UTILIZATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA FOR CRISIS MANAGEMENT: THE CASE OF PROCTER AND GAMBLE DURING THE ALWAYS SANITARY TOWELS CRISIS IN KENYA

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A Thesis submitted to the Department of Communication Studies in the Faculty of Business, Computer Science and Communication Studies in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for the Award of the Degree of Master of Arts in Communication Studies of St. Paul's university

2021

DECLARATION

This thesis is a product of my own work and is not the result of anything done in collaboration. It has not been previously presented to any other institution. I agree that this proposal may be available for reference and photocopying at the discretion of the University.



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS vi
LIST OF FIGURES vii
LIST OF TABLES viii
TERMS DEFINITIONS ix
ABSTRACT xi
CHAPTER ONE 1
INTRODUCTION 1
1.1 Background to the Study 1
1.1.1 Global Perspectives of Crisis Management 4
1.1.2 Regional Perspective on Crisis Management 5
1.1.4 Proctor and Gamble Company in Kenya 8
1.2 Statement of the Problem 11
1.3 Objectives of the study 13
1.3.1 Main Objective 13
1.3.2 Specific Objectives 13
1.4 Research Questions 13
1.5 Justification of the study 14
1.6 Significance of the Study 15
1.6.1 The National Government 16
1.6.2 Researchers and Academics 16
1.6.3 Companies 17
1.7 Scope 17
1.8 Limitation of the study 18
1.9 Assumptions of the Study 18
CHAPTER TWO 19
LITERATURE REVIEW 19
2.1 Introduction 19
2.2 Theoretical Framework 19
2.2.1 Situational crisis communication theory 20
2.2.2 Social-Mediated Crisis Communication Model (SMCC) 20
2.3 Conceptual Framework 23
2.4 Review of Variables 24

2.4.3 Online Crisis Management 30
2.4.4 Message Content 31
2.5 Empirical Review 32
2.5.1 Forms of Social Media 33
2.5.2 Social Media Audiences 33
2.5.3. Online Crisis Management 35
2.5.4 Message Content 35
2.7 Summary 36
3.1 Introduction 38
3.2 Research Design 38
3.3 Target Population 38
3.4 Sample and Sampling Technique 39
3.5 Data Collection Instruments 40
3.6 Pilot Testing 41
3.6.1 Validity of Research Instruments 41
3.6.2 Reliability of research instruments 41
3.7 Data Collection Procedure 41
3.8 Data Analysis 42
3.9 Ethical Consideration 43
CHAPTER 4 45
DATA PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS 45
4.1 Introduction 45
4.2 Response Rate 45
4.3 Demographics 45
4.4 Social media platforms used for online management of the Always Pads crisis 52
4.5 Influence of online audience on the Always Pads crisis management 54
4.6 Social Media Strategies for Crisis Management 56
4.7 Messaging used by P&G during the crisis 60
4.8 Discussion 61
4.9 Summary 62
CHAPTER FIVE 63
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS 63
5.1 Introduction 63
5.2 Summary 63
5.3 Conclusions 65

5.4 Recommendations.....67
5.5 Suggestions for further study.....67
REFERENCES 68
APPENDIX 1:..... 73
APPENDIX 2..... 74
APPENDIX 3..... 75
APPENDIX 4..... 77
NACOSTI PERMIT..... 77
APPENDIX 5..... 78
ST. PAULS UNIVERSITY LETTER 78

ABBREVIATIONS

NDMF	:	National Disaster Management Framework
EU	:	European Union
NEMA	:	National Emergency Management Agency
SEMA	:	State Emergency Management Agency
LEMA	:	Local Emergency Management Authority
P&G	:	Procter & Gamble Co
SCCT	:	Situational crisis communication theory
SMCC	:	Social-Mediated Crisis Communication Model

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1 Social Mediated Crisis Communication Model 22

Figure 2.2 Conceptual Framework 24

Figure 4.1 Age Of Respondents.....46

Figure 4.3 Social Media Platform Usage.....47

Figure 4.4 Frequency Use Of Social Media.....48

Figure 4.5 Research On Social Media 50

Figure 4.6 Social Media Platform.....51

Figure 4.7 Influence By Social Media To Purchase 52

Figure 4.8 Preferred Social Media.....54

Figure 4.9 Effect Online Response.....55

Figure 4.10 Choice Of Strategy 56

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1: Procter and gamble social media presence 9

Table 4.3 Perception by respondents……48

TERMS DEFINITIONS

Crisis Definition

Coombs (2006) defines a crisis as an unpredictable event. This is a major threat that, if handled improperly, can adversely affect an organization, industry, or stakeholder.

Crisis Management

“Crisis management is a proactive process which involves dealing with the crisis before it happens, during the crisis and the aftermath. It is designed to prevent or lessen the damage a crisis can inflict on an organization and its stakeholders and diminish the negative outcomes of crisis” (Zamoum & Gorpe, 2018).

Crisis Response strategies

Ki and Brown (2013) identified three components of an effective crisis response strategy, which the organization defined as speaking after the crisis was imminent. The first component is that a successful response needs to provide information that shows how to physically protect yourself in a crisis situation with stakeholders. Secondly, response must avail coordinating, to communicate to stakeholders what happened along with a description of the incident that caused the crisis. Finally, the organization can timely direct and coordinate information with stakeholders and then manage their stakeholder reputation through response.

Crisis Communication

Crisis communication has been described as a way of passing information that is used by organizations before, during and after crises (Farha, 2015).

Social Media

Social media is defined as a group of platforms that have been designed on the internet as applications with the ability to create and exchange content generated by users based on ideas and Web 2.0 based technology (Farha 2015).

Influential Social Media Creators

An influencer is a social media person with a loyal audience who is inspiring, fun, informative, and shares content that connects with followers. This direct communication line allows influencers to create social dialogue, guide participation, and ultimately set trends among accepting and socially savvy viewers (Media kix, 2021). Social media influencers can have a blog with a trusted audience or a social media account to provide their subscribers with interesting specific content.

ABSTRACT

The Study sought to examine the utilization of social media in crisis management, using Procter and Gamble's Sanitary product, Always Pads, as a case study. Objectives that guided the study are (i) to find out the social media platforms used for online management of the Always Pads crisis by Procter and Gamble in Kenya, (ii) to examine how online audiences influenced the Always Pads crisis management by Procter and Gamble in Kenya, (iii) to determine the online crisis management strategies used for the Always Pads crisis by Procter and Gamble in Kenya, (iv) to determine the message content used for the Always Pads crisis management by Procter and Gamble in Kenya. The study was hinged on the situational crisis communication theory, the Social Mediation Crisis Communication (SMCC) model and the Framing theory. Qualitative research design was adopted in the research. The target population was St. Paul's female students. 25 female students were interviewed. The qualitative data was then analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings indicate that particular social media platforms were preferred as a medium of crisis management, this being Instagram, the study also found out that WhatsApp ranked as the most common medium of social media communication. There was the realization that from the age groups interviewed, ages 21-30 were more accessible to share their information concerning menstruation and how crisis management relating to sanitary pads is best tackled through engaging with the audiences. There were specific crisis management strategies that online audiences also identified with, including the use of social media influencers, direct engagement, and community service. The study recommends that when handling online communication crisis, companies should use a multi-pronged approach whereby they use as many social media platforms as possible and several messaging strategies at the same time. Further research is necessary in organizations that have strict policies on using social media as a formal mode of communication.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Crisis and reputation management experts agree that, among other dangers, the crisis poses a threat to an organization's reputation (Barton & Davies as cited in Coombs & Holladay, 2006). In a study conducted by Dent, Woo and Cudworth (2018), a company's confidence in its crisis management capabilities does not always match its level of preparedness. The respondents further noted that the magnitude of crises are becoming more intense as the world becomes more dynamic (Dent,2018) . Crisis situations are rare, important, impactful, ambiguous, urgent, and share six high-risk characteristics (Zamoum & Gorpe, 2018). In this case, the basic values of the organization/system are threatened and require critical decisions. It has a volatile impact on the organization and stakeholders, and one or more issues during this period are expected to grow in error or procedure (Zamoum & Gorpe, 2018).

Crisis management is a proactive process that involves dealing with crises before, during and after the crisis. It aims to prevent or mitigate the damage that a crisis may cause to the organization and its stakeholders, and to mitigate the negative consequences of the crisis (Zamoum & Gorpe, 2018). One of the main platforms currently used to manage crises is the social media platform described in depth in this article.

Social media is quickly becoming a medium in which a crisis both erupts and is a medium that can be used for the crisis management process. Crisis management is effective when maintaining or resuming operations, so the organization can maintain or regain the necessary core activity momentum, transform input into an output level that meets key customer needs, and minimize the loss of the organization and external stakeholders, you can learn from it. The occurrence of such a lesson will continue into future events (Pearson

and Claire, 2008). The use of social networks to respond to and manage crises has become a new global phenomenon (Kaewkitipong, 2012). Due to the limited amount of research conducted to determine the importance of social networks as the most effective means in times of crisis, many companies have decided not to adopt a crisis strategy. (Derani & Naidu, 2015)

Social networks allow for widespread dissemination of information during extreme events, even before responsible officials such as emergency management agencies arrive at the scene to help or resolve the situation (Stieglitz, 2018). Emergency Management Agencies include organizations such as the Kenya Red Cross Society of Kenya. Emergency Management Agencies are among the examples that may need to embrace the potential that social media has in crisis management and its potential in escalating and deescalating a crisis. Social media and the growing social media community have become powerful and promising solutions for crisis and emergency management. Past crises have shown that social media and mobile technologies used by citizens and public services have contributed to post-crisis relief efforts (Flizikowski, 2014). Despite these advantages, there are many warnings about the quality of information in crisis reports provided by online citizen volunteers (Oh, 2013).

Measuring Crisis Management

Organizations rely on different metrics to measure crisis management. The methods include threat readiness, team capability, infrastructure readiness, and past performance. The metrics then define crisis management response by companies at the internal and external levels (Paine, 2011). Threat readiness denotes the capacity of an organization such as P&G in handling different internal and external threats. The events comprise black swan incidences due to their unpredictable and expected nature. The organization should prepare for social

media and cyber threats that have to change the way companies plan as well as contain their attacks (Farazmand, 2014). An organization's readiness to deal with threats varies with the degree and availability of the resources.

Infrastructure readiness is another effective metric for measuring crisis management in an organization. Organizations should indicate their command centers, supplies, and the technology in place to handle the crisis (Coombs & Holladay, 2012). The presence of P&G on social media is proof that they have a critical model in place to respond to customer complaints and publishing information to sensitize the target audience. The infrastructural readiness, for instance, on social media should underline the effort made to manage public expectations. However, continuous review of the infrastructure is imperative due to the ever-changing nature of the online crisis on social media platforms.

According to Paine (2011), team capability further comprises a viable measure for crisis management. An organization should have a team with leadership, facilitation, and execution skills guided by the crisis at hand. The overseeing institution or customers can rate the work of each team member or the group in general. Team capability is a viable metric for measuring crisis management because it underscores the competence and aptitudes of the teams. On the other hand, an organization such as P&G complements the team capability with the results of the past performance in similar or different incidences, exercises, or events (Coombs & Holladay 2012). Consequently, the measurement of crisis management guides teams to set priorities and assembling groups to handle the crisis at hand.

The effect of social media frenzy on the P&G Always Campaign underlines the need for establishing a crisis management plan for social media platforms. Many companies lack an explicit model to guide their response to social media crises (Coombs & Holladay, 2012).

However, the basic components of the crisis management plan for different social media sites include social media policy, account security, social listening programs, scheduled posts, and engaging the users advancing the negative buzz towards a brand (Farazmand, 2014). The plan should comprise guidelines, the latest contact information, and preapproved content such as images, information, and messages for engaging groups or specific influencers on social media. Additionally, an organization engages the customers based on the experiences and detailed public relations plans.

1.1.1 Global Perspectives of Crisis Management

When conducting research to effectively respond to and manage emergencies caused by disasters in crisis situations, it may lead to loss of legitimacy and lead to system breakdown; it can cause chaos and lead to crises with far-reaching effects and uncontrollable results. Researchers in Sweden and the Netherlands work with public agencies to upgrade national and EU-level emergency plans and crisis contrasts. It includes a variety of activities, including direct observation and in-depth assessment of key crisis management tasks, risk assessment and crisis planning support, and extensive training and exercise programs. This form of knowledge transfer is essential to facilitate organizational learning and plays an important role in complementing other hardware-oriented decision support systems (Hart & Sundelius, 2013). The interest of the experience of many crisis management scholars was generally limited to earthquakes, tsunamis, floods, and major natural disasters such as hurricanes and large-scale terrorist attacks. However, a crisis can also occur in an organization as result of various aspects, with our focus being on organizations.

In 2009, two employees of the Conova franchise, North Carolina, uploaded to YouTube a video of them doing nasty things on a sandwich, but Domino's Pizza was implicated in a viral attack. The video soon went viral, Domino's Pizza immediately plunged into a

complete social media crisis. During this time, Domino's Pizza had no social media presence. According to some people, Dominos handled the situation in about 48 hours, but this is too long. The video in question played close to a million times before being deleted, a situation that had already done serious damage to the brand. The rogue employees were charged with felony charges for distributing prohibited food. An apology from the company's president, Patrick Doyle was recorded and uploaded on YouTube (Doyle, 2009).

British Airways also faced a social media crisis when it used Twitter to share a video that chief executive Alex Cruz apologized in response to an IT failure that left hundreds of passengers stranded at Heathrow and Gatwick airports. Instead of suppressing the adverse reaction, the tweet developed a new wave of anger among disgruntled passengers.

British Airways did not explain the cause of the IT failure, suggesting it was human error. The situation couldn't be saved, especially considering the brand's late response on social media (Gilliland 2017).

1.1.2 Regional Perspective on Crisis Management

In a report carried out by Rohwerder (2015) it was clear that the Ebola crisis in West Africa made the need for effective crisis management clear. In the report, Rohwerder was looking at Crisis management models in Africa. While it is clear that crises such as floods and other natural disasters must be addressed, she noted, there are other crises that need management to reduce their impact. Little is known about how these weather crises are being managed by the government. Descriptive information is provided for many national crisis management models that address natural disaster anomalies. However, there is little evaluation of how these crisis management models actually work in the context of crises such as public chaos, political unrest, and epidemic.

Regionally, countries have put in place disaster and crisis management agencies, Nigeria set up the National Disaster Management Framework (NDMF) (Rohwerder, 2015). The NDMF was intended to address implementation gaps and increase efficiency and effectiveness of disaster management in Nigeria. Agencies have been set up to deal with disasters at a State, National, Country and Federal Level. South Africa established a Disaster Management Center in 2003. The National Disaster Management Center has been established in 8 provinces, with disaster management centers and consultation forums.

