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**EFFECT OF DIGITAL MARKETING COMMUNICATION TOOLS ON STUDENT
ENROLMENT IN PRIVATE HOSPITALITY COLLEGES IN KENYA**



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REG NO. MBA/114477/18

**THIS IS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE AWARD DEGREE OF MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION AT
STRATHMORE UNIVERSITY**

SEPTEMBER 2022

DECLARATION

I declare that this work has not been previously submitted and approved for the award of a degree by this or any other University. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the dissertation contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the dissertation itself.

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Approval

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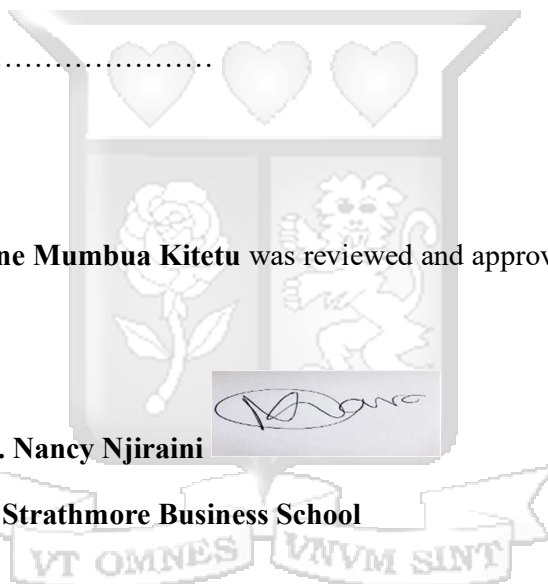
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ABSTRACT

Digitalization has a positive impact how businesses market themselves and interact with customers. Digital marketing is the utilization of electronic media to promote an institution to the target market. Universities' market themselves on digital channels to attract students and other stakeholders as well as to interact with the institution through digital media. However, there is little research on the potential of digital marketing in higher education institutions such as hospitality colleges. This study sought to fill this gap by reviewing how various digital marketing tools; social media marketing, content marketing and email marketing have affected the student enrolment rate in Nairobi County. The study used the social learning theory and the technology acceptance model to anchor the research variables. The study employed a positivism philosophy with a descriptive research design used during the research. The research targeted the 7,813 students within the hospitality colleges in Nairobi County registered under TVETA. The study employed a quantitative research instrument in the data collection process. Google forms was applied dominantly in the data collection process owing to the large sample for the study. The collected data was analysed using a mix of descriptive and inferential analysis. The results showed that 94% of the students utilize the hospitality college social media channels, only 37.7% use the colleges content marketing pages with only 15. % accessing the school websites. The overall regression established that 42% of the changes in student enrolment within hospitality colleges is predicted by the application of digital marketing communication tools. Conclusions are that social media marketing; email marketing and content marketing had a positive and significant effect on the student enrolment. The study recommends that institutions of higher learning utilize several types of digital communication tools to increase the rate of information spread and reach a wider audience. The research recommends that hospitality schools should pay close attention to email generated content, social media engagement and personalized content that can enhance relationship-building with current and prospective students.

Key Words: Digital marketing, hospitality colleges, digital marketing tools, student enrolment

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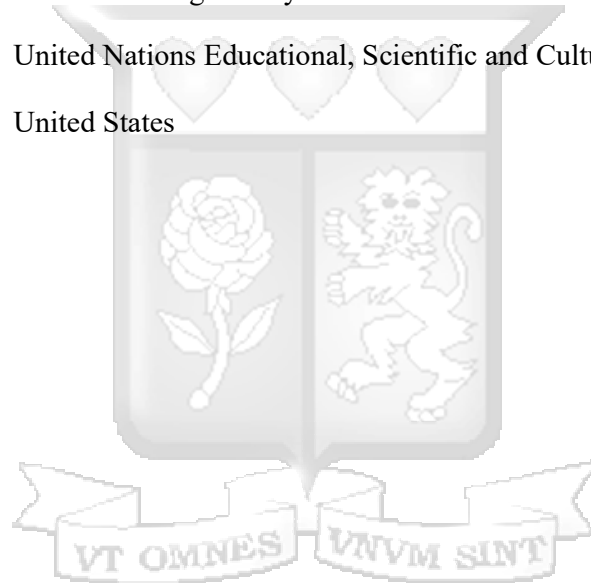
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AMA	American Marketing Association
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation
SEO	Search Engine Optimization
SEM	Search Engine Marketing
SLT	Social Learning Theory
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
US	United States



DEFINITION OF TERMS

Communication tools	These refer to the methods and media used by an organization to communicate and interact with its stakeholders
Content marketing	Content marketing refers to the publishing and distribution of text, video, or audio materials to customers online, which enables businesses to show understanding of customer needs by delivering relevant, real-time messages
Digital marketing	Digital marketing can be summed as the use of digital technologies that form channels to market and attain business objectives by achieving and surpassing clients' needs more than the competitors.
Email marketing	Email marketing is a type of digital communication strategy where consumers are targeted with advertisements and promotions through electronic mail to attract them, leading to the purchase of the product
Social media marketing	Social media marketing is a method of marketing through social networks on online platforms to attract the attention of potential consumers.
Student enrolment	This is defined as the criteria for admitting students and retaining students in a school

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DEDICATION

I'm dedicating this dissertation to my husband and our two lovely children Amara and Bryce.



CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Over the past century, digital technologies have transformed the marketing space (Bartosik-Purgat, 2019), and advances in digital tools have seen institutions of higher learning use new tools for marketing themselves (Jordan, 2014). According to Motta and Barbosa (2018), digital technologies have increased the opportunity for institutions of higher learning to increase their brand awareness within an international market. In the education sector, competition for student enrollment is high in the private sector, where the number of internationally recognized institutions has been on the rise in recent decades (Eide, 2018). With the sector facing increased scrutiny and low public funding, universities' attractiveness has consequently become crucial to the financial sustainability of private universities (Ghosal, Prasad, & KulvinderKaur, 2020).

Globally, well-known universities like Yale, Rochester, and John Hopkins are the Universities known to have used digital media to communicate their programs to international students (Reddy, 2014). Alexander, Becker, Cummins, and Geisinger (2017) revealed that college students have been familiarizing themselves with new digital communication tools, which have been key to developing habits that cultivate long-term learning and continuous mastery of new skills. Studies show that the rise in digital usage by the younger generation is the key to attracting them via an internet search, mobile, and social media channels (Marima, 2015). Patton (2018) affirms that the target market for today's institutions of higher learning has grown up with digital tools and is easy to access through various digital platforms. Habib, Jamal, Khalil, and Khan (2021) opine that it is essential that institutions of higher learning make their presence known in digital spaces as recruitment, advertising, and promotion strategies.

Despite increased investment and usage of various digital technologies, Eide (2018) asserts that private colleges are in peril, and financial pressures and declining enrollment may lead to more closures. In the UK, reputable universities' social media engagement through Weibo and WeChat has a positive association with Chinese student numbers (Zhu, 2019), while Al-Thagafi, Mannion, and Siddiqui's (2020) research shows that although universities in Saudi Arabia use Web 2.0 for the recruitment of international students, the platforms often lack consistency and depth. Nigeria's Oluwasola (2019) revealed that private universities use websites, search engine optimization tools, and social media to spread positive word of mouth and increase admission. Despite the evidence of increased digital marketing, Farinloye, Wayne,

Mogaji, and Watat (2020) shows how the high cost of devices, lack of infrastructure, and low bandwidth and access to the internet are impacting African universities' use of strategic communications.

Njuguna (2015) reports a moderate adoption of digital marketing tools among private universities in developing countries such as Kenya, where traditional channels are still popular. Mulonzi (2014) found that accessibility and reputation as marketed through various media have more of an influence on enrolment than fee flexibility. Maina (2018) argues that paper print and radio are still influential marketing communication tools that influence student enrolment. Ngure (2018) avers digital technologies as essential growth drivers for private universities, facilitating communication and allowing shareholders to gauge public opinion on their investments. Binsard and Ekwulugo (2018) observed that higher institutions of learning with proper digital marketing strategies attract more students than the ones with lower usage of digital marketing channels. This study investigated the effect of digital marketing communication tools on student enrolment in private hospitality colleges in Kenya.

1.1.1 Digital Marketing Communication Tools

Digital marketing (DM) can be summed as the use of digital technologies that form channels to market and attain business objectives by achieving and surpassing clients' needs more than competitors (Tiago & Verissimo, 2014). DM involves the use of the internet and digital channels in the promotion of a business, product, service, or brand (Miklosik, Kuchta, Evans, & Zak, 2019). Concern (2016) affirmed that a product's packaging and content have a significant impact on its overall ability to attract consumers. The American Marketing Association (AMA) (2021) reports that digital technology evolution has resulted in a digital means for businesses to leverage, such as websites, search engines, blogs, social media, video, and email, among others. Taiminen (2016) marvels at the ability of digital marketing to enable niche marketing which is marketing targeted toward specific audiences. Digital communication tools have been associated with increased customer experience, satisfaction, customer retention, and revenue through personalization (Mutali & Messah, 2018).

DM communication tools are a cost-effective marketing strategy whose impact can be graded using Google Analytics, instantaneous feedback through SMS services, and has a high conversion rate; in contrast to traditional marketing (Paladan, 2018). Web and google analytics measure digital interactions through click counts and visitor reports, then matches with ROI to assess goal realization (Fierro, Cardona Arbelaez, & Gavilanez, 2017). In assessing the trends

in the application of digital marketing, Kotane, Znotina, and Hushko (2019) identified virtual assistants, chatbots, video marketing and artificial intelligence (AI) as the most actively used digital marketing tools globally. Preniqi, Sylaj and Krasniqi (2020) opine that although AI will continue to shape digital trends, they are costly to acquire and maintain.

To realize the full benefits of DM, it is necessary to incorporate multiple channels under a unified, coordinated plan (Kaur, 2017). Farinas and Rodriguez (2021) emphasized the quality of the content uploaded on digital platforms, while according to Karjaluoto, Mustonen, and Ulkuniemi (2015), employing multiple channels in marketing increases customer awareness, increases customers, and improves brand image if managed. Kelsey (2017) supports, affirming that the central goal of digital marketing is to develop content that flows through various channels. Bala and Verma (2018) emphasized the importance of identifying the best channels for their target market. Hermawan (2018) showed that private universities had invested extensively in search engine marketing, social media marketing, and websites.

Research on digital marketing tools has taken various conceptualizations, although the channels are similar. Ghosal (2019) referred to them as social networks, digital platforms, and e-communication tools. Maina (2018) used content advertising (video, audio, photographs, written testament), social media, and direct marketing as the nomenclature. Omboi and Mutali (2015) reported increased use of content marketing, social media, and e-mailing among institutions of learning in Kenya. The current study investigated the effectiveness of digital marketing communication tools in hospitality students' recruitment by focusing on social media marketing, email marketing, and content marketing, as utilized in Gitahi's (2020) study. Wilson and Makau (2018) reported that these were effective and cheap, while Simiyu (2021) reported their extensive use among Kenyan institutions of higher learning. These are discussed further below.

Social media marketing is the use of social networks to market a company's products and services (Bamfo & Atara, 2015). Garcia, Pereira, and Cairrão (2021) opine that social media marketing (SMM) involves creating and sharing content through social media platforms and sited to drive engagement and increase awareness. Yamin (2017) hails SMM as a key marketing tool for its ability to target specific groups of customers, while Hudders, De Jans, and De Veirman (2021) hail it for exposing and increasing the traffic of businesses' digital channels. Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2019) praise it for reducing information asymmetry within organizations and between businesses and their clients. Constantinides and Stagno (2017) opined that despite social media having a significant influence on study selection and

university choice, its core benefits had not been exploited. Simiyu, Komen, and Bonuke (2019) determined that SMM significantly influences postgraduate enrollment. Motta and Barbosa (2018) identify three main platforms; audio, video, and competitive analysis platforms comprising social networks (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram), social news networks (Reddit), microblogging (Twitter), media sharing (Youtube), Bookmarking sites (Pinterest) and community blogs (Tumblr).

