EXAMINING THE EFFECT OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING DIMENSIONS ON CONSUMER ATTITUDES AND ADOPTION AMONG GENERATION Y CONSUMERS

by

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DEDICATION

Of utmost importance and appreciation, I would like to dedicate this dissertation in recognition and with the deepest and greatest respect to my late mother, Dieketseng Nelly (Bally) Keta for her unconditional love and for raising me to be the man that I am today. Thank you for instilling in me the love, discipline, courage and consistency that saw me through this study. I thank the Almighty God for your life and the time I shared with you on this earth. You will always live in our hearts until we meet again.

DECLARATION

I, Keitumetse Tjama David Keta, declare that the contents and information in this dissertation (Examinig the effect of social media marketing dimensions on consumer attitudes and adoption among Generation Y consumers) represents my own independent and unaided work, apart from the citations and quotations, which have been appropriately acknowledged and that this dissertation has not previously been submitted for academic examination towards any qualification. Moreover, it represents my own articulations and opinions and not necessarily those of The Vaal University of Technology.

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This dissertation is being submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree Magister Technologiae: Marketing Management.

Signed **KETA K.T.D**

Date **18/2/2021**

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I hereby give consent for my dissertation, if approved and accepted, to be made available for photocopying and interlibrary loans and for the title and summary to be made available to outside organisations.

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ABSTRACT

EXAMINING THE EFFECT OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING DIMENSIONS ON CONSUMER ATTITUDES AND ADOPTION AMONG GENERATION Y CONSUMERS

KEYWORDS: social media, social media marketing, consumer attitudes, adoption, Generation Y

It is evident that social media has become a fundamental instrument in society and has revolutionised the way society interacts and conducts business. More than 75 percent of the South African Generation Y population are active users of various social media platforms and the collective topics that are discussed include the status quo, entertainment, sports and other various issues that affect society as an integrated whole. However, many challenges are associated with social media concerning the affordability and accessibility of the internet. Consequently, it makes it a challenge for organisations to utilise social media as a reliable marketing instrument. Therefore, the study seeks to examine the effect of social media marketing dimensions on consumer attitudes and adoption among Generation Y consumers.

The sample consisted of 285 self-reporting social media active users located in the Southern Gauteng region of South Africa. The study adhered to a quantitative approach and a snowball sampling method, whereby data were collected using a paper and pencil based self-administered questionnaire in 2019. A positivist research philosophy was followed whereby hypotheses where formulated for the study. In addition, formal procedure regarding research ethics were observed during empirical data collection and the questionnaire was also tested for reliability as well as validity. A pilot study preceded the main data collection survey processes. The collected data was analysed using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis and regression models.

The results of the study indicated significant positive relationships for the three dimensions of social media marketing, namely in-formativeness (β= +0.302; t= 6.030; $p<0.01$), source credibility (β= +0.171; t= 2.767; $p<0.01$), perceived enjoyment (β=+0.169; t=2.956; $p<0.00$) and Generation Y consumer's attitude. The fourth dimension being social identity, did not yield a statistically significant relationship in the regression model (β= 0.017; t= 0.256; p=0.01). Furthermore, significant positive relationships were also observed between consumer attitudes and the adoption of social media marketing (β= + 0.276; t-value= 4.841; $p<0.01$) among Generation Y consumers.

As such, insight acquired from this study will assist both marketing academics as well as practitioners in comprehending Generation Y consumers' perceptions on adoption and attitudes in relation to the adoption of social media as a marketing instrument. Based on the results, recommendations assert that, among others, marketing practitioners should effectively adopt social media as a marketing platform to communicate their marketing efforts and initiatives. Furthermore, marketers should integrate their marketing initiatives and strategies with the 4th industrial revolution. In addition, limitations, future research avenues are identified, and contributions of this study are discussed.

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INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

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1.1   INTRODUCTION

Social media has transformed the influence structures in the marketplace. There are new types of influential and refined customers developing, which are difficult to control, convince and retain (Constantinides 2014:40). Hays, Page and Buhalis (2014:304) define social media as deeds, actions, and operations among groups of people who gather online to exchange information, understanding and feelings by utilising conversional media. Therefore, social media is initiating a new system of how society absorbs and contributes to the design of information. In addition, Celik and Karaaslan (2014:304) articulate that technological devices have enhanced the online community in the previous years; it is easy to locate and stay connected with associates and family, as well as those individuals who share mutual interests. The emergence and acceptance of social network sites have established a new social order of alliance and communiqué, where social network platforms are the fundamentals of the new digital existence, and society has formed a digital existence, almost without realising it.

The development of social marketing as an academic field of study has been fuelled by the extensive usage of social media marketing as a state of art methodology to stimulate behaviour change and the appreciation by many governments that it contributes significantly to enhanced digital existence of consumers and societies (Truong & Dietrich 2017:1). Guesalaga (2016:72) defines social media marketing as the technological component of the communication, transaction and relationship building functions of a business which leverages the network of customers and prospects to promote value co-creation. 77 percent of the inspected US corporations are estimated to be utilising social media for marketing purposes (Pan, Vorvoreanu & Zhou 2014:347). Executives spend time on social media marketing to nurture relations and engage with customers (Vries, Gensler & Leeflang 2012:83). Entrepreneurs encounter a variety of challenges in their businesses, one of which is the exploitation of the marketing potential of social media while safeguarding profits. Social networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn are exceptional, possessing the power to persuade the way consumers buy products and services (Geho & Dangelo 2012:61). Furthermore, Constantinides (2014:42) affirms that to effectively engage social media as part of the corporate marketing strategy, it needs to demonstrate an exceptional company website that is well designed, competent, and credible, organisationally

united and customer orientated. The firm's existence towards social media marketing must reproduce and clearly communicate its positioning, excellence, customer orientation and appearance (Seo & Park 2018:37). In addition, the acceptance of social media marketing is fluenced by consumer attitudes.

Boateng and Okae (2015:250) define consumer attitude as an individual's favourable or unfavourable assessment with using a service. In contrast, Khandelwal and Bajpai (2013:90) define consumer attitude as the trend of group affiliates to establish a group norm and the tendency of individuals to comply with the respective norm. In addition, consumer attitudes towards social media marketing can be defined as consumers' like or dislike of marketing initiatives communicated through social media platforms (Duffett 2017:498). Ling, Piew and Chai (2010:118) state that in consumer studies, consumer attitude constitutes the central role because it influences feelings, thoughts, and above all the process of consumer decision making. Furthermore, consumer attitude can be a determinant in the decision-making process of adopting a technological innovation.

Adoption of social media marketing comes with benefits to the company, for example, increased brand awareness, increased customer relationships, influence purchasing power, increased communication and audience (Chikandiwa, Contogiannis & Jembere 2013:370). Dahnil, Marzuki, Langaat and Fabeil (2014:121) define adoption as the acceptance and usage of a technological innovation. Ahmad, Bakar and Ahmad (2018:4) assert that adoption in the context of social media marketing is defined as the extent to which corporations and consumers see a technological innovation as better than other alternatives such as traditional marketing platforms. Zolkepli and Kamarulzaman (2015:192) assert that individual, communal, and situational inspiration motivates the adoption of social media marketing and are believed to change dependence on the importance of the needs and the motivations of social media usage. In addition, Generation Y consumers are likely to comprehend and to such an extent consider adopting social media as a marketing platform instead of traditional marketing platforms.

Generation Y consumers are defined as the individuals born in 1980s and 1990s and have grown up in a materialistic society through social media (Kim & Jang 2014:39). Bolton, Parasuraman, Hoefnagels, Migchels, Kabadayi, Gruber, Loureiro and Solnet (2013:248) articulate that Generation Y consumers grew up with a technological device and have understood its use for numerous roles in their lives, mostly communication. According to Lissitsa and Kol (2016:305), Generation Y individuals originates during the period of economic development, strong exposure of social media and the disappearance of modern beliefs, sustained by globalisation and strong

domination from western culture. According to Bento and Martinez (2018:234), Generation Y cohort's lives and daily deeds (for example, communal relations, alliances, and hobbies) are related by digital technologies. They are in fact digital natives who are not familiar with any other way of life. In addition, Quintal, Phau and Cheah (2016:175) state that in the United States, Generation Y constitute nearly 25% of the population (73 million people), similarly in Australia, 27 % of the population (4.2 million people) are identified as Generation Y. According to Statistics South Africa (2020:1), an estimation of more than 27 % of the South African population is identified as Generation Y, translating into a buying power of 14 million people. In other words Generation Y consumers are an important market to target in relation to the social media as marketing channel.

1.2   PROBLEM STATEMENT

Encouraged by the rapid evolution of digital existence into society, organisations are progressively using social media as part of their marketing instruments (Tsimonis & Dimitriadis 2014:328). A survey conducted in the US projected that marketers were to increase their social media advertising expenditure from 4.1 billion dollars in 2014 up to 5 billion dollars in 2017 (Housholder & Lamarre 2014:371). Social Media Industry Report of 2013 projected that 86 percent of marketers believe that social media platforms are crucial for their marketing ambitions (Ashley & Tuten 2015:15). Therefore, in a short period of time, marketers have effectively utilised social media for many marketing initiatives such as research, sales promotion, and branding.

Social media has been the focus for many researchers in Europe. Vries, Gensler and Leeflang (2012:86) conducted a study on the popularity of brand posts on brand fan pages which reported that consumers favour engaging with their brands through social media. Similar studies were also conducted in Asia by Gao, Sultan and Rohm (2013:579) on activities persuading Chinese youth customers' acceptance of mobile marketing, and their findings reported that they approve of marketing intelligence being communicated through mobile technology. Likewise, a study compiled in Asia by Dahnil *et al.* (2014:120) on the factors which influence Small and Medium Size Enterprises' (SMEs) adoption of social media marketing reflected in its findings that it is significant for a firm to expand its marketing activities. In South Africa, a study was conducted by Duffett (2017:499) on the influence of social media marketing communications on young consumers' attitude, which reflected that young consumers, particularly Black and Coloured, displayed the most favourable attitudinal responses to social media marketing communications.

However, there is no comprehensive study examining the effect of social media marketing dimensions on consumer attitudes and adoption undertaken in South Africa amongst the

Generation Y cohort. Prompted by the gap in literature, this study investigates consumers' perceptions on attitude and adoption towards social media marketing in Southern Gauteng. In addition, the study alerts marketers about social media dimensions that influence adoption and attitude by Generation Y cohort of social media marketing.

1.3 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Based on the literature reviewed, this study suggested that in-formativeness, source credibility, perceived enjoyment and social identity are the independent variables. It was postulated that consumers' attitude is the intervening variable and adoption is the dependent variable. Figure 1.1 below provides the conceptual framework and hypothesised relationships between the variables under investigation.
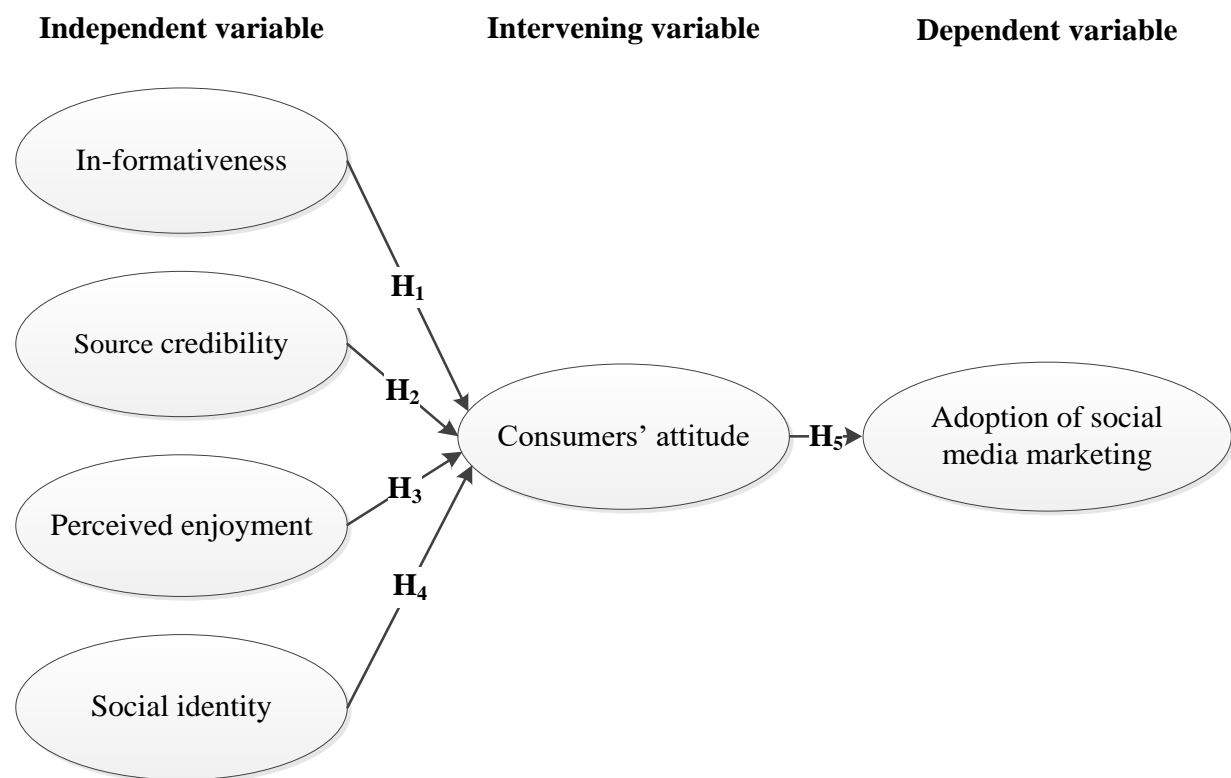
Figure 1.1:   Conceptual Framework and hypothesised relationships

Hypothesis:

H_01:   *In-formativeness does not have a significant positive influence on Generation Y consumers' attitude.*

H_a1:   *In-formativeness has a significant positive influence on Generation Y consumers' attitude.*

H₀2:   *Source credibility does not have a significant positive influence on Generation Y consumers' attitude.*

Hₐ2:   *Source credibility has a significant postive influence on Generation Y consumers' attitude.*

H₀3:   *Perceived enjoyment does not have a significant positive influence on Generation Y consumers' attitude.*

Hₐ3   *Perceived enjoyment has a significant positive influence on Generation Y consumers' attitude.*

H₀4:   *Social identity does not have a significant positive influence on Generation Y consumers' attitude.*

Hₐ4:   *Social identity has a significant positive influence on Generation Y consumers' attitude.*

H₀5:   *Consumers' attitude does not have a significant positive influence on Generation Y consumers' adoption of social media marketing.*

Hₐ5:   *Consumers' attitude has a significant positive influence on Generation Y consumers' adoption of social media marketing.*

1.4   OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following research objectives were formulated for this study:

1.4.1   Primary objective

The primary objective of this study was to examine the effect of social media marketing dimensions on consumer attitudes and adoption among Generation Y consumers.

1.4.2   Theoretical objectives

The theoretical objectives are to:

- outline the fundamentals of social media;

- conduct a literature review on social media marketing;

- gain an understanding of social media marketing dimensions that influence consumers' attitude;

- conduct a literature review on consumers' attitude;

- provide an overview on social media marketing adoption; and

- conduct a literature review on the Generation Y cohort.

1.4.3 Empirical objectives

The empirical objectives are to:

- determine the influence of social media marketing dimensions on Generation Y consumers' attitude;

- determine the influence of consumers' attitude on the adoption of social media marketing in Southern Gauteng; and

- empirically test the model that predicts the influence of social media marketing dimensions on consumers' attitude and adoption among Generation Y consumers.

1.5 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

A research design is a framework or blueprint for conducting the marketing research project. It details the procedures necessary for obtaining the information needed to structure and solve marketing research problems (Malhotra 2010:102). Furthermore, Tustin, Ligthelm, Martins and Van Wyk (2010:82) define research design as a blueprint a researcher can follow to realise the research objectives or hypotheses. It represents the master plan that specifies methods of collecting and analysing the required information for the study. For this study, a descriptive research design was undertaken in order to quantify the different social media marketing activities. Two methods of research were conducted, namely a literature review and empirical study.

1.5.1 Literature review

A theoretical study comprised the underlying theories of the study, social media marketing dimensions, consumers' attitudes and social media marketing adoption among the consumers that constitute the Generation Y cohort. Available articles, prescribed journals, conference papers and relevant textbooks were used as sources of information.

1.5.2 Empirical study

McCusker and Gunaydin (2015:537) describe various research approaches as quantitative, qualitative, and mixed method. Qualitative research provides insights and understanding of the problem setting, while quantitative research seeks to quantify the data and typically applies some form of statistical analysis (Taguchi 2018:26). Mixed method combines aspects from both

quantitative and qualitative perspectives. In the empirical component of this study, a quantitative research approach was applied. The rationale for employing this approach is that it enables the researcher to quantify the data and generalise the results from the sample to the population of interest (Zikmund & Babin 2007:198). Therefore, upon following a quantitative research approach, the following sampling design procedure was adhered to:

1.5.2.1 Target population

Tustin *et al.* (2010:340) define target population as a group of individuals who participate in a marketing research initiative and are usually designed to reflect an underlying audience. For this study, the target population comprised the consumers aged between 18 and 40 years of age that are based in Southern Gauteng in Vanderbijlpark that constitute the Generation Y cohort.

1.5.2.2 Sampling frame

A sampling frame is a representation of the elements of the target population and consists of a list or set of directions for identifying the target populations (Malhotra 2010:373). No sampling frame could be established for this study since no documented list exists of the entire populous of consumers that constitute the Generation Y cohort in Southern Gauteng, Vanderbijlpark.

1.5.2.3 Sampling method

There are two broad sampling methods, namely, probability and non-probability sampling methods (Tustin *et al*. 2010:344). Due to the nature of this study, the non-probability sampling method was utilised, more specifically the snowball sampling technique, as it enables the selection of respondents based on a series of referrals (Chowdhury *et al*. 2013:33). Initially, the researcher selected respondents at the Vaal University of Technology that constitute the Generation Y consumers cohort. After being interviewed, these respondents were asked to identify others who belong to the same target population of interest. This process may be carried out in waves by obtaining referrals from referrals. The major advantage of the snowball sampling technique is that it substantially increases the likelihood of locating the desired characteristics in the population (Malhotra 2010:381).

1.5.2.4 Sample size

The sample size for this study comprised of 300 consumers as guided by the historical evidence approach. Using this approach, a sample size of 300 was deemed enough for this study. This sample size is in line with other digital marketing studies of this nature, such as Kwon and Wen (2010:258), who used a sample size of 280, Ainin, Parveen, Moghavvemi, Jaafar and Shuib

(2015:570), who used a sample size of 259 as well as Vries, Gensler and Leeflang (2012:83), who used a sample size of 355. Furthermore, there is justification in behavioural research for sample sizes between 300 and 500 because sample sizes between these ranges ensure the researcher that sample error will not exceed ten percent of the standard deviation (Hill 1998:4).

1.5.2.5   Methods of data collection and measuring instrument

Data were collected by means of self-administered surveys. The study utilised a close-ended questionnaire comprising 7 sections, with dichotomous, multiple choice and 5-point Likert scale questions.

1.6   STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Initially, data was captured on Microsoft Excel, whereby a coding book was established and then transferred to Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24.0. SPSS performed descriptive and inferential statistics to the empirical data set. In addition, this comprised measures of central location (mean, mode and median), measures of variability (standard deviation, variance, range, and interquartile range), tabulation and frequencies. Correlation and regression analysis were conducted to identify possible pairs of variables included in the study and review the relationships among the constructs.

1.7   RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF THE STUDY

Reliability is defined as the extent to which a scale produces consistent results if repeated measurements are made (Malhotra 2010:318). Cronbach's alpha coefficient tests were applied with the objective of measuring the internal consistency reliability of the instrument. A low value (<0.5) could be as a result of factors such as a low number of questions, or poor interrelatedness between items, while a high value alpha (>0.90) may be as a result of some redundant items in the instrument. Therefore, a benchmark level of 0.70 or higher was considered acceptable along the alpha coefficients (Lee, Moon, Kim & Yi 2015:299). Further computation and reporting of the reliability values for the various study constructs are elucidated in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 of the study.

Validity is defined as the extent to which differences in observed scales scores reflect true differences among objects on the characteristics being measured (Roger 2011:45). Therefore, validity assesses whether differences in scores on the instrument reflect the actual differences among the characteristics that are being measured, thereby resulting in precision of the study. Malhotra (2010:321) articulates that construct validity attempts to answer theoretical questions.

Accordingly, construct validity requires a sound theory of the nature of the construct being measured and how it relates to other constructs. In addition, content, convergent and predictive validity were measured through correlation and regression analysis.

1.8   CHAPTER CLASSIFICATION

The following section summarises the chapters of this research.

Chapter 1: Introduction and background to the study

This chapter introduces the research problem, background to the study, the preliminary literature review, the conceptual framework underpinning the study and the research design employed to answer the research problem.

Chapter 2: Social media marketing

This chapter outlines and discusses relevant literature on social media with emphasis on social media marketing. The relevant theories provided a theoretical framework for the study. Social media marketing pertaining to their negative and positive experiences in different markets of the world are outlined, and its marketing activities, consumer attitude, adoption of Generation Y discussed.

Chapter 3: Research design and methodology

This chapter discusses the research design and sampling methods to be used in this study. Different types of research are highlighted and the statistical techniques for data analysis are explained. The chapter identifies and justifies the target population for the study, procedures, sample methods, data analysis systems, and sample size and research methods. Validity, reliability and data analytical tools and instruments are highlighted and discussed.

Chapter 4: Results and findings of the study

This chapter highlighted and discussed the findings of the study, which are presented in terms of the theoretical and empirical objectives set out.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and recommendations

This chapter summarised the conclusion of the study. Its limitations and recommendations are provided. Practical and theoretical implications are highlighted and discussed.

1.9   SYNOPSIS

This chapter provided the introduction and background of the study, clarified the problem statement and provided its theoretical underpinnings, the conceptual framework and hypothesis. It stated the study's objectives, and briefly outlined the research design and methodology. The statistical analysis procedure, reliability and validity procedure were discussed as well as the ethical steps taken and adhered to. The following chapter covers the literature review.

2

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The advent of social media and the Internet were assured to usher in the era of possibilities for organisations to communicate and engage with their key stakeholders and the public (Waite & Wheeler 2014:667). Social media marketing has quickly transformed the old marketing techniques and recognised relations between consumers and marketers, constructing new possibilities and opportunities with the objective of increasing consumers' brand awareness (Pillay & Maharaj 2014:4). Therefore, from an operational point of view, social networks are a digital space where millions of individuals engage and the utilisation and adoption of social media as a marketing tool seems apparent.

This chapter is organised in six sections with sub-sections. Section 2.2 provides an overview of the Generation Y consumers' cohort, their description, characteristics, background, and their extensive usage of social media platforms. Section 2.3 seeks to advocate and explain the theories that were adopted and applicable and how they are related to this investigation. Figures are shown to indicate the components that comprise these theories. Section 2.4 defines social media and seeks to provide a detailed landscape of social media in South Africa. This section further elaborates on South African statistics regarding social media, provides a detailed list of active social media platforms and social media usage from a South African context. Section 2.5 is a deeper analysis of social media marketing. Different articulations and definitions from previous researchers are clearly outlined to provide a deeper comprehension of social media as a marketing tool. Examples of social media marketing communication tools are outlined in this section. Furthermore, this section provides the benefits and drawbacks of social media marketing. Section 2.6 is a critical analysis of the intervening variable (consumers' attitude) of the study. This section seeks to define attitude from various perspectives of different scholars. It provides a clear comprehension of the components that constitute attitude and provides the tripartite model of attitude. Section 2.7 outlines the outcome variable (social media adoption) of the study. It seeks to articulate the acceptance and adoption of social media as a marketing instrument. It also seeks to give a clear understanding of challenges pertaining to the adoption of social media marketing.

2.2 OVERVIEW OF GENERATION Y CONSUMERS

The global marketplace is rapidly changing due to unprecedented technological development, acceleration of globalisation, concentrated competition, and intensified customer expectations (Kim, Knight & Pelton 2011:247). For modern customers, sophisticated products and services are no longer restricted to the upper class and as the average level of disposable income increases, many individuals have access to conspicuous products and services (Kim & Jang 2014:39). Therefore, Generation Y has become the area of interest for researchers due to their strong influence, not only as customers and as employees but also on the overall development of the community. Dlodlo and Mafini (2013:2) articulate that people who belong to the same generational cohort may be seen as being a group of individuals who have experienced a common political, social, historic and economic environment. Corodeanu (2015:9) asserts that some members of Generation Y are on the verge of entering the working place to become a valuable segment of consumers with increasing purchasing power.

Generation Y customers' have been raised in a consumption-driven society with great levels of flexible income at their disposable and are considered as active contributors in the marketplace (Ave, Venter & Mhlophe 2015:99). Noble, Haytko and Phillips (2010:617) state that Generation Y customers' total numbers and purchasing influence change the market, and these individuals were born between 1985 and 2004. Generation Y is revitalising the American economy and currently represents the largest teen population in the history of the United States, hence, they have tremendous purchasing influence, already at 600 billion dollars a year, which has substantial impact over parental expenditure. Likewise, Gardiner and Kwek (2017:497) affirms that in Chinese culture, Generation Y customers were born after 1970 and they are defined as the Social Reform generation because of their significant political, cultural and social reforms that they have witnessed growing up in China. China's Generation Y consumers represent 250 million strong demographic groups, and they resemble their western countries counterparts in terms of access to and increased usage of the internet, social media, mobile phones, and various technological devices. According to Statistics South Africa (2020:1) Generation Y consumers represent a significant segment which comprises 27 percent of the country's population, translating into a buying power of 14 million people. In addition, Dlodlo and Mafini (2013:2) articulate that in South Africa, Generation Y consumers are individuals who were the first to enjoy the fruits of a democratic dispensation.

In addition, Kruger and Saayman (2015:369) categorise Generation Y as individuals born during 1982 to 2000, who are still in the process of defining themselves, which causes challenges in

setting a distinct end date (individuals born between 1982-2000). Generation Y consumers grew up in times of enormous and fast paced revolution, including full employment opportunities for women, additional income for families as the standard norm, wide array of family types seen normal, substantial respect for ethnic and cultural differences including an intensified societal consciousness and computers at home and at school (Corodeanu 2015:5).

Generation Y consumers are knowledgeable on a wide variety of media currently available, and were the first to grow up with computers, the Internet and cell phones. Due to having grown up in a period of technological progress, they have a reliance on technology (mobile phones and computers) to perform various actions of their daily lives (Jordaan, Ehlers & Grove 2011:3). Furthermore, Generation Y comprise about 75 million young consumers in America alone, making them the most powerful consumer group due to their high disposable income, which places strong importance on the integration of advanced technological devices within all facets of their lives, resulting in extreme dependence on the Internet for information (Jang, Kim & Bonn 2011:803; Kruger & Saayman 2015:370).

Cortes and Bonilla (2018:1) contend that Generation Y customers' use virtual social media platforms to reconstruct experiences which are consistent with their identities and create content in social media when they find that the experience significantly contributes to their social value and status. Jordaan, Ehlers and Grove (2011:3) affirm that marketers have labelled Generation Y customers' as being difficult to communicate with because they have become technologically conscious with social media becoming part and parcel of their world. In addition, Bolton (2013:261) alludes that Generation Y consumers spent their entire existence in a technologically cognisant society and marketers are interested in their consumer social media usage because it might be the way of life soon.

2.3   THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In recent years, a variety of models and theories have been proposed to explain, anticipate and predict consumer actions and behaviour (Hansen, Jensen & Solgaard 2010:539). Therefore, for the purposes of this study, social exchange theory, theory of reasoned action and a technology acceptance model were adopted. These theories are articulated in the following section.

2.3.1   Social Exchange Theory (SET)

According to Nunkoo (2016:590), social exchange theory (SET) emanated from sociology and social psychology literature and is the oldest theory of social behaviour. Pan and Crotts (2012:7) elaborate that social media are reliant on its users providing content, and a comprehension of the

reasons why individuals contribute to the content appears fundamental. SET draws its origins from sociology literature that explores exchange between individuals or a collective.

SET mostly uses cost-benefit structure and assessment of options to elaborate how individuals communicate with each other, how they form associations and relationships, and how groups are established through communiqué exchange (Kang & Lee 2018:310). SET, developed by psychological scholars Homans and Emerson in partnership with an economics researcher Blau, articulates that it conceptualises the exchange of resources between consumers and societal groups and offers a basis for comprehending consumer transactions, interactions and relationships (Molye, Croy & Weiler 2010:98).

SET is one of the ancient theories used to explain social behaviour whereby interactions between individuals is regarded as exchange of resources which emphasises reliant and mutually dependent exchange between individuals as the foundation for societal relations and transactions (Chang, Tsai, Chen, Huang & Tseng 2015:868; Oparaocha 2016:537). Tsai and Cheng (2012:1070) advocate that SET is among the most significant conceptual examples of consumer behaviour due to its incorporation of feelings of individual commitment, gratitude and trust. SET stipulates that social behaviour results in an exchange process.

Parzefall and Salin (2010:766) contend that SET refers to an unstated exchange whereby an individual or a group necessitates to trust the other that the reimbursements received can be shared and these procedure manifest without any formal agreement. Similarly, Khalid and Ali (2017:492) is of the view that SET is described as voluntary deeds of individuals and societal groups that are encouraged by the benefits they expect to receive and typically the benefits they have to offer. According to Shiau and Luo (2012:2432), it embraces the essential models of modern economics as a basis for evaluating human behaviour and relations in order to define social structure complexity. Therefore, SET can be utilised to articulate the cognitive process (benefits/costs analysis) through which individuals participate in digital social activities (Zhao, Chen, Wang & Chen 2017:372).

Furthermore, SET can be utilised to describe individuals' behaviour across a variety of spheres, including technology adoption, information sharing, consumer behaviour and behaviour in virtual communities (Yan, Wang, Chen & Zhang 2016:644). For the purpose of this study, SET was utilised to establish the interdependent relationship between social media marketing dimensions (source credibility, informativeness, social identity and perceived enjoyment) and that all social life can be treated as an exchange of intangible and tangible benefits between individuals and societal groups. It is also appropriate as it permits the analysis of the exchange of resources

between individuals and societal groups with expectations of acquiring some form of benefits in return. SET was utilised in this study to contemplate attitudes and perceptions towards social media marketing.