South Africa also adopted the Hyogo Framework for Action (2005-2015) a global blueprint for disaster risk reduction efforts with a ten-year plan, adopted in January 2005 by 168 Governments at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction (Prevention Web, 2005). In October 2015,a viaduct under construction on the M1 Freeway in Sandton, South Africa collapsed on the freeway. Foot collapse is another example of how a social media platform played a part in the rescue process during a crisis situation. Construction company Murray & Roberts did not use social media platforms to communicate with relevant stakeholders, but citizens tried to express their views and anger about the collapse through social media. The city of Johannesburg used social media with the mayor to keep residents calm and understand the pending situation and provide alternative routes for traffic diversion (Ramluckan, 2016).

Local Perspective on Crisis Management

The Kenyan Government was also one of the governments that adopted the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 aims to "build the nation's and community's resilience to disasters" by strengthening disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels. Gakunga (2013) in a study that looked at “Crisis Communication Approaches in the Public Sector; A Study of selected government Ministries in Nairobi Kenya” pointed out that,

Public relations departments in government ministries are categorized as support functions alongside others such as human resources, planning, procurement, accounts, finance, information and communications technology departments. However, even if the device is present, the government's communication performance in times of crisis does not reflect effective management. In many cases, governments seem to react after the crisis is mainly reported by the media. There is a clear lack of a coordinated crisis communication plan with officials giving opposing positions on the same issue.

Kenyatta National Hospital in Kenya was faced with claims of women in the maternity wing being raped as they went to feed their babies who were placed on another floor (Boyani, 2019). There was an uproar on social media after an alleged patient posted on Facebook, on a page noted as ‘buyer beware’ famous for exposing rogue service providers, merchants, and companies. This spilled over to Twitter with numerous people, mostly women chiming into the conversation with gory stories of their experience in the hospital. This reflected poorly on the hospital’s leadership. To manage the outrage the then Chief Executive Officer, Lily Koros, spoke on the issue and commented that the messages doing rounds on social media, of the rape of mothers who’ve only recently given birth, were being made in bad faith (Mbuthia, 2018).

On August 2013, Jomo Kenyatta International Airport in Nairobi was trending on social media as a result of a fire incident. The Ministry of Interior and Coordination went live on social media and mainstream with hourly updates concerning the incident. The Kenya Airports Authority were equally updating citizens and its passengers. Kenya Airways, a national carrier, used the platform to issue a statement and update its passengers about the cancellation of all its flights. Kenya Red Cross also took to social media to update the nation at large that no passenger or staff at the airport was affected by the inferno and updated ‘Nairobi Airport Closes as Fire Crews Tackle Blaze' in 2013.

G4S, a leading global integrated security company specializing in the provision of security products and solutions, was embroiled in a controversial crisis when a group posing as security personnel made away with 80Million Kenya Shillings that was to be collected from Co-operative Bank headquarters and later fed to various ATMs in the Kilimani area. They used a van that they had painted with G4S colors to collect the money and later abandoned it in Upper Hill. The Bank realized that the money had been stolen when the genuine G4S employees turned up later to collect the money. The Communications manager, Dan Okoth later issued a statement confirming the incident, and confirming Cooperative Bank had lost the money to fraudsters (Ombati, 2010).

1.1.4 Proctor and Gamble Company in Kenya

Also known as Procter and Gamble, Procter & Gamble Co. is a US multinational consumer goods company headquartered in Cincinnati, Ohio founded in 1837 by British-American William Procter and Irish American James Gamble. In Kenya Procter and Gamble will be installed in Nairobi with a small staff. were. Procter and Gamble has been providing reliable brands to Kenyan consumers since 1992. The organization's portfolio includes products such as Pampers, Always, Safeguard, Gillette, Vicks, Oral B and Ariel. Procter And Gamble products reach more than 4 billion people worldwide. Mainly specializes in large-scale detergents, personal hygiene products and hygiene products (Khan, 2017).

Procter & Gamble (P&G) is one of the world's leading consumer products companies, operating in Africa since the early 1990s. The company has grown, with more than 300 brands in its product portfolio and offices in 80 countries worldwide.

Procter And Gamble in its 2019 annual report breaks down its global business divisions. These divisions are divided into ten product categories. These product categories are summarized into five reportable sectors: beauty; cleanliness; hygiene; fabrics and home

care; and baby, women familiarization, and familiarity. Under Feminine and family care the product that this research seeks to feature is classified under feminine care that reported 27% of net sales and 23% of net earnings which was the second largest percentage in comparison to the rest of the segments. This segment was second to Fabric and Homecare which houses laundry products and air care products (Procter & Gamble, 2019). It is important to note that Procter &Gamble has competitors like, Kimberly-Clark (Kotex Kenya) Unilever, L'Oréal, Colgate-Palmolive, Dabur, and Avon who are also expanding their business and showing innovation in their products as well as establishing their presence in Kenya.

Procter and Gamble have an online presence as illustrated in Table 1. Below:

Procter & Gamble		
Social Media Site	**Followers**	**Social media Handle**
Facebook	5.6 million	@proctergamble
Twitter	211.7 thousand	@proctergamble
YouTube	43 thousand	P&G (Procter & Gamble)
Instagram	132 thousand	@proctergamble
LinkedIn	4.3million	Procter & Gamble

Table 1.1: Procter and Gamble social media Presence

Source: Author

The case study of P&G was chosen due to diverse reasons. Primarily, the engagement on the social media platform Twitter indicates the reliance on online communication to understand and manage a crisis. The crisis indicated the sale of low quality Always despite the dominance of the brand in a key mass market in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). According to Kimeria (2020), the loss of positive brand image meant a subsequent loss of at least 65% of the market share for menstrual hygiene products. The users underline the PR disaster by sharing the low-quality products and comparing them with the same in the UK, US, and

other developed markets. The company failed to address the comments and complaints from the affected customers despite increasing their product offering and facing possible litigation (Gamonde 2019). P&G showed low accountability for the society through which it was expected to commit to quality health and sanitary pads.

Social media presence is determined in numbers, many organizations work towards building up an audience. Procter and Gamble's Facebook presence is about 5.6 million which, compared to its other social media sites, records the highest number of followers. This number represents individuals. The next social media site is LinkedIn with 4.3 million followers. LinkedIn is a social media site for working professionals and normally work-related content is shared on this site. The third social media site that Procter and Gamble has an account on is Twitter with 211.7 thousand followers, with twitter being a more vibrant site for sharing news in a short straight to the point fashion. Followers can then retweet tweets meaning an account can reach double its initial followers. Procter and Gamble has an online presence on Instagram as well with 132 thousand followers. On this site, information is shared in pictorial and video form, with not too much room for interaction except 'Direct Messages' and 'Comment' section of a picture, it also provides a space for promotional material, through 'Instagram TV' and 'Instagram Stories'. Finally, the company also has a YouTube account that primarily focuses on sharing content in video form and comments for interaction. In 2019, a popular hashtag #MyAlwaysExperience appeared on the Twitter timeline. The first tweet in this thread came from Kenyan activist Schaeffer Okore, who talked about huge and painful rashes, itching, strong burning sensations, and unpleasant smells - citing these as the characteristics of her use of Always pads. The first tweet collected 77 retweets and 112 replies. Procter & Gamble initially tried to deny claims that some women's pads were problematic, and the social media campaign gained attention. One of the resources shared by those who used tweets at the time was a 1996 study in the

Canadian Medical Association Journal that investigated the association between contact dermatitis and the use of Always Pads.

Twitter is a popular platform for companies and customers such as Kenyan women with apparent dissatisfaction with Always pads. The platform generates much-needed buzz for the companies, which then shape their engagement and response agenda (Burton and Soboleva 2011). On the other hand, the choice of social media by women underlines the value they associate with the fast responses and dedicated engagement with the companies. Gunarathne, Rui and Seidmann (2017) established that companies are more likely to increase positive feedback through Twitter more than any other social media platform. Overall, the choice of Twitter and frequent use by women shape the crisis management plan. Twitter shapes both reactive and interactive crisis management approach against frequent users such as women.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Web 2.0 technology and social networks are important platforms for organizations, which can not only respond in the fastest and most direct way, but also spread information to audiences around the world (Farha, 2005). Web 2.0 is a term for today's interactive Internet as opposed to static internet that was being used in the 1990s. With these illustrated technological advancements, how a crisis rolls over is greatly dependent on response time, crisis management systems that are put in place in the pre-crisis stage, during the crisis and post crisis by said institution/organization.

While conducting a study on trends in corporate crisis communication management (Ngugi, 2014) highlighted that it would be best in case of an online crisis with an example of the Domino Pizza online crisis, to fight viral with viral. Derani (2016) conducted a study on the impact of utilizing social media as a communication platform during a crisis within the oil

industry with a case study on British Petroleum. This study found out British Petroleum had neglected to harness social media to share information about the oil spills and fire incident that rocked the organization. To avoid damaging the image of the organization through negative feedback resulting from such communication failures, this well-known established oil and gas company makes effective use of social media, it is encouraged that the organization get closer to the stakeholder who is at stake. Kote (2013) conducted a case study of G4S Kenya Limited, a study on the role of social media in crisis communication for Kenyan security companies. This study confirmed that the G4S, Kenya Communication Strategy, more specifically, does not implement social media in crisis communication. It recommended G4S Kenya prioritize the use of social media to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of crisis communication.

Crisis management strategies play a critical role in how a social media crisis is handled. Knowledge on what the appropriate social media platform to be used in any social media crisis is also key in the crisis management process. This study sought to investigate the social media crisis response strategies used by Procter and Gamble via social media. It also sought to analyze the effect the crisis management strategies had on the reputation of the organization and potentially the interaction between the consumers and the product. Previous studies and research projects have mainly surrounded navigating crisis types such as natural calamities, humanitarian crises, economic crisis, and even political crises. Despite this, there is a gap in terms of research that seeks to examine how crisis management via social media has been addressed with the case of Procter and Gamble sanitary products, the Always pads. This research in Kenya sought to find out how use social media was used in relation to approaching a crisis in relation to menstrual health. This study therefore sought to fill the existing gap in research by examining how Procter and

Gamble utilized social media during the Always Sanitary towels crisis in Kenya and the impact it had on social media users.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The study sought to address the following objectives:

1.3.1 Main Objective

The main objective of the study was to determine the utilization of social media by Procter and Gamble during the Always Pads crisis in Kenya.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

The study was guided by the following specific objectives:

i. To find out the social media platforms used for online management of the Always Pads crisis by Procter and Gamble in Kenya.
ii. To examine how social media audiences influenced the Always Pads crisis management by Procter and Gamble in Kenya.
iii. To determine the online crisis management strategies used for the Always Pads crisis by Procter and Gamble in Kenya
iv. To determine the message content used for the Always Pads crisis management by Procter and Gamble in Kenya.

1.4 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research objectives:

i. What social media platforms were used for online management of the Always Pads crisis in Kenya?

ii. How did social media audiences influence the Always Pads crisis management by Procter and Gamble in Kenya?

iii. To what extent were the online crisis management strategies used for the Always Pads crisis management by Procter and Gamble in Kenya?

iv. What message content was used for the Always Pads crisis management by Procter and Gamble in Kenya

1.5 Justification of the study

A crisis is a make or break for most if not all organizations. Organizations need to understand the importance of social media and why senior management should include crisis response strategies as they serve as policy makers. The world is using social media as its primary source of information and switching to it as its primary tool of communication regardless of geographical boundaries or cultural differences. In crisis situations, you need to develop comprehensive and international best practices to help your organization use social media effectively. There is need to attach value to an organization's online presence and the capability of solving a crisis through these platforms. There is little research on determining the importance of social networks as an effective means during crises, which leads many companies to decide not to adopt this crisis strategy (Derani & Naidu, 2015).

The study was therefore to identify what social media platforms are available and the power that they harness in crisis management. The study also explored new resources used in crisis management on social media, as there's very little study on using social media influencers as a way of managing a crisis and maximizing on their online presence. Despite the limitations of the research, social media influencers on networks such as Instagram are especially valuable, as 74% of consumers will seek advice from social networks before making a major purchase. The study explored the effectiveness of the crisis management

strategies employed and the impact it had on the organization. Effective and efficient crisis communication with stakeholders reduces negative perceptions and threats to the reputation and image of the organization (Derani & Naidu, 2015).

The horror experiences from different Twitter users under the hashtag #MyAlwaysExperience underscored the extent of the crisis. Personal experiences rather than the hearsay from the social media users revealed the lopsided production and sale of flagship menstrual pads to the Kenyan market (Kimeria, 2020). The horror stories revealed persistent complications by the loyal customers of P&G, who confirmed their fears when they revealed predictable patterns. The women revealed their experimentation with other brands, which stopped the painful rashes, itching, excessive burning sensation, and the unpleasant odors after using Always pads during menstruation (Ombaka, 2019).

Key influencers and experts compounded the crisis that downplayed the outlook of Always as one of the leading P&G's brands in Kenya. For instance, Dr. Njoki Ngumi observed the pervasive issues of illnesses triggered by the supposedly low quality Always pads. The expert contributed to the buzz further by detailing how the company has assumed the periods, flow, and bodies of the affected women drive the symptoms rather than the product (Okore, 2020). Another influencer compared the experience with the brand in the UK and US by detailing how Always did not affect their bodies as much as they did with the same product in Kenya. The influencers shaped debate and firsthand experiences with the feminine hygiene brand that increase risks of cancer, infertility, and severe ulcerations by triggering vaginal itching and odors.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study intended on serving as an insight for companies, the government researchers and companies that have their operations in Kenya and beyond. It was intended to provide

information for the parties that were interested in formulating sustainable and realistic crisis response strategies such as:

1.6.1 The National Government

The national government has incorporated disaster management strategies that deal with crisis that result from natural disasters. However, looking back at the Kenyatta National Hospital crisis, it shows that it needs to diversify its scope and include all angles, amongst them social media. Having an elaborate crisis response strategy that deals also with spheres that could possibly disrupt governance is worth giving a shot. This study, through the process of interviews, gave the government information on the mind of consumers and what they hope for in the event of a crisis, therefore a chance to create appropriate crisis response strategies with resources such as social media and Web 2.0 platforms.

1.6.2 Researchers and Academics

As academicians and researchers continue to conduct studies and further dive into understanding crisis and crisis management, Kenya has a limited number of studies showing how social media can change the realm of crisis communication and relevance of new media versus traditional media. This study can potentially provide space for continuation of research on social media, social media theories and models.

The research was to enhance the conceptual understanding of how companies have used social media to respond and solve their crisis. According to Okore (2020), P&G did not outline an elaborate campaign to counter the arguments and complaints raised by the customers on Twitter. The company prioritized changing the product offering rather than outlining a clear crisis management approach on social media. Consequently, the findings were to shape the value of social media platforms for companies seeking to advance online management for improving brand image as well as engaging aggrieved customers. The

research clarified the model for online audiences and various crisis management options for firms such as P&G. The findings affirmed the right message content and crisis management strategies and the subsequent communications options for local as well as international firms. The management process prevents the crises from escalating to the mainstream media, which would damage the offline outlook of the brand.