Email marketing involves the use of electronic mail to target consumers with advertisements and promotions (Ghosal, 2019). E-mail marketing refers to the use of email for sending promotional messages to internet users and has been considered one of the more effective methods of online advertising and marketing (Dwityas, Mulyana, Hesti, Briandana, & Putrianti, 2020). Sahni, Wheeler, and Chintagunta (2016) infer that personalized email content creates an impact on individuals to increase their views towards the institution and help in driving patronage and retention of consumers. Mamat, Roslan, Rahman, and Alaudeen (2015) revealed that telemarketing is a cheap means of distributing information to a wide range of potential students, thus improving student enrolment rates within institutions.

Content marketing refers to the publishing and distributing of text, video, or audio materials to customers online (Wall & Spinuzzi, 2018). Businesses show their understanding of their customers through formulating content that is specific to their needs through their relevance and timeliness (Pažėraitė & Repovienė, 2016). Customers switch to a competing brand in the search for exceptional and personalized experiences achieved through relevant content (Getty, 2015). Bala and Verma (2018) averred to content marketing as an effective strategy that engages targeted readers. Content marketing highlights how higher educators engage with their target markets, including students, parents, alumni, donors, and faculty (Garcia, Pereira, & Cairrão, 2021). However, according to the American Marketing Association (2021), higher educators are yet to develop the requisite digital marketing content to realize full benefits. Getty (2015) found a positive relationship between content marketing and undergraduate students' recruitment.

1.1.2 Student Enrolment

Student enrolment in a higher education learning institution is defined as the criteria for admitting students and retaining students in a school (Maina, 2018). It involves the total number of students already registered, present in class, and have the intention of referring their peers to the institution (Suraya & Saragih, 2019). Al Hallak, Ayoubi, Moscardini, and Loutfi (2019) identified student enrolment as the process of initiating attendance at a school. This is

the total number of students properly registered to attend classes in schools or universities. Cotter (2013) argues that student enrolment also entails that the registered students continue to pursue their education within their schools of registration. While this study recognizes the importance of retention, it adopted Suraya and Saragih's (2019) definition, which considers students' registration into various schools. It further used the students' intention to refer their peers to their various enlisted institutions.

Eide (2018) opines that private schools are highly dependent on tuition revenues for survival, noting that declining enrollment was increasing the financial strain on the schools. Ghosal (2019) points out that higher learning institutions are faced with the challenges of increasing their student enrolment to break even and sustain their market share. Warren and Lafortune (2020) affirmed that declining enrollment presented both challenges and opportunities to the education sector. Guzman (2019) argued that declining enrollment affects schools' income, thus operations, providing evidence of schools that had restructured their funds to meet performance requirements. However, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization - UNESCO (2015) reports that while student enrolment has been on the rise, schools in developing states have been unable to match it in core resources such as faculty.

Ortagus, Yang, Voorhees, and Riggs (2021) identified online enrollment as a strategy used by community colleges to increase enrollment. Binsard and Ekwulugo (2018) suggested that the utilization of digital marketing tools has been important within institutions of higher learning that have driven school enrolment. In Ghana, Amisah, Opoku-Mensah, Mensah, and Gamor (2019) showed that less than half of the students enrolled in the hospitality program intend to choose careers in the industry. Tupas, Mejares, Virtudez, and Pabatang (2020) found articulation and teaching performance as the main drivers of student enrollment, acknowledging the importance of enhancing advertising strategies and content to increase institutional attractiveness. Anthony, Mensah, and Amisah (2021) showed how entrepreneurial intentions, interest in hospitality careers, and social pressure influence enrollment into hospitality colleges. Ho and Law (2020) assert that marketing strategies can be leveraged as tools to attract potential students.

The Tourism Regulatory Authority's (2018) action plan indicates that the Kenyan hospitality training colleges have collaborated with international brands to drive the intake among the institutions. This is expected to lead to the delivery of training, which can contribute to a strong culture of service excellence in the hospitality and service industry. Jepkoech (2020) associated enrollment with an increase in student population within an institution. The current research

examined the enrolment rates within the private hospitality colleges using the rate of uptake and willingness to refer their respective schools to potential students. This is as ascribed in Suraya and Saragih's (2019) study. These measures were also used by Omingo and Mberia (2019).

1.1.3 Hospitality Colleges in Kenya

Kenya's hospitality industry falls under the tourism and hospitality sector and is lauded as one of the three top-earning industries in Kenya (Ministry of Education, 2021). Hospitality schools fall under the University Education and Research Sub-Sector of Kenya's education sector. The industry has realized enormous growth in recent years, with demand for specialized skills and competencies increasing as international standards become localized (Wandolo, Ndiritu, Khayiya, & Mugendi, 2018). Kenya's tourism and hospitality industry continue to suffer a shortage of trained and skilled staff (Francis, Wamathai, Wandaka, & Jilo, 2020). TRA, in conjunction with the Ministry of Education, has identified hospitality colleges and institutions as the bridge to this gap (TRA, 2017), and various hospitality courses and programs have since been introduced in institutions of higher learning (Binyanya, Wandolo, & Mugambi, 2021). The private industry has also played a big part in the promotion and facilitation of the growth of these schools Wamwangi (2012), with the 33 registered hospitality colleges guaranteeing prospective students international standards, skills, and competencies. Graduates from these schools emerge with diplomas and certificates in hospitality management.

However, McCowan (2018) argues that Kenyan institutions of higher learning are struggling to meet quality demands despite the high demand for open positions. Currently, hospitality courses are offered by multiple universities and colleges around the country. The MOE (2021) reports that student enrolment into universities has been on the rise in both public and private universities by 1%, from 542,005 in 2018/19 to 547,133 in 2019/20 and further by 3% to 566,042 in 2020/21. Various researchers have established a link between marketing communication tools and enrolment into institutions of higher learning in Kenya (Kimani & Obwatho, 2020; Kimani, 2020; Simiyu, 2021; Simiyu, Komen, & Bonuke, 2019). Gwaye (2018) found a positive relationship between direct marketing and student enrolment for KASNEB programs. Private Hospitality Institutions continue to work toward filling this gap while managing profitable customer relationships to create value for customers and capture value from the customers in return (Onyuna, 2019). The study focused on registered hospitality colleges operating within Nairobi City County.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Digital channels have become ubiquitous in the modern world, and they have been utilized to advance business development, improve brand value, and ensure growth and better visibility. According to Goh, Nguyen, and Law (2017), international educational institutions aim to connect with prospective students and increase students' enrolment through digital media channels such as Email Marketing, Search Engine Optimization (SEO), Social Media Marketing (SMM), content and affiliate marketing, despite little empirical evidence of their effectiveness. The survival of private colleges is based on how well they can incorporate marketing efforts to increase their attractiveness to prospective students (Al Hallak, Ayoubi, Moscardini, & Loutfi, 2019). Poor adoption of emerging marketing tools within private colleges has resulted in significant challenges in attracting enrolment (Qi, 2015). Eide (2018) affirms that low enrollment rates are affecting the financial strength of private colleges, which threatens their survival. It is important to understand how to employ digital tools to increase customer awareness and institutional attractiveness (Shamsudin et al., 18).

Fierro, Cardona Arbelaez, and Gavilanez (2017) focussed on Big Choice Group marketing strategies and found that the multi-national has been successful at using search engines, webpages, and social media platforms in marketing higher learning institutions. Indonesia's Kusumawati (2019) identified social media and content marketing (website) as the most used direct marketing strategies employed at Brawijaya State University. India's Bapat, Mahale, Kumar, and Srinivasan (2021) reported that internet advertisements influence all prospective students regardless of their age, academic level, gender, or socioeconomic background. Jamil, Rusle, Zolkipli, and Shaharane (2021) associated Instagram marketing with improved student interest in particular universities. Dhar (2020) hailed digital communication tools as facilitators of 'viral marketing,' which leverages timely dissemination of information through multiple digital communication channels. Oluwasola (2019) identified the use of school websites, search engine optimization, and social media as instrumental communication strategies for private institutions of learning in Nigeria.

Vululleh (2020) researched the challenges and opportunities for higher education marketing in Africa and maintains that digital platforms present an opportunity to market programs to overseas students. Eger, Egerova, and Krystoň (2019) carried out an investigation into Facebook utilization in the Czech Republic and Slovakia and found evidence that Facebook has been a useful channel to initiate communication and manage relationships. Uchendu, Nwafor, and Nwaneri (2015) examined marketing techniques and their impact on student

enrollment in Calabar, Nigeria, and established that use of email and social media increased enrollment in online programs while social media had no effect. Maina (2018) researched marketing communication tools at a private university and established that Web 2.0 tools complement traditional marketing channels and can attract new enrollees. Zawadi and Makena (2019) sought the effect of social media marketing on the marketing performance of telecommunication firms and determined that Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube marketing have significant positive effects on the sales performance of telecommunication firms.

Vululleh (2020) carried out a literature review, presenting a methodological gap, Eger, Egerova, and Krystoň (2019) researched relationship management, presenting a conceptual gap, while Uchendu, Nwafor, and Nwaneri (2015) researched enrolment in online programs. Maina (2018) based their study on Web 2.0 tools presenting a contextual gap, while Zawadi and Makena (2019) only investigated one type of digital marketing channel. Further, these studies have not focused on hospitality schools, are based in different regions, and have largely focused on the effect of digital marketing on performance rather than specifying enrolment. Further, according to Vululleh (2020), understanding how to utilize different digital tools would improve the effectiveness of marketing campaigns. This study sought to fill this empirical gap by examining the relationship between digital marketing communication tools usage and student enrolment into hospitality colleges in Kenya.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 General Objective

The main aim of the study was to determine the effect of digital marketing communication tools on student enrolment in private hospitality colleges in Kenya.

1.3.2 Specific Objective

- i. To establish the effect of social media marketing on student enrolment in private hospitality colleges in Kenya.
- ii. To determine the effect of email marketing on student enrolment in private hospitality colleges in Kenya.
- iii. To establish the effect of content marketing on student enrolment in private hospitality colleges in Kenya.

1.4 Research Question

The research sought to answer the following research questions.

- i. What is the effect of social media marketing on student enrolment in private hospitality colleges in Kenya?
- ii. What is the effect of email marketing on student enrolment in private hospitality colleges in Kenya?
- iii. What is the effect of content marketing on student enrolment in private hospitality colleges in Kenya?

1.5 Scope of the Study

The geographical scope of the research focused on enrolment in private hospitality colleges operating within Nairobi County. The conceptual scope of the study examined digital marketing communication tools (social media marketing tools, content marketing, and email marketing) and how they impact student enrolment in private hospitality colleges in Kenya. The theoretical scope of the research anchored on the social learning theory and the technology acceptance model. The time scope of the study was limited to October 2021 and November 2021.

1.6 Significance of the Study

1.6.1 To policymakers

The tourism and hospitality businesses in Kenya, alongside those established globally, are likely to find the results obtained from this study helpful. This study will establish the relationship between digital marketing and student enrolment with the hope that policymakers will realize the potential of technologies as marketing tools. Towards this, the ministry can develop a framework for strengthening higher institutions' ability to acquire and utilize emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and machine learning in marketing.

1.6.2 To Industry

The study is likely not only to impact faculty and students at hospitality colleges but also other institutions of higher learning in amplifying the enrolment rates. The results were critical in the application of various communication tools within hospitality colleges. The findings to be gained from this study will present valuable insight to private hospitality institutions in Kenya. It was useful to Hospitality Institutions' marketing managers and the management of those institutions. The findings were useful in helping to formulate effective integrated marketing strategies, enrolment policies, strategic planning processes, and expansion of program offerings. It will further benefit investors in both education and hospitality industries, including founders of private hospitality institutions, in ensuring proper digital marketing strategies are

put in place for value creation to the customers and, in return, capture the said value from the customers.

To scholars

The research's importance is in its contribution to the understanding of the utilization of digital communication tools within hospitality colleges. With the scant literature focusing on digital marketing and student enrolment in private hospitality institutions, the findings were relevant to academia by enhancing available literature, enhancing the body of knowledge, and contributing to future research work.



CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presented a review of previous researchers' literature that is related to the study variables. It first presented the theoretical underpinning of the study, presenting the theories that form the basis of the current study. It then presented a critical review of previous researchers' work on the three main study variables in relation to the objectives.

