ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL MEDIA AS DISTANCE LEARNING FACILITIES:

A CASE OF OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA

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CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certifies that he has read and hereby recommends for acceptance by the Open University of Tanzania a dissertation titled: "*Analysis of Social Media as Distance Learning Facilities: A Case of the Open University of Tanzania"* in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Master Degree of Arts in Mass Communication (MA-MC).

Signature …………………………………

Dr. Kaanaeli Kaale

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Date…………………………………………

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DECLARATION

I, **Ruth Jonathan Kyelula**, do hereby declare that, the work presented in this dissertation is my own original work. It has never been presented to any other University or Institution for a similar or any master's award. Where other people's works have been used, references have been provided. It is hereby presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Master Degree of Arts in Mass-Communication of the Open University of Tanzania.

Signature …………………………………………

Ruth Jonathan Kyelula,

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Date ……………………………………………

DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to Almighty God who guide me throughout my studies at The Open University of Tanzania and to my parents for their moral and financial support in my education and their encouragement which helped me triumph over all the difficulties I encountered during my research.

This research paper is dedicated to the loving parents Mr. and Mrs. Jonathan Kyelula, who but could not wait for my graduation. I dedicate to my family and all my friends who support me; I am so gratefully for their support and love during the time of my research.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to make analysis of social media as distance learning facilities at the Open University of Tanzania. Specifically, the study focused on determining the types of social media used, examined students' challenges of using social media; and found out the impact of social media on learning facilities. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected and analyzed using descriptive statistics; and graphs, tables, pie charts and percentages were analyzed by SPSS Statistical analysis. A structured questionnaire was the main tool for data collection from a sample of 120 respondents who were randomly selected from different university regional centers while interview was set out to five key informants drawn from OUT headquarters. The findings indicated that 70 percent of the respondents (n=120) use MOODLE as distance learning facility. Meanwhile, 60 percent of the respondents (n=120) spent 3-5 daily on social media while 5 percent spent more than 8 hours. This study used Social Information Processing Theory and Media Equation Theory to assess the contribution of social media as distance learning facilities. The study concluded that crowd sourcing effect, online information overload, emotional barriers, required time and dedication; and difficulty management and digital identity were the major students' challenges of using social media as learning facilities. Also, the study concluded that social media brought positive impact on learning facilities at the OUT. MOODLE has become a vigorous social media for people to interact each other in academic career. Other social media widely used is internet forum. The study recommended provision of education, introduction, and supervision and control the accessibility of new; and use of poorly accessed social media in order to reduce the challenges. Finally, it is recommended for further research to be done on social media and students' academic satisfaction, social media and students' academic development; and social media and online learning.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

MET   Media Equation Theory

MOODLE   Module Object Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment

NGOs   Non-Governmental Organizations

OUT   Open University of tanzania

PhD   Doctor of Philosophy

SIPT   Social Information Priocessing Theory

SMJ   Social Media Journalists

SNS   Social Network Sites

SPSS   Scientific Package for Social Scientists

TV   Television

USA   United States of America

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter comprises the information required to understand the context to the study, declaration of the research problem, research objectives; and significance of the study. However, it is made up of the social media, limitations of the study as well as organization of the study.

1.2 Background of the study

Worldwide in current years, the increasing of technological development has brought achievement to accomplish its role in serving people leading to the considerable medium of interaction in the social world as well as in academic arena. Over the years, those in higher learning institutions have had employed the exciting opportunities new technological advancement brought to institutions, educators and students. The technology has changed the way people interact and has brought about the emergence of an open social media that allow the populations of this world to connect with each other leading this world into globalization (Denielle, 2014).

Social media are being used in learning for the purpose of suitable communication between students and possibly with fellow students when they make discussions outside the classrooms and; when students communicates with experts in their subjects of study (Subrami, 2015). The start of social media has brought impact significantly on students' learning and the instructors' mode of teaching. Currently, in higher learning education settings, the social media has influenced the instructors, students and others to cooperate

with each other on the tasks of knowledge construction in learning and teaching environments. The application of social media could strengthen class material and class material and positively influence discussions material and positively influences discussions, collaborative work and authoring. Educators and researchers have constantly experimented with social media technologies hoping to stimulate critical thinking skills, collaboration; and knowledge constructions (Anjugu, 2013). However, the fact that social media are generally open to the world implied a need to carefully consider its' benefits, effects and risks of openness as well as need for ongoing communication with students in order to address their concerns and deal with issues in the use of social media as they arise (Confetto & Siano, 2018).

Academic development is the outcome of education, the extent to which a student, teacher or institution has achieved their educational goals. In Tanzania's higher learning institutions, the academic performance of the students is commonly measured by both implementation of examinations and continuous assessment. The drop out students are considered underachievers and those who pass are the victory and continued with studies (Annie *et al.,* 1996).

1.2.1 The Open University of Tanzania (OUT)

The Open University of Tanzania (OUT) is a government institution that was established by an Act of Parliament No.17 of 1992. The Act became operational on 1st March, 1993 by the publication of Notice No. 55 in the official gazette. The first Chancellor was officially installed in a full ceremony on 19th January, 1994. Act No. 17 of 1992 has currently been replaced by the Open University of Tanzania Charter, effectively from January 1st 2007, which is in line with the university Act No. 7 of 2005. The Charter was signed by H.E. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, the former President of the United Republic of

Tanzania on 28th March, 2007. However, OUT is an open and online distance learning institution offering certificates, diplomas, degrees and postgraduate courses. Educational delivery is attained through various means of communication including print media, Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), correspondence, enhanced face to face. Therefore, this study was conducted in Tanzania higher learning institution particularly at the Open University of Tanzania to assess the contribution of social media as distance learning facilities.

1.3 Statement of the Research Problem

Various research problems were identified during the analysis of social media as distance learning facilities at the Open University of Tanzania. Respondents and the final results revealed that, LinkedIn is poorly used as a distance learning facility. This is supported by Ndaku (2013) who found that facebook usage is not positively associated with lower grades of students and rather facebook users scored higher grades.

Another problem identified in the study and the final study revealed that the students' main challenges of using social media as learning facilities are crowd sourcing effect, online information overload, emotional barriers, require time and dedication; and difficulty management and digital identity. This is supported by Beqiri (2014) whose preliminary investigation and interviews with some teachers and students revealed a number of challenges in relation to student's participation on social media networks.

Meanwhile, the study found out the impact of social media on learning facilities and the result implied that social media are effective tool for E- learning for students, using social media helps you to access academic material any time, using social media helps to access academic material any time; and engagement in academic forums on social media increases understanding of topics discussed in class. Others comprise group discussions

on social media yield good results as far as my academics are concerned, the usage of social media for research has helped for academic development, social media are affecting the way of speaking or writing in students life, social media helps to accomplish and submit your assignments timely; and I use materials gotten from social media to compliment what I have been taught in class. A study conducted by (Brown, 2010) who concluded that the driving factors for adoption of social media are the progressively widespread access, convenience, functionality, and flexibility of social technologies. These are among the knowledge gaps that need to be solved. Therefore, the study was conducted to assess much on the scenario to the contribution of social media as distance learning facilities in higher learning institutes in Tanzania to fill the information gap on social media as learning facilities in higher institutions.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study was to make analysis of social media as distance learning facilities at the Open University of Tanzania.

1.4.1 Specific Objectives

i. To determine the types of social media used as learning facilities at the Open University of Tanzania

ii. To examine students' challenges of using social media as learning facilities at the Open University of Tanzania.

iii. To find out the impact of social media on learning facilities at the Open University of Tanzania.

1.4.2 Research Questions

i. What were the types of social media used as learning facilities at the Open University of Tanzania?

ii. What were the students' challenges of using social media as learning facilities at the study area?

iii. What was the impact of social media on as learning facilities at the Open University of Tanzania?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study contributes to an understanding of social media, its usage and how it is influencing students learning environment. It contributes knowledge on linkage and assessment of the contribution of social media as distance learning facilities of higher learning institutions in Tanzania. Also, this study provides an in-depth understanding on usefulness of various type of social media in academic development. Meanwhile, this study guides, stimulates and adds knowledge to the government, Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) and individual researchers in addressing the impact of social media in general. For the time being, the study contributes knowledge of the impact of social media on as learning facilities. The study helped researchers to manipulate and modernize their purpose regarding the use of social media. Finally, the study encourages other researchers in various academic institutions to embark on further research related to this topic.