1.6.3 Companies

Companies also benefit from this study as a major part of crisis management involves companies from customer complaints, to faulty goods to poor services, companies have the bulk of responsibilities when it comes to preparing for a crisis.

The study was intended on serving as a look book for companies that have their operations in Kenya and beyond and are interested in formulating sustainable and realistic crisis response strategies. It aims at equipping companies with knowledge on the Kenyan market and their attitude when utilizing social media during a crisis. The study was to serve as a drill for potential crisis in the Kenyan market and other countries when it comes to consumer goods and how best to use social media.

1.7 Scope

The study focuses on the female population in Nairobi county in Kenya. The respondents to be interviewed are 25 female students from St. Paul's University who are aged between 19-45. The choice of female students is a result of women having interacted and used sanitary towels. The sample population of 25 is to decrease any chances of vague answers. The

social media platforms that were to be reviewed included Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. The interviews were to be conducted over a period of 30 minutes and the interviewing period was to be conducted within two months.

1.8 Limitation of the study

The study is to be conducted through case study approach. The data gathering method being interviews. There is therefore a likelihood of opinions being withheld because of the myths and taboos associated with talking about menstruation and menstrual heath. However, the respondents will be given interview guidelines that will protect their identity, enabling them to share their responses at ease. The interviewer will also be female to maintain privacy and reduce on the chances of the interviewees shying off.

1.9 Assumptions of the Study

The research assumes that the research model outlined in the study to explain crisis management and utilization of social media applies to the Kenyan setting.

The study further assumed that Twitter was the widely used platform by women who complained about the low-quality Always pads and their complications.

The study assumed that the female participants answered all the questions on social media usage in complaining against P&G.

The study hoped that all participants used Twitter and presented truthful experiences with the Always sanitary pads.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter looks at the theoretical framework that relates to this study and its relationship to the research questions on which this study is based on. The chapter discusses in-depth the theories that have guided the literature in this area of research. It then focuses on the conceptual framework, with a model showing a clear relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The study then reviews the variables guiding the literature in this research and reviewing the empirical literature of the same. It then proceeds to critique and summarize the literature that has been featured.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework will focus on the theory that provides information for this research. Corporate crises are now more like "when" than "if". Companies must be prepared and be able to respond to crises quickly and efficiently, as they can easily damage the image, identity and reputation of the organization (Ford, 2013). Theories in crisis communication and management mostly focus on fixing an organization's reputation. Liu

and Fraustino (2014) of the Department of Communication at the University of Maryland recommended that crisis communication theory should be improved to explain the widespread use of social media.

2.2.1 Situational crisis communication theory

The situational crisis communication theory was proposed by Timothy Coombs in 1995. Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) prescribes crisis response strategies that should maximize protection from crises using organizational responsibility for crises. There is a close relationship between crisis communication and corporate reputation management.

Generally speaking, a crisis will damage the reputation of a company, and the reputation of a company can be either an asset or a liability for a crisis manager. This theory provides guidance for organizations to communicate about crises to protect their reputation. According to Coombs, an organization must provide information about the physical and psychological risks that crisis victims may face; subsequent communication should focus on protecting reputation (Lauran et al., 2019). The theory believes that the attribution of crisis responsibility and/or reputation damage threats increases, and crisis managers should use crisis response strategies that reflect greater attention to victims and take more responsibility for the crisis (Lai, 2010). Identifying the type of crisis can provide a preliminary assessment of the public's responsibility attributable to the crisis (Coombs and Holladay, 2002). Situational crisis communication theory provides crisis communication information at a strategic level. He pointed out that every crisis has a unique response method that can potentially reduce the escalation of the crisis.

2.2.2 Social-Mediated Crisis Communication Model (SMCC)

The Social Mediation Crisis Communication (SMCC) model was also formerly called blog mediation theory, and it plays an important role in recent crisis communication theory. The theory provides a model that can identify demographic data that can help improve communication strategies and components (Austin, 2012). This model believes that in the world of social media in crisis situations, there are several "audiences" or "audiences" such as: An influential person who produces information that can be accessed by others. Followers: These people follow influencers, and they have access to scattered information. Active Members: Individuals who do not get information directly from social networks, but instead search for information from other sources or contact indirectly through social networks. Liu et al., (2016). The crisis communication model through social media explains and predicts the process of direct and indirect influence of social networks through social networks, traditional media, and the dissemination of word of mouth of information about crisis. Liu, Austin, and Jin (2011) mention "the importance of strategically matching the format and source of crisis information when an organization responds to a crisis." The need for a crisis communication model that can explain and predict "how the public creates, consumes, and / or shares crisis information through social media and other sources" has emerged (Horner&Palmkvist, 2016). SMCC combines rumor psychology theory and SCCT in order to provide a model of how organizations may respond to public's crisis communication using social media. Figure 2.1 describes the Social Mediated Crisis Communication Model.

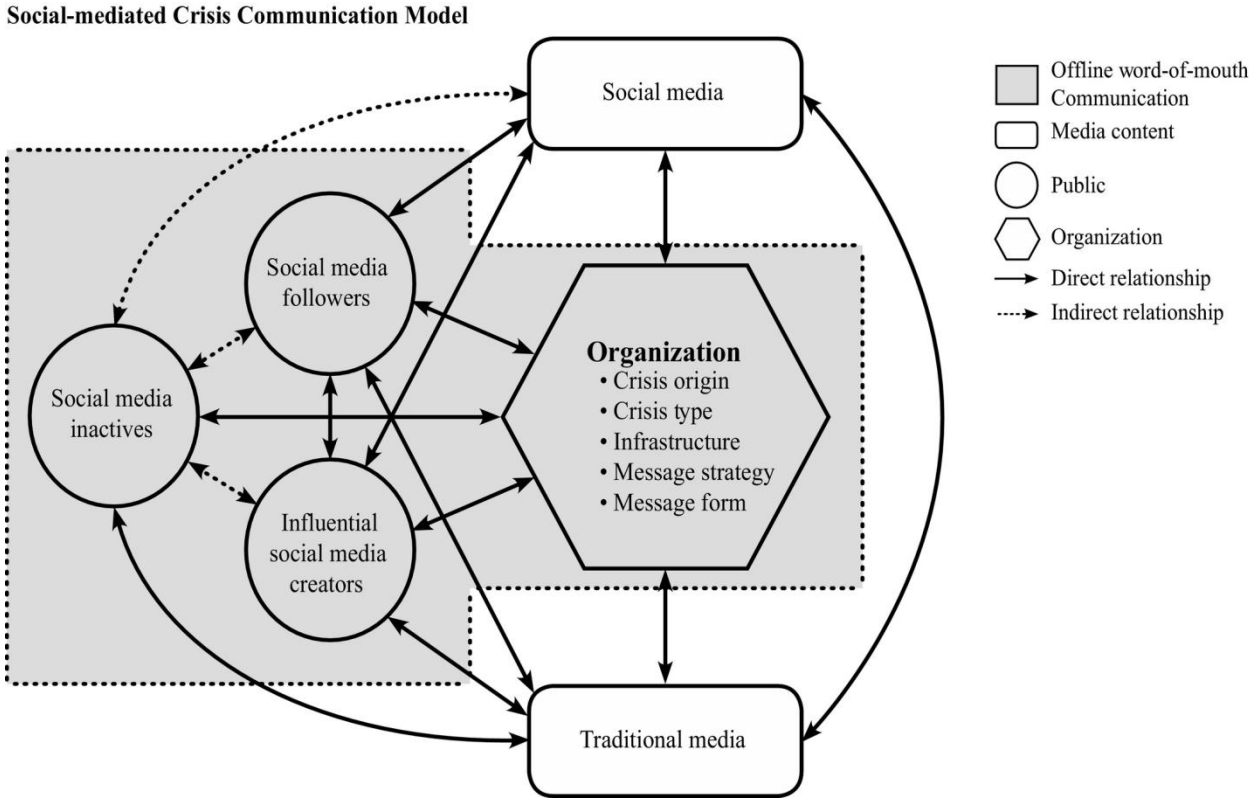


Figure 2.1 Social Mediated Crisis Communication Model

The social mediated Crisis Communication Model will greatly inform this study on the patterns in which the public communicate during a crisis, and sources of information that they lean on during a crisis. This will shed light on why some sources are trusted and why others are not, the advantages and disadvantages of these patterns, and the recommended go to channels of communication during a crisis.

2.2.3 Framing Theory

Framing theory was developed in 1974 by the sociologist Irving Goff. Goffman (1974) argued that as we travel through time and space we constantly and often radically change how we define or typify situations, behaviors, and others. Goffman (1974) used the term frame to mean a specific set of expectations used to understand a social situation at a specific point in time. Entman (1991) defined the framing of selecting certain aspects of perceived reality in a way that promotes the definition of a particular problem, interpretation

of causality, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendations and make them more prominent in the communication text. When it comes to media, Goffman (1974) believes that the editing of media content is the highlight of the most meaningful action. After Gough research in the 1960s and 1970s, frame theory continued to receive attention and acceptance. Other scholars took their ideas and extended them to create a conceptual framework that considered the social and political contexts created by the framework. Long-term social media learning framework.

One of the other more productive and creative framework researchers is William Gamson whose work has helped shape the current view of framework theory and its interpretation of how news affects the social world. Gamson (1987) believes that, increasingly, the frameworks used in public discourse are developed and promoted by individuals and groups who are interested in promoting certain ways of seeing the social world rather than others.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework represents a graphical association among existing variables. It seeks to explain association between social media and the Always Pads crisis with the mediating factors that potentially change the status of the crisis at hand on either side of the spectrum. Figure 2.2 below lays out the association between social media platforms and Procter and Gamble's Always Pads crisis, and the mediating variables that assist in the management of the crisis. The independent variables are social media platforms and social media audiences while dependent variables are online crisis management strategies and message content.

Social Media Platforms

- Twitter
- Facebook
- YouTube

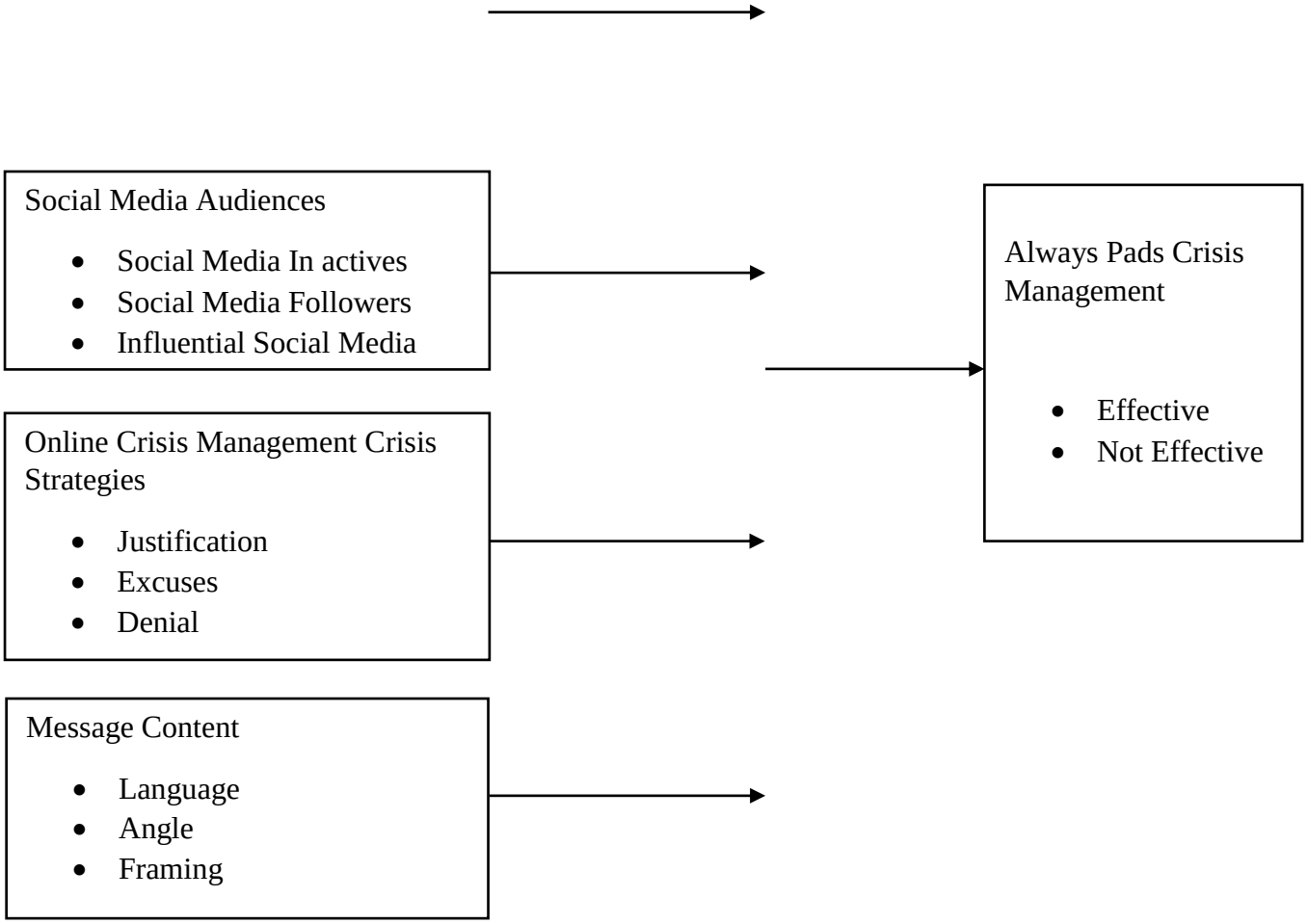


Figure 2.2 Conceptual Framework

2.4 Review of Variables

The variables illustrated on figure 2.2. have shown some aspects of social media dynamics in the context of online crisis and crisis management. This section of the review therefore expounds on the illustrated variables.

2.4.1 Social Media Platforms

Disaster sociologists and communication researchers have positive results such as increased support for endangered organizations, where social media, especially Twitter, is an effective tool for rapid information retrieval and exchange (Schultz et al., 2011; Sutton Et al., 2013; Utz et al., 2013). There's empirical evidence after researchers carried out research and

validated that publics engage in disaster/ crisis information seeking and sharing before they decide whether they take protective actions. Snoeijers et al. (2014) conducted a study on the impact of social network types, sources, and information on students' response to university crises, #universitycrisis, and studied how universities use the internet when facing crises. Like any non-profit organization, universities have a special interest in relationships with the stakeholders they benefit from. These stakeholders include students, who are an important part of the organization and important users of social media platforms.

