brand promise and convey the brand's core values. The "benefits and experiences" that marketing efforts attempt to identify with a product in the minds of its present and potential consumers are referred to as "brand promise" (BusinessDictionary.com 2016). According to Aaker (1996), the goal of brand identity is to assist establish a relationship with the customer by getting them to consider the advantages of the brand.

Brand image and brand identity are not the same thing. While brand image refers to how customers actually view the brand, brand identity is defined by the brand's owner. What the brand's owner is aiming for as an image is brand identity? "Brand identity" refers to the organization's view of the brand (Kapferer, 2008).

We currently inhabit a civilization that is time poor but knowledge abundant. As a result, customers frequently become interested in a brand through its visual identity. People frequently establish impressions and perceptions about a brand before they even know who the company is and what it stands for. Because of this, the brand needs to have a strong visual presence in order to differentiate itself from the competition and win over clients.

In today's fast-paced and knowledge-rich society, customers often form impressions and perceptions about a brand before they even know who the company is and what it stands for. Therefore, a brand needs to have a strong visual presence in order to differentiate itself from the competition and attract customers. Aaker (1996) and Kapferer (2008) both stress the importance of a well-defined brand identity in order to create a strong and memorable brand image.

## **2.5 Brand Image**

Keller (2008) asserts that user profiles, purchase and usage contexts, personality, and values—including history, heritage, and experiences—make up a brand's image. Brand image of service brands is sometimes referred to as the "corporate image" (Keller, 1994). The traits that a customer believes a good or service has been called attributes (Keller 1993). According to Keller (1993), brand attitudes reveal how consumers feel about a brand. Benefits are things that "consumers think a product or service can do for them," according to Keller (1993).

Brand images are formed by customers, not by businesses, and cannot be created by businesses (Management Study Guide, 2016). However, businesses can attempt to change the brand's perception using marketing and brand building.

In the aggressive higher education market, institutions of higher learning are making significant investments to improve their brand image (Chapleo, 2005). According to Chapleo (2005), higher education institutions need to develop and/or maintain a distinctive image in order to stand out in the crowded global market. This emphasizes the need for institutions of higher learning to make significant investments to improve their brand image.

## 2.6 Social Media and Higher Education Institutions Branding

Few would contest that universities have long-standing reputations and have significant authority and value in both society and the economy. As the importance of the university's contribution to the economy rises, so does the use of commercial terminology and the adoption of branding and brand management strategies. How beneficial is brand-related activity to a university, though?

By taking into account the use and effects of social media inside the university sector, this study advances the body of literature on higher education branding. Commercial brands immediately reaped the rewards of Twitter's and Facebook's interactive communication features. The usage of social media by UK universities and how it affects a particular goal of higher education, particularly student recruitment.

Branding in higher education has been a topic of discussion since the 1990s. The higher education sector is now the focus of research on more sophisticated branding concepts, such as brand as a logo (Alessandri et al., 2006), image (Chapleo, 2007), brand awareness, brand identity (Lynch, 2006), brand meaning (Teh & Salleh, 2011), brand associations, brand personality (Opoku, 2005), and brand consistency (Ali-Choudhury et al., 2009). While branding and brand management strategies are becoming increasingly important in the higher education sector, there is a need for further research on the use and effects of social media in this context, particularly in relation to student recruitment.

As they discuss the competitive higher education market, Mazzarol, Soutar, and Sultan (2012) and Curtis, Wong, and others (2012) make the case for the value of image and reputation in framing a university's offering. Curtis, Wong, and others (2009) hypothesise that HEIs experience these market pressures in many different

countries. Empirical proof that a university benefits from having a defined brand direction is provided by Casidy (2013). According to her research, students' opinions about a university's brand orientation have a big impact on their satisfaction, loyalty, and post-enrolment communication behaviour. Online advertising is relatively cheap (Cox, 2010), and new research indicates that social media (wikis, blogs, and other content sharing) has changed from once being an afterthought to a phenomenon that can have a significant impact on a brand's reputation and, in some situations, survival. In particular, when consumers and brands collaborate to create content, this emphasis change from traditional brand communication to the usage of social /media frequently benefits the company and helps it reach out to new customers.

In addition to traditional forms of brand communication, online advertising and social media have become important tools for shaping a university's image and reputation. Cox (2010) notes that online advertising can be relatively cheap, and recent research suggests that social media platforms like wikis, blogs, and other content sharing tools have the potential to significantly impact a brand's reputation and even its survival. In particular, when consumers and brands collaborate to create content, it can change the emphasis from traditional brand communication to the use of social media, which can benefit the company and help it reach new customers.

While research indicates that businesses are confused of how to manage their social media strategy and ultimately produce great results, organisations are aware of the performance benefits of social media adoption and integration. The higher education sector is hardly an exception, with muddled social media marketing and inconsistent techniques that eventually limit the possibility of building relationships with prospective students. According to Asur and Huberman (2010), social media buzz on

Twitter can forecast future performance results. The higher education sector still needs to test such predictive and causal models.

Some HEI social media marketing communication practices, according to Fujita et al. (2017), include encouraging hashtags to produce pertinent content that encourages user participation, giving students and staff the chance to voice their opinions and jointly create meaning for the brand, aligning the institution's communications with student experiences, and delivering timely and relevant content. In turn, Araujo's study from 2018 shows that through Facebook, these methods support speedier and more engaging public exposure while also improving visibility and access to academic articles (Araujo, 2018).

It is important to note that these numerous studies also suggest that social media marketing communication practises can be used to improve relationships and build contact networks (Peruta & Shields, 2016), attract new students (Antunes, 2011), facilitate the development of personalized, interactive, and frequent contacts and calls (Assimakopoulos et al., 2017), contribute to value creation, and favour the rapid and inexpensive dissemination of services. Effect of interaction and vividness on user engagement in social media marketing therefore, it is reasonable to expect that HEI's social media presence could aid in enhancing both the brand's reputation and company performance. It is important to note that the effect of interaction and vividness on user engagement in social media marketing is an important factor for HEIs to consider.

## **2.7 Social Media Presence and Enrolment in Higher Education Institutions**

Social media is a particularly crucial instrument when it comes to recruitment efforts in the higher education industry. From a university's perspective, social media could



make the enrolment process more personable and welcoming by allowing for instant communication with a variety of stakeholders, including parents of applicants, current students, and representatives of companies that collaborate with the university.

Many higher education admissions experts agree that social media communication is particularly important during the enrolment stage because it personalises the candidates' experience of contacting the institution they have chosen, which is crucial in the current climate of fiercer competition. It is also appropriate to bring up research by Wilson (2013), which show that HEI admissions offices use social media primarily to approach potential candidates in a setting where they feel most comfortable. Among prospective students who fall under the category of the aforementioned digital natives, the rate of social media penetration is extraordinarily high. These are very tech-savvy individuals who are "immersed" in social media. The young generation of digital natives claims that social media profiles, such as Facebook fan pages, can give you a better idea of student life at a particular school or university, including information about the academic culture, atmosphere, attractions, etc., than other sources of information, which aids them in choosing the location where they will study and develop over the coming years. Potential students demand individualised contact and authenticity from schools/universities, regardless of the type of social platforms being used. This allows them to determine whether the institution is the perfect fit for them. In conclusion, the growing importance of social media as a solution should not be a surprise that applicants to HEIs frequently use the internet to research the colleges or universities they are interested in.

Studies by Asur and Huberman (2010) and Fujita et al. (2017) have highlighted the benefits of social media in the higher education recruitment process, including the ability to forecast future performance results, encourage user participation, align



communication with student experiences, and deliver timely and relevant content. Araujo's study (2018) also shows that through Facebook, these methods support faster and more engaging public exposure while also improving visibility and access to academic articles.

## **2.8 Effects of social media on Students in Higher Education Institutions**

Since the advent of social media networks, students' academic lives have taken on a new dimension, and numerous studies have confirmed that social media has both beneficial and bad effects on students in higher education.

Even though there are some schools of thought that believe social media is a hindrance to students' academic lives, such as Kuppaswamy and Narayan (2010), who claimed in their study that social networks divert students' attention and concentration away from learning and instead direct it toward non-educational activities like pointless and unnecessary chatting, there have been several studies conducted since that time whose findings are in direct opposition to this claim. For instance, the study "the impact of social networking on promoting education" by Jain, Verma, Verma, and Tiwari (2012) demonstrated that pupils can learn more by interacting with professors, other students, and outside sources. It is further supported by research from Arquero and Esteban (2013) and Selwyn (2007), both of which came to the conclusion that social media unquestionably creates new opportunities for student engagement in higher education because they are remarkably successful at bringing people together and facilitating the exchange of information.

Moreover, there are concerns about the negative effects of social media on students in higher education, studies suggest that social media can also have beneficial effects on students' academic lives when used in a responsible and balanced manner. Further

research is needed to understand how to best leverage the potential of social media to enhance student engagement and academic performance in higher education.

Social media, used as an educational tool, enhances learning by allowing both students and teachers to connect in novel and engaging ways, promoting a flexible form of learning. According to some, flexible learning gives people more options for what, when, and how they learn. It supports a variety of learning methods, including the widely used electronic learning method (E-learning). These findings make it obvious and undeniable that, since its inception, social media usage in the educational sector cannot be understated.

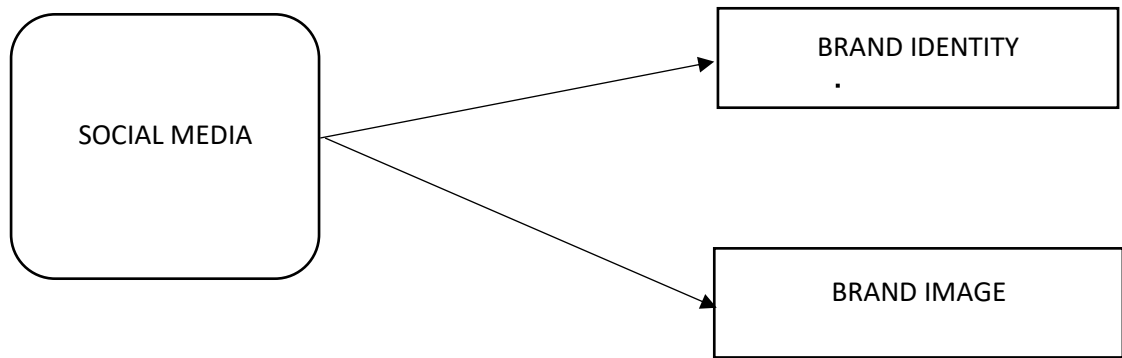
O'keeffe and Clakepearson (2011) listed cyberbullying, online harassment, sexting, Facebook depression, and privacy concerns as some of the challenges related with social networking while discussing the impact of social media on students' lives.

Studies by Kuppuswamy and Shankar (2010), Osharive (2015), Maya (2015), among others, have conclusively shown that social media can negatively affect students' academic lives if prudence is not used in its use.

However, there are challenges and potential negative effects associated with the use of social media in education, research suggests that if used appropriately, it can be an effective tool for enhancing learning and promoting engagement among students and teachers. It is important for educators and institutions to establish guidelines and policies for the use of social media in the classroom to ensure its safe and effective usage.

## 2.9 Conceptual Framework

Below is the conceptual framework depicting what the research seeks to do, that is, analysing how social media influences brand identity and brand image.



## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.0 Introduction

The study's methodology is the primary focus of this chapter. This section provides more information on the study's sample, sampling techniques, and research methodology. The study's data, how it was gathered, how it was analysed, and how valid and reliable it is, are all covered in further detail in this chapter. The methodology of a study is a crucial aspect of the research process as it determines the validity and reliability of the findings. In this study, we will examine the various methods used to gather and analyze data in studies related to the topic of interest.