2.2 Theoretical Review

The study was grounded on the social learning theory by Bandura (1977), which advocates that people's perceptions and specific actions are influenced by their social environment. As such, the theory can be utilized in this study to advocate how hospitality colleges can manage their social environment to drive better enrolment rates in the school. The second theory that was applied in the study is the technology acceptance model by Davis (1986), which underpins how various institutions have embraced digital communication tools as a key instrument of driving institution communication and engagement with students and other actors. TAM supplements SLT by explaining how schools perceive digital marketing technologies and choose to employ them in marketing themselves (Al-Emran, Mezhuyev, & Kamaludin, 2018). The TAM ties to the SLT through Bandura's self-efficacy.

2.2.1 Social Learning Theory

This theory emerged from the works of Bandura (1977), and it stipulates that people learn new behaviours through observing others. It emerged from earlier theories that attribute human behaviour to responding to external stimuli ranging from expected rewards and punishments for specific actions. This theory contrasts earlier theories in that it identifies the link between social characteristics of the external environment, the learning of individuals' perceptions of the social construct, and how individuals are motivated to reproduce certain behaviours as emulated by individuals they identify with (Law, Geng, & Li, 2019). This theory was revolutionary for its focus on imitation because of observation. It argues that people influence and are influenced by the social environment in which they exist (Le & Hancer, 2021).

This theory identifies observing, considering, rehearsing, acting, comparing, and confirming as steps preceding acceptance. Nguyen, Lu, Conduit, Tran, and Scholz (2021) affirm that through social norms, community beliefs and attitudes, and the influence of outside actors, one develops behaviour and will emulate behaviour based on perceived rewards or punishments (Davis, 1989). The SLT explains the interaction between behavioural, cognitive, and

environmental stimuli (Deaton, 2015). Wardsworth (2021) identifies attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation as critical SLT elements. The premise of this theory is that advertising reinforces social influences. The emphasis here is that content on digital marketing channels will influence prospective students' school selection behaviour. Bandura's theory predicts that prospective students will model or emulate the things they observe based on whether they perceive enrolment as beneficial.

In later years of development, Bandura acknowledged the limits of humans and incorporated the dimension of self-efficacy, adding aspects of barriers emanating from individuals' self-internalization and judgment of their ability to replicate observed behaviour (Lim, 2021). This theory has found extensive application in communication and advertising research, from traditional media (Sakwa, 2012) to digital media (Gaturi, 2020). Social learning theory considers how both environmental and cognitive factors interact to influence human learning and behaviour (Gaturi, 2020). Due to its insistence on the perception of rewards and punishment, in marketing, positive images help create the desired association with a particular brand, product, or service (Kalimullina & Dobrotvorskayaa, 2016).

In this study, SLT explained how different digital marketing channels could be used by hospitality colleges to market themselves and spread positive word of mouth to prospective students in Kenya in the hopes that the messages would generate the desire to enrol students. This theory also asserts that the quality of content delivered on media channels has a significant impact on viewer decisions (Liu, 2021). This theory supports the utilization of new channels as a means of generating and maintaining interest, making it essential when trying to understand schools' use of digital channels such as social media marketing, email marketing, and content marketing to attract new enrolment.

2.2.2 Technology Acceptance Model

This theory was proposed by Davis in 1986, and as a model, it helps in the explanation and prediction of the behaviour of users of new technology (Rigopoulos, 2007). The theory asserts that continued usage of new technologies is impacted either directly or indirectly by the user's attitude, intentions, and the user's perception of the usefulness of the system and its ease of use (Estriegana, Medina-Merodio, & Barchino, 2019). Perceived usefulness refers to the extent to which a technology user's perception of its importance will satisfy their needs, while perceived ease of use refers to the extent to which a technology user believes that the system is free from error (Davis, 1989). The technology acceptance model asserts that digital marketing users

employ these systems based on their weighted considerations of these two primary factors (Granić & Marangunić, 2019).

The theory has developed and been expanded into the TAM2, which includes the influence of social elements on technologies' adoption, such as imagery, subjective norms, and voluntariness in the explanation of perceived usefulness. The TAM2 also asserts that technology is more accepted once it can demonstrate successful goal realization and desirable output quality with relevance to the task required (Lala, 2014). Banky-Sword (2017) asserts that the degree of perceived reliability and ease of access and use of technologies influences their adoption. This study adopted TAM2 together with TAM as the baseline model for explaining digital technologies' acceptance factors. It incorporated the TAM2 concept that affirms that external factors such as market and policy pressures also influence institutions' rate of technology adoption and use.

2.3 Empirical Review

This section presents a review of various findings from previous researchers on the study variables. The section will carry out an assessment of previous research on the effect of social media marketing, e-mail marketing, and content marketing on student enrolment. This study will define social media use as the practice of using social media platforms as channels to interact with customers, build brands, increase sales, and drive website traffic (Kimani & Obwatho, 2020). The various social media platforms that will be investigated will include Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and Snapchat, which are social networks, media sharing networks, and blogging and publishing sites as utilized by Kimani and Obwatho (2020).

E-mail marketing refers to the use of email channels by businesses to send promotional messages and share new products, sales, and updates with customers on their contact lists. E-mails can be designed to reach a wide range of contacts or can be personalized depending on the relationship established between a buyer and a seller (Khadka, 2017). (Jeshurun, 2018) avers that the direct marketing capability feature of emails and their attractiveness and accessibility increase the effectiveness of email marketing. This study seeks to examine how direct mail and email advertising influence student college choice decisions.

Content marketing is a form of marketing whereby users create content and share that may be relevant to particular audiences as a means of keeping the audience attracted and engaged (Farinas & Rodriguez, 2021). Content marketing involves the development and distribution of relevant, useful content through blogs, social media posts, emails, and videos to current and

potential customers as a means of standing out and developing sustainable relationships. This study will investigate content analysis by assessing private universities' usage of web analytics and personalized audio and media to market their programs used (Vululleh, 2020).

2.3.1 Social media marketing and student enrolment

Thornton (2017) carried out an assessment of the role played by social media in influencing students' choice process and how it impacts university enrolment. A quantitative research design was adopted in this study which involved 16 universities selected based on their classification by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. Stratified purposeful sampling was conducted, and content analysis methodology was used in the analysis of the collected data. The study noted that all the universities had active and regularly updated social media accounts on Facebook and Twitter, with some having different accounts being managed by different department managers. This enabled personalized services being offered to students and was key in public image building and relationship management. The study, however, noted that most of the communications being spread on social media accounts do not involve recruitment. This brings into question the relevance of the goals of the universities since the type of content posted was also significantly related to clicks, likes, and shares. Content that is associated with university events and athletics-related events generates the most interest, showing the importance of involving digital content creators to generate relevant content. This study focused on social media use; the current study focused on this by addressing the impact of content marketing and email marketing on student enrolment.

Motta and Barbosa (2018) investigated a host of universities from North America and the European Union in an examination of the role played by social media as marketing tools. The study population consisted of the top 100 higher education institutions ranked in the 2017 Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU). The quantitative study focused on the links presented on the school's websites to their social media sites and carried out an analysis of the follower count and content provided on these sites. The study noted that although all the universities had invested in social media marketing strategies, there were significant differences in which sites were most used. In the United States, universities were more involved in LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, and G+, while EU-based schools were more associated with Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter, with minimal communication through Instagram. G+ showed the least number of participants. This study was limited to the top 100 universities in North America and the EU: the current addressed social media use within Kenyan hospitality schools.

Krishnamoorthy and Srimathi (2019) analysed the influence of digital and social media marketing on the recruitment of higher education students. The study sourced data from prospective applicants, parents, and admission teams of private education institutions. The study determined the fee structure. The third-party career websites enabled education prospects to search for similar institutions, the cut-off points, and registration deadlines, while social media platforms, webinars, and email improved student connections, informed on scholarships and internships, and campus infrastructure. Chatbots powered by artificial intelligence were used for instant responses to inquiries. The study also determined that search engine optimization (SEO) and mobile support improve student retention rates. The study noted that while prospective students preferred to use students prefer social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and Twitter to acquire information, parents were more likely to use email and call centre services. It was determined that the firms also engaged with professional teams for video marketing, content validation, and analytics. Recommendations were for the institutions to plan for integrated platforms to enhance recruitment and engagement with prospective students. The study involved parents' use of digital channels; the current study did not involve parents in its analysis.

Nwedu (2019) carried out a literature review comparing marketing strategies adopted by African and western universities. The study adopted a qualitative and analytical approach and reported that African universities lacked a conclusive marketing approach and were heavily reliant on traditional forms of marketing such as open days, application fee waivers, alumni networks, disability support, student loans and scholarships, prospectus and fliers and student experience testimony, while only a few universities had adopted internet recruitment practices. The study found that, while western universities had made a lot of investment in websites and associated social media or social network platforms, African universities had websites that lacked basic features and platforms that were not fully functional, meaning that students could not carry out all their inquiries through online systems. Lack of infrastructural development also means that African universities could not successfully offer internet services such as free Wi-Fi and email services to students. The study explored all marketing strategies, while the current study analysed digital communication tools in student recruitment.

Mutali and Messah (2018) adopted a descriptive research design in an investigation into the effect of public relations management, advertising, direct marketing, and personal selling on student enrolment in private universities in Kenya. Correlation analysis was used to determine the extent of the relationship between the study variables. Probability random sampling was

used in the selection of the study respondents. The study determined that public relations tools like PowerPoint slides, posters, brochures, annual reports and institutional branding efforts, e-mail marketing, personal selling, and direct marketing practices such as social media marketing and websites all have a significant impact on the choice of private universities by university undergraduates. However, the study found sporadic use of social media as a marketing and recruitment channel within private universities. The study also noted that it was necessary to incorporate traditional means of marketing, such as high school visits and career days. The study restricted itself to private universities, while the current limited itself to hospitality colleges.

In a study on the role of social media marketing on students' uptake in Kenya's public universities, Kimani and Obwatho (2020) utilized a descriptive design that targeted 210 respondents. A desk review was carried out. The study determined that social media had been an effective tool for the recruitment of students into private tertiary institutions. Social networks, media sharing sites, and blogging and publishing sites were integral in enabling online technical support, quick response to inquiries, reduced communication costs, and enabled availability of online services. These services were also associated with reduced marketing costs and improved price and product information, making them the preferred means of marketing. The study focussed on social media adoption within Kenya's public universities, the current examined student uptake within hospitality schools.

2.3.2 E-mail marketing and student enrolment

Mamat, Roslan, Rahman, and Alaudeen (2015) sought to determine whether telemarketing played any role in influencing student enrolment. The study focussed on one university and collected information from staff at the university's marketing department through structured interviews. The study determined that telemarketing was one of the key strategies employed by the university to attract potential students. The study associated telemarketing as a cheap means of distributing information to a wide range of potential students, determining that telemarketing was cheaper than bundle SMS communication and direct mailing. The study insisted that the content of marketed services must be relevant to make sure that the strategy has more impact on student enrolment. This study focussed on one university and only investigated telemarketing as a channel; the current study expounded on this knowledge by assessing how other marketing platforms impact student enrolment in hospitality schools.

In an investigation into talent scouting promotional strategies, Suraya and Saragih (2019) explored the role of personal selling, publications, sales promotion, and advertising in boosting university students' enrolment. The study adopted a descriptive qualitative approach and collected data from interviews with students and marketing staff at Darma Persada University. The study determined that personal selling and direct marketing were the most adopted strategies by the university; and that these strategies were key in increasing students' awareness about the university and hence boosted selection chances. However, the study noted that this was not carried out through digital channels but involved direct sales approaches. The study recommended that the university adopt social media marketing, tele-advertising, and audio broadcasting as means of optimizing its marketing strategies. The study carried out a case study and did not specifically analyse the digital marketing strategies adopted by the university to attract students.

Rajkumar, Joseph, and Sudhakar (2021) investigated the impact of digital marketing communication strategies on students' decision-making processes. The study carried out a review of relevant academic literature. The study noted that universities were using Influencer Marketing, email marketing, website, social media marketing, online reputation management, search engine optimization (SEO), search engine marketing (SEM), online education portals, and content marketing strategies as a means of attracting new students. All the above online communication tools were established to play a significant role in attracting students, and proper utilization of these tools resulted in a significant rise in the competitive advantage of the universities. The study notes that developments in artificial intelligence were essential in enhancing students' decision-making. The study reviewed published literature, while the current examined the use of primary data collected from Kenyan hospitality school students.