Social networks such as Facebook and Twitter provide a great platform for universities to communicate and maintain trust with students (Bouvier, 2015). Especially in crisis situations, social media can be used to communicate directly and quickly with stakeholders. In a study by Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy and Silvestre (2011), they focused on the latest issues through real-time status updates, and users that are facing issues rather than personal relationships. Facebook has now discovered the fact that it relies on user identity disclosure. Introduce information and yourself. Research shows that students are more likely to leave messages when communicating via Twitter than Facebook. This implementation was supported by Jinet al. (2011) “In their statement, the organization prefers Twitter for crisis communication.” The study also showed that students may share information conveyed by the dean, which was also supported by Freberg, Graham, McGaughey and Freberg (2011), and Turk (2012) on the importance of communication with CEOs. Although there is a difference between using Twitter and Facebook in crisis communication. Researchers do not agree that the use of specific social media platforms is preferred for crisis communication. Austin et al. (2012) also conducted a study on "How audiences find crisis information: exploration of crisis communication models in social networks". Research shows that audiences use social media to gain inside information and connect with family/friends during a crisis and use traditional media for educational purposes. The use of

traditional blogging has declined as individuals increasingly use social networking and microblogging sites Lenhart, Purcell, Smith, and Zickuhr (2010). This demonstrates the need for crisis communicators to review new media sources other than blogs. Since the study by Austin *et al.*, (2012) for the purpose of finding out how the audience can find crisis information on social media, the format of the crisis information and the source given form and source combination will affect how the viewer finds additional information after learning the crisis information.

When asked about the crisis through a third party via social media, study participants were more likely to seek interpersonal communication with social media sources. Participants were most likely to obtain information through traditional media when hearing the crisis through traditional media through a third party. Participants were most likely to use the same type of media in the crisis to find information. However, the first exception for participants about the crisis, primarily through social media, was interpersonal communication.

2.4.2 Social Media Audiences

Blee and McDowell (2012) pointed out that the audience is not just everyone who receives information or watches the performance; on the contrary, performers construct audiences within the framework of culture and evaluation, treating them as easily fooled or selective, selfish or involved, accepting or soliciting. Therefore, this new generation and growth of social media viewers in the online environment needs to be reviewed before the culture of participation in the communication space, especially generated or publicized by the Internet / online media (Tham, 2009). When Axel, Tim and Jean (2013) conducted a study on "The Arab Spring and Social Media Audiences: English and Arabic Twitter Users and Their Networks", they supported the existence of diverse users of social media and remote social

networks. Observation and exchange of information on the globalization of media user groups.

Social Media In actives

As demonstrated in a study conducted by Austin, Liu and Jin (2012), social media, social media followers and influencers who follow traditional media and word-of-mouth communication indirectly consume crisis information from social media creators, media creators and/or social media followers. Revisiting the study conducted by Blee and McDowell (2012) on the social movement audiences, they cited that audiences could influence the performers by their response or lack thereof, consequently shaping the performer’s presentation of self. Audiences who considered the performance to be non-genuine, false, or inappropriate, failed to applaud and said the performer was likely to adjust their behavior according to the audience's reaction or lack thereof.

Social Media Followers

On social media, followers represent the users you select to see other users' posts from your content feed. Encouraging users to follow their accounts is the main goal of online business for social media. Follow is different from sharing. Now, retweets and shares show that people find value in individual posts, while follow shows interest in receiving continuous updates. Follow shows a higher level of participation with the audience and offers more value than other participation indicators (Big Commerce). According to research, individuals are proposing to 'like' or follow the company for internalization and identity. Mauder (2018)found that individuals 'like' a company's social networking pages for a company's message and image that aligns with the individual's values. Marketing for other articles is about some of the goals that social media can provide, from devaluing brand to various marketing focus between B2B (Business to Business) and B2C (Business to

Consumer) target groups in the education system focused (Mauder, 2018). Identifying leaders and followers of online social networks is important for advertising, community health campaigns, public administration, and various political applications, according to a study conducted by Liu et al. (2016).

Influential Social Media Creators

Social media influencers are people who can influence personal purchases due to their authority or their relationship with target customers. You can have your own blog, have a trusted audience or social media account, and provide subscribers with interesting specific content (Promo Republic, 2020). During the ubiquitous era of the Internet, social media influencers became a dynamic external spokesperson (Lim et al., 2017; Freberg et al., 2011). Social media influencers often interact with followers to keep them up to date on a regular basis (Liu et al., 2012). In a crisis lifeline, a social media influencer has the power to spread information intended to either prepare the public, inform or debrief the public concerning the same crisis. Social media influencers also hold the power of the snowball effect as a result of the number of loyal followers each of them has in the respective social disciplines that each of them represents.

Smith et al. (2018) conducted research due to the injury of the brand public relations ambassador. Social media reveals social stakes between influencers, corporate social responsibility, and influence. The team pointed out that there is a challenge to attract attention and a challenge to build credibility in the era of fake news accusations. Social media influencers therefore play the role of carrying a flagship on behalf of a brand, hence the term brand ambassador. The research identifies factors that drive brand ambassadors, including brand ambassador stakes, corporate social responsibility roles, and empowerment through social media engagement. Businesses are using brand ambassadors for a variety of

purposes, from promotional window dressing to strategic collaborations (Brand Ambassador, 2012). Social networks give users the right to speak and allow them to interact with the organization (Smith & Taylor, 2017). This potential influence puts organizations on the defensive because they fear that users of social networks "will use their conversations to criticize the company's products" (Toledano, 2010, p. 231).

The researchers interviewed brand ambassadors aged between 22-60 and found that brand ambassadors carry an organization's "wealth-creating capacity". Saffer (as cited in Smith 2018), the brand ambassadors in this study believe that their role is the same. As a group of stakeholders, the results of this research put forward hypotheses about the role of brand ambassadors and the ethical challenges of connecting with brand ambassador organizations. Research confirms that strategic legitimacy is partly obtained through correctly implemented ethical codes (Long & Driscoll, 2008). This study shows that when working with brand ambassadors/social media influencers, part of this code should include transparency.

The research of Lim et al., (2017) is based on the theoretical framework of social learning theory. This theory proves that individuals obtain motives from social agents through direct or indirect social interactions and therefore exhibit favorable attitudes (Subramanian, Moschis & Churchill, 1978). This study proved the fact that positive attitude toward a product by social media influencers influences purchasing intent. But the reverse is also true. The study also sought to find out the mediator role that social influencers play on consumers' attitude. They found out that source credibility, source of attractiveness, product matchup and meaning transfer impact consumer attitude which then translates to purchase intention.

In this current era of social media and social media influencers who as illustrated by the studies mentioned above have an influence on consumers purchasing potential and their attitudes, it's important to understand how best to harness this resource. Pang *et al*. (2016) conducted a study on 'Building effective relations with social media influencers in Singapore'. Freberg et al., (2011) identified "Social Media Influence" as "a new type of independent third-party guarantor that uses blogs, tweets, and other social media to shape viewer attitudes." (P. 90).

Such "social media makers" (Liu et al., 2012, p. 366) participate in the production of content for specific issues. Reducing SMI to social media influential people and maintaining strong relationships with the organization can allow the organization to maximize the range of active media and ultimately create a stronger mass presence. I can do it. This creates the potential to use the influence of social media for crisis communication and management. One of the influences affecting the relationship with the influence of social media was the opinion indicators such as 'comments' and 'likes' on content that measured viewers' empathy. Lifestyle bloggers noted that readers sometimes question the blogger's recommendations especially if the product or service was not good.

2.4.3 Online Crisis Management

Crisis management is understood as strategies, processes, and countermeasures to deal with crises that are planned and implemented (Glaesser, 2006). A strategic response should therefore be employed in order to deal with each crisis uniquely. As earlier proposed in the theoretical framework, (Liu *et al*., 2015) Situational Crisis Communication Theory presents a good opportunity of covering three components: (1) Instructing stakeholders to briefly explain the crisis situation; (2) Coordinating information to enable stakeholders to respond

psychologically to the crisis; (3) Reputation management (Coombs, 2014), which means the actual response that an organization uses to resolve a crisis to protect its stakeholder.

Crisis causes reputational damage and reputational capital is lost. A favorable dictionary (pre-crisis) reputation is a buffer against reputation capital lost during a crisis. Organizations with a good pre- crisis reputation will still have a strong post-crisis reputation because of pre-reputation disadvantages or spending more prestige capital than neutral organizations. Image Restoration (Repair Theory): The Benoit image restoration strategy is a prestige restoration strategy that can be used after a crisis, arguing that successful crisis resolution requires honest and ethical communication between crises. Image restoration theory offers several crisis response strategies. This has a variety of possibilities, from "denial" to "responsibility avoidance" to "attack mitigation" (Zamoum & Gorpe, 2018).

Organizations adopt different crisis strategies on social media, which border justification, excuses, scapegoat, attack accuser, and denial. Organizations use the online environment to manage and minimize reputation threats on social media platforms (Lambret and Barki, 2017). However, the strategy increases the unpredictability of the corporate crises as the response strategy changes with the nature of the comments and negative buzz by the consumers. The online crisis management approaches as the negotiation process to gain credibility online and offline Pang, Hassan, and Chong (2014). The lack of proper gatekeeping on social media platforms such as Twitter means that organizations must expect crises to arise to the extent of prompting them to reclaim legitimacy through the same platforms.

2.4.4 Message Content

Coombs and Holladay (2008) pointed out that researchers overemphasized the use of apology/humiliation as the "best" response to a crisis and used widely different definitions

of apology. Several additional factors can be added to this definition, including expressions of regret/sympathy, expressions of regret, and preventive and corrective measures (Benoit, 2004). Park and Avery (2018) conducted a study on the "influence of media channels, crisis types, and demographic data on the audience's intention to follow instructional information during a crisis". In the study Situational theory of crisis communication (SCCT), it has been determined that different types of crises require different information strategies; different types of crises may also require different channels to maximize their scope and effectiveness. When issuing instructions to the public to respond to crises that threaten their safety, the most strategic information is particularly important; revealing the most effective combination of information and media can increase the motivation to implement recommended behaviors.

The conceptual framework recognizes the message content in terms of language, angle, and framing to expedite the pursuit of online and offline legitimacy among customers. The message content informs effective crisis management on social media by acknowledging the source, information form, and the overall crisis response by the organization (Jin, Liu, & Austin, 2011). However, relaying the message may require the incorporation of traditional media and electronic word of mouth (eWOM) to manage the emotions of the customers. Framing the message with the right language and angle is imperative for organizations. According to Xiao, Cauberghe, and Hudders (2017) framing the messages with humor as opposed to hearsay could create a better organizational reputation and decrease the perceived crisis severity. Proper message content aligns with the expectations of the public and boosts the perceived organizational responsibility for a crisis.

2.5 Empirical Review

This section of the research will include empirical literature including research designs used in the various studies carried out in the crisis management and communication through social media. This section will also highlight the findings and a discussion of the same. The review will include the variables discussed in the conceptual framework.

2.5.1 Forms of Social Media

Social media as previously discussed includes platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. Each social media platform serves a specific purpose with unique content being shared. (Snoeijers *et al*., 2014) carried out a study on the "effect of source, social media type, and information of a crisis message through social media on students' secondary crisis communication". The research tested three factors and developed hypothesis on them: social media type, source, and crisis information. The experiment conducted the following tests between (social media platform: Facebook and Twitter), (source: university and dean), (crisis information: guidance and adaptation). The data set contains 336 participants (65.8 men). Their median age was 22 years old, and 80.2% were 25 years old or younger. The study was carried out via email, through questionnaire, whereby the participants were presented with an online scenario. Twitter was found to be most favorable compared to Facebook, in obtaining responses. Compared to universities on either platform, when the dean sends a message, students are more likely to share the message or discuss the event with friends. Studies have shown that in terms of secondary communication, Twitter is the preferred platform for crisis communication (Liu et al., 2016).

2.5.2 Social Media Audiences

Looking at the online responses on Twitter during the Always Pads Crisis, the tweets reflected the types of audiences following Procter and Gamble. These responses ranged

from complaints to testimonials concerning the relationship they each had with the products. Always pads manufactured by Procter and Gamble. One of the women tweeted, “Always pads cause excessive sweating, pads aren't breathable, develop rashes painful & huge, the skin in contact with the pad itches profusely, severe burning sensation when walking and the gel substance produces an unpleasant odor. #MyAlwaysExperience”.

The thread continued with numerous women following the conversation and tweeting in response to her call to action. “Maybe we should share in detail our personal irritations, discomfort and displeasures with Always pads in the Kenyan market. It seems we generalize by saying irritation instead be specific because the quality of sanitary products must improve #MyAlwaysExperience DM for privacy”.

The first tweet gathered 77 retweets and 112 replies. Procter & Gamble initially tried to deny claims that some women’s sanitary napkins had problems, and the social media campaign gained attention. One of the resources shared by those who used this tweet at the time was a study published in the Journal of the Canadian Medical Association in 1996, which looked at the link between contact dermatitis and consistent use of sanitary napkins (Feldman & Eason, 1996).

Procter and Gamble did not escape the wrath of Kenyan women, when they engaged female Kenya social media influencers in a promotional campaign dubbed, #FeelTheComfortAlways. The company sponsored some of the influencers to a luxurious weekend as part of the launch of their new brand of pads, Always Ultra Soft. This enraged Kenyans as a result of how the brand ignored the grievances of the some of the women who have continually had bad experiences with the pads. More so that the quality of pads in Kenya is lower than those in American and European markets. Responding through their twitter handle, Always Kenya maintained that their “products go through very rigorous

regulatory tests and are also tested with real women to ensure that they are safe for use." The brand also pinpointed that the needs of the Kenyan girl is their number priority and that they recognize the evolving needs of their consumers (Olouch, 2019).

2.5.3. Online Crisis Management

Scholars Austin, Liu and Jin (2012) conducted a study on How Audiences Seek Out Crisis Information: Exploring the Social-Mediated Crisis Communication Model (Austin *et al*., 2012). The purpose of this research is to understand how individuals and organizations use social media to communicate during organizational crises. This research attempts to examine the information search behavior during the organizational crisis and the main factors affecting media usage related to the organizational crisis. In particular, crisis information and sources are identified and tested as two important factors that affect how the audience seeks more information after understanding a certain combination of forms and sources of crisis information. The scholars further looked into the motivation for social media use and found that publics use newer methods of communications such as blogs to seek information and media check, for convenience, personal fulfillment, political surveillance, social surveillance, and expression and affiliation (Kaye & Johnson, 2015).

Audiences pay attention to social media during the crisis because they provide up-to-date, unfiltered communication channels (Procopio & Procopio, 2007) and provide unique crisis information that audiences cannot get from anywhere else (Bucher, Sutton, Palen & Shklovski, 2008). Just like the concept in the SMCC model, the source of information is the source of crisis information: organizations or third parties experiencing the crisis, such as influential social media creators or journalists.

2.5.4 Message Content

Rhee and Yang (2014) conducted a study on “Consumers’ Emotional Reactions to Negative Publicity and Crisis Management in the Health Care Industry”. The case studies involved supplement drugs; Lipitor and Oxyelite Pro and the negative publicity associated with these supplements. The study found that organizations can minimize the potential damage from a crisis if they implement their appropriate response strategies and pay attention to the emotional reactions of consumers.