2.3.2 Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)

Social researchers have a developing interest in the relationship between actions and attitudes which led to the development of The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) by Fishbein and Ajzen in 1975 to anticipate human actions under planned control (Dwyer & Williams 2002:86; Untaru, Ispas, Candrea, Luca & Epuran 2016:51). According to Wu (2003:3), Fishbein and Ajzen established their TRA based upon an individual's deeds as a positive function of a behavioural objective to perform the behaviour, when their behavioural objective is perceived as a direct function of two psychological variables, namely, an attitude towards executing the behaviour and an individual's subjective norm with regards to the behaviour.

Roberto, Shafer and Marmo (2014:308) contend that based on TRA, the significant predictor of an individual's behaviour is an intent to execute or not execute the behaviour. They argue further that the best predictor intentions are an individual's attitude towards that particular action (does an individual feel negatively or positively towards the behaviour) and subjective norms (how an individual thinks that others think they should behave). Ackermann and Palmer (2014:529) assert that TRA addressed disapproval of coherent choice justifications of consumer behaviour by suggesting that individuals are coherent in utilising information at their disposal and acknowledged the role of social influence on this coherence.

Likewise, Glanz, Rimer and Viswanath (2015:70) elaborate that TRA asserts that the utmost significant element of behaviour is behavioural intention. Direct elements of an individual's behavioural intentions are their attitude towards effectuating the actions and their biased norms related to the behaviour. In addition, Ramayah, Rouibah, Gopi and Rangel (2009:1224) are of the view that in line with TRA, the behavioural intention of a specific behaviour is influenced by a social element represented by an individual's attitude towards that behaviour, or a personal element which is represented by a subjective norm.

Furthermore, Guo, Johnson, Unger, Lee, Xie, Chou, Palmer, Sun, Gallaher and Pentz (2007:1068) articulate that TRA also addresses the impacts of cognitive aspects such as social standards, attitudes and intentions on human behaviour. Consequently, TRA is one of the utmost significant theories utilised by information system scholars to investigate a user's acceptance behaviour and

find vital indicators to acquire the benefits of technology acceptance through information systems (Oni, Mbarika & Ayo 2017:318).

In TRA, attitude is equivalent with the attitudinal certainty that carrying out a specific behaviour results in a specific outcome, attributed by an estimation of the interest of the outcome (Mishra & Akman 2014:30). However, in the context and the nature of this study, TRA was utilised to comprehend and analyse the role of attitude and its cognitive aspects in predicting Generation Y consumers' perceptions towards the adoption of social media marketing. Figure 2.1 summarises TRA:
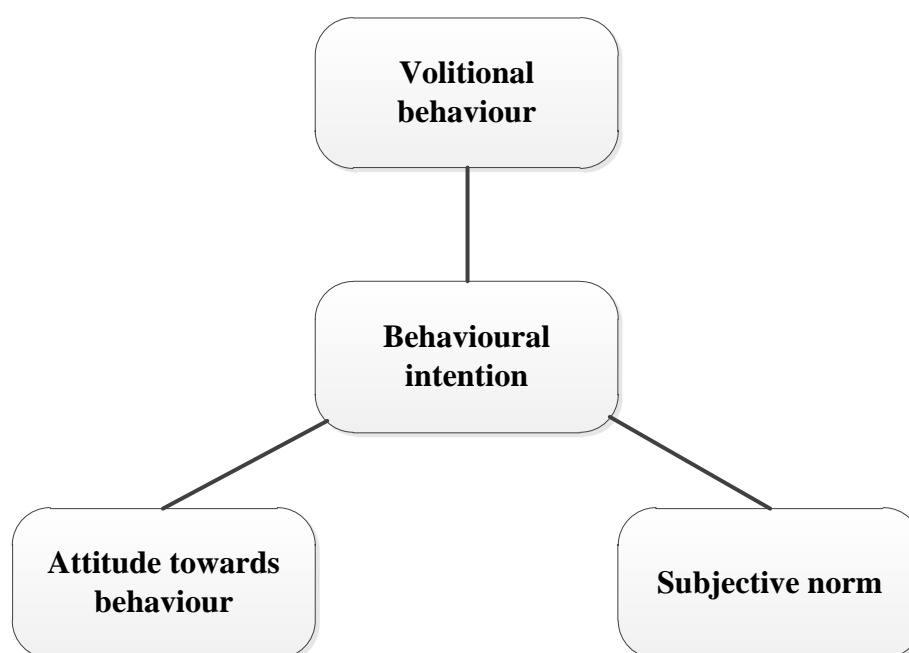
Figure 2.1:   Theory of reasoned action

Source: Narh and Williams (2012:1385)

2.3.3   Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

Rauniar, Rawski, Yang and Johnson (2014:9) state that the technology acceptance model (TAM) was instigated by Davis (1986) to hypothesise the usage habits of software technology. Therefore, TAM is the adaption of the theory of reasoned action and is one of the significant and distinguished models for explaining technology acceptance and utilisation (Verma, Bhattacharyya & Kumar 2018:793; Hussein 2017:160). Ibrahim (2014:1535) affirms that TAM is anchored in TRA and is instituted based upon a hypothesis that technology acceptance can be explained by individuals' intentions, beliefs, and attitudes. Furthermore, Mortenson and Vidgen (2016:1251) state that TAM is grounded in TRA, and postulates that perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, attitude

towards use and behavioural intention will envisage definite utilisation of a particular technology. Accordingly, TAM advocates the stimulus of individuals by the following elements, perceived ease of use, attitude and perceived usefulness which elements have been hypothesised to be the primary influencers for acceptance attitude and technology utilisation (Taherdoost 2018:962; Akman & Mishra 2015:480).

Therefore in TAM, perceived ease of use refers to an individual's evaluation that a particular technology will be easy to utilise, and attitude then demonstrates an individual's favourable or unfavourable sentiments concerning the behaviour in question; and perceived usefulness is the degree to which an individual believes that the technology will make life easier and enhance job performance (Ramayah, Rouibah & Rangel 2009:1224; Akman & Mishra 2014:4789). According to Jokar, Noorhosseini, Allahyari and Damalas (2017:204), TAM is founded on the proposition that a person's views have an influence on their attitude concerning particular technologies. Chen, Xu and Arpan (2017:94) argue that originally TAM was postulated for information technology and is reflected upon as the utmost effective model utilised to advocate an individuals' acceptance and uses of numerous technologies.

In the past, TAM has become dominant, powerful and a firmly established model for anticipating technology adoption and acceptance (Wang & Sun 2016:60). Therefore, TAM has been selected for this study due to the nature of its predictive capability of technology acceptance. Furthermore, it is deemed to be an applicable model upon which to base a study of Generation Y consumers' perceptions on acceptance and adoption towards social media marketing. In addition, the model was utilised to anticipate the elements that influence the acceptance and adoption of social media marketing. Figure 2.2 articulates and illustrates the components that comprise TAM:
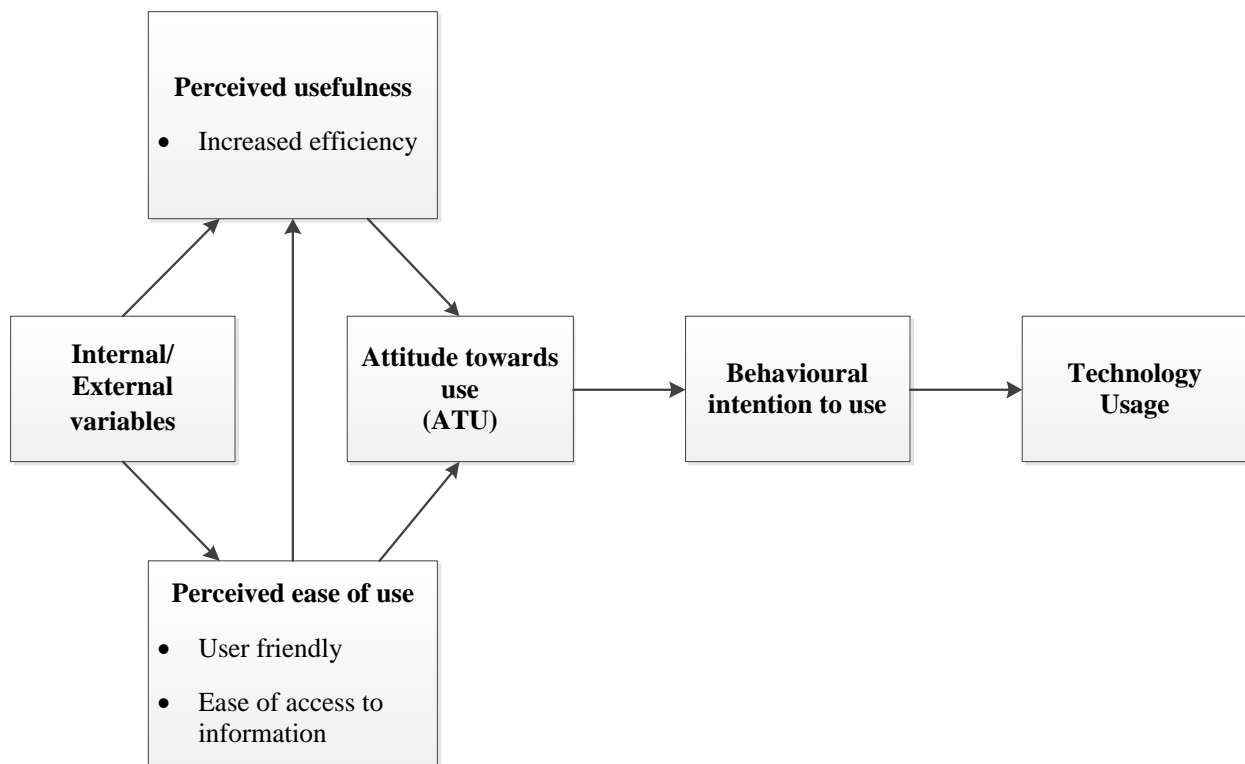
Figure 2.2: **Technology Acceptance Model**

Source: Davis (1986).

The theories underpinning the study has been established and articulated, therefore, social media as well as social media maketing and its aspects pertaining to digital landscape in a South African context is alluded to in the next sections of the study.

2.4 SOCIAL MEDIA

Constantinides (2013:40) attests to the fact that some of the old marketing tenets such as traditional marketing and mass marketing approaches have become less effective. Likewise, Zhu and Chen (2015:335) are of the view that for marketing strategists, being visible in the period of authorised and influential consumers involves comprehending the role of technology in influencing the marketplace, and more significantly engaging social media as part of the marketing toolbox. As a result, social media has become the new communique model companies use to directly deliver the message to their consumers.

Black and Thompson (2013:29) indicate that social media marketing emanated from social media which has taken traditional marketing and progressed it to a digital space, resulting in the increase of opportunities to influence. Before elaborating on the social media marketing concept, it is of significance to define and understand social media. Ismali (2017:129) defines social media as an

assembly of internet-based applications that are formed on the conceptual and practical fundamentals of Web 2.0 that permit the design and commutation of user-generated content. According to Khan, Dongping and Wahab (2016:694), social media offers user-generated content which is more operative than the traditional marketing communication in influencing customers' behaviour and attitude.

2.4.1   Social media setting in South Africa

The digital setting in South Africa is quite extraordinary as it indicates critical and interesting statistics that are fundamental to a modern business environment. Social media usage in South Africa is significant to Generation Y consumers and modern businesses, with 31.18 million internet users recorded in 2018. Therefore, We Are Social (2019) conducted research which indicated that Facebook is becoming an effective platform in South Africa with 2.27 million users realised in January 2019 (https://www.slideshare.net/DataReportal/digital-2019-south-africa-january-2019-v01). The table below reflects South African social media user statistics recorded January 2019.

Table 2.1:   South African social media statistics

Social Network (platform)	Active Users (in millions)
Facebook	2.271
YouTube	1.900
WhatsApp	1.500
FB messenger	1.300
WeChat	1083
Instagram	1000

Source: We Are Social (2019:31)

We Are Social (2019:31) research reflected that of the 2.271 million users active on Facebook, 22 million gain access to the social platform through mobile and smartphones. YouTube is the second largest social media platform, which has certainly grown to 1.900 million active users. The third largest social media platform recorded was WhatsApp in 2019 which realised 1.500 million active users. The research further noted that the mobile phone was the device most utilised to access WhatsApp in 2019. Additionally, other social network platforms such as TikTok, Twitter, LinkedIn and Pinterest have shown to have significantly grown in South Africa.

We Are Social, a globally recognised company published a report which reflected the total population of South Africa to be 57.73 million and of those 23 million have active social media accounts (We Are Social 2019:15).

Figure 2.3: South Africa's digital setting

Source: We Are Social (2019:15)

2.4.2   South Africa's social media platforms

We Are Social, a global enterprise indicated that active internet users spend abundant time on social networks on the mobile phones, reflecting Facebook on top of the list in South Africa followed by YouTube (We Are Social 2019:33). Active social media platforms in South Africa are indicated in the figure below:
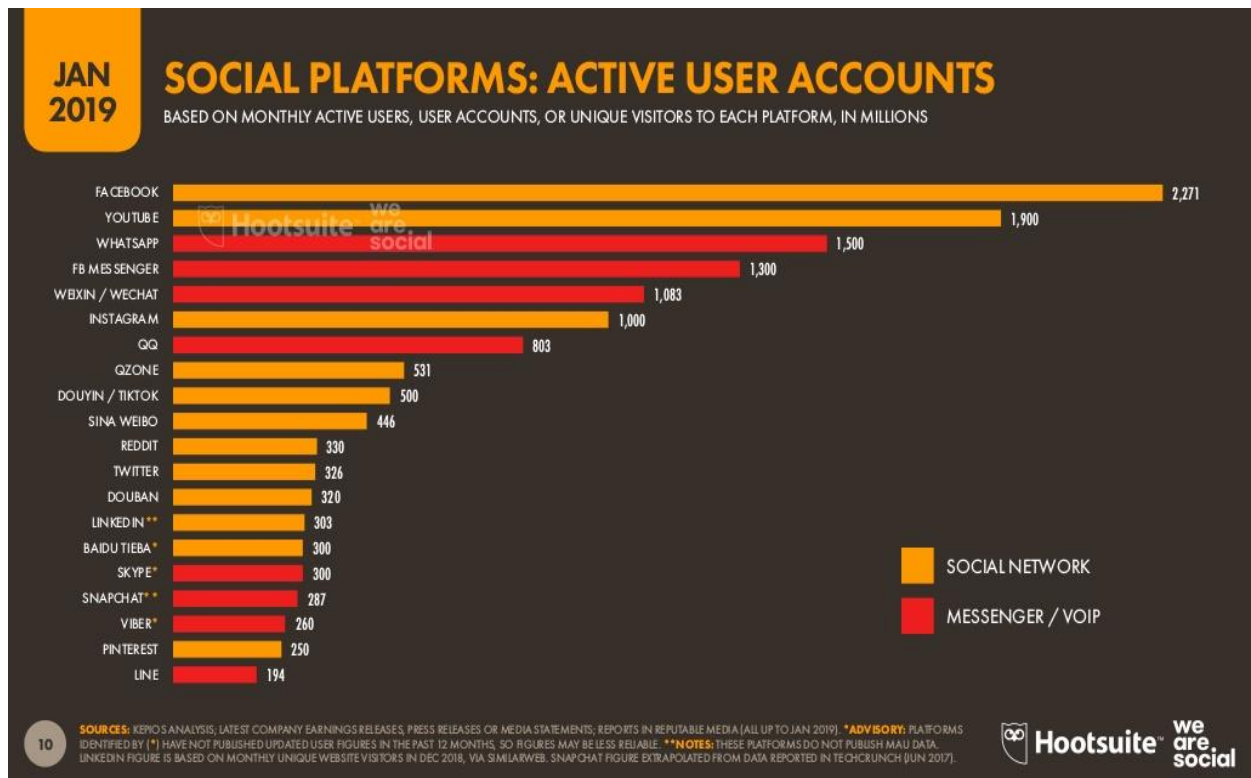
Figure 2.4: South Africa's most active social platforms

Source: We Are Social (2019:33)

2.4.3 Social media usage in South Africa

Relative to what South Africans utilise to access social media network applications or the internet, it is fascinating to take cognisance of the fact that smartphones have revolutionised the communication landscape in South Africa. Consequently, of the 23 million active social network users, 22 million of those gain access to their social media accounts via smartphones or mobile phones (We Are Social 2019:31). This is fundamentally in relation to the South African mobile industry which reflects an increase in the request or demand of smartphones.
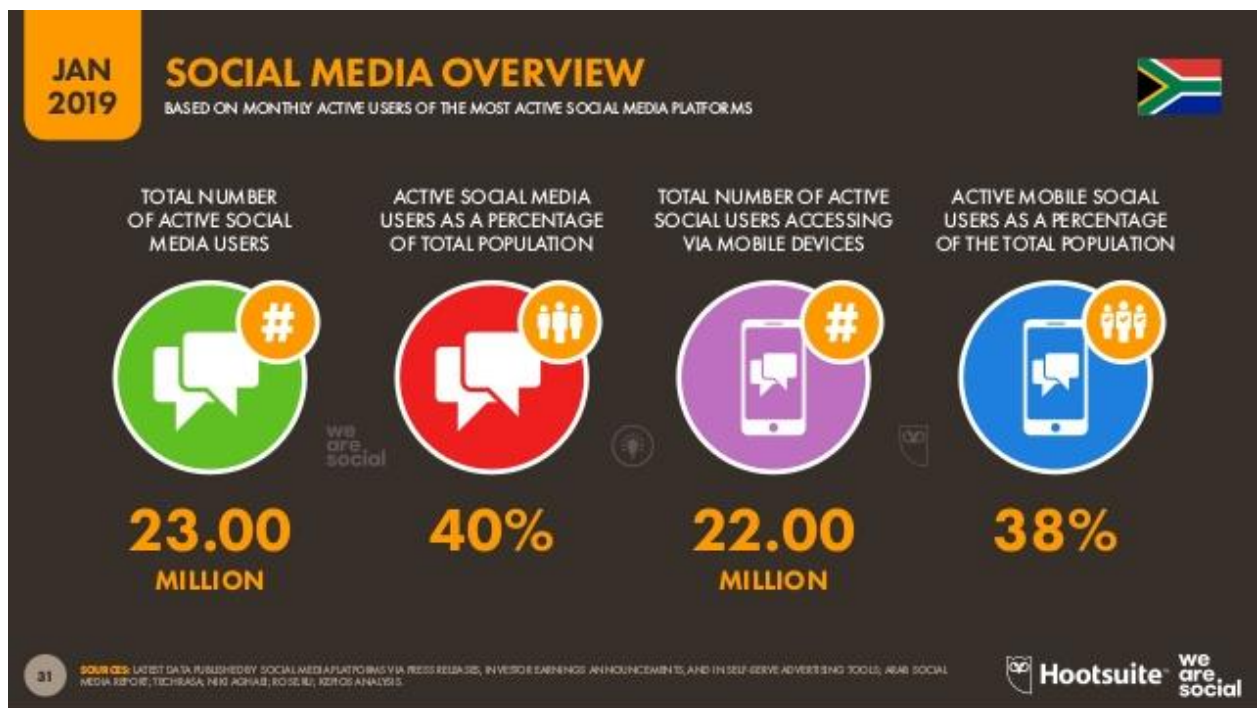
Figure 2.5:   Social media usage from a South African context

Source: We Are Social (2019:33)

Since the development of social media, its utilisation and adoption have been significantly increasing with various social media platforms observing billions of active users around the globe, as well as millions from a South African context. As we drew to January 2019, 31.18 million active internet users were recorded in South Africa while the number of active Facebook users recorded amounted to 2.271 million in 2019 (https://www.slideshare.net/DataReportal/ digital-2019-south-africa-january-2019-v01).

2.5   SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

Yazdanparast, Joseph and Muniz (2016:243) define social media marketing as a procedure that enables promotion of websites, products and services online through social platforms and it is related to strengthening relationships with current customers and attracting potential customers. Yadav and Rahman (2017:1295) articulate that many researchers define social media marketing as a resource to interact and connect potential and existing consumers to establish consumer relationships, while other scholars define social media marketing as a method of improving stakeholders' value through marketing initiatives by integrating social media platforms as part of marketing communiqué. Therefore, in a traditional marketing paradigm, marketing is seen as a one-way communication model in which the producer is the sender and the consumer the receiver. Lagrosen and Grunden (2014:255) elaborate that the utilisation of social media marketing is

founded on a multi-way communication method in which the roles of the receiver and the sender are diversified. Social media marketing can create value for the entire network, including both consumers and the organisations.

2.5.1 Summarised definitions of social media marketing

Table 2.2 below elaborates and proves that many investigators indeed have different definitions and articulations pertaining to social media marketing as a marketing tool.

Table 2.2: Definitions of social media marketing

No.	Author	Definition
1	Taubenheim *et al* (2008:58)	A way of utilising the Internet to directly cooperate, share data and have a dialogue about opinions and views of mutual interest.
2	Chan and Guillet (2010:347)	A societal and managerial procedure by which individuals and groups attain their needs and desires through a set of Internet based applications that permit interaction, communication, relationship of user-generated content and sharing of information.
3	Chi (2011:46)	Social media marketing provides significance and association between brands and customers and provide a personal platform for user-centred networking and social interaction.
4	Chang *et al* (2015:777)	Social media marketing, which uses social networks platforms such as Facebook to permit content sharing relationship building and customer cohesion.
5	Pham and Gammoth (2015:325)	Organisation's procedure of establishing and promoting online marketing related initiatives on social media platforms that value to its stakeholders.
6	Choi *et al* (2016:772)	Platform of engaging with consumers on social network sites to create word-of-mouth, enhancing customer loyalty and increasing purchase intentions of the organisation's products and services.
7	Tuten and Solomon (2016:21)	The use of social media technologies, platforms and software to establish, communicate as well as exchange and deliver offerings that have value to the organisation's stakeholders.
8	Felix *et al* (2017:123)	Interdisciplinary and cross-functional concept that use social media to achieve organisational goals by creating value for stakeholders.

Adapted from Yadav and Rahman (2017:1296).

Social media marketing is a submission of social media due to the utilisation of natural dialogues between the users strategically to benefit the organisation and establish long term relationships between the organisation, current and potential customers and entering into the power of peer-to-peer influence (Plessis 2010:3). Keegan and Rowley (2017:16) contend that social media marketing is fundamentally changing the way marketing ambitions and intelligence is communicated, consumed, and created. The importance of social media marketing is a crucial part of everyday business activities. As a result, it is important to consider the attributes of strategic marketing activities in the modern digital economy. Matikiti, Mpingajira and Lombard (2018:2) advocate that social media marketing can stimulate social contact between the organisations and the consumers through social media platforms such as blogs, Facebook, Twitter, and various other social network platforms.

2.5.2 Social media marketing communication tools and their uses

Social media marketing is associated with its relevant communication tools as well as their vital uses, which are stated and briefly and discussed in Table 2.3.

Table 2.2:   Examples of social media marketing communication tools and their uses

Tool	Explanations	Use by organisation
Blog	An individual offers explanation in the form of a personal diary about numerous topics of interest (Stanyer 2006).	Builds customer community Encourages customer discussions
Product blog	Like a blog but communications are meant for selling products and services. On many occasions the blogger has entered affiliate programs or joint ventures with another organisation (Goodfellow & Graham 2007).	Builds customer community Encourages consumer discussions.
Blog press room	A blog sustained by an individual or an enterprise in which information is distributed to the media by means of videos, press release, screen shots and photos (Wyld 2008).	Product/brand publicity
Review blog	An extension of a blog but endorsing new goods and services and offering a chance for professional considerations and perspectives (Schrecker 2008).	Product/brand publicity

Tool	Explanations	Use by organisation
Message board	An electronic platform in the form of a medium where a variety of communications about different topics can be posted (Maclaran & Catterall 2002).	Builds consumer community Inspires consumer dialogue
Podcast	A digital media file that can be transferred from the Internet by customers and played back utilising a variety of Internet and communication technology (Lu & Hsiao 2009).	Builds consumer community Encourages consumer discussions
Vlog	Same as a blog but the medium is a video where communications can be seen and analysed by other users (Lu & Hsiao 2009).	Builds consumer community Encourages consumer interaction
Wiki	A web page or several web pages, the content of which can be reformed by customers who can access these pages (Mason 2008).	Builds consumer community Encourages consumer interaction
Really simple syndication (RSS) feed	Users can be connected to Internet content by subscribing (Luckhoff 2009).	Attracts traffic to a web site Leaves a content trail
Widget built into social media sites	An applet that can be integrated into an HTML web page to add content and make it interactive (Dmochowska 2008).	Builds consumer community
Beacon	An advertisement system on Facebook. Information is sent from external web sites to Facebook to allow targeted advertisements while customers/users can share their mutual activities with friends (Facebook backs down 2007).	Establish consumer community Inspire consumer interaction
Fan pages	A page of a celebrity within a social media platform such as Facebook or Twitter. Many organisations also create a fan page for a particular brand (Luckhoff 2009).	Establish consumer community Inspire consumer interaction
Games, competition, incentives	Offering entertainment to online community individuals while surfing the website (Sicilia & Palazon 2008).	Draws traffic to a website Builds consumer community

Tool	Explanations	Use by organisation
Mobile platforms	Using the Internet or social dialogues to reach online customer (Boyd 2008).	Product/brand awareness
Social media aggregator	A web platform that allow for searches on social media and provides marketer with opportunities to read opinion of customers about products and services (Capper 2008).	Establish strong brand reputation

Adapted from Plessis (2010:6)

Therefore, as guided by the table above, a brief discussion of the identified tools is provided in the next section.

2.5.3   A brief discussion of the tools identified

- **Blog**

According to Plessis (2010:8) a blog is considered as a website which normally is maintained and sustained by an individual with regular entries of personal events, personal videos, and graphics. Puschmann (2013:83) stipulates that a blog is a form of online expression, communication and can be defined as a shared online journal whereby individuals can post diary entries in relation to their personal hobbies, habits as well as their personal experiences. Consequently, the National Centre for Technology in Education state that a blog can be explained as a comprehensive website which is organised in reverse chronological order and is transparent to the public and every individual is free to create one. In addition, Plessis (2010:7) advocates that blogs can offer opportunities for readers on the Internet to interact with each other and that blogs can be perceived as a form of publishing on the Internet.

- **Product blog**

As the above table (Table 2.3) indicates, a product blog is like a blog, but communications of a product blog are intended to sell products and services. Pulizzi (2012:4) contends that a product blog offers an easy way to present a range of products offered and services available for rendering. Therefore, product blogs are effective when they are utilised to build online communities regarding relevant topics and issues in relation to products and services as well as using the blog to enhance the organisation's social media strategy (Plessis 2010:7). Furthermore, Ho, Chui, Chen and Papazafeiropoulou (2015:347) affirm that product blogs also enable consumers to be content

creators in terms of commenting, providing suggestions as well as recommendations in relation to the product. Additionally, product blogs are contended to be an effective advertising tool (Ho *et. al* 2015:348; Plessis 2010:9).

- **Blog press room**

Blog press can also play a significant function like a blog as well as a product blog. Ho *et al.* (2015:346) assert that a blog press room can be regarded as an online newsroom or a website page that encompasses distributable, useful, and helpful information regarding a brand or an organisation. Shapiro (2012:1) contends that a blog press room is an important component of an enterprise public relations, marketing initiatives as well as sales objectives.

- **Review blog**

A review blog enables comments on products or services and is a way corporations and their brands maintain communication with their target population as well as extend the organisation's prospective customer base (Plessis 2010:11). In other words, review blogs are used as a feedback platform for services rendered and products offered. Accordingly, Puschmann (2013:84) articulates that review blogs can be used as a guide or a master plan to address customer complaints, comments as well as suggestions in relation to services rendered and products offered.

- **Message board**

A message board is an electronic platform in a form of an Internet forum that permits vital product and service discussions among consumers in a form of posted messages (Plessis 2010:13). Therefore, message boards allow various consumers to give their views regarding an organisation's products and services as well as views regarding their marketing initiatives (Lerman 2010:6). In addition, Ho *et al.* (2015:348) affirm that the nature of the message boards differs broadly, and include information requests, trading recommendations knowledge sharing as well as general observations.

- **Podcast**

A podcast is a digital file made obtainable on the worldwide web (Internet) that can be downloaded on a computer and various technological devices, usually made obtainable as new instalments of which can be received by subscribers (Puschmann 2013:86). Therefore, podcast offers an associated website with links and show notes, guest biographies, transcripts, additional resources, and a community platform dedicated to discussing relevant organisational content (Shapiro 2012:3). Furthermore, corporations are intended to create and maintain podcast to express

organisational passion, establish a social network of influencers and increase the organisational professional visibility (Lerman 2010:8).

- **Vlog**

Aymar (2009:5) advocates that a vlog is a mode of communication than its visual as well as its stylish attributes. Organisations can utilise a vlog with an objective to either achieve a particular market share or an audience. It is contended by Gao, Tian and Huang (2009:24) that a vlog is similar to a blog but different in a manner that vlog entries are made regularly and often combine embedded video or video link with supporting images, texts and other data.

- **Wiki**

A wiki is a website that can be accessed and editable by an individual that possess an electronic device (tablets, a mobile phone or even a computer), a web browser as well as an internet access and connection (Barataz 2018:1). In the same vein, it is articulated that to access a wiki platform, an individual only needs an Internet browser and connection (Aymar 2009:8). Further, Plessis (2010:13) states that among other advantages, one of the strengths of a wiki is that it provides individuals with the ability to work collaboratively on the same document.

- **Really simple syndication (RSS) feed**

RSS is a defined standard with the specific purpose of delivering updates to web-based content. Consumers' use RSS readers and news aggregators to collect and monitor their favourite feeds in one centralised programme or location (Dey & Sarkar 2010:342). Simec, Carapina and Duk (2011:28) explain that RSS can be considered as a service and is a platform which is used to publish frequent updated content on the internet. Therefore, RSS can be used as a channel to communicate marketing efforts and initiatives (Plessis 2010:15).

- **Widget built into social media sites**

Widget built into social media sites refers to an applet that can be integrated into an HTML web page to add content and make it interactive (Dey & Sarkar 2010:346). Therefore, social media sites provide a model where individuals become part of a broader virtual community which enables them to share, collaborate and communicate in online commentary as well as engagement regarding shared interests (Aymar 2009:10). Moreover, social media sites lead to effective and useful information regarding marketing efforts and initiatives (Plessis 2010:18).

- **Beacon**

Beacon is considered as an advertising platform on various social media sites such as Facebook (Dey & Sarkar 2010:348). Accordingly, Saranya, Fathima and Ismail (2019:390) assert that location-based marketing efforts and sending context-aware communication based on the customer's location has increased, due to the wide usage of mobile devices and technology software such as beacon. In addition, beacon enables various consumers to have conversations regarding mutual interests and activities (Lerman 2010:21).

