

**A FRAMEWORK FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING
STRATEGIES IN POLITICAL CAMPAIGNING**

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**Nelson Mandela
Metropolitan
University**

Business School
Leaders for tomorrow

**A FRAMEWORK FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING
STRATEGIES IN POLITICAL CAMPAIGNING**

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PORT ELIZABETH**

DECLARATION

I, Kayode A. Ayankoya, hereby declare that:

- This work has not been previously submitted in full or partial fulfilment of the requirement or candidature of any degree.
- This dissertation is being submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree on Masters in Business Administration.
- This dissertation is the result of my independent work and investigation, except where otherwise stated. All the sources used is documented in the attached reference list and duly acknowledged.
- I hereby give consent for my dissertation, if accepted, to be available as a library material and for interlibrary loan.

Kayode A. Ayankoya

November 2013

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I count myself to be absolutely blessed to have the right people around me at different phases of my life. Hence I consider people – pastors, friends, family, colleagues, teachers and coaches as my greatest asset. In the course of my MBA programme, I have been overwhelmed by support from different people and I would like to say that I am grateful. To mention just a few, I will like to thank and acknowledge the following:

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- Ms Pamela Nyokwana of the NMMU business school library, for your help and assistance.

ABSTRACT

The concept of social media has grown rapidly in the last years. This can be attributed to the rate of adoption and the penetration of social media around the world. Currently, there is an estimate of over two billion people that are actively using social media. The increased usage of social media has changed the way people interact and communicate. Literature suggests that Internet-enabled social networks (relationship between or among individuals and groups) are developing faster than offline relationships. Previous studies have linked social media to the social network theories that define social relationships based on the actors, the ties that exist and the flow of resources among them. This is made possible by social networking sites and other Internet enabled services that allow friends to meet, connect and interact.

Social media allow for individuals, groups or organisations to build their social network of friends and followers. It also facilitates the formation of communities with common interest. Social media facilitate the creation and exchange of content such as text messages, images, audio and video formats among individuals or communities that share a common interest or belong to the same social network.

Social capital theorists suggest that the ties that exist in social interaction like on social media have the ability to create benefit for the actors in the networks. This provides the foundation to study the benefits that individuals and organisations can obtain from social media. The opportunity to target and communicate directly with the target market and potential customer qualifies social media as a valuable marketing tool and an important component of the integrated marketing communication.

As a marketing communication tool, social media introduces a completely new paradigm into marketing communications. Therefore marketing professionals and academics are continuously seeking how to take advantage of social media for different industries. In the field of politics, the use of marketing concepts to engage voters and drive collective participation in political processes has become critical due to stiff competition.

The use of social media for political campaigning and engagement could be beneficial, but politicians and political organisations are not taking full advantage of the concept. Previous studies show that organisations are aware of the opportunities that social media could provide for their organisations. However, they are reluctant because they are faced with the problems of lack of information on how to implement social media for business purposes.

This treatise investigates the approach and critical success factors for the use of social media for political campaigning and engagement. To evaluate the conceptual framework that was suggested by this study based on the literature review and case studies, an empirical study was conducted among the members of the Democratic Alliance in the Eastern Cape. A survey was conducted among the members of the Democratic Alliance in the Eastern Cape using a questionnaire and 92 responses were received. The questionnaire measured the respondents' social media usage, level of political engagement, perception on the use of social media for political engagement and the level of political activities on social media. Also, hypotheses were tested to examine the assumption that there might be an association between the respondents' gender, population group and level of political activities on social media.

The findings of this study indicate that a structured approach, a strong emphasis of engaging followers socially and micro-targeting are critical to effective implementation of social media for political campaigning and engagement. Other factors include the direct involvement of leadership, listening and encouragement of user generated contents. This study concludes that political organisations can use social media to establish multi-levelled social networks that provide access to their target audience and also reach potential audience through their friends. This social connectedness can then be translated into political social capital for campaign and engagement purposes.

Keywords: Social Media, Social Networks, Social Capital, Social Media Marketing, Political Marketing.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

1.1 Introduction

The social media concept involve the use of Internet based applications and services for communication, collaboration, creation and exchange of contents by individuals and groups (Mangold and Faulds, 2009; Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). The main concept behind social media is the communications that take place, how the communications take place and the relationships that develop based on those communications. However, the Internet based platforms that facilitate the communication and relationship on social media are known as social network sites (Boyd and Ellison, 2008). Social network sites allow individuals and groups to develop, maintain and stay connected to a network of other individuals and people with common interests.

The rapid growth and acceptance of social media concept among various spectrums of people can be explained by the social networks theory. The theory highlights the social relationship and interactions that exist among actors in the form of friendship, work relationship, etc. (Kane, Alavi, Labianca and Borgatti, 2013). Lately, the social networks theory has received a great deal of attention and it has been said to offer a description, analysis and explanation for the behaviours on social media platforms (Kane et al., 2013).

Literature shows that the flow and the quality of the content that is being exchanged in a social network can generate benefits. The values created in a social network as a result of exchanges include trust, common purpose and coordination (Lin, 2001; Kane et al., 2013). This ability to create values based on social relationships is entrenched in the social capital theory that suggest that investment in relationships can be made with expected economic, political, labour or other form of returns (Lin, 2001). Previous research established that the social relationships created on social networks have embedded resources, opportunities and dividends defined as social capital (Lin, 2001; Hersberger, Rioux and Cruitt, 2005; Finkbeiner, 2012). On this premise, businesses and organisations can take advantage of social media to create value.