Organizational goals can not only protect the organization from potential liability, but also control the negative reactions of consumers (Dean, 2004). Coombs and Holladay (2006) divided post-crisis management strategies into two categories: defensive and lenient. The first category includes five actions: defense, denial, scapegoat, and attack on the accuser; the last category includes two actions: apology and compensation. Researchers have also triggered consumer responses to these views. Consumers usually express negative attitudes and emotions in the form of behavior and words in response to negative publicity (Weiner et al., 1987).

Rhee and Yang (2014) conducted 8 cases four cases (1-4) concerning cholesterol level lowering drug called Lipitor of the Pfizer company and cases (5-8) involving dietary supplement Oxyelite. While the studies carried out building up to the literature indicate that there might be hypothetical or actual occurrences used in the studies, their findings might not as well represent accurate information. Park and Avery (2018) pointed out that individuals' past crisis experiences (frequency and magnitude) are likely to shape their responses during investigations. Therefore, in future studies, it is important to investigate the effect of these factors (e.g, previous crisis experiences) on motivation to follow media choices and crisis directives.

2.7 Summary

The literature reviewed in this chapter focused on the theoretical foundations of crisis communication via social media. Scholarly articles reviewed have based their studies on Situational Crisis Communication theory and Social-Mediated Crisis Communication Model. The studies reviewed looked at academic institutions, public institutions and the emergence of social media influencers who act as a mediating factor in crisis communication. It discusses crisis management strategies that have been applied during various crises in the cited studies. The chapter has also laid out a conceptual framework that synthesizes four variables that play a critical role in crisis management. These include social media, social media influencers.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology that was be used to carry out the study. It illustrates in depth the research design used in the research. The chapter then proceeded to discuss the target population. Further to that, the sampling and sampling techniques were addressed and data collection instruments that were used. It included a pilot test in form of an interview guide and questionnaire and the justification of using these particular instruments. Then it looked at the data collection procedure and finally the data analysis aspect of the research.

3.2 Research Design

The design that was be adopted in this study is a case study design. A case study is a detailed investigation of a specific research question rather than an exhaustive statistical investigation and comprehensive comparative investigation. This is often used to narrow down a very broad field of study to one or a few easily researchable examples. The research process involves new questions and steps. Data typically collected from the participant's settings. The final report has a flexible structure. Those who participate in this form of exploration support the importance of rendering the complexity of the situation, focusing on the individual meanings of the method of looking at research that respects inductive style.

3.3 Target Population

The target population is women from St. Paul’s University based in Nairobi County. The choice of university being St. Paul’s University to directly reach a group of women with diverse ages, social media use and needs in terms of sanitary products. The number of women that were directly targeted in the study was 25. The sample population of 25 was to

decrease any chances of vague answers. The interviewees being targeted were sanitary products users and social media users. The Interviews intended to provide firsthand reactions and opinions on the impact of the crisis response strategies that were employed by Procter and Gamble in the Always pads crisis. It was also to give a feel of how effective these response strategies were in managing the crisis. Finally, this population provided an idea of what influence the social media users.

3.4 Sample and Sampling Technique

This research used purposive sampling method. Purposive sampling refers to a variety of selection techniques in which sample members are selected with the sole intention of making specific generalizations. The women interviewed were purposively picked by class, however each needed to be on a social media platform and use sanitary products during menstruation. There is need to specify the products used, as there are many products that can be used during menstruation. Products like tampons, menstrual cups, and period panties. The sites that were studied included Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube.

Qualitative research requires smaller sample sizes in comparison to quantitative research. However, the sample size should be large enough so that the researchers can obtain sufficient data to expedite analysis and subsequent description of the phenomenon under study and answer the research questions too. The right sample size should improve the outcomes of the qualitative research (Omona, 2013). Consequently, the research generalized the findings to P&G and other companies that use social media to expedite their crisis management process. Dworkin (2012) describes a sample size policy that involves conducting an inquiry that addresses every aspect of the predetermined research question. The investigation garnered insights that built an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon

of crisis management through social media. On the other hand, using a purposive sampling method provided several advantages to the research.

Using purposive sampling over other sampling methods such as random sampling enhanced generalizations. Purposive sampling enabled the research to understand how social media and crisis management relate based on P&G and the industry in general. On the other hand, the purposive sampling was cost-effective and timesaving for the qualitative research that hoped to make a generalization about online engagement through social media platforms. The cost-effectiveness then enabled the study to undertake the subsequent phases of collecting and analyzing data (Omona, 2013). Overall, purposive sampling prompted an in-depth analysis of the wide, non-probability sampling chances.

The purposive sampling technique enabled the research to target the niche demographics (van Rijnsoever, 2017). The niche demographics include the women and informants from P&G. While the purposive was heterogeneous, it enhanced the collection of emotions, physical features, and identities of the informants affected by the Always Pads crisis. The heterogeneous approach ensured the research analyzes the issues from multiple and diverse perspectives. Therefore, purposive sampling prompted research that asks similar questions to create a convincing perspective that represents the target population under study.

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

This research took up the interview questions as the instrument of collecting data from the women being interviewed. It was a semi-structured interview. A semi structured interview provided the interviewees and informants the freedom to express their views in their own terms, while providing the interviewer structure. It contained key questions which covered the scope of the areas that the study needed to explore. It also allowed for the research to explore the subject matter.

3.6 Pilot Testing

Pilot testing for interviews is an integral aspect and useful in the process of conducting qualitative research as it highlights the improvisation to the major study Lim *et al*., (2017). In this research, pilot testing was done on a small number of the main sample number. The number of people tested was a quarter of the main number, therefore three women. A set of questions were asked to monitor responses and the viability of these questions.

3.6.1 Validity of Research Instruments

According to Brink (1993), the validity of a study is related to the accuracy and veracity of scientific findings. A valid study must prove that it exists. A valid instrument or measurement must measure what it is actually meant to measure**.** An interview guide was be prepared prior to the interviews and was supervised by experts in the field, the experts being the supervisors of the research project (LeCompte & Goetz,1982).

3.6.2 Reliability of research instruments

It can be defined as the degree to which a measure of the reliability configuration of research equipment is consistently reliable (Kubai, 2019). This refers to the ability of a research method to consistently produce the same results over a period of repeated testing (Brink, 1993). Use of code sheets and interview guides were through supervision to establish their reliability prior to the interviews and monitoring. The authenticity of the research was validated by obtaining a license to research in Kenya, a role mandated to the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI). Implementation of an intercoder reliability provided an opportunity for the research to argue for the consistency, and by extension the validity of the findings in this research.

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

The research relied on primary data. The data was collected through an interview guide. The guide was administered through a sit-down interview with the respondents. An Interview

guide was used as it provided precision, through the questions being asked to follow up questions can be administered in the semi structured interview. The interview, apart from the structured questions, the respondent is at liberty to add any further comments.

Third-party recruitment was used to find the interviewees from St. Paul's University. Using staff and referrals as third parties reduced the attrition rate and increased the response rate in the study. The parties used word of mouth to explain to the target informants about the research. The snowballing technique enabled the research maximize the response rate and willingness of the participants to provide accurate information about the phenomena of interest as recommended by Shamoo and Resnik (2015). Furthermore, it was easier to follow-up with the participants for clarification.

3.8 Data Analysis

Upon completion of the interview session the data was analyzed through thematic analysis. The data was read and reread to capture a theme in the responses. The data was then labelled according to the wider themes captured in the responses. The data was then re-read just to confirm that the labels indeed fit the responses. A write up is then presented with coherent quotes from the interviewees. According to qualitative researchers in psychology, Braun and Clarke (2006), "Thematic analysis continues between the complete dataset, the coded extraction of the data being analyzed and the analysis of the generated data. It involves reviewing data in a qualitative manner". Braun and Clarke (2006) note that thematic analysis involves important steps such as:

Familiarizing with the data: The investigator transcribed the data, read and re-read the social media conversations. The initial codes were noted down.

Producing initial codes: The codes comprised the interesting features relating to the social media conversations and P&G's approach to the Always crisis. The dataset was collated in line with the appropriate code.

Searching for the key themes: The collated codes were interpreted as potential themes in the qualitative research. Data for each theme was reconciled for each potential theme.

Reviewing the themes: The key themes were reviewed in line with the coded extracts and for the entire dataset and generated a thematic map.

Definition and naming of themes: The step entailed refinement of the established themes and assigned clear names.

Generating the final report: The final report was generated after selecting the appropriate themes from various data extracts on social media. The report comprised of results discussion, relating the findings to the existing literature, and conclusion.

3.9 Ethical Consideration

This research adhered to all ethical principles required when carrying out a research. The respondents were allowed to participate on a voluntary basis only, without any coercion. They were then informed concerning their consent to participate in the research. Their consent meant that their responses were to be used in the research and would be published as well. The confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents was upheld throughout the interview process. Thereafter the outcome of the research was shared with the respondents after successful completion of the research project.

The research observed the ethical principle of beneficence, privacy, and deception when collecting information from social media users. Beneficence ensured the researcher did not collect information that could harm the informants psychologically and emotionally. The qualitative research prevented any professional harm against the respondents who revealed

their views on the online engagement by P&G after the Always pads crisis. On the other hand, maintaining the privacy of the social media users was imperative for the research. The research used the conversations of the respondents without revealing their identities. The researcher did not use deception, to maintain the accuracy of the information.

The interviewing process involved all the covid protocols, social distancing during the interview sessions. Substituting face to face interviews with online interviews.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter looked at the main themes that emerged during the interviewing process. The main objective of this study was to find out the utilization of social media by Procter and Gamble during the always sanitary towels crisis in Kenya. The data analyzed was acquired from respondents through questionnaires. The interpretations and discussions in this chapter are related to this goal.

4.2 Response Rate

The researcher had a sample size of 25 female students from St. Paul's University. Females were singled out because they are the ones who experience menstrual cycles hence have an experience with sanitary pads. However, out of the issued questionnaires, 17 were returned duly filled signifying a response rate of 68%, which was adequate for statistical analysis, as noted in Mugenda and Mugenda (1999), a response rate of 50% or higher is considered good.

4.3 Demographics

4.3.1 Analysis of respondents by Age

The study sought to find out the respondent's age distribution and the questionnaire required the respondents to fill in their age category.

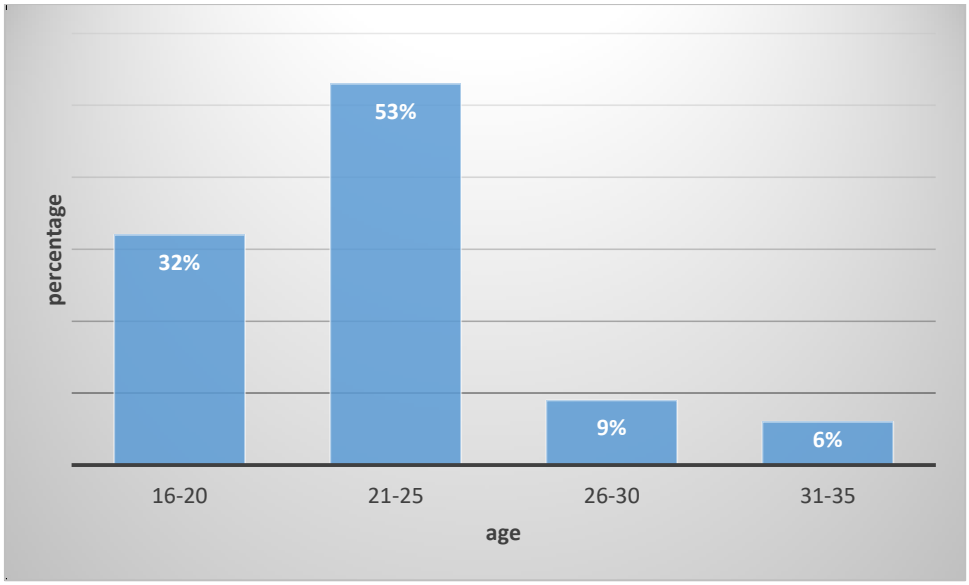


Figure 4.1 Age of Respondents

As illustrated above in Figure 4.1, majority of the respondents 11out of 17, were of the age's category of between 21 and 25. This represents 32% of the total respondents. 9% are aged of the age group 26 to 30, 6 % of the age group 31 to 35, 50% of the respondents belong to the age between 36-40, while 3% of the respondents are between 16 to 20 years. The above findings indicate that the majority of the respondents are aged between 21 and 25 years. This is due to the fact that this is the age bracket with the most number of students pursuing tertiary education and with lesser engagement thus readily accessible.

4.3.2 Representation of social media usage

The researcher sought to find out the most used social media platform.

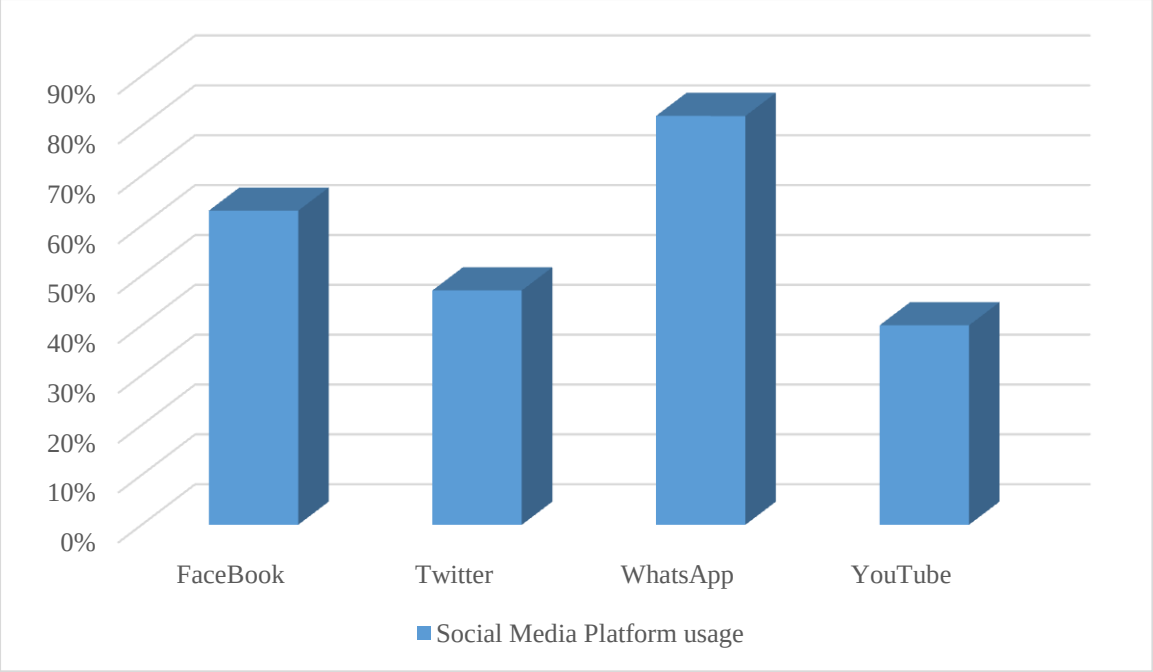


Figure 4.3 Social media platform usage

As shown in figure 4.3, WhatsApp emerged the most used platform among respondents with 82% indicating they used it most, 63% indicated they frequently used Facebook while 47% and 40% indicated they used Twitter and YouTube respectively. The most widely used platform was WhatsApp, however this platform does not offer a means through which communication and adverts from non-group members can be shared, therefore inadequate for public communication.