1.6 Social Media

1.6.1 Google Classroom

Google is a popular Web 2.0 tools that offers a lot of interesting facilities and applications. It, like many other Web 2.0 tools, has potential for teaching and learning because of its unique built-in functions that offer pedagogical, social and technological affordances. Google Classroom is a new tool introduced in Google Apps for Education in 2014. This classroom facilitates the teachers to create and organize assignments

quickly, provide feedback efficiently, and communicate with their classes with ease. However, the use of Google classroom in teaching and learning also promotes higher order thinking skills, promotes the development of problem solving skills and supports type questions which are more desirable in this computer age (Chirwa, 2018).

1.6.2 Internet Forums

This type is considered the earliest form of social media sites. *Blogs, Microblogs,* and *Forums* are considered personal web pages where individuals can communicate with one another through texts and other multimedia like videos, audios, and pictures. The blog or forum owner can post messages to the blog or can upload information to the blogs or forums while the blog or forum followers can view, download, and give comment to the messages. The most commons blogs and forums are *Wordpress.com, Blogger.com,* and *Yahoo! Groups.com.* (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

1.6.3 LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a professionally-oriented social medial that enables the creation of a profile containing personal information, related work and educational experience, and samples of professional work. It also enables its users to connect with other people, participate in community forums, and subscribe to posts of specific groups. LinkedIn has incorporated many new features, such as a newsfeed, user content, and the ability to follow professionals, improving user engagement and time spent on the site. In addition to academic development, LinkedIn is a tool that can be used to increase student engagement and collaboration during the class and beyond (Cooper & Naatus, 2014).

1.6.4 MOODLE

MOODLE is an open source e-learning system. MOODLE stands for Modular Object Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment. It can be used as a tool for delivering content

to students and more interestingly, it can be used to build rich collaborative learning communities. MOODLE allow users to be active learners, actively participating in the online learning process. However, MOODLE allows instructors to plan and designate activities for the students. MOODLE is a dream tool for teachers, integrating wide range of resources and assessment strategies and is powerful in content creation (Ahmed & Raheem, 2012).

1.7 Limitation of the Study

Assessment of the contribution of social media as distance learning facilities at the Open University of Tanzania was limited to first degree and post graduate students at Kinondoni Region Centre. Financial resources and time constrained the original budget to become too minimal to fully support the research in terms of intensity and coverage. This was corrected by using research assistants to distribute and collect the questionnaires from the respondents in their respective localities.

1.8 Organization of the Study

This study is organized in five chapters. Chapter one introduces the study by giving the background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study and research questions. It also presents the significance of the study and limitations of the study. Chapter two presents definitions of the key terms, literature review, theoretical review, empirical review, conceptual framework and research gap. Chapter three describes research methodology, research design, sampling technique, data collection methods as well as data analysis techniques. Chapter four deals with research findings and results while chapter five elaborates conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the literature review which is drawn from various areas experiencing students' academic development. It defines some key concepts, explains the theoretical review, empirical review, conceptual framework and it describes the research gap.

2.2 Definition of the Key Terms

2.2.1 Social Media

Social media consist of forms of electronic communication (such as websites for social networking and micro blogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content including videos (Kasika, 2017).

According to Buettner, (2016) social media are computer mediated tools that allow people or companies to create, share exchange information, career interest, ideas, picture/virtual communities and networks.

According to Curtis (2011), "Social media are internet site where people interacts freely, sharing and discussing information about each other and their lives, using multimedia mix of personal words, pictures, videos and audio.

Kaplan & Haenlein (2011) defines social media as a group of internet based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 which allows the creation and exchange of user generated content.

Liang (2017) expresses that social media is a set of technologies and channels targeted at forming and enabling a potentially massive community of participants to productively collaborate.

2.2.2 Social Media Platforms

Social media platform is defined as a web based technology that enables the development, deployment and management of social media solution and services (Acheaw & Larson, 2015).

2.2.3 Distance Learning

It is a field of education that focuses on teaching methods and technology with the aim of delivering teaching, often on an individual basis, to students who are not physically, present in a traditional educational setting such as a classroom (UNESCO, 2008).

2.2.4 Learning Facilities: According to UNESCO, (2008) learning facilities are those materials that enhance learning processes.

2.2.5 Media: Buettner (2016) defined media as all those media technologies that are intended to reach a large audience by mass communication. They are also messages communicated through mass media to a number of people.

2.2.6 Higher Learning Institution: Refer to a College or University

2.3 Theoretical Framework

The theories considered most appropriate for this study are the social information processing theory and media equation theory, this study has employed both theories.

2.3.1 Social Information Processing Theory (SIPT)

Social information processing theory is the theory that explains online information. The theory was developed in 1992 by Joseph Wather (Kyoshaba, 2009). This theory is an interpersonal communication which suggests that online interpersonal relationship development might require more to develop than face-to-face relationships, but when developed, it has the same influence as face-to-face communication. This means, the more students use social media, the more they influence their disposition to studies, given the fact that friends from social media will begin to exert influence on each other.

2.3.2 Media Equation Theory (MET)

Media Equation Theory as one of the guiding theories was propounded by Bryon Reeves and Clifford Nass (Asemah & Edegoh, 2012). This theory proposes that media are equal to real life and that electronic media in particular are being given human attributes. In most cases, people talk to computer as if they are talking to human beings. However, most people talk to their television sets as if they are conversing with human beings. People have made to order the media of mass communication to the magnitude that they now see them, just the way they observe human beings.

Reeves and Nass's equation suggests that we respond to communication media as if they are alive. Though, MET states that people now treat computers, televisions and the new media like real people and places; we tend to give human attributes to lifeless objects in our homes (Asemah & Edegoh, 2012). Practically the implication of MET is that once we turn on a television or boot up on computer, we follow all the rules of interpersonal interaction that we have summarized throughout life. Thus, the word interface is particularly appropriate when describing human media relations. This natural social response goes way beyond occasional words yelled at the television set or our desperate

play for the computer to retrieve lost data. Reeves and Nass maintain that the media equation is so basic that it applies to everyone, it applies often and it is highly consequential (Hoyle, 1986). The above assertion appropriately captures how the audience members now tend to engage the media in a discussion as they do to human beings. Therefore, the relevance of the theory to the paper cannot be exaggerated. People treat the media like human beings, so whatever people see in the media, they tend to believe because they respond to the new media, the way they will respond to human beings.

The justification of this study to employ both SIPT and MET is because these theories relates to my study as the data collected provided the knowledge on the contribution of social media as distance learning facilities in a case area of the OUT. However, the contribution of social media as distance learning facilities would improve under social information processing and media equation conditions. Therefore, this necessitated a realization of the existing situation and documentation.

2.4 Empirical Literature Review

Ezzat (2020) studied how social media influencers and the online identity of Egyptian youths. The study found youths performed to their fans and aimed deliberately to create a specific impression. They had to balance their performance with displaying authenticity which was a characteristic they knew was key for their fans. They employed a number of practices to perform authentically such as developing original content, and their conscious choice of topics while observing Egyptian traditions and societal boundaries, posting selfies, going live regularly and maintaining a distance between themselves and their fans to create an aura of mystique around themselves.

Banda (2020) piloted a study on Media influence of Migration Expectations: Experiences of Sub-Saharan black African students. The study found that the participants significantly used televisions more than social media as a source of information to create initial images about the economic condition of their target nation. Social media, given its level of interactivity compared to television, emerged as a preferred medium for confirmation of conditions in the target nation to further ground their decisions on migration. Furthermore, social media was extensively used as a means of integration into the American society.

Al Yousufi (2019) piloted his study on the role of social media journalists in TV news: their effects on profession and identity of TV journalism, the quality of news, and the audience engagement. The study found most of the surveyed journalists believed that the role of social media journalists (SMJ) is consistent with the general principles tethered to the professional identity of journalists. For that reason, the study argue that espousing the role of SMJ has become an inevitable fashion in social media-embedded newsrooms. The research documents that many TV news channels have broadcast misinformation spread on social media. Furthermore, it unfolds that far less attention has been paid in many TV newsrooms to the potentiality positive and beneficial utility of the role of SMJ concerning audience engagement.

Basher (2018) on his study to investigate social media on higher learning institutions found that Google classroom application depends on Google documents and cloud storage and Gmail mail service to accomplish the required functions, research and follow-up with academic development of the students. However, it depends on tools provided for teachers that allow them to publish the assignments, home works, and questionnaires and get answers from students in real time. Higher learning institutions

should play a strong role in fostering social cohesion, reducing inequalities and raising the level of knowledge, skills and competences in society. Therefore, educational institutions should aim at maximizing the potentiality of individuals in terms of their personal development and their contribution to a sustainable and democratic knowledge based society. The students who enter, participate in and complete higher education learning institutions at all levels must reflect the diversity of the populations and be able to complete their studies without obstacles related to their social and economic background. Consequently, the efforts to provide adequate services for students, create more flexible learning pathways into and within higher learning institutions; and widen participation at all levels equal opportunity must continue.