- **Fan pages**

A fan page refers to a website created and maintained by a particular fan or devotee regarding a specific celebrity or cultural phenomenon (Plessis 2010:28). Therefore, Mare, Parreeno and Blas (2014:362) articulate that companies can utilise fan pages with the objective to create relationships, interact as well as communicate with their prospective consumers. Furthermore, consumers have a wide range of fan pages with different information as well as products/services from which to choose, and which they can change from one fan page to another with just a single click (Simec, Carapina & Duk 2011:35).

- **Games, competitions, and incentives**

People tend to change their behaviour in relation to what others do or according to other's opinions (Silva & Sigmund 2010:3). Companies should also incorporate and offer virtual entertainment to consumers together with their social media marketing campaigns (Plessis 2010:31). In addition, consumers will also be entertained through social media marketing initiatives.

- **Mobile platforms**

Web 2.0 services are increasingly going mobile (Silva & Sigmund 2010:7). A mobile social networking site which is the step towards development of social networking applications and services to the mobile devices is vital (Hammershoj, Sapuppo & Tadayoni 2011:1). From an operational perspective, mobile platforms can assist companies to interact, keep in touch and build relationships with their consumers through mobile applications such as Facebook or WhatsApp.

- **Social media aggregator**

Social media aggregator is any media on social channels which can be referred to as a social media feed (Plessis 2010:34). Lerman (2010:27) states that the benefits of using a social media aggregator are time and cost efficient, audience agreement (an effective way to engage with the target population), and a way to create social media trends. Consequently, social media

aggregators enable organisations the opportunity to engage consumers' comments and opinions in relation to products and services. The social media marketing communication tools form part and parcel of the 4th industrial revolution. In the same vein, the next section will elaborate on the benefits as well as the pitfalls of social media marketing from an organisational and consumers' point of view.

2.5.4 Benefits and pitfalls of social media marketing

Social media marketing is a procedure which has benefits and downfalls for both the organisation and the consumer. Still, marketers need to identify, analyse and comprehend the various benefits and pitfalls of utilising social media marketing. Erdogmus and Cicek (2012:1355) attest that social media marketing is associated with relationship marketing, where organisation move from "trying to sell" to the establishment of networks with customers. Therefore, organisations can provide prompt support, stimulate products and services, and establish an online society of brand supporters through all forms of social media such as social networking sites (Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube), virtual worlds, blogs, online gaming sites, news sites and more. Similarly, Felix, Rauschnabel and Hinsch (2017:2) state that social media marketing can benefit the organisation in terms of increasing brand recognition, stimulating sales, and reducing marketing expenditure. Therefore Vance, Howe and Dellavalle (2011:2) contend that organisations can observe and examine consumer dialogues on social media to comprehend the way customers view the organisation and its activities. Many organisations also seek to minimise the risk of inappropriate social media use by their employees by setting rules and regulations on how social media should be utilised in work related contexts.

From a customer's viewpoint, the use of information communication technologies such as social media marketing offers a variety of benefits which include accessibility, efficiency, improved and participative information, competitive pricing, a broader selection of products and services and product diversity (Tiago & Verissimo 2014:704). Constantinides (2014:46) further elaborates that social media marketing permits customers to share information, interest one another and stimulate conversations between different cultures and through this platform (social media marketing) they can seek each other's sentiments about products and services.

In contrast, social media marketing can be detrimental to the organisation and the customer. Vance, Howe and Dellavalle (2011:3) state that it has its own set of regulatory challenges. Authorship is problematic to define, sources are infrequently provided, and customers may post their personal sentiments as comments. Therefore, Felix, Rauschnabel and Hinsch (2017:119) pinpoint common challenges to all methods of social media communication, namely, relations,

identity, status, conversations, existence, sharing and identity groups. However, marketers can use these fundamentals to establish value for users. Furthermore, Zhu and Chen (2015:339) content that only 15 percent of customers have confidence in social media marketing in the United States, resulting in poor marketing campaign outcomes.

2.5.5 Social media marketing dimensions that influence consumer attitude

This section articulates and elaborate further on the effect of social media marketing dimensions that have a significant influence on consumers' attitude towards social media marketing.

2.5.5.1 In-formativeness

In-formativeness is defined as the ability of advertising to inform users of alternative product information, which allows them to make choices with the highest value (Hamouda 2018:428). The key inspiration for Social Network Service (SNS) is the trade of reliable data, given the information structure of their SNS. Celik and Karaaslan (2014:304) define Social Network Services as software technology services that offer its users modified facilities, such as constructing a digital existence, locating users with whom a mutual connection is shared, seeing and permitting their list of networks and information from other users in the allowance of the system. SNS users were found to be friendly to informative when advertising on social network platforms and indeed, in-formativeness remained positively associated to consumer' attitude towards advertising on social network platforms (Bright, Gangadharbatla & Logan 2010:168). Vries, Gensler and Leeflang (2012:85) affirm that information exchange is a crucial motive for individuals to engage in social networking platforms, contribute to an online community and participate in Facebook groups. Furthermore, the search of credible information articulates why individuals prefer and consume brand-related content. In addition, customers might have a favourable attitude toward brand posts that are informative in contrast to non-informative brand posts.

In-formativeness reflects the adequacy, accuracy, relevancy, and appropriateness of communicated information (Zhou 2013:1289). According to Seppanen and Virrantaus (2015:113), in-formativeness can be described in a variety of ways, such as adherence to specifications, adherence to requests, relevancy, fitness for use and satisfying consumer expectations. Therefore, in-formativeness can be defined as the degree to which networks afford users with resourceful, and cooperative information and accommodates consensus regarding the capability of marketing campaigns to notify and update customers of product choices (Dehghani, Niaki, Ramezani & Sali 2016:166; Dao, Le & Chen 2014:278). Moreover, Kang and Namkung (2014:2) contend that in-

formativeness is the extent to which consumers consider the communiqué as precise, current, and useful. Furthermore, Alalwan (2018:69) articulate that in-formativeness is a construct related to the sender's capability to logically appeal to the consumer's response as it allows the consumer to cognitively consider the adoption of the information and communique. In addition, Lee and Hong (2016:364) are of the view that in-formativeness is a construct that comprehends coherent appeal due to its capability in assisting customers to make informed decisions regarding the approval of the communique.

2.5.5.2   Source credibility

Source credibility is defined as the positive features of the source of the communication that persuades how a receiver responds to the message (Todd & Melancon 2018:81). Source credibility refers to a source's capability and rational to offer correct and honest information and the source of influential information is valued as more reliable through knowledge or trustworthiness (Chiou, Hsu & Hsieh 2013:912). Teng, Khong, Goh and Chong (2014:748) articulate that the attributes of information source are the communicator's credibility, attractiveness, physical appearance, familiarity, and power.

In this regard, it was argued that these elements had an impact on the credibility of the message which are significant antecedents of assurance and confidence in the communication procedure (Ngamvichaikit & Beise-Zee 2014:279). Reliable data sources usually produce enough influential messages and prompt a satisfactory attitude towards products or services. Housholder and LaMarre (2014:370) advocate that conceptual reliable sources comprise two main components, character and capability (such as dependability and capability), therefore sources are reliable (or trustworthy) to a degree that the audience are convinced that their declarations are valid. Furthermore, sources are declared capable to a degree that they retain information or enough knowledge of a subject.

Source credibility refers to the degree to which the communication platform (source) is observed to be reliable, sincere, and well-informed, and a reliable source offers effective and influential information due to its nature of expertise (Mahapatra & Mishra 2017:596). Similarly, Haigh and Brubaker (2010:456) advocate that source credibility is the degree to which a communication platform (source) is perceived as having the capability applicable to the communication subject and can be trusted to provide an objective judgment. Wu and Wang (2011:452) argue that source credibility is an attitude towards the communication platform which affects the receiver's level of confidence about the source claims and is a significant element that contributes to persuasion effectiveness. Therefore, existing information identifies the source of expertise and dependability

as fundamentals which determine the credibility of the information communicated (Hussain, Ahmed, Jafar, Rabnawaz & Jianzhou 2017:97). However, Filieri, Hofacker and Alguezaui (2018:125) attest that in a digital environment it is a challenge to extensively comprehend the credibility and trustworthiness of a source. Furthermore, Luo, Luo, Schatzberg and Sia (2013:93) state that source credibility can directly change an individual's attitude and that a highly credible source will provide a greater impact on information credibility, hence individuals are more likely to accept and adopt the viewpoint of the information communicated.

2.5.5.3   Perceived enjoyment

Perceived enjoyment is evaluated as a form of amusement, desire or enthusiasm resulting from performing an activity (Than, Goh & Lee 2015:595). According to the 14th Bled Electronic Commerce Conference compiled by Heijden (2001:177), perceived enjoyment is defined as the degree to which the deed of utilising software technology is alleged to be fun in its own capacity and separate from any performance drawbacks that may be projected. Perceived enjoyment is theorised to have an influential effect on usage intention. The distinction between utilitarian and hedonic products has important implications for consumer behaviour. Schulze, Scholer and Skiera (2014:4) state that when acquiring hedonic products such as games, customers pursue items that are entertaining, fun, pleasant, inspiring, and amusing. Key utilitarian products should be effective, useful, efficient, essential, and real to appeal to customers.

Soares and Pinho (2014:247) articulate that utilitarian products are associated with physical, neutral, and well-designed features while hedonic products are associated with self-fulfilment and perceived amusement. Kang and Schuett (2013:4) elaborate that perceived enjoyment has been investigated as a determinant which articulates a behaviour in information and communication technologies, such as technology acceptance and uses. In addition, social networks are exciting, amusing, and stimulate the imagination, offer customers assistance from a depressing life and are found to have a positive impact on a user's acceptance of technology.

Perceived enjoyment refers to a consumer's view that a service rendered is fundamentally enjoyable (Yen 2014:581). Park and Kwon (2016:357) define perceived enjoyment as the degree to which utilising a specific technology is regarded as amusing apart from any performance challenges that may be predicted. Therefore, Chen, Lu and Wang (2016:104) state that social network services (SNS) investigations have found a significant role of perceived enjoyment in shaping customers' usage behaviour. Consequently, perceived enjoyment reflects the satisfaction and pleasure related to utilising a technological innovation such as social media marketing (Zhou 2013:1290). Furthermore, regarded as an essential element, perceived enjoyment has been

thoroughly scrutinised and its impact on consumers' attitude and behaviour has been investigated by a variety of studies (Than, Goh & Lee 2014:91). In addition, Alalwan, Baabdullah, Rana, Tamilmani and Dwivedi (2018:103) contend that perceived enjoyment has prominence regarding consumers' intention to use and adopt new technological innovations.

2.5.5.4 Social identity

Langner, Hennigs and Weidmann (2013:32) define social identity as an individual's awareness that he/she belongs to a particular social group together with emotional and significance of the group membership. Therefore, social identity articulates how belonging to a group shapes individual behaviour, as it claims that individuals describe themselves as associates of groups and develop their identity group affiliation. Kwon and Wen (2010:256) assert that "social identity theory has recently expanded from its origins in social psychology to areas of organisational research".

Social identity is described by its consensus to the social group in accordance with in-groups (individuals that belong to the same virtual community) and discrimination against out-groups (individuals that do not belong to a virtual community). Individuals who possess a high social identity tend to declare their in-groups in ways that distinguish themselves clearly from out-groups and prefer a group which provides them with positive online existence (Langner, Hennigs & Weidmann 2013:33). In a nutshell, Pan, Lu, Wang and Chau (2017:76) articulate that social identity refers to the classifications of the self that reflect integration to more inclusive social units. In addition, from a marketing point of view, social identity relates to circumstances and conditions when a customer affiliates the characteristics of a product or states that attract, grasp or hold his/her attention with fundamentals of his/her social identity or social group.

Consumers feel obliged to differentiate themselves from other members of society. However, they are still subjected to the psychological necessity to associate with a particular social group (Brandle, Berger, Golla & Kuckertz 2018:18). A study conducted by Hogg and Rinella (2018:6) state that social identity describes how individuals signify social classifications and their related aspects as models to govern how they interact and behave. Consistent with this, Ambrose, Matthews and Rutherford (2018:271) also contend that social identity suggests that individuals normally categorise themselves into a variety of classifications as a means of determining their identity and belonging to a larger collective. The cognitive foundation of social identity is therefore reflected in self-classification (Scheepers & Derks 2016:74). Furthermore, social identity takes into consideration social influence and subjective norms mainly on interpersonal influence (Jiang, Zhao, Sun, Zhang, Zheng & Qu 2016:755). As a result, social identity unifies motivations

and cognitive activities into a consistent framework which permits the scrutiny of intergroup behaviour with individual processes (Edwards, Stoll, Lin & Massey 2019:358).

The next section of this study provides an overview of consumer attitude, functions of attitude, attitude as a predictor of intention and behaviour, the model of attitude as well as its components.

2.6 AN OVERVIEW OF CONSUMER ATTITUDE

Consumer attitudes can be defined as individuals' total assessment of carrying out a specific conduct (Matikiti, Mpinganjira & Lombard 2017:3). Consumers' attitudes towards social media marketing in general can be described as unfavourable or favourable tendencies towards marketing communications through social media (Humbani, Kotze & Jordaan 2015:5). Dhurup, Muphosi and Shamhuyenhanzva (2015:1273) define consumers' attitudes as a psychological act that is articulated by an evaluation of a specific entity with a certain extent of disfavour or favour. Ariffin, Aun and Salamzadeh (2018:35) attest that attitude is the tendency or trend to act in a negative or positive manner to a given motivation such as a brand, product category and advertisement. Similarly, Bashir and Madhavaiah (2015:79) define consumer attitude as practised tendencies to react in a consistently unfavourable or favourable way with detail to a given object.

Customer perceptions of new software technology modifications and technology acceptance have been of significance to researchers in the past two decades. Xu (2014:11) lamented that a variety of well-developed and well tested behavioural models that advocate customer behaviours exist, such as Technology Acceptance Model. According to Akar and Topcu (2011:43), attitude is defined as an individual's favourable or unfavourable assessment, emotional feeling, and tendencies toward an object or idea. Nadeem, Adnreini, Salo and Laukkanen (2014:4) advocate that attitude towards a website is positively affected by trust, which eventually leads to a repeat visit. However, from an advertising point of view, Ling, Piew and Chai (2010:116) articulate that customers' attitude in relation to advertising is one of the significant indicators of advertising success since customers' cognitive ability towards the advertising/advertisement are revealed in their opinions and outlooks and subsequently will have an impact on their attitude towards advertising. In addition, the more an individual's attitude is favourable towards a brand or service, the more likely they are to utilise the service. Therefore, it is of great significance that marketers identify social network platforms whereby the persuasion is high.

According to Wang, Zhang, Choi and Eredita (2002:9), individuals form an attitude towards an object in relation to affective beliefs in a component that reflects how they feel about the object and, on the other hand, to cognitive beliefs in a component that reflects whether the aspects and

functions of the object are to their advantage. Perez, Mafe and Blas (2013:65) elaborate that investigations on the affective, cognitive and behavioural elements of attitude have intended to obtain an additional in-depth comprehension of their own individual influence to one's general tendency. Functions of attitudes will be presented in a tabulation form in the next section.

2.6.1 Functions of attitude

The table below elaborates briefly on the functions, definition, explanation, and relevant examples pertaining to consumer attitudes.

Table 2.3: Functions of attitude

Function	Definition	Explanation	Example
Instrumental function	The individual uses attitude to obtain satisfaction from the object	The individual therefore aims to maximise external reward while maximizing external punishment	An individual might develop an attitude towards a restaurant because his/her friends go there, and the food is excellent
Ego-defensive function	Protects against internal conflicts and external dangers	Here the attitude shields the individual from his own failings	An individual who is unable to understand how to utilise the product or service might have an attitude that suggest that manufacturers make products/services too complex
Value-expressive function	Opposite of ego-defensive, the drive for self-expression	The attitudes expressed often go against the flow of opinion	Most radical political viewpoints fit this function of attitude.
Knowledge function	The drive to seek clarity and order	Related to the need to understand what the object is all about. Comes from the belief that if you know what you like or dislike, decision making is easy	An individual who has an interest in the latest car models is likely to read car magazines, attend auto shows and watch television programmes about cars such as top gear

Adapted from Madichie (2012:90)

However, in the context of this study, consumers' attitude is defined as an individual's undesirable or positive sentiments towards social media marketing use and adoption. This definition is in line with the objective the study seeks to achieve, which is to investigate whether consumers attitude have an influence towards social media marketing. Cesareo and Pastore (2014:518) stipulate that attitude is one of the significant components of Theory of Reasoned Action and it is strongly agreed upon in the reference literature that attitude is the best predictor of intention and behaviour.

2.6.2 Attitudes as a predictor of intention and behaviour

Attitude is a robust predictor of behaviour and it is anticipated that the more favourable an individual's attitude towards a specific object is, the more possibilities that the individual will display any given positive behaviour, and less likely that the individual will display negative behaviour regarding a specific object (Dekker, Dijkgraaf & Meijerink 2011:2). Therefore, Nguyen, Phan, Bui and Moon (2019:4) state that attitude towards a specified behaviour is defined as the extent to which an individual has a favourable or unfavourable appraisal of the behaviour in question. Bagozzi (2012:607) affirm that attitude has been addressed in two broad ways, namely, the premise that no necessary connection exists, and that attitude behaviour is believed to be contingent on the context in which it occurs. In addition, the best and influential exemplar that explains attitude as a predictor of intention and behaviour is TRA (Cesareo & Pastore 2014:524).

Most researchers have accepted as a given that human behaviour is guided by social attitudes (Ajzen, Albarracin & Lohmann 2018:8). Guyer and Fabrigar (2016:184) advocate that the TRA starts with the premise that the effects of attitude are not direct but instead articulate that the most proximal element of behaviour is behavioural intention. Therefore, Bagozzi (2012:609) assert that a behavioural intention signifies the extent of determination an individual is prepared to exert in order to perform any given behaviour. In the same vein, Dekker, Dijkgraaf and Meijerink (2011:4) sustain that intentions are assumed to capture the motivational elements which influence behaviour, as intentions increase in strength, and so do the possibilities that a given behaviour will be performed. Furthermore, determining an individual's behavioural intention is vital in order to acquire accurate predictions of behaviour (Nguyen, Phan, Bui & Moon 2019:7; Fazio & Roskos-Ewoldsen 2012:41).

Furthermore, Matos, Ituassu and Rossi (2007:37) are of the view that attitude is closely connected with an individual's intentions, which is a realistic predictor of behaviour. Wilcock, Pun, Khanona and Aung (2004:58) state that consumers' attitude is comparatively constant and stable. They evaluate reviews concerning an object and are a significant psychological construct because they have been found to influence and predict a variety of behaviours. Verdurme and Viaene (2003:97)

therefore advocate that consumer attitude is rooted in demographic and socio-economic features as well as cultural backgrounds. Attitude is an essential element when predicting behavioural adoption intention and could influence the behavioural result of utilising and adopting social media marketing (Akroush & Debei 2015:1355; Phau & Teah 2009:101). In addition, empirical work has reliably informed the positive effects of attitude on behavioural intentions in investigations linked to social network services acceptance (such as social media marketing) and its adoption (Jiang, Zhao, Sun, Zhang, Zheng & Qu 2016:755).

Duffett (2017:502) and Jain (2014:5) lament that there are attitudinal significant elements that form part of the tripartite model of attitude (also known as ABC model), namely, affective component (a consumer's feeling regarding a particular object which may be favourable or unfavourable), the cognitive component (a consumer's views concerning a particular object) and the behavioural component (a consumer's willingness to react to a particular object in the form of behaviour).
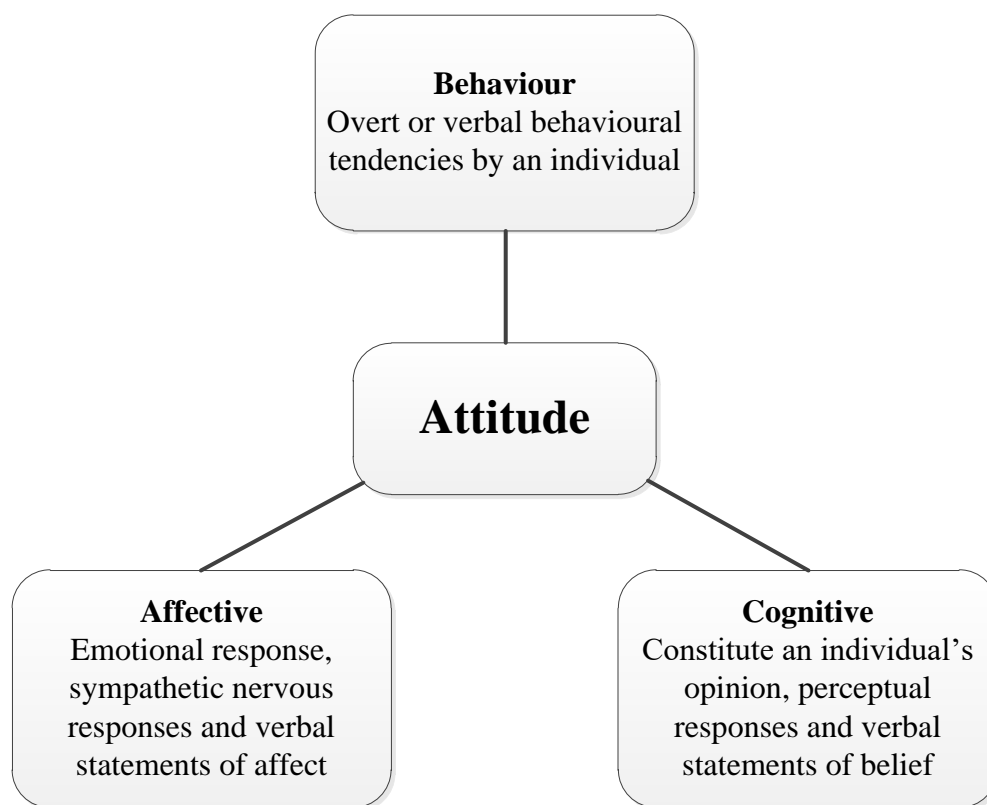
Figure 2.6:   **Tripartite model of attitude structure**

Source: Jain (2014:4)

Therefore, the tripartite model of attitude structure was adopted in this study and is explained in the following section.

2.6.3 The Tripartite model of attitudes

Attitude is divided into three components or dimensions (cognitive, affective and behavioural component) which are related (Santillan, Garcia, Castro, Zamudio & Trejo 2012:8). The components that constitute consumers' attitude, namely, cognitive, affective as well as the behavioural elements are briefly alluded to in the next section.

2.6.3.1 The cognitive component

The cognitive component in the model of attitude is concerned with the knowledge, information and perceptions gathered by the consumers which are articulated in the form of belief (Youssef, Kortam, Aish & Bassiouny 2015:788). Chowdhury and Salam (2015:103) articulate that the cognitive component of attitude comprises information and perceptions that are found through a combination of experiences with attitude objects and related information from a variety of sources. Asiegbu, Powei and Iruka (2012:42) further elaborate that this knowledge as well as resulting perceptions commonly take the form of beliefs, that is, the consumer believes that the attitude object possesses various attitudes and that specific behaviour will ultimately lead to specific outcomes. Additionally, through brand associations, marketers establish and influence favourable beliefs about a brand and unfavourable beliefs in relation to competitors (Santillan *et. al* 2012:12; Duffet 2017:504).

2.6.3.2 The affective component

Asiegbu, Powei and Iruka (2012:42) state that the affective component of an attitude reflects feelings, evaluation, or emotions in relation to the attitude object. Chowdhury and Salam (2015:104) therefore affirm that the affective component of attitude covers individuals' feelings regarding the attitude object. Consequently, an affective component of attitude is based on preferences as well as emotions (Duffet 2017:505). Furthermore, Ariffin, Aun and Salamzadeh (2018:32) allude that the affective component is a significant element as it involves evaluating the attitude object and is concerned with the emotions and feelings that consumers have towards an attitude object. Moreover, Santillan *et al* (2012:13) stipulate that positive and negative affect make independent contributions to satisfaction as well as dissatisfaction judgments in relation to products and services offered by marketing practitioners.

2.6.3.3 The behavioural component

Petzer (2012:90) states that behavioural element in the model of attitude deals with the behaviour or tendency that the consumer has towards an object. Chowdhurry and Salam (2015:108) assert

that the component reflects behavioural tendencies towards the attitude object and refers to the act of attempting something. In the same vein, Duffet (2017:506) states that the behavioural component of attitude is concerned with the likelihood or tendency that an individual will undertake a specific action or behave in a way in relation to the object. Moreover, Asiegbu, Powei and Iruka (2012:44) advocate that in relation to marketing and consumer-based research, the behavioural component of attitude is frequently treated as an expression of the consumer's intention to buy.

In contrast, not all attitude elements are built up through cognitive processes and it is suggested that to cognitively contemplate marketing communications, affective reactions to the communication could frame consumer attitudes towards brands and products (Esch, Arli, Castner, Talukdar & Northey 2018:782; Egbue & Long 2012:718). Jones, Reynolds, Arnold, Gabler, Gillison and Landers (2015:190) explain that cognitive consistency concepts show that consumers seek to make decisions based on their fundamental or underlying attitudes and beliefs. In addition, Petzer (2012:90) laments that since consumer attitudes are formed based on consumer's individual behavioural tendencies, feelings and beliefs, which sometimes articulate that they are likely to have different attitudes towards an object. Furthermore, measuring consumer attitudes is a challenge as consumer attitudes are not always consciously developed and they are sometimes not aware of having a view towards an object (Youssef, Kortam, Aish & Bassiouny 2015:788).

2.7 SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ADOPTION (OUTCOME VARIABLE)

It has been contended that a well-documented and upheaval revolution is manifesting in marketing communications, instigated by the rapid emergence of social media as a marketing channel (Rader, Subhan, Lanier, Brooksbank, Yankah & Spears 2014:194). Social media as a marketing channel is fundamentally changing the way we interact, which has a significant influence in shaping the traditional way businesses and consumers engage with each other (Taiminen & Karjaluoto 2015:633; Keegan & Rowley 2017:16). Gavino, Williams, Jacobson and Smith (2018:118) attest that the existence of millions of consumers on social media networks are exciting for marketers as it establishes new channels that permit engaging with important stakeholders such as investors and suppliers. In the context of this study, it is important to comprehend the technology adoption process before defining the adoption of social media as a marketing platform. Park, Kim, Cho and Han (2019:289) state that this process focuses on consumers' acceptance and utilisation of a technological innovation based on their perceptions of extent of usage, usefulness and ease of use.

2.7.1 Social media adoption

With the emergence of the Internet as well as foundations of a process of change, social media not only enables the transformation of the meaning and function of technology but also permits the beginning of a new social base in the socio-cultural structure (Gunduz 2017:199). Social media offers numerous opportunities for public relations as well as marketing practitioners to interact with the public while adopting new forms of technology and integrating them in their everyday lives (Zolkepli and Kamarulzaman 2015:190). Advances in software technology have experienced extensive usage between public relations experts and journalists (Curtis, Edward, Fraser, Gudelsky, Holmquist, Thornton & Sweeter 2010:90). However, Dahnil *et al*. (2014:121) assert that to define the process of social media marketing adoption, it is significant to examine the adoption concept. Several definitions of technology adoption have been outlined by past studies (Zolkepli & Kamarulzaman 2015:192) such as process of approval and usage of the technological invention, application, and degree of usage. In addition, Fu, Sawang and Sun (2019:2) affirm that social media networks have a great importance in relation to technology adoption.

2.7.2 Technology Adoption

Technology adoption is defined as the process of recognition and acceptance of a technological innovation over a period amongst individuals of a social system (Jahanmir & Cavadas 2018:337). Further, Chikandiwa, Contogiannis and Jembere (2013:366) define technology adoption along with social media adoption as a mechanism that enables marketers to engage, participate, relate, and channel collective intelligence crowd sourcing for marketing ambitions. Nawaz and Mubarak (2015:449) state that scholars have categorised social media adoption models into two broad groups. The first is founded on the organisation's strategic structure. In the second group, the classification is regarded as the phase of maturity level whereby the organisation is in the adoption stage. In addition, Fu, Sawang and Sun (2019:4) state that as more forms of social media platforms occur, it is helpful for public relations and marketing experts to comprehend how to utilise these significant tools as they relate to their jobs. Practitioners working for non-profit organisations can benefit from adopting social media marketing due to their restricted financial resources.

2.7.3 The adoption of social media marketing

The adoption of social media marketing occurs when organisations accept, implement, and utilise a system that integrates social media principles with marketing components to establish customer relationships (Chikandiwa, Contogiannis & Jembere 2013:366). The adoption of social media as a marketing channel offers businesses and customers technology infrastructure that permits social

interactions among customers and with the organisation (Wang, Chen, Ou & Ren 2019:177). Therefore, Alalwan, Rana, Dwivedi and Algharabat (2017:1184) advocate that the adoption of social media as a marketing channel is significant as it offers a deeper comprehension of the usage patterns of social media platforms that could assist organisations in forming clear ideas concerning consumers' perceptions and attitudes towards the organisation and its brands. Furthermore, in the context of this study, it is argued that the adoption of social media as a marketing channel is described as an approval, acceptance and the use of technology infrastructure that provides value, effective communication, collaboration, interaction and dialogues among consumers and marketers.

Pillay and Maharaj (2014:2) avow that the adoption of social media marketing could increase the mobilisation capacity of organisations across local, cultural, and national frontiers, which could result in sophisticated and innovative communication platforms that allow new types of social relations. Consequently, for marketers, the adoption of social media marketing signifies a crucial marketing opportunity to reach and serve customers anywhere and anytime (Jham 2018:52). Williamson, Vieira and Williamson (2015:490) elaborate that the notion with social media postulates that it offers an economical (efficient) means for communication and provides a channel for marketing practices. Moreover, considering the opportunities offered by social media tools, organisations are beginning to change from traditional marketing techniques to the adoption of social media marketing (Chirumalla, Oghazi & Parida 2018:140).

However, it is evident that technology innovation and adoption inevitably encompasses uncertainty regarding desired outcomes (Lee, Cho & Hwang 2013:152). Accordingly, Iankova, Davies, Brown, Marder and Yau (2018:4) affirm that whilst social media channels are acknowledged by their relative ease of measurability, there is uncertainty amongst marketers regarding the value and adoption of social media marketing. It is argued, therefore, that although incorporating social media as a marketing tool has been acknowledged as positive, there are also challenges which include legal issues, reputational risks, lack of staff training, executives' lack of support and uncertainty in utilising social network platforms to achieve marketing objectives (Chirumalla, Oghazi & Parida 2018:140). Furthermore, "organizations have struggled to utilise these technologies, perhaps as a result of lacking the know-how or the staff to create content and monitor feedback" (Waite & Wheeler 2014:667).