Facebook's prominence as a social media platform can be ascribed to the fact that it is very simple to use, offers a platform for private communication between individuals and groups, allows access to multimedia content which include videos, audio, text and graphic, and allows for interaction with general content from the public. Otiende (2018) concurs that Facebook is so prominent that it has become part of the mandatory applications that come with phones. Some mobile network providers offer this platform for free just to entice their clients. Twitter is comparable to Facebook; however multimedia content is limited in size. It's mostly used to interact with text where feedback is encouraged. YouTube provides video

content, but it is limited in terms of interaction because it is one-sided, with little input from the viewer. YouTube is suitable for long videos, so it is used when the viewer has time to devote to that content, whereas Facebook allows for short interactive videos that require less effort to consume.

4.3.3 On the frequency of accessing social media

The researcher sorted the responses to see how often respondents use social media. The goal of this question was to determine how effective social media is as a communication tool. 90% of respondents said they use social media on a daily basis, while 10% said they use it four to five times per week. This demonstrates that the majority of respondents use social media on a daily basis hence an effective communication channel.

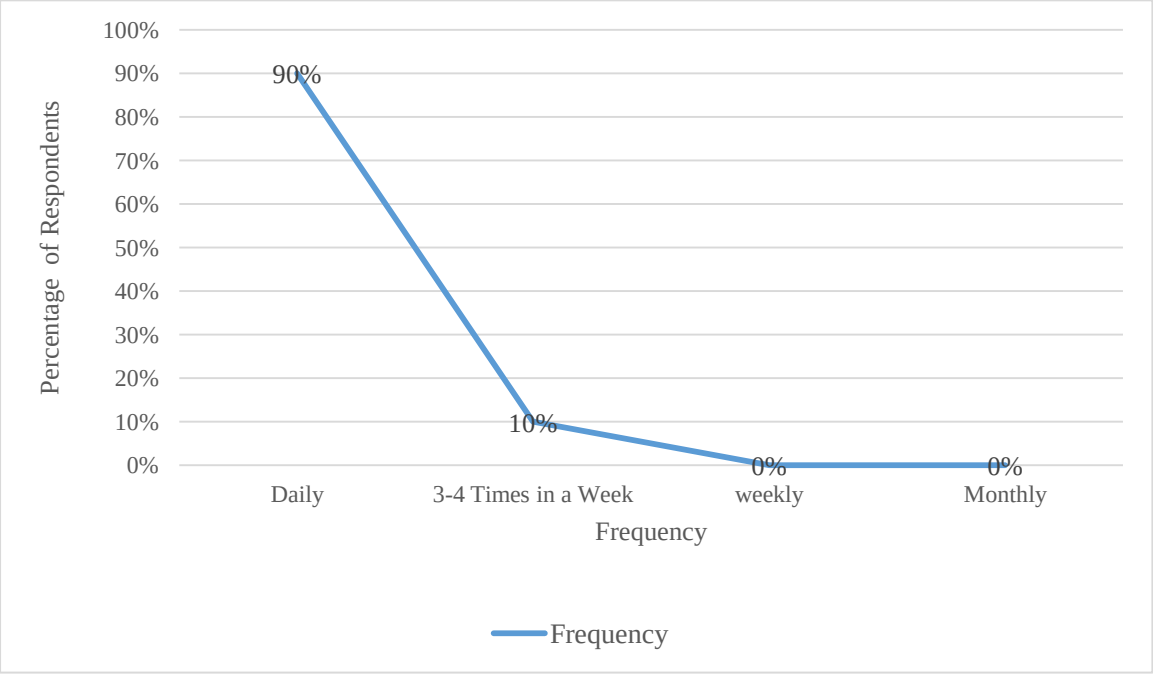


Figure 4.4 Frequency use of social media

4.3.4 Perception of social media by respondents

Respondents were asked their views on social media. Their overall perspectives would serve as a useful indicator of the factors that influenced their use of social media. On a five-point

Likert scale, the replies were ranked as follows: 1 - Strongly disagree, 2 – disagree, 3 – neutral, 4- agree and 5- strongly agree. The response is as represented in table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3 Perception by respondents

Statement	Mean	Standard deviation
Social media has impacted communication positively	3.9	0.176
Social Media is a more trusted source than transitional mainstream media	3.32	0.853
Social Media allows better interaction with organizations and personalities	3.53	0.566
Advertisements on social media have a stronger impact than traditional mass media.	3.29	0.374

From the findings, most of the respondents agreed with the statements; social media has impacted communication positively, social media is a more trusted source than traditional mainstream media, social media allows for better interaction with organizations and personalities. Advertisements on social media have a stronger impact than traditional mass media. This is shown by the mean scores 3.9, 3.32, 3.53 and 3.29 respectively. It can therefore be deduced that there is generally a positive attitude toward social media and the role it plays in communication.

4.3.5 Information Seeking on Social Media Platforms

The study sort to determine if respondents used social media for market and product research prior to making a purchase, as well as which medium they thought provided the best platform for gathering as much information as possible.

The researcher asked respondents if they used social media for market and product research prior to buying a product. The purpose of this question was to determine if buyers consider social media as a source of credible information that they can rely on to make proper purchase decisions. 68% of the respondents use social media while 32% don't use social media for research.

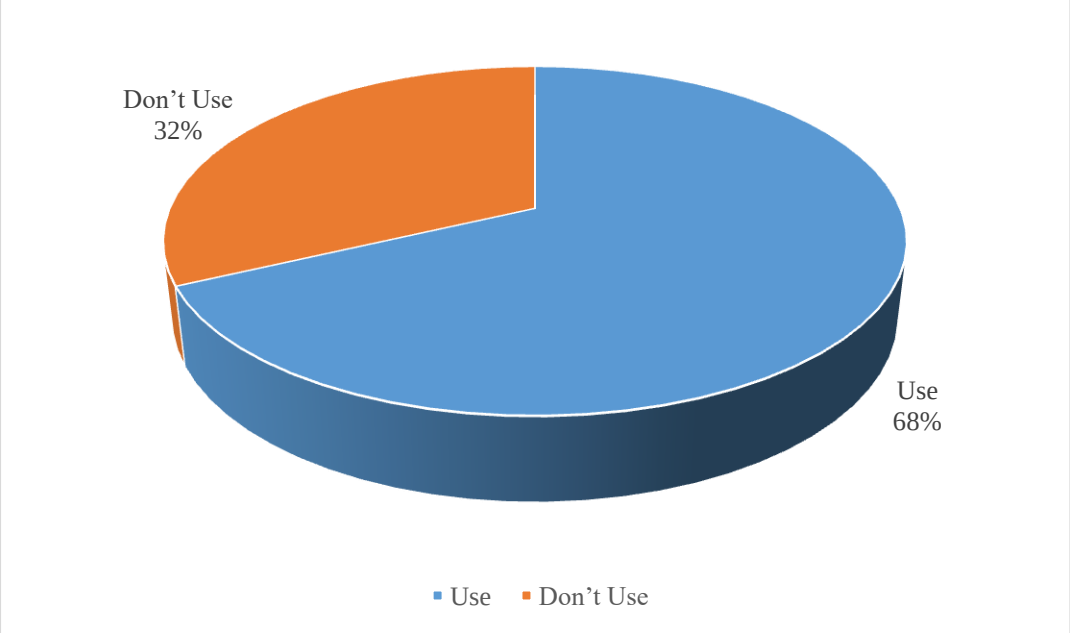


Figure 4.5 product research on social media

Figure 4.5 showed that most of the respondents indicated that they use social media as a source of information. It was however noted that respondents did not rely on social media as a standalone source of information but rather complimented it with company websites and referrals. Mwendwa (2017) suggests that social media platforms are highly used as means of market and product research, with ages between 18 and 40 years being the most dominant group. This corresponds with the findings of this study that social media is an avenue through which market research is done by shoppers. On the question of which social media they thought provided the best platform for gathering as much information as possible, 42%

of the respondents indicated they preferred Facebook page, 15 % indicated they preferred YouTube while 21% preferred Twitter Page.

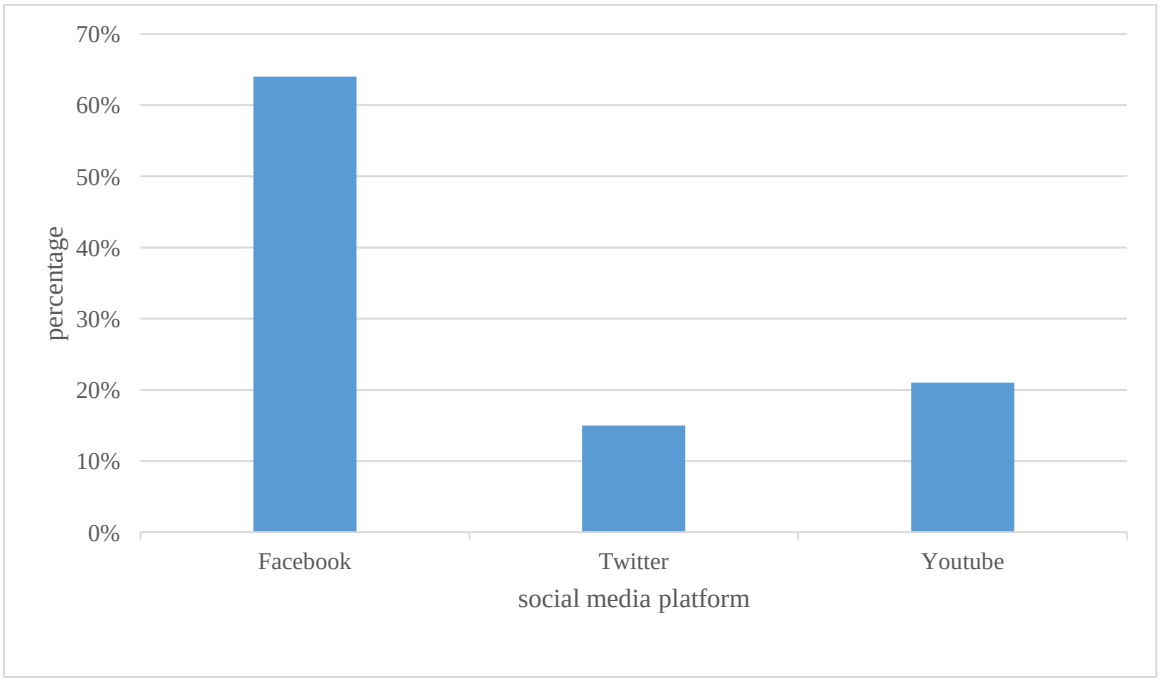


Figure 4.6 Social Media Platform

These findings indicate that the majority of the respondents used Facebook to get information that helps them make shopping decisions. Twitter is the least used since tweets are brief in nature. Respondents use YouTube when they have been directed by links or refereed to a company page.

4.3.6 Influence of social media on purchase decisions

Respondents were asked if they had ever made purchasing decisions due to influence from social media advertisements, 69% of the respondents admitted while 31% denied. This showed that majority of the respondents have been influenced by advertisements on social media to make buying decisions.

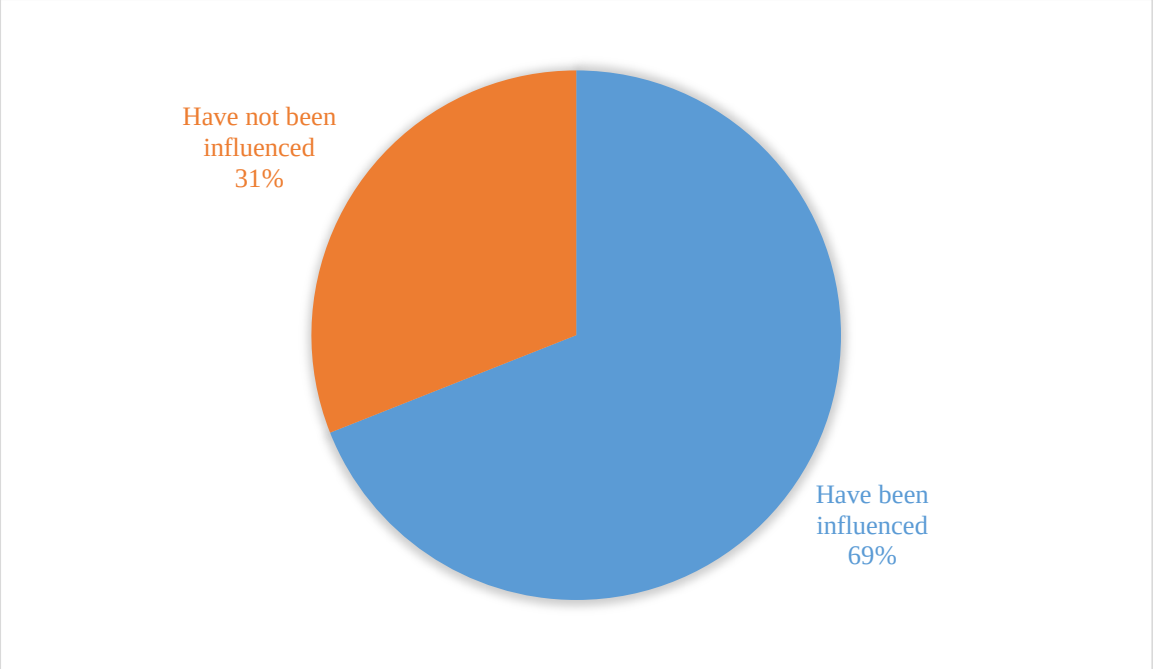


Figure 4.7 Influence by social media to purchase

4.4 Social media platforms used for online management of the Always Pads crisis

The study sought to find out the social media platforms P&G used for online management of the Always Pads crisis in Kenya. On which social media platforms they use to communicate with its publics, it was ascertained that it had presence on the following: Facebook under P&G, Twitter under @ProcterGamble, Instagram under proctergamble and YouTube under P&G (Procter & Gamble). From the findings, P&G uses most of the prominent social media platforms to reach its target audience.

On which social media platform P&G had the highest reach, the following were the findings; Facebook had 5,641,884 followers, Twitter had 216,900 Followers, Instagram had 163,000 followers and YouTube had 64,400 subscribers. From these findings, Facebook had the highest reach while YouTube had the lowest reach. This indicates that, if P&G aims to reach as many people as possible, they should use Facebook. The findings agree with

Ochieng' (2019) who found that a social media platform is necessary if you are to reach very many people within a short period of time.