Kolan & Dzandza, (2018) their study on Effects of Social Media on Academic Performance of Students in Ghanaian Universities: A case study of University of Ghana, Legon. The study revealed that students of Ghana are well exposed to social media networks; all 197 respondents use one social media platform or the other. All respondents are on Facebook and WhatsApp. Other social media platforms used by the students are twitter and Instagram. Students mainly use social media for chatting and downloading the pictures/videos while they are lowly used social media for academics.

Queder & Abousaber (2018) studied on the impact of social media usage on student academic performance: University of Tabuk an example. The study revealed that online social media had improved the communication between the faculty member staff and the students which facilitate the communication of the correct information and improve the understanding and the development of the ideas and the courses. The use of social media during the lecture time is not recommended from most of the respondents. YouTube and Twitter are the best social network that improve the educational process.

Zachos *et al.,* (2018) conducted a study that was carried to assess social media use in higher education. The study found positive impacts in learning processes (support educational processes, communication and collaboration enhancement, academic performance), from the side of students and educators, the users' personality profile and learning style; the social networks as online learning platforms (learning management system); and their use in higher education.

Kasika (2017) his study was carried out to ascertain the use of social media to enhance collaborative learning in Tanzania high learning institutions. The study found that Tanzania, higher learning students' use social media for collaborative learning. The nature of use included sharing learning materials during and off class hours among groups. However, the study found students collaborating with peers purposely for acquiring new knowledge and skills.

Liang (2017) conducted study on comparing social network sites (SNS) usage among African college students in the USA and Tanzania. The study found differences in SNS use between the two student groups, including their general SNS usage, Facebook uses, and motives to use Facebook. African students in Tanzania were more likely to use SNS for utilitarian purposes in school word and professional advancement. African students in the USA, however, mirrored their peer American students and used SNS as a social communication tool.

Lubua *et al.,* (2017) their study was carried out to evaluate factors affecting the use of social media in the learning process. The study reveals that social media offer a good platform for the learning process. Necessary effort are required to enhance the perception of users on the usefulness of social media, and improve their awareness of

security issues because they relate with the adoption of social media. Similarly, the complexity of social media relates with the adoption. Finally, the study found that an ease of use platform enhances the adoption.

Mpepo (2017) studied on impact of social media on interpersonal communication relationships amongst couples in Tanzania: A case of Dar es Salaam region. His study found 80 percent of couples spend four hours of their time per day for communicating through social media while 20 percent do not. The study also showed that there is positive impact of social media on interpersonal communication relationships amongst couples.

Boating & Amankwaa (2016) their study was carried out to appraise the impact of social media on student academic life in higher education. The study reveals that social media is widely used by students of higher institution. Similarly, the study found that participants are in support of the idea that social media contribute a significant quota to the development of their academic life.

Adesope & Ogan-Charles (2015) their study was carried out to ascertain the perception of students on the use of social media for educational purposes. The study found that social media is used for educational purposes in terms of communication, sharing and exchanging ideas with improved engagement with technology. The study also revealed that SM is frequently used for interactions with friends for classroom assignment, communication in and outside classroom, promoting interactions during lectures, promoting informal learning, enhance course grades, facilitating language exchange, video conferencing, creating room for educational and video sharing.

Apeanti & Danso (2014) their study was carried out to determine social media on students of Winneba University of Education. The revealed that students believed that it would be fun for their lecturers to use social media. They also added that their grades would be better if they could contact lecturers through social media and lecturers should hold lecture hours on social media.

Barasa (2014) carried out a study to review social media as an effective advertising tool in Kenya. The study sought to provide an analysis of current commercial social media usage by critically evaluating the most effective ways to utilize social media platforms as advertising tools in Kenya. Meanwhile, the study found how Kenyans can use this platform effectively for marketing and communications to achieve maximum results. Kenyan companies know about social media and understand its importance but only a few know the most effective way of using this medium as an advertising tool.

Beqiri (2014) piloted study on the impact of social media on higher education in Kosovo. The study found that there was an increase of social media usage within the students of higher education in Kosovo. The study also found that social media had an impact and was considered as an effective tool by students about study related activities (activities related to subjects, research, group activities, projects, internship, etc.) and positive influence when it comes to communication and interactivity among them.

Domizi (2013) carried out a study on social media in graduate students in which they were told to use Twitter and weekly post tweets in order to extend discussions of classroom. It was discovered that students used tweeter account to connect with their content and with other students. However, the study remarked that tweeter was useful personally and professionally.

Shambare *et al.,* (2012) conducted a study on social networking site habits among students. Their study indicates that the most commonly SNS used by youths is Facebook that is most widely used by a large number of community members. The study also discovered that SNS have multiple effects on students' life. The high speed and quickly approach to internet and the development of smartphones technology are most important drivers behind the adoption and connectivity with social networking websites. Finally, the study concluded that SNS contributes to the enhancement of the level of students' knowledge.

Yunus & Salehi (2012) carried out a study to assess students' benefit from social networks in various education institutions. The pointed out that in higher learning institutions students gained more vocabularies. They also improved their writing skills as a result of their participation on social networks including Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp and Tweeter.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

Figure 2.1: A Link between Distance Learning Facilities, Social Media and Higher Learning Institution

Social Media as Learning Facilities

-MOODLE

-Internet forum

-Google

-LinkedIn

Learning Outcome

-Bachelor degree

-Master degree

High Learning Institution Management

The Open University of Tanzania
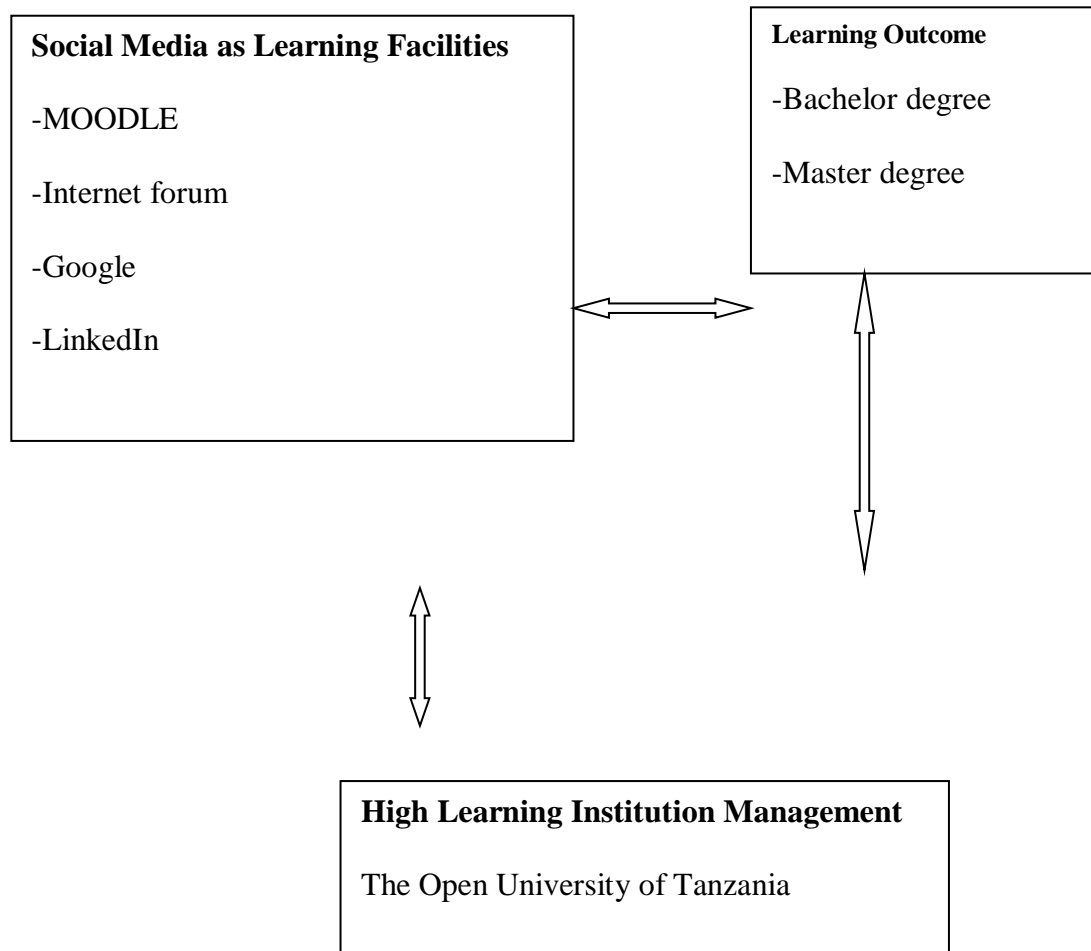
Source: (Researcher, 2021)

2.5.1 Social Media

In this framework, the social media are independent variables that comprise of MOODLE, Internet forum, Google and LinkedIn. The present study attempts to bridge the gap by providing basis for a thorough and insightful discernment of social media and student's academic development of higher learning Institutions.