2.8 SYNOPSIS

This chapter concentrated on reviewing literature on Generation Y consumers, theories applicable for this investigation, South African social media statistics, active social media platforms and

social media usage as well as the digital landscape in South Africa. It also reviewed social media marketing in depth, which is said to have revolutionised communication in South Africa and globally. Also reviewed is the model of theory of reasoned action, social exchange theory and technology acceptance model to summarise and illustrate these theories adapted in this study. The literature reviewed indicates that social media in its entirety and in a marketing, context has been welcomed in consumers' everyday customs and has become an integral part of their source of information as well as their communication patterns. Likewise, social media has given consumers a resilient voice as opposed to traditional marketing where organisations were sole creators of content. The next chapter articulates on the research methodology.

CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3

3.1   INTRODUCTION

This study aimed to examine the effect of social media marketing dimensions on consumer attitudes and adoption among Generation Y consumers in Southern Gauteng. Generation Y consumers, social media marketing dimensions, adoption as well as consumers' attitudes, and literature from past studies were discussed to establish the theoretical background for the study.

This chapter offers a range of facets in relation to research approaches as well as the hypothesis stipulated in the study. It outlines the research approach undertaken and the research design employed. The procedures used to collect, capture, test, process and analyse the data are presented. In addition, the procedures as well as steps taken to guarantee reliability and validity are also provided. An overview of the sampling design procedure is also discussed. Additionally, ethical considerations are considered.

3.2   RESEARCH PARADIGM

Neuman (2011:94) alludes that one of the challenges that confront researchers is the choice and explanation of a research paradigm. Kivunja and Kuyini (2017:26) define research paradigm (also known as research philosophy) as a philosophical manner of thinking, school of thought or a set of beliefs that guides the interpretation and sense of research data. Paradigm can be described as worldviews or beliefs that reflects a researcher's hypothesis about reality and methodology (Mertens 2012:255). Kawulich (2012:1) states that a research paradigm is a common world view that signifies the ethics and principles in a discipline and monitors how research problems are solved. In addition, it is essential for researchers to fully comprehend their philosophical orientations within the paradigm adopted for their investigation (McGregor & Murnane 2010:419). In this study two research paradigms were identified, namely, positivist and interpretivist paradigm.

Positivist research philosophy defines a worldview to research as the scientific way of investigation and is chosen as the favoured method for investigations, seeking to interpret and comprehend observations in terms of evidence and measurable objects (Kivunja & Kuyini 2017:30). As a result, positivist research philosophy dominates in science and assumes that science quantitatively measures independent evidence about a single perceived reality, and that

researchers view the world through a "one-way mirror' (Krauss 2005:760). Additionally, McGregor and Murnane (2010:423) articulate that positivist research philosophy was created utilising scientific procedures that include the empirical methodology, elucidating that data is gathered from observations and experiments that can be repeated in future.

3.2.1 Interpretivist research philosophy

Interpretivist researchers seek to comprehend human experience, discover reality through individual views, their experiences and background (Thanh & Thanh 2015:24). In contrast to positivist research philosophy, an interpretivist paradigm coheres to a relative position that assumes numerous, understandable, and equally valid realities and that reality is assembled in the mind of individuals' instead of it being an externally singular entity (Ponterotto 2005:129). Wahyuni (2012:71) asserts that interpretivist researchers' favour to have conversations and interact with the participants that are under investigation and prefer to work with qualitative data which offers reliably descriptions of social constructs.

Therefore, in line with the nature of this study which seeks to extract and test theory-based hypothesis utilising a quantitative approach from empirical reality, it is premised within the positivist paradigm.

3.3 RESEARCH APPROACH

Quantitative research approach is characterised by the presumption that human behaviour can be articulated by social facts, theories that can be justified to a degree which they can be verified and an application to facts acquired (Amaratunga, Baldry, Sarshar & Newton 2002:22). Malhotra (2010:171) describes quantitative research approach as a research methodology that attempts to evaluate data and generalise the findings from the sample to the populace under investigation. Sukamolson (2011:2) asserts that quantitative research is a social research that employs empirical statements and methods, numerical representation of data as well as manipulation of observations with the objective of articulating the occurrences that those observations reflect. Furthermore, Muijs (2009:1) defines quantitative research approach as advocating research manifestations by gathering numerical data for analysis utilising mathematically based procedures. In addition, the benefit of quantitative research is that it utilises statistical data which has a way of saving resources and time as well as enabling the researcher to generalise findings to the population under investigation (Eyisi 2016:94).

In contrast to quantitative research, a qualitative research approach involves the gathering, examination and interpretation of data which cannot be easily reduced to numbers and is related

to the societal world, the perceptions and behaviour of groups or individuals within it (Claire 2010:1). Therefore, a qualitative research approach is an inquiry procedure of comprehension based on distinct and methodological traditions of review which explore human or social problems (Srivastava & Thomson 2009:73). Yilmaz (2013:312) defines a qualitative research approach as "emergent, inductive, interpretive and naturalistic procedure to the study of people, social situations and processes in their natural settings in order to disclose in descriptive terms the significances that people attach to their experiences". On the other hand, Eyisi (2016:92) alludes that qualitative research utilises data collection instruments such as open-ended questions, observations, in-depth interviews, and field notes to gather data from participants in their natural settings. Additionally, the aim of this approach is to clearly comprehend experiences and perceptions of a collective or individuals and the context in which these experiences and perceptions are found (Brien, Harris, Beckman, Reed & Cook 2014:1245).

The combination of qualitative and quantitative research techniques falls into a class of research that are called mixed methods research or mixed research. Sampling decisions are more complicated in mixed methods research because sampling schemes must be designed for both the qualitative and quantitative research components (Onwuegbuzie & Collins 2010:281).

Table 3.1:   Qualitative Versus Quantitative

Factor/Characteristics	Qualitative	Quantitative
Research objective	To acquire a qualitative understanding of the underlying reasons and motivations	To quantify the data and generalise the results from the sample of population of interest
Sample	Small number of non-representative cases	Large number of representative cases
Data collection	Unstructured	Structured
Data analysis	Non-statistical	Statistical
Outcome	Develop an initial understanding	Recommend final course of action

Source: Malhotra (2010:171)

For the purpose of this investigation, a quantitative research approach was followed to quantify the data, apply statistical analysis and generalise the findings acquired to the population under investigation.

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is a blueprint, formation and approach of investigation as to attain answers to research problems and questions, which includes a plan to guide the researcher in the formulation of the hypothesis, their operational implications, the final analysis of data acquired and interpretation of findings (Kumar 2011). Malhotra (2010:102) asserts that a research design comprises the techniques necessary for acquiring the information required for solving the research problems and questions. Three research designs are discussed, namely, exploratory research, which establishes the basis for descriptive research, which usually builds the foundation for causal research (Zikmund, Barbin, Carr & Graffin 2010:55).

3.4.1 Exploratory research

Exploratory research design is conducted when there is no prior research or enough studies to depend upon to predict an outcome and is used for the generation of new ideas and assumptions as well as the determination whether a study will be feasible in the future (Wahyuni 2012:79). Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2014:139) state that exploratory research seeks to acquire new insights, assesses a phenomenon from a different perspective and asks relevant questions. In other words, exploratory studies are significant in providing clarity with regards to a research problem, so it is flexible and can adapt to change. Exploratory research is used to explain and describe new phenomena and predict outcomes (Caniato, Caridi, Crippa & Moretto 2012:663). Furthermore, exploratory studies are informal and unstructured, research undertaken to acquire background information regarding the nature of the research problem. Unstructured research in a sense that there are no predetermined techniques, rather the nature of the research changes while the researcher acquires information (Burns & Bush 2014:73).

3.4.2 Causal research

Causal research design is used for the comprehension of a phenomenon in the form of conditional statements (if and why statements) and utilised to measure the influence a change will have on assumptions and existing norms (Sovacool, Axsen & Sorrel 2016:25). Burns and Bush (2014:79) allude that the conditional statements (if and why statements) becomes the researcher's way of manipulating variables of interest. Accordingly, causal research seeks to study and clearly understand a situation or a research problem to articulate the cause-and-effect relationship between variables (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2014:140). Causal research is characterised by obtaining evidence of cause-and-effect relationships (Malhotra 2010:113).

3.4.3 Descriptive research

With regard to the timing of research, descriptive studies can either be conduted as longitudinal or cross-sectional studies (Brown, Suter & Churchill 2018:128). Longitudinal research is a type of research where respondents are questioned at multiple points in time, while using a fixed sample of population elements (Zikmund, Babin, Carr & Griffin 2013:197). In other words, the sample is measured repeatedly on the same variables, even if over an extended period of time that can span several years. Cohort analysis and panel data are often cited as the most useful forms of longitudinal research (Malhotra, Nunan & Birks 2017:76).

Cross-sectional studies measure units from a sample of the population at one specific point in time (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2016:200). Since cross-sectional research is a once-off measurement, it can be described as "snapshots of the population" (Burns, Veeck & Bush 2017:98). While cross-sectional sample surveys are based on either small or large samples, the sample is drawn out to be representative of the broader population that is being measured (Brown *et al*. 2018:128). Nonetheless, Malhotra *et al*. (2017:74) distinguish between single and multiple cross-sectional research. Single cross-sectional research involves drawing the data only once from singular sample. Conversley, multiple cross-sectional research involves the use of more than one sample of participants, whereas the data is obtained once.

Descriptive research design is utilised for acquiring information about the current status of a phenomenon and explaining the existence of variables to make specific outcomes, as a result, it is pre-planned and structured (Malhotra 2010:106). In other words, in descriptive research there are predetermined research procedures to be adhered to. The main objective of descriptive research is to describe individualities of organisations, groups, people or environments and seeks to provide a clear understanding of a given situation by addressing the where, when, who, what and how questions (Zikmund *et al.* 2010:55). Kumar (2011:7) advocates that the purpose of descriptive research is to accurately describe events, situations, and individuals. Consequently, it is significant to have a clear picture of a phenomenon before the collection of the data (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2014:140).

This study applied a single cross-sectional form of descriptive research. Specifically, the target population were identified as social media participants who had engaged in any social media platform within six months from the survey date. A single cross-sectional design was considered useful in providing a clear picture of the respondents' shared opinions and perceptions in relation to their attitude towards the adoption of social media marketing. Upon following single cross-sectional design, data were collected once from the identified target population. In addition, the

research was conducted as a once-off exercise between March 2019 and September 2019, whereas the participants were selected from within the southern Gauteng.

A descriptive research was adhered to by utilising a sample survey. A descriptive study was deemed appropriate as it enables the researcher to articulate perceptions on adoption and attitude of Generation Y in a numerical form. It was appropriate in anticipating the existence of relationships in the marketing discipline. Additionally, descriptive research enables the researcher to create tabulations and frequency estimations, precisely indicating the number of population members sharing the same characteristics, perceptions on adoption and attitude towards selected social media marketing activities in Southern Gauteng amongst the target population chosen.

3.5 SAMPLING DESIGN PROCEDURE

According to Malhotra (2010:372), the sampling design procedure consists of five steps which are interrelated, namely, defining the target population, determining the sampling frame, selection of a sample method, determining the sample size and the selection of a measuring instrument.
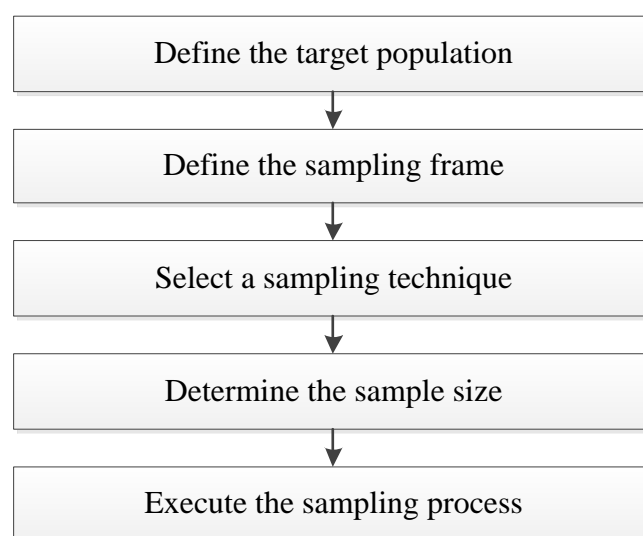
Figure 3.1: **The sampling design process**

Source: Malhotra (2020:372)

The steps adhered to in the sampling design procedure are explained below.

3.5.1 Target population

The first phase in the sampling strategy is to accurately identify and define the target population which is generally related to the number of individuals residing in a residential area, region, province or a country (Taherdoost 2016:19). A target population is known and identified by

researchers and defined as a group of individuals which have specific information required for the study (Asiamah, Mensah & Abayie 2017:1611). Malhotra (2010:372) defines target population as a group of elements that possess desired information by the researcher whereby interpretations are to be made and includes the translation of the research problem into a precise statement of the elements that should be included and excluded in the sample. Therefore, a well-defined target population reduces the risk of conducting a misleading research project. Additionally, Tustin *et al.* (2010:340) assert that a well identified and well-defined target population can reduce population specification errors. The target population of this study comprised male and female consumers that fall under the Generation Y cohort, aged 18 to 40 years, who are social media users situated in Southern Gauteng region of South Africa.

The Southern Gauteng region consists of four towns, namely, Vanderbijlpark, Vereeniging, Meyerton and Three Rivers. Collectively the four towns constitute the Southern Gauteng region because of their geographical location inside the southern part of Gauteng province. There are several townships, namely, Sharpeville, Sebokeng, Bophelong and Everton, which complete the region. Time and cost constraints stirred the selection of the Southern Gauteng region as a sample for this study. In addition, the proximity of the towns and the townships made it easier for the researcher to access the participants and collect data in a comparatively short space of time.

3.5.2 Sampling frame

A sampling frame is a list of participants from which the sample will be drawn and should be representative of the population (Taherdoost 2016:20). A list of automobile dealers, students registered in a learning institution, voters registered, list of Small and Medium Size Enterprises (SMEs) and a list of credit companies and telephone directories are examples of commonly used sample frame sources in marketing research (Burns & Bush 2014:212). Therefore, Malhotra (2010:373) advocates for a complete and accurate sampling frame to reduce sampling errors and eliminate having elements which are outside of the population of interest.

The above-mentioned requirements often make it a challenge for the researcher to acquire an accurate and complete sample frame. No sample frame could be established for this study due to no existence of a comprehensive and documented list of the populace that constitute the Generation Y cohort in the southern part of Gauteng. This study was restricted to other forms of sampling which are non-probabilistic in nature.

3.5.3   Sampling method

The sampling method refers to the way participants are selected sequentially from the population of interest (Malhotra 2010:373). Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2014:213) state that the sampling techniques which can be utilised by the researcher are divided into two categories, namely, probability and non-probability sampling techniques.

In probability sampling the chance of each participant being selected from the population is known and usually the researcher can reduce the sample error and generalise the findings utilising statistical significance measures (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2014:214). Kumar (2011) states that a probability sampling method includes simple random, stratified, systematic and cluster sampling methods. In a simple random sampling method, each participant has an equal and known chance of being selected, meaning that every participant is selected independently from one another (Malhotra 2010:382). In a stratified sampling method, the researcher identifies subpopulations in the sample frame called strata and a simple random sample is taken from each stratum (Burns & Bush 2014:215). On the other hand, in a systematic sampling method, the researcher provides the entire list of the population elements and selects the sample at regular intervals (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2014:226). In a cluster sampling method two steps are a prerequisite. First the population is separated into mutually exhaustive and exclusive subpopulations known as clusters. Then a random sample of clusters is selected upon a probability sampling method such as simple random sampling (Malhotra 2010:385).

Non-probability sampling methods offer a variety of alternatives techniques for the selection of samples based on the researcher's discretion and comprise of convenience, judgmental, quota and snowball sampling methods (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhilll 2014:233; Malhotra 2010:376). In convenience sampling, the researcher utilises high traffic locations such as a shopping mall or a busy pedestrian area as the sample frame in order to intercept potential participants (Burns & Bush 2014:227). In judgmental sampling method the researcher utilises his or her discretion as to who could offer the best information to achieve the objectives of the study and is useful when a researcher wants to explain a phenomenon or develop something of which little is known (Kumar 2011). Quota sampling involves the selection of sample elements based upon a set of pre-determined characteristics such as gender, age and demographic characteristics to ensure that the sample elements represents the required sub-groups of the population (Justin *et al* 2010:353).

Additionally, in snowball sampling, an initial group of participants are identified at random. After being interviewed, these participants are then requested to identify other participants who belong to the same target population of interest. Participants are therefore selected based on referrals

(Malhotra 2010:381). The snowball sampling method was selected for this study as a complete and accurate sampling frame could not be identified. Therefore, referrals could be the appropriate method for identifying Generation Y consumers who are active on social media in the southern part of Gauteng province.

3.5.4 Sample size

Sample size refers to the number of population elements chosen to be in the study (Malhotra 2010:347). To minimise sample errors and generalise the research findings, the sample needs to be of adequate size (Taherdoost 2016:23). The determination of the sample size can be placed upon the researcher. This sample size is in line with other social media marketing studies of this nature. Using the historical evidence approach, Table 3.2 provides a comparison of sample sizes utilised by previous researchers related to the current study.

Table 3.2:   **Sample size determinations utilising historical evidence approach**

Author/s	Summary of the investigation	Country	Sample size used
Vries, Gensler and Leeflang (2012:83)	Effects of social media marketing	Netherlands	355
Kwon and Wen (2010:258)	Factors affecting social network use	Republic of Korea	300
Ainin *et al* (2015:570)	Factors influencing the use of social media by SMEs	United States of America	259

Source: Author's compilation (2020)

Based on the historical evidence approach, sample sizes of 300 Generation Y consumers were deemed enough for this study. Moreover, the selection of the sample size was motivated by Hill (1998:4) who advocates that sample sizes between 300 and 500 ensure the researcher that sample error will not exceed 10 percent of the standard deviation.

3.5.5 Selection of sample elements

The choice of the sample elements involves identifying how the sampling strategy decisions were realised about the target population, sample elements, extent, sample frame, sample method and sample size (Malhotra 2010:372). The following sampling strategy steered this study:

Table 3.3:   **Synopsis of sample elements selection for this study**

Target population	Generation Y consumers who are active on social network services (social media)
Sample elements	18 to 40 years old, both male and female
Extent	Southern part of Gauteng province (South Africa)
Sample frame	Not established
Sample method	Snowball
Sample size	300

Source: Author's compilation (2020)

3.5.6   Measuring instrument

Davies and Hughes (2014:82) advocate the significance of employing applicable data collection procedures with the aim of obtaining reliable, valid, and accurate evidence that can be useful in addressing the research objectives. The data collection procedure in this study was conducted in two stages. Firstly, secondary data were collected through a comprehensive review of social media marketing in Chapter 2. Secondly, an empirical study was conducted through fieldwork, whereby the evidence gathered was presented and analysed in Chapter 4. The next section articulates on the two stages undertaken in this research.

3.5.6.1   Secondary data collection

Secondary data (also known as "desk research") is described as a review of prior obtained evidence by other researchers in an area of interest (Johnston 2014:620). As the name suggests, secondary data is information that is readily available and is at the researcher's disposal. According to Ajayi (2017:2), secondary data is an interpretation and analysis of primary data, is related to the past and located quickly and inexpensively. Therefore, secondary data is of substantial importance in the reduction of limited time and other resources about marketing research projects. In addition, secondary data is regarded as an economical source of background evidence and is vital in the research problem definition process (Malhotra 2010:73).

In this study, the collection of secondary data was elaborated on in a review of literature in Chapter 2. This stage was considered important in realising the theoretical objectives established under Section5.2 (Chapter 5). Secondary sources such as journal articles, textbooks, conference proceedings and government publications were used to complete the review process. Whilst

secondary data sources were utilised in the previous chapter (Chapter 2), the assembly of primary data is critical to complete the research.

3.5.6.2 Primary data collection

According to Wilson (2014:152), surveys can be classified as either interviewer or sefl-administed, whereby the former are facilitated by the interviewer verbally, face-to-face or telephonically. Verbal interviews include one-on-one conversations whereby one person plays the role of an interviewer (research) and the other plays the role of an interviewee (participant). In this case, the interviews may be conducted in the interviewer's presence at home or even telephonically. Brown *et al.* (2018:158) allude that in terms of application of these interviews, interviewer-administered surveys are flexible and provide an opportunity for the interviewer to ask questions, record the answers and make further clarifications when required to do so. Nonetheless, other scholars suggest that interviewer-administered surveys may lack anonymity (Babin & Zikmund 2016:178) owing to the interviewer's involvement in the capturing of responses. In addition, Tustin *et al.* (2010:425) cite the time-consuming and expensive nature of these interviews as a major drawback of conducting interviewer administered survey.

Self-administered surveys comprise structured questionnaires that are distributed to a target population and are to be completed by the respondents without the aid of the interviewer (Tustin *et al.* 2010:185). In general, self-administered surveys are preffered among researchers since they generate vast amount of information (McDaniel & Gates 2013:116). For instance, in postal surveys the researcher sends out the questionnaire through posted mail of which the survey is completed by the respondents in his or her own time and pace (Burns *et al.* 2017:192). However, the disadvantage of postal surveys lies in that there is no control over who takes part in a survey, which increases the chances of bias (Wegner 2012:16).

Primary data refers to evidence assembled by a researcher for a specific objective of addressing the research problem and should not be collected until the secondary data is analysed fully and comprehensively (Malhotra 2014:132). Due to the nature of this study, descriptive research designs were quantitative and structured. A self-administered survey was deemed the most applicable primary data collection method. The survey in this study used a questionnaire as an instrument for data collection. The structure of the survey will be discussed in the next section.

3.6 QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN

"A questionnaire is a data gathering tool which is consistent of a set of questions, statements and other prompts for the purpose of collecting information from participants" (Abawi 2013:2).

Simply, a questionnaire is a research instrument utilised for the collection of primary data with the purpose of achieving the objectives set in the study. Acharya (2013:2) states that the design of the questionnaire is a vital and significant part of any scientific research because if not assembled appropriately, it could mislead the research, academics, and policymakers. The following sections elaborate on the aspects of the questionnaire structure, content, format, and final administration.

3.6.1　　　　　Questionnaire structure

A questionnaire can be categorised into two sections, structured and unstructured questionnaires (Acharya 2013:3). A structured questionnaire consists of questions (closed-ended questions) that pre-specify the set of response alternatives and the response format and includes a scale, dichotomous or multiple-choice questions (Malhotra 2010:344). Hyman and Sierra (2016:2) state that a structured questionnaire offers speedy responses by respondents, which enables the researcher to ask more questions on a broader range of topics. In addition, the main benefit of a structured questionnaire results in the stimulation of an individual's memory, generation of a more realistic response and ultimately enabling the researcher to code and enter data automatically utilising questionnaire software applications (McDaniel & Gates 2013:360). Contrastingly, an unstructured questionnaire consists of open-ended questions whereby a pre-determined set of responses does not exist, and the respondents can articulate answers in their own words (Ian 2010:54). Unstructured questions require the researcher to encourage the respondent to articulate further on the discussion and does not limit the response choices (McDaniel & Gates 2013:358). Therefore, unstructured questions also attempt to elicit an unprompted response from the respondent without the researcher's assistance and encouragement. However, open-ended questions are known to be time-consuming because the researcher offers the respondents an opportunity to articulate a wide range of views that can result in unexpected responses which requires extended probing (Hyman & Sierra 2016:3). Furthermore, one of the fundamental disadvantages of unstructured questions is that possible interviewer bias tends to be high (Malhotra 2010:343).

The measuring instrument utilised in this study comprised structured questions only, which are commonly easy to administer and not expensive to process (Ian 2010:56). In addition, data acquired from respondents by means of a structured questionnaire can be quickly coded, entered and analysed (McDaniel & Gates 2013:360).

3.6.2   Questionnaire format and content

The development of the measuring instrument necessitates the researcher to decide whether to adopt an existing scale from past related studies, adopt questions that have been operationalised for a study or construct and formulate a new set of questions (McDaniel & Gates 2013:353). Firstly, adopting existing scale items from past related studies can be favourable to the researcher if a complete questionnaire exists. Secondly, adopting questions that have been operationalised can assist the researcher to contextualise a study. Lastly, formulation of a new set of questions is appropriate in the exploratory phase of a research (Ian 2010:43). Due to resource constraints, this study adopted existing scale items from past related studies, which assisted the researcher to make validity and reliability comparisons with variables utilised in previous research.

Questionnaire format can influence several aspects of data quality, ranging from sampling error, non-response, coverage error and measurement error and is regarded as the degree of freedom allocated to the participants of the study in providing responses (Reja, Manfreda, Hlebec & Vehovar 2010:160; Aaker, Kumar, Day & Leone 2011:277). Moreover, Malhotra (2010:352) articulates that questionnaire format is essential as it plays a vital role in determining the effect of the results and the willingness of the participants to effectively contribute to the study. The measuring instrument utilised in this study, was formatted in terms of multiple choice, dichotomous and scaled format responses. This study utilised a survey questionnaire consisting of eight (8) sections.

The first section (Section A) was designed to assemble demographic information in this study. The scaled items included questions in the respondents' gender (A1), age (A2), ethnicity (A3), marital status (A4), highest educational qualification (A5) and monthly income before tax (A6). The question addressing the respondents' gender (A1) was anchored along a dichotomous scale with only two options "male" or "female". The remaining questions in Section A (A2, A3, A4, A5 and A6) were anchored along a multiple-choice format of response.

Section B consisted of questions relating to the respondents' social media usage information. The question required them to answer whether they have utilised any social media service in the past six months (B1). This question (B1) was anchored along a dichotomous scale with only two options "yes" or "no" and only those respondents that have confirmed their response with yes to B1 were encouraged to proceed with completing the rest of the questions in the questionnaire. In addition, Section B consisted of three more questions anchored along a multiple-choice scale, relating to the most preferred social media service (B2), the frequency with which the respondents

utilise social media services (B3) as well as the average expenditure amount, they spend in order to utilise social media services (B4).

Section C consisted of statements relating to the source credibility in social media marketing. McDaniel and Gates (2013:315) articulate that a Likert scale format of response consists of a set of statements which advocate the extent to which respondents agree or disagree with the construct being measured. Therefore, this study utilised a five-point Likert scale format of response. The use of the five-point Likert scale response was encouraged by Joshi, Kale, Chandel and Pal (2015:398), who articulate that this format of responses offers respondents more independence to choose the exact (most preferred option) rather than choose a nearby option. In addition, Mahapatra's and Mishra's (2017:609) eight scale items (C1-C8) were adopted to measure source credibility in social media marketing. The respondents were required to indicate their perceptions regarding source credibility in social media marketing using a five-point Likert-type scale format of response where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree.

Section D comprised statements regarding informativeness in social media marketing. Particularly, Logan, Bright and Gangadharbatla's (2012:172) six (6) scale items (D1-D6) were adapted and utilised to measure informativeness in social media marketing. The respondents were required to indicate their perceptions regarding informativeness in social media marketing on a five-point Likert scale format response where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree.

Section E comprised statements related to perceived enjoyment in social media marketing. Soares and Pinho's (2014:255) 6 scale items (E1-E6) were adapted to measure perceived enjoyment. The respondents were required to indicate their perceptions regarding perceived enjoyment in social media marketing using a five-point Likert scale response format where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree.

Section F comprised statements related to social identity in the context of social media marketing. In this instance, Chahal and Rani's (2017:323) 4 scale items (F1-F4) were adapted to measure social identity from a social media marketing perspective. The respondents were required to indicate their perceptions regarding social identity in relation to social media marketing utilising a five-point Likert scale format of response where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=agree and 5= strongly agree.

Section G comprised statements related to consumers' attitude (intervening variable) towards social media marketing. Akar and Birol's (2011:46) 8 scale items (G1-G8) were adapted to measure their attitude towards social media marketing. The respondents were required to indicate their overall attitude towards social media marketing using a five-point Likert scale format of response where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, neither agree nor disagree, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree.

Section H comprised statements relating to the adoption of social media marketing. Particularly, Zolkepli and Kamarulzaman's (2015:199) 8 scale items (H1-H8) were adapted to measure the adoption of social media marketing. The respondents were required to indicate their overall perception with regards to the adoption of social media marketing using a five-point Likert scale format of response where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree.

3.7 PILOT TESTING THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Bowden, Rushby, Nyandieka and Wanjau (2010:328) assert that pilot testing can be defined as a rehearsal prior to the actual data collection whereby questions are assembled as they are projected to appear on the final questionnaire and the elements of the questionnaire are examined. Consequently, every questionnaire should undertake a formal pilot in which the reliability, validity and acceptability of the measure is tested (Williams 2011:251). Therefore, for the purpose of this study, a questionnaire was administered to a group of 40 participants that did not form part of the main survey. A survey was applicable to test the validity and reliability of the scale as well as the Cronbach alpha, presented in Chapter 4. After the pilot study, modifications were made to the questionnaire with the objective to formulate the final survey instrument. Pilot test results are presented in Section 4.2.1 (refer to Table 4.1) of this study.

3.8 DATA PREPARATION

Editing, coding, capturing, and cleaning are data preparation techniques utilised in this study.

3.8.1 Data editing

Malhotra (2010:453) asserts that editing is the review of the measuring instrument with the aim of increasing precision and accuracy, which consists of screening the measuring instrument to pinpoint inconsistency, incompleteness and obscured responses as well as ambiguous responses. Zikmund, Ward, Lowe, Winzar and Babin (2011:28) maintain that editing includes the scrutiny of data collected with the aim of reducing interviewer and respondent error. Therefore, the purpose

of editing is to affirm the consistency, completeness and clear data and includes the inspection, correction, and modification of the questionnaire where applicable (Iacobucci & Churchill 2014:406). In this study, questionnaires were reviewed by the researcher upon collection from each respondent, implying that field editing was conducted. In field editing, checks were done to ensure that all the questions had been answered and that the handwriting was legible (Tustin *et al.* 2010:100). Moreover, central editing was conducted after the fieldwork whereby the researcher checked for any out of the ordinary cases, duplications and inconsistencies.