4.4.1 Social media platform that P&G used for crisis management

It was ascertained that P&G used YouTube as the social media platform to reach out to its target audience and manage the crisis. Regarding which social media platform P&G should use to communicate with consumers about the crisis, 41% of the respondents preferred a combination of all media, 32% preferred Facebook, 16% Twitter, and 11% YouTube.

On the question of which media, the respondents preferred P&G to use in communicating to them about the crisis, 41% chose all media, 32% chose Facebook, 16% chose twitter and 11% chose YouTube. This finding shows that most online audiences have preferred social media platforms and so in order to reach many people, companies should use the various platforms simultaneously. This relates to Otiende (2018) findings that each social media platform has its core users who rarely visit other sites, and so to get to them, diversify the platforms.

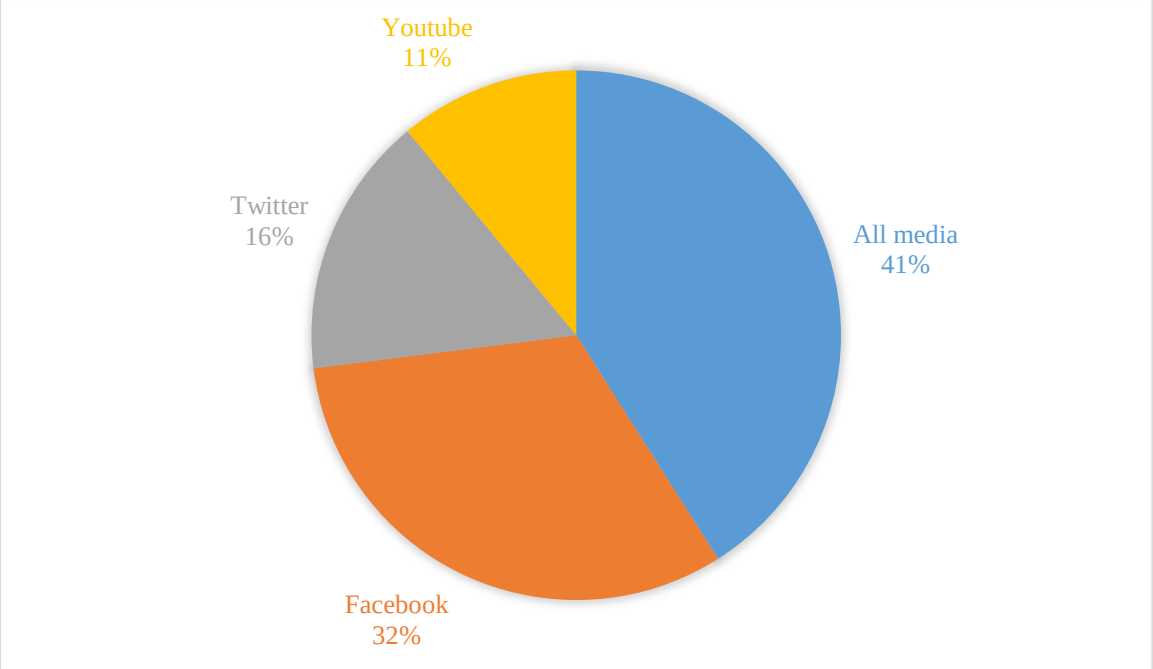


Figure 4.8 Preferred social media

4.5 Influence of online audience on the Always Pads crisis management

The research sought to ascertain how online audiences influenced the Always pads crisis management by Procter and Gamble in Kenya. Regarding the target audience on the crisis management campaign, P&G's primary target audience were females aged between 15 years and 40 years, and who use social media as a channel of communication. This is because the concerns on the quality of the Always pads were raised on twitter, and by females who fit this profile, and so the campaign was aimed at addressing them.

Regarding the sentiments of the online audience on the matter, majority were of the view that P&G had looked down upon Kenyan ladies by offering them substandard products while offering the South African market quality sanitary pads. There were pockets of drastic views such as the always pads should be completely banned from the market, while others were calling for boycott of the product. As was observed from the responses by the online audience, these negative sentiments led to a publicity crisis whereby Always sanitary pads were being painted as substandard products with health implications. The researcher sought

to analyze how these negative sentiments from online audiences influenced the reputation of the Always pads. Upon interacting with negative sentiments about Always pads on social media from fellow ladies, whether the respondents still use always pads or switched to an alternative, had the following responses: 40% opted for an alternative sanitary pad, 38% would still continue using Always Pads while 22% were indifferent.

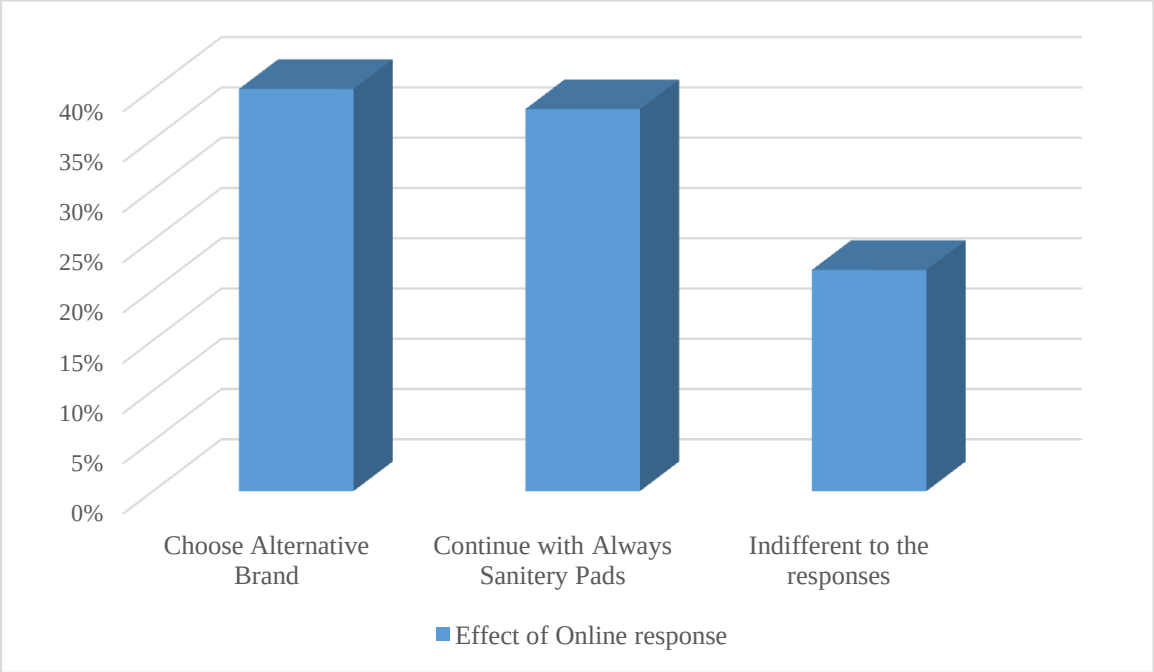


Figure 4.9 Effect online response

From this, it can be deduced that the Impact of the online audience on the crisis management had two effects, it led to loss of some clients hence frustrating the crisis management efforts, it led to understanding/knowing its core client base who would still continue using the Always products regardless of the negative publicity which the crisis management campaign had little impact on them. The indifferent one's choice of using Always pads is dependent on factors other than reputation, such as costs, availability, and marketing. This meant the scope of the crisis management had to include these other factors so as to win over the indifferent category with alternative massaging, thus countering the reduced sales caused by the client's fallout.

4.6 Social Media Strategies for Crisis Management

The respondents were asked to point out any social media strategies that they have seen being used by P&G and other related companies to solve crises. Of the 17 respondents 11 proceeded to engage with the question. Their responses were summarized into themes that would represent their general ideas.

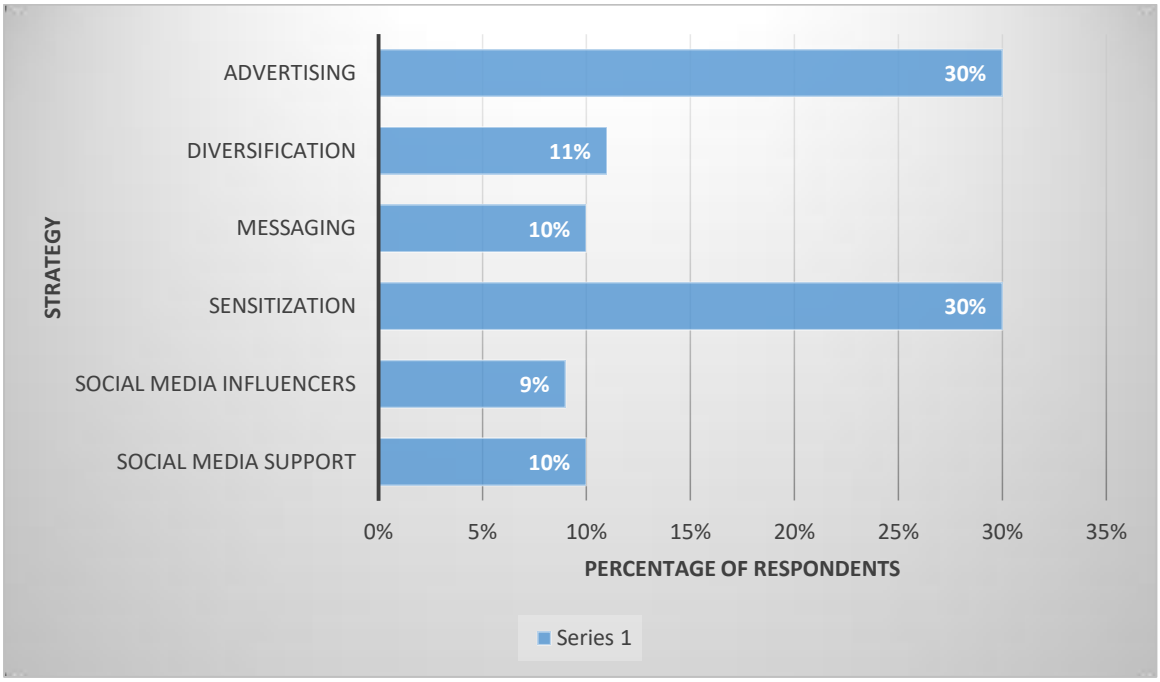


Figure 4.10 Choice of strategy

4.6.1 Social Media Support

An emerging theme of the need for real time support on social media platforms was expressed by some of the participants. Participant 17 addressed the possibility of the sanitary products companies using their social media pages for support in the event of a crisis.

...But it would be very necessary to have even a social media support of these companies so that you can answer all these questions. If something has gone wrong, you can actually consult them because I expect they are experts at it.

(Participant 17)

Austin, Liu and Jin (2012), while studying how audiences seek out information, and in their study, noted that almost all participants reported that convenience initially was a driving force behind the media they used during crises. This finding supports participant 17's sentiments on need for support that results in convenience for the online social media user in a crisis.

Owing to the occurrence of Always pads crisis on social media, the participant commented on the various companies embracing using the same channel as a way of resolving crisis and consequently providing support.

4.6.2 Social Media Influencers

The interview also derived the theme of social media influencers as an online strategy that was necessary for crisis management. Participant 9 talked about the companies involving social media influencers to make the product more relatable to every girl.

I think they can do more social media influencers, to do the advertisements so that people can relate more to the product. Because I feel like for something like Always, I think it became such a household name, that now that middle and upper class no longer really associate with it. And now something like Kotex and even upper class can associate with it. And so social media influencers can do a great job at that.

(Participant 9).

Organizations can cooperate with social media influencers to achieve both marketing and PR objectives. Social media influencers can act as cooperation partners, integrating commercial content into organic narratives, or as independent critics. And finally, social media influencers potentially combine different roles, which have traditionally been occupied by separate actors (Borchers, 2019). Regarding the social media strategy P&G used to manage the crisis, it was found that P&G used influencers.

4.6.3 Sensitization

The participants in this segment believed that the companies should incline their social media strategies to sensitizing the customers using the sanitary pads on other aspects like menstrual hygiene, production process, the menstrual cycle, and the variants of menstruating.

There are so many different things you can do on the marketing side and also to bring awareness of period hygiene products, menstrual hygiene products rather and the presence of menstrual hygiene product companies on social media that will bring them marketing but at the same time, sensitize girls all around the world.

(Participant 5)

If they tell us more about their products, if they tell us what they have used, the material they have used, if they tell us if they have a scent or not, wakitwambia if it's for someone either heavy flow ama for someone with a light flow, at least kila mtu atakaa akijua, this is by always go-to product when I'm experiencing my menstruation. So, I really think they should educate us more as women, as ladies on the products in general. The companies that manufacture them, they should tell us about the different types of flows that are experienced by women, how many hours, ikienda sana tunafaa kukaa na period for how long. So, I really think they should tell us rather than saa ile unavaa pad ndio unaskia uko uncomfortable saa izo it is not full. Then you just have to throw it away then get another one. I really think it will be more economical if they just train us on how long ndio tukae tukijua I'll wear this for one-hour ata kama ikiwa imejaa ama haijajaa, it won't be itchy. I really hope and wish they would educate us more on their products. They would make us aware also about our health because I think when they create the products, they know what to use, they know about our health issues, so they know which materials to use. So, I really wish they would make us aware, not even for marketing purposes but also for our health. But I think it will be a win-win situation.

(Participant 13)

The participant was referring to the idea of involving customers in the production process as a way of building trust between the manufacturer and consumer. This, in the participants opinions, will enlighten the user. This including getting the best use of the products after it is purchased.

4.6.4 Diversification

Participant 4 inclined her thoughts and sentiments to the idea of the companies diversifying their strategies in-handling issues. Most tend to spend more of their resources in advertising whilst this can be spent on increasing quality, working on lower prices and charity.

They're poorly handled as one product gets too much attention, while the others are equally good. I think the ones that are pricey, it's because they have to incorporate the money for advertising because as compared to the adverts and the prices, I don't see much of the products that I use, which of a bit lower price being advertised too much. So yeah, they should put most of their money into lowering the prices rather than advertising their brands because it's all about us women getting the best quality. And if they do that, it's going to help us. It's going to enable us to be able to be confident out there, be confident even when you are walking on the streets because we can afford it, unlike when we're just buying the brand, the name, and everything. It's too pricey, and it's not good because most of these girls who are in extreme poverty, they can't even afford the one that I can afford. So, if we can have a donation for guys. These adverts they do, instead of paying money to do adverts, they can just donate all those sanitary pads to those guys in northern Kenya, wherever, where people are not well off and they can't afford them

(Participant 4)

Incorporation of customer outreach programmes, according to participant 4, is one way of reaching the customer during or after a crisis. This, according to the participant, would also involve redistributing resources to aspects such as lowering prices and using money saved in the production process to fund women with no means of obtaining the sanitary products.

4.6.5 Advertising

This was the final theme derived from the interview question where participants were to identify strategies that they find most suitable in addressing a social media crisis.