Omingo and Mberia (2019) carried out an assessment of direct marketing strategies on student enrolment within Kenyan private universities and adopted a descriptive research design incorporating descriptive and inferential statistics. The study involved administrators, marketing officers, public relations officers, and undergraduate students from six universities in Nairobi County. It was determined that telephone marketing, direct mail marketing, and direct response television marketing all had a positive effect on student enrolment. Recommendations were for increased investment into direct marketing channels to increase students' enrolment. The study did not address how these strategies impact student enrolment in hospitality schools.

Yator and Ombogi (2019) investigated the relationship between communication channels and corporate social responsibility strategies as a corporate strategy for university enrolment for postgraduate students. The study adopted a case study research design that focussed on students' enrolment at Kabarak University. The study determined that use of online communication channels, adoption of corporate social responsibility practices, and online information sharing all resulted in increased registration of postgraduate students. The study assessed CSR strategies and communication on enrolment of postgraduate students; the current study investigated corporate social responsibility and did not focus on postgraduate students.

2.3.3 Content marketing and student enrolment

Khadka (2017) conducted a study on Finnish universities in an assessment of the marketing strategies adopted to attract international students. The study sourced data from both primary and secondary sources. The data was sourced from the staff at the universities' marketing departments and e-books, publications, reports, and books. The study determined that Finnish universities were using responsive website designs, web analytic tools, massive open online courses, content management systems, and customer relationship management systems to attract and retain student enrollees. All these systems were associated with reduced marketing costs, higher enrolment and student retention rates, and improved company image. The study concluded that integrated marketing communication tools comprising advertising components, public relations management, web marketing, sales promotion, direct marketing, and social media marketing are essential to higher education institutions' recruitment performance. The study investigated the recruitment of international students into higher education institutions; the current examined the recruitment of local students into hospitality schools.

Okpa, Okoi, Igbineweka, and Udida (2017) examined the strategies adopted by the University of Calabar in attracting students to the school's consultancy programs. The study used an ex-post facto research design and focussed on nine faculties at the university, collecting data from 27 heads of departments. Data analysis involved the use of means and standard deviation. The study determined that online advertising, imaging, branding, and product development were among the key factors influencing student enrolment into consultancy programs. Television, newspapers, radio, direct emails, and social media platforms were the main media used in information dissemination. The study focussed on enrolment and marketing strategies for students taking consultancy programs, and the current examined e-channels marketing and student enrolment in hospitality universities.

Owoyele (2017) investigated the use of websites as a means of communicating within institutions of higher learning in Finland. The qualitative study specifically sought to determine whether web accessibility, web learnability, web helpfulness, web attractiveness, web credibility, web controllability, web efficiency, web usability, web content, and aesthetics have an influence in influencing student selection decisions. The study focused on three of the biggest universities. The study determined that a good website played a key role in influencing student selection decision and portraying a positive image for the institutions, noting that it is necessary for universities to design attractive websites that are easy to understand and provides an easy way for prospective students to get information regarding course offering, tuition costs, registration deadlines, and scholarships. Attractive designs and aesthetics were determined to influence users' perceived ease of information access, credibility, and value of the institutions. Having relevant and regularly updated content on the websites was necessary for user satisfaction and continued use of the websites.

Ghosal, Prasad, and KulvinderKaur (2020) examined the influence of digital marketing strategies in promoting student enrolment in private institutions of higher learning in India. The study adopted a descriptive research design, and random selection was selected in choosing student respondents. Questionnaires were used in data collection, and exploratory factor analysis was employed in data analysis. The study determined that website content and search engine optimization, social media marketing, video portal advertising, print media, and third-party online and online career counselling were influential determinants of school selection intention among university students. The content on the school websites and search engine marketing and optimization were significant determinants of course uptake decisions. This study investigated digital marketing strategy and student uptake in Indian higher education institutions, while the current analysed uptake in Kenya's education sector.

In a study based on student enrolment in private universities, Marima (2015) sought how marketing communication tools influenced private universities' student uptake. The study was guided by a descriptive research design, with probability-simple random sampling being adopted in the selection of respondents composed of students and public recruitment/relations officers. The study found a positive relationship between public relations management, advertising, direct marketing, and personal selling and student enrolment in private sector universities. The study focussed on private institutions' student uptake, while the current examined the same within hospitality institutions, whether private or public.

In a case study, Maina (2018) focussed on the effect of marketing communication tools on student enrolment at the United States International University. The study adopted a case study research design that involved the school's registered students. The study was able to determine that print media, radio, television advertisements, billboards, career/ open days, alumni magazines, and brochures had played a key role in influencing the student's choice of an institution of higher learning. More vigorous and varied marketing strategies resulted in higher enrolment numbers. Social media and direct marketing channels were also determined to significantly influence students' university selection. The study recommended the adoption of mobile apps as a means of marketing institutions of higher learning. The study generalized communication tools, while the current examined digital marketing communication tools used on student enrolment.

2.4 Research Gaps

The empirical review examined the relationship between various digital communication tools and student enrolment. However, there exists different research gaps were identified. Below is a discussion of some of the identified research gaps. The studies by Krishnamoorthy and Srimathi (2019), Kimani and Obwatho (2020), and Thornton (2017) did not explore any other different communication tools apart from social media tools, while the current investigated e-mailing and content marketing. Nwedu's (2019) survey did not restrict itself to digital marketing tools but assessed the impact of all marketing tools and strategies adopted by universities around the world. The study carried out by Okpa et al. (2017) focussed on attracting consultancy program students at the university of Calabar, while the current examined enrolment to the school of hospitality.

Khadka (2017) focused on Finnish universities' marketing to attract foreign students, while Owoyele (2017) examined the use of web marketing as a communication tool. The study by Marima (2015) investigated the uptake of students in private universities, while Maina (2018) focussed his study on student enrolment in a single university. Mamat et al. (2015) only assessed telemarketing as a communication strategy, while Suraya and Saragih (2019) investigated strategies aimed at getting students with specific talents that the university specializes in. The table below represents a summary

Table 2.1 Summary of Literature Gaps

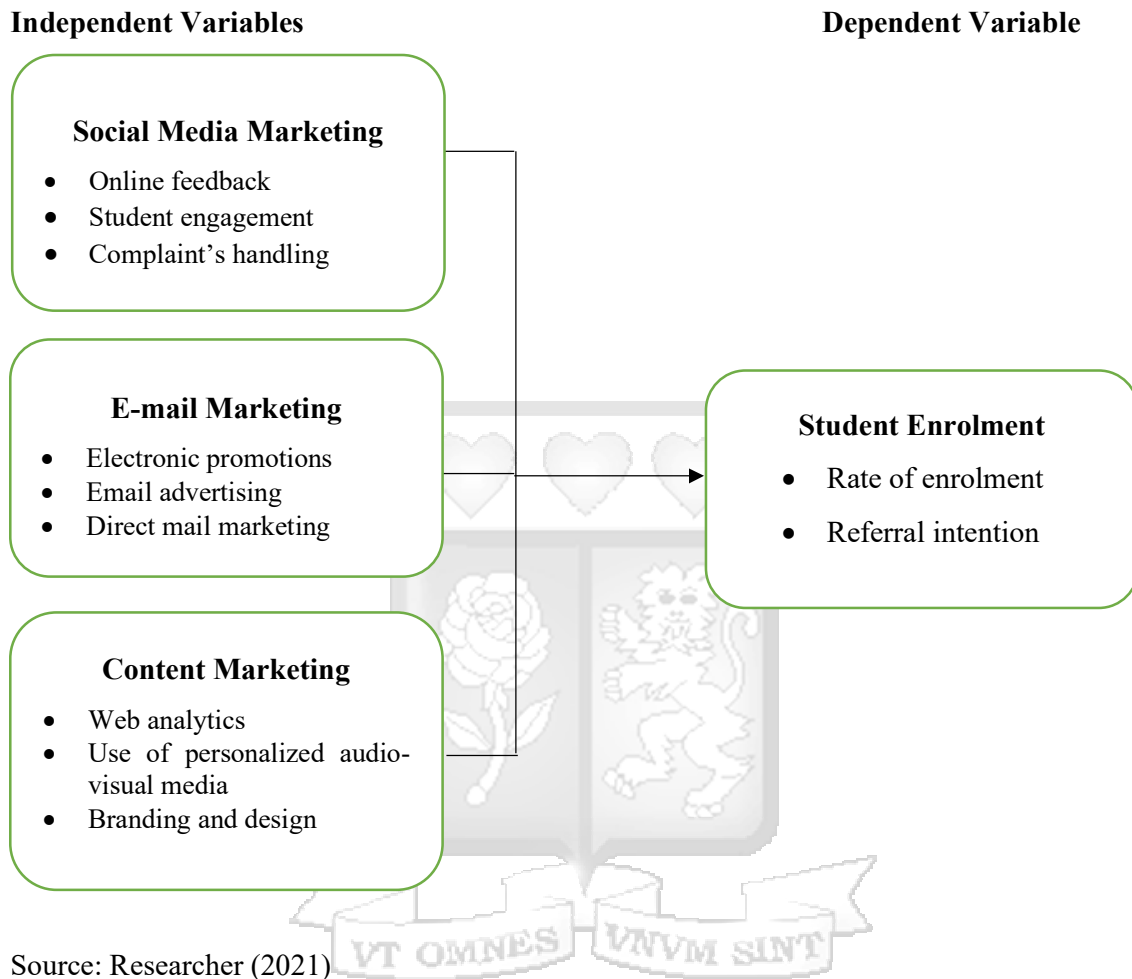
Author	Title	Findings	Research Gap
Thornton (2017)	Understanding the role of social media on a student's college	Social media channels have been key	This study focused on the top 100 universities and

	choice process and the implications on a university's enrolment and marketing strategies.	marketing instruments for universities	focused on their social media strategies; the current examined Kenyan universities and analysed more digital marketing communication tools
Nwedu (2019)	Strategies and Opportunities for Student Recruitment and Retention in African Universities: Lessons from Western Universities.	African Universities' digital marketing strategies were still in the developmental stage, with little investment in digital marketing specifically for student enrolment	The study involved a comparison between universities in Africa and those of the rest of the world. The current examined strategies adopted by Kenya's hospitality schools
Omingo and Mberia (2019)	Direct Marketing and Student Enrollment in Public Universities in Kenya	Telephone marketing, direct mail marketing, and direct response television marketing were essential to enrolment in private universities	The study investigated private universities' enrolment; the current did not distinguish between private and public school's enrolment
Rajkumar, Joseph, and Sudhakar (2021)	Digital Marketing Communication Strategies and Its Impact On Student Higher Education Decision Making Process – A Review of Relevant Academic Literature	Universities were employing a variety of digital marketing strategies, and these were impacting the student decision-making process	The study conducted a review of relevant academic literature and did not involve the actual students who are selecting the university and courses.
Okpa et al. (2017)	Strategies For Enrolment Management, Marketing, And Sustainability Of Consultancy Programmes In University Of Calabar, Nigeria.	Online advertising, imaging, branding, and product development were among the key factors influencing student enrolment into consultancy programs	The study addressed student enrolment into consultancy programs

2.5 Conceptual Framework

From the summary of the literature review, it is evident that there are conceptual, contextual, and methodological gaps to be filled as most of the studies done were not focused on hospitality colleges. The study hypothesises a diagrammatic conceptualization of the association between the independent and dependent variables. In the figure, the independent variable-social media

marketing, e-mailing, and content marketing are hypothesized to influence student enrolment decisions.



Source: Researcher (2021)

Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework

The aim of the study was to determine the relationship between digital marketing communication tools, school environment, and student enrolment in private hospitality colleges. The study variables were operationalized as shown below.