2.5.2 Learning Outcome

These are regarded as dependent variables. Distance learning facilities plays an important role in an individual placement, be it in the academic institutions or job placement. Due to this, many people are concerned with the ways they can enhance their distance learning facilities. The emphasis on academic excellence which is also prevalent worldwide has encouraged many studies about the conditions promoting it. The role of distance learning facilities as one of the predictors of one's life success and also in the aspect of academic placement in higher institutions as well as the level of employability in one's career is inevitable (Kyoshaba, 2009).

2.5.3 Higher Learning Institution Management

In this conceptual framework, high learning institution management is regarded as moderating variable. Distance learning facilities, which is measured by teaching and learning process is one of the major goals of a university. Higher learning institutions are established with the aim of imparting knowledge and skills to those who go through them and behind all this is the idea of enhancing distance learning facilities (Hoyle, 1986).

2.6 Research Gap

With respect to the aforementioned studies, the researchers had studied on the ways with which social media affect student academic performance at higher learning institutions. Yunus & Salehi (2012) concentrated on higher learning Institution that students gained more vocabulary and improved their writing skills as a result of their participation on social networks such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp and Twitter. Moreover they stated that the exchange of assignments, resources and discussions on academic work and other issues on social networks among students this study is much differentiated with other theoretical, geographical and methodological. Furthermore, there is still an

urgent need to address the problem of not using social media in academic arena especially in higher learning institutes because of the importance of social media. Therefore, this study dealt with assessment of the contribution of social media as distance learning facilities particularly at the Open University of Tanzania; in Dar es Salaam City to fill the gap.

2.7 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter explored the literature related to the study. It has given the theoretical literature based on the Social Information Processing and Media Equation Theories. The empirical literature reviews were mostly drawn from Africa. However, the conceptual framework was based on variables of interest in this study. It also described the research gap. Finally, the next chapter presents the methodology of the study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter is about the methodological issues regarding this study. It begins by presenting the research design that adopted by study at hand, followed by study location and presentation of the case study. Further, population of the study, the research sample size and sampling techniques used to identify the participants of the study was discussed. Thereafter, the chapter presents the data collection methods and data analysis. Finally, the chapter winded up with a section on validity and reliability.

3.2 Research Design

The study made usage of a descriptive approach to probe both quantitative and qualitative forms so that the general strength of a study brought post-measurement of alteration. The aim of this research design was to acquire information from respondents, which could be analyzed, patterns extracted from it and comparison of variables made (Creswell, 2014). In this context, the research design is a structure of the research, which is used to show how all the major parts of the research project work together and try to address the central research question. As such, the design includes an outline of what the researcher did from the beginning to the final analysis of data. In this study the researcher used the descriptive design because the nature of this study is to make analysis of social media as distance learning facilities at the Open University of Tanzania.

3.3 Study Area

The study was conducted at the Open University of Tanzania (OUT) headquarters which is located in Kinondoni Municipal Council, Dar es Salaam City. The Open University of Tanzania was selected for study because it provides distance learning whereby the students use much social media in learning comparing to those campus universities which uses blackboard in Tanzania. Therefore, the Open University of Tanzania is posed to be a good case for measuring level of social media and student's academic development of higher learning Institutions. More than that, the researcher is more conversant with the study location in terms of solicited people in order to facilitate data collection since the research employed case study methodology. Thus, selection of the setting done was based on convenience and suitability (Saunders *et al.,* 2016).

3.4 Target Population

The target population of this study was the first degree and master degree students. The selected respondents were interviewed from different parts of the country. However, the study targeted the key informants who were the Lecturers of different academic careers; and the Information and Communication Technologies' workers from OUT headquarters involved to get reliable information, data and records. Both the students and the key informants helped the researcher to determine the types of social media which were mostly used. They also helped to examine the students' challenges of using social media as learning facilities within a particular institution. Finally, they helped to find out the impact of social media on as learning facilities. The targeted population selected to the extent that these people have had experiences on contribution of social media as distance learning facilities.

3.5 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

This study combined both purposeful and simple random sampling as the techniques of getting samples of the study. Purposeful sampling was used in identifying lecturers and ICT workers as the key informants in the study area. Simple random sampling was used to get a representative sample of students' population. The sample size comprised of 120 respondents who grouped as follows: 100 OUT higher learning students of post graduate and undergraduate and 20 OUT academic staffs. 100 students were selected in order to get the sample size through the use of questionnaires.

3.6 Data Collection Methods

This study employed the following tools of data collection: -

3.6.1 Interview

Interview was used to collect views from the key informants in order to get comprehensive information on the topic at hand. Interview method used face-to-face interviews to the purposeful selected respondents to directly seek their opinion as advocated by Kothari (2014). The key informants in this study included the OUT headquarter administrators, Lecturers and ICT workers. In this process of collecting data, the interviews were guided by semi-closed questionnaires.

3.6.2 Questionnaire Survey

According to Kothari (2014), the use of questionnaire is one of the most common data collection tools employed in research works. Questionnaires were used as it was relatively cheap when a large sample used as recommended by Mugenda & Mugenda (2003). The questionnaire contained both closed and open ended questions. Questionnaire gave the respondents the ability to air their view while guided by the question. Using a questionnaire, each respondent of the randomly selected

student was interviewed on social media as learning facilities, challenges of using social media as learning facilities, impact of social media; his/her hours spent on social media daily and usage of social media website. With this method, information on social media as learning facilities such as MOODLE, Internet forum, Google, and LinkedIn were established. However, dependent variable that is the learning outcome which comprise the bachelor and master degrees; and the moderating variables such as the higher learning institution management including the Open University of Tanzania on the other hand were involved.

3.6.3 Secondary Sources of Data

Secondary data was collected to obtain further insights on the topic from such documents such as the published and unpublished dissertations, books, reports, newspapers, and journal articles, in this study involved the Open University of Tanzania main library, reports, past theses, journal and articles. Others were policy documents, internet, website and social media; teaching and learning resources and other resources retrieved from the Internet. Such data helped the researcher to make critical analysis on the problem under investigation. Finally, this method enabled the researcher to confirm and validate the information provided by the respondents during the conducted study through questionnaire surveys.

3.7 Data Analysis

The study used both quantitative and qualitative data analysis that was done from individual responses who were randomly sorted in order to develop objective knowledge that aimed at generalizing independent and dependent variables. The nature of data was simulated and grouped coherently with the research objectives; and research questions were structured. The data collected was summarized by using frequency tables, pie charts and bar graphs for easy management and interpretation. In this study quantitative

approach will be used in statistical data analysis. Data that extracted from hard copies was entered into software (SPSS version 20) and Microsoft Excel used to draw tables and charts. These was used because it gave incredible capabilities and flexibilities of analyzed huge data and generated unlimited scale of results (Kothari, 2014).

3.8 Validity and Reliability

Validity refers to the extent to which the concept on wishes to measure is actual being measured by a particular scale or index (Saunders *et al.,*2016), the extent account accurately and represents the phenomena to which it refers. As regarding to the logic of qualitative research, two methods are suggested for validation that is, triangulation of data and methods and respondent validation. Also, Saunders *et al.,* (2016), explained that, respondent validation is important for improving validly in a study involving qualitative data and analysis. In this study validity of instruments were improved by using pilot study in order to assess the clarity of items controlled. Alteration was made where the instruments were found to be insufficient thus clear instruments were applied during the actual field research survey. Validity in this study was done by confirming that data analysis, interpretation and discussion together with inferences, conclusions and recommendations was made on the basis of collected data to make the study suitable and expressive. Finally, the use of quantitative approach helped to demonstrate validity and open up new perspective about the topic under investigation.

According to Kothari (2014), reliability is the extent to which results are consistent over time. Results are referred to as reliable if the same results can be produced under a similar methodology the research instrument are considered to be reliable. There was the use of triangulation of methods in data collection. The methods that employed were questionnaires, interview and documentation. As regard to pre testing of questionnaires

and interview guide, there is high degree of stability on the data, and high degree of reliability. Yet, in this study, the researcher attempted to gather accurate, complete and consistent so as to get relevant findings. However, data reliability was safeguarded by using multiple sources of data including questionnaires, interview, observation and secondary data. Conversely, data obtained was compared to similar data available in order to ensure reliability. It was confirmed by using SPSS software version 23 with the assistance of Microsoft Excels for coding and analyzing data.