#### 3.1 Research Approach

The research methodology is a process that is used in science to gather data for certain goals and purposes (Sugiyono, 2016). This study used a qualitative research methodology. Data from information gathering techniques including interviews, document analysis, and participant observations must be analysed in qualitative research (Creswell, 2013; Glesne, 2010). When conducting qualitative research, the researcher makes an effort to record what they observe, note or hears while out in the field (Denscombe, 2003). One of the key characteristics of qualitative research is the use of non-numerical data, such as interviews, observations, and documents, to gather information (Sugiyono, 2016). These methods are often used to gain an in-depth understanding of the subject matter and to capture the participants' perspectives and experiences (Creswell, 2013).

The study of Sugiyono (2016) provides an overview of the various types of qualitative research methods, including ethnography, case study, grounded theory, and

phenomenology. The author also discusses the strengths and weaknesses of each method, highlighting the importance of selecting the appropriate method for the research question.

Creswell (2013), also, provides a comprehensive overview of qualitative research methods and the different approaches that can be used. He also discusses the importance of aligning the research question and the chosen method, and the importance of considering ethical issues when conducting qualitative research.

Moreso, Glesne (2010), describes the different methods used in qualitative research and provides guidance on how to design, conduct, and evaluate qualitative research studies.

Furthermore, Denscombe (2003), covers the fundamental principles and practicalities of planning and conducting qualitative research, including issues of ethics, data collection, and analysis.

Hence, the importance of using qualitative research methodology in the field of study. It provides an overview of the key characteristics of qualitative research, including the use of non-numerical data, and the importance of aligning the research question with the chosen method. It also highlights the importance of considering ethical issues when conducting qualitative research

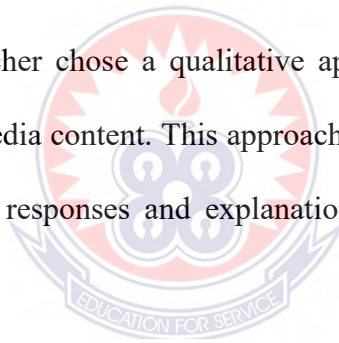
The qualitative technique also looks on the quality of interactions, pursuits, circumstances, or practices. Instead of comparing the outcomes of various treatments, this study method places more focus on holistic description or explaining in detail everything that occurs in a specific activity or circumstance (Fraenkel & Wallen 2000). The qualitative approach was chosen for this study because we wanted to

speak to experts on social media content who could provide more thorough responses and explanations to our concerns and questions.

One of the key benefits of using qualitative research is the ability to gain in-depth and rich data through techniques such as interviews, document analysis, and participant observations (Creswell, 2013; Glesne, 2010).

Moreover, qualitative research has been shown to be particularly useful in studying social media, as it allows for the exploration of the subjective experiences and perceptions of individuals and groups (Denscombe, 2003). This approach can provide valuable insights into the ways in which social media is used and the impact it has on various aspects of people's lives.

In this study, the researcher chose a qualitative approach to gain in-depth insights from experts on social media content. This approach allowed for the collection of rich data and more thorough responses and explanations to the research questions and concerns.



### **3.2 Research Design**

In essence, the research design acts as a guide for how the study will respond to its research questions (Patten & Newhart, 2017). It is the technique to carry out the study in a clear-headed and logical way in order to respond to the stated research question(s) through the gathering, interpreting, analysing and presenting of data. The University of Education, Winneba is the focus of this study, making it a case study according to Yin's definition of a case study, which is a narrative or description of anything, special or intriguing about a person, organisation, institution, programme, or event, among others (Yin, 2003). Case studies were employed in this study because they provided a useful means of penetrating and critically examining a few delicate

situations (Denscombe, 2003). Interviews with important respondents, including institution workers, particularly those directly involved in marketing communication and branding, would be conducted for the study. The researcher would also use additional tools, including questionnaires, document analysis of UEW secondary data, and observation of their logos, designs, and other visual cues.

Therefore, methodology and techniques used in this study are intended to respond to the research question in a clear-headed and logical way by using the case study approach, data collection techniques like interviews, questionnaires, document analysis, and observation. The qualitative research methodology was chosen to gather, interpret and analyze data with a focus on the quality of interactions, pursuits, and circumstances.

### **3.3 Sample**

A sample is a part of the study's population. Given that attending every university would be costly and time-consuming, it serves as a representation of the population. The University of Education, Winneba, a public university in Ghana, served as the source of the study's sample. This university was considered since it was close by and because of what was seen through frequent visits to their Facebook page.

Creswell (2003) says that the fact that the researcher is close to the institution(s) chosen as a case study makes it easy for people to take part in the research. In the field of research, the concept of sample plays a crucial role in the overall design of a study. A sample is a portion of the population that is chosen to represent the entire population in a research study (Babbie, 2017). The selection of a sample is important

as it allows researchers to make inferences about the population based on the observations and data collected from the sample (Cooper & Schindler, 2016).

### **3.4 Sampling Technique**

Sampling is the process of choosing a subset of a population of components, such as individuals, things, or events. The selection of the sample of participants in the study was one of the key steps in the research process. A sample is a subset of the population being studied, and the sampling technique used will affect the representativeness of the sample. Studies have used various sampling methods such as random sampling, stratified sampling, and convenience sampling (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). A study by Smith (2016), used a stratified random sampling technique to select a representative sample of participants from a university population.

Non-probability sampling technique will be used in this study. To choose people for the interviews, one type of non-probability sampling method called the purposive sampling would be employed. With the purposive sampling, the researcher uses their judgment to select factors for the sample population. According to Saunders (2007), the study can select respondents using the purposive sample technique who are best suited to provide answers to research questions. This decision was made since the case study focuses on how UEW uses social media to brand itself, making the UEW officials who operate in a specific area of responsibility the most appropriate interview subjects. These key respondents would provide very insightful responses to the researcher's questions during the interview.

In addition to that, the purposive sampling method was again used to select respondents for the study. In order to effectively analyze the impact of social media



branding on UEW, the students who are the main followers of UEW on Facebook were selected as respondents. The purposive sampling was appropriate because only students who follow UEW on Facebook were needed as respondents so they were selected on purpose. In contrast to a probability sampling technique which gives equal chance to everyone to be selected, a student selected using this technique could not have any idea what UEW does on Facebook. Therefore, it was appropriate to employ a purposive sampling method, specifically purposive sampling method, in order to have respondents who follow UEW on Facebook.

This method is particularly useful when the researcher has a clear idea of the population of interest and wants to select participants who are most likely to provide relevant and useful information. The use of purposive sampling in this study is appropriate as it allows the researcher to select respondents who are most likely to provide relevant and useful information about the impact of social media branding on UEW. This method is useful in situations where the researcher has a clear idea of the population of interest and wants to select participants who are most likely to provide relevant and useful information.

A hundred (100) students and five (5) social media managers of UEW were purposively chosen, as the sample size making the total of 105 sample size for the study.

### **3.5. Sources, Types of Data and Data Collection Methods**

#### ***3.5.1 Sources and Types of Data***

In this study, the researcher utilized both primary and secondary data collection methods to gather information relevant to the research objectives. Primary data, which is first-hand information collected directly from the field, was collected through

interviews with UEW social media managers and surveys administered to students of UEW. This approach was chosen because it provided a direct and in-depth understanding of the research topic from the perspectives of those most closely involved with the subject matter.

On the other hand, secondary data, which is already existing information collected from sources such as books, journals, and published and unpublished publications, was also utilized in this study. According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2016), secondary data can provide valuable background information and context for the study, and can also be used to triangulate primary data. In this case, secondary data sources were used to gain a comprehensive understanding of the research topic and to support the findings of the primary data collection methods. Overall, the use of both primary and secondary data collection methods in this study ensured that the research findings were comprehensive and reliable.

Since the research design is qualitative, the type of data collected was qualitative data. One way to collect data in qualitative research is through interviews and observations. According to Creswell (2018), qualitative data can include words, images, and other forms of data that provide a rich description of the phenomenon being studied.

In this study, qualitative data was collected through interviews with UEW social media managers and students, as well as observations of UEW's use of Facebook for branding. This data provided insight into the demographic characteristics of the respondents, UEW's understanding of branding, the specific ways UEW uses Facebook to brand itself, the target audience of UEW's social media branding, the purposes for the use of social media by UEW, and the impact of Facebook promotion on UEW's brand image and identity.

It is important to note that qualitative data is subject to researcher bias and interpretation. To mitigate this, the researcher should employ data analysis techniques such as content analysis and memo-writing, and use the triangulation of data sources such as multiple interviews and observations. (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

### ***3.5.2 Data Collection Methods and Instrument***

**Interviews:** The researcher in this study employed semi-structured interviews to obtain data from key respondents in order to gain in-depth understanding of the topic at hand.

Semi-structured interviews are a common method used in qualitative research, as they allow for the collection of rich data through open-ended questioning (Denscombe, 2003). This type of interview format allows interviewees to generate ideas and engage in in-depth discussion of the topics raised by the interviewer. The use of interview guides and recorders is also a common practice in conducting semi-structured interviews. Interview guides serve as a tool to help the researcher stay on track and ask the right questions, while recorders are used to capture the responses given by the interviewees.

The study also examines the specific aspects of the study that the researcher aimed to investigate through the use of semi-structured interviews. In this case, the study aimed to explore the impact of Facebook branding on the UEW as well as the purpose and target audience of UEW's social media branding.

The study employed a qualitative research design, which is suitable for exploring and understanding the subjective experiences and perspectives of individuals. The study aimed to understand the impact of social media branding on the UEW and the purpose

for the use of Facebook by UEW. In order to achieve this, the study used semi-structured interviews as the main data collection method. This method allows for in-depth and open-ended discussion of the topic, while still providing structure and guidance for the interviewee.

Denscombe (2003) supports the use of interviewing as a data collection method in qualitative research, stating that it allows the researcher to obtain information from a small number of respondents with extensive knowledge on the topic. Additionally, the semi-structured format allows for flexibility and the generation of new ideas and perspectives from the interviewee. The use of interview guides and recorders helped to ensure that the information collected was relevant and accurate.

The study also obtained consent from the respondents and obtained their permission to record the interviews. This is important for ensuring ethical standards in research, as well as providing a means to refer back to the original recordings for accuracy and clarity. The use of semi-structured interviews as the main data collection method in this study was a suitable and effective means for understanding the impact of social media branding on UEW and the purpose for the use of Facebook by UEW.

The use of interviews as a data collection method in qualitative research has been widely accepted. According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2016), interviews provide the opportunity for an interactive process of communication with participants. This allows for a deeper understanding of the participants' perspectives and experiences.

In addition, interviews reduce the incidence of non-responses compared to other data collection methods such as self-administered questionnaires (Creswell, 2014). Interviews also provide the researcher with the ability to probe further and seek

clarification on ambiguous or confusing responses, which can lead to a more accurate understanding of the participants' experiences (Kvale, 1996).

Furthermore, interviews allow for free expression by the participants, which can lead to a more in-depth understanding of the research topic. Creswell (2014) states that interviews allow participants to provide rich, detailed descriptions of their experiences, which can be difficult to obtain through other data collection methods.

Hence, interviews are an appropriate data collection method for this study as they provide the opportunity for an interactive process of communication with the respondents, reducing non-responses, enabling the researcher to seek clarity on ambiguous and confusing responses, and allowing the respondents to freely express themselves.

**Qualitative Surveys:** The study made use of qualitative survey, enabling the researcher to ascertain the reasons that informed the students' of UEW answers for the study. According to Creswell (2018), qualitative research often involves studying in a small number of individuals or cases in-depth and aims to understand the meaning and perspective of the participant. Also, per Kvale (1996), the goal of an interview in qualitative research is to gain understanding of the participants experience and perspective, rather than to simply gather information. Interviews can be conducted in person, over the phone or online. Interviews also allow the respondents to freely express themselves in ways they would not have otherwise been able to do in filling out questionnaires.