Table 2.2 Operationalization of variables

Variable	Type	Indicators	Measurement	Source
Social media marketing	Independent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online feedback • Student engagement 	5-point Likert Quantitative analysis	Krishnamoorthy and Srimathi (2019), Mutali

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaint's handling • Online technical support 		and Messah (2018)
Email marketing	Independent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronic promotions • Email advertising • Direct mail marketing 	5-point Likert Quantitative analysis	Rajkumar, Joseph, and Sudhakar (2021), Omingo and Mberia (2019)
Content marketing	Independent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web analytics • Use of personalized audio-visual media • Branding and design 	5-point Likert Quantitative analysis	Khadka (2017)
Student enrolment	Dependent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rate of enrolment • Referral intention 	5-point Likert Quantitative analysis	Maina (2018), Al Hallak, Ayoubi, Moscardini, and Loutfi (2019)

2.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented other researchers' findings on the relationship between the study variables. The chapter first presents the study's theoretical underpinnings. Bandura's Social Learning Theory and the Technology Acceptance Model guided the study. The empirical review section reviewed literature on social media marketing, e-mail marketing and content marketing and tried to establish whether the relationship exists in other fields, regions, or industries. The research gaps emanating from the literature review are then presented along with the conceptual framework and operationalization of study variables.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter described the methodology used in the study. It gave a detailed description of the methodological approach and explained the philosophical thrust of the framework that influenced the procedures in the research. Further, details on the population, sampling, data collection approach and analysis were presented in this chapter.

3.2 Research Philosophy

According to Žukauskas, Vveinhardt, and Andriukaitienė (2018), a research philosophy is a belief about the method in which data about a particular phenomenon should be gathered, analysed, and used. The most predominant philosophies, according to Bauer (2017), in this area are positivism (researcher and reality are separate). Positivism believes that research can be undertaken by using well-developed hypotheses derived from literature or existing theory and tested as well as requiring many randomly selected samples (Quay, Bleazby, Stolz, Toscano, & Webster, 2018). This study relied on the positivist research paradigm. Positivists view the researcher as existing independently of what is being researched and do not impact upon the topic being investigated or modify reality. Hence this was key to adoption in this research.

3.3 Research Design

Research design methods aid in data collection on variables of interest to the researcher. The research design provides a framework that structures a basis for the study type to find answers to questions (Xie, 2016). Research design methods are usually selected depending on the nature of the research study (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019). The study adopted a descriptive research design in the examination of the research phenomena. Descriptive research attempts to find the characteristics of a research study and its variables. It attempted to identify the reasons for the occurrence of events and investigate the factors that trigger the occurrence of those events (Leavy, 2017). Descriptive research examined the events that lead to inferences and relationships between variables. Hence, it was vital in this study to identify the relationship between the research variables. Further, the design allowed for the examination of the study variables in its natural state with minimal interference.

3.4 Target Population

The study population refers to all constituents of any clearly described group of people, events, or objects who are the focus of an investigation (Patten & Newhart, 2017). The focus of this research was the 35 fully-fledged hospitality colleges in Nairobi County that offer hospitality and tourism training courses. There are 35 private hospitality colleges within Nairobi that

formed the unit of analysis of the current research. The target population was the various students within the hospitality colleges in Nairobi City County. The study targeted the 35 hospitality colleges offering Kenya National Examination Council Curriculums and registered with the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Authority (Somo , 2021; TVETA, 2021). The study selected 7,813 students from the colleges since they can be able to articulate how various digital communication tools have impacted their enrolment rate within the school (See Appendix A). The research main assumption was that the students included in the survey have some knowledge on the various digital platforms adopted by their respective institutions.

3.5 Sampling Design and Sample Size

A sampling design is a process of developing a plan in which elements of interest are selected (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019). The design outlines the probability of developing a reliable sample that is related to a population (Leavy, 2017). The sampling design consists of the sampling technique, the sample frame, and the sample size. The purpose of the sampling technique is to outline a process that was used to collect data that enables the researcher to make conclusions about the research population (Ghauri, Grønhaug, & Strange, 2020). The study adopted probability sampling that attributes equal probability of selection to all the elements of a population. Therefore, each member of the population has a known chance of participating in the study (Creswell & Clark, 2017).

According to Leavy (2017), when choosing a sample frame, one must consider the composition of the sample, the representativeness of the sample, and the size of the sample. The sample frame for this study comprised students within hospitality colleges. The sample size should be based on a general representation of a sample population (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019). It is vital to select a sample size that provides accurate results and identifies differences. The selected sample size should give adequate power to the results of the study (Ghauri, Grønhaug, & Strange, 2020). The sample size for the research was computed using the formula below.

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

Where, n is the sample size, N is the total population, and e is the level of precision.

$$\text{Thus; } n = \frac{7,813}{1+7,813 (.05 \times .05)} = 381 \text{ respondents}$$

The sample frame population of this study was 381 students, assuming a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error. The research employed convenience sampling in the selection of the participants from the institution.

3.6 Data Collection Instruments

According to Leavy (2017), data collection is the process of obtaining raw data for analysis and interpretation. The study focused on primary research data that was obtained using structured questionnaires in the data collection process. An appropriate questionnaire should be unambiguous, easy to understand, and have no ambiguities (Creswell & Clark, 2017). The study questionnaire was formulated in line with the study objectives. The research used a structured questionnaire that relied on a standardized scale that shows the level to which a respondent agrees with a statement from 5 (strong agreement), 4 (agreement), 3 (moderate agreement), 2 (disagreement), and 1 (total disagreement).

3.7 Data Collection Procedures

A research procedure outlines the process that was followed to collect information about a research study (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019). The research procedure of this study includes the development of a questionnaire that was reviewed and approved for distribution by the supervisor. Further, the study obtained any relevant approval from the hospitality colleges and the Strathmore University Business School before undertaking the data collection process. The research used Google forms in the data collection. This ensured there was minimal contact with the sample participants because of the ongoing public health regulations.

3.8 Research Quality

The research conducted a pre-test of the study instrument with 10% of the study sample of 32 students that were not included in the final research. The pilot test was vital to examining the reliability tests of the research instrument. Further, through the pre-test, the study tests for the validity of the instrument using the content validity and construct validity approach.

3.8.1 Validity Tests

The study reviewed the validity of the instrument to ensure its objective in measuring the stated objectives of the study. The research used content validity with the help of the study supervisor to ensure that the research instrument captured all the themes of the study in developing the instrument. Further, the study adopted construct validity to review that all the operationalized constructs are adopted in the research instrument, and the stated scale measurement is applied in the questionnaire (Creswell & Clark, 2017).

3.8.2 Reliability Tests

The study conducted reliability tests that examines whether the research questionnaire has maintained internal consistency, which reviews whether conducting the same study multiple times will yield similar results (Creswell & Clark, 2017). The study employed the Cronbach alpha tests in checking the reliability of the questionnaire. The Cronbach alpha is a score of between 0-1.0; with a standardized value of 0.7 being considered as the benchmark for internal consistency (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019). This standard value was used in this research.

Table 3.1 Reliability Statistics

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Verdict
Social media marketing	.784	Accepted
Email marketing	.860	Accepted
Content marketing	.865	Accepted
Student enrolment	.815	Accepted

All the variable has a Cronbach Alpha, which was higher than 0.7 showing the research instrument's internal consistency; hence, the constructs were accepted for and utilized in the study.

3.9 Data Analysis and Presentation

Data analysis is the process of inspecting information for decision-making in order to draw a conclusion on the research questions (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019). This study employed a quantitative data analysis method. The collected data was stored in a statistical format that allows computer-aided analysis. The study used both descriptive and inferential analysis. The descriptive analysis included frequency, percentages, a mean, and standard deviation, which analyses the participant's characteristics and dominant patterns generated from the data. The study applied the following diagnostic checks, normality tests, collinearity tests, linearity, and heteroscedasticity tests. The inferential analysis examined the use of regression analysis and correlation tests in determining the magnitude of the relationship and direction of the association, respectively. The analysed research data was presented using charts, graphs, and tables. The following regression method was applied in the study.

$$Y = \alpha + b_1x_1 + b_2x_2 + b_3x_3 + \varepsilon$$

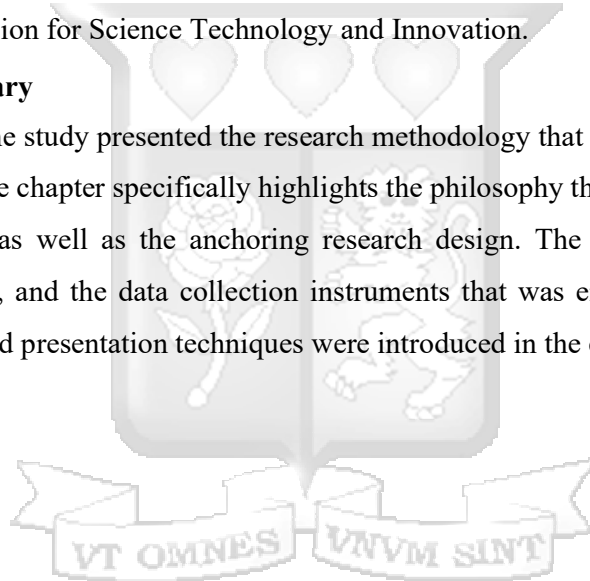
where, Y represents the student enrolment, α is the model intercept, β_1-3 is the coefficient of the predictor variables, ϵ is the error term and x_1-x_3 represents the independent variables social media marketing, e-mail marketing, and content marketing.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

Before administering the questionnaire to the respondents, instructions were given to the participants with the assurance that the information given out in the questionnaire was purely for academic purposes. They were informed that their participation was voluntary, and one had a right to participate or end their participation if they so wished. The anonymity and confidentiality of the respondents was respected by ensuring that the research instruments did not bear the names of the respondents. The research obtained ethical clearance from the University before conducting the data collection. The study further got a research permit from the National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation.

3.11 Chapter Summary

The third chapter of the study presented the research methodology that was applied in solving the study problem. The chapter specifically highlights the philosophy that was used in guiding the research process as well as the anchoring research design. The chapter presented the population of interest, and the data collection instruments that was employed in the study. Lastly, the analysis and presentation techniques were introduced in the chapter.



CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter was used in presenting the various findings derived from the quantitative analysis of the respondents. The chapter mainly focused on the response obtained, the demographic profile of the students, application of digital communication tools and descriptive tests. The study applied correlation tests to determine relationship between variables while the magnitude of the effect was tested using regression analysis for each individual variable and the composite model. The study will conduct diagnostic tests to ensure that the data observations being applied in the survey meet the threshold for linear regression. Lastly, a summary of the research is provided.

4.2 Background Results

4.2.1 Response Rate

The research sought participants from the 35 hospitality colleges with the sample size of the survey being 381 students. The research was conducted in the months of February and March 2022. The response rate obtained from the field work was 86% (n=329) students with only 14% (n=52) students not responding. Overall, a response of 86% was considered sufficient for application in answering the research problem and being representative of the sample.

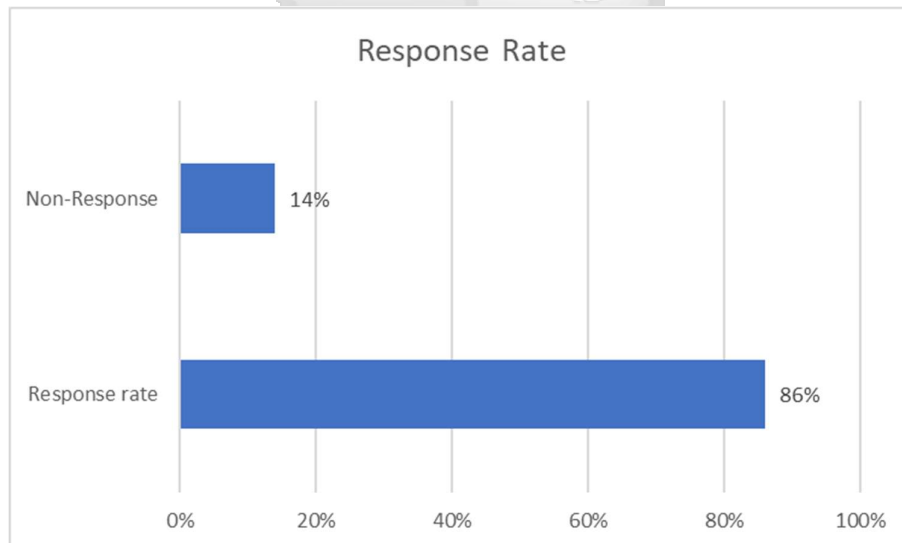


Figure 4.1 Response Rate

4.2.2 Demographic Results

The demographic profile of the students was assessed using their age, gender, and length of time in the institution.

4.2.2.1 Age of the Students

The study analysed the age of the students in the hospitality industry and findings demonstrated that 97% of the students were below 35 years of age with only 3% being above 35 years of age. This is consistent with enrolment trends in institutions of higher learning where youthful students comprise the largest population within the colleges.