3.9 Ethical Consideration

Permission to conduct the research was obtained from relevant authorities. The researcher prepared questionnaires, made reconnaissance, prepared instruments for data collection, made actual visit. Throughout the research study, the researcher avoided everything that would cause discredit on him and the respondents. The aim of ethics in research is to ensure that no one is harmed or suffered adverse consequences from research activities. This was arrived at by complying with all ethical principles. For instance, the principle of voluntary participation that required people not to be coerced into participating in research was adhered to informed consent whereby research participants were fully informed about the procedures and the importance of the study. Confidentiality was maintained where the researcher made sure that information obtained from the respondents is kept secretly and this even guaranteed by not even allowing them to show their identity on the filled questionnaires. However, the numbers were used instead of names to ensure privacy.

3.10 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter has dealt with the research methodology and procedures that were used to collect and analyze data from the field. The study was conducted at the Open University of Tanzania. The study sample incorporated 120 representatives. The data were collected

in form of qualitative, quantitative and secondary method. The nature of the study facilitated the researcher to make triangulation of data collection techniques, analysis and presentation to be organized. The findings and results were presented by using frequencies, tables, percentages and graphs. The next chapter deals with research findings and results.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the profile information of respondents and analysis of the contribution of social media on Students' academic development at higher students learning institutions at the Open University of Tanzania. However, it was the intention of this study to apply Social Information Processing and Media Equation to predict the contribution of social media on students' academic development in higher learning institutions. These were tied to series of questions related to their respective objectives.

4.2 Profile Information of the Respondents

In the study profile characteristics of respondents that were considered involves gender, age category and level of education. The variables were important to this research as they provided the basis for comparison with other variables studied in this research on social media and academic development. The study sample had 120 respondents and data was collected from printed questionnaires and others from Google Docs form.

4.2.1 Gender of the Respondents

The results in Figure 4:1 shows that men have a great representation than women, where among all people social media and distance learning facilities at the study area 69 percent were males while 31percent are females (n=120). However, it indicated that most of the people in which respondents were drawn are men as opposed to women.

Figure 4.1: Gender of the Respondents
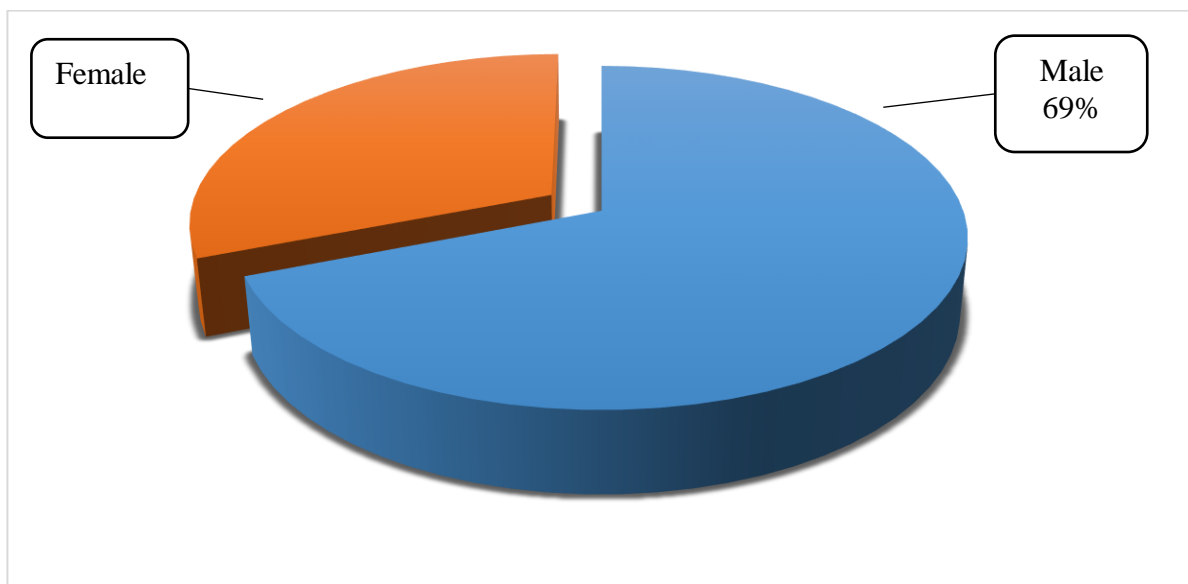
Source: (Field data, 2021)

4.2.2 Age of the Respondents

The findings indicated that majority of respondents 61percent (n=120) were mature belong to the age group of 31-35years followed by a group of young and energetic persons aged between 21-30years who occupied 21percent (n=120). Also, the age group between 36-40years occupied12percent while the minority of respondents were age group between 41-45years occupied 6 percent (n=120). This implies that most respondents in higher learning Institutions particularly at the Open University of Tanzania were youth who were students and staffs. However, from illustration in Figure 4.2, this shows that the age is not a significant factor in contribution of social media as distance learning facilities in area of study. Further, this study proves that all groups are necessary but the active people for contribution of social media as distance learning facilities are those of age between 31-35years.

Figure 4.2: Age of the Respondents

Series1	21-30	31-35	36-40	41 and Above
	21	61	12	6
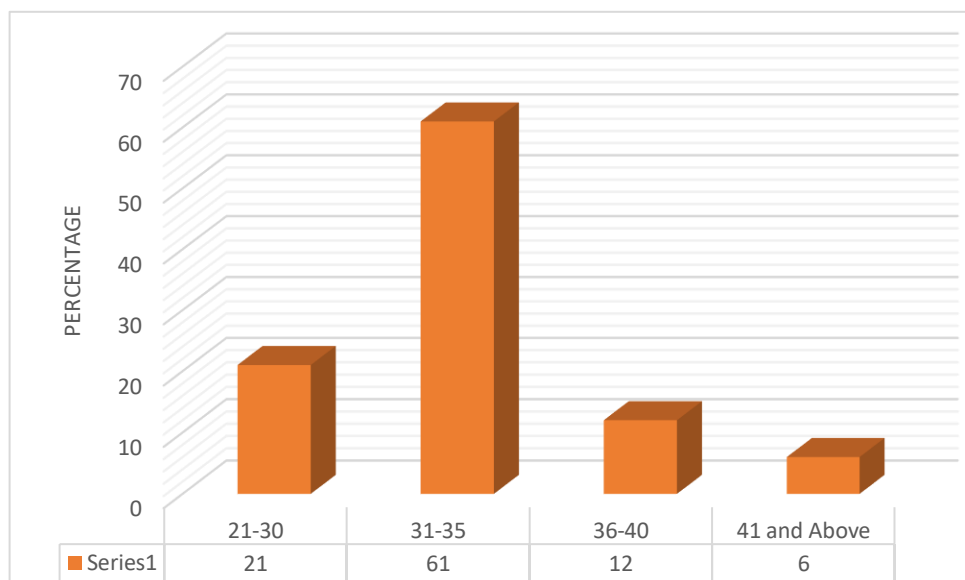
Source: (Field data, 2021)

4.2.3 Education Level of the Respondents

The results show that 83 percent were students and holders of bachelor's degree and 17percent were postgraduate/master's degree holders (n=120). The findings show that most of the respondents were degree holders. The results also indicate that education level is considered a noteworthy aspect in the use of social media at the Open University of Tanzania. This substantiates that all level of education groups are compulsory but the active people for use of social media in academic development are those students and holders of 1st degree. However, this point out that proper utilization of social media in academic institution stimuluses proper education process.