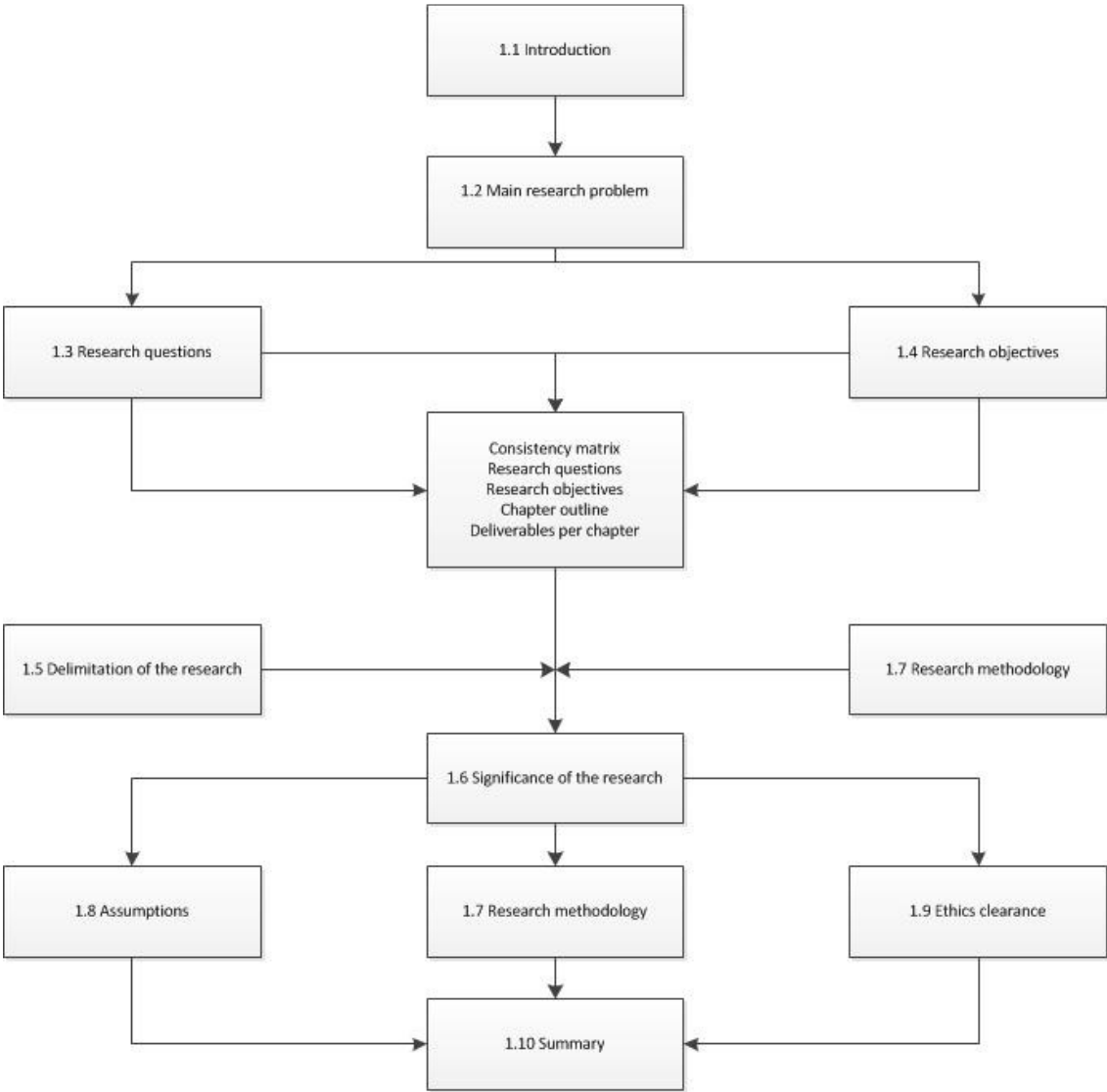
According to the statistics from Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, there is an estimated 1 billion people that use at least one social media platform globally (Shaughnessy, 2012). This makes social media a very important platform for businesses and organisations to reach their target audience (Mangold and Faulds, 2009). Although the main focus of social media is interpersonal relationships, Gillin and Schwartzman (2011) suggest that social media can offer social capital to businesses and organisations for gathering marketing intelligence and identifying opportunities by listening to the target market and monitoring social behaviours on social media. Gillin and Schwartzman (2011) further suggest that social media can also be used for building and managing the organisation's brand. This can be achieved by developing visibility as a thought leader in the industry, customer support, crisis management, customer feedback system and even for market research.

The social capital offering of social media platforms positions it as a strategic marketing tool especially for marketing communication and brand development (Mangold and Faulds, 2009). Despite identified potentials, there seems to be a lack of understanding of how to use social media profitably for business and organisational use (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). This could be as a result of the fact that the use of social media in marketing brings about a complete change in paradigm (Mangold and Faulds, 2009). It provides the customer with the opportunity to have a say in marketing communication, determine content and even shape an organisation's brand (Mangold and Faulds, 2009; Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010).

The application of marketing concepts and principles in the field of politics known as political marketing have developed prominence recently (Savigny, 2003; Osuagwu, 2008; Kreiss, 2012a). As with the other areas of business, social media marketing offers several opportunities in political campaigning (Dale and Strauss, 2009). Politicians and political organisations have recorded success in the use of social media for political campaigning (Kreiss, 2012a; Howard and Parks 2012). However a structured approach is yet to gain prominence because of insufficient information (Chikandiwa, Contogiannis and Jembere, 2013).

As a result of the lack of sufficient information, politicians and political organisations are also missing out on the opportunities they can get from the use of social media as part of their marketing strategies (Cogburn and Espinoza-Vasquez, 2011). This study investigates a framework for the implementation of social media marketing strategies for political campaigning. It will also identify critical success factors for the implementation of social media marketing strategies for political campaigning and engagement.

Figure 1.1: Layout of Chapter 1



Chapter one provides an overview of the problem identified by this study and further identifies the pertinent questions that are expected to provide a solution to the main

problem. It further highlights the objectives of this study and the significance of this study that justifies the need for this study. The later part provides a brief description of how this study will be done and a consistency matrix (on page 7) that matches the research questions and the research objectives to the chapters outline and the expected deliverable from each chapter. Figure 1.1 above provides a pictorial overview of the chapter layout.

1.2 Main research problem

The growth of social media has crossed the geographic, demographic and socio-economic boundaries in many places including remote locations (Goldstuck, 2012b). As a result, the subject of getting the best out of the platforms is increasingly receiving attention among marketing professionals and the academics. In political marketing, studies have shown that the use of social media marketing strategies can provide a platform for politicians to be closer to the electorate and the public. Social media has the capacity to influence the political relationship between the politician and the electorate as well as the political relationships among the electorate especially for political communications (Howard and Parks, 2012).

The adoption and implementation of social media marketing strategies for business and organisational usage does not measure up to the opportunities that social media platforms have to offer. The Goldstuck (2012b) report shows that in South Africa, many of the large corporate brands acknowledge the role that social media could play in their marketing strategies. The report further shows that most businesses are still neutral about the implementation of social media in their organisations, while some do not have any social media presence.

The disparity in the usage of social media compared to the opportunities it avails can be attributed to the lack of understanding on how to deal with issues such as negative publicity that can arise from user generated contents, a loss of absolute control of their brand, legal and security issues (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). However, organisations without clear social media strategies might be running the same level of risk, especially when it comes to public relations and branding. This is because consumers now turn to social media for information when making buying

decisions and as an avenue to express their post purchase comments (Mangold and Faulds, 2009).

The slow adoption of social media is also prevalent in the field of political marketing, political engagement and driving participation (Zuniga, Veenstra, Vraga and Shah, 2010; Cogburn and Espinoza-Vasquez, 2011). In several political campaigns, especially in the Western World, the use of Internet based strategies is not new. However, only a few reports have implemented social media as part of their core campaign strategy have been able to gain competitive advantage from it (Cogburn and Espinoza-Vasquez, 2011). Research has shown that the use of the same social media platforms by opposing candidates in a political campaign does not guarantee the same result. Organisations or campaigns with clear strategic planning and effective execution will always have a competitive edge (Cogburn and Espinoza-Vasquez, 2011; Kreiss, 2012a).

It is important to have a framework of implementation because of the requirement of a strategic approach in the implementation of social media for business and organisational usage (Chikandiwa et al., 2013). This poses the main research problem for this study stated below.

Main research problem: **Political parties in South Africa are not taking the full advantage of social media for political campaigning and engagement.**

Based on the main research problem, this study will develop a framework for the implementation of social media marketing strategies for political campaigning. It will guide the political organisations and politicians how to effectively implement social media marketing strategies within their landscape so as to take a full advantage of the opportunity. This introduces the main research question of this study:

RQ_M: **How can a framework for the implementation of social media marketing strategies be developed for political campaigning and engagement?**

1.3 Research questions

In order to answer the main research question, the following secondary research questions have been identified and will be investigated:

- RQ₁: How do the Internet, mobile technologies and social media impact integrated marketing communication?
- RQ₂: What is the role of strategic marketing in political campaigning and voters' engagement?
- RQ₃: How can social media be used for political campaigning?
- RQ₄: What are the components of a social media strategy framework for political campaigning and engagement?
- RQ₅: How can a detailed research methodology be provided in order to understand and reproduce this study in future?
- RQ₆: How can a proposed social media strategy framework for political campaigning be evaluated?
- RQ₇: What are the critical success factors for using social media in politics?

1.4 Research objectives

The main objective of this study is:

RO_M : To develop a framework for the implementation of social media marketing strategies for political campaigning and engagement.

Other objectives for this study include:

- RO₁: To determine the role of communication in strategic marketing with a focus on the use of the Internet, mobile technologies and social media;
- RO₂: To investigate and identify the role of marketing in political campaign and voters' engagement;
- RO₃: To determine the uses of social media as an alternative marketing communication tool for political campaigning;
- RO₄: To develop a conceptual framework for the implementation of social media marketing strategies for political campaigning;

- RO₅: To explain the research methodology that will be used to carry out this study that can be used for future reproduction;
- RO₆: To conduct a survey that evaluates the proposed conceptual framework for the implementation of social media marketing strategies for political campaigning;
- RO₇: To identify critical success factors for the implementation of social media marketing strategies for political campaign.

Table 1.1 presents a consistency matrix that portrays the link between the research questions, research objectives, chapter outline and deliverable for each chapter. It also describes a storyline of how each element of the study fits together.

Table 1.1: Consistency matrix

Research Title: A framework for the implementation of social media marketing strategies in political campaigning.				
Main Research Problem: Political parties in South Africa are not taking the full advantage of social media for political campaigning and engagement.				
Thesis statement: A framework for the implementation of a social media marketing strategy can be proposed for political campaigning and engagement.				
Research objective (RO_M): To develop a framework for the implementation of social media marketing strategies for political campaigning and engagement.				
Main Research Question (RQ_M): How can a framework for the implementation of social media marketing strategies be developed for political campaigning and engagement?				
Secondary research questions	Research objective	Chapter	Research strategy	Deliverable
RQ ₁ : How do the Internet, mobile technologies and the social media impact integrated marketing communication?	RO ₁ : To determine the role of communication in strategic marketing with a focus on the use of the Internet, mobile technologies and social media.	Chapter 2: The role of communication in strategic marketing.	Literature review.	The role that the Internet, mobile technologies and social media play as a communication tool and strategy in strategic marketing.

RQ ₂ : What is the role of strategic marketing in political campaigning and voters' engagement?	RO ₂ : To investigate and identify the role of marketing in political campaign and voters' engagement.	Chapter 3: Social media and political marketing.	Literature review and case studies.	The role of marketing in political campaigning and engagement.
RQ ₃ : How can social media be used for political campaigning?	RO ₃ : To determine the uses of social media as an alternative marketing communication tool for political campaigning.			The use of social media for political engagement and campaign with relative case studies.
RQ ₄ : What are the components of a social media strategy framework for political campaigning and engagement?	RO ₄ : To develop a conceptual framework for the implementation of social media marketing strategies for political campaigning.			A guide on how social media marketing strategies can be implemented for political campaign.
RQ ₅ : How can a detailed research methodology be provided in order to understand and reproduce this study in future?	RO ₅ : To explain the research methodology that will be used to carry out this study that can be used for future reproduction.	Chapter 4: Research design and methodology.	Literature review.	Description of the research process and the methodology that will be used to conduct the study.
RQ ₆ : How can a proposed social media strategy framework for political campaigning be evaluated?	RO ₆ : To conduct a survey that evaluates the proposed conceptual framework for the implementation of social media marketing strategies for political campaigning.	Chapter 5: Empirical study and results.	Survey and data analysis.	Evaluation of the proposed framework for the implementation of social media for political campaigning based on the findings of the empirical study.

RQ ₇ : What are the critical success factors for using social media in politics?	RO ₇ : To identify critical success factors for the implementation of social media marketing strategies for political campaign.	Chapter 6: Findings, recommendation and summary	Recommendation, conclusion and further research.	Improved framework, critical success factors and recommendations for the implementation of social media marketing strategies for political campaigning based on literature review and empirical study.
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1.5 Delimitation of the research

The scope of this study will be limited the Democratic Alliance in the Eastern Cape. The Democratic Alliance is the opposition party in the government of South Africa. The research will be limited to the political party and their members. This indicates the empirical study that will be used to evaluate the conceptual framework will be based on respondents that are deemed to be politically active.

1.6 Significance of the research

This research aims to provide insight into the use of Internet and mobile technologies in political marketing with a specific focus on social media. Politician and political organisations are attempting to connect with their target market via social media, but not all of them are gaining competitive edge from it. Previous studies suggest that the use of social media business and organisations have to be structured, strategic and well executed (Mangold and Faulds, 2009; Chikandiwa et al., 2013). The development of a framework for the implementation of social media for political marketing will therefore be significant and advantageous.

The outcome of this study will also be useful:

- For political organisations going into an election;
- For marketing team of a political organisation looking to increase their organisation's brand equity using social media;

- As a roadmap, step by step guide and the critical success factor for the implementation of social media in politics. It is expected that this information will increase leadership buy-in in political campaigning; and
- As the basis for the development of a framework for the implementation of social media for other industries.

1.7 Research methodology

A conceptual framework will be proposed for the implementation of social media marketing strategies in political campaign by this study. This will be based on the review of literature. Thereafter a quantitative approach will be followed to evaluate the proposed framework. Chapter four provides information on the adopted research process for this study. It further elaborates on the research philosophy, design, approach and strategy for this study. A questionnaire that is specifically designed for the purpose of this research will be used as the main research instrument. The measuring instruments addressed by the questionnaire include:

- Demographics;
- Internet awareness and usage among the respondents;
- Mobile technology awareness and usage among the respondents;
- Social media as a marketing tools;
- Level of political engagement;
- Perception on the use of social media for political activities; and
- Level of political activity on social media.

The questionnaire was presented to a qualified statistician to ensure correct structuring of the questions. It was also presented to the leadership of the Democratic Alliance in the Eastern Cape as a pilot study and revisions were made following feedback from the statistician and the leadership of Democratic Alliance in the Eastern Cape to ensure reliability and validity. Descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were used to analyse the collected data. Based on the results, recommendations were made and the proposed framework was improved.

1.8 Assumptions

At the start of this study, it was assumed that there is sufficient literature of political marketing and social media marketing to conduct a study on the implementation of social media for political campaigning. It is also assumed that the electorates are all familiar with the use of the Internet and many are already using the mobile platform. Assumptions were also made that a framework can be developed based on the study of literature on political marketing, social media marketing and relevant case study. It is assumed that the outcome of this study can be used by politicians or political organisations for effective implementation of social media marketing for political campaigning.

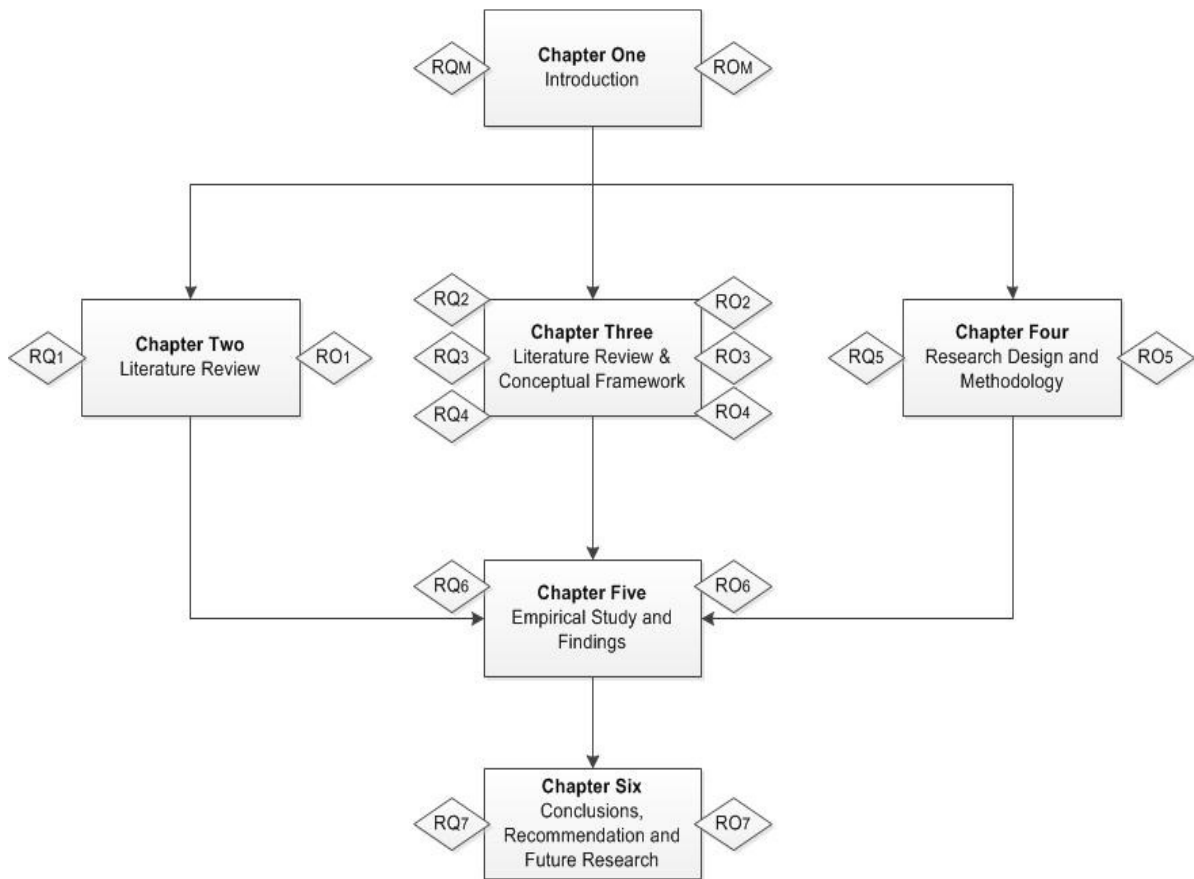
1.9 Ethics clearance

The completed pro-forma for Ethics Clearance was submitted to the NMMU Business School. However, the questionnaire used as the research instrument was administered by the Provincial office of the Democratic Alliance in the Eastern Cape. Therefore no vulnerable group was involved in this study and a full ethics clearance was not applied for. The approved Form E is attached as Appendix C.

1.10 Summary

This chapter provides an overview of this study, the questions that this study seeks to answer and the objectives that it seeks to achieve. It highlights the challenges that are faced by political organisation on how to effectively implement social media for political campaigns despite the opportunity that it offers. This chapter further highlights the consistency matrix that provides a link between each of research questions, the objects, each of the chapters and the expected deliverable from each of the chapters. Finally, it provides the significance of this study and a brief overview of the methodology that this study follows. Figure 1.2 on the next page depicts a graphical layout of the Chapters, the research question and the research objective addressed by each of the Chapters.

Figure 1.2: Layout of all Chapters



The next chapter will examine and review the literature on the core concepts of marketing particularly on integrated marketing communication. It will focus on the use of Internet, mobile technologies and social media for marketing communications. The review of literature on topics will achieve the research object RO₁ of this study.

CHAPTER TWO

THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATION IN STRATEGIC MARKETING

2.1 Introduction

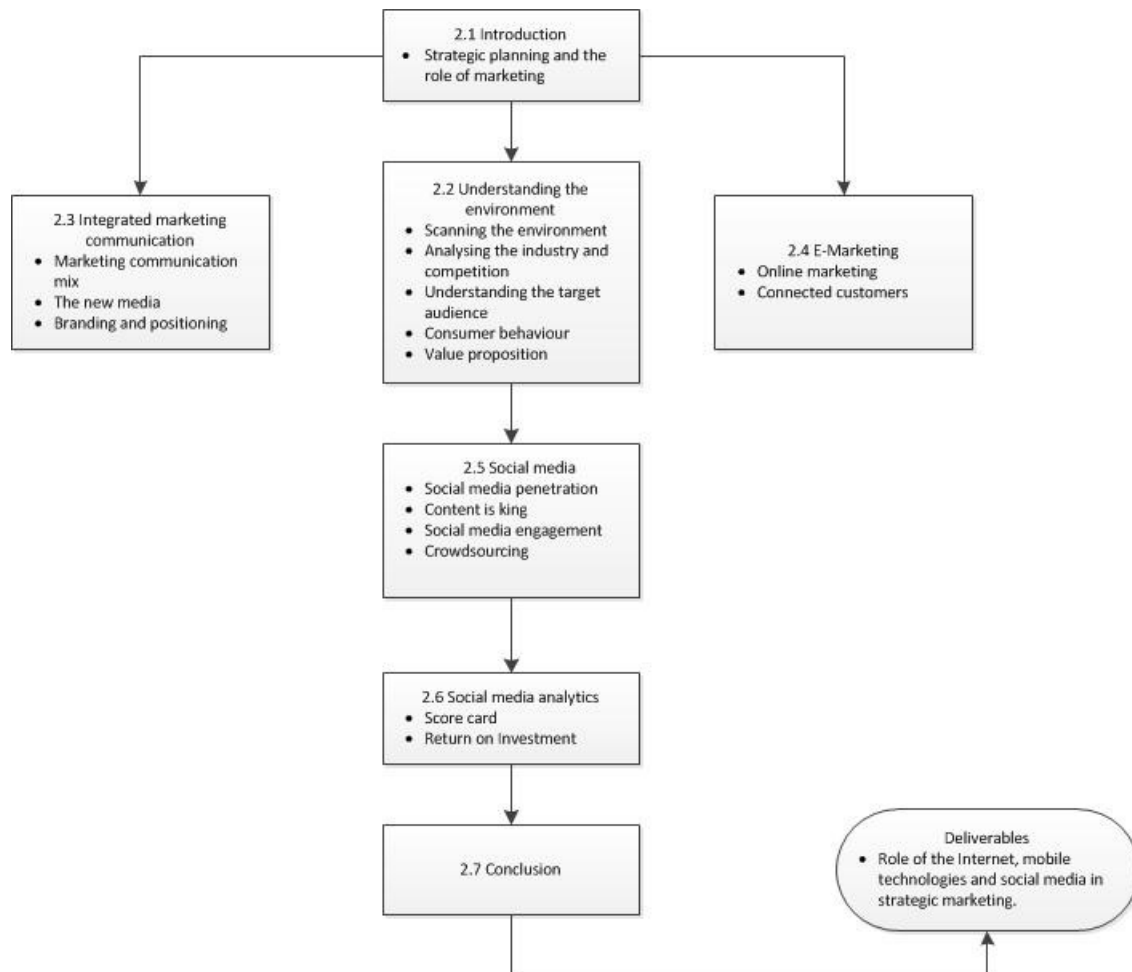
Chapter 1 provides an overview of the entire study. It highlights the research questions, objectives and the significance of the study. This chapter will commence with the literature review for this study by examining the role of communication in strategic marketing. To achieve this, the literature will be reviewed on the place of marketing in strategic planning and then on integrated marketing communication. This will address the research question, RQ₁ – how the Internet, mobile technologies and social media impacts integrated marketing communication? It will also address the research objective RO₁ – to determine the role of communication on strategic marketing with a focus on the use of the Internet, mobile technologies and social media. Figure 2.1 provides a layout of the chapter that shows a flow and connection between the topics that Chapter 2 reviews.

The issues of growth, sustainability and out-performing the competition have become more important than ever before (Hough, Thompson, Strickland and Gamble, 2011). This is because of the constantly changing and dynamic business environment, technological advancement, changing customer preferences and the unprecedented availability of information. Thus, the leadership and managers of organisations are actively involved in crafting strategies to attain or retain sustainable growth and profitability in the highly competitive business environment of the times (McDaniel, Lamb and Hair, 2013).

When considered from the perspective of a market-led organisation, strategy can be defined as the choices and decisions an organisation makes and the processes it follows to out-perform competition (Blythe, 2009; Hough et al., 2011). In a bid to out-perform their competitors, organisations are constantly evaluating their strengths and looking externally for opportunities that can give them a competitive edge in their industry. These factors that will make the consumer choose their product or service instead of that of their competitor are known as the competitive advantage. The

purpose of strategy is to create a sustainable competitive advantage that can lead to growth and profitability.

Figure 2.1: Layout of Chapter 2



2.1.1 Strategic planning and the role of marketing

Whilst the internal strengths and the market opportunities can provide an organisation with a competitive advantage, its value proposition must be with the need and expectations of its target market. Aaker and McLoughlin (2010) suggest that the strategic direction of an organisation should match the perceived value of the target market; this process is known as the strategic fit. In order to be able to achieve the aforementioned effectively, firms go through a strategic planning process that defines the organisation's vision and objectives, understands the environment, crafts the strategy, implements the strategy and puts controls in place (Hough et al.,

2011). The end product of this process is to describe where the organisation will be in the future and a clear path of how it will get there.

Looking at the place of the strategic planning process within an organisation, it is evident that the role of marketing cannot be overlooked or pushed aside (Aaker and McLoughlin, 2010). According to Philip Kotler in Dibb, Simkin, Price and Ferrell (2012), a proper understanding of the concept of marketing will help organisations to achieve set objectives and goals by finding out what the customer wants and ensuring that the organisation can deliver the expected value to the customer efficiently and effectively. The description of marketing as a set of activities and processes that facilitate the exchange of perceived value between an organisation and its target market (McDaniel et al., 2013) further explains the place of marketing in strategic planning.

Marketing plays a significant role in the strategic planning process. It plays an important role in understanding the environment and the target market, strategic fit, crafting and execution of strategy (Aaker and McLoughlin, 2010). This important role of marketing in the strategic planning process is what literature has described from different perspectives as strategic marketing. This study will investigate the place of strategic marketing in politics with specific emphasis on the use of the Internet and social media.

2.2 Understanding the environment

The ability to make the right decision is at the core of strategy for any organisation and the information available to decision makers about the present and future outlook is what they base their decisions on. It can then be deduced that the strategy formulated by an organisation would be as good as the information on which it is based. In a survey of 619 multi-national companies in the USA, Muralidharan (2003) draws a positive relationship between strategy (formulation and implementation) and information available to the firms. It is therefore imperative that organisations make the gathering and processing of information from within and outside their entities a significant part of their strategic planning. This is particularly important because of the rapidly changing financial, economic and political conditions globally (Dibb et al., 2012). The process of gathering information for the

purpose of strategy formulation, implementation or more specifically for strategic marketing, is known as environmental scanning (Dibb et al., 2012).

2.2.1 Scanning the environment

Armstrong and Kotler (2005) describe successful organisations as those who are constantly monitoring and responding to changes in their environment. According to McDaniel et al. (2013), it is the response and the way a firm responds to changes and the trends in the environment that determines whether the firm will be a leader or a follower in its industry. These organisations out-perform the others in the market place because of their ability to understand their external and internal environment and then formulate winning strategies that create sustainable competitive advantage for them in their industry (Hough et al., 2011). This is more than a once off or a process that the organisation goes through annually, but a continuum because of the constant changes in the environment. The process of gathering and processing the information from the environments relevant to the business is known as environmental scanning (Blythe 2009; Dibb et al., 2012; McDaniel et al., 2013).

In the strategic marketing context, scanning the environment will assist organisations to collect information that will help them to identify opportunities, prepare for and deal with threats from the environment and be able to plan effectively for the future (Dibb et al., 2012). It is the role of marketing in an organisation to keep track of changes in the environment and to identify opportunities. This is achieved by keeping abreast of what is happening in the environment where the business operates (Armstrong and Kotler, 2005).

Recent literature refers to the concept of scanning for market trends as gathering competitive intelligence or market intelligence by marketing experts (Qiu, 2008; Calof and Wright, 2008; Dibb et al., 2012). Organisations at different levels are becoming more aware and are investing heavily in competitive and marketing intelligence as an integral part of their businesses because of the unprecedented need for them to respond and adapt to changes in a more structured manner (Calof and Wright, 2008). Although the organisations might not be responsible for the trend in the business environment, some of the changes and trends could have immense impact

on their business or even determine competitiveness and sustainability of the business (Dibb et al., 2012). This is another reason why scanning the environment is as much of a marketing role and very strategic for survival in today's business world.

The environmental factors that organisations have to monitor to be able to make winning strategic decisions can be divided into internal and external factors. The internal factors are those that the organisations can control. These could be in the form of areas where the organisation has strengths, competencies within the organisation or identified weaknesses within the organisation that could be configured to create a winning position and an edge for the organisation in its industry (Hough et al., 2011). According to Blythe (2009), the internal environment of a firm determines all that happens within the organisation and by extension how it is perceived by the customers as a result of its offerings. The author further explains that the internal environment of a firm is determined by the following factors, namely:

- **Resource availability:** The availability and use of resources or assets can assist an organisation to meet the demands of the market. The strategic configuration of these resources can lead to a competitive advantage for the organisation in the industry. Whilst the availability, lack or the degree of a resource like financial and human capital could impact the way a firm trades, O'Cass and Voola (2011) noted that for political marketing, assets such as reputation, innovativeness, networking and policy development are competitive advantages.
- **Organisational culture:** These are sets of values and beliefs within an organisation. These sets of values are the things that determine what is taken as important in the organisation, how and the reason people behave the way they do. These can be documented like most organisations as core values or just assumed and passed across among the employees (Werner, 2011). Blythe (2009) described the type of relationship that exists between the staff within the organisation as one of the factors that determine the internal environment. However, Werner (2011) attributes the type of relationship

between staff in a firm to the values in the organisation. This suggests that this factor can be categorised as a cultural issue.

The external environment is made up of factors that are completely outside of the control of the organisation, but they impact the ability of an organisation to offer value and satisfy the needs of their customers (Dibb et al., 2012). These factors range from the behaviour of their competitors, general consumer behaviour and overall industry trend to the legislation that controls the industry or even the country where the business operates (Blythe, 2009). It is important that firms give considerable attention to these factors because that they do not have control over them and the fact that they change consistently.

2.2.2 Analysing the industry and the competition

The marketing environment where an organisation functions can also be divided into the macro and the micro environments. The macro environmental factors are those that affect how all the businesses in a specific market operate; these are societal factors that affect a firm from the outside (Dibb et al., 2012). These factors affect other firms in the same industry and even those in other industries in the same society. Although, the macro environmental factors can present opportunities for a firm, the trend and changes in the macro environment can have an adverse effect on a firm. Therefore, a firm might have to change to accommodate the changes in the macro environment, because no single organisation can change or influence the macro environment (Claudiu, Andrei and Gabriela, 2011). In order to analyse and understand the macro environment in which an organisation operates, several authors suggest the use of the PESTEL analysis (Armstrong and Kotler, 2005; Blythe, 2009, Dibb et al., 2012; McDaniel et al., 2013). This analysis breaks the macro environment into:

- **Political factors:** Political factors influence the business environment greatly because the policy or the lack thereof, which the ruling organisation favours, sets the tone of the business environment. It can sometimes determine what an organisation or industry is allowed to do or not thereby impacting the way an organisation or industry meets the need of its customers.

- **Economic factors:** The general economic climate provides information on factors like the living standard, buying power, the growth rate of the overall economy, inflation and unemployment measures among other issues. These issues influence how organisations trade and even what they trade on because it affects the bottom line directly.
- **Social issues:** The changes and trend in social factors like population growth and distribution, religious inclination, culture and lifestyle that are prevalent in a market will determine what can be offered to the market, how to make the offering and where it should be made (McDaniel et al., 2013). These factors influence every marketing area and should be monitored carefully and constantly for strategic decision making and marketing responses.
- **Technological forces:** Technological research and development is one single factor that now impacts almost every walk of life. Technology now plays a major role in areas and at a degree that was unimaginable in the previous decade. The development of super-fast aircrafts has brought cities from different continents very close and the evolution of the Internet, innovative mobile technologies brought cities across continents even closer. These factors have revolutionised the way people work, play and socialise. They now determine consumer behaviour, the marketing mix and accordingly they create new markets and opportunities (Armstrong and Kotler, 2005). In many industries, technological factors are the source of innovation. Research has shown that innovative companies have been found to have a competitive edge that can be directly linked to their innovativeness (McDaniel et al., 2013).
- **Environmental factors:** Issues that concern the physical environment – such as the subject of environmental pollution and global warming has gained more attention in the business world. Organisations that do not pay attention to these issues are likely to get punished, while firms that show respect for the environment are likely to attract more customers (Dibb et al., 2012). Besides, initiatives that have the power to change some industries completely have been borne out of the concern for environmental protection. An example is the on-going changes in the energy sector that could reduce the use of fossil fuel considerable in the very near future. This means that organisations like

automobile manufacturers have to consider this factor in their future product developments.

- **Legal and regulatory frameworks:** The legal system and regulating bodies are extensions of the political system. The legal system and regulatory bodies create and enforce laws and regulation for various reasons like the economic situations, needs of the society or because of a political agenda. However, these regulations and laws can change at any time and organisations are expected to comply. Therefore, strategic and marketing decision making processes have to take note of the current regulations and laws to ensure compliance. Plans should be made to accommodate changes in legal and regulatory frameworks avoid unnecessary penalties.

The micro environments are those factors that are industry specific amongst competing enterprises. Firms outside the specific industry are usually not affected by these factors (Blythe, 2009). These factors are from the immediate environments of a firm and can include factors from within the firm itself and its entire value chain, its competitors and the structure of the entire industry (Armstrong and Kotler, 2005; Blythe, 2009). A thorough analysis and understanding of the micro environment can help organisations to make strategic decisions that will give them an edge in their industry. Understanding and responding to the trends in the micro environments can also help an organisation to maintain a proactive position by shaping the future of the industry to become leaders in the industry, rather than a passive follower (Dibb et al., 2012). This will eventually translate into a competitive advantage and increase in the market share.

In order to analyse and understand the micro environment of an organisation, firms can gather and evaluate information from organisation-specific factors like those mentioned as internal environmental factors in the previous section. Other factors within organisations that impact its ability to serve its customers include the business model adopted by the firm, the core strategy of the organisation and the leadership capabilities within the firm. Blythe (2009) recommends the use of the Porter's five forces model (Porter, 2008) for industry specific and competition analysis that gives a strong insight into the micro environment of a firm. According to Hough et al. (2011), the Porter's five forces model provides insight and a detailed assessment of

an industry and the major forces that drives competition in the industry. This analysis will therefore help an organisation to understand its immediate environment and how to trade or position itself in the industry to be able to serve its customers properly.

This study focuses on the application of a strategic marketing concept in politics. O'Cass (2011) makes a case for the application of strategic marketing concepts and frameworks in the political domain and describes it as political marketing. Although influencing voters with political concepts and ideology is the subject in political marketing as opposed to products and services in mainstream business (Osuagwu, 2008) the application core marketing tools and frameworks are very relevant in politics (Osuagwu, 2008; O'Cass and Voola, 2011). The analysis and understanding of the environmental factors that influence political marketing could be a major success factor. This study will explore the environmental effect of technology, precisely the Internet and mobile technologies, in engaging political stakeholders and winning elections.

2.2.3 Understanding your target audience

The purpose of the entire marketing concepts is to understand and satisfy the needs of the customers (Armstrong and Kotler, 2005). This necessitates understanding the target audience known as the customer in the mainstream business environments and in winning political elections: the voters are the target audience. Whether it is a profit or non-profit organisation, the target audience is the most important actor because there will be no need for a product or service if there are no consumers for it. Therefore, for effective communication or to be able to design the right communication strategy, it is important for an organisation to know who the customers are and what is important to them in order to satisfy their need (Blythe, 2009).

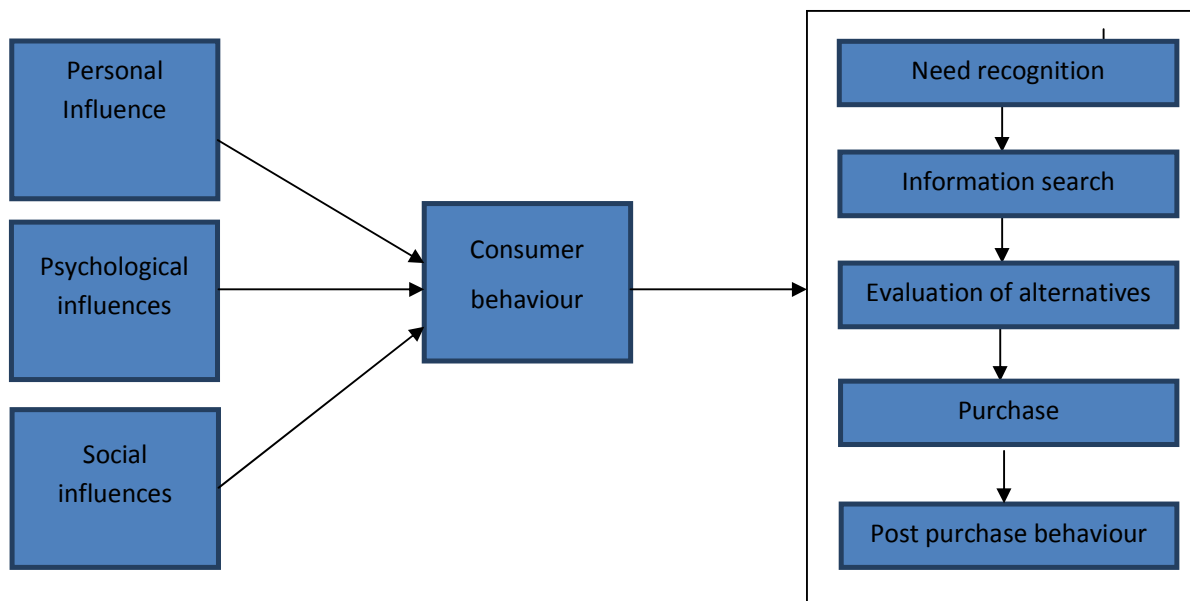
Consumer behaviour

The ultimate goal of firms is to get its potential customers to buy and remain loyal. In the context of this study, the purpose of political marketing is to get the electorate to vote in favour of the political party's ideology and to keep them engaged and loyal. In between the process of converting a potential customer into a buying customer is

the decision making process (Dibb et al., 2012). This decision making process of the buying customer, how they make use of the purchased good or service, when and how they eventually dispose the good or service is referred to as consumer behaviour (Blythe, 2009; Dibb et al., 2012; McDaniel et al., 2013).

According to Dibb et al. (2012), the behaviour of consumers is influenced by the personality of the consumer and its environment. The authors break the factors that influence the decision consumers down into personal, psychological and social influences. Figure 2.2 provides an overview of what process the consumers go through in making a buying decision and with the factors mentioned earlier as influences (Dibb et al., 2012; McDaniel et al., 2013).

Figure 2.2: The consumer buying decision making process model



Adapted from: McDaniel et al., 2013

Figure 2.2 represents a generally accepted model of the process involved in the consumer buying decision making process and the factors that influence the behaviour of the consumers. However, Mihart (2012) submits that effective marketing communication can introduce extra motivation and a different consumer perception to the entire marketing mix, thereby influencing the decision making

process. This study will explore the impact of the use of new media as a communication strategy to influence the decision of the electorate in politics.

Social media and mobile technologies now impact the decision making of consumers in making purchases because of the influence it has in the feedback element of the process and the new concept of connected consumers that will be explored later in this chapter (Dibb et al., 2012). Besides, the buyer–seller relationship and the consumer to consumer relationship have never been as intimate as they are currently. This suggests that there might be an opportunity for further research into the decision making process of consumers that takes the new media into consideration.

2.2.4 Value proposition

Forward thinking organisations invest in understanding who their customers are and how they can meet their needs through on-going marketing research. Marketing research is expected to provide a thorough understanding of the customer behaviour especially what they want. The decision maker in organisations must come up with the reason that the customers should choose their product or service out of the competing clutter. Korosec (2012) explained that by looking inward and outward, a firm can make an offering to its potential customers by answering all the possible questions of why the customer should choose its product or service.

The offering can be made through feature, functionality, price, quality, location or through a perceived value of the customer – what the customer believes to be a benefit (Hassan, 2012). This offering described by Reilly (2012) as the promise to the customer is known as the value proposition (Hassan, 2012; Reilly, 2012; Korosec, 2012). Korosec (2012) stressed the fact that the marketing role in an organisation must be careful to ensure that its value proposition is customer-centric and not just what the firm can do, but its ability to deliver what the customer wants taking the fact that the customer has options to choose from into consideration. This introduces the fact that the success of a company is not just about what the firm can offer, but how the offering is communicated to the customer.

Hassan (2012) summarised that successful organisations are those with well communicated value propositions that clearly separate them in the market. Therefore the place of communication in the entire marketing process is very strategic. O'Cass and Voola (2011) reiterated the importance of the effective use of communication from a strategic marketing stand point even in political marketing. It is therefore important that organisations and businesses that want the attention of their customers have well-crafted value propositions. However, beyond a well-crafted value proposition, there is a need to ensure that the value proposition is effectively communicated to the customers for them to stay ahead of their competition.

2.3 Integrated marketing communication strategies

The result of a marketing programme in any organisation should be to configure a suitable marketing mix of product, price, promotion, place and people. This should be based on a proper understanding of the company itself, the environmental factors and the customer needs that will help the firm satisfy such needs of the customers (Dibb et al., 2012). The promotion element of the marketing mix presents the value proposition to the target market with the aim of influencing the purchase decisions and to separate the firm's brand from that of the competitors (McDaniel et al., 2013). These authors describe the promotion element of the marketing mix as marketing communication. Dibb et al. (2012) describe marketing communication as the use of information to persuade the target market about a product, service or brand. The purpose of marketing communication is therefore summarised as informing, persuading and reminding the target market about a product, service or the brand of a firm.

Based on the previous review of literature on customer behaviour, their buying decision process and value proposition, it can be said that effective marketing communication would be to target the right customer with a suitable message. It should employ the use of the right channel and the message that describes how the product or service will be of benefit or satisfy the customer's need. Belch and Belch (2012) describe the strategic use and effective coordination of the different communication channels to reach the target market as integrated marketing communication. The purpose of this relatively new concept in the marketing field is

to ensure the evenness of the information relayed to the different target markets or using different strategies for the same product, service or brand of the firm.

Belch and Belch (2012) describe integrated marketing communication as a strategic business process that involves the planning, developing, executing and evaluating of brand communications. The authors highlight that the communications could be targeted at consumers, customers, prospects, employees, associates and other relevant external and internal audiences. This provides more insight about integrated marketing communication as not just using different communication strategies that are expected to resonate together, but the fact that there are different types of audiences.

2.3.1 The marketing communication mix

McDaniel et al. (2013) suggest that strategies employed by marketers to deliver information can be divided into interpersonal communication that requires a one on one discussion and the mass communication through which they can reach many of their target market at the same time. The traditional marketing communication programmes make use of any or a combination of advertising, direct marketing, sales promotion, publicity/public relations or personal selling (Belch and Belch, 2012; McDaniel et al., 2013). The selection of the method or methods that effective marketing communication use to reach their target market is based on the product/service, the position it is expected to take in the marketplace, the needs and buying decision of the consumers (Dibb et al., 2012). The selection of the appropriate marketing communication channel(s) based on the overall marketing objective is referred to as the marketing communication mix.

The marketing communication programme of a firm can choose from any of the following (Belch and Belch, 2012; McDaniel et al., 2013):

- **Advertisement:** This is the use of paid mass media like television, radio, newspaper to transmit a non-personal message to a target market;

- **Personal selling:** This is an interpersonal communication channel that informs and persuades customers on a one on one basis about a product or service;
- **Sales promotion:** This is an interpersonal communication activity that is directed at the target market that provides an incentive expected to generate a sale. This could be in the form of offering something of extra value to the customer or the sales agent;
- **Public relations:** Organisations can embark on and invest in public relations activities to gauge and manage the way its brand, product or service is perceived in the market. In some cases, firms evaluate areas of interest of their target market and invest in public images that associate them with such interest to create or maintain connection with their target market (McDaniel et al., 2013).
- **Direct marketing:** This marketing communication method can also be considered an interpersonal channel because it involves the use of personal media like posted mail, email, telephone to target a pre-selected and qualified target. Belch and Belch (2012) explain that this channel is considered less than the others because it also makes use of some electronic means like building and managing a database of target market. It can then be argued that it is a bridge between the traditional marketing communication mix and the new media marketing communication channels.

2.3.2 The new media

The effect of the staggering growth and evolution of technology, especially of the Internet and mobile technologies is being felt in every area of business. Marketing has not been an exception (Belch and Belch, 2012). The advancement in Internet and mobile technologies has brought about a complete paradigm change in information exchange and the way people communicate that did not exist in the previous decade. These have had a major impact on the field of marketing communication, bringing about a completely new approach to concepts such as consumer behaviour, purchase decision processes, the buyer-seller communication and have given birth to new concepts such as consumer-generated media (Mangold and Faulds, 2009). An example of the consumer-generated media is the ability of

customers to review a product, service or brand on the Internet. Chen and Xie (2008) suggest that firms must pay attention to these reviews as they can either promote or cause serious damages.

The traditional marketing communication mix allows for a one way communication, where the seller sends out a message for the consumption of the target market. However, the new media, given birth to as a result of the advancement in Internet and mobile technologies allows firms not just to send out messages to the target market, but they are able to receive immediate and credible feedback. Furthermore, customers are able to initiate communication with a firm and above all and probably the most powerful - the consumer to consumer communication that takes place in the new media (Chen and Xie, 2008). Mangold and Faulds (2009) proposed that this new media be considered as a component of the marketing communication mix and that organisations should not neglect it in their communication strategies. Belch and Belch (2012) include the interactive/Internet marketing as part of the marketing communication mix elements and McDaniel et al. (2013) include social media in the mix.

2.3.3 Branding and positioning

The essence of marketing communication is to send out or exchange information with a target market about a product, service or the firm as a whole. The message sent out by a firm is expected to create a perception about the product or service that will inform, persuade and remind the target market about its value proposition which is expected to result in sales and customer loyalty. Thus, the actual message that goes out is a key success factor of the marketing communication investment.

Knox (2004) alludes that the message sent out is what informs the value attached to a product or service by the target market. This makes the management of such messages very critical in the entire marketing communication process, especially in the business of today where competition is rife and the customers are very knowledgeable. The marketing concepts of branding and positioning give organisations and marketers the opportunity to design and send out a message that is in line with the overall company objective or the objectives and the marketing communication programme.

Branding

A brand allows an organisation to communicate its value proposition to the target market and helps the customers to identify or differentiate a product or service from its competitors (Dibb et al., 2012). This could be a chosen name, term, slogan, symbol, design or a mixture of them (McDaniel et al., 2013). Through effective brand management, a firm can create an image for itself in the market-place that not only sells the organisation's product or service by adding value to it, but the brand on its own can become an asset to the organisation. In this case, the customers will buy a product from a product or service from a known or big brand without worrying about quality or not getting value for their money.

Organisations like Coca-cola have been reported to have a brand that is more valuable than all its plants and other physical assets (Knox, 2004). According to Knox (2004) what customers perceive as value informs their buying decision. An example of this is in the retail industry where consumers may be willing to pay a little more for products from their preferred brand even if the same product with "no-brand" or from competing brand names has the same quality.

Positioning

After a firm has developed a brand for its product, service or organisation as a whole, then it uses the process of positioning to gain a place in the heart and mind of the target market (McDaniel et al., 2013). In a cluttered business world where the consumers are faced with so many choices, in some cases for basic needs, firms use positioning to align their product, service or organisation to the needs of a segment of the overall market, thereby separating their brand from that of the others (Belch and Belch, 2012).

Firms can achieve positioning through a differentiation strategy that separates the product or service from that of the others (Belch and Belch, 2012). Alternatively, they can adopt a comparative positioning strategy that compares their brand to that of the others and emphasize a vantage point. In both cases, the perception created in the minds of the target customers could be real or perceived and could be based on attribute, price and quality, application of the product or service, personality or

lifestyle choices of the users, product class, benchmarking against a competing product or an emotional appeal.

2.4 The new marketing paradigm – E-marketing

Statistics show that more than 2.4 billion people are connected to the Internet globally, this shows a huge growth of 566% between the year 2000 and 2012, considering the fact that only 360 million people were connected to the Internet as at 2000 (Internetworldstats, 2012). The countries with emerging markets seem to be contributing to the exponential surge in the number of Internet users much more than the other regions of the world. Africa has seen a growth of 3067%, Middle East – 2639% and Latin America – 1310% growth between 2000 and 2012 (Internetworldstats, 2012). One trend that should concern every industry about the Internet usage is the prediction by Dean, Digrande, Field and Zwillenberg (2012) of Boston Consulting Group (BCG) that Internet usage may reach a significant 45% of the world population and Internet based economy of US\$ 4.2 trillion by 2016.

The growth in the number of people connected to the Internet has changed the approach to business, work and even the way people socialise in the last decade. The drivers of this Internet penetration include the economic growth in the emerging markets, the growth in the technology and use of mobile devices and the new concept of social media (Goldstuck, 2012a). The concept of mobility and mobile technologies is driving the growth of the Internet because it has also become a part of the daily life of most people around the world. According to a 2012 report, it is estimated that over 6 billion people now own a mobile phone (World Bank, 2012) and it has become part of livelihood as much as lifestyle. The development of cheaper smartphones and tablet PC devices where people can access the Internet offers a whole new level of opportunity for social and economic development globally.

As a result of this, the Internet has become a centre of economic activities that not only impacts organisations but has become important to the economy of nations. The Internet is estimated to have a US\$8 trillion worth of annual transactions and a total contribution to the global economy that is bigger than the GDP of Canada (Manyika and Roxburg, 2011). The Internet has become a hub of economic

activities, as a result, the economists studying the impact of the Internet on economic activities introduced what is known as the Internet economy of a country or region which is a “sum of Internet consumptions (services, commerce, access etc.), private investments, public expenditure and the trade balance in interrelated goods and services” (Du Rausas, Manyika, Hazan, Bughin, Chui and Said, 2011:6).

2.4.1 Online marketing

The embrace of the revolution in the information and communication technology, the Internet and lately mobile technologies in the field of marketing is the result of the electronic marketing concepts known as e-Marketing. It has been defined as the application of information technology in the field of marketing (Molenaar, 2012). The Internet has a multifaceted application in the field of marketing. According to Belch and Belch (2012), organisations are using the Internet to promote their brands firstly with their own website, which in most cases have become the first point of contact and a point of reference for consumers. The Internet has also found its usage as an integrated marketing communication channel, where firms pay for advertisements on websites like Google and Yahoo. Lately, this medium has gained extensive usage in reaching target markets through their mobile phones with the availability and rate of usage of the Internet facilities on the mobile phone by many.

Other firms, especially those in the retail industry like Amazon and Kalahari.com have created their business model around the Internet, using it as their major distribution and customer contact medium. Molenaar (2012) explained that the Internet provides organisations with the opportunity to better understand their target market and build a relationship. The author explained that marketing through the Internet gives the organisations using it effectively to have a truly customer oriented marketing programmes where the customers' needs dictate and shape the entire marketing process. This opens up a two way communication channel between firms and their target markets (Belch and Belch, 2012). This Internet-focused marketing effort is what the marketing professional and the academia refer to as online marketing.

2.4.2 Mobile technologies and marketing

Mobile technologies have evolved over the years from very expensive devices that only the rich elite could afford between the 1970s and the 1990s. Not only have the devices become more affordable, mobile telephones have also evolved greatly in terms of design, functionalities and possibilities (Nubarrón, 2011). Unlike the earlier versions, the current models of mobile devices support the exchange of large packets of data at higher speed via the Internet (Nubarrón, 2011). The ability to access high speed internet on