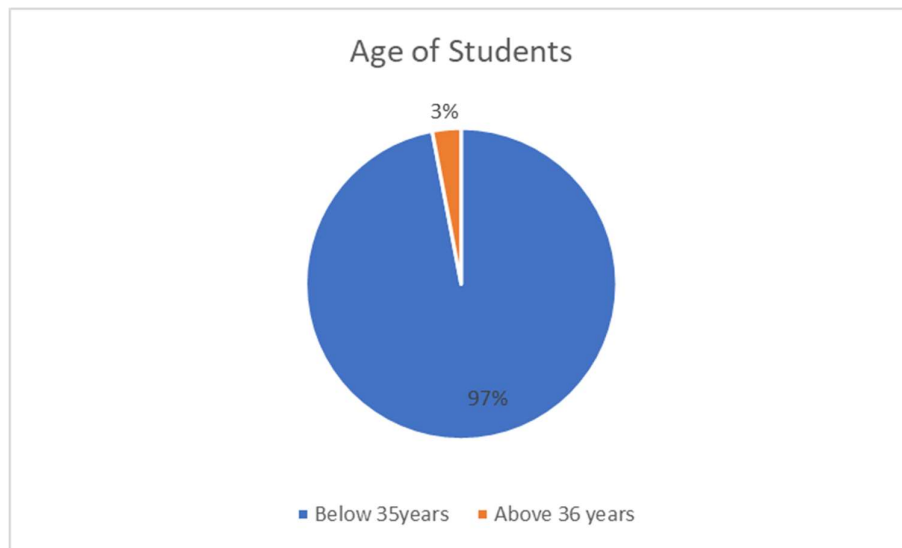


Figure 4.2 Age of Students

4.2.2.2 Gender of Students

The study reviewed the gender distribution of the students and results indicate that 55% (n=183) of the respondents were female students with only 45% (n= 146) being male hospitality college students. The findings are an indication that hospitality colleges have increased their enrolment rates of female students which improves education attainment.

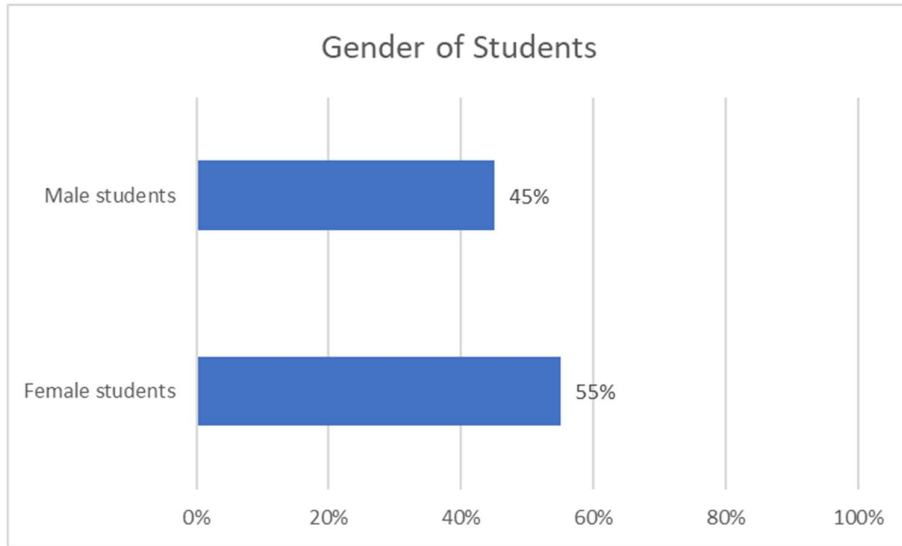


Figure 4.3 Gender of Students

4.2.2.3 How Long have you been a student

Further review on how long the participants have been a student within the hospitality colleges showed that majority of the respondents 57% (n=187) have been in the school for less than a year, 37% (n=123) for 2-3 years and only 6% (n=21) for over 3 years. The findings are an indication that with the various time periods the students have been in the institutions they can respond to how the various digital communication tools influence their enrolment to the colleges.

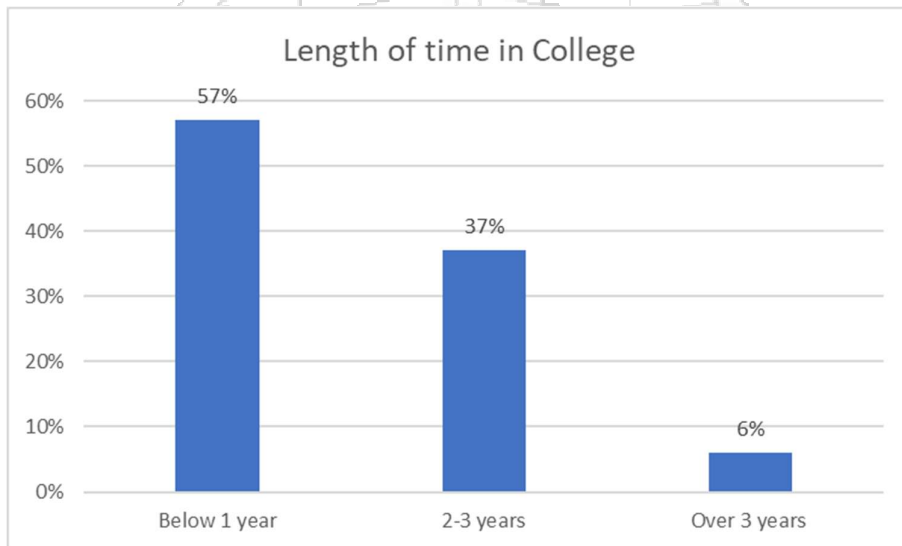


Figure 4.4 Length of time in college

4.2.3 Usage of Digital Communication Tools

The study reviewed how various digital communication tools have been applied and often used in the school. The results are shown in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1 Usage of Digital Communication Tools

Category	Metrics	Frequency	Percentage
<i>Which of the following digital communication tools are in use within the institution?</i>	Social media i.e., Twitter, Facebook, Instagram etc	309	93.9%
	Content marketing sites i.e., YouTube, TikTok, Daily Motion	124	37.7%
	Interactive school website	51	15.5%
	Email marketing and telemarketing	80	24.3%
<i>How often do you use the various digital communication tools adopted by your institution?</i>	Very often	52	15.8%
	Often	216	65.7%
	Rarely	55	16.7%
	Not at all	6	1.8%

The findings showed that 94% of the students utilize the hospitality college social media channels, only 37.7% use the colleges content marketing pages with only 15. % Accessing the school websites. The results imply that within the hospitality colleges there is limited interest among students to utilize the school websites hence institutions should continuously leverage on popularity of social media sites and content marketing sites to improve usage and enrolment rates. The findings also indicated that 66% of the students often used the school digital communication tools, 16% very often used the channels with only 1.8% not using them at all. The results signify that there is high usage of digital communication tools adopted by your institution which the colleges can utilize for various communication, marketing and information sharing with the students.

4.3 Descriptive Analysis

The descriptive analysis was used in this study to summarize the various responses obtained from the students on the various Likert scale statements. The research will use the mean value and deviation in discussing the summary results.

4.3.1 Social Media Marketing and Student Enrolment

The study reviewed how social media marketing is employed by the hospitality colleges and the analysis is presented in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2 Social Media Marketing Results

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I'm aware that the school allows students to submit their opinion on various issues through their social media handles	329	1.00	5.00	3.5897	.90998
The school staff are often available to help handle complaints submitted by students through the social media sites	329	1.00	5.00	3.5076	.90431
I have been able to submit feedback to the school through their social networking accounts	329	1.00	5.00	3.4863	.87337
I am aware that the school staff can help students with technical support through the various social media platforms	329	1.00	5.00	3.4559	.86534
I am aware that the school conducts regular promotion of their course offering and information through the social platforms	329	1.00	5.00	3.4590	.89323
Through the social media sites the school can offer seamless online service to current and potential students	329	1.00	5.00	3.4225	.92439

The students agreed that they are aware that the school allows students to submit their opinion on various issues through their social media handles (mean = 3.5897) with moderate deviation in the responses (dev = .90998). The students agreed (mean = 3.5076) that the school staff are often available to help handle complaints submitted by students through the social media sites.

Results show disagreement among students that they are aware that the school staff are able to help students with technical support through the various social media platforms (mean = 3.4559, dev = .86534). With a mean of 3.4225; the findings showed disagreement among respondents that through the social media sites the school is able to offer seamless online service to current and potential students.

4.3.2 Email Marketing and Student Enrolment

The research examined how email marketing is employed by the hospitality colleges and the analysis is presented in Table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3 Email Marketing Results

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
The school routinely conducts telemarketing activities to enhance product placement among potential students	329	1.00	5.00	3.5836	.90046
I'm aware of the various electronic promotions conducted by the school through regular emails bulletins to students	329	1.00	5.00	3.4529	.88607
The school regularly conducts email advertising which provides students with more detailed information on the course information	329	1.00	5.00	3.4924	.86291
I rely mostly on the email marketing from the institution to as main source of school information and any new updates	329	1.00	5.00	3.4742	.90734
I believe routine email interaction is the most efficient way of collecting information and communicating to the students	329	1.00	5.00	3.5106	.91100
Through the automated email campaigns the schools can provide students with relevant information on new courses and changes in service offering	329	1.00	5.00	3.4529	.93626

The analysis showed a mean of 3.5836 and deviation of .90046 which revealed agreement among students the school routinely conducts telemarketing activities to enhance product placement among potential students. The students also agreed that they believe routine email interaction is the most efficient way of collecting information and communicating to the students (mean = 3.5106). The results showed disagreement that students rely mostly on the email marketing from the institution to as main source of school information and any new updates (3.4742, dev = .90734). The students also disagreed (mean = 3.4529) that through the automated email campaigns the schools can provide students with relevant information on new courses and changes in service offering.

4.3.3 Content Marketing and Student Enrolment

The research examined how content marketing is employed by the hospitality colleges and the analysis is presented in Table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4 Content Marketing Results

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I have been able to view and share personalized advertisement information created by the school on the course I currently take	329	1.00	5.00	3.5289	.89711
I have been able to access the various audio-visual material shared by the school offering more student information	329	1.00	5.00	3.4802	.90075
The school routinely shares branding information through online digital tools which enhances students' knowledge on marketing information	329	1.00	5.00	3.4529	.84377
The school often posts Blog posts on topics that potential students might find interesting	329	1.00	5.00	3.5046	.87346
I'm aware that the school has provided student experience tab on the institution's website providing analytics on various aspects relevant to students	329	1.00	5.00	3.5015	.87347

I believe the attractive designs and aesthetics of the institutional contents is key to influencing the potential student's decision	329	1.00	5.00	3.4924	.93089
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Findings showed agreement that students have been able to view and share personalized advertisement information created by the school on the course they currently take (mean = 3.5289, dev = .89711). The students agreed that they are aware that the school has provided student experience tab on the institution's website providing analytics on various aspects relevant to students (mean = 3.5015). There was disagreement among students they have been able to access the various audio-visual material shared by the school offering more student information as indicated by mean of 3.4802. Response showed disagreement among students they believe the attractive designs and aesthetics of the institutional contents is key to influencing the potential student's decision (mean = 3.4924, dev = .93089).

4.3.4 Student Enrolment in Hospitality College

The dependent variable asked students questions on their enrolment to the hospitality colleges and the summary results are shown in Table 4.5 below.

Table 4.5 Student Enrolment Results

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I would gladly refer potential students to our hospitality college	329	1.00	5.00	3.6748	1.06238
I have no intentions of leaving the hospitality college for another one	329	1.00	5.00	2.8632	1.25042
The various digital communication tools used by the school led to my decision to enrol to the hospitality college	329	1.00	5.00	3.6353	.98190

The results noted agreement among students the various digital communication tools used by the school led to my decision to enrol to the hospitality college (mean = 3.6353, dev = .98190). With a high deviation of 1.250 and mean of 2.8632; the students disagreed that they have no intentions of leaving the hospitality college for another one. The students also agreed with a

high deviation (mean = 3.6748) they would gladly refer potential students to the hospitality college. The overall results show that the students were impacted by the digital communication tools in enrolling, and they would gladly refer new students to the college.