As highlighted by Groves et al. (2004), a qualitative survey aims to understand variations within a population, rather than counting the number of individuals with specific characteristics. Jansen (2010), also argues that qualitative surveys focus on

understanding the diversity of a topic of interest, rather than quantifying frequencies and means. This study aimed to understand the opinions and perspectives of students regarding the use of social media for branding by UEW. The researcher distributed questionnaires to a purposively selected group of students to gather valid opinions. In total, 105 questionnaires were filled and returned for analysis. The study did not focus on identifying the number of students using the UEW's Facebook platform but rather aimed to gather in-depth understanding of the students' perspectives on UEW branding.

**Observation:** The researcher also used observation as a data collection method. According to Kvale (1996), observation is a useful method for understanding the meaning and perspective of participants in a natural setting. During the period of the study, there was constant visit to the Facebook platforms of UEW. This was to ensure data collected reflected the true nature of the branding processes of UEW on Facebook. The Facebook page was closely monitored to observe the type and contents of posts as well as how the followers interacted with those posts.

### **3.6 Validity and Reliability of the Research**

Reliability in research refers to how well a study's findings can be replicated under same circumstances. A study with high reliability yields consistent findings each time it is carried out.

According to Trochim (2006), reliability is a crucial aspect of research as it ensures that the results of a study are not only accurate, but also able to be replicated by other researchers. Similarly, Kline (2015) states that reliability is important because it allows other researchers to test the validity of a study's findings by repeating the study using the same methods and procedures. In order to ensure reliability, researchers

often use multiple data collection methods, such as interviews and observations, to triangulate the data and provide a more comprehensive understanding of the research topic. Additionally, Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest that using a pilot study, member checking, and prolonged engagement with the research participants can also improve the reliability of qualitative research. Thus, the use of multiple data collection methods and reliability enhancing strategies can increase the confidence in the findings of a study.

Validity is a way to rate a research study's level of quality. The degree to which the results genuinely measure what they are supposed to assess is referred to as validity. A study's accuracy is referred to as its validity.

The concept of reliability and validity is important in research as it helps to ensure that the results obtained from a study are accurate and can be replicated. According to Trochim (2006), reliability is the extent to which a research study yields consistent and stable results over time. On the other hand, validity is a measure of the extent to which a research study accurately measures what it is supposed to measure (Trochim, 2006). In order to ensure reliability in a study, various methods can be employed such as pilot testing, repeated measurements, and inter-rater reliability (Polit & Beck, 2017). In this study, the researcher has acknowledged the importance of reliability and validity in the research process. The use of multiple data collection methods such as interviews, observation, and questionnaires, as well as the use of a purposively selected sample of participants, can help to ensure the reliability and validity of the study's findings.

To boost validity, documentation and interview techniques are integrated to provide various yet complementary data collection approaches (Denscombe, 2003). The

purpose of the interviews was to gather knowledge from the interviewees regarding social media branding in higher education institutions. The study deduced meaning from the responses and data collected from the respondents. From a different perspective, Saunders (2007) defines the validity of interviews in qualitative studies as the degree to which the researcher is able to access the experience and knowledge of the respondents and the extent to which the researcher is able to infer meaning from the language used by the respondents. The procedures used to obtain the data and the source of the data must be thoroughly examined for secondary data to be legitimate and dependable (Saunders, 2007). It was therefore noted that, incorporating multiple data collection methods, such as documentation and interviews, can help to increase the validity of a study by providing different perspectives and sources of information, as well as ensuring the legitimacy and dependability of the data.

Due to the research tools, the variety in the respondent's response rather than the tendency of the ones who often indicate common method bias (Mackenzie & Podsakoff, 2012). A few measures are taken in this study to avoid common method biases, as mentioned by Mackenzie and Podsakoff (2012). Interviewees who are knowledgeable and well-known in this field of study have been asked the interview questions. In order to make the questionnaire as straightforward as possible for the responders, all ambiguous concepts have been avoided. Similar to this, queries of the reflective recall variety have also been avoided.

### **3.7 Method of Data Analysis – Thematic analysis**

LeCompte and Schensul (1999) argue that data analysis is an ongoing process that should be conducted both in the field and after the researcher has left the field. This approach, known as in-the-field and out-of-field analysis, allows for a deeper



understanding and interpretation of the data collected. This approach is supported by Braun & Clarke (2006), who state that thematic analysis is an effective method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns or themes within data.

Thematic analysis is a popular method of qualitative data analysis that helps researchers understand research subjects in more detail. Boyatzis (1998) notes that thematic analysis is a type of qualitative analysis that researchers used to identify themes or patterns related to the data collected. In this study, the researcher used thematic analysis to group the data into appropriate themes in relation to the theoretical framework of the study. This method aided in critically examining the data collected in order to understand and present them as meaningful information for the study.

The study suggests that the use of in-the-field and out-of-field analysis, as well as thematic analysis, can be effective in gaining a deeper understanding and interpretation of the data collected. LeCompte and Schensul (1999), Braun & Clarke (2006) and Boyatzis (1998) all support the use of these methods to analyze qualitative data.

### **3.8 Presentation of Data**

According to Miles and Huberman (1994), data presentation is an important aspect of qualitative research as it allows for the researcher to communicate their findings in a clear and meaningful way. The use of detailed explanations, narrations, quotations and descriptions is a common way to present data in qualitative research as it allows for the researcher to provide context and meaning to the data. Additionally, charts and graphs can also be used to present data in a visual and easy-to-understand format.

Furthermore, Tufte (2001) also emphasized the importance of using charts and graphs in data presentation, stating that it allows for the researcher to effectively communicate complex information in a simple and clear manner. Moreover, the researcher can also use data visualization techniques to help readers understand the data better. In this way, the use of detailed explanations, narrations, quotations and descriptions, as well as charts and graphs, can help the researcher present their findings in a clear and meaningful way, making it easier for readers to understand and interpret the research.

As a result, the analyzed data for this study, was presented using detailed explanations, narrations, quotations and descriptions. Charts and graphs were also used to represent data with interpretations and discussions.

### **3.9 Ethical Consideration**

One key study in this area is the work of Orb, Eisenhauer and Wynaden (2001), who argue that concepts of relationship and power are central to qualitative research. They suggest that researchers need to be aware of the power dynamics at play in the research setting, and that building trust with participants is crucial for gaining access to meaningful information.

Other studies have also emphasized the importance of ethics in qualitative research. The researcher in this study, recognized the importance of ethical principles in guiding the study by introducing themselves to the participants, explaining the purpose of the study, and assuring them that their identities would be kept confidential. This helped to build trust and willingness to share their views and perceptions, which facilitated access to information.

Additionally, the researcher also mentions about the process of data analysis in which she transcribes the conversations, coded their responses and generated themes from the codes and also replaced their names with pseudo names in the study. This is a common practice in qualitative research to ensure the anonymity and confidentiality of the participants, as well as to maintain the trust built with them.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter details the findings and analysis of data gathered from the field. It comprises analysis, presentation, interpretation and discussion of data collected with reference to the objectives of the study. The analysis is qualitative therefore it is presented using descriptive writing and charts.

The findings with respect to the questions are presented in three main thematic areas after the demographic characteristics;

1. How is UEW using Facebook to brand itself?
2. What are the reasons or purposes for UEW's use of social media?
3. What is the brand image and identity presented by UEW on Facebook?

#### 4.1 RQ1. How is UEW Using Facebook to Brand Itself?

Kapferer (2004) is of the view that branding consists in transforming the product category which requires a corporate long-term involvement, high level of resources and skills. (Ryan S. Baker & Hare, 2015), conclude that social media can be an effective tool for universities to engage with their audiences, build relationships and promote their brand. A case study by (Tussy & Longo, 2015) also found that the university's Facebook page helped to build a sense of community among students and prospective students and that the page was an effective tool for promoting the university's brand and recruiting new students. The authors also found that the university's Facebook page helped to create a sense of community among students and prospective students and that the page was an effective tool for promoting the university's brand and recruiting new students. (Tussy & Longo, 2015).

It is clear from the above literature that universities can use Facebook as a tool for branding. Thus, can be used to create a sense of community, to promote their brand and to recruit new students. Additionally, Facebook is a powerful tool for building relationships with students and alumni which can be used to promote the university's brand.

The findings have also revealed that the target audience of UEW's Facebook activities includes the university community, students, potential students, alumni, faculty members and the general public. The following information was gathered using online observation as a data collection method. In order to collect the data, the researcher visited UEW's Facebook platform to observe how posts about the school were made and thus, the following themes were realized from the data on how the university brands itself on Facebook.

Overall, the study suggests that branding is a complex process that requires a long-term commitment and resources, and that social media can be an effective tool for promoting brands in higher education institutions.

#### ***4.1.1 Brand awareness through text and images***

Per Aaker (1996), brand awareness refers to the degree to which consumers are familiar with a particular brand and can recognize it.

During the online observation of the UEW Facebook page, it was noticed that there were continuous posts about admission processes, programmes and faculties. These posts stated the admission timeline, the links to apply and the requirements as well as the various faculties and their respective programmes. The university is seen branding itself through brand awareness tactics seen in posts about admissions. This study

supports the idea that universities can use social media platforms like Facebook to create brand awareness and attract new students.

According to Paulsen (1990), enrollment trends in institutions are determined by their capacity to draw students to their programs. In an effort to attract more students, many higher education institutions have created new promotional materials for their institutions, increased student recruitment budgets, and spent more time, money, and other resources on marketing research and recruitment initiatives that not only promote the institutions' academic programs but also improve their reputation. The goal of these students recruiting tactics is to teach potential students about the institution and its programs in order to help them make decisions about which institution to attend.

Additionally, the goal of these recruitment strategies is to attract a diverse group of students including those from underrepresented groups such as women, physically challenged individuals and students from underprivileged areas. This research emphasizes the importance of effective recruitment strategies in determining enrollment trends in higher education institutions.

Hossler, Bean and Associates (1990) suggest that the numbers of students who enroll in universities and their student recruitment tactics are strongly correlated. The ability of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) adopts successful recruitment methods for luring domestic and international students is a critical aspect in determining the success and long-term survival in today's global education sector as highlighted by Naidoo and Wu (2011). Thus, in order to draw students to their institutions at the start of each academic year, many HEIs launch student recruitment drives and employ a variety of student recruiting tactics. Research in this area has also found that HEIs

employ a wide range of student recruiting tactics, including open days, campus visits, information evenings, school visits, and recruitment fairs (Botha & Van der Berg, 2013). These recruitment drives are often launched at the start of each academic year in order to attract new students. The suggests that these recruitment tactics can be effective in drawing students to institutions and increasing enrollment numbers. It is also important to note that universities must also focus on ensuring that the information provided is compelling enough to draw in a sufficient number of students with the desired academic standing.

The schools that understand the present generation of potential students, learn from past mistakes, occasionally rely on their gut feelings, and are eager to improve their methods are the most successful at recruiting new students (Lindbeck & Fodrey, 2010). Lukic & Lukic (2016) posits that it is important to improve student recruiting tactics utilized by a faculty or the university as a whole in order to draw in more students to the institution. Hossler's (1999) advice is that research and a strong marketing plan are central to successful admissions recruitment because they enable the admissions office staff reach prospective students when they are ready to make decisions about colleges and universities.

Furthermore, Hossler, Bean and Associates (1990) suggest that the numbers of students who enroll in universities and their student recruitment tactics are strongly correlated. Naidoo and Wu (2011) also highlighted the importance of successful recruitment methods in determining the long-term survival of higher education institutions in today's global education sector. Thus, it is important for higher education institutions to adopt effective student recruitment tactics in order to attract and retain students.