Figure 4.3: Education Level of the Respondents
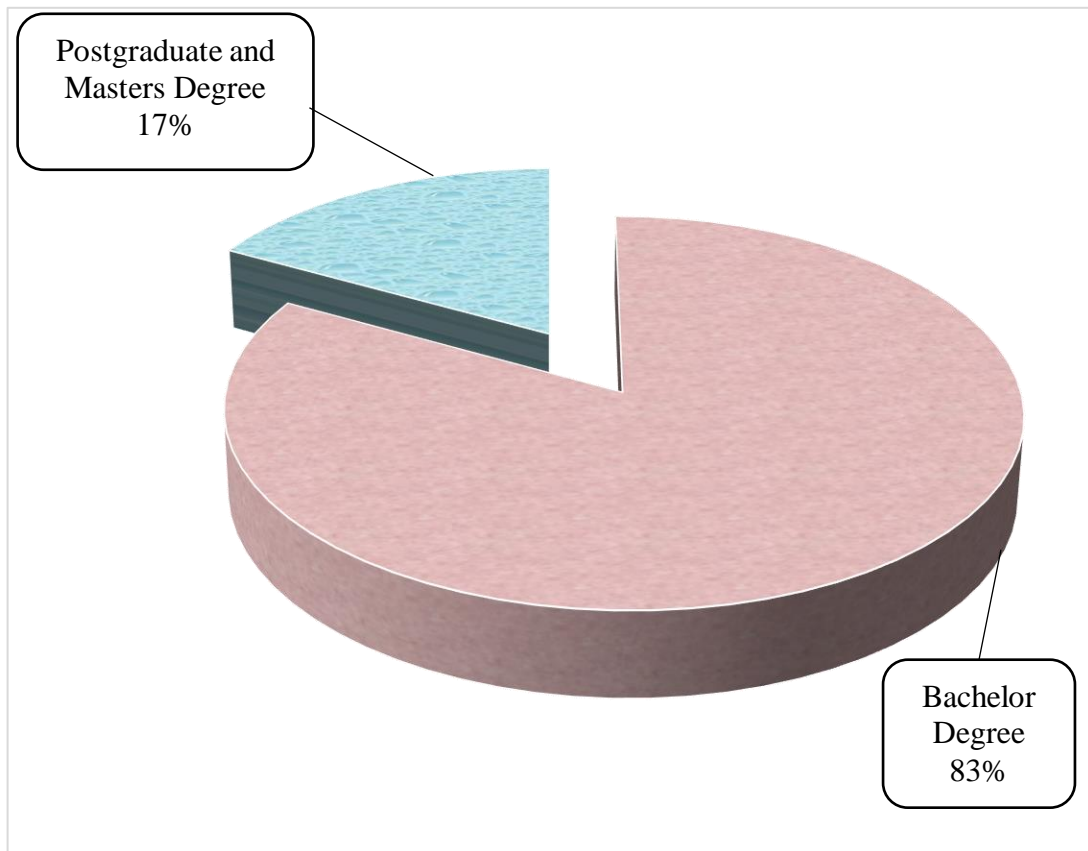
Source: (Field data, 2021).

4.2.4 Sample Size Distribution of the Respondents

The population distribution of the respondents at the Open University of Tanzania where data was collected show that most of the respondents were students who occupy 83 percent (n=120) and the staffs were 17 percent (n=120) as it is shown on Table 4.1

Table 4.1: Sample size Distribution of the Respondents

Respondents	Frequency	Percent
Students	100	83
Staffs	20	17
Total	**120**	**100**

Source: (Field data, 2021)

4.3 Objective One: Social Media used as Learning Facilities

The study intended to determine the types of social media used as learning facilities at the Open University of Tanzania. *Social information processing and Media equation were consecutively identified* through Internet forum, Google classroom, MOODLE; and LinkedIn. The Open University of Tanzania had numerous social media used to meet distance learning facilities in education arena. The respondents were asked to name social media used to meet academic development at their respective institution. As it is revealed on Table 4.2, the result show that the majority of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed on the use of Internet Forum by 30 percent (n=120). Also, the majority of respondents disagreed on the use of both Google Classroom and LinkedIn by 40 percent (n=120).

Finally, the majority 70 percent agreed on the use of MOODLE. This can be inferred that on social information processing, the majority of people at the OUT mostly use MOODLE as distance learning facility while they are slightly using Google Classroom and LinkedIn. Further, in relation to media equation most of people at the OUT had made to order the MOODLE to the magnitude, followed by Internet Forum that they had seen it just the way they had observed human beings contrary to Google Classroom and LinkedIn.

One of the key informants remarked that, *Lecturers use MOODLE as distance learning facility to teach students in the classrooms where computers are used for teaching and learning. Meanwhile, during the research students could obtain relevant information through internet forum to obtain relevant information.*

The findings in Table 4.2 are consistent with the Open University Vision of reaching more students with life-changing learning that meets their needs and enriches society. According to the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic), MOODLE is the most social

media used to communicate between Lecturers and the Open University of Tanzania students. However, it is considered to be the mutual social media for effective E-learning that allow the Internet users to create personal profiles, invite others to join the site, access the profiles of other users, share information (text, pictures, videos, and other links from the other sites), and send emails as well as instant messages to each other and again the site owner controls access to the site. In a nutshell the findings have the implications that intensive application of Social media at higher learning Institutions at the Open University of Tanzania resulted into improved students' distance learning facilities in terms of masters/postgraduate and bachelor degrees.

During the interview, one of Open University staff made some comments about social media.

MOODLE is everything at the Open University of Tanzania because we make registration for examinations, everyone gets his/her results through social media, we also provide assignments; and we can make face to face through social media.

Table 4.2: Percentage Distribution of Social Media used to meet Learning Facilities

Declaration	Social Media used to meet Learning Facilities									
	Category of Response and Percentage									
	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree		Total	
	Respondent	%	Respondent	%	Respondent	%	Respondent	%	Respondent	%
Internet Forum	24	20	24	20	36	30	36	30	120	100
Google Classroom	12	10	48	40	36	30	24	20	120	100
MOODLE					84	70	36	30	120	100
LinkedIn	48	40	48	40	12	10	12	10	120	100

Source: (Field data, 2021)

4.4 Objective Two: Students' Challenges of using Social Media as Learning Facilities

The study aimed to examine students' challenges of using social media as learning facilities at the study area. *Social information processing* was successively used to examine students' challenges of using social media such as Crowd sourcing effect, Online information overload, Emotional barriers, Requires time and dedication; and Difficulty management and digital identity. These students' challenges of using social media as learning facilities were drawn from a documentary review. As it is revealed on Table 4.3, the results showed that the majority 45 percent (n=120) of the respondents agreed on Crowd sourcing effect. The results on Online information overload indicated that the majority, 40 percent of the respondents (n=120) agreed. The results on Emotional barriers shows that the majority of respondents, 41 percent (n=120). On the concept of requires time and dedication, 42 percent of the respondents (n=120) agreed. However, on Difficulty management and digital identity concept, respondents agreed and strongly agree by 35 percent (n=120). From these results it can be inferred that the

majority of the respondents accepted reasons for students' challenges of using social media as learning facilities at the OUT.

During the interview one of the respondents said that, *I always face social media challenges particularly during the period of study near examination period where every student need to access materials from social media.*

Table 4.3: Percentage Distribution of Students' Challenges of using Social Media as Learning Facilities

Category of Response and Percentage						
Declaration	1.Strrongly Disagree	2. Disagree	3. Not sure	4. Agree	5. Strongly Agree	Total
Crowd sourcing effect	10%	15%	10%	45%	20%	100%
Online information overload	8%	10%	12%	40%	30%	100%
Emotional barriers	9%	8%	8%	41%	34%	100%
Require time and dedication	8%	7%	8%	42%	35%	100%
Difficulty management and digital identity	9%	9%	12%	35%	35%	100%

Source: (Field data, 2021)

4.5 Objective Three: Impact of Social Media on Learning Facilities

The study designed to find out the impact of social media on learning facilities at the OUT. This study used both *Social information processing and Media equation* contents to find out the impact of social media platforms on learning facilities, hours spent on social media platforms daily; and usage of social media platforms. The impact were outcomes implemented in the respondents' society through exercise and responsiveness. The respondents replied by indicating five points of Likert scale.

Table 4.4 demonstrates the scenario on the level of students' academic development at the OUT. The findings indicated that the majority of the respondents 54 percent (n=120) strongly agreed that social media are effective tool for E- learning for students. This implies that at the OUT, Social media platforms had high positive impact on learning facilities. On the concept of using social media helps you to access academic material any time, the majority of the respondents 42 percent (n=120) agreed. This can be inferred that both Staffs and students at OUT use Social media as the working tool in their daily teaching and learning activities. Also, it implied that the Social media are so useful to high learning institutions especially at the OUT whereby most of their classes are long distance learning. These findings were consistent with the Open University of Tanzania Facts and Figures 2018/2019 retrieved from www.out.ac.tz which showed that the majority of students are distance learners.

From Table 4.4 the findings displayed that the majority of people, 45 percent of the respondents (n=120) agreed on the idea that social media helps them to participate in the forum effectively. These findings implied that Social media have positively impacted learning facilities. In relation to the concept of engagement in academic forum on social media increases understanding of the topics discussed in the class. The results implied that the majority, 48 percent of the respondents (n=120) agreed. This is an indicator of positive impact of Social media on learning facilities at the OUT.

For the moment, on the perception of group discussions on social media yield good results as far as academics are concerned. The results showed that the majority, 40 percent of the respondents (n=120) agreed. This can be inferred that Social media at the OUT would result into improved learning facilities in terms of master and bachelor degrees. However, on the conception of the usages of social media for research has

helped for academic development. This showed a positive impact of social media on learning facilities since 45 percent of the respondents (n=120) agreed. The implication of this impression is that, the magnitude to which the effect of a percentage increase in Social media would cause shift of learning facilities progress.