3.8.2 Data coding

Once all the returned and completed questionnaires were assembled, they were edited, and the responses coded. Zikmund *et al.* (2011:29) articulate that coding refers to the rules and regulations of recording, transferring, categorising and, interpreting data collected, which facilitates hand or computer tabulation. Malhotra (2010:454) asserts that coding is the assignment of a code that represents a precise response to a precise question together with the data record and column position that code occupies. For example, gender of respondents as 1 for males and 2 for females. For this study, pre-coding was deemed appropriate as mostly closed-ended questions and scaled questions were utilised (Zikmund & Babin 2013:363). In addition, pre-coding saves money, time and decreases the probability of coding errors since the data was directly obtained from the returned and completed questionnaires and assembled into a common classification. Resultantly, a coding table was developed and included in Section 4.3.2 of this study.

3.8.3 Data capturing

Data capturing is a technique of assembling documentation or data into an electronic format that can be identified, read and evaluated by a computer (Yatin, Ismali & Ghazali 2018:618). Also known as transcribing, this stage in research involves transmitting the coded data from the questionnaires or coding sheets onto disks or directly into the computer by manually entering the data or by other means (Malhotra 2020:459). After the editing of data and development of a code book, data was captured onto a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet for the preparation of statistical analysis. For identification purposes, each respondent was captured as a case number since their names were not disclosed. After that, the responses given by each case (respondent) were then captured in terms of the codes that have been established for this study (refer to Table 4.3).

3.8.4 Data cleaning

According to Van den Broeck, Cunningham, Eeckels and Herbst (2005:966) data cleaning can be a three-stage process diagnosing, repeated cycles of screening (outliers/inconsistencies) and

editing (deletion and corrections) of suspected or identified data abnormalities. Additionally, Malhotra (2020:461) states that data cleaning involves consistency assessments and treatment of omitted responses. For this study, the Microsoft Excel spreadsheet (code manual/table) was transferred (imported) onto SPSS (Version 25.0) for cleaning purposes. In this process, each case was inspected for out of range values and/or missing values.

The next section alludes and presents the statistical analysis techniques that were applied in the study.

3.9 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Data was analysed using SPSS. In addition, the study utilised descriptive and inferential statistical analysis which is communicated in the next section.

3.9.1 Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics deals with the presentation of data, numerical facts in a form of graphs and tables along with the methodology of data analysis and describes distribution of responses on a variable. These statistics include measures of central tendency (median, mode and mean), measures of variability in the distribution (range, interquartile, variance and standard deviation), and measures of the shape of distribution (e.g. kurtosis and skewness) (Malhotra 2010:486). The measures of central tendency were utilised to summarise, and articulate data obtained from the population of interest and discussed in the next section.

3.9.2 Measures of central location

The mean is the average value in the distribution and is the most utilised measure of central tendency. The mean can be calculated by the summary of all the distributions and by dividing it by the total number of responses recorded in the study. The mean can also be calculated when the data scale is ratio or interval. Commonly, the data obtained will indicate some degree of central tendency, with most responses distributed to the mean on which most statistical tests are based (Malhotra 486:2010; Deshpande, Gogtay & Thatte 2016:64). Means were computed in sections C, D, E, F, G and H off this study, reported in Section 4.4.2 (refer to Table 4.4).

The median is defined as the value in the middle of a set of variables (Tustin *et al.* 2010:540). This value can be found when data are arranged from either the largest to smallest number or the smallest to the largest number (Field 2013:22). In an odd-numbered data set such as five-point Likert-type scale used in this study, the median value was established as the middle value of 3.0

(1, 2, [3], 4 and 5). Nevertheless, in an event data set, the median can be calculated by adding the two middle values and dividing the total by two (Burns *et al.* 2017:319), whereby the statistic denotes the 50th percentile (Saunders *et al.* 2016:529).

Another measure of central tendency is the mode. It refers to a value that occurs most frequently in a data set (Wegnar 2012:67). Burns *et al.* (2017:319) state that mode is a value that has the highest frequency in a frequency distribution. When distribution graphs are used to observe data, the mode is used to signify the maximum peak on that graph (Hair, Celsi, Ortinau & Anderson 2018:269).

3.9.3 Frequency distribution

According to Malhotra (2010:484), frequency distribution indicates mathematical distribution of data and the relative frequency or occurrence of different values of the variables is expressed in percentage form. Duquia, Chica, Bastos, Mesa and Bonamigo (2014:281) state that frequency distribution refers to the way observations of a given variable behave in terms of its relative, absolute or cumulative frequencies. Frequency distribution was computed for the demographic section (Section A) and social media usage section (Section B). The findings are reported in Section 4.4 of this study.

3.9.4 Charts

Charts are graphical representations of data which concisely and comprehensively convey ideas to permit human readers and observers to quickly comprehend critical points (Siegel 2015:2). Charts can be in several graphical forms, namely, histograms, bar charts, pie charts, and line charts, which can be effectively used to present research outcomes or findings (Schonlau & Peters 2010:3). The study utilised the above-mentioned descriptive statistics in the form of bar graphs, pie charts and tables in sections C, D, E, F, G and H. These findings are reported in Section4.4.1.

3.9.5 Inferential

Statistical procedures utilised in this study take in account correlation and regression analysis. Therefore, a brief discussion and articulation of these procedures follows:

3.9.5.1 Correlation analysis degree and strength of association

Correlation analysis is a statistical procedure utilised to represent the relationship or association between two or more quantitative variables. This statistical analysis is essentially based on the assumption of a straight (linear) association between the quantitative variables (Gogtay & Thatte

2017:78). Likewise correlation analysis is applied in order to measure the strength of the linear association between two numeric scaled variables (Wegner 2012:305). In which case, correlation analysis establishes the degree to which changes in one variable are associated with changes in another variable and attempts to estimate the extent of the changes (McDaniel & Gates 2010:560). Correlation analysis can be assessed utilising three statistics, namely, Pearson's correlation coefficient (r), Kendall's Tau correlation coefficient, or Spearman's *rho (R$_s$)* (Gogtay & Thatte 2017:78*).*

Non-metric variables can be correlated utilising either Kendall's Tau correlation coefficient or Spearman's *rho*, of which are both non-parametric tests that do not assume a normal distribution. Spearman's correlation coefficient is a non-parametric statistic based on a ranked data set that is used with the objective of minimising the effects of extreme scores or the effects of violations of the assumptions (Gogtay & Thatte 2017:78). Spearman's *rho* (R$_s$) contains both inferential and descriptive elements. The inferential element attempts to test the significance of the relationship between the variables, at either 95 percent ($p=0.05$) or 99 percent ($p=0.01$) level of confidence. Equally, the descriptive element concludes the calculation of Spearman's *rho* coefficient (R$_s$) values and then defines the nature of the relationships between the variables being correlated. However, if the data needs to be ranked in some way, Kendall's Tau correlation coefficient may be conducted (Gogtay & Thatte 2017:78).

The correlation coefficients presented in this investigation were positive and statistically significant, ranging between +0.478 and +0.154 at *p* less than 0.01. This was an indication of linearity among the variables included in this study. Also, the strength association among the variables here can be considered moderate and positively associated.

For this study, Spearman's test correlation was computed with the objective of examining the relationship and association between Generation Y consumers' perceptions on adoption and attitudes towards selected social media marketing activities. Correlations are presented in Section 4.7 (refer to Tables 4.6 and 4.7).

3.9.5.2 Regression analysis

Schroeder, Sjoquist and Stephen (2017:1) state that regression analysis is known as a statistical method that affords an approach to appropriately explain and summarise the connection and relationship among a variable of interest and one or more variables that are projected to influence that variable. Malhotra (2010:568) is of the view that regression analysis can be utilised to:

- Establish if the independent variable explains a significant variation in the dependent variable (whether a connection and relationship exist).

- Establish how much of the variation in the dependent variable can be explained by independent variables (the strength of the relationship).

- Establish a form or structure of the relationship (mathematical equation in relation to the independent and dependent variables).

- Predict the values of the dependent variable.

- Control for other independent variables when evaluating the contributions of a specific variable or set of variables.

In addition, Mooi and Sarstedt (2014:194) articulate the benefits of regression analysis as:

- Indicate whether the independent variables have a significant relationship with the dependent variable.

- Indicate the relative strength of different independent variables' effect on the dependent variable.

- Project predictions.

Regression analysis was deemed appropriate to examine the influence amongst the variables in this study, namely, source credibility, informativeness, perceived enjoyment, social identity, consumers' attitudes, and adoption. Regression analysis was also conducted to test the hypothesis, as reported in Section 4.8.

3.10   RELIABILTY

Reliability is a crucial concern utilised to quantity a behaviour or specific attribute and refers to the degree to which findings are consistent and accurately represents the population under investigation (Drost 2009:106; Golafshani 2011:599). Therefore, in line with this study, Cronbach alpha reliability was utilised to articulate a clear indication of the average correlations amongst all the items that constitute the scale. Malhotra (2010:319) asserts that "Cronbach alpha is the average of all possible split-half coefficients resulting from different ways of splitting the scale items and these coefficients vary from 0 to 1, and value of 0.5 or less normally shows inadequate internal consistency reliability". Reliability results are presented in Section4.5 (refer to Table 4.5).

3.11 VALIDITY

According to Malhotra (2010:320), validity of a measuring instrument may be well-defined as the degree to which differences in observed scale scores replicate the actual difference amongst objects on the characteristics being measured, rather than random or systematic error. Therefore, in a nutshell validity is the degree to which an instrument measures what it supposed to measure (Kimberlin & Winterstein 2009:2278). This study utilised constructs validity, content validity, convergent validity, and predictive validity.

3.11.1 Construct validity

Construct validity addresses how well the items are developed to operationalise a construct and provide a satisfactory and representative sample of all the items that might measure the construct under investigation (Kimberlin & Winterstein 2009:2279). Construct validity answers the question of "Does the instrument indeed measure what is supposed to measure?" In other words, construct validity will attest to the fact that the instrument indeed correlates with the hypothesis developed earlier in this study. Construct validity can be established through correlation and exploratory factor analysis (Malhotra 2012:321). Cronbach alpha was used to measure construct validity in this study.

3.11.2 Discriminant validity

Discriminant validity refers to a type of validity that assesses the degree to which a measure does not correlate with other constructs from which it is supposed to differ (Malhotra 2010:321). Likewise, discriminant validity means that a latent variable can account for more variance in the observed variables associated with measurement error, or similar external, unmeasured influences, or other constructs within the conceptual model (Tahersdoost 2016:31).

3.11.3 Convergent validity

Malhotra (2010:321) articulates that convergent validity is the degree to which the scale correlates positively with other measures of the same construct and it is not always required that all the measures be acquired by utilising conventional scaling methods. Therefore, Spearman's correlation coefficient was utilised to determine any relationship between the data set used. Correlations were computed amongst social media marketing dimensions, consumer attitude and adoption. Convergent validity is reported in Section 4.6.2 (refer to Table 4.7).

3.11.4 Content validity

Content validity is the degree to which the instrument covers the content that it is supposed to measure. It can be used to measure the appropriate sampling of the content domain of items in a questionnaire, and content validity of an instrument depends on the adequacy of a specified domain of content that is sampled (Yaghmale 2010:25; Taherdoost 2016:28). Content validity therefore can also help to ensure construct validity and give confidence to the respondents and researchers regarding the instrument (Muhamad 2019:49). Content validity, also known as "face validity" is the degree to which a measure appears to be associated to a construct and reviews the appearance of the measuring instrument in terms of consistency of style, feasibility, readability, and clarity of the jargon (language used) as well as formatting (Taherdoost 2016:29). Content validity was instigated by pre-testing and piloting the measuring instrument, and findings obtained were utilised to determine whether questions included in the measuring instrument are of relevance to specified research objectives. Content validity is reported under Chapter 4 (refer to Section4.6.1).

3.11.5 Predictive validity

McDaniel and Gates (2010:255) state that predictive validity is the extent to which a future level of a criterion variable can be predicted by a current measure in a scale. In this study, regression analysis was used to evaluate Generation Y consumers' perceptions on adoption and attitude towards selected social media marketing activities. Predictive validity is reported in Section4.8 of this study.
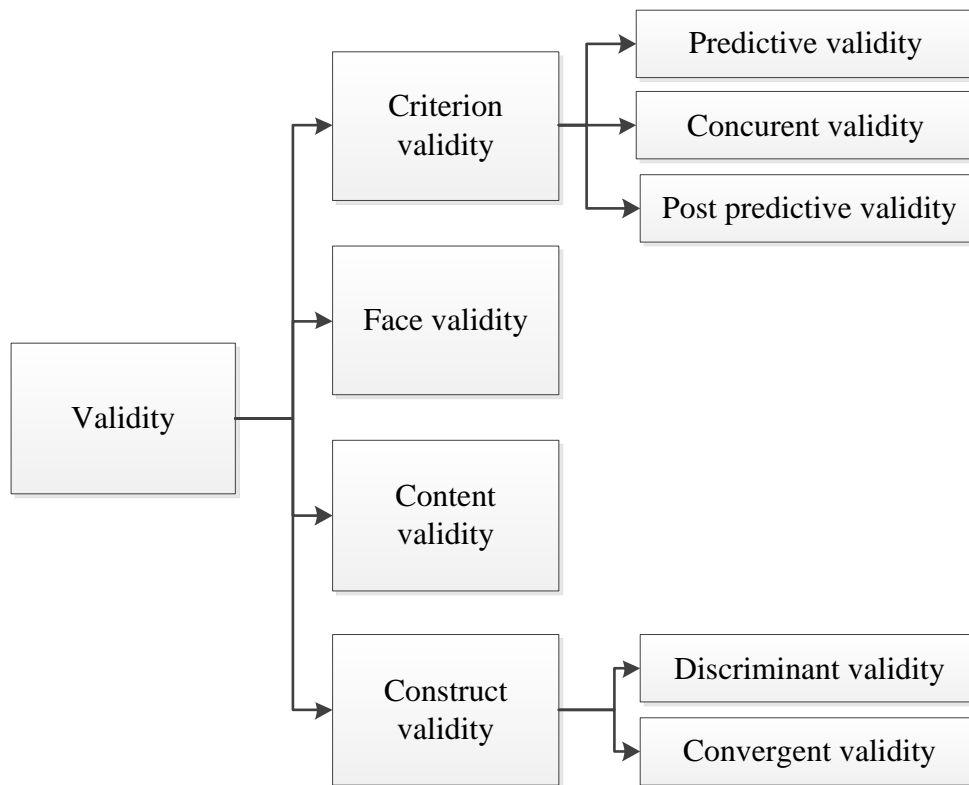
Figure 3.2:   **Various forms of validity tests**

Source: Taherdoost (2016:29)

3.12   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

It is understood that ethics is a branch of values which deals with the dynamics of decision making regarding what is morally wrong or right (Fouka & Mantzorou 2011:4). This author further advocates that there are numerous research ethics codes which can be utilised to guide researchers. For the purposes of this study the following ethical codes were observed.

3.12.1   Respect for anonymity and confidentiality

Informed consent and anonymity are of the major ethical guidelines in research and it means that an individual intelligently, voluntarily and, knowingly as well as in a clear and manifest manner, gives their consent in participating in the research project. The identities of the respondents were not disclosed during the process of data collection, specifically, the respondents were in no instances forced to disclose their names. The data aggregated with no reference to any respondent.

3.12.2   Beneficence

During the data collection process, the researcher prioritised the fact that the research was not for the researcher's direct financial benefit. Therefore, respondents were advised in each interview

that the data provided would only be used for academic purposes and that the aggregated report would be available for their access at the Vaal University of Technology upon request. Thereafter, the participants were constantly reminded by the researcher to ensure that they did not divert into confrontations. The mentioned steps taken were intended to build mutual trust between the researcher and the respondents.

3.12.3 Non-maleficence and voluntary

The researcher made sure that the respondents participate in the study of their own choice and without being harassed or forced to partake in the study. Therefore, the researcher constantly reminded the respondents that the survey is voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw from the survey at any given time if they so wished.

3.12.4 Justice

The philosophical principle of justice in research requires that the researcher treat respondents with fairness and equity during the data collection process. In other words, the researcher must fully uphold standards of confidentiality and anonymity as promised to respondents. In this research, all the respondents were treated equally and professionally, observing mutual respect.

3.13 SYNOPSIS

This chapter delivered an outline of research methodology. Therefore, it outlined various phases undertaken to achieve the practical aspects of this study. It outlined the research design undertaken, which was adhered to throughout. A quantitative approach was adhered to and sampling method was restricted to other forms of sampling which were non-probabilistic in nature.

A comprehensive discussion of the data collection procedures utilised in this study is provided. The measuring instrument (questionnaire) format, content, construction, and layout is articulated, highlighting how it was designed, structured and administered in the field. Appropriate statistical analysis procedures were applied in the study, namely, correlation analysis and regression analysis. The relevant code of ethics was fully obligatory to the researcher during the survey. In addition, reliability and validity measures were also discussed and undertaken in this study. In the following chapter the results of the study and interpretation of empirical findings are discussed.

4

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter discussed an overview of the methodological approach utilised in this study. The current chapter presents a summary of the analysis and interpretation of the results, which are discussed against supporting and contrary findings from previous researchers. The pilot study is presented, and its reliability discussed. The pilot test was conducted to ensure that the instrument measures the variables it is supposed to measure. Its results are discussed, followed by an articulation of the main findings, which are presented and discussed. The chapter then presents and briefly discusses the demographic description of the sample, correlation and regression analysis. It concludes by discussing the reliability and validity aspects of the measuring instrument.

4.2 PILOT STUDY RESULTS

A pilot study was undertaken to verify that the measuring instrument (questionnaire) utilised in the main survey was properly and adequately constructed and ensured that it captured the vital variables of this study. The pilot study was examined by the promoter as well as the researcher whereby inputs and comments were considered during the adjustments and refinements of the measuring instrument. Malhotra (2010:153) articulates that a pilot test includes a trial run of the measuring instrument with a small or limited sample size of the participants from the study's target population, with the objective to iron out and eliminate problems and challenges regarding the measuring instrument. A limited number of participants (n=40) were utilised in the pilot study. Furthermore, the participants from the pilot study were drawn from the same population of interest from where the main sample was drawn.

4.2.1 Reliability statistics for the pilot study

The initial questionnaire consisted of Section C (source credibility comprising 8 items), Section D (in-formativeness comprising 6 items), Section E (perceived enjoyment comprising 6 items), Section F (social identity comprising 4 items), Section G (consumer attitudes comprising 8 items) and Section H (adoption of social media marketing comprising 8 items) were respectively subjected to reliability tests during the pilot test. The questionnaire utilised the five-point Likert-

type scale, ranging from 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= neither agree nor disagree, 4= agree and 5= strongly agree.

Data obtained from the pilot study give a satisfactory indication for some of the sections of the questionnaire as reported in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: **Pilot reliability statistics**

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of items
Section C (Source credibility)	0.874	8
Section D (In-formativeness)	0.683	6
Section E (Perceived enjoyment)	0.666	6
Section F (Social identity)	0.834	4
Section G (Consumer attitudes)	0.538	8
Section H (Adoption of social media marketing)	0.728	8

Source: Author's compilation (2019)

Nunnally (1978:245) recommend that the reliability indicators should exceed the suggested level of 0.600. Data obtained from the pilot study gave a satisfactory indication for five sections of the questionnaire except Section G (consumer attitudes). The next section presents the preliminary data preparation with regards to data coding, data editing, data cleaning and data capturing.

4.3 PRELIMINARY DATA PREPARATION

Preliminary data preparation assessments in this study were concerned with editing, coding, capturing and cleaning of data.

4.3.1 Data editing

During the fieldwork, data editing and cleaning involved visual checks of questionnaires for legibility, comprehensibility, accuracy and completeness. In situations where the hand-writing was vague, the researcher promptly returned it to the respondent for clarity. Subsequently, central editing was conducted after the completion of fieldwork with a clear objective to eradicate major inconsistencies rendering the data coding and storage transfer. The table below (Table 4.2) reviews the number of questionnaires distributed and the ones considered useful for statistical analysis.

Table 4.2: Data editing and questionnaire return rate

Fieldwork activity	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Questionnaires distributed	300	100%
Incomplete questionnaires	7	2.3%
Responded and returned completed	**293 (300-7)**	**97% (100-2.3%)**
Observations identified with outliers	8 (case 28, 45, 54, 55, 93, 118, 198 and 264)	2.6%
Useful observations	**285** **(293-8)**	**100 – (2.3% + 2.6%)** **95% response rate**

Source: Author's compilation (2020)

Out of the 300 distributed questionnaires, seven questionnaires (2.3% of the sample) were incomplete. However, the researcher proceeded to conduct central editing of the 293 responded and returned questionnaires. In central editing, eight questionnaires (2.6% of the sample) were observed as having unusable and inconsistent responses, rendering their assessment meaningless. As a result, meaningless questionnaires were omitted from the study. Therefore, this process yielded a total of 285 completed and usable questionnaires (approximately 95 % response rate).

4.3.2 Data coding

The 285 usable questionnaires were captured onto Microsoft Excel for coding purposes and a spreadsheet was prepared. Pre-coding was applied in Sections C, D, E, F, G and H whereby codes ranging between 1 (strongly disagree) and 5 (strongly agree) were applied directly to the questionnaire before its distribution in line with the choice of the 5-point Likert-type scale. The codes for Sections A and B were assigned after the central editing process had been concluded. Table 4.3 grants the codes that were assigned to the variables in the questionnaires.

Table 4.3:   Data coding -main survey

Section A:	Demographics		
Question	**Code**	**Variable**	**Value assigned to response**
Question 1	A 1	Gender	Male (1), Female (2)
Question 2	A 2	Age	18 to 20 years (1), 21 to 30 years (2), 31 to 40 years (3), 41 to 50 years (4), over 50 years (5)
Question 3	A 3	Ethnic group	Black African (1), Coloured (2), Indian/Asian (3), White (4), Other (5)
Question 4	A 4	Marital status	Single/Never been married (1), Married (2), Separated (3), Divorced (4), Widowed (5), Other (5)
Question 5	A 5	Highest educational qualification	Grade 12/Matric (1), Diploma/Degree (2), Honours/BTech (3), Post graduate qualification (4), Other (5)
Question 6	A 6	Monthly income (before tax)	Less than R 5 000 (1), R5 001 to R10 000 (2), R10 001 to R20 000 (3), R20 001 to R30 000 (4), Above R30 000 (5)
Section B:	Social media usage information		
Question	**Code**	**Variable**	**Value assigned to response**
Question 1	B 1	Engaging in social media network within the last 6 months	Yes (1), No (2)
Question 2	B 2	Most preferred social media service	Facebook (1), Twitter (2), YouTube (3), Instagram (4), Other (5)
Question 3	B 3	Social media service engagement average per year	Once a year (1), At least twice a year (2), At least four times a year (3), At least 12 times a year (4), At least 52 times a year (5)
Question 4	B 4	Average expenditure amount on social media	Less than R150 (1), R151 to R500 (2), R501 to R10 00 (3), More than R10 000 (4)

Section C:	Source credibility in social media marketing		
Question	**Code**	**Variable**	**Value assigned to response**
Items 1 to 8	C1, C2, C3, C4, C5, C6, C7, C8	Source credibility	Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), neither agree nor disagree (3), agree (4), Strongly agree (5)
Section D:	In-formativeness in social media marketing		
Question	**Code**	**Variable**	**Value assigned to response**
Items 1 to 6	D1, D2, D3, D4, D5, D6	In-formativeness	Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), neither agree nor disagree (3), agree (4), Strongly agree (5)
Section E:	Perceived enjoyment in social media marketing		
Question	**Code**	**Variable**	**Value assigned to response**
Items 1 to 6	E1, E2, E3, E4, E5, E6	Perceived enjoyment	Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), neither agree nor disagree (3), agree (4), Strongly agree (5)
Section F:	Social Identity in social media marketing		
Question	**Code**	**Variable**	**Value assigned to response**
Items 1 to 4	F1, F2, F3, F4	Social identity	Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), neither agree nor disagree (3), agree (4), Strongly agree (5)
Section G:	Consumer attitudes towards social media marketing		
Question	**Code**	**Variable**	**Value assigned to responses**
Items 1 to 6	G1, G2, G3, G4, G5, G6	Consumer attitudes	Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), neither agree nor disagree (3), agree (4), Strongly agree (5)
Section H:	Adoption of social media marketing		
Question	**Code**	**Variable**	**Value assigned to responses**
Items 1 to 8	H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, H6, H7, H8	Adoption	Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), neither agree nor disagree (3), agree (4), Strongly agree (5)

Source: Author's compilation (2020)

4.3.3 Data cleaning

The Microsoft Excel spreadsheet containing 285 questionnaires was precisely coded as illustrated in Table 4.3 and then transferred onto the software (SPSS Version 25.0), ready for cleaning. During the data cleaning process, the researcher managed to identify missing values. Data editing also enabled the researcher to check any influential observations that were out of the ordinary cases since they have the potential to distort the findings. Cases 28, 45, 54, 55, 93, 118, 198 and 264 were the notable outliers in this research. Therefore, only 285 questionnaires were considered useful for statistical analysis resulting in 95 percent response rate for this study (refer to Table 4.2).

4.4 MAIN SURVEY RESULTS

The next section presents and interpret the findings of the main survey.

4.4.1 Demographic profile and social media usage information

This section of the study delivers a description of the sample, with reference to their demographics and social media usage information. Bar graphs and pie charts were utilised to represent the information acquired from the respondents.

4.4.2 Sample composition

The sample presents a general overview that transpired, a description of the sample regarding participants' gender, age, ethnic population, marital status, highest educational qualification, monthly income, social media usage (B1 required them to answer "Yes" or "No" to whether they have engaged in any social media network in the last six months), preferred social media network, social media network engagement frequency and expenditure amount spend in social media network activities follows.
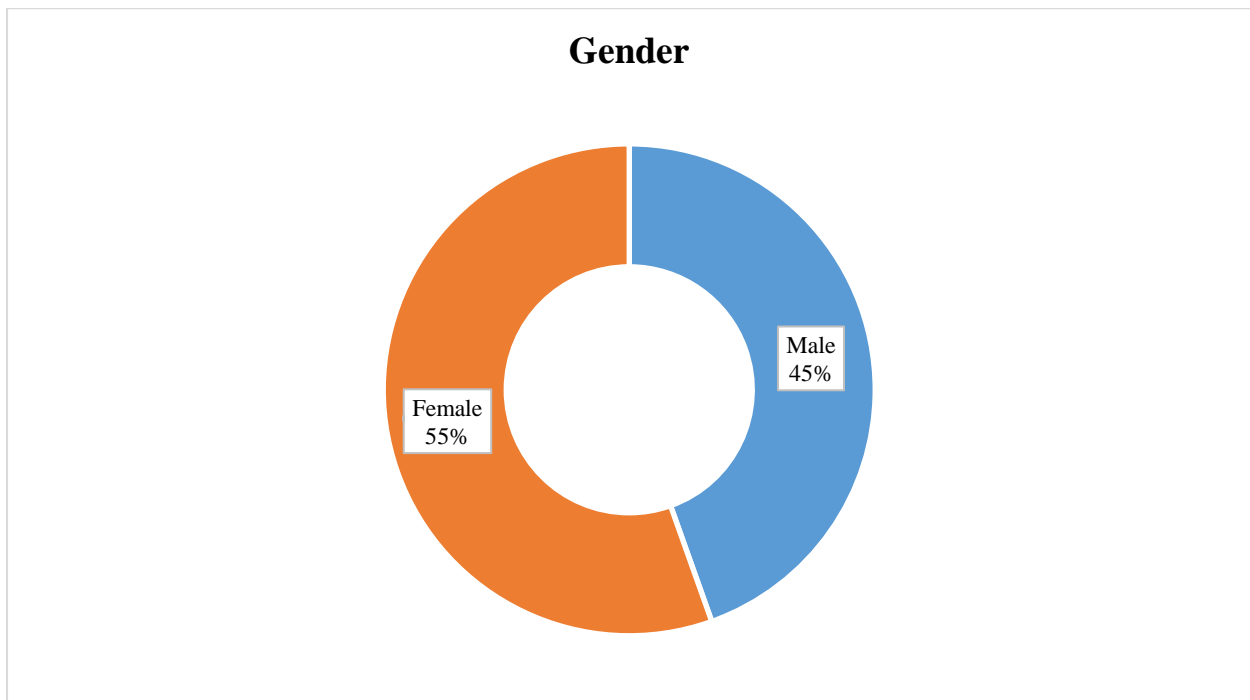
Figure 4.1:   Respondents' gender

Figure 4.1 stipulates that many of the respondents were female, demonstrating 55 percent, (n=130), while 45 percent (n=156) of the sample were recorded as male. Feedback from the participants therefore suggests that females engage in social media activities more than males.

Figure 4.2 grants a summary of the respondents' age pertaining to Question A2 of the questionnaire.
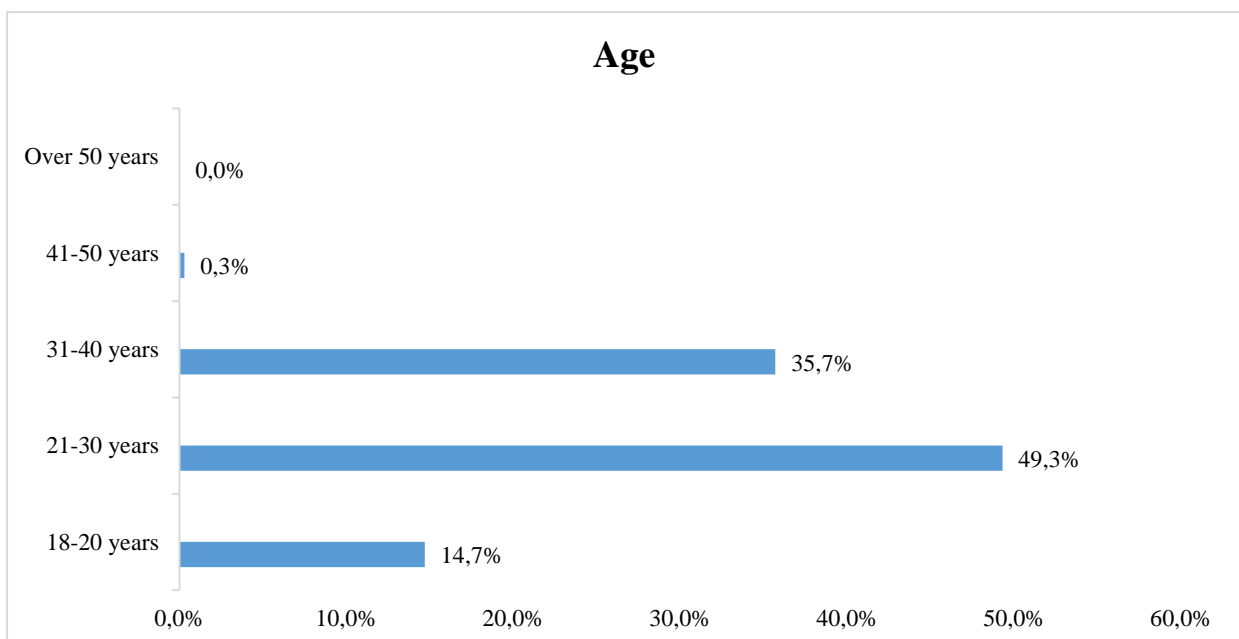
Figure 4.2:   Respondents' age

Figure 4.2 shows the demographical information pertaining to the respondents' age and was utilised to ensure that only those respondents that are 18 years and older would form part of the sample are included in the study, which was agreed and in accordance with the focus of the study, as defined and articulated under target population in Chapter 3 (refer to Section3.5.1). The majority of the respondents specified being between the age of 21 to 30 years (n=141; 49.3% of the sample), followed by respondents' who specified being between the ages of 31 to 40 years (n=102; 35.7 % of the sample) and between the ages of 18 to 20 years (n=42; 14.7% of the sample). The remaining respondents were between the ages of 41 to 50 years (n=1; 0.30 % of the sample) and no respondents reported to be 50 years and older.