The study indicates that effective communication strategies are crucial for institutions to effectively connect with potential students. Baker, Irani and Abrams (2011) argue that it is essential for an institution to evaluate its current communication strategies and develop new, more engaging ways to reach potential students. This idea is supported by Junco (2012), who posits that social media, particularly Facebook, plays a role in shaping students' perceptions of their universities and how they interact with them.

Posts shared on the University of Education, Winneba's Facebook page:

**Figure 1: Facebook post by the university on admission**

Researcher's field data: *Facebook post, 2022*





**Figure 2: Facebook post by the university on accommodation**



Researcher's field data: *University of Education, Winneba posted on January 18, 2023.*

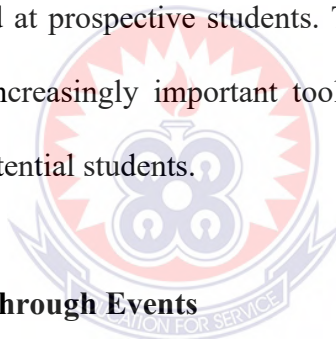
**Figure 3: Facebook post by the university on admission**



Researcher's field data: *University of Education, Winneba posted on January 4, 2023.*

With the rise of social media, universities and colleges have found new opportunities to connect with potential students and inform them about the application process and program choices. According to Kelleher and Sweetser (2012), admissions and recruitment departments make use of social media as a means to communicate with younger audiences. Their study of social media adoption by university communicators highlights the growing importance of social media in university admissions.

Barnes and Mattson (2009) conducted a report on the increasing use and effectiveness of social media in recruiting. They found that admissions offices and student interest in social media recruiting is growing, and that this trend shows no signs of slowing. Cappex.com (2010) also reported a significant increase in the use of social media in college admissions aimed at prospective students. These findings suggest that social media is becoming an increasingly important tool for universities and colleges to reach and engage with potential students.



#### **4.1.2 Brand reputation through Events**

Fombrun, (2010) highlights the importance of reputation management as a strategic tool for companies to build and maintain a positive reputation. The literature suggests that brand reputation is a crucial component of a brand's overall success, and it is closely related to other key brand metrics such as brand awareness, customer loyalty, and sales.

Additionally, Gray, et al. (2002) highlights the importance of reputation management as a strategic tool for companies to build and maintain a positive reputation. Research in this area has identified several key elements that contribute to a brand's reputation. These include the level of quality and reliability of a brand's products or services (Fombrun & Van Riel, 2004), the visual and verbal elements of a brand, such as its

logo, slogan, and messaging, that create a consistent and recognizable image (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000), the values and mission that a brand represents and communicates to its target audience (Fombrun & Shanley, 1990), the overall experience that customers have with a brand, including customer service and support (Balmer & Greyser, 2008), and the brand's commitment to ethical and sustainable practices (Fombrun, 2010).

Overall, the study suggests that reputation management is a vital tool for companies to effectively build and maintain a positive reputation in the eyes of customers, stakeholders, and the wider public. Hence, UEW brands itself on Facebook with updates about extra-curricular activities carried out in and around campus. By so doing, UEW builds a strong and continuous reputation for itself. During the observation of the Facebook page, the activities seen included;

- **Chemistry Festival:** An event was arranged for selected Junior High Schools (JHS) in the Effutu Municipality. During the celebration, the processes of akpeteshie (local gin) distillation, gari production, and palm oil production were demonstrated for the students to observe on the festival grounds.

**Figure 4: Facebook post by the university on Chemistry Festival**



Researcher's field data: *University of Education, Winneba posted on November 17th, 2022.*

- **STEM Training Workshop:** This was designed to inform Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) teachers at selected basic schools in the Effutu Municipality.

**Figure 5 Facebook post by the university on Stem Training Workshop.**



Researcher's field data: *University of Education, Winneba posted on December 17th, 2022.*



- **Windy Kids' Talent Academy:** This event is organized by Windybae campus radio with the aim of discovering and promoting the potential of young individuals.

**Figure 6: Facebook post by the university on admission**

**University of Education, Winneba** ✓  
8 Sep 2022 · 🌐

Windy Kids' Talent Academy is the newest talent nurturing event on the social calendar of the people of Effutu. It is an event dedicated to unearthing, nurturing, and showcasing the talents of kids in Effutu and beyond. Participants will be drawn from kids between the ages of 7 and 15 years who will showcase talents in singing, dancing, and playing musical instruments just to mention a few.

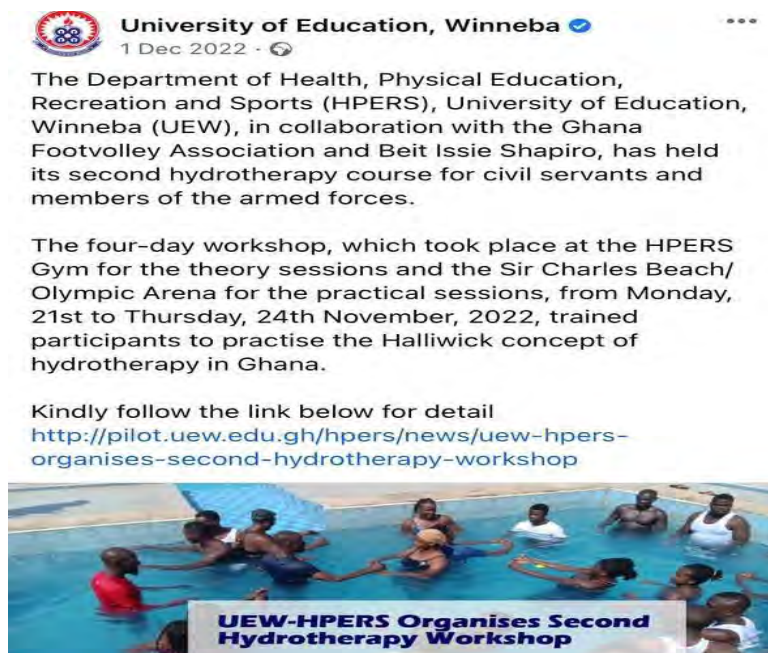
Windy Kids' Talent Academy will present a myriad of opportunities for the business and commercial sector by enabling access to a market segment that has not been properly analyzed and explored. The event is led and organized by a team of professionals from Radio Windy Bay with support from partner departments in the School of Creative Arts, University of Education, Winneba.

Together, we'll persevere against the Coronavirus scourge!  
[#UEW](#)



Researcher's field data: *University of Education, Winneba posted on September 8th, 2022.*

**Figure 7: Facebook post by the university on admission**



Researcher's field data: *University of Education, Winneba posted on December 1st, 2022.*

These activities have a positive effect on UEW's branding as they demonstrate that they care not only for the academic well-being of their students, but also positively impact young people in society with regards to their social lives, health, and talents among other areas.

#### ***4.2.3 Brand loyalty through Photos***

The use of photos on Facebook has been found to play a role in the branding efforts of organizations. Tucker (1964) conducted a study and found that even in situations where there is no prior consumer knowledge about the available brands, growth of brand loyalty can still occur. This growth is driven by search behavior, which ultimately leads to the development of brand loyalty despite the virtual identity of the brands. This highlights the significance of the use of photos on Facebook as a tool for building brand loyalty. UEW leverages this aspect of Facebook to brand itself

effectively. By utilizing photos, the university can showcase its various activities, events, and facilities, thus creating a positive image in the minds of its target audience. This, in turn, contributes to the growth of brand loyalty and overall branding efforts.

Thus, the use of photos on Facebook as a tool for branding is supported by the findings of Tucker's (1964) study.

UEW uses Facebook's photo feature to create a positive first impression of its campus and facilities. The school showcases images of its picturesque and peaceful environment, which entices potential students and visitors even before they set foot on campus. In addition to photos, UEW also uses Facebook to promote its campus accommodation and hostel facilities, as well as to share season's greetings and well wishes with its community.

**Figure 8. A Cross - section of photos on the University's page.**







Source: UEW Facebook platform, 2022\2023

#### 4.2 RQ2. What are the Reasons for UEW’s use of social media?

According to Aakar (1996), the goal of a brand identity is to establish a relationship with the customer by getting them to consider the advantages of the brand. Customers frequently become interested in a brand through its visual identity. The use of social media, including Facebook, can also play a key role in building brand identity, according to Uzunboylu (2016). The study found that universities can leverage social media to enhance student engagement and learning. This is achieved by providing students with a platform to communicate and collaborate with their peers and instructors, and to participate in class activities and discussions. The use of social media, therefore, has the potential to improve the brand identity of universities, by strengthening their relationship with students and increasing engagement.



The use of social media by universities has become a growing trend in recent years. As technology continues to evolve, universities have increasingly embraced social media as a means to achieve their goals and objectives. A study by Aakar (1996) found that a key goal of a brand identity is to establish a relationship with the customer by highlighting the advantages of the brand.

Another study by Baker and Williams (2015) explored the use of social media in support of student learning, engagement, and collaboration. The study found that social media can play a crucial role in supporting students in their academic journey. It can be used to share information, knowledge, and expertise between students and faculty, and provide opportunities for professional development and networking.

Additionally, a study by Uzunboylu (2016) found that social media can be used to improve student engagement and learning by providing students with a platform to communicate and collaborate with their peers and instructors. This supports the idea that social media can play a valuable role in supporting student success in higher education.

This study suggests that universities should have a clear strategy and objectives when using social media. They should consider the many ways in which social media can be used to support their goals and objectives, including recruitment, communication and engagement, marketing and branding, student support, and research and collaboration.

An interview with a key informant, Mr. Desmond, who is a social media manager, said that UEW chose Facebook to brand itself because Facebook has a large number of users.

*“These days, young people don’t read graphic. If we post in the graphic, our target audience will not see it because they will be in their rooms with their phones... so we use Facebook more because that is where our students and incoming students are”, he said.*

Rose and Morstyn (2013) reported that social media is where the majority of people aged 12-25 will learn about things, via a post made by a friend, an advertisement on the side or just an instant message. This argument by Rose and Morstyn is in line with the recommendation of Kim, Sin, and Tsai (2014) that social media sites should be treated as important sources of information.

Rose and Morstyn (2013) conducted a study on the role of social media in information dissemination and found that for the age group of 12-25, social media was the primary source for learning about things, whether it was through a post by a friend, an advertisement, or an instant message. This finding aligns with the recommendation made by Kim, Sin, and Tsai (2014) that social media should be considered as an important source of information.

The authors highlight the significance of social media in reaching younger audiences and the potential for organizations to utilize social media as a marketing tool. They also emphasize the importance of using social media effectively to engage and communicate with the target audience. This is particularly relevant for businesses and organizations looking to reach younger generations who are heavy users of social media.

These studies provide insight into the impact of social media on information dissemination and the role it plays in the decision-making process of young people. They also highlight the importance of using social media effectively in marketing and communication strategies to reach and engage the target audience.

#### 4.2.1 Student Recruitment and Support

The use of social media by universities as a tool for recruitment and marketing is a growing trend in the higher education sector. UEW leverages social media as a means to connect with prospective students and disseminate information related to the university. It uses social media to provide information about academic programs, admission procedures, and scholarships.

Studies have shown that social media is an effective way to reach out to potential students. Social media provides universities with an opportunity to reach out to potential students and provide them with the information they need to make informed decisions about their education.

**Figure 9: Facebook post by the University on Enrollment**



Source: UEW Facebook platform, 2022\2023

#### 4.2.2 Communication and Engagement

The use of social media by universities to communicate with their students, alumni and other members of the community is a topic that has received increasing attention in the field of higher education. According to Uzunboylu (2016), social media is an effective tool for building community and engagement among university students and alumni. The author's findings support the study of UEW, that by sharing news and updates, answering questions and responding to comments on social media, they are able to build a sense of community and engagement among students and alumni.