On the perception of social media are affecting the way of speaking or writing in students life. The results showed that the majority, 43 percent of the respondents (n=120) agreed. This can be inferred that social media are positively affecting students' learning facilities hence improvement of academic development. For the idea of social helps to accomplish and submit their assignments timely. The results can be inferred that the majority, 46 percent of respondents (n=120) agreed on the notion that social media helps to accomplish and submit assignments timely.

This also implied that the more Social media are emphased and acted upon accordingly the more learning facilities would increase. Finally, the respondents were asked if they used material that had gotten from social media to complement what had been taught in class. The results showed that the majority, 50 percent of the defendants (n=120) agreed. This can be inferred that the students' grade points at the OUT were enhanced through using social media. This also implied that social media were regularly used at this institution. The findings in Table 4.4 are consistent with those by Mpepo (2017) who found the positive effects of the social Media among interpersonal communication relationships amongst couples in Tanzania.

Table 4.4: Impact of Social Media on Students' Learning

KEY: 1= Strongly Disagree   2= Disagree   3= Not sure   4= Agree   5= Strongly

      Agree

Impact of Social media	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Social media are effective tools for E learning for students	2%	3%	1%	40%	54%	100%
Using social media helps you to access academic materials any time	11%	10%	7%	42%	30%	100%
Social media helps you to participate in the forum effectively	6%	10%	9%	45%	30%	100%
Engagement in academic forums on social media increases your understanding of topics discussed in class.	5%	5%	6%	48%	36%	100%
Group discussions on social media yield good results as far as my academics are concerned	8%	5%	9%	40%	38%	100%
The usage of social media for research has helped for academic development	6%	4%	5%	45%	40%	100%
Social media are affecting the way of speaking or writing in students life	7%	8%	7%	43%	35%	100%
Social media helps to accomplish and submit your assignments timely	5%	5%	6%	46%	38%	100%
I use materials gotten from social media to complement what I have been taught in class.	5%	6%	4%	50%	35%	100%

Source: Field data (2021)

4.5.1 Hours spent on Social Media daily

The respondents were asked to name the number of hours spent daily on social media. As it is revealed on Table 4.5, the results indicated that the majority 60 percent of the respondents (n=120) at the OUT including staff members and student spend about 3-5 hours on social media daily. This was followed by those who spend about 1-2 hours

represented by 28 percent (n=120), while 10 percent spend 6-8hours and the minority, 5 percent spend more than 8hours. These results typically indicated that at the OUT only a few of students spent much on social media daily. The findings in Table 4.5 are consistent with those by Beqiri (2014) who found that 62% of university students in Kosovo were spending 10hours per week and 6% spent more than 20hours per week.

Table 4.5: Percentage Distribution of Time (Hours) spent daily on Social Media

Time (hours) spent daily on Social Media					
Time (hours)	1 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 8	More than 8	Total
Number of Respondents	30	72	12	6	120
Percentage	25%	60%	10%	5%	100%

Source: Field data (2021).

4.5.2 Usage of Social Media Website

As for the conception of usage of social media website, the majority of people, 60 percent of the respondents (n=120) in the study area were using 3-5 types of social media websites. These are followed by 16.7 percent of the respondents who were using 1-2 types of social media websites while 10 percent (n=120) of the respondents were using 6-10 types of the social media websites. However, 8.3 percent of the respondents were using 11-20 types of the social media websites while the minority who occupied 5 percent of the respondents (n=120) were using more than 20 types of the social media websites This can be inferred that the majority of the respondents spent not more than five social media websites while the minority had access of using more than twenty social media websites in their vicinities.

Table 4.6: Percentage Distribution of Social Media Usage

Social Media Websites Usage						
Social media Website	1-2	3-5	6-10	11-20	More than 20	Total
Number of Respondents	20	72	12	10	6	120
Percentage	16.7	60	10	8.3	5	100%

Source: Field data (2021)

4.6 Summary of the Chapter

The present chapter has dealt with the study findings and results. This chapter particularly dwelt on descriptive analysis of sample characteristics as well as the quantitative of the study variables. The data presentation and analysis focused on testing the three research questions to achieve the desired objectives of the study. The qualitative analysis was used to examine the relationship of the interested variables.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents conclusions basing on the research findings and analysis presented in chapter four. Finally, the chapter presents recommendations for administrative actions and recommendations for further studies.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

From the findings it was discovered that the majority of the respondents were males while the minority were females. This indicates that there were gender inequality of students' enrollment at Open University of Tanzania. This gender inequality could be caused by inferiority of women in studying journalism and media at the highest level cadre since the number of men surpasses women. The study findings also showed that, the majority of the respondents belong to the age group from a group of young, energetic and productive, the presumed mature age; and the middle age and above. The study answers showed that the majority of learners at the Open University of Tanzania were learning bachelor degrees and very few were learning postgraduate/master degrees.

The study determined MOODLE to be the most social media that was used to meet learning facilities at the Open University of Tanzania while LinkedIn was leastly used. Meanwhile, crowd sourcing effect, online information overload, emotional barriers, requires time and dedication; and difficulty management and digital identity were examined as students' challenges of using social media as learning facilities. Finally, the study found out that the majority of the respondents spent 3-5 hours spent daily in social media; and the minority spent more than 8 hours.

5.3 Conclusion

The findings of the study revealed that some of the social media have contributed on learning facilities at higher learning institutions in Tanzania. The evidence also showed that most of people didn't access some of social media hence those social media became poor distance learning facilities.

The first objective of this study determined the type of social media used as learning facilities at the Open University of Tanzania. The study concluded that the majority of people are regularly using MOODLE in academic career. Consequently, considering that MOODLE has become an active social media for people to interact each other in academic career, the contribution of MOODLE is of paramount importance for leaning facilities. Internet forum is also widely used while a half of the population were using Google Classroom; and the study has shown that the majority of people were minimally accessing LinkedIn. From these findings it can be concluded that LinkedIn type of social media is poorly used as distance learning facility.

The basis of objective two was to examine students' challenges of using social media as learning facilities at the institution of Open University of Tanzania. The study has shown that the challenges included the Crowd sourcing effect, Online information overload, Emotional barriers, Requires time and dedication; and Difficulty management and digital identity. From these findings, the study concluded that the majority of people at the Open University of Tanzania are mostly facing all of these challenges of using social media as learning facilities and they are considered to be the major students' challenges of using social media as learning facilities.

The final objective of this study was to find out the impact of social media on learning facilities. These included the following: social media are effective tool for E- learning for students, using social media helps you to access academic material any time, using social media helps to access academic material any time; and engagement in academic forums on social media increases understanding of topics discussed in class. Others comprises group discussions on social media yield good results as far as my academics are concerned, the usage of social media for research has helped for academic development, social media are affecting the way of speaking or writing in students life, social media helps to accomplish and submit your assignments timely; and I use materials gotten from social media to compliment what I have been taught in class.

Most of people accepted all of these impacts. This implied that at the Open University of Tanzania, Social media had positive impact on learning facilities. In relation to hours spent on social media daily. The study on this concept concluded that at the Open University of Tanzania most of the people spent 3-5 hours and only a few of them use more than 20 websites. The study concluded that most of people at the Open University of Tanzania used 3-5 social media website on learning facilities.

5.4 Recommendations about the contribution of social media as distance learning facilities.

This study recommends the following:-

❖ Students at the OUT should actively engage in LinkedIn and increase the utilization of Google Classrooms as distance learning facilities in order to reduce overdependence on a few source.

❖ Since education is a modernized and socialized tool that enhances raising awareness, exchange of information and communication, it should be provided to

the university students in order to reduce crowd sourcing effect, reduce online information overload and reduce emotional barriers. Education should also be provided in order to reduce time consumption and dedication; and remove difficulty management and digital identity.

❖ The OUT administration should introduce, supervise and control the accessibility of new social media in order to reduce the challenges of using the available social media as learning facilities. However, the OUT administration should put more emphasis on the use of social media that were poorly accessed.

5.5 Recommendation for Further Research

The study looked on the contribution of social media as distance learning facilities a case of Open University of Tanzania; the researcher suggests further area to be researched on social media and students' academic satisfaction; social media and students' academic development. Finally, it can be researched on social media and online learning.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1:

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS AT OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA

Dear Sir/Madam

My name is Ruth Jonathan Kyelula, a student pursuing a postgraduate of Mass Communication at the Open University of Tanzania (OUT) the research proposal is part of my course for the fulfillment of the award of master's Degree of Mass Communication. You are kindly requested to respond to these questionnaires to help me to accomplish the study topic of "**THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON STUDENTS ACADEMIC PERFOMANCE, A CASE OF OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA".**

Therefore, you are kindly requested to participate in this study by filling this short form. The information being looked for is only for academic purposes. It is not for any other use, under no circumstances will this information be given out to any person or institution. There is no need to provide your name.