Figure 4.3 provides respondents' ethnic group pertaining to Question A3 of the questionnaire.

Ethnic group

19,6%

7,3%

12,9%

60,1%

■ Black African   ■ Coloured   ■ Indian/Asian   ■ White   ■ Other
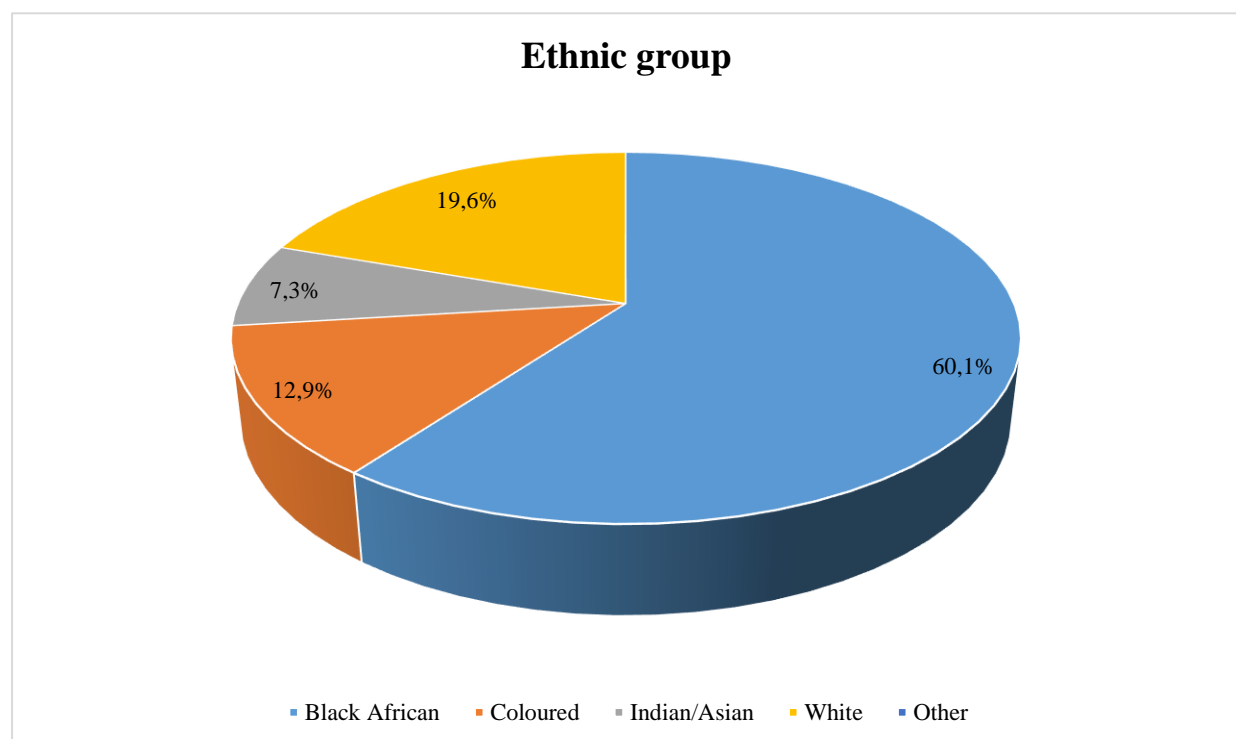
Figure 4.3:   Respondents' ethnic group

Figure 4.3 indicates that most of the respondents were Black African (n=172; 60.1% of the sample), followed by respondents who indicated being White (n=56; 19.6 % of the sample). The remaining respondents were either Coloured (n=37; 12.9 % of the sample) or Indian/Asian (n=21; 7.3% of the sample).

Figure 4.4 provides the respondents' marital status pertaining to Question A4 of the questionnaire.
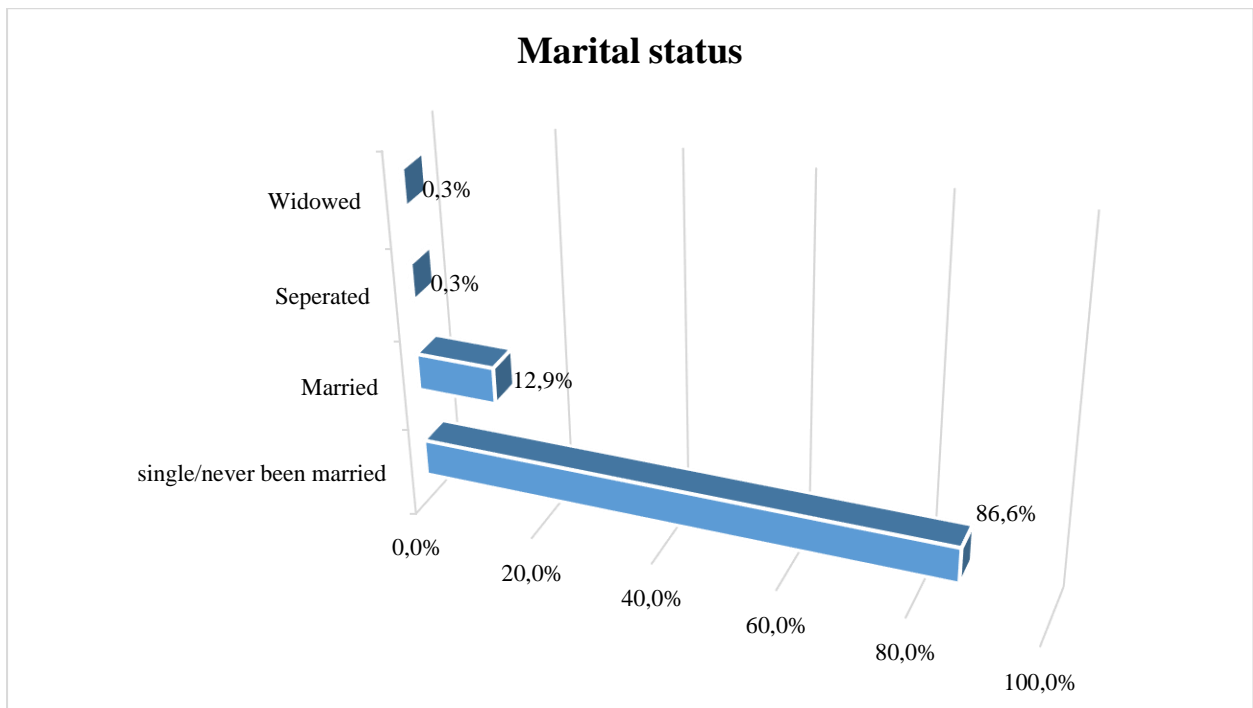
Figure 4.4: **Respondents' marital status**

According to Figure 4.4, most of the respondents indicated being single and never been married (n=247; 86.6% of the sample). In addition, 12.9 percent of the respondents indicated being married (n=37). The remaining respondents were either separated (n=1; 0.3% of the sample) or widowed (n=1; 0.3% of the sample).

Figure 4.5 presents the respondents' highest educational qualification pertaining to question A5 of the questionnaire.
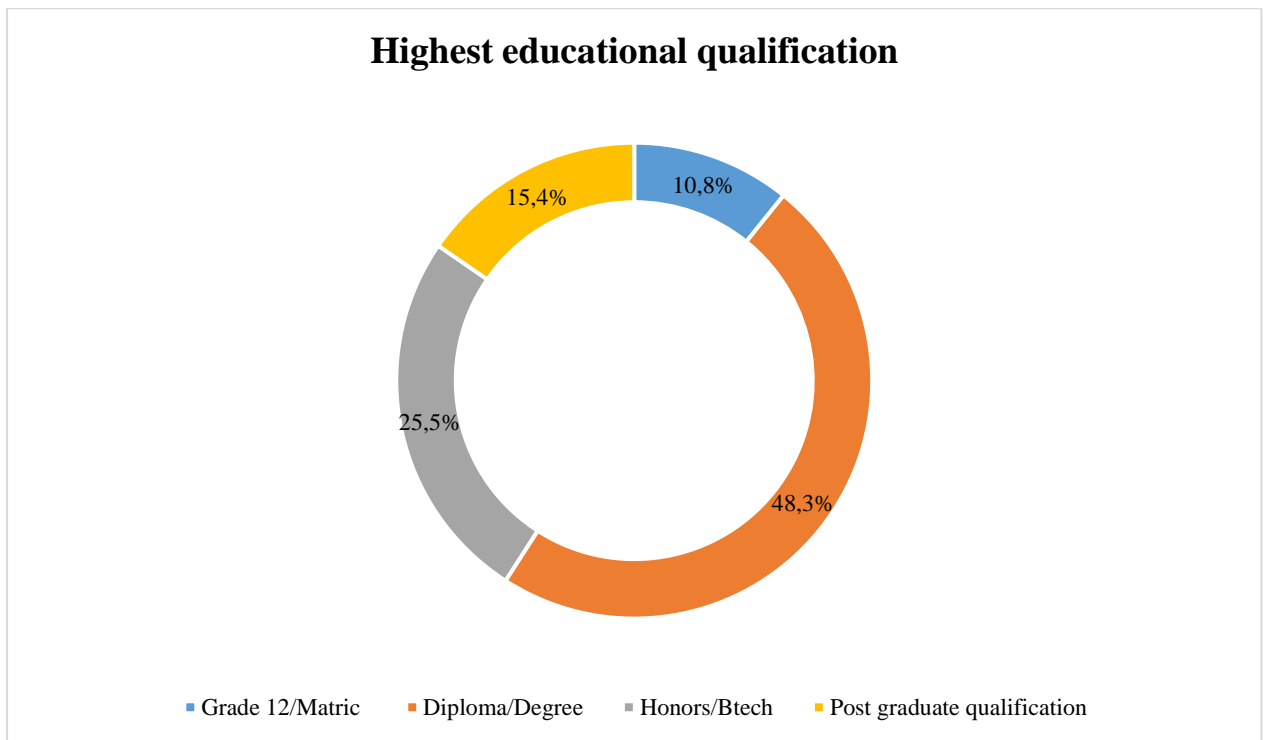
Figure 4.5:   Respondents' highest educational qualification

Figure 4.5 provides evidence that most of the respondents' highest educational qualification is diploma and degree (n=138; 48.3 % of the sample). They indicated that educational qualifications in Honours and BTech were 25.5 percent (n=73). Additionally, the remaining respondents indicated that they held a post graduate qualification (n=44; 15.4% of the sample) and indicated a qualification in Grade 12 or Matric were 10.8 percent (n=31). Furthermore, no respondents marked the other classification which made provision for other educational qualifications not included in the options provided in the questionnaire.

Figure 4.6 provides a summary of the respondents' monthly income before tax pertaining to question A6 of the questionnaire.
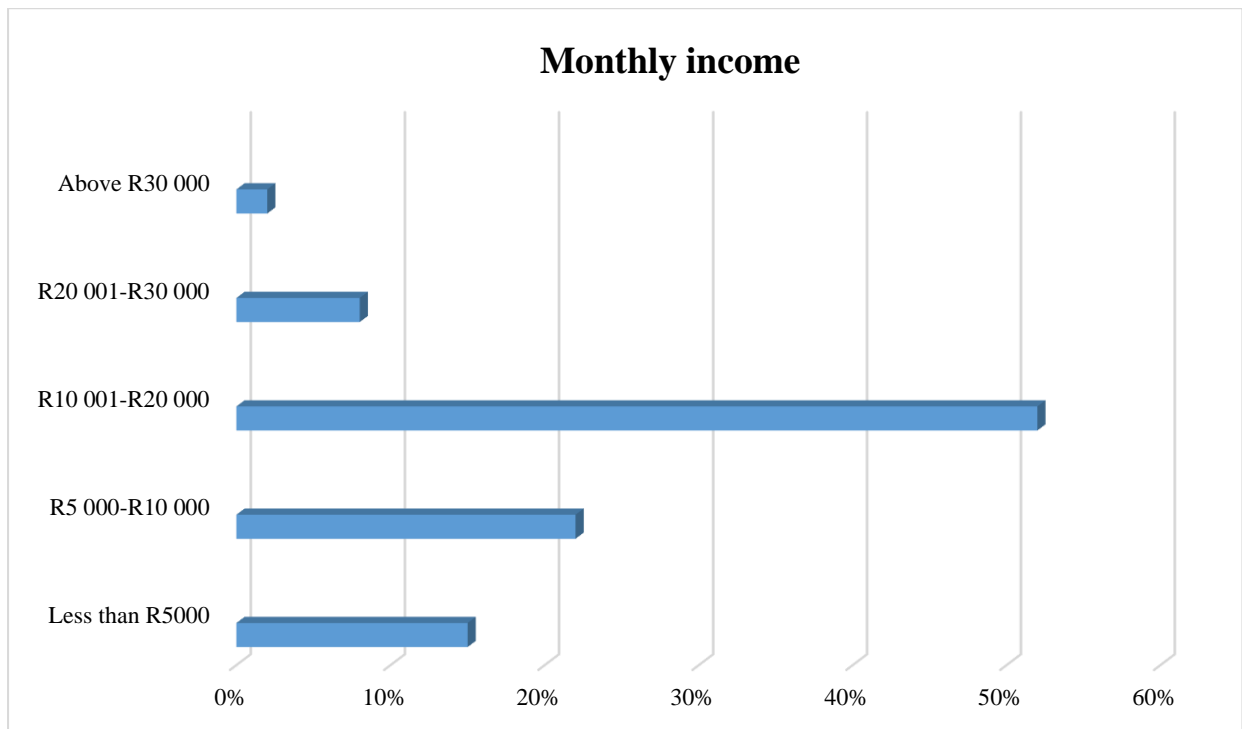
Figure 4.6:   Respondents' monthly income before tax

According to Figure 4.6, 52.4 percent of the sample (=150) indicated monthly income ranging between R10 000 - R20 000, followed by respondents who indicated a monthly income ranging between R5 000 – R10 000 (n=64; 22.4% of the sample size). Respondents who indicated a monthly income of less than R5 000 represented 14.7 percent of the sample size (n=42). The remaining respondents who indicated a monthly income ranging between R20 000 – R30 000 represented 8.0 percent of the sample (n=23) and respondents who indicated a monthly income above R30 000 only represented 2.4 percent of the sample (n=7).

Question B1 of the questionnaire was utilised as a screening question to include only respondents who active social media users are. Figure 4.7 presents respondents who are active on social media (at least for the last 6 months).
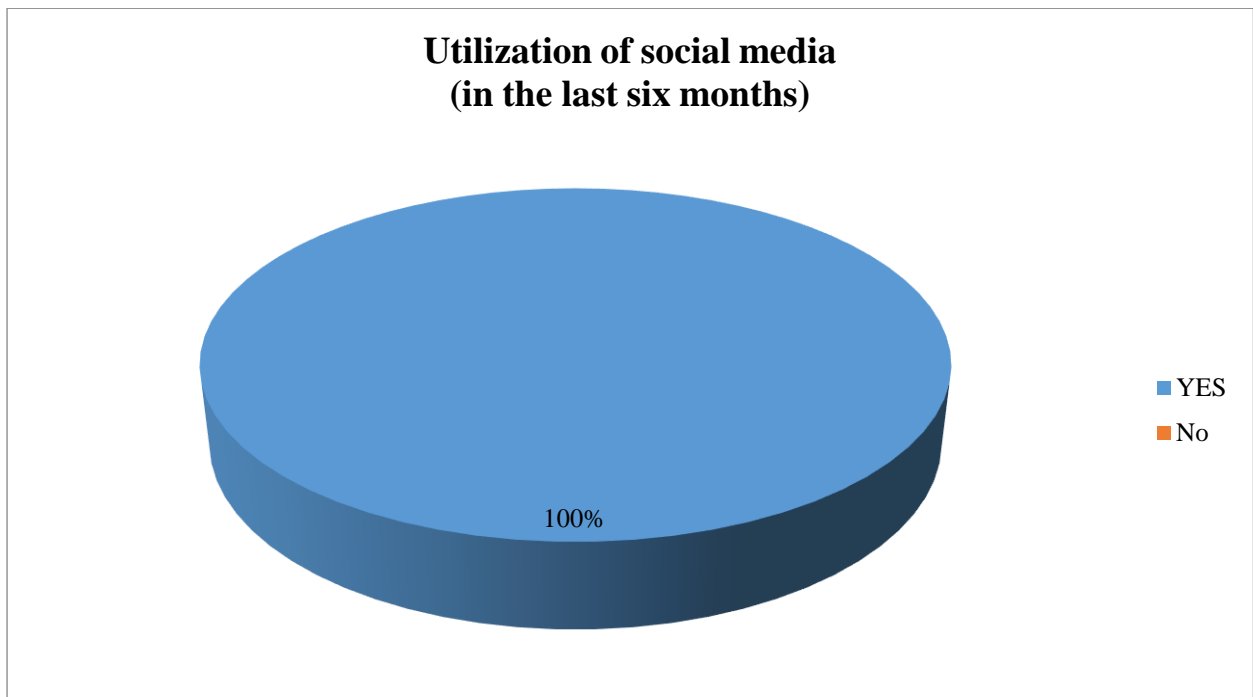
Figure 4.7: Respondents utilisation of any social media network in the last 6 months

Only respondents who answered "YES" pertaining to question B1 were included in the study as indicated in figure 4.7.

Figure 4.8 presents the respondents' most preferred social media network pertaining to Question B2 of the questionnaire.
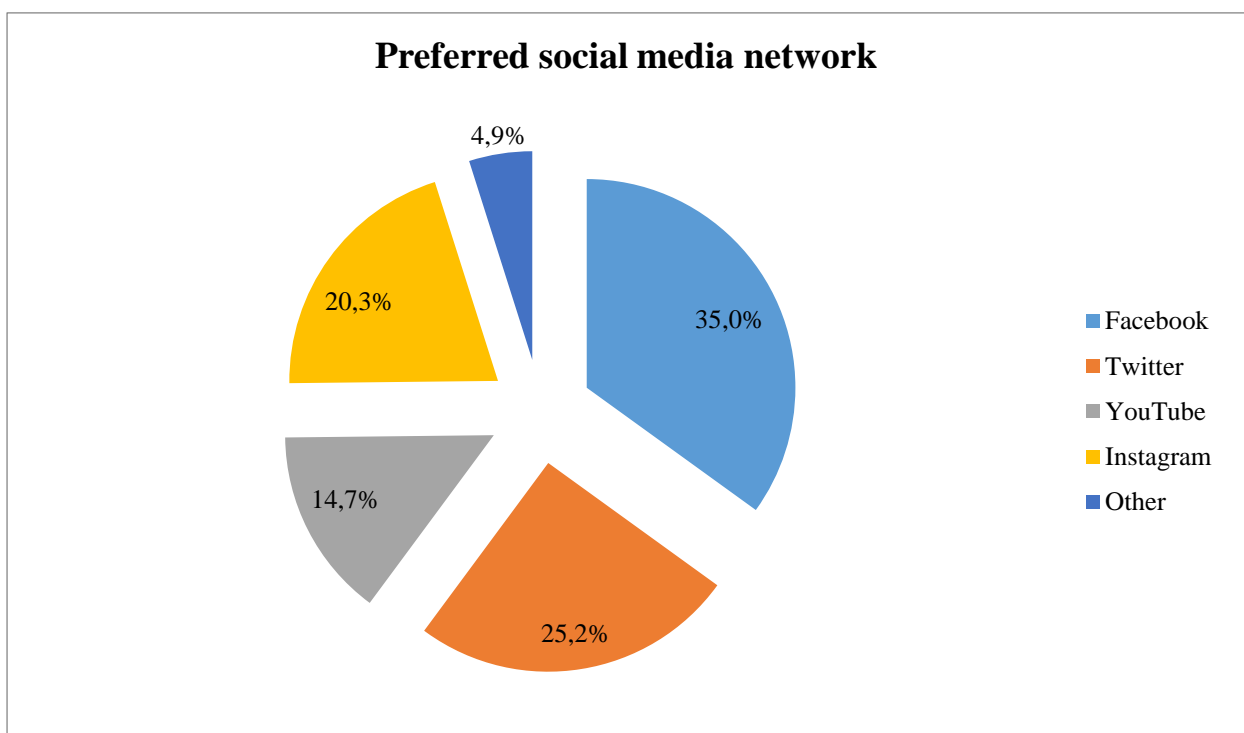
Figure 4.8: Respondents most preferred social media network

According to Figure 4.8, the majority of the respondents' indicated Facebook as their most preferred social media network (n=100; 35.0% of the sample), followed by respondents who indicated Twitter as their most preferred social network service (n=72; 25.2 % of the sample). Respondents who indicated Instagram as their most preferred social network service represented 20.3 percent of the sample size (n=58) and 14.7 percent of the sample indicated YouTube as their most preferred social media network (n=42). In addition, respondents who indicated other social media networks not provided in the questionnaire represented 4.9 percent of the sample size (n=14).

Figure 4.9 presents the respondents' social media network engagement frequency pertaining to question B3 of the questionnaire.
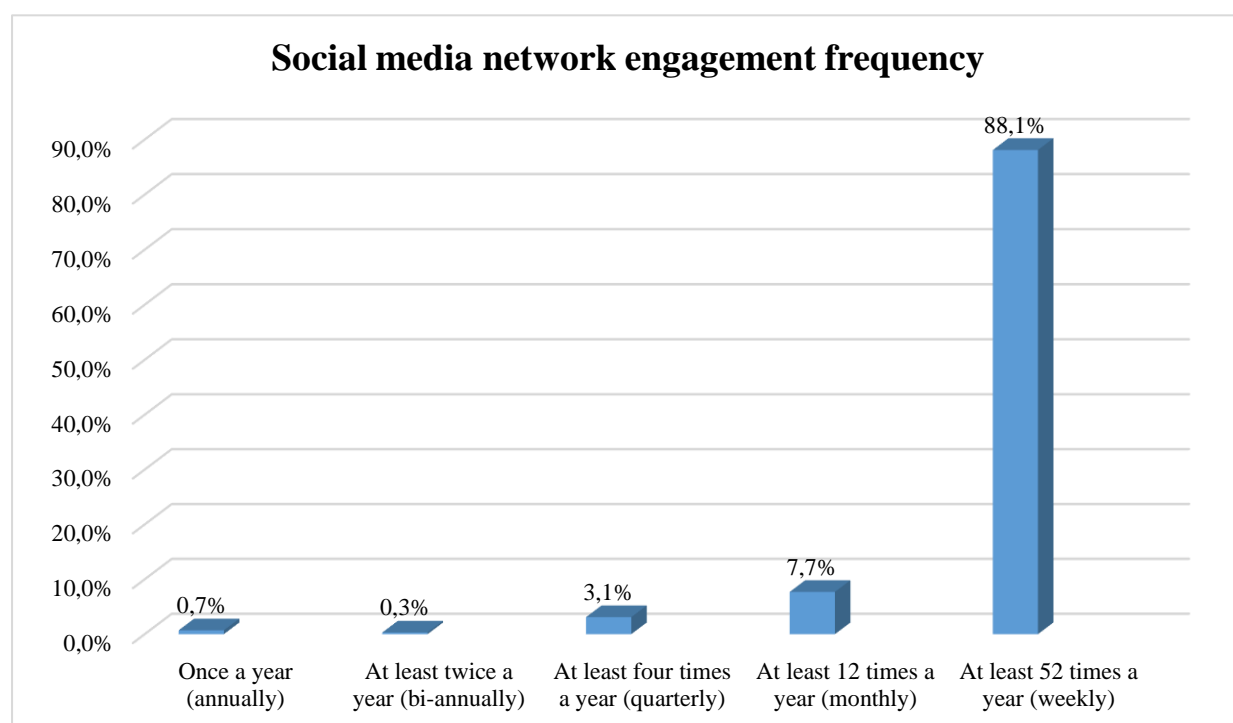
Figure 4.9: **Respondents' social media network engagement frequency**

According to Figure 4.9, the majority of respondents indicated that they engage in social media network activities at least 52 times a year, weekly (n=252; 88.1% of the sample), followed by those who indicated that they engage in social media activities at least 12 times a year, monthly (n=22; 7.7 % of the sample) and those who indicated that they engage in social media activities at least four times a year, quarterly (n=9; 3.1% of the sample). The remaining respondents indicated that they engage in social media activities at least twice a year, bi-annually (n=1; 0.3% of the sample). Additionally, those who indicated that they engage in social media activities once a year, annually, constituted 0.7 % of the sample (n=2).

Figure 4.10 represents the respondents' average expenditure amount spent on social media activities pertaining to question B4 of the questionnaire.
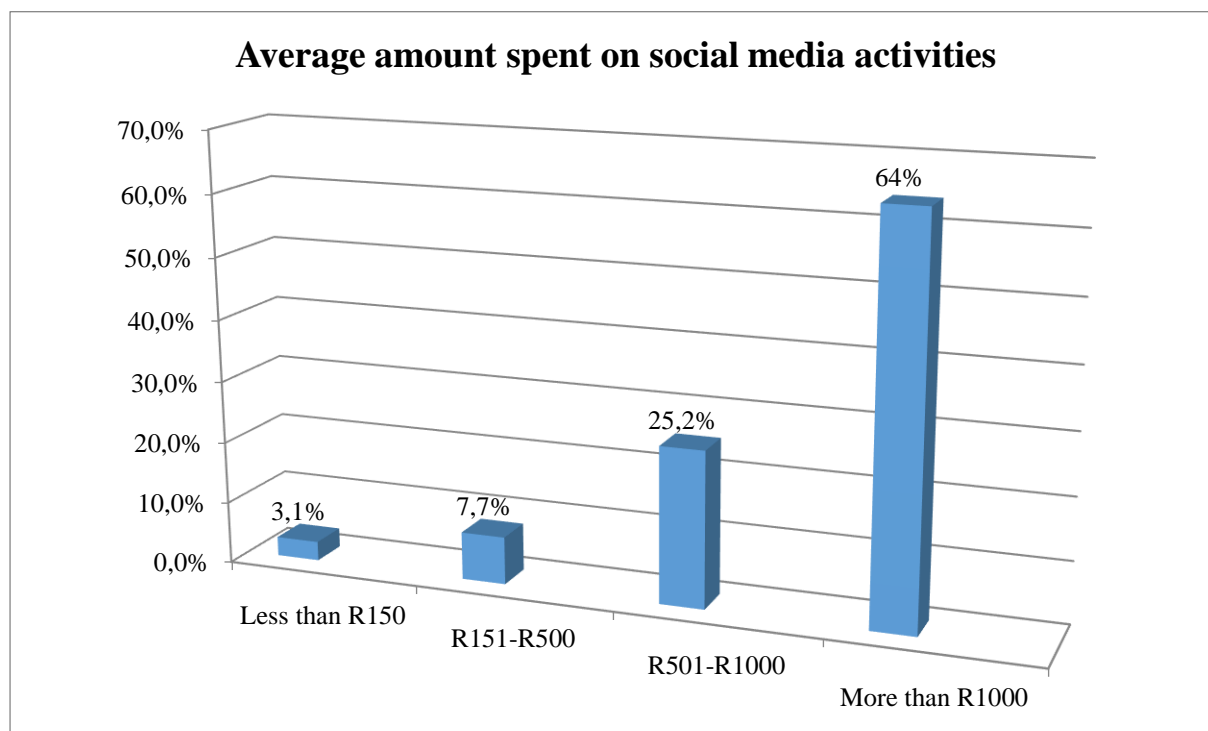
Figure 4.10: Respondents' average expenditure amount spent on social media activities

According to Figure 4.10, the majority of respondents indicated that they spend more than R1 000 on social media activities (n=180; 64% of the sample), followed by those who indicated that their average expenditure on social media activities is between R501-R1 000 (n=72; 25.2% of the sample) and those who indicated their average expenditure on social media activities being between R151-R500 (n=22; 7.7 % of the sample). The remaining respondents indicated that their average expenditure is less than R150 (n=9; 3.1% of the sample).

4.4.3 Descriptive- means and Standard Deviation

Table 4.4 reports the descriptive statistical analysis results for this study in view of summarising the sample responses and report on the data structure.

Table 4.4: Mean classification of variables

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Independent Variable 1 (Source Credibility)	4.02	0.429	285
Independent Variable 2 (In-formativeness)	4.30	0.375	285

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Independent Variable 3 (Perceived Enjoyment)	3.87	0.418	285
Independent Variable 4 (Social Identity)	4.15	0.443	285
Intervening Variable (Consumers' Attitude)	4.31	0.323	285
Dependent variable (Adoption of social media marketing)	3.95	0.424	285
1= Strongly disagree; 2= disagree; 3= neither agree nor disagree, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree			

Source: Authors' compilation (2020)

The intervening variable obtained the highest mean among participants (mean= 4.31), closely followed by variable 2 (mean= 4.30), variable 4 (mean= 4.15), variable 1 (mean= 4.02), dependent variable (mean= 3.95) and variable 3 (mean= 3.87) respectively.

Consumers' attitude: The participants ranked consumers' attitude with a high mean score of 4.31. This can be an indication that it plays a fundamental role towards the adoption of social media marketing.

In-formativeness: The significance of informativeness among participants was ranked high with a mean of 4.30. This stipulates that enough information is critical in social media marketing campaigns.

Social identity: Social identity recorded a moderately positive mean of 4.15. It highlights the significance of different groups (social identity groups) within society.