**Figure 10: Facebook post by the University on campus news**

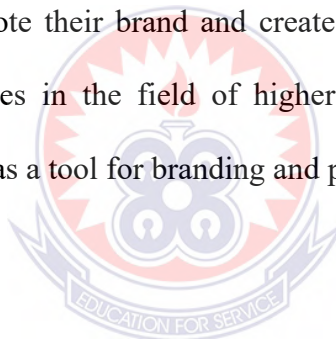


Source: UEW Facebook platform, 2022\2023

### 4.2.3 Marketing and Branding

UEW use social media to promote their brand and create a positive image of the university. This includes sharing information about the university, such as upcoming events and achievements of students, staff, and faculty, as well as showcasing student life and highlighting academic programs and research.

Furthermore, Uzunboylu (2016) found that institutions use social media to promote their brand by sharing information about the university, including upcoming events, achievements of students, staff, and faculty, as well as showcasing student life and highlighting academic programs and research. This helps to create a positive image of the university and attract potential students and other stakeholders. The use of social media by UEW to promote their brand and create a positive image aligns with the findings of several studies in the field of higher education, which highlights the potential of social media as a tool for branding and promoting universities.





**Figure 11: Facebook post by the University on upcoming events**

University of Education, Winneba ✓  
6d · 🌐

The Inter-University Conference for Doctoral Studies in collaboration with the School of Graduate Studies, UEW is organising a three-day Seminar to cover the needs of students who are on Ph.D. programmes or who are offered admission into Ph.D. programmes in the various Departments of Faculties and Schools at the University of Education, Winneba (UEW). The Seminar is scheduled to take place at UEW as follows:

Kindly follow the link below for more information  
<https://www.uew...> See more

**3 DAYS SEMINAR**  
PROMOTING STAFF DEVELOPMENT THROUGH COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH AND QUALITY TEACHING IN EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA | IUCCS | INTER-UNIVERSITY CONFERENCE FOR DOCTORAL STUDIES  
WORKING IN COLLABORATION WITH THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

VENUE: JOSEPHUS ANANMOAN-MENSAH CONFERENCE CENTRE  
DATE: Tuesday (19th) - Thursday (21st) January 2023  
TIME: 8:30AM - 5:00PM (DAILY) 8:30-10:30AM

104 likes · 1 share

Like Comment

Source: UEW Facebook platform, 2022\2023

#### 4.2.4 Research and Collaboration

According to a study by Chen, Liang, and Liang (2018), social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter can play a crucial role in promoting research and collaboration among academic communities. The authors found that social media can be used as a tool for researchers to disseminate information about their work, network with other researchers, and participate in collaborative initiatives. Similarly, researchers can use social media to stay up-to-date with current developments in their field and participate in online discussions and debates.

Additionally, a study by Huang and Li (2020) explored the use of social media in academic research and found that it can serve as a powerful tool for disseminating research findings, fostering interdisciplinary collaborations, and promoting the impact of research. The authors concluded that universities and researchers should take advantage of the opportunities provided by social media to promote research and collaboration in their fields.

Overall, this study suggests that social media can play a crucial role in promoting research and collaboration among academic communities, and universities such as UEW can leverage social media to support their research and academic endeavors.

**Figure 12: Facebook post by the University on the promotion of research**



Source: UEW Facebook platform, 2022\2023

#### **4.3 RQ3. What is the brand image and identity presented by UEW on Facebook?**

The concept of brand image and identity of a university is crucial in creating a recognizable image, differentiating the university in a crowded market, and attracting student enrollment and top talent. Kim, Park, and Kim (2019) provided a clear understanding of how a strong brand image and identity can impact a university positively. These findings can provide guidance for universities looking to establish or improve their brand image and identity.

The study by Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2005) is significant in highlighting the importance of brand identity in higher education institutions. The authors emphasize the need for a clear, consistent, and compelling brand identity to stand out in a crowded market and to achieve success in the long run. They found that a strong brand image and identity can increase student enrollment and attract top talent to the university.

The notion that brands images are created by customers and not businesses is also supported by other literature in the field (Management Study Guide, 2016). In the case of UEW, students and potential students play a crucial role in creating the brand image of the university through their perceptions and experiences.

To better understand the impact of UEW's Facebook promotion on its image and identity, the research set out to interview both key persons and students. The results of the key person interviews provided insights into the overall impact of the Facebook promotion on UEW's image and identity.



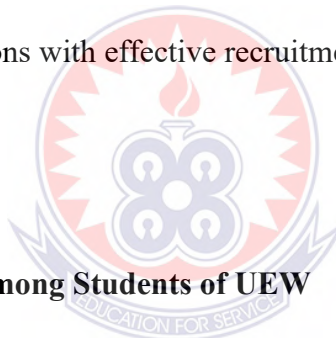
Facebook aids the institution in spreading awareness among a sizable population worldwide, increasing the demand for its services. A study by Martin (2015) shows that, regardless of size or geographic location, institutions place a high value on social media during the recruitment process. His study also showed that social media were an everyday part of the lives of today's college and university students. He further stated that social spaces like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram were effective places for colleges and universities to reach prospective students.

In the highly competitive higher education market, Facebook has emerged as a valuable tool for universities to gain a competitive advantage. The increasing number of tertiary education institutions in countries such as Ghana (NAB, 2018) has made it crucial for universities to effectively compete for students in the recruitment market. The significance of effective recruitment strategies has been acknowledged by scholars such as Maringe (2006) and Beneke and Human (2010), who highlight the need for higher education institutions to be proactive in attracting students.

In line with this, Facebook has been shown to be an effective tool for universities in gaining a competitive edge. By leveraging the platform, UEW has positioned itself as a highly sought-after teacher education university in Africa. The university can use Facebook to share information about its programs and achievements, connect with potential students and other members of the community, and build a strong and recognizable brand image. The impact of Facebook on UEW's image and identity can be assessed by surveying both key persons and students, as noted in previous study (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2005).

Moreso, Facebook facilitates the public acceptance of UEW's position as Ghana's and sub-Saharan Africa's top institution for teacher education. It helps UEW develop a sense of identity and distinction and elevates UEW's public image. UEW has an advantage over its competitors due to its brand identity and image on Facebook.

This idea is supported by several studies in the field of higher education marketing. Beneke and Human (2010) found that changes in the competitive environment have forced higher education institutions to become more proactive in student recruitment, and that effective recruitment strategies are key to success in the market. Similarly, Maringe (2006) argues that, given the intense competition in higher education delivery, higher education institutions must compete for students in the recruitment markets and that institutions with effective recruitment strategies are more likely to be successful.



#### **4.3.1 Use of Facebook among Students of UEW**

The study conducted on the use of Facebook by University of Education, Winneba (UEW) highlights the significance of social media in promoting the university and its brand image. The results indicate that the majority of the respondents use Facebook as a source of information about the university. They follow UEW's Facebook page to stay updated on internal information and events on campus, student life, and school information. Moreover, the respondents expressed interest in joining a social media site specifically for admitted students.

Furthermore, the study reveals that respondents share posts about the university on their Facebook profiles, indicating that UEW's social media presence is being spread through word of mouth. However, the study also found that a large percentage of

students were unaware of the university's social media presence, indicating a need to bring greater awareness to the university's presence on social media.

These findings align with the studies of DiAna (2014) and the importance of social media in promoting a university's brand image and increasing student engagement. The results suggest that UEW should continue to use Facebook as a platform to promote its brand and engage with its students, as well as make efforts to increase awareness of its social media presence among students.

#### **4.3.2 Impact of UEW's brand identity on enrollment**

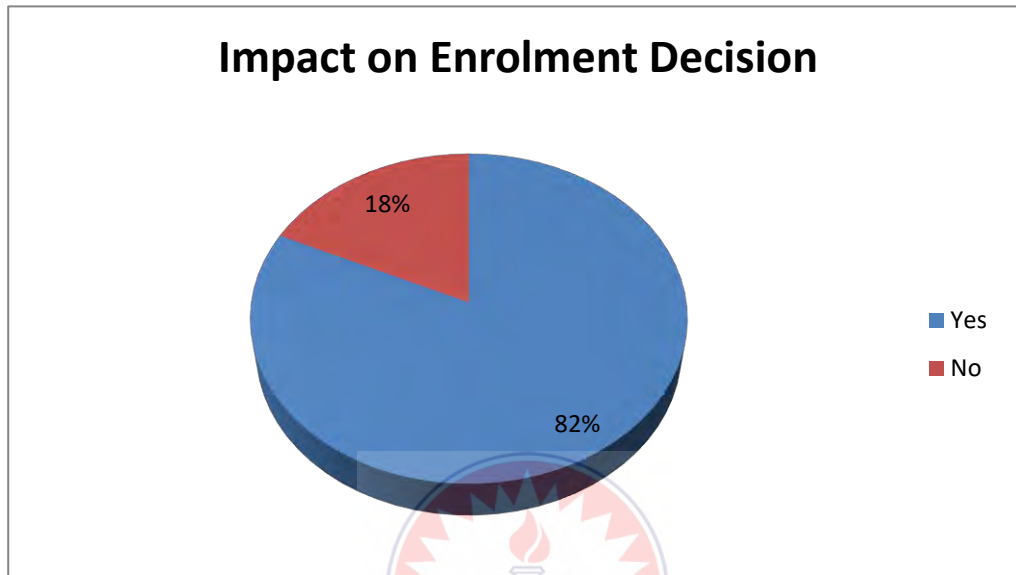
The role of universities in providing education to students is central to their purpose, and it is dependent on student enrollment. In order to understand the impact of university branding on enrollment, it is necessary to examine the relationship between the two.

Studies have shown that a strong brand image and identity can increase student enrollment and attract top talent to the university (Kim, Park, & Kim, 2019). Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2005) also emphasize the importance of creating a clear, consistent, and compelling brand identity for universities to stand out in a crowded market and achieve success in the long run.

In addition, the results of various studies indicate that social media can play a significant role in promoting a university's brand and attracting students (DiAna, 2014). By using social media platforms like Facebook, universities can engage with prospective and current students, share information about the university, and provide updates on campus life and events.

Overall, it is clear that branding plays a crucial role in a university's enrollment status, and it is important for universities to carefully craft and manage their brand image in order to attract and retain students.

**Chart 1:** Impact on Enrollment



Source: Field Data, 2022.

According to the chart, 82% of the respondents stated that the Facebook page played a role in their decision to enroll in UEW.

The finding that 82% of the respondents at the University of Education, Winneba (UEW) believed that their decision to enroll was influenced by the university's Facebook page supports the views of Benedict et al. (2016), Nyangau and Bado (2012), and Hayes et al. (2009) that social media can be an effective tool for student recruitment. To achieve this goal, however, universities need to have clear objectives for using these platforms and make them interactive and engaging, with videos and photos. This aligns with the thoughts of Lubbe et al. (2013), who believed that

students would willingly share interesting videos posted by the university, thereby helping to promote it.

Some students said they relied on Facebook for information even before applying to UEW.

*Yes, before I came here I used to check the Facebook page and was impressed by the facilities posted on the page. I always saw nice buildings and was really excited to come here... I also applied through the link on Facebook, Mercy stated.*

*I scrolled through the Facebook page of UEW and saw pictures and videos of matriculation and graduation of continuing and past students as well as pictures of the school environment. It piqued my interest so I chose it, Hannah said.*

*... I wanted a good experience in tertiary education so I checked on Facebook. I liked the pictures of the UEW infrastructure and how they portrayed the school*

Godwin, responded and said:

*I gained admission to two tertiary institutions and to help me decide, I browsed online. I saw that UEW had a more appealing online presence as against the other institution so I decided to accept the admission and I have not been disappointed*

According to these and several other responses, the greater majority of current students of UEW got information about the school on social media before accepting admission into the school.

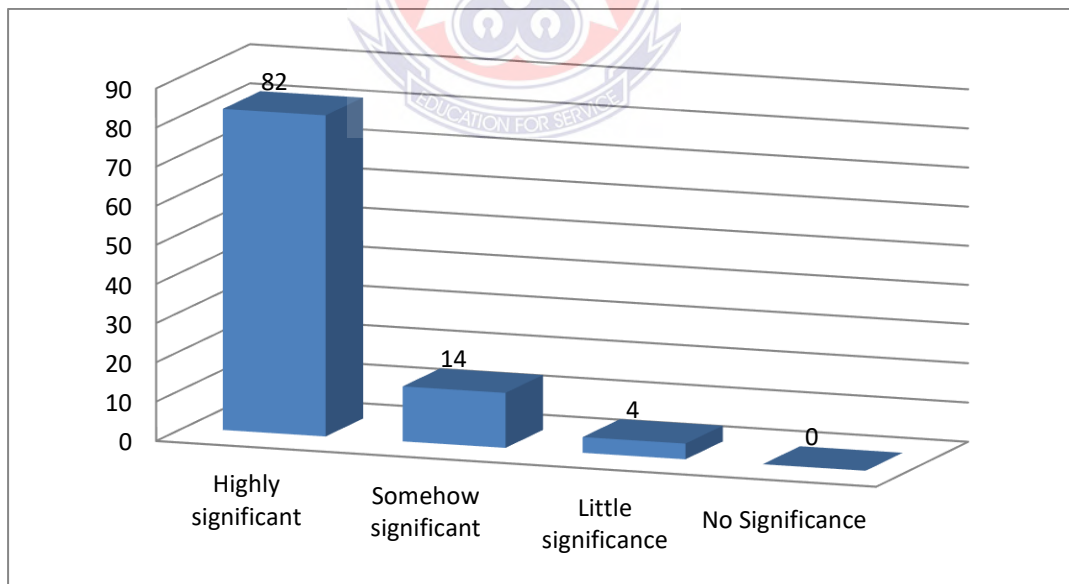
#### **4.3.3 How Significant is Social Media Branding on Promoting UEW's image**

Respondents were asked if Facebook affects branding of UEW and how significant it is on the promotion of UEW. The findings of the study indicate that the majority of the respondents believe that Facebook plays a crucial role in enhancing the brand

image of UEW. This result aligns with prior research on the influence of social media on university branding.

Several studies, such as those by Duan and Gu (2017), Fombrun and Shanley (1990), and Kapferer (2012), have emphasized the importance of using social media for building and maintaining a robust brand image in the competitive market. Additionally, Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2005) stressed the significance of having a clear, consistent, and compelling brand identity for universities to differentiate themselves in the crowded market and achieve long-term success. To sum up, the study results highlight the crucial role played by Facebook in promoting the branding of UEW, and suggest that utilizing social media effectively can positively impact a university's success in the highly competitive higher education market.

**Chart 2:** Significance of Facebook impact on UEW brand image.



Source: Field Data, 2022.

Of the 100 respondents, 82 reported that the University of Education, Winneba's (UEW) branding on Facebook has a significant impact on its promotion.

As a result, researchers have found that social media sites like Facebook have the ability to guide students entering into universities. Scherer (1997) posits that Facebook has become an important site for the informal, cultural learning of being a student, with online interactions and experiences allowing roles to be learned, values understood and identities shaped. Yu, Tian, Vogel, and Kwok (2010) corroborate Scherer's study with the suggestion that social network sites offer a unique opportunity to promote socialization to the college environment. They established that social network sites can help students to learn more about their colleagues and the university they were enrolled into. During the study, Becky not her real name responded said;

*'Oh yes... we are in digital era. Everybody use Facebook so when the school put something there we all see it and that will tell people about our school.'*

This is in line with Rutter, Roper and Lettice (2016) finding that the real brand benefit occurs when universities used social media interactively because social media communications were public and were easily taken up by others.

*"It brings information to its potential students who ordinarily cannot travel to the campus to seek relevant information about the school." T. K. responded*

Some were also of the view that it is somehow effective. Fredrick said:

*"...it depends on a person whether to be affected by what they see on the UEW Facebook page or not"*

*" they don't always reply our questions and comments on posts", Lucy, another respondent said.*

With respect to this response, further observation of the Facebook page revealed that there was indeed a problem with replies and feedback from the page. In that, most comments were not replied and this can be detrimental to the Branding efforts of

UEW. This assessment is in line with Rutter et al. (2016), which emphasized that the responsiveness of the brand to consumers was another aspect of social media interaction where universities that replied quickly and helpfully to questions and statements generated better engagements with followers and potential students. The study concluded that universities that interacted more with their followers achieved better student recruitment performance because social media interaction prior to student recruitment fosters an early sense of belonging to universities.

From the above presentation of findings, it can be analyzed that Facebook does promote the identity and image of University of Education, Winneba, as it provides insightful information for students, prospective students, the general public and all stakeholders of the University. To conclude the findings is the Uses and Gratifications Theory of New Media.

This study was informed by the Uses and gratifications theory of communication, a theory that examines how media audiences consume specific media to satisfy certain needs. The theory concentrates on how audiences deliberately choose media that enhances knowledge, relaxation or social interactions/companionship (Tankard, 2000; McQuail, 2010).

Contrary to other communications theories, the uses and gratifications theory postulates that media users are not passive receptacles of messages but active in interpreting messages and applying such messages to their lives (Palmgreen, Wenner and Rosengren, 1985).

Studies into the theory came up with five goals of media usage. It emerged from the research that people used the media to obtain information or education, identify with characters of the situation in the media environment and to entertain themselves. That



aside, some people also used the media to enhance social interaction or escape from the stresses of daily life (McQuail, 2010).

The above theory is consistent with the study's findings, in that, the responses all pointed towards the fact that the students all use social media and follow the UEW Facebook page because they get information that they need and thus, social media gratifies their need for information relating to the university. This, in effect, promotes the identity and image of UEW because as far as the informative needs are met, the university gains more publicity among the students, prospective students, general public and stakeholders who visit the Facebook page for information.

In summary, this chapter has shown that the University of Education Winneba (UEW) primarily uses social media, particularly Facebook, to target its branding efforts towards its university community, students, potential students, alumni, faculty members, and the general public. The university primarily achieves this by posting photos and updates about admissions, programs, and extracurricular activities.

The findings of this study highlight the significant role that social media, particularly Facebook, plays in promoting the branding of universities and suggest that using social media effectively can have a positive impact on the success of a university in today's highly competitive higher education market.

The research also revealed that Facebook is an effective tool for UEW to increase awareness, gain a competitive edge in the highly competitive higher education market, and position itself as a sought-after teacher education university in Africa. Respondents in the study reported that their decision to enroll at UEW was influenced by the university's Facebook page, and many current students of UEW reported that they had first learned about the school through social media. However, one issue that

was identified is that UEW's Facebook page does not always respond to questions and comments promptly.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter entails the summary of major findings, conclusion and some recommendations based on the findings and conclusions made.

#### 5.1 Summary of Major Findings

##### *5.1.1 How UEW Uses Facebook to Brand Itself*

During this research, it was revealed that universities can effectively use Facebook as a tool for branding, building relationships, and recruiting students. This study found that the university's Facebook page helped to create a sense of community among students and prospective students and was an effective tool for promoting the university's brand. Additionally, the target audience for the university's Facebook activities includes the university community, students, potential students, alumni, faculty members, and the general public.

The study explored the impact of Facebook on the branding of the University of Education, Winneba (UEW). The findings indicate that a majority of the respondents believe that Facebook plays a significant role in enhancing the brand image of UEW. This result aligns with prior research that highlights the importance of using social media for building and maintaining a robust brand image in the competitive higher education market. The studies by Duan and Gu (2017), Fombrun and Shanley (1990), Kapferer (2012), and Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2005) emphasized the significance of having a clear, consistent, and compelling brand identity for universities to differentiate themselves in the crowded market and achieve long-term success. The study results highlight the crucial role played by Facebook in promoting the branding

of UEW and suggest that effectively utilizing social media can positively impact a university's success in the highly competitive higher education market.

The research highlights that, the goal of branding for UEW is to create a unique image in the minds of target audience and stakeholders. The institution primarily uses Facebook to brand itself by posting photos and updates about admissions, programs, and extracurricular activities.

Online observation was used as a data collection method for this study.

### ***5.1.2 The Use of Social Media by UEW***

According to this study reputation management is a crucial strategic tool for companies to build and maintain a positive reputation. Research in this area has identified several key elements that contribute to a brand's reputation such as the level of quality and reliability of a brand's products or services, the visual and verbal elements of a brand, the values and mission that a brand represents, the overall experience that customers have with a brand, including customer service and support and the brand's commitment to ethical and sustainable practices.

UEW promotes the visibility of the university activities by establishing a distinct image for itself. Also, it facilitates interaction among its target audience including; sharing of knowledge, experiences, and opinions, enhancing the institution's growth and appeal and creating new opportunities for student attraction.

### **5.1.3 Impact of Facebook Promotion on the UEW's Brand Image and Identity**

This study on brand image and identity of the university shows, there is a set of consistent visual and verbal elements that is used to create a recognizable image and convey its core values, mission and positioning. Research has found that a strong

brand image and identity can help the university stand out in a crowded market, increase student enrolment, and attract top talent. The impact of branding can be assessed not only by the initiator but more importantly, by those who are targeted by the branding.

In this case, the students and potential students of UEW are significant in creating the brand image. The study found that Facebook aids the institution in spreading awareness among a sizable population worldwide, increasing the demand for its services and helping the institution gain a competitive edge in the highly competitive higher education market, making it a sought-after teacher education university in Africa. Additionally, it helps the institution develop a sense of identity and distinction, elevates its public image and facilitates public acceptance of its position as a top institution for teacher education in Ghana and Sub-Saharan Africa.

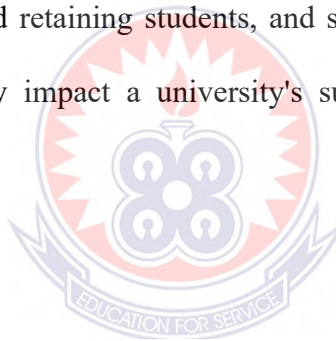
The impact of this is significant, as students have reported that their decision to enroll in UEW was influenced by the university's Facebook page. Lastly, a majority of current students at UEW obtained information about the school from social media before accepting their admissions. However, there is an issue with timely response to questions and comments on Facebook.

## **5.2. Conclusion**

In summary, the study found that UEW makes significant effort to promote their brand on Facebook through various methods and strategies, making it an effective tool for communication and information dissemination. Facebook also helps bridge the communication gap between the school and students, leading to the creation of a distinct identity for UEW in the minds of its target audience. The study concludes that

Facebook plays a significant role in promoting the identity and image of the University of Education, Winneba.

To sum it up, the relationship between university branding and student enrollment is crucial in understanding the impact of branding on student enrollment. Studies have shown that a strong brand image and identity can increase student enrollment and attract top talent to the university. The significance of creating a clear, consistent, and compelling brand identity has been emphasized by Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2005). Social media, such as Facebook, can also play a significant role in promoting a university's brand and attracting students as indicated by various studies (Kim, Park, & Kim, 2019; DiAna, 2014). These findings highlight the importance of university branding in attracting and retaining students, and suggest that utilizing social media effectively can positively impact a university's success in the competitive higher education market.



### **5.3 Recommendations**

Based on the research findings, analysis, and conclusions, the following recommendations can further improve the use of Facebook by UEW to promote their brand identity:

- UEW should constantly post and share information about new accredited programs offered by the school on their Facebook page.
- UEW should consider using Facebook paid advertisements to reach a wider audience on the platform.
- UEW should pin important posts (such as enrollment instructions) on their Facebook page to make it easy for prospective students to access such information.

- UEW should use their Facebook page to showcase the various achievements and accomplishments of their faculty, to highlight the quality standard of the school to the public.
- UEW should clearly outline the process for students to channel their questions and inquiries, to ensure that their concerns are effectively addressed and to limit the number of questions posted on Facebook.

UEW could also incorporate the following practices to further enhance the use of Facebook for promoting their brand identity:

- Collaborate with current students, alumni, and faculty members to create and share content that showcases the university's unique culture and values. This will help build a sense of community and make the university more appealing to prospective students.
- Create and share engaging and visually appealing content (such as infographics, videos, and images) to highlight the university's academic programs, campus life, and student achievements.
- Utilize Facebook Live and other interactive features to provide virtual tours of the university and host Q&A sessions with current students and faculty members.
- Monitor and respond to comments and messages promptly to ensure that the university is providing a positive experience for its Facebook audience.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the university's Facebook page regularly by analyzing metrics such as engagement rates, reach, and pageviews to continually improve the content and strategy.



By incorporating these additional practices, UEW can leverage Facebook even more effectively to promote their brand identity and increase student enrollment.



## REFERENCES

- Aaker, David A. (1996). "Measuring Brand Equity Across Products and Markets," *California Management Review*, 38 (Spring), 102-20.
- Aaker, J. M., Aaker, D. A., & Joachimsthaler, D. (2005). University branding and the quest for distinctiveness. *California Management Review*, 47 (4), 6-28.
- Adeola, O.; Hinson, R.E.; Evans, O. (2020). *Social Media in Marketing Communications: A Synthesis of Successful Strategies for the Digital Generation*. In Digital Transformation in Business and Society; George, B., Paul, J., Eds.; Springer International Publishing: Cham, Switzerland, 2020; pp. 61–81, ISBN 978-3-030-08276-5.
- Aichner, Thomas; Jacob, Frank H. (March 2015). "Measuring the Degree of Corporate Social Media Use". *International Journal of Market Research*. 57 (2): 257–275. doi:10.2501/IJMR-2015-018. S2CID 166531788.
- Al-Khalifa, H. S., & Garcia, R. A. (2013). The state of social media in Saudi Arabia's Higher Education. *International Journal of Technology and Educational Marketing (IJTEM)*, 3(1), 65-76.
- Antunes, A. (2011). A utilização de redes sociais como estratégia de Marketing nas instituições de ensino superior público: estudo de caso (Master's thesis, FEUC).
- Apeanti, W. O., & Danso, E. D. (2014). Students' use of social media in higher education in Ghana. *Innovative Journal*, 3(1), 3-9.
- Araujo, R. (2018). Marketing científico digital e métricas de mídias sociais: indicadores-chave de desempenho de periódicos no Facebook. *Informação & Sociedade: Estudos*, 28(1)
- Arquero, J. L., & Esteban, R., (2013). Using social network sites in Higher Education: An experience in Business Studies. *Journal of Innovations in Education and Teaching International*. DOI:10.1080/14703297.2012.760772.
- Assimakopoulos, C., Antoniadis, I., Kayas, O., & Dvizac, D. (2017). Effective social media marketing strategy: Facebook as an opportunity for universities. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 45(5), 532-549.
- Asur, S., & Huberman, B. A. (2010). Predicting the future with social media. In *Proceedings of the 2010 international conference on web intelligence and intelligent agent technology-volume 01* (pp. 492-499). IEEE.

- Atuahene, F. (2014). Charting higher education development in Ghana: Growth, transformations, and challenges. *In the development of higher education in Africa: Prospects*.
- Baker, L. M., Irani, T., & Abrams, K. (2011). Communicating strategically with generation me: *Aligning students' career needs with communication about academic programs and available Careers1*. *NACTA Journal*.
- Babbie, E. (2017). *The basics of social research (6th ed.)*. Cengage Learning.
- Baker, R. S., & Hare, J. W. (2015). The use of social media in higher education for marketing and communications: A literature review. *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*.
- Balaji, M.S., Roy, K.R. and Sadeque, S. (2016), "Antecedents and consequences of university brand identification," *Journal of Business Research*, 69, 3023-3032.
- Bamigboye, O. O., & Olusesan, A. A. (2017). An analysis on impact of social media for learning in Eastern Cape Universities, South Africa. *International Journal of Educational Sciences*, 17(1-3), 69-75.
- Barnes S. B. (2006). A privacy paradox: Social networking in the United States. *First Monday*, 11(9). Retrieved November 5, 2010, from [http://firstmonday.org/issues/issue11\\_9/barnes](http://firstmonday.org/issues/issue11_9/barnes).
- Benedict, L., Leach, L. F., Winn, P., & Baker, C. (2016). A Thematic Analysis of the use of Social Media Marketing in Higher Education. *Southwestern Mass Communication Journal*.
- Berger, J., & Milkman, K. L. (2012). What Makes Online Content Viral? *Journal of Marketing Research*, 49(2), 192-205. <http://doi.org/10.1509/jmr.10.0353>.
- Biancarosa, G., & Griffiths, G. G. (2012). Technology tools to support reading in the digital age. *The future of children*, 139-160.
- Botha, A., & Van der Berg, S. (2013). Student recruitment in higher education institutions: *A comparative study of South African and Dutch universities*. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 37(5), 597-610.

- Boyd, Danah M.; Ellison, Nicole B. (2007). "Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship". *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*. 13 (1): 210–30. doi:10.1111/j.1083-6101.2007.00393.x.
- Branding Insider (2006). "History of Branding - Brand Strategy Insider". [brandingstrategyinsider.com](http://brandingstrategyinsider.com). 2006-08-14. Retrieved 2012-11-04.
- Brech, F. M., Messer, U., Vander Schee, B. A., Rauschnabel, P. A., & Ivens, B. S. (2017). *Engaging fans and the community in social media: Interaction with institutions of higher education on Facebook*. *Journal of Marketing for Higher education*, 27(1), 112-130.
- Brian A. Tussy and Nicholas J. Longo (2015). The Use of Social Media in Higher Education for Branding and Recruitment: *A Case Study of Facebook at the University of Massachusetts Amherst*.
- Buer, V. B., Owusu-Ansah, C. M., & Acquah, G. K. (2016). Facebook use among students of University of Education, Winneba, Ghana. *Ghana Library Journal*, 26(2), 65-79.
- Buhari, S. A., Ahmad, G. B., & Ashara, B. H. (2014, April). Use of Media among Students of Nigerian Polytechnic. Presented in International Conference on Communication, Media, Technology and Design.
- Business Insider Africa. (2022). Fastest fixed broadband. Retrieved from <https://www.businessinsider.com>
- Casidy, R. (2013). The role of brand orientation in the higher education sector: a student-perceived paradigm. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 25(5), 803-820.
- Chapleo, C., & Simms, C. (2010). Stakeholder analysis in higher education: A case study of the University of Portsmouth. *Perspectives: Policy and Practice in Higher Education*, 14(1), 12–20
- Constantinides, E., & Zinck Stagno, M. C. (2011). Potential of the social media as instruments of higher education marketing: *A segmentation study*. *Journal of marketing for higher education*, 21(1), 7-24.
- Constantinides, E., & Zinck Stagno, M.C. (2011). Potential of social media as instruments of higher education marketing: *A segmentation study*. *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*, 21, 7- 24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08841241.2011.573593>.

- Cormode G., & Krishnamurthy B. (2008). Key differences between Web 1.0 and Web 2.0. *First Monday*, 13(6). Retrieved October 5, 2008, from <http://www.uic.edu/htbin/cgiwrap/bin/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/2125/1972>.
- Creswell, J. W. (2003). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*, Thousand Oaks, CA, Sage.
- Creswell, J.W. (2013) *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*, 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage
- Creswell, J.W. (2018) *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Sage publications.
- DeAndrea, D. C., Ellison, N. B., LaRose, R., Steinfield, C., & Fiore, A. (2012). Serious social media: *On the use of social media for improving students' adjustment to college. The Internet and higher education*, 15(1), 15-23.
- Dearborn, E., (2014). My official definition of social media. Retrieved from <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/20140929215745-47165795>.
- DeBell M., & Chapman C. (2006). Computer and internet use by students in 2003 (NCES 2006– 065). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.
- Denscombe, M. (2003). *The Good Research Guide for Small Scale Social Science Projects*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- Dholakia, R. R., & Acciaro, L. A. (2014). Branding a state university: *Doing it right. Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*, 24(1), 144–163.
- DiAna, K. (2014). *The Impact of Social Media on College choice*. (Unpublished Master of Education thesis), College of Education and Human Service Professions, University of Minnesota Duluth.
- Ellison, N. B., Steinfield, C., & Lampe, C. (2011). Connection strategies: Social capital implications of Facebook-enabled communication practices. *New media & society*, 13(6), 873-892.
- Felix, R.; Rauschnabel, P.A.; Hinsch, C. (2017). Elements of strategic social media marketing: *A holistic framework. J. Bus. Res.* 2017, 70, 118–126.
- Fombrun, C. J. (1996). *Managing corporate reputation: The new currency*. Academy of Management Executive.

- Fombrun, C.J. (2010). *Reputation: Realizing Value from the Corporate Image*. Harvard Business Review Press.
- Foulger, M. (2014). *Higher Education Success Stories: How 3 Leading Universities Use Social Media*. Retrieved from <http://blog.hootsuite.com/higher-education-success-stories-3-leading-universities/>
- Fraenkel, J.R., & Wallen, W.E. (2000). *How to design and evaluate educational research*.
- Fujita, M., Harrigan, P., & Soutar, G. (2017). A netnography of a university's social media brand community: *Exploring collaborative co-creation tactics*. *Journal of Global Scholars of Marketing Science*, 27(2), 148-164.
- Glesne, C. (2010) *Becoming qualitative researchers. An introduction*, 4th ed. Boston: Pearson.
- Greenwood, S., Perrin, A., & Duggan, M. (2016). *Social media update 2016*. *Pew Research Center*, 11(2), 1-18.
- Hanna, R., Rohm, A., & Crittenden, V. L. (2011). We're all connected: *The power of the social media ecosystem*. *Business horizons*, 54(3), 265-273.
- Hayes, T. J., Ruschman, D., & Walker, M. M. (2009). Social Networking as an Admission Tool: *A case study in success*. *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*.
- Hemsley-Brown, J., & Goonawardana, S. (2007). Brand harmonization in the international higher education market. *Journal of business Research*, 60(9), 942-948.
- Herren, C.D., Cartmell 11, D. D., & Robertson, J. T. (2011). Perceptions of Influence of College Choice by Students Enrolled in a College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural resources. *NACTA Journal*.
- Heyam, A. A., (2014). The influence of social networks on students' academic performance. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Computing and information Sciences*, 5. ISSN 2079- 8407 Retrieved from <http://www.cisjournal.org>.

- Hossler, D., Bean, J. P., & Associates (1990). *The Strategic Management of College Enrolments*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Inc. <https://africa.businessinsider.com/local/markets/top-10-african-countries-with-the-fastest-fixed-broadband/n4mrdkz#:~:text=1%20Speedtest%20Global%20Index%20has%20released%20the%20ranking,in%20the%20world.%20Egypt%20ranked%20third%20in%20Africa>.
- Hutter, K., Hautz, J., Dennhardt, S., & Füller, J. (2013). The impact of user interactions in social media on brand awareness and purchase intention: the case of MINI on Facebook. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 22(5/6), 342-351. <http://doi.org/10.1108/JPBM-05-2013-0299>.
- Inestopedia (2021). Social Media: Definition, Effects, and List of Top Apps (investopedia.com).
- Jacka, M., & Scott, P.R., (2011). Auditing social media: A governance and risk guide. ISSN: 978-1-118-06175-6. Retrieved from [eu.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd118061756.html](http://eu.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd118061756.html).
- Jain, N., Verma, A., Verma, R., & Tiwari, P. (2012). Going Social: The Impact of Social Networking in Promoting Education. *International Journal of Computer Science (IJCSI)*, 9(1), pp.483-485. ISSN: 1694-0814. Retrieved from <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED548379>.
- Jin, S. A. (2012). The potential of social media for luxury brand management. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 30(7), 687-699. <http://doi.org/10.1108/02634501211273805>.
- Kapferer, J.N. (2004). *The New Strategic Brand Management: Creating and Sustaining Brand Equity Long Term*. London: Kogan Page.
- Kelleher, T., & Sweetser, K. (2012). Social Media Adoption Among University Communicators. *Journal of Public Relations Research*.
- Kietzmann, J. H., Hermkens, K., McCarthy, I. P., & Silvestre, B. S. (2011). Social media? Get serious! *Understanding the Functional Building blocks of Social Media*. *Business horizons*, 54(3), 241-251.
- Kietzmann, Jan H.; Hermkens, Kristopher (2011). "Social media? Get serious! Understanding the functional building blocks of social media". *Business Horizons (Submitted manuscript)*. 54 (3): 241–251. doi:10.1016/j.bushor.2011.01.005. S2CID 51682132.



- Kim, K., Sin, S.J., & Tsai, T. (2014). Individual differences in Social Media Use for Information Seeking. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*.
- Kirkpatrick, David (2011). *The Facebook effect: the real inside story of Mark Zuckerberg and the world's fastest-growing company*. London: Virgin.
- Kline, R. B. (2015). *Principles and practice of structural equation modeling* (4th ed.). New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Kotler, P., & Armstrong, G. (2012). *Principles of Marketing* (14th ed.). New Jersey: Pearson Education.
- Kotler, P., & Keller, K. (2012). *Marketing management*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.
- Kotler, P., Keller, K. L., Ang, S. H., Tan, C. T., & Leong, S. M. (2018). *Marketing management: an Asian perspective*. Harlow: Pearson.
- Kuppuswamy, S., & Narayan, P. (2010). The impact of Social Networking Websites on the Education of Youth. *Internal journal of virtual Communities and Social Networking (IJVCSN)*, 2(1) 67-79.
- Kvale, S. (1996). *InterViews: An introduction of qualitative research interviewing*. Sage publication.
- Laurell, C.; Sandström, C.; Berthold, A.; Larsson, D. (2019). Exploring barriers to adoption of Virtual Reality through Social Media Analytics and Machine Learning—*An assessment of technology, network, price and trialability*. *J. Bus. Res.* 2019, 100, 469–474.
- Lenhart A., Arafeh S., Smith A., & MacGill A. R. (2008). *Writing, technology, and teens*. Washington, DC: Pew Charitable Trusts. Retrieved September 29, 2008, from [http://pewinternet.org/pdfs/PIP\\_Writing\\_Report\\_FINAL3.pdf](http://pewinternet.org/pdfs/PIP_Writing_Report_FINAL3.pdf)
- Lenhart A., Madden M., & Hitlin P. (2005). *Teens and technology*. Washington, DC: Pew Charitable Trusts. Retrieved September 29, 2008, from [http://www.pewinternet.org/pdfs/PIP\\_Teens\\_Tech\\_July2005web.pdf](http://www.pewinternet.org/pdfs/PIP_Teens_Tech_July2005web.pdf).
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Sage.
- Lindbeck, R., & Fodrey, B. (2010). Using Technology in Undergraduate Admission: *A Student Perspective*. *Journal of College Admission*.

- Lubbe, J., Roets, L., Van Tonder, S., & Wilkinson, A. (2013). Social Media: A Method to Recruit Students into Undergraduate Nursing Programmes. *Gender & Behaviour*.
- Lukic, V.R., & Lukic, N.(2016).Application of Marketing Mix Concept in Student Recruitment Strategies: Evidence from University of Novi Sad.
- Mackenzie, S.B., and Podsakoff, M.P. (2012). Common method bias in marketing: Causes, mechanisms and procedural remedies. *Journal of Retailing* 88,542-555.Doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jretai.2012.08.001>.
- Maringe, F. (2006). University and Course Choice: Implications for Positioning, Recruitment and Marketing. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 20(6), 466-479.
- Martin, C. M. (2015). Social Media Engagement and Collegiate Recruitment: An Examination of the Use of Social Networks in the College Recruitment and Student Choice Processes.
- Maya, k. G., (2015). Achievement scripts, media influences on Blacks students' academic performance, self-perceptions and carrier interests. *Journal of Black psychology*, 42(3) pp.195-220. DOI: 10.1177/0095798414566510.
- McQuail, D. (2010). *Mass communication theory: an introduction*. London: Sage Publications.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook* (2nd ed.). *Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage*.
- Moore, J.R. and Caudill, R. (2019). The Bot Will See You Now. *Psychiatr. Clin. N. Am.* 42, 627–634.
- Mourad, M., Ennew, C., & Kortam, W. (2011). Brand equity in higher education. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*.
- Naidoo, T., & Wu, W. (2011). The importance of student recruitment and retention in higher education institutions. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 2(5), 114-121.
- Ngak, Chenda (2011-07-06). "Then and now: a history of social networking sites". CBS news. Retrieved 2018-01-26.

- Obar, Jonathan A.; Wildman, Steve (2015). "Social media definition and the governance challenge: An introduction to the special issue". *Telecommunications Policy*. 39 (9): 745–750. doi:10.2139/ssrn.2647377. SSRN 2647377.
- Orb, A., Eisenhauer, L., & Wynaden, D. (2001). The ethics of relationship in qualitative research. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 34(4), 717-725
- Osharie, P. (2015). Social media and academic performance of students, conference paper of January 2015. Retrieved September, 2016 from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/273765340>.
- Palmgreen, P. L. & Wenner, K. R. (1985). Uses and gratifications research: The past ten years, *Media gratifications research*.
- Pappas, C., (2013). The role of social media in E-learning. Retrieved from <http://elearningindustry.com/role-of-social-media-in-elearning>.
- Paulsen, M. B. (1990). *College Choice: Understanding Student Enrollment Behavior*. ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report No. 6. ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Reports, The George Washington University, One Dupont Circle, Suite 630, Dept. RC, Washington, DC.
- Perrin, A. (2015). Social media usage. *Pew research centre*, 125, 52-68.
- Peruta, A., & Shields, A. (2017). Social media in higher education: understanding how colleges and universities use Facebook. *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*, 27(1), 131-143.
- Polit, D. F., & Beck, C. T. (2017). *Nursing research: Generating and assessing evidence for nursing practice*. Wolters Kluwer.
- Pinar, M., Girard, T., & Basfirinci, C. (2020). Examining the relationship between brand equity dimensions and university brand equity: An empirical study in Turkey. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 34(7), 1119-1141.
- R. Ladner, *The Lived Experience of College Choice* (Doctor of Business Administrations Theses and Dissertations), Oregon: George Fox University, 2015.
- Raab, C., Berezan, O., Krishen, A. S., & Tanford, S. (2016). What's in a Word? Building Program Loyalty through Social Media Communication. *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, 57(2), 138-149. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1938965515619488>.

- Rekettye, G., & Pozsgai, G. (2014). University and place branding: the case of universities located in ECC (European Capital of Culture) cities. *Econviews*, 13-24.
- Reuben, R. (2008). *The Use of Social Media in Higher Education for Marketing and Communications: A Guide for Professionals in Higher Education*; Rachel Reuben Consulting LLC: Kingston, NY, USA, 2008.
- Robert A. Sevier (2009-09-01). "Have College Brands Delivered on Their Promise?". *UB University Business*. Archived from the original on 2012-07-28. Retrieved 2012-10-22.)
- Rose, J., & Morstyn, L. (2013). *What makes you tweet?. Young People's Perspectives on the Use of Social Media as an Engagement Tool*. Australia. Youth Affairs Council of Victoria.
- Rutter, R., Roper, S., & Lettice, F. (2016). Social Media Interaction, the University Brand and Recruitment Performance. *Journal of Business Research*.
- Rutter, R., Roper, S., & Lettice, F. (2016). Social media interaction, the university brand and recruitment performance. *Journal of Business Research*, 69(8), 3096-3104.
- Saunders, M., Lewis, P. & Thornhill, A. (2007). *Research Methods for Business Students*, Harlow, UK, Pearson.
- Schivinski, Bruno; Brzozowska-Woś, Magdalena; Stansbury, Ellena; Satel, Jason; Montag, Christian; Pontes, Halley M. (2020). "Exploring the Role of Social Media Use Motives, Psychological Well-Being, Self-Esteem, and Affect in Problematic Social Media Use". *Frontiers in Psychology*. 11: 576. doi :10.3389/fpsyg.2020.617140. ISSN 1664- 1078 .PMC 77 721 82. PM ID 333 91 137.
- Selwyn, N. (2007). The use of computer technology in university teaching and Learning: a critical perspective. *Journal of computer assisted learning* 23(2). DOI: 10.1111/j.1365- 2729.2006.00204.x.
- Sharma, V., Volkova, S., Bachrach, Y., & Armstrong, M., (2015). Inferring latent user properties from texts published in social media. In *Twenty-Ninth AAAI Conference on Artificial Intelligence*.
- Soutar, G. N. (2012). Revisiting the global market for higher education. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 24(5), 717-737.

- Statista (2022). Global social networks ranked by number of users 2022. Retrieved from: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/272014/global-social-networks-ranked-by-number-of-users/>.
- Statista (2022). Number of internet users in Ghana 2017-2022. Retrieved from <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1171416/number-of-internet-users-ghana/>.
- Sugiyono. 2016. Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif dan Research & Development. Bandung: PT Alfabet.
- Sultan, P., & Wong, H. Y. (2012). Service quality in a higher education context: an integrated model. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 24(5), 755-784.
- Tankard J. & James, W. (2000). "2: New Media Theory". *Communication Theories: Origins, Methods and Uses in the Mass Media*, Addison Wesley, Longman.
- Teh, G. M., & Salleh, A. H. M. (2011). Impact of Brand Meaning on Brand Equity of Higher Educational Institutions in Malaysia. *World*, 3(2), 218-228.
- Tiago, M. T. P. M. B., & Verissimo, J. M. C. (2014). Digital marketing and social media: Why bother? *Business Horizons*, 57(6), 703-708. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2014.07.002>.
- Trochim, W. M. K. (2006). Research methods knowledge base. Retrieved from <http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/relval.php>.
- Tsimonis, G., & Dimitriadis, S. (2014). Brand strategies in social media. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 32(3), 328-344. <http://doi.org/10.1108/MIP-04-2013-0056>.
- Tufte, E. R. (2001). *The visual display of quantitative information* (2nd ed.). Cheshire, CT: Graphics Press.
- Twenge, J. M., & Martin, G. (2020). Gender differences in associations between digital media use and psychological well-being: Evidence from three large datasets. *Journal of Adolescence*.
- Ukpabi, D.C.; Aslam, B.; Karjaluoto, H. (2019). Chatbot Adoption in Tourism Services: A Conceptual Exploration. In *Robots, Artificial Intelligence, and Service Automation in Travel, Tourism and Hospitality*; Ivanov, S., Webster, C., Eds.; Emerald Publishing Limited: Bingley, UK, 2019; pp. 105–121, ISBN 978-1-78756-688-0.

Uzunboylu, E. (2016). Social Media in Higher Education: Strategies for Building Online Communities of Practice. *Journal of Educational Technology Development and Exchange*.

William T. Tucker (1964). The Development of Brand Loyalty. *Journal of Marketing Research* 1 (3), 32-35, 1964.

Yin, R., K (2003). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. (3rdEd.), Thousand Sage Publications.

Yunus, M., & Salehi, H., (2012). The effectiveness of Facebook groups on teaching and improving writing: students' perceptions. *International journal of education and information Technologies*, 6. Retrieved from [research.iaun.ac.ir/pdfs/paperM-778](http://research.iaun.ac.ir/pdfs/paperM-778).