Participants responded to the question by sharing their thoughts on advertising as a way of solving the social media crisis. The responses are as below:

What do I think about the online strategies used to resolve constraints I've highlighted? I think it's more marketing. Those companies manufacturing these menstrual products need to really market themselves. I mean, really, how will we know that you exist without marketing yourselves? And nowadays, everyone has gone online so I think, apart from advertising through the mainstream media, TV, radio, and television, newspapers, I think online strategies need to be embraced even more because this is the future. This is where we are going. So that is the only way I think these companies can survive money-wise in terms of generating income and making sales if they embrace online strategies.

(Participant 15)

Online strategies, I think mostly a lot of people don't use social media, a lot of people, a huge percent in Kenya. Most of them ni either waskize kwa radio ama kwa TV ama the percentage which use media, already hao ni watu wenye 90% are well educated on menstrual products. I think wanafaa… Maybe yes, it's good to advertise on social media but waangalie pia wale watu hawako social media vile watawasaidia.

(Participant 16)

And a strategy would be… During the advertising if they could…You see the way they always just say ati at night… It won't leak… 8 hours… Now if they could add the swimming perspective into it, then that would be really nice.

(Participant 7)

4.7 Messaging used by P&G during the crisis

The study sort to determine the message content used for the Always pads crisis management by Procter and Gamble in Kenya. It was observed that P&G used influencers to relate comfort with Always pads. The campaign was dubbed #always feel the comfort. Ideally, P&G wanted to dispel the notion that there are a lot of discomforts when using Always sanitary pads. Instead of denying or accepting the claims, they sort to focus on promoting positive messages and adverts on how safe and comfortable always sanitary pads are. Question as to the effectiveness of the message on managing the crisis was asked to the respondents. One of the participants pointed out the importance of ensuring the companies get the messaging right when addressing any concern on social media.

My honest opinion is that these companies could do more in terms of providing, showcasing, and distributing the brands. I know very little of other menstrual products such as the cups, the menstrual discs, and the very new menstrual underwear. I feel that if these companies will be able to market the products more, they'd enable young girls to be able to have varied options to their menstrual products choice. And I feel that these companies need to advertise more. Even when it comes to sanitary towels, I feel that companies like maybe Always, because I usually use Always and Kotex, I feel Always could promote its sanitary towels even more by showing us the different brands that they're releasing. Their features, the comfort they offer, and such things because well, when you go to the pages of Kotex Kenya or Always, you'll find a lot of initiative to provide pads to kids around the world. But not a lot about the pads themselves, or the tampons themselves and why it will be my best option.

(Participant 2)

The participant sort to urge the sanitary pad companies to divulge more information concerning the products they release.

4.8 Discussion

There was an establishment of the most popular social media platforms that the respondents are using and how companies like Procter and Gamble are using these platforms to solve online crisis. There was feedback on the use of Instagram for advertising through social media influencers in order to directly connect with the girl next door. Participants attested to the fact that indeed there was a social media presence of the product Always compared to other products as highlighted in chapter four. There was also the emergence of the fact that competitors like Kotex have also stepped up their social media presence and engaged various diverse methods of engagement from Question-and-Answer sessions, to engaging social media influencers. There was also a number of participants who equally preferred Kotex Kenya as much as Always, which is significant because Always has been in the market longer than Kotex, therefore through social media the gap is being bridged.

Online audiences, as portrayed by the participant responses, show that indeed social media is a powerful tool that if harnessed can capture a lot of attention. All participants pointed out to having a presence online in more than three platforms on average. This, therefore, means that they have three different arenas to share their dissatisfaction concerning specific sanitary products. During the Always pads crisis, some of the participants picked up the issues online and some switched to other products while others preferred to stay put as a result of customer loyalty.

The strategies used in this case were translated to incline more to suggestions on what these manufacturing companies could do to solve the crises. The participants proceeded to suggest, focusing on information concerning the production process would empower the female masses using these products and make them understand what goes in the production. Therefore, the participants can be able to decipher when there is a problem and point it out in the product. Participants also pointed out that indeed advertising more on social media

could increase visibility. Out of the 17 participants only one believed that traditional media still plays a critical role in solving crisis, the rest picked social media as a preferred means to solve online social media crisis.

Messaging was another important aspect that participants delved into, how information is packaged. Is it relevant, understandable and can the users relate to? Emerging issues like diseases related to menstruation were brought up by the participants with some participants mentioning that they were unable to respond to various questions as result of complications arising from menstruation. These diseases include endometriosis, where the participant challenged the manufacturing companies for products like Always products, Kotex products to address these issues and share messages that acknowledge these challenges.

4.9 Summary

This chapter looked at the main themes that emerged during the interviewing process. A study was carried to find out the Utilization of Social Media by Procter And Gamble During the Always Sanitary Towels Crisis in Kenya. The initial number of respondents to be interviewed was 25, the number of respondents actually interviewed was 17, this is 68% passing the threshold of expected return rate. The key themes that emerged when investigating how social media has been used by Procter and Gamble during the Always sanitary towels crisis included Perspective of sanitary products in Kenya, preference, social media presence of sanitary products companies, social media presence of the respondents and social media strategies.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The chapter presents the summary of findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the study on the influence of social media and on the utilization of social media by Procter and Gamble during the Always pads crisis in Kenya. Suggestions, recommendations, and areas for further research will then be presented.

5.2 Summary

The main objectives of this study were to find out the social media platforms used for online management of the Always pads crisis by Procter and Gamble in Kenya. The specific objectives were to ascertain how online audiences influenced the Always pads crisis management by Procter and Gamble, determine the online crisis management strategies used and to determine the message content used for the Always pads crisis management by Procter and Gamble in Kenya. The findings of this study were based on the interpretation and analysis of data obtained through use of interviews, observation and secondary data. The target population was females who use social media for communication and experience menstrual cycles thus use sanitary products. Out of a sample size of 25 respondents, the researcher received responses from 17 participants, 68% of the expected response, which was sufficient to make analysis and draw conclusions about the study matter. The following were the key findings from each of the four research objectives:

5.2.1 Social media platforms used for online management of the Always Pads crisis by Procter and Gamble in Kenya

From the findings, it was determined that P&G uses the following social media sites to connect with its target audience: Facebook under P&G, Twitter under @ProcterGamble, Instagram under proctergamble, and YouTube under P&G (Procter & Gamble). Facebook had the most reach, while YouTube had the least. It was ascertained that P&G used YouTube as the social media platform to reach out to its target audience and manage the crisis. Regarding which social media platform P&G should have used to communicate with consumers about the crisis, majority of the respondents preferred a combination of all media. However, if they were to choose one, majority preferred Facebook.

This study thus found that P&G used YouTube as the social media to respond to the crisis despite them having higher audiences in Facebook.

5.2.2 Influence of online audience on the Always Pads crisis management

Regarding the target audience on the crisis management campaign, P&G's primary target audience were females aged between 15 and 40 years, and who use social media as a channel of communication. This is because the concerns on the quality of the Always pads were raised on Twitter by females who fit this profile, and so the campaign was aimed at addressing them.

On the sentiments of the online audience on the subject matter, majority were of the view that P&G had looked down upon Kenyan ladies by offering them substandard products while offering the South African market quality sanitary pads. It was found that the online audience impacted the crisis management negatively. Their sentiments made a bad situation worse. The number of complaints increased significantly which in effect affected a greater percentage of their customers.

5.2.3 Social Media Strategies for Crisis Management

The study looked into social media support, social media influencers, sensitization, diversification, and advertising as potential strategies for managing online crisis. Each strategy is suitable for a particular situation and so applied as such. The researcher sorts the views of the respondents as to which strategy would be most suited for this crisis. Majority preferred sensitization and advertisement. Regarding the social media strategy P&G used to manage the crisis, it was found that P&G used influencers and messaging. The messaging was # feel good with always.

5.2.4 Message content used for the Always Pads crisis management by Procter and Gamble in Kenya

It was observed that P&G used influencers to relate comfort with Always pads. The campaign was dubbed #always feel the comfort. Ideally, P&G wanted to dispel the notion that there are a lot of discomforts when using Always sanitary pads. Instead of denying or accepting the claims, they sort to focus on promoting positive messages and adverts on how safe and comfortable Always sanitary pads are. Question as to the effectiveness of the message on managing the crisis was asked to the respondents.

5.3 Conclusions

It can be deduced that using a variety of social media platforms to enhance reach to specific audiences is preferable. The next preferred option that companies can use is using one platform with the most reach which in this case, P&G should have used Facebook. From this, it can be deduced that the impact of the online audience on the crisis management had two effects, it led to loss of some clients hence frustrating the crisis management efforts, it led to understanding/knowing its core client base who would still continue using the Always

products regardless of the negative publicity which the crisis management campaign had little impact on them.

Regarding strategy, it can be deduced that each strategy is ideal for a given specific situation. However, two or three can be applied simultaneously so as to get the desired results. P&G chose to advertise and messaging. Their goal was to counter the dwindling of sales caused by the negative publicity of the Always pads. However, they failed to address the issues addressed head on in their social media campaigns. In this case, additionally, P&G should have considered sensitization. Sensitization helps in enlightening target audience about the product, it would also provide a forum for question and answer whereby P&G would answer all these questions and address the complaints. Regarding messaging, other than promoting positive messages and adverts on how safe and comfortable products are when facing complains from the public, messaging should also be directed towards addressing the issue, so that the company does not come across as ignorant to the customers concerns.

Businesses need to monitor social media in order to quickly respond to any looming crisis. It is important that this response is adapted to the channel, which means that it should not coincide with the message that is transmitted to traditional media in a press release, for example. The answer must also be given in a friendly and humane way. On social media, people want a human response, not the voice of the company. Social media is a viable medium of crisis management. Message packing is a valuable way to communicate during a crisis, to avoid creating controversy. Engaging diverse social media crisis management techniques also assists in reaching a wider online audience.

5.4 Recommendations

It is recommended that when handling online communication crisis, companies should use a multi-pronged approach whereby they use as many social media platforms as possible, and several messaging and strategies at the same time. The various social media platforms will enable them to reach many and diverse target audiences, thus maximising their reach. The various strategies will ensure that they not only appeal to a certain section of the target audience, rather to all audiences regardless of the diversity. The different messaging is aimed at tackling various angles of the crisis. One will be aimed at promoting the positives of the product, another will be for addressing the concerns raised, while another will be for pushing sales.

5.5 Suggestions for further study

Based on the findings of the study, the following suggestions for further research are made. Research on the relationship between age and communication. It was noted that the older age category of above 45 years were less vocal on the concerns of Always sanitary pads as compared to the younger of between 18 years and 40.

There is also room to find out more information on the areas of social media language and crisis communication. This was due to the fact that in as much as the messaging was done using formal English, online audience of 30 years and below relate more on street lingua and “sheng”.

Further research is also necessary in organizations that have strict policies on using social media as a formal form of communication and potential crisis communication plans.

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APPENDIX 1:

LETTER OF REQUEST T O CARRY OUT RESEARCH

ALICE MKAMBOI

P.O. BOX 7408-00300

NAIROBI

29.03.2020

RE: REQUESTING TO INTERVIEW FEMALE STUDENTS IN ST. PAULS UNIVERSITY

Dear Sir,

I am a Master of Arts Student in Communication Studies here at St. Paul's university and I am currently working on my research project. My research topic being, "Utilization Of Social Media For Crisis Management: The Case Of Procter And Gamble During The Always Sanitary Towels Crisis In Kenya''. To be able to carry out the research effectively, I am requesting for permission to interview female students aged between 19-45 years. The main aim is to research on the social media pages they use. What type of menstrual products they use and why? Their experience with the always pads and their interaction with Procter and Gamble social media pages. I will appreciate your permission and a go ahead to carry out the interviews.

Yours Sincerely,

Alice Mkamboi.

APPENDIX 2

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION TO THE RESPONDENTS

Alice Mkamboi,
Master of Arts in Communication Studies,
St. Paul's University,
macsnrb514719@spu.ac.ke,

29.03.2020

Dear Respondent,

RE: REQUEST FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN MY RESEARCH

I Am a Master of Arts Student in Communication Studies here at St. Paul's university and I am currently working on my research project. I Am researching on the Utilization of social media by Procter and Gamble during the Always Pads Crisis in Kenya and would love to interview you as part of the research. Specifically, I'm hoping you can comment on; The social media pages you use. What type of menstrual product you use and why? Your experience with the product, always pads and your interaction with Procter and Gamble social media pages.

The interview will take 15-25minutes, and there is no preparation you need to do beforehand. Last but not least, your identity will be kept secret throughout the interview even at the publication of this research. I will appreciate if you agree to participate, thank you

Yours faithfully,

Alice Mkamboi

APPENDIX 3

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Utilization of social media by Procter and Gamble during the Always Pads Crisis in Kenya

Introduction

1. What is your age?
2. What are you studying at St. Paul's University?

Verbal Consent

3. Would you like to participate in this interview?

Background Information Overview:

4. Briefly tell me about yourself
5. What are your experiences and perspectives concerning menstrual products in the Kenyan market?

Experiences with the menstrual products

6. Tell me about preferred menstrual products
7. Tell me about your least preferred menstrual products
8. Highlight the pros and the cons of the above mentioned

Social Media

9. Let’s talk about your social media presence
10. What is your preferred social media platform?
11. What is your opinion on the social media presence of the companies that manufacture your preferred menstrual products?
12. What is your opinion on the social media presence of the companies that manufacture your least preferred menstrual products?
13. What do you think about the online strategies used to solve constraints you have highlighted?

APPENDIX 4

NACOSTI PERMIT

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Ref No: 790888

Date of Issue: 09/April/2021

RESEARCH LICENSE



This is to Certify that Miss.. Alice Mkamboi of St. Paul's University, has been licensed to conduct research in Nairobi on the topic: UTILIZATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA BY PROCTER AND GAMBLE DURING THEALWAYS SANITARY TOWELS CRISIS IN KENYA for the period ending : 09/April/2022.

License No: NACOSTI/P/21/9913

790888

Applicant Identification Number

Director General
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Verification QR Code

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APPENDIX 5

ST. PAULS UNIVERSITY LETTER

ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

Private Bag 00217 LIMURU, KENYA
Email: office@spu.ac.ke
Website: www.spu.ac.ke

Tel Office: +254 (0) 20 - 2020505/10
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(0) 736 - 424440

6th April 2021

National Commission for Science and Technology,
P.O. BOX 30623-00100,
Nairobi.

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: RECOMMENDATION FOR ALICE MKAMBOI- MACSNRB514719 TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

This letter confirms the above named person is a student of the Master of Arts in Communication Studies program at St. Paul's University.

The second year consists of a major research work leading to a dissertation. The student's selected topic is *'Utilization of socio media by Procter and Gamble during the always sanitary towel crisis in Kenya'.*

Kindly grant this student the required permit.

Yours Faithfully,

Dr. Julius Kahuthia
Director, Board of Postgraduate Studies