Source credibility: Source credibility was ranked with a positive mean of 4.02. This proposes that social media as a source for communicating marketing intelligence should be credible in order to result in positive characteristics that positively affect the consumers' acceptance of the marketers' message.

Adoption of social media marketing: Adoption of social media marketing among participants documented a mean score of 3.95. This evidently shows that adoption is a procedure of customers' approval and utilisation of technological platforms such as social media marketing.

Perceived enjoyment: Perceived enjoyment documented a mean score of 3.87. This articulates that a service rendered is attractive when is perceived enjoyable by consumers.

The study provides an assessment of reliability and validity of the research instrument given below.

4.5   RELIABILITY ANALYSIS

This section deals with psychometric tests in relation to the measuring instrument. It is important to this study since the measurement scales utilised were amended to suit a social media marketing context. Therefore, to discover and establish the reliability of this study, Cronbach's alpha coefficient and average inter-item correlation were calculated as illustrated in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5:   Reliability analysis results of the main survey

Construct	N	Items	Cronbach's alpha coefficient	Inter-item correlation
Source credibility	285	C1, C2, C3, C4, C5 and C6	0.664	0.668
In-formativeness	285	D1, D2, D3, D4, D5 and D6	0.664	0.668
Perceived enjoyment	285	E1, E2, E3, E4, E5 and E6	0.763	0.777
Social identity	285	F1, F2 and F4	0.607	0.608
Consumer attitudes	285	G1, G2, G3, G4, G5 and G6	0.635	0.661
Adoption of social media marketing	285	H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, H6, H7 and H8	0.745	0.729

Source: Author's compilation (2020)

According to Table 4.5, perceived enjoyment scale (E1- E6) had the highest Cronbach's alpha value of 0.763, followed by the adoption scale (H1- H8) which reported a Cronbach's alpha of 0.745 and source credibility scale (C1- C6) which reported a Cronbach's alpha of 0.668. Informativeness scale (D1- D6) reported a Cronbach's alpha of 0.664, closely followed by consumer attitudes scale (G1- G6) which reported a Cronbach's alpha of 0.635. In addition, the remaining social identity scale (F1, F2, and F4) which is the lowest, reported a Cronbach's alpha of 0.607. Cronbach's alpha is a measure of internal consistency, that is, how closely related a set of items are as a group. Therefore, Cronbach's alpha values reported in table 4.5 are all above the recommended level.

Furthermore, inter-item correlation measures validity. Average inter-item correlation coefficients were above 0.15, thus suggesting the convergent validity of the items within each of the scales. Average inter-item correlation coefficients are all above Clark and Watson's (1995:316) recommended range of 0.15 to 0.50, suggesting no discriminant validty for each of the scales used in the study.

In addition to reliability measures, various types of validity assessments are reported.

4.6 VALIDITY

Types of validity measures were undertaken, namely, content validity, convergent validity and predictive validity. These are discussed in terms of analyses taken.

4.6.1 Content validity

In this study, content validity was determined by a review of the questionnaire by the supervisor and co-supervisor to make necessary adjustments, such as deletion and rewording of questions. The pilot study was also conducted to determine the reliability of the questionnaire. The overall reliability of the scale was assessed and reported in Section4.2.1 (refer to Table 4.1). In addition, source credibility, social identity and adoption of social media marketing scales were found to be satisfactory as the Cronbach alpha coefficient was greater than the recommended level of 0.70.

4.6.2 Convergent validity

Malhotra (2020:321) alludes that convergent validity is the degree to which the scale correlates positively with other measures of the same construct. McDaniel and Gates (2020:626) further state that convergent validity has a high degree of correlation between different measurement variables that purport to measure the same construct. In this study, Spearman's correlation coefficient was utilised to measure the extent of association between four variables with consumers' attitudes and adoption. Correlations range from -1.00 to +1.00. The value +1.00 indicates a perfect positive linear correlation whereas a value of -1.00 illustrates a perfect negative linear correlation. Carlson and Herdman (2012:18) state that high correlation signifies a strong relationship between variables. Table 4.7 reports on the correlations between social media marketing dimensions with consumers' attitudes and adoption.

4.6.3 Predictive validity

In order to establish the amount of variance in consumers' attitudes that can be explained by the four selected social media marketing dimensions, a standard multiple regression analysis was

conducted. The four selected social media marketing dimensions were entered as independent variables and consumers' attitude was entered the regression model as the dependent variable. The results of the regression model are presented in Section 4.8.

4.7 CORRELATION ANALYSIS

In line with the objectives outlined in Chapter 1 (Section 1.4) of this study, it was necessary to observe the influence of source credibility, in-formativeness, perceived enjoyment, social identity on consumer attitudes and social media marketing adoption. Accordingly, it was required to perform correlation analysis between the above-mentioned constructs to determine the strengths of the fundamental relationship. In addition, Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2014:537) articulate the threshold of the evaluation of Pearson correlation coefficients:

Table 4.6:   Strength of the relationships between variables

Size of correlation coefficient (r)	Interpretation
+ 1	Very strong positive relationship
+ 0.6 to + 0.8	Strong positive relationship
+ 0.35 to 0.59	Modest positive relationship
+ 0.20 to + 0.34	Weak positive relationship
0	Perfect independence among variables
-0.2 to -0.35	Weak negative relationship
-0.36 to -0.6	Modest negative relationship
-0.7 to -0.8	Strong negative relationship
-0.9 to -1	Very strong negative relationship

Source: Author's compilation (2020)

Therefore, as proposed and articulated by Malhotra (2010:562) Pearson correlation coefficient (r) was utilised to measure the extent of linear association between the constructs. Correlation analysis was undertaken and presented in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Correlation analysis results

Construct	Source credibility	In-formativeness	Perceived enjoyment	Social identity	Consumer attitudes	Adoption of social media marketing
Source credibility	1	0.478**	0.199**	0.469**	0.257**	0.342**
In-formativeness	0.478**	1	0.092	0.405**	0.278**	0.231**
Perceived enjoyment	0.199*	0.092	1	0.154**	0.214**	0.513**
Social identity	0.469**	0.405**	0.154**	1	0.179**	0.249**
Consumer attitudes	0.257**	0.278**	0.214**	0.179**	1	0.276**
Adoption of social media marketing	0.342**	0.231**	0.513**	0.249**	0.276**	1

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

Table 4.7 illustrates that the strongest (highest) correlation coefficient value was computed between in-formativeness and source credibility (0.478; p=0.01). This outcome submits that informativeness in social media marketing campaigns is positively related to Generation Y consumers' perceptions on the source credibility used to communicate marketing campaigns. Other strong (positive) correlations values were reported between social identity when correlated with source credibility (0.469; p=0.01) and in-formativeness (0.405; p=0.01). In a related manner, a positive linear relationship was observed between social media marketing adoption and perceived enjoyment (0.513; p=0.01).

Weak, positive linear relationships were reported between consumer attitudes when correlated with social identity (0.179; p-0.01), perceived enjoyment (0.214; p=0.01), in-formativeness (0.278; p=0.01) and source credibility (0.257; p=0.01). Furthermore, weak positive linear relationships were reported between social media marketing adoption when correlated with consumer attitudes (0.276; p=0.01), social identity (0.249; p=0.01), in-formativeness (0.231; p=0.01) and source credibility (0.342; p=0.01). Weak, positive linear relationship was reported between perceived enjoyment when correlated with source credibility (0.199; p-0.01) and in-formativeness (0.092; p=0.01). In a related manner, a weak positive linear relationship was reported between consumer attitudes and social identity (0.154; p=0.01). In addition, the

correlations offer support to convergence as positive relationships were found among the variables under investigation.

4.8 REGRESSION ANALYSIS

The next sections dispense the regression analysis results of the study.

4.8.1 Hypothesis testing results for the first regression model

Multiple regressions were undertaken in order to estimate the influence between independent variables against their respective dependent variable. From the instigation of this investigation in Section 1.3, hypotheses were formulated for testing. Four classifications narrate to the first regression model that was projected in this study. The formulated hypotheses are:

$H_01:$ *In-formativeness does not have a significant positive influence on Generation Y consumers' attitude.*

$H_a1:$ *In-formativeness has a significant positive influence on Generation Y consumers' attitude.*

$H_02:$ *Source credibility does not have a significant positive influence on Generation Y consumers' attitude.*

$H_a2:$ *Source credibility has a significant positive influence on Generation Y consumers' attitude.*

$H_03:$ *Perceived enjoyment does not have a significant positive influence on Generation Y consumers' attitude.*

H_a3 *Perceived enjoyment has a significant positive influence on Generation Y consumers' attitude.*

$H_04:$ *Social identity does not have a significant positive influence on Generation Y consumers' attitude.*

$H_a4:$ *Social identity has a significant positive influence on Generation Y consumers' attitude.*

4.8.2 Data requirements for regression analysis

Two aspects were considered before estimating the regression model in line with the recommendations by Mooi and Sarstedt (2014:196). Firstly, the questionnaires were anchored

along interval data in sections C to H as reported in Section 3.6.2. Secondly, a considerably large sample size was used (N= 285), which offer a significant opportunity of obtaining good results. Shiker (2012:56) affirms that multivariate statistics like regression analysis are difficult to interpret and require a significantly large sample of data, and as a result it is vital to have a sample size of 300 or more. Therefore, the sample size utilised in this study was deemed suitable for the respective population under investigation.

4.8.3 Projection of the regression model (first regression model)

Malhotra (2020:568) state that multiple regression is undertaken in order to test the effect of numerous independent variables on a dependent variable. In the first regression model, the variables were chosen individually by the researcher for insertion into the regression model based on their usefulness, as stated in the hypotheses of this study. Therefore, Table 4.8 indicates the variables that were entered the first regression model.

Table 4.8: **Variables Entered in the regression model (first regression model)**

Model	Variables Entered	Variables removed	Method
1	Social identity, Perceived enjoyment, In-formativeness, Source credibility		Enter
Dependent Variable: Consumer attitudes **All requested variables entered.**			

Source Author's compilation (2020)

The variable selection process was undertaken by applying the Enter method of regression analysis through Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) process, which the default estimation procedure on Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. Respectively, social identity, perceived enjoyment, informativeness and source credibility were entered as predictors in the regression model and consumer attitudes were entered as the dependent variable.

The Durbin Watson (d) test statistics was computed to ascertain whether the residuals from the regression model were independent. The d statistic always ranges between zero and 4.0, with a value of 2, therefore indicating the absence of autocorrelation in the sample, meaning the residuals are uncorrelated. Contrarily, a value of zero indicates positive autocorrelation whereby a value close to 4.0 portrays negative autocorrelation (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2014:547). Maxwell and Harris (1995:490) state that any values outside the $1.5 \leq d \leq 2.5$ range show the presence of

autocorrelation is detrimental. Therefore, in the first regression model, most residual autocorrelations were within the 95 percent confidence interval.

Table 4.9:   Durbin Watson Statistic results (first regression model)

Model 1		
Change Statistics		
DF	**Sig. F Change**	**Durbin Watson Statistic**
285	0.000	1.738

Source: Author's compilation (2020)

The table above reports Durbin Watson statistic of 1.738 for the first regression model that was projected in this study. This result stipulates that autocorrelation was vague in the data set and that the projections made included independent observations.

4.8.3.1   Absenteeism of multicollinearity

The final assumption of undertaking regression analysis was that there was no multicollinearity. Multicollinearity manifests when the independent variables are dependent on each other, which makes it a challenge to determine the individual effects of separate variables, therefore resulting in unusual results of the relationship between dependent variable and independent variables. In this investigation, multicollinearity was evaluated by examination of different collinearity coefficients calculated during the projection of the regression model. The table below illustrates on the collinearity coefficients pertaining the first regression model considering Tolerance and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF).

Table 4.10:   Collinearity coefficients (first regression model)

Collinearity statistics	Tolerance	VIF
Source credibility	0.667	1.499
In-formativeness	0.729	1.371
Perceived enjoyment	0.955	1.047
Social identity	0.734	1.362

Source: Author's compilation (2020)

According to O'Brien (2010:677) tolerance values measure the influence (relationship) between a single independent variable and other independent variables and should be above 0.10, for multicollinearity not to exist. The values presented in Table 4.10 of this research met this requirement (above 0.01). The tolerance values ranged between 0.667 and 0.955. Secondly, the inverse of the tolerance values known as variance inflation factor (VIF) values were also computed for each independent variable included in the regression model. Variance inflation factor (VIF) measures the impact of collinearity amongst variables and should always be less than 10. Therefore, the reported VIF values pertaining to the first regression model ranged between 1.047 and 1.499, which is satisfactory since it is within the acceptable thresholds and therefore multicollinearity is not a threat.

The collinearity diagnostics pertaining to the first regression model were evaluated and reported in Table 4.11. Collinearity diagnostics included assessment of condition index, eigenvalues as well as variance proportions for the variables that were entered the regression model.

Table 4.11:   Collinearity diagnostics for regression model (first regression model)

Constructs	Eigen value	Condition index	(Constant)	Source Credibility	In-formativeness	Perceived Enjoyment	Social identity
Consumer attitudes	0.974	1.000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Source credibility	0.011	21.227	0.01	0.07	0.03	0.68	0.10
In-formativess	0.036	20.538	0.01	0.25	0.11	0.02	0.38
Perceived enjoyment	0.026	21.958	0.16	0.41	0.27	0.08	0.01
Social identity	0.030	23.647	0.83	0.04	0.48	0.22	0.01

Source: Author's compilation (2020)

According to Cecconi, Moretti and Dejaco's (2019:188) condition index is the measure that shows the degree of multicollinearity in a regression. A high condition index of values of 30 or greater is associated with variance inflation in the standard error of parameters and indicates a sign of multicollinearity. The results presented in Table 4.11 illustrates that the highest condition index reported for the first regression model was 23 467, indicating no multicollinearity.

In this study, eigenvalues were also considered as a collinearity diagnostic tool. Therefore, Tanvir and Nieves (2014:107) assert that all eigenvalues below 0.01 is an indication of multicollinearity, which indicate a point where collinearity affects statistical estimates the lowest eigenvalue reported was 0.011, which is greater than 0.01.

None of the observed variance proportions on the collinearity diagnostics table (Table 4.11) were greater than 0.5. In this regard, this excludes the column labelled constant, which is the Y intercept (the value of the dependent variable when the independent variables are all zero).

Additionally, the correlations reported in Section 4.7 of this study (Table 4.7) yielded only weak to moderate yet positive and statistically important inter-factor correlations, returning the highest correlation coefficient of + 0.478at p less than 0.01. As advocated by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2014:537), this outcome submits that there was no substantial collinearity due to computed correlations that were below 0.90; therefore the results reported in the study affirm that severe multicollinearity challenges did not exist.

4.8.3.2   Assessing fit of the regression model (first regression model)

The table below is the presentation of the model fit

Table 4.12:   Fit of the regression model (first regression model)

Model 1						
R	**R square**	**Adjusted R square**	**Std. error of the estimate**	**R square change**	**F change**	**df 1**
.354[a]	0.125	0.113	0.304	0.125	10.042	4

Source: Author's compilation (2020)

The overall regression model articulated 12.5% of variance in consumers' attitude towards the adoption of social media marketing, which was shown to be statistically significant (F=0.125; p<0.000). The regression model was significant at p<0.000, an assessment of the independent variables (predictors) revealed that only factor 1, (source credibility) (β= 0.171; p= 0.00), factor 2, (in-formativeness) (β= 0.302; p= 0.00) and factor 3, (perceived enjoyment) (β= 0.169; p= 0.00) were predictors of consumers' attitudes. Imparting support on the above-mentioned positive results, Wu and Wang (2011:448) accentuate that electronic word of mouth (eWOM), message source credibility, perceived enjoyment, shared identity and brand trust are stronger predictors of

consumers' attitudes. The Beta coefficients presented also show that factor 4 (social identity) contribute a less instrumental part in influencing consumers' attitudes.

The evidence shown in the table indicate that social identity had less impact on consumers' attitude and is not uncommon as established in the study conducted by Valaei and Nikhashemi (2017:523). However, social identity is significant in the comprehension of consumers' behaviours and attitudes (Kim 2018:141). Furthermore, a study undertaken by Johnsons and Chattaraman (2019:558) revealed that identities are arranged hierarchically, based on their salience, which identities are most likely to affect consumer behaviours and attitudes.

Table 4.13:   Analysis of variance (first regression model)

Model 1	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Regression	3.724	4	0.931	10.042	.000
Residual	26.052	281	0.093		
Total	29.776	285			

Source: Author's compilation (2020)

Table 4.13 reports that the first regression model returned F-value of 10.042 at $p<0.01$, given 3 degrees of freedom. Therefore, the null hypothesis can be rejected in favour of alternative hypothesis that at least one of the regression coefficients included in the model differs significantly from zero. Consequently, this is an indication that the regression model is a significant fit for the empirical data in this study.

4.8.3.3   Effects of individual variables (first regression model)

The first regression model was significant and the R square value for the first regression model is deemed satisfactory thereby denoting the model fit. Therefore, it becomes imperative to interpret the effects of the various independent variables that have been utilised to explain the dependent variable. Respectively, the following essentials are interpreted:

- The Significance level or p-value.

- The t-values reported for each individual parameter.

- The size and direction of the regression coefficient.

Table 4.14 presents regression coefficients for the first regression model.

Table 4.14:   Regression coefficients (first regression model)

	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardised coefficients			Decision
	B	Standard error	B	T	Sig	
(Constant)	2.650	0.268		9.889	0.000	
Source credibility	0.091	0.051	0.171	2.767	0.000	Reject H_02 Conclude H_a2
In-formativeness	0.301	0.031	0.302	6.030	0.000	Reject H_01 Conclude H_a1
Perceived enjoyment	0.131	0.044	0.169	2.956	0.000	Reject H_03 Conclude H_a3
Social identity	0.012	0.048	0.017	0.256	0.798	Reject H_a4

Source: Author's compilation (2020)

The regression coefficient's *p* values (indicated by the column headed by Sig.) for source credibility, informativeness and perceived enjoyment are below 0.05. As a result, it can be established the three variables (source credibility, informativeness and perceived enjoyment) narrate significantly to the dependent variable (consumer attitudes).

The extent of the *t*-statistic offers a means to criticise relative importance of the independent variables. According to Table 4.14, there are three regression coefficients which are indeed statistically at *p* is less than 0.05, where the constant is excluded from the interpretation.

Regarding the size of the regression coefficients, the Beta value range from -1 to +1, therefore indicating the strength of the predictor variable under review. Nonetheless, Van Voorhis and Morgan (2011:47) state that the rule of thumb indicates that if the regression coefficient from the regression model changes by more than 10 percent, then X_2 is said to be a confounder, representing the size of the effect. Therefore, Beta values higher than 0.1 point to evidence of explanatory effect of the predictor variable on the dependent variable.

Pertaining to the multiple regression equation, 0.302 is the estimated regression coefficient that computes the relationship between informativeness and the outcome, consumer attitudes, adjusted for 0.031, standard error term. This relationship was positive and recorded the strongest effect in

the regression model (β= +0.302; t= 6.030; *p*<0.01). As a result, H$_o$1 can be rejected and alternative H$_a$1 can be accepted.

Source credibility was reported second in terms of strength of variable effect on consumer attitudes (β= +0.171; t= 2.767; *p*<0.01). The results conclude that source credibility is an influencer in the regression model. Therefore, H$_o$2 is rejected and H$_a$2 is concluded in this study.

The variable perceived enjoyment recorded a statistically significant regression coefficient of 0.169. The results indicate that the relationship between the predictor and consumer attitudes (β= 0.169; t= 2.956; *p*= 0.01). Therefore, H$_o$3 is rejected and alternative H$_a$3 is concluded in this study.

Lastly, the variable social identity did not yield statistical significance in the multiple regression model (β= 0.017; t= 0.256; *p*=0.01). According to this outcome, it can be decided that there is inadequate evidence to support the rejection of the null hypotheses suggested between social identity and consumer attitudes. As a result, H$_a$4 is rejected in this study.

4.9 HYPOTHESES TESTING RESULTS FOR SECOND REGRESSION MODEL

Only one dependent variable (adoption) was being projected against a singular independent variable (consumers' attitude), therefore, linear regression was applied. The model attempted to test the last hypothesis that was projected in Section 1.3 as follows:

H$_0$5:   *Consumers' attitude does not have a significant positive influence on Generation Y consumers' adoption of social media marketing.*

H$_a$5:   *Consumers' attitude has a significant positive influence on Generation Y consumers' adoption of social media marketing.*

4.9.1 Projection of the regression model (second model)

The variable consumer attitudes were included into the regression model as the only predictor variable and adoption of social media marketing was elected as the dependent variable. The variable selection process was undertaken by applying the Enter method of regression analysis, through the Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) process. In addition to examining the relationship between social media marketing dimensions and consumers' attitudes, regression analysis was also conducted with the purpose to establish the predictive relationship between consumers' attitudes and adoption. Consumers' attitudes were entered the regression model as an independent variable (predictor), and adoption was entered the regression model as a dependent variable.

Table 4.15 presents this information.

Table 4.15: **Variables entered in the regression model (second model)**

Model 2		
Variables entered	**Variables removed**	**Method**
Consumer attitudes		Enter
a. Dependent variable: adoption All requested variables entered		

Source: Author's compilation (2020)

When autocorrelation exists, it means that observations lack in terms of independence, which can result in an undesirable scenario. Autocorrelation means that the regression errors are correlated either positively or negatively, indicating that the predictions made may seem to be significant when contrarily they may not actually be significant in any way. Regarding Durbin-Watson statistics, Maxwell and Harris (1995:490) assert that any value outside the $1.5 \leq d \leq 2.5$ range signifies the presence of autocorrelation, which is detrimental. Therefore, in the second regression model computed in this study, the residual correlations were within the 95 percent confidence interval closer to zero, as reported by a value of 0.841. Durbin-Watson statistics is presented in Table 4.16.

Table 4.16: **Durbin Watson statistic results (second regression model)**

Model 2		
Change Statistic		
Df	**Sig. F Change**	**Durbin Watson Statistic**
285	0.000	0.841

Source: Author's compilation (2020)

Multicollinearity was not a challenge regarding the second regression model. Therefore, since the Tolerance and VIF values have a common relationship, they are equal to one in a linear regression model where only a single predictor is entered the regression equation. The collinearity statistics are presented in Table 4.17.

Table 4.17:   Collinearity coefficients (second regression model)

Collinearity statistics		
	Tolerance	**VIF**
Consumer attitudes	1.000	1.000

Source: Author's compilation (2020)

Table 4.18 presents the diagnostics for assessing the collinearity issue pertaining to the second regression model.

Table 4.18:   Collinearity diagnostics (second regression model)

			Variance proportions	
Constructs	**Eigen value**	**Condition index**	**(Constant)**	**Consumer attitude**
Social media marketing adoption	1.997	1.000	0.00	0.00
Consumer attitudes	0.020	14.724	1.00	1.00

Source: Author's compilation (2020)

The presence of multicollinearity was evaluated by observing the condition index and eigenvalue for the predictor variable. The condition index was reported as 14.724 for consumer attitudes, which is below 30. The eigenvalue for consumer attitudes was reported as 0.020, which is satisfactory considering that eigenvalue should be well above the 0.01 threshold recommended by Tanvir and Nieves (2014:107). Therefore, given the satisfactory condition index and eigenvalue collinearity is not an issue and is not likely to affect the statistical estimates of the second regression model.

4.9.2   Assessing fit of the regression model (second regression model)

The following tables (Table 4.19 as well as Table 4.20) indicate the results of the regression analysis and the ANOVA test. A coefficient of determination of 0.076 with an adjusted R square of 0.073 (7.6% variation) was recorded. Therefore, 7.6% of variation indicates that social media marketing adoption among Generation Y consumers can be attributed to the independent variable labelled consumer attitudes. Therefore, the adequate fit was established for the second regression model.

Table 4.19:   Fit of the regression model (second regression model)

Model 2						
R	**R square**	**Adjusted R Square**	**Std. error of the estimate**	**Change Statistics**		
				Rsquare change	**F change**	**df1**
.276^a	0.076	0.073	0.408	0.076	23.432	1

Source: Author's compilation (2020)

Table 4.20 represents the analysis of variance (ANOVA) table that was examined with a view of determining the statistical significance with regards to the second regression model.

Table 4.20:   Analysis of variance (second regression model)

	Sum of squares	**Df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig**
Regression	3.899	1	3.899	23.432	.000
Residual	47.259	284	0.166		
Total	51.158	285			

Source: Author's compilation (2020)

Articulating from the ANOVA results above, an F value of 23.432 as well as a significance level of 0.000 (F= 23.432 p<0.05) submit that the independent variable constantly predicts the dependent variable. Therefore, it is to assume that consumer attitudes can be used as a predictor of social media marketing adoption among Generation Y consumers. Consequently, the null hypothesis can be rejected in approval of the alternative hypothesis. The next section discusses the regression coefficients reported on the second regression model.

4.9.3   Effects of individual variables (second regression model)

The regression coefficients are computed in order to comprehend the influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable entered the second regression model. Table 4.21 presents the regression coefficients pertaining to second regression model.

Table 4.21: Regression coefficients (second regression model)

	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardised coefficients			Decision
	B	**Standard error**	**B**	**T**	**Sig**	
(Constant)	2.393	0.323		7.414	0.000	
Consumer attitudes	0.362	0.075	0.276	4.841	0.000	Reject $H_0 5$ Conclude $H_a 5$

Source: Author's compilation (2020)

Consumer attitudes returned a statistically significant regression coefficient in the second regression model. Particularly, the predictor variable returned a regression coefficient of 0.276, which measures the relationship between consumer attitudes and adoption of social media marketing ($\beta = +0.276$; t-value= 4.841; $p<0.01$). Therefore, the null hypothesis $H_0 5$ is rejected whereas $H_a 5$ is concluded in this study.

4.10   DISCUSSION

The first hypothesis $H_a 1$ suggests that informativeness has a positive and significant influence on Generation Y consumers' attitude, while $H_0 1$ postulates that no such relationship and influence exists between the two variables. The empirical results reported in Section 4.8.3.3 present enough evidence that in-formativeness does certainly have a positive and significant influence on Generation Y consumers' attitude; as Table 4.14 reports that in-formativeness indeed recorded the highest Beta regression coefficient with regards to the first regression model ($\beta = +0.302$; t= 6.030; $p<0.01$). These results are in line with the findings of Lee and Liu (2016:364) who also found a positive and significant influence of in-formativeness on consumers' attitude in predicting positive user response to social media advertising. Consistently, Alalwan (2018:69) yielded similar findings of a positive and significant effect of in-formativeness on consumers' attitudes towards social media marketing. The findings indicate that enough information plays a vital role in influencing consumers' attitude. In other words, marketing practitioners need to offer comprehensive and adequate content in their social media marketing campaigns.

The second hypothesis attempted at testing whether source credibility was a predictor of consumers' attitude. The statistically significant results in the first regression model showed among the four constructs (selected dimensions of social media marketing) that source credibility

recorded the second highest Beta regression coefficient in the first regression model (β= +0.171; t= 2.767; $p<0.01$). These empirical results offered support for H_a2 in this study. Previous research by Wu and Wang (2011:452) found that source credibility has a positive and significant influence on brand attitude. Therefore, supported by empirical data, these findings mean that the communicator (source) plays a significant role in persuading consumers' attitude. In addition, the communicator's (source) status and reputation tend to influence overall consumer attitudes.

The third hypothesis postulated that there is existence of a positive and significant relationship between perceived enjoyment and consumers' attitude. The empirical findings supported the alternative hypothesis H_a3 (β= 0.169; t= 2.956; p= 0.01). A study conducted by Zhou (2013:1289) also provided evidence that perceived enjoyment indeed positively influences consumers' attitude. Therefore, perceived enjoyment was confirmed to be the third out of four constructs (selected activities of social media marketing) in terms of the strength of influence on the dependent variable, consumers' attitude.

The fourth hypothesis proposed that social identity has a positive and significant influence on consumers' attitude towards the adoption of social media marketing. The empirical results did not yield a statistically significant relationship in the regression model (β= 0.017; t= 0.256; p=0.01). As a result, H_a4 cannot be concluded in this study and thus an alternative hypothesis $H_04$is accepted. H_04 is accepted and alternative hypothesis H_a4 rejected. It can therefore be concluded that social identity is not a significant predictor of Generation Y consumers' attitude towards the adoption of social media marketing.

Finally, Section 4.9 presents the results of the fifth hypothesis, which proposed that there is a relationship between consumers' attitude and adoption of social media marketing. The empirical results offered adequate evidence that the intervening variable consumers' attitude positively and significantly influences Generation Y consumers' adoption of social media marketing (β= + 0.276; t-value= 4.841; $p<0.01$). Therefore, the hypothesis H_05 was rejected and H_a5 was concluded instead.

4.11 SYNOPSIS

The purpose of this study was to examine Generation Y consumers' perception on adoption and attitudes towards selected social media marketing activities in a Southern African context (Gauteng region). The empirical results were reported in this chapter. This involved the discussion of the reliability of the pilot study as well as the main survey. A descriptive analysis was undertaken on social media usage (Section B), source credibility (Section C), informativeness

(Section D), perceived enjoyment (Section E), social identity (Section F), consumers' attitudes (Section G) as well as demographic profiles. Frequencies, charts, graphs and percentages were utilised to describe the response of the study's participants.

The essential purpose of this study was to examine the nature of the relationship between social media marketing selected activities, consumers' attitudes and adoption of social media marketing. In this regard, correlation and regression analysis were undertaken to further validate the theoretical background of the relationship that exists between these constructs. Therefore, a positive linear association of the constructs was also established and validated.

Reliability and validity valuation were also undertaken leading to Cronbach alpha coefficients being computed for the overall scale and for every activity to measure the internal consistency of the measuring instrument.

The final chapter provides an overview of the study as well as addresses the accomplishment of the research objectives. In this regard, the objectives are set into perspective with a purpose to find synergy in terms of conclusions, recommendations and limitations originating from the study.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE STUDY

5

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Social media marketing has revolutionised society's social contacts and has also become more and more popular as a marketing instrument for the management and establishment of customer relationships (Lagrosen & Gruden 2014:255). Social network services such as Facebook and Instagram have reported approximately 1 billion daily active users and it is further reported that adults in the United States spend an average of 45 minutes daily engaging in social media via their smartphones devices (Koay, Ong, Khoo & Yeoh 2019:291). These statistics indicate the exhilarated use of social network channels as a platform of marketing communication for marketing practitioners.

The main purpose of this study was to examine the effect of social media marketing dimensions on consumer attitudes and adoption among Generation Y consumers. Social media marketing dimensions, namely, in-formativeness, source credibility, perceived enjoyment and social identity were considered as they play a significant role in influencing consumers' attitudes towards the adoption of social media marketing.