4.4 Correlation Test

The relationship between the study variables was tested using correlation analysis. The correlation values range between $-1 < r < +1$ with the closer the value goes towards 1 showing a strong relation. The summary of the correlation tests is shown below.

Table 4.6 Correlation Result

			Student Enrolment	Social Media Marketing	Email Marketing	Content Marketing
Spearman's rho	Student Enrolment	Correlation Coefficient	1.000			
		Sig. (2- tailed)	.			
		N	329			
	Social Media Marketing	Correlation Coefficient	.584**	1.000		
		Sig. (2- tailed)	.000	.		
		N	329	329		
	Email Marketing	Correlation Coefficient	.649**	.833**	1.000	
		Sig. (2- tailed)	.000	.000	.	
		N	329	329	329	
	Content Marketing	Correlation Coefficient	.620**	.775**	.818**	1.000
		Sig. (2- tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.
		N	329	329	329	329

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



The spearman correlation tests showed a moderate positive effect of social media marketing on the student enrolment ($r = .584^{**}$, $\text{Sig} = .000 < .05$). The test on second objective affirmed there is a strong positive and significant effect of email marketing on the student enrolment in hospitality colleges ($r = .649^{**}$, $\text{Sig} = .000 < .05$). Lastly, the analysis confirmed a strong positive and significant effect of content marketing on student enrolment ($r = .620^{**}$, $\text{Sig} = .000 < .05$).

4.5 Regression Tests

The overall regression analysis was conducted to estimate the effect of the digital marketing communication tool on student enrolment and summary of the model is shown in Table 4.7

Table 4.7 Regression Summary Digital Marketing Communication Tools and Student Enrolment

Model Summary ^b					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.648 ^a	.420	.415	1.58176	1.739

a. Predictors: (Constant), Content Marketing, Social Media Marketing, Email Marketing

b. Dependent Variable: Student Enrolment

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	589.988	3	196.663	78.604	.000 ^b
	Residual	813.136	325	2.502		
	Total	1403.125	328			

a. Dependent Variable: Student Enrolment

b. Predictors: (Constant), Content Marketing, Social Media Marketing, Email Marketing

From Table 4.7 results, the value of R was 0.648 while R² was 0.420. This meant that 42% of the variation in student enrolment within hospitality colleges is predicted by the application of digital marketing communication tools such as social media, email and content marketing. The results also signify that 58% of the variations are explained by variables not included in the research.

The ANOVA test showed an F value of 78.604 at p =0.05. Given that the F-test from the findings summarized in Table 4.8 was statistically significant (Sig = .000<.05) the study therefore rejects the null hypothesis and based on the model generated confirms there is a positive and significant relationship between digital marketing communication tools and student enrolment in hospitality colleges.

Table 4.8 Summary Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	3.608	.451		8.002	.000
Social Media Marketing	.120	.037	.043	3.243	.002
Email Marketing	.209	.036	.460	5.735	.000
Content Marketing	.084	.034	.181	2.498	.013

a. Dependent Variable: Student Enrolment

The overall research model is thus stated as follows.

$$Y = 3.608 + .120X_1 + .209X_2 + .084X_3 + .451$$

To establish the effect of social media marketing on student enrolment in private hospitality colleges in Kenya.

Regression results showed that the coefficient of social media marketing $X_1 = .120$, $Sig = .002 < .05$, which showed there existed a positive and significant effect. Thus, it was established that changing social media marketing by a single unit will contribute to student enrolment in hospitality colleges by a factor of .120 (12%).

To determine the effect of email marketing on student enrolment in private hospitality colleges in Kenya.

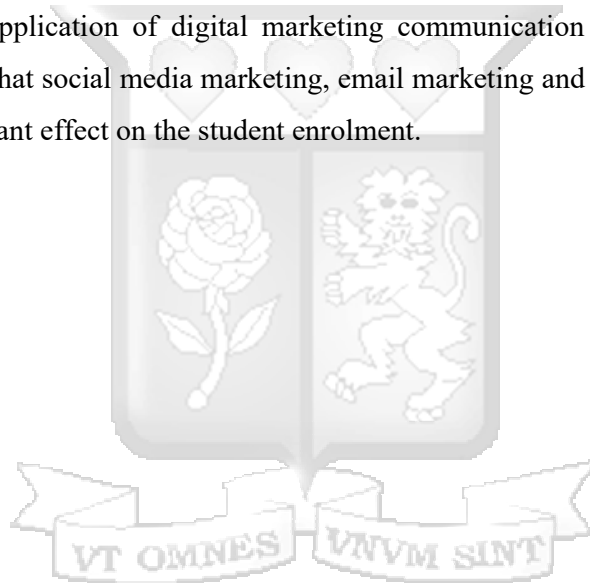
Regression results showed that the coefficient of email marketing $X_2 = .209$, $Sig = .000 < .05$, which showed there existed a positive and significant effect. Thus, it was established that changing email marketing by a single unit will contribute to student enrolment in hospitality colleges by a factor of .209 (20.9%).

To establish the effect of content marketing on student enrolment in private hospitality colleges in Kenya.

Regression results showed that the coefficient of content marketing $X_3 = .084$, $Sig = .013 < .05$, which showed there existed a positive and significant effect. Thus, it was established that changing content marketing by a single unit will contribute to student enrolment in hospitality colleges by a factor of .084 (8.4%).

4.6 Summary

The research was focused on evaluating how the various digital communication tools impact student enrolment in hospitality colleges. The survey was able to obtain an 86% response rate with the majority of the students 55% being female students. The results showed that 94% of the students utilize the hospitality college social media channels, only 37.7% use the college's content marketing pages with only 15 % accessing the school websites. Findings suggested that 66% of the students often used the school digital communication tools, 16% very often used the channels with only 1.8% not using them at all. Correlation analysis revealed a moderate positive effect of social media marketing and a strong positive and significant effect of email marketing and content marketing on student enrolment in hospitality colleges. The overall regression established that 42% of the changes in student enrolment within hospitality colleges is predicted by the application of digital marketing communication tools. The regression coefficients revealed that social media marketing, email marketing and content marketing had a positive and significant effect on the student enrolment.



CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The last chapter of the research presented the discussion of the study findings in relation to the empirical literature. The chapter showed the conclusions based on the results of the study and the recommendations drawn from that basis. Lastly, a suggestion for future research works was provided.

5.2 Discussion of the Findings

This study sought the effect of digital marketing communication tools on student enrolment in private hospitality schools in Kenya. The analysis determined that digital marketing tools have a significant impact on student enrolment, with all variables recording a significant positive effect. These findings concur with the study by Ghosal et al. (2020), which determined increased student enrolment in private universities with digital communication channels. Maina (2018) found a similar relationship when investigating student enrolment in Kenyan private universities. Spearman, Rahim, Ghanayem, and Ljepava's (2016) study concluded universities need to focus on the quality of their digital presence to garner student enrolment.

According to the Technology Acceptance Model, digital products' ease of use and perceived usefulness are among the main determinants of their adoption. Further, according to Bandura's (1962) Social Learning Theory, goals, outcome expectancies, perceived self-efficacy, and socio-cultural variables influence behavioural intent. It posits that individuals will behave in the desired way depending on how well their attention is acquired and how well the information being provided meets their needs. Further, it asserts that individuals learn through observation, imitation, and modelling. Hence, if prospective students see other students successfully using digital channels to inquire and access course information, they too will utilize these sources in the hope of achieving similar goals and increasing enrolment rate.

5.2.1 Social Media Marketing and Student Enrolment

The first study objective was to investigate the effect of social media marketing on student enrolment in private hospitality colleges in Kenya, with the analysis revealing that there exists a strong positive effect of social media marketing on student enrolment in hospitality colleges. The analysis showed that using social media to market universities will lead to a 31.2% variation in student enrolment. Findings showed that schools that handled student complaints

through social media and allowed students to submit their opinion on various issues through their social media handles were determined to be most attractive. Further, the study concluded that the promotion of school achievements and growth prospects through social media would improve an institution's attractiveness.

These findings are consistent with Thornton (2017), who found similar findings, reporting that social media significantly influences students' choice process and university enrolment. Kimani and Obwatho (2020) showed a positive influence of social media marketing on students' uptake in Kenya's public universities, while Yamin (2017) hailed SMM as a key marketing tool for its ability to target specific groups of customers. The study by Hudders, De Jans, and De Veirman (2021) concluded that social media usage increases traffic to business digital channels and plays a significant impact in influencing consumer decisions. However, according to Constantinides and Stagno (2017), universities are yet to realize the full benefits of social media marketing.

5.2.2 Email Marketing and Student Enrolment

The second study objective was to investigate the effect of email marketing on student enrolment in private hospitality colleges in Kenya, and the analysis determined that direct marketing in the form of email marketing produces a positive and significant effect on the enrolment of hospitality students. The analysis showed that e-mail marketing explains 40.5% of the variation in student enrolment at private hospitality institutions of higher learning. The study concludes that schools which communicate directly to students through emails are attractive to prospective students. This variable had the most significant influence on student enrolment, leading to the conclusion that hospitality universities should pay close attention to how they communicate through emails.

Consistent with our findings, Mamat, Roslan, Rahman, and Alaudeen's (2015) study found a similar relationship and ascertained that email marketing attracts potential students. Omingo and Mberia (2019) also asserted that telemarketing, direct mail marketing, and direct response marketing all have a positive effect on student enrolment. Suraya and Saragih's (2019) study determined that email marketing was a form of personal marketing that increases students' awareness and affiliation. Rajkumar, Joseph, and Sudhakar (2021) made similar findings and urged public universities to use personalized email content when communicating with prospective students.

5.2.3 Content Marketing and Student Enrolment

The final objective involved the use of content marketing and its influence on student enrolment in private hospitality colleges in Kenya. The analysis concluded that content marketing has positive and significant effects on student enrolment in hospitality colleges. The study analysis also showed that content marketing explains 32.8% of the variation in enrolment among hospitality colleges in Kenya. The analysis concluded that the aesthetics and appearance of online content, especially audio-visual content, offers a significant boost to student enrolment.

These findings have been ascertained in previous studies such as Khadka (2017) who found evidence showing a positive association between branding and product development, with web designs, contents, and product placement having positive effects on student enrolment. Okpa, Okoi, Igbineweka, and Udida (2017) also concluded online advertising, branding, image portrayal, and product development were among the key factors influencing student enrolment into consultancy programs. Marima (2015) affirmed private universities must embrace public management systems and digital advertising to attract more enrollees.

5.3 Conclusions

Regression analysis led to the conclusion that the use of digital marketing communication tools has a significant positive effect on the enrolment of students in private hospitality institutes in Kenya. The study concludes that hospitality colleges should utilize social media, email marketing and content creation as marketing strategies since they increase an institution's attractiveness and inspire student enrolment.

The findings led to conclusion that social media significantly influenced student enrolment to hospitality colleges. Conclusion are that schools should have dedicated social media managers who will utilize the school's social media accounts to communicate with students from spaces where they feel safest. The study also notes that advertising new courses through social media resulted in increased interest on the specific courses which would improve enrolment rates in the hospitality colleges.

The findings supported the conclusion that e-mail marketing had a significant positive effect on the student enrolment in hospitality colleges in Kenya. Conclusions were that e-mail advertising has a significant influence on student enrolment and that course promotion through school emails significantly improved course selection. Routine email communications were

determined to be an efficient way of communicating relevant information to students on courses' offering.

The study concluded that content marketing has a significant positive effect on the student enrolment in hospitality colleges in Kenya. This led to the conclusion that the quality and relevance of the content that schools post is an important determinant of enrolment among hospitality colleges in Kenya. Further, sharing of school activities was determined to significantly improve students' enrolment intentions. The study also concluded that blog posts are important tools that can attract students with similar interests.

5.4 Recommendations

The findings of the study showed a strong positive relationship between digital marketing communication tools and student enrolment at private hospitality colleges in Kenya. This leads to the recommendation that institutions of higher learning officiate their digital channels and acquire competent digital managers whose job description is to coordinate communication patterns and vet content before release to maintain quality and ensure timeliness of the release of relevant information. The study also recommends that institutions of higher learning utilize different types of digital communication tools to increase the rate of information spread and reach a wider audience. Another recommendation is that these institutions ensure there is efficient infrastructural and resource development such as Wi-Fi and ICT competent staff to support the integration of digital communication tools in course marketing.