SECTION A [GENERAL INFORMATION]

Please tick (√) your appropriate choice in the boxes provided.

Name of your Center ………………………………………………………

1. Gender

Male ☐ Female ☐

2. Age [year]

21 - 30 ☐ 31-35 ☐ 36 - 40 ☐

☐

41 - 45 ☐   46 – 50 ☐   Above 50

3. level of education

Certificate ☐   diploma ☐   6 Bachelor ☐   Postgraduate ☐

4. How long have you been using social networking sites?

a) Less than 6 months

b) 6 month-1 year ☐

c) 1 yr-5 years

d) More than 5 years

5. How many hours do you spend on social networks daily?

a) 1-2 hours

b) 2-5 hours

c) 8 hours ☐

 d) More than 8 hours

6. How many social networking websites do you use?

a) 1-2

b) 2-5 ☐

c) 5-10

d) 10-20

e) More

SECTION B [SPECIFIC ACADEMIC]

ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Table 3.3 below interpreted keys of likert scale scores

Mean range	Response mode	Score	Description
1.00-1.75	Strongly disagree	1	Very low
1.76-3.25	Disagree	2	Low
2.56-3.25	Neutral	3	Moderate
3.20-4.00	Agree	4	High
4.01-4.75	Strongly Agree	5	Very High

Source: Research (2019)

Please tick or circle your most appropriate answer to the following questions.

1. Which of the following social media do you mostly use?

(a) you tube (b) slide share (c) Moodle (d) whatsApp (e) Facebook (f) Twitter (g) All

   of the above (h) none of them

2. Which of the following social media do you use mostly in communicating with

   lecturers?

(a) you tube (b) slide share (c) Moodle (d) whatsApp (e) Facebook (f) Twitter (g) All

   of the above (h) none of them

3. What kind of social media do you use to do your assignments and to get materials and

   other interactions?

(a) you tube (b) slide share (c) Moodle (d) whatsapp (e) Facebook (f) Twitter

4. Which of the type of social media help students to get materials easily online?

(a) you tube (b) slide share (c) Moodle (d) whatsapp (e) Facebook (f) Twitter

5. Which kind of Social media do you prefer in online academic discussions?

a)Skype   b) viber c)Linkedin d) Snapchat e) You tube f) Moodle

6. Which kind of Social media do you use to get information to do your assignments?

a) Wikipedia   (b) Google   (c) Quora   (d) QQ   (e) Tumblr (f) WhatsApp

7. Which of the following social media are mostly preferred by OUT students? (Respond

by circle the most preferred)

Skype Viber   Linkedin   Snapchat   You tube Google

Wikipedia   Quora Tumblr   WhatsApp Facebook   QQ   Slide

shareTwitter   Moodle   My Space Yahoo Messenger

STUDENTS ACADEMIC PERFOMANCE

Please respond to the options and kindly be guided with the scoring system below,

Please tick your or circle most appropriate answer in the boxes provided

1. Are social media helps you to accomplish your assignments timely?

(a) Yes

Why Yes……………………………………………………………………………….

 (b) No

Why No………………………………………………………………………………

(c) Neutral d) don't know

2. Do social media help you to submit your assignments on time?

(a) Yes

Why Yes …………………………………………………………………………….

(b) No

Why No……………………………………………………………………………….

(c) Sometimes (d) don't know

3. In using social media helps you to access academic materials any time?

(a) Yes

Why Yes

…………………………………………………………………………………….

 (b) No

Why No

…………………………………………………………………………………..

 (c) Neutral (d) Sometimes

4. Are social media helps you to participate in the forum effectively?

(a) Yes

Why Yes ……………………………………………………………………………..

(b) No

Why No

…………………………………………………………………………………….

(c) Not sure (d) All of them

5. Does engaging in academic forums on social media increases your understanding of

topics discussed in class.

(a) Yes

Why   Yes

……………………………………………………………………………………

 (b) no

Why No

……………………………………………………………………………………………

 (c) Neutral (d) don't know

6. Group discussions on social media yield good results as far as my academics are concerned.

(a) Yes

Why Yes ………………………………………………………………………….

(b) No

Why No …………………………………………………………………………

(c) Neutral   (d) Sometimes

CHALLENGES OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON STUDENTS ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Please respond to the options and kindly be guided with the scoring system below, Please tick your or circle most appropriate answer in the boxes provided

1. Is there any good infrastructure on accessing social media to both students of rural (regions) and urban areas?

a) Yes

Why Yes

………………………………………………………………………………….

 (b) No

Why

No…………………………………………………………………………………

 (c) Neutral d) none of above

2. Do you meet the deadlines of submission of assignment to the social media?

(a) Yes

Why Yes …………………………………………………………………………….

(b) No

Why No…………………………………………………………………………………

(c) Sometimes (d) never

3. Social networking sites have been helpfully to shape your career?

a) Yes

Why Yes ……………………………………………………………………………

b) No

Why No …………………………………………………………………………..

(c) Neutral

4. Is social media helping you to disseminate knowledge to your class mates/colleagues?

a) Yes

Why Yes …………………………………………………………………………….

(b) No

Why No

…………………………………………………………………………………..

(c) Sometimes (d) Never

5. Do you have the necessary competence to use social media for your academic work?

a) Yes

Why Yes …………………………………………………………………………..

 (b) No

Why No…………………………………………………………………………..

(c) Neutral

6. Does spending too much of your time using social media affect/impact on your academic life?

a) True

Why True ………………………………………………………………………….

b) Not true

Why Not True ………………………………………………………………………

c) Don't know (d) sometimes

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA

STUDENTS (OUT)

1. Groups and pages related to academics are created by scholars on moodle helps students   in   their   studies? Discuss……………………………………………………..............

2. Is it flexible to focus on work by logging into Moodle as it helps students to remain in contact and interact with classmates?

If yes how…………………………………………………………………………

4. Students from regional centers are they affected with the system of using moodle in their academic activities?

Please explain………………………………………………….

5. Do you use whatsApp and Moodle to disseminate knowledge to your class mate?

If yes how? Explain..

6. Do you use materials from social media sites to accomplish what you have been taught by your lecturers? If yes explain why…………………………

7. Do you think using social networks helps you in your studies by any means? If yes how? Explain..

Thank you very much for your corporation and contribution

APPENDIX 2:

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA

ACADEMIC STAFFS

Dear Sir/Madam

My name is Ruth Jonathan Kyelula, a student pursuing a postgraduate of Mass Communication at the Open University of Tanzania (OUT) the research proposal is part of my course for the fulfillment of the award of masters Degree of Mass Communications. You are kindly requested to respond to these interview guide questionnaires to help me to accomplish the study topic of "**THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON STUDENTS ACADEMIC PERFOMANCE, A CASE OF OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA**".

Therefore, you are kindly requested to participate in this study by filling this short form. The information being looked for is only for academic purposes. It is not for any other use, under no circumstances will this information be given out to any person or institution. There is no need to provide your name.

Section A: General information

Position …………………………….…………………………………………………...

How long have you been in service in this University? (Please indicate in years) ….

………………………………………………………………………………………….

SECTION B [SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES]

SOCIAL MEDIA

1. Do the students use social media in the academic activities?

    (Yes or no)……………………………………………………………………..

2. If yes/no, what types of social media are mostly usages by your students? Please list

down

………………………………………………………..……………………………………

………………………………………………………………..

…………………………………………………….…………………………………………

3. Does social media have any contributions/significant to student academic

performance please mention them if any.

…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………..

STUDENTS ACADEMIC PERFOMANCE AT THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF

TANZANIA

4. Which ways are you using to communicate with your students?

Explain how………………………..

5. Do you think MOODLE help students of the Open University of Tanzania to achieve

higher academic performance than face to face sessions?

Please explain how? ……………………………………………………………

6. Do students participate fully in discussion forums in the MOODLE?

Yes ( ) or no ( )

If yes how please Explain……………………………………………………

CHALLENGES OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON STUDENTS ACADEMIC

PERFORMANCE

7. Does the Social networking sites act as an effective tool for E- learning for students in

your opinion, explain

…………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………

8. In your experience do you think usage of social media to students has any advantage
to them?

If yes explain……………………………………………………………………

9. Does the social l media helps the students submit their assignment in MOODLE on
time?

If yes explain…………………………………………………………….

Thank you very much for your corporation and contribution