This chapter discuss how the theoretical and empirical objectives stated at the beginning of this investigation were accomplished. Specifically, the achievement regarding theoretical objectives originates from the theory and secondary data (desk-research) conducted in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3. In addition, the achievement of the empirical research objectives originated from the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the data explained in Chapters 3 and 4 of this study.

5.2 ACHIEVEMENT OF THE RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The primary objective formulated at the beginning of this study was to examine the effect of social media marketing dimensions on consumer attitudes and adoption among Generation Y consumers (refer to Section 1.4.1). In lieu of addressing this primary objective by applying a quantitative research approach, a decision was taken to adhere to a dual-pronged approach towards collecting data in terms of the review of both secondary and primary data (empirical data). Therefore, to support the research objective stated in Section 1.4.1, six theoretical objectives as well as three empirical objectives were formulated.

5.2.1 Achievement of the theoretical objectives

The theoretical objectives of this investigation were addressed through a thorough review of secondary sources such as peer reviewed journal articles, published reports, conference proceedings, textbooks and the Internet. The theoretical objectives as stated in Section 1.4.2 are reviewed and outlined in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Achievement of theoretical objectives

Specific research objective	Theoretical research objective being addressed	Section where the research objective was addressed in this study
Theoretical objective 1	Outline the fundamentals of social media	Section 2.4 (sub-sections 2.4.1, 2.4.2 and 2.4.3)
Theoretical objective 2	To conduct a literature review on social media marketing	Section 2.5 (sub-sections 2.5.1, 2.5.2 and 5.5.3)
Theoretical objective 3	Gain an understanding of social media marketing dimensions that influence consumers' attitude	Section 2.5.4
Theoretical objective 4	To conduct a literature review on consumers' attitude.	Section 2.6
Theoretical objective 5	To provide an overview of social media marketing adoption	Section 2.7
Theoretical objective 6	Conduct a literature review on the Generation Y cohort	Section 2.2

Source: Author's compilation (2020)

The first theoretical research objective in relation to the fundamentals of social media was addressed in Section 2.4. It relates to the advent of social media, its conceptualisation both globally as well as from a South African setting. Beginning from this departure point provides a necessary theoretic base and central importance from a consumer and marketing point of view. In addition, South African statistics pertaining to social platforms and the number of active users (refer to Table 2.1) digital landscape (refer to Figure 2.3) as well as their ratings in terms of active social media platforms (refer to Figure 2.4) are provided in sub-Sections 2.4.1, 2.4.2 and 2.4.3.

The second theoretical research objective aimed at conducting a literature review on social media marketing was addressed in Section 2.5. First, social media marketing was conceptualised from

different articulations of different researchers. Thereafter, a summary of definitions of social media marketing from different researchers was provided in a table form in Section 2.5.1 (refer to Table 2.2). Subsequently, definitions were linked to each other and summarised to articulate a single point of view utilising evidence from previous studies. Moreover, social media marketing communication tools and their uses were articulated and summarised in Section 2.5.2 (refer to Table 2.3). Additionally, benefits and pitfalls pertaining to social media marketing from marketing practitioners and consumers' point of view are provided in Section 2.5.3.

The third theoretical research objective in relation to the understanding of social media marketing dimensions that influence consumers 'attitude was achieved in Section 2.5.4. Social media marketing dimensions, namely, in-formativeness (refer to Section 2.5.4.1), source credibility (refer to Section 2.5.4.2), perceived enjoyment (Section 2.5.4.3) as well as social identity (Section 2.5.4.4) are defined and clearly articulated with supporting evidence and literature from previous studies. Thereafter, each dimension is explained on how it may be related or can significantly influence consumers' attitude as well as its relationship with regards to social media.

The fourth theoretical research objective that attempts to conduct a literature review on consumers' attitude was addressed in Section 2.6. This section provides a detailed definition of consumers' attitudes with support from previous literature and different researchers. Commencing from this departure point provides a definition of consumers' attitude in the context of this study. Moreover, consumers' attitude was associated and connected with TAM (technology acceptance model) and TRA (theory of reasoned action) which were adopted theories for this study. Additionally, the Tripartite model of attitude was presented as well as the elements that constitute the model (refer to Figure 2.6.). Additionally, elements that constitute consumers' attitude, namely the behaviour element, affective element and cognitive element were thoroughly articulated utilising evidence from previous investigations.

The fifth theoretical research objective seeks to provide an overview of social media marketing adoption. This is achieved in Section 2.7, whereby the definitions of adoption are provided in the context of social media marketing. Furthermore, Section 2.7 narrowed down the specific focus of this investigation by relating adoption from social media marketing perspective to TAM (technology acceptance model). Moreover, the fifth theoretical research objective was consolidated through a discussion of integrating TAM with the adoption of social media marketing.

With reference to the sixth theoretical research objective, a review of literature was conducted on Generation Y consumers. The objective was achieved in Section 2.2. The discussion revealed that

Generation Y consumers constitute 75 million consumers in America alone, has flexible income at their disposal and they have grown in an era of technological progress. As a result, Generation Y consumers have become the area of interest for researchers. Section 2.2 also revealed that this generational cohort (Generation Y) intensively engage in social media and have experienced a common political, social, historic and economic environment.

5.2.2 Achievement of the empirical research objectives

A set of empirical research objectives were formulated and outlined in Section 1.4.3. They were addressed by conducting fieldwork and liaising directly with a sample for data collection. In this regard, the data were collected with a view of testing the conceptual model for the study and in lieu of providing statistical evidence to support the decision regarding the set of hypotheses stated in Section 1.3. Therefore, the previous chapter (Chapter 4) presents the empirical findings of the data analysis. The achievement of the empirical research objectives is discussed next.

- **To determine the influence of social media marketing dimensions on Generation Y consumers' attitude**

The first empirical research objective communicated in this study relates to determining the influence of social media marketing dimemsions on Generation Y consumers attitude. Namely, the findings of the descriptive statistics (refer to Section 4.4.3) attested that social media marketing dimensions can be taken into cognisance when determining consumers' attitude. This outcome was ascertainable since the mean values presented were all higher than the pre-determined value of 3.0. This alludes that the respondents returned a greater degree of agreement regarding each social media marketing dimension that influence consumers' attitude. The presented standard deviation values for each social media marketing activity ranged between -1 and +1 indicated significant responses provided by Generation Y consumers.

Section 4.7 illustrates the correlation matrix that was computed. The same section alludes to Generation Y consumers' attitude and social media marketing dimensions, as stated in the first empirical research objective. Positive correlations were established in this work after correlating consumers' attitude with informativeness ($r=+0.278$); $p<0.01$), source credibility ($r=+0.257$; $p<0.01$), perceived enjoyment ($r=+0.214$; $p<0.01$) and social identity ($r=+0.179$; $p<0.01$). The established correlation coefficients were of weak but positive relationship, signalling the influence of each social media marketing dimension on Generation Y consumers' attitude. Furthermore, the statistically significant correlations represent the existence of linearity among social media marketing dimensions with the intervening variable, consumers' attitude.

- **To determine the influence of consumers' attitude on the adoption of social media marketing in Southern Gauteng**

The second empirical research objective formulated relates to determining the influence of consumers' attitude on the adoption of social media marketing. This objective was achieved by conducting multiple statistical analysis that connects the two variables (Generation Y consumers' attitude and adoption of social media marketing). First, correlation analysis was undertaken, where a positive relationship was established between Generation Y consumers' attitude and the adoption of social media marketing ($r=+0.276$; $p<0.01$). The results indicate that consumers' attitude poses a direct relationship with a linearity effect on the Generation Y consumers' adoption on social media marketing.

The results presented in Section 4.9 pertaining to the second regression model served to achieve the second empirical research objective stated in this research. A positive path was established between Generation Y consumers' attitude and adoption of social media marketing. Furthermore, the path returned adequate fit (adjusted $R^2=0.073$).

- **To empirically test the model that predicts the influence of social media marketing dimensions on consumers' attitude and the adoption of social media marketing among Generation Y consumers'**

Upon testing the model comprising four social media marketing dimensions, consumers' attitude and adoption of social media marketing, Figure 5.1 reveals the outcome of the empirical testing procedure.
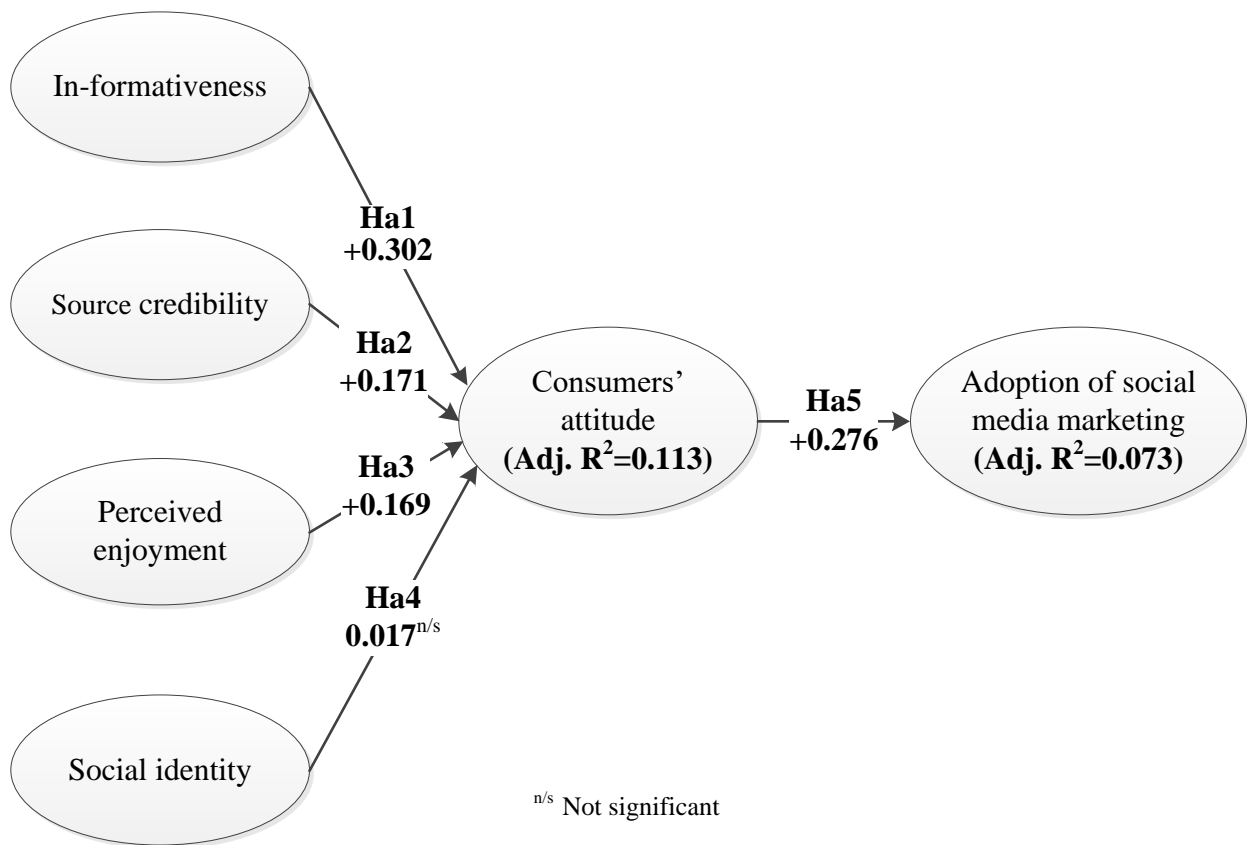
Figure 5.1: **A conceptual model on the adoption of social media marketing**

Source: Author's compilation (2020)

The conceptual model (research model) comprising five relative hypotheses statements tested in Section 4.8, which led to the achievement of the third empirical research objective. Two regression models were estimated and the empirical data set were then measured against the results of the specified standardised regression coefficients. In the first regression model, the results presented regarding hypotheses testing corroborated that informativeness has a positive and statistically significant influence on consumers' attitude, where the variable recorded the highest Beta value ($\beta = +0.302$; $t = 6.030$; $p < 0.01$). As a result, a decision was taken to reject H_01 and conclude the alternative hypothesis H_a1. The results are in line with the research findings of Lee and Llyoo (2016:364) who also found a significant influence of informativeness on consumers' attitude. Therefore, the results along this path serve as evidence that indeed relevant and enough information is vital in influencing Generation Y consumers' attitude.

The second hypothesis intended to test the influence of source credibility on consumers' attitude towards the adoption of social media marketing. The results acquired from the hypothesis testing corroborated that source credibility has a positive influence on consumers' attitude ($\beta = +0.171$; $t = 2.767$; $p < 0.01$). Therefore, a decision was taken to reject H_02 and accept H_a2 instead. The findings

are consistent with research conducted by Wu and Wang (2011:452) that advocate source credibility indeed positively and significantly influence consumers' attitudes towards brands. The findings articulate that the element of trustworthiness as well as reputation play a significant role in influencing consumers' attitude regarding the Generation Y cohort.

In relation to the third hypothesis, perceived enjoyment was found to have a significant influence on consumers' attitude (β=+0.169; t=2.956; $p<0.01$). A statistically informed decision was undertaken to reject H_03 and alternatively accept H_a3. Nonetheless, perceived enjoyment recorded the weakest but statistically significant influence on consumers' attitude. Conceivably, the weak influential strength of this variable can be attributed to the fact that the feeling of enjoyment does not necessarily have direct influence of Generation Y consumers' attitude.

With respect to the fourth hypothesis, the sample data could not establish enough evidence for the relationship between social identity and consumers' attitude (β= 0.017; t= 0.256; $p=0.01$). In this regard, H_04 is accepted and alternative hypothesis H_a4 rejected.

Finally, with regards to the influence of Generation Y consumers' attitude on the adoption of social media marketing, a second regression model was projected. The empirical findings provided sound evidence of a positive influence of Generation Y consumers' attitude on the adoption of social media marketing (β= + 0.276; t-value= 4.841; $p<0.01$). This outcome indicates that consumers' attitude can consequently influence Generation Y consumers towards the adoption of social media marketing. Therefore, H_05 was rejected and H_a5 was concluded, based on the sample data.

The contributions of empirical evidence of this dissertation are discussed in the next section.

5.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The current study is the first to investigate the effect of social media marketing dimensions on consumer attitudes and adoption among Generation Y consumers within a Southern Gauteng context. The findings provide fruitful implications for both marketing practitioners and academics. From an academic point of view, this study contributes to the existing literature on the Generation Y cohort, consumers' behaviour and attitude as well as social media as a marketing platform. From a marketing practitioners' perspective, this investigation provides insights on how to improve and design effective marketing campaigns that are facilitated and communicated on various social media platforms.

It is evident that modern consumers are technology conscious and exposed to a complex and large amount of information communicated through various social media platforms by known as well as unknown sources (Soares, Proenca & Kandampully 2017:521). This investigation contributes to the body of knowledge by testing a research model that presents a cohort of social media marketing dimensions to be considered when assessing Generation Y consumers' attitude and further considers what leads to the adoption of social media as a marketing tool. Relatively, this study has confirmed informativeness, source credibility and perceived enjoyment as dimensions that can influence consumers' attitude towards the adoption of social media marketing. Furthermore, consumers' attitude was established as a predictor of the adoption of social media marketing. Accordingly, the research model proposed in this study is simple to apply and could be utilised by marketing practitioners to communicate effective marketing campaigns using various social media platforms at their disposal.

5.4 LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

Although this dissertation has provided relevant and significant findings with regards to understanding Generation Y consumers', consumer behaviour and attitude as well as the adoption of social media marketing, it is also of utmost importance to take into cognisance its limitations, several of which could be used to provide a foundation in relation to opportunities for further research. Regarding the scope, a major limitation is that it concentrated only on Generation Y consumers who are based and reside in the Southern Gauteng region. This geographical consideration articulates that the results may not present the perception of South African Generation Y consumers in an accurate manner. To increase the scope for a comprehensive picture of Generation Y consumers, it would be of interest to concentrate on other provinces and regions inclusive of South Africa. Accordingly, the results presented here would also require further empirical verification when applied in different regions and provinces.

Another limitation is attributed to the use of a single method of data collection (data was collected quantitatively). The negative outcome of this methodological choice is that the study lacks the accuracy of a longitudinal study that aims to measure perceptions of consumers under investigation over a long (extended) period. On the other hand, the study did not acquire the benefits of conducting mixed or triangulation methods approach (making follow-ups to the respondents provided in the quantitative design). Nevertheless, it would be worthwhile for future researchers to utilise both quantitative and qualitative paradigms to supplement each other. In addition, future research should consider using a marketing-based experimental methodology

where respondents are required to articulate their perceptions on marketing campaigns communicated on various social media platforms.

The third limitation is that the study utilised a snowball sampling method which is non-probabilistic in nature to select respondents. The sampling procedure is not based on any probability estimation, and its use may not present the full spectrum of the Generation Y consumers. The empirical findings of this study therefore may be applicable to participating respondents only. As a result, its findings are not necessarily a true reflection for the population at large. Moreover, a snowball sampling method dispenses implications for sampling error that has the potential to contaminate the findings. Future research should therefore be conducted using sampling methods which are probabilistic in nature in order to permit statistical estimations.

In terms of the study's theoretical limitations, the researcher selected social media marketing dimensions from previous studies upon determining the primary factors influencing consumers' attitude. This study also used Social Exchange Theory (SET), Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and Technology Acceptance Model to support the framework in this work. As an outcome of its empirical investigation, only three social media marketing dimensions were statistically significant, namely, informativeness, source credibility and perceived enjoyment. Consequently, future researchers should consider other elements such as social influence, trust and perceived web design that were found to be statistically significant by Bashir and Madhavaiah (2015:47) in order to deliver a balanced estimation of Generation Y consumers' attitude towards the adoption of social media marketing. Additionally, other theories such as Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) should be considered with an objective to evaluate and assess effects of marketing communications from a social media context.

It is vital to note that the limitations do not necessarily contradict the contributions of this study but provide further opportunities for future research. Rather than to minimise the impact of the findings in this study, the limitations outlined in this work establish boundaries and aims to identify future opportunities for research. The following section articulates the recommendations emanating from the study.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the analysis of the literature review and considering the empirical findings of this study, the following recommendations are outlined:

5.5.1 Use software technology as an essential attribute to empower message content

The fact that in-formativeness returned the highest predictive power among all the predictors tested indicates the significance of this element. Hamouda (2018:428) states that relevant and up-to-date information is persuasive in the influence of consumers' attitude in relation to the adoption of social media marketing. It is evident that the primary objective of engaging in social media platforms is to seek for and exchange information. As a result, marketing practitioners are encouraged to fully understand software technologies that help improve the quality of information communicated on social media platforms. Furthermore, marketing practitioners should provide enough information when communicating marketing intelligence on social media platforms. In addition, the more enough and relevant information is communicated the more effect on the marketing campaign communicated on social media.

5.5.2 Emphasise source credibility as an influencer of consumers' attitude

Shared content on social media could be generated by both consumers and marketing companies (Dedeoglu 2019:515). Consumer-generated content is the outcome of individuals' numerous motivations, namely, socialisation, seeking social status and entertainment, whereas organisation-generated content seeks to attract customers. Marketing practitioners as well as marketing organisations are therefore encouraged to generate content on social media as well as their official websites in order to validate source credibility. Moreover, marketing organisations are encouraged to establish content regulations in order to eliminate marketing activities that consumers perceive inauthentic, intrusive and out of place. In addition, marketing organisations and marketing practitioners are encouraged to establish social media platforms that facilitate consumer-generated content and can be regulated. Marketing organisations are also encouraged to be transparent in relation to their social media generated content as transparency is known to supplement source credibility.

5.5.3 Accentuate perceived enjoyment as core attribute of consumers' attitude

Soares and Pinho (2014:247) state that social media platforms stimulate the imagination and provide users with a relief from a stressful life and serve as a form of entertainment. Consequently, marketing practitioners are encouraged to stimulate consumers' imagination and communicate entertaining marketing campaigns on social media platforms. Pipitwanichakarn and Wongtada (2015:325) measure perceived enjoyment with three items to be interesting, enjoyable and exciting. Marketing practitioners should therefore ensure these elements are included in their social media marketing campaigns. Marketers are also encouraged to prioritise in creating a

feeling of fun and excitement in order to create awareness and interest through social media marketing campaigns. Marketers should moreover consider including consumer competitions in their social media marketing campaigns in the form of games in order to enhance perceived enjoyment.

5.5.4 Invest in social media marketing to realise its adoption as a marketing tool

It is evident that social media has revolutionised society's social contacts and has become more and more popular and useful as a marketing instrument for the management and establishment of customer relationships (Lagrosen & Grunden 2014:255). In this regard, marketing organisations and practitioners are encouraged to invest more in social media marketing campaigns and the organisation's existence in the digital arena, which can result in cost efficient communication with consumers as well as capitalisation of conversations among prospective consumers through eWOM (electronic word-of-mouth). Trust is a critical element in any organisation's marketing efforts. Investment in social media marketing could enable marketing organisations and practitioners to build constant relationships by engaging their consumers via interactions and exchange of ideas. Intensive investment in social media marketing could assist marketing organisations as well as marketing practitioners create highly interactive platforms of which users could utilise to share, co-create, modify and discuss user-generated content.

In addition, it is evident that marketing organisations should incorporate their marketing activities with the 4th industrial revolution. Social media platforms encompass the spheres of marketing power and reach. To this end, these organisations and practitioners should adopt social media as a comprehensive marketing avenue in order to occupy their position in the digital space.

5.6 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Drawing from the findings of this study, it is evident that the 4th industrial revolution has arrived, and social media has become an integrated part of our lives. The success of any social media marketing campaign depends largely on marketing practitioners understanding of the target audience. Marketing managers must carefully ponder which elements they should monitor in social media marketing, taking into cognisance the difference between social media platforms. It was established in this investigation that the adoption of social media marketing is influenced by an assortment of elements. In addition, the study provides insights into the significant role of social media marketing in the modern marketplace. Moreover, marketing organisations should not be strangers to the avenues and practices of being active and present in the digital landscape as well as understanding the effects of these practices in action.

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EXAMINING THE EFFECT OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING DIMENSIONS ON CONSUMER ATTITUDES AND ADOPTION AMONG GENERATION Y CONSUMERS

Dear participant

I am currently undertaking a research project for MTech degree in the discipline of Marketing. The purpose of this study is to examine the effect of social media marketing dimensions on consumer attitudes and adoption among Generation Y consumers in Southern Gauteng. As such, the study aims to determine consumers' attitudes towards social media marketing in various social media platforms.

Consumers who are currently active users of social media services are encouraged to participate in this study, as their contributions are considered valuable for the completion of this study. Kindly assist us by completing the attached questionnaire. The questionnaire is user-friendly and should take, approximately 10 minutes to complete. All responses are confidential, and the results will only be used for research purposes, outlined in the form of statistical data.

Thank you – your assistance and contribution is highly appreciated.
Department of Marketing
Vaal University of Technology (Vanderbijlpark Campus)

APPENDIX 2: QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES

Please answer the following questions by selecting the appropriate box.

A1	**Gender:**	Male		Female

A2	**Age range:**	18-20 years	21-30 years	31-40 years	41-50 years	Over 50 years

A3	**Ethnic group:**	Black African	Coloured	Indian/Asian	White
	Other (Please specify)				

A4	**Marital status:**	Single/Never been married	Married	Separated	Divorced	Widowed
	Other (specify):					

A5	**Please indicate your highest qualification:**		
	Grade 12 / Matric	Diploma/Degree	Honours/BTech
	Post graduate qualification	Other (specify):	

A6	**Please indicate your monthly income (before tax):**				
	Less than R5000	R5000 – R10 000	R10 001 – R20 000	R20 001 – R30 000	Above R30 000

SECTION B: SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE INFORMATION

B1	Have you used any social media network in the past 6 months (between March 2019 and September 2019)?	Yes	No

If your response to B1 is YES, then you can proceed to complete the rest of the questions in this questionnaire. If your answer is NO, then you are not eligible to participate in this study:

B2	Which is your most preferred social media service?				
	Facebook	Twitter	YouTube	Instagram	Other (specify):

B3	**How many times do you engage in social media services on average per year?**				
	Once a year (annually)	At least twice a year (bi-annually)	At least four times a year (quarterly)	At least 12 times a year (monthly)	At least 52 times a year (weekly)

B4	**What is the average expenditure amount that you spend engaging in social media activities?**			
	Less than R150	R151 – R500	R501 – R1000	More than R1000

SECTION C: SOURCE CREDIBILITY IN SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

	This section describes your overall evaluations regarding the source credibility in social media. Please indicate in your opinion, the extent to which you agree with the following statements anchored along 1 (Strongly Disagree), 2 (Disagree), 3 (Neither agree nor disagree), 4 (Agree) and 5 Strongly Agree). Mark only one number with an "X" for each statement.								
C1	I consider social media marketing as being sincere	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
C2	I consider social media marketing as being honest	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
C3	I consider social media marketing as being trustworthy	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
C4	I consider social media marketing as being credible	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
C5	I consider social media marketing as being biased	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
C6	I consider social media marketing as being reputable	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
C7	I consider social media marketing as being reliable	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
C8	I consider social media marketing as being truthful	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree

SECTION D: INFORMATIVENESS IN SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

	This section describes your overall evaluations regarding the informativeness in social media. Please indicate in your opinion, the extent to which you agree with the following statements anchored along 1 (Strongly Disagree), 2 (Disagree), 3 (Neither agree nor disagree), 4 (Agree) and 5 (Strongly Agree). Mark only one number with an "X" for each statement.								
D1	Social media marketing is a good source of product information	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
D2	Social media marketing supplies relevant product information	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
D3	Social media marketing provides timely information	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
D4	Social media marketing is a good source of up-to-date product information	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
D5	Social media marketing is a convenient source of product information	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
D6	Social media marketing supplies complete product information	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree

SECTION E: PERCEIVED ENJOYMENT IN SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

	This section describes your overall evaluations regarding perceived enjoyment in social media. Please indicate in your opinion, the extent to which you agree with the following statements anchored along 1 (Strongly Disagree), 2 (Disagree), 3 (Neither agree nor disagree), 4 (Agree) and 5 (Strongly Agree). Mark only one number with an "X" for each statement.							
E1	I entertain myself using social networks	**Strongly disagree**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**Strongly agree**
E2	I like to use social networks because it is exciting	**Strongly disagree**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**Strongly agree**
E3	The use of social networks makes me happy	**Strongly disagree**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**Strongly agree**
E4	The use of social networks stimulates my curiosity	**Strongly disagree**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**Strongly agree**
E5	The use of social networks stimulates my imagination	**Strongly disagree**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**Strongly agree**
E6	The use of social networks provides relief from a stressful life	**Strongly disagree**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**Strongly agree**

SECTION F: SOCIAL IDENTITY IN SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

	This section describes your overall evaluations regarding social identity in social media. Please indicate in your opinion, the extent to which you agree with the following statements anchored along 1 (Strongly Disagree), 2 (Disagree), 3 (Neither agree nor disagree), 4 (Agree) and 5 (Strongly Agree). Mark only one number with an "X" for each statement.							
F1	My identity is like other members of the community	**Strongly disagree**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**Strongly agree**
F2	I have a sense of strong belongingness to social media community	**Strongly disagree**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**Strongly agree**
F3	Social media community's identity reflects me image	**Strongly disagree**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**Strongly agree**
F4	Social network services help form a relationship with others	**Strongly disagree**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**Strongly agree**

SECTION G: CONSUMER ATTITUDES TOWARDS SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

This section describes your overall evaluations regarding consumer attitudes towards social media. Please indicate in your opinion, the extent to which you agree with the following statements anchored along 1 (Strongly Disagree), 2 (Disagree), 3 (Neither agree nor disagree), 4 (Agree) and 5 (Strongly Agree). Mark only one number with an "X" for each statement.

G1	It is necessary for companies to use social media marketing sites such as Facebook for purposes of marketing	**Strongly disagree**	1	2	3	4	5	**Strongly agree**
G2	It is a good idea to market with applications such as YouTube, Facebook, and blogs, generally known as social media marketing	**Strongly disagree**	1	2	3	4	5	**Strongly agree**
G3	Marketing with applications such as YouTube, Facebook and blogs, generally known has social media marketing, is very interesting	**Strongly disagree**	1	2	3	4	5	**Strongly agree**
G4	I think that companies should take part in social media marketing sites such as Facebook	**Strongly disagree**	1	2	3	4	5	**Strongly agree**
G5	I like marketing with applications such as YouTube, Facebook and blogs, generally known as social media marketing	**Strongly disagree**	1	2	3	4	5	**Strongly agree**
G6	I find it useful to market with applications such as YouTube, Facebook, and blogs, generally known as social media marketing	**Strongly disagree**	1	2	3	4	5	**Strongly agree**

SECTION H: ADOPTION OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

This section describes your overall evaluations regarding adoption of social media. Please indicate in your opinion, the extent to which you agree with the following statements anchored along 1 (Strongly Disagree), 2 (Disagree), 3 (Neither agree nor disagree), 4 (Agree) and 5 (Strongly Agree). Mark only one number with an "X" for each statement.

H1	My usage is extensive; therefore, I continue using it	**Strongly disagree**	1	2	3	4	5	**Strongly agree**
H2	My usage is active; therefore, I am a frequent user of social media	**Strongly disagree**	1	2	3	4	5	**Strongly agree**
H3	Overall, I adopt using social media because of its usefulness	**Strongly disagree**	1	2	3	4	5	**Strongly agree**
H4	My usage has substantially changed my life	**Strongly disagree**	1	2	3	4	5	**Strongly agree**
H5	My usage has impacted my life	**Strongly disagree**	1	2	3	4	5	**Strongly agree**
H6	I expect my social media usage to increase in the future	**Strongly disagree**	1	2	3	4	5	**Strongly agree**
H7	Overall, I am satisfied with my social media usage	**Strongly disagree**	1	2	3	4	5	**Strongly agree**
H8	My usage has benefited my life	**Strongly disagree**	1	2	3	4	5	**Strongly agree**

Thank you for your time and co-operation!
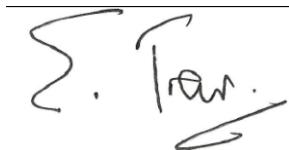
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2 January 2021

LANGUAGE EDITING

This is to certify that I language-edited the dissertation, "The effect of social media marketing dimensions on consumer attitudes and adoption among Generation Y consumers", by Keitumetse Keta, for the MTech in Marketing degree, in the Faculty of Management Sciences, Vaal University of Technology.

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