The analysis determined that using social media to market institutions of higher learning has a significant impact on student enrolment. This conclusion led to the recommendation that schools carry out market research to determine the most popular social media sites in the region that the school resides. The study calls for deep investigation into prospective students' social preferences since hospitality students' interests differ from students in alternative courses. Proper consumer targeting would increase student enrolment. The study also recommends that hospitality colleges integrate social media channels into the recruitment process to realize the full effect of social media in inducing student enrolment. The study also recommends these institutions use social media to handle requests from prospective and existing students as this increase's institutional attractiveness.

The analysis also concluded that use of e-mail marketing has a significant impact on student enrolment at private hospitality colleges. The study, thus, recommends that these schools pay close attention to email generated content and ensure that they personalize automatically

generated e-mails to enhance relationship building with prospective students. The study also recommends that the school uses official department e-mails as channels to communicate courses offered with students.

Based on the study findings the research recommends that hospitality colleges ensure they carry out strict content review to ensure published content is verified and meets the required quality standards. Maintaining the quality and relevance of content released in social sites such as YouTube and Facebook would be key to providing consistently updated and verified information that prospective students can access at any time and form a perception about the school. Building a positive online presence would significantly increase students interests in represented schools and courses.

5.5 Study Limitations

During the exploration, this study was limited to certain specific contexts. This study limited itself to a descriptive study design. The study also limited itself to investigating digital technologies' use for marketing purposes and only within private institutions of higher learning. Further, the findings were limited to private hospitality schools, the study also constricted itself to collecting data from students and explained the relationships between the variables using the Technology Acceptance Model and the Social Learning Theory.

5.6 Areas for Further Research

The study conclusions showed that the variables under investigation explain less than half of the student enrolment factors. This means that student enrolment is affected by other factors that this study did not investigate. This study suggests more investigation into the other factors that influence student enrolment such as students' career choice and student perceptions about courses. This study only investigated student enrolment in private hospitality sector. This study recommends research be carried out using the study variables but focusing on enrolment determinants in schools in the public sector and for other courses such as engineering or medicine as this would enhance the findings of the current study.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Introduction Letter

C/O Sangale Rd, Macareka Estate,
P.O. Box 59857 00200, Nairobi, Kenya,
Cell: +254-703 41 4667, Twitter: @SBSKenya
Email: info@sbs.ac.ke or visit www.sbs.strathmore.edu



13th January 2022

To Whom It May Concern,

Dear Sir/ Madam,

RE: FACILITATION OF RESEARCH – EVALYNE MUMBUA KITETU

This is to introduce Evalyne Kitetu who is a Master of Business Administration student at Strathmore University Business School, admission number MBA/114477/18. As part of our MBA Program, Evalyne is expected to do applied research and undertake a project. This is in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the MBA course. To this effect, she would like to request for appropriate data from your organization.

Evalyne is undertaking a research paper on “Effect of Digital Marketing Communication Tools on Student Enrolment in Private Hospitality Colleges in Kenya”. The information obtained from your organization shall be treated confidentially and shall be used for academic purposes only.

Our MBA seeks to establish links with industry, and one of these ways is by directing our research to areas that would be of direct use to industry. We would be glad to share our findings with you after the research, and we trust that you will find them of great interest and of practical value to your organization.

We appreciate your support and shall be willing to provide any further information if required.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Caroline Tiara".

Caroline Tiara.
Manager – Graduate Programs.
Strathmore University Business School.

Association of African
Business Schools



Strathmore Business School is a Proud member of:



AACSB

Appendix B: Institution Review Board Approval



16th February 2022

Ms Mumbua Kitetu, Evalyne
kitetu.evalyne@strathmore.edu

Dear Ms Mumbua,

RE: Effect of Digital Marketing Communication Tools on Student Enrolment In Private Hospitality Colleges In Kenya

This is to inform you that SU-IERC has reviewed and **approved** your above **SU Master's** research proposal. Your application reference number is **SU-IERC1275/22**. The approval period is **16th February 2022 to 15th February 2023**.

This approval is subject to compliance with the following requirements:

- i. Only approved documents including (informed consents, study instruments, MTA) will be used
- ii. All changes including (amendments, deviations, and violations) are submitted for review and approval by SU-IERC.
- iii. Death and life-threatening problems and serious adverse events or unexpected adverse events whether related or unrelated to the study must be reported to SU-IERC within 48 hours of notification
- iv. Any changes, anticipated or otherwise that may increase the risks or affected safety or welfare of study participants and others or affect the integrity of the research must be reported to SU-IERC within 48 hours
- v. Clearance for export of biological specimens must be obtained from relevant institutions.
- vi. Submission of a request for renewal of approval at least 60 days prior to expiry of the approval period. Attach a comprehensive progress report to support the renewal.
- vii. Submission of an executive summary report within 90 days upon completion of the study to SU-IERC.






Prior to commencing your study, you will be expected to obtain a research license from National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI) <https://research-portal.nacosti.go.ke/> and obtain other clearances needed.

Yours sincerely,

for: Prof Fred Were,
Chairperson; SU-IERC



Appendix C: NACOSTI Research Licence

 REPUBLIC OF KENYA	 NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
RefNo: 365410	Date of Issue: 08/February/2022
RESEARCH LICENSE	
	
This is to Certify that Miss. Evelyn Mumbua of Strathmore University, has been licensed to conduct research in Nairobi on the topic: EFFECT OF DIGITAL MARKETING COMMUNICATION TOOLS ON STUDENT ENROLMENT IN PRIVATE HOSPITALITY COLLEGES IN KENYA for the period ending : 08/February/2023.	
License No: NACOSTI/P/22/15572	
365410 Applicant Identification Number	 Director General NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
	Verification QR Code 
NOTE: This is a computer generated License. To verify the authenticity of this document, Scan the QR Code using QR scanner application.	

Appendix D: List of Hospitality Colleges

College	Student Numbers
1. Boma International Hospitality College (Bihc)	512
2. International Hotel Tourism Institute	355
3. Utalii College	650
4. Kibondeni College Of Catering and Hospitality	200
5. Westford International Training College	109
6. United Africa College	213
7. The New Dimension College	98
8. Spring Hill College	117
9. Regional Centre of Management	139
10. Railway Training Institute (RTI)	344
11. Nairobi Industrial Institute	256
12. Kreston College	128
13. Kenya Institute of Professional Studies (KIPS)	108
14. Kenya Institute of Financial and Applied Management (KIFAM)	56
15. Epic Aviation College	103
16. East Africa Institute of Certified Studies (ICS)	226
17. East Africa College of Tourism and Hospitality Management	264
18. Dima College	115
19. Aims College of Business and Technology (ACBT)	76
20. Air Travel and Related Studies	163
21. Alice Italian Food Institute	98
22. Barmisco Hospitality and Commercial Training Institute	113
23. Centre For Tourism Training and Research	145
24. East African Institute of Homecare Management	345
25. Epren College of Professional Studies	236
26. Genesis Institute of Professional Studies	234
27. International Hotel and Tourism Institute	321
28. Kenya College of Commerce and Hospitality	300
29. Mahanaim Educational College	187
30. Nairobi College of Bread and Confectionery Technology	250
31. Nairobi Institute of Business Studies	457

32. Oshwal College	325
33. Red Hill College of Management	144
34. Stedmak Hospitality Training College	276
35. Zyara School of Hospitality	150
<i>Target Population</i>	7,813

Source: (TVETA, 2021; Somo , 2021)



Appendix D: Questionnaire

Hello, the attached questionnaire aims to get information from students within hospitality colleges on *the effect of digital marketing communication tools on student enrolment in private hospitality colleges in Kenya*. I kindly ask for your kind assistance in answering the attached questions to the best of your ability.

Thank you for your participants in this research work.

Part A: Demographic Information

1. Please indicate your age?

Below 35 years of age ()

Over 36 years ()

2. Please indicate your gender?

Male ()

Female ()

3. How long have you been a student within the institution?

Below 1 years ()

2-3 years ()

Over 3 years ()

4. Which of the following digital communication tools are in use within the institution?

Social media i.e., Twitter, Facebook, Instagram etc. ()

Content marketing sites i.e., YouTube, TikTok, Daily Motion ()

Interactive school website ()

Email marketing and telemarketing ()

5. How often do you use the various digital communication tools adopted by your institution?

Very often ()

Sometimes ()

Rarely ()

Not at all ()

PART B: EFFECT OF DIGITAL MARKETING COMMUNICATION TOOLS ON STUDENT ENROLMENT IN PRIVATE HOSPITALITY COLLEGES IN KENYA

Please indicate in the table with a tick (√) or across (×) with a scale of

5= strongly agree 4= Agree 3= Disagree 2= Strongly Disagree 1= Not at all

No Social Media Marketing and student enrolment **1 2 3 4 5**

I'm aware that the school allows students to submit their opinion on various issues through their social media handles.

The school staff are often available to help handle complaints submitted by students through the social media sites

I have been able to submit feedback to the school through their social networking accounts

I am aware that the school staff are able to help students with technical support through the various social media platforms

I am aware that the school conducts regular promotion of their course offering and information through the social platforms

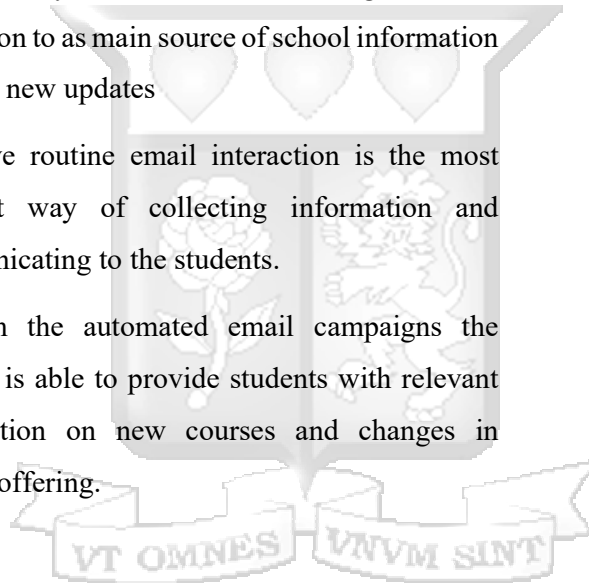
Through the social media sites the school is able to offer seamless online service to current and potential students

Please indicate in the table with a tick (√) or across (×) with a scale of

5= strongly agree 4= Agree 3= Disagree 2= Strongly Disagree 1= Not at all

No Email Marketing and student enrolment **1 2 3 4 5**

1. The school routinely conducts telemarketing activities to enhance product placement among potential students
2. I'm aware of the various electronic promotions conducted by the school through regular emails bulletins to students
3. The school regularly conducts email advertising which provides students with more detailed information on the course information
4. I rely mostly on the email marketing from the institution to as main source of school information and any new updates
5. I believe routine email interaction is the most efficient way of collecting information and communicating to the students.
6. Through the automated email campaigns the schools is able to provide students with relevant information on new courses and changes in service offering.



Please indicate in the table with a tick (√) or across (×) with a scale of

5= strongly agree 4= Agree 3= Disagree 2= Strongly Disagree 1= Not at all

No	Content Marketing and student enrolment	1	2	3	4	5
1.	I have been able to view and share personalized advertisement information created by the school on the course I currently take.					
2.	I have been able to access the various audio-visual material shared by the school offering more student information					

3. The school routinely shares branding information through online digital tools which enhances students' knowledge on marketing information
4. The school often posts Blog posts on topics that potential students might find interesting
5. I'm aware that the school has provided student experience tab on the institution's website providing analytics on various aspects relevant to students
6. I believe the attractive designs and aesthetics of the institutional contents is key to influencing the potential student's decision

PART C: STUDENT ENROLMENT IN PRIVATE HOSPITALITY COLLEGES IN KENYA

Please indicate in the table with a tick (√) or across (×) with a scale of

5= strongly agree 4= Agree 3= Disagree 2= Strongly Disagree 1= Not at all

No	Student enrolment	1	2	3	4	5
1.	I would gladly refer potential students to our hospitality college					
2.	I have no intentions of leaving the hospitality college for another one					
3.	The various digital communication tools used by the school led to my decision to enrol to the hospitality college					

Thank you for participating in the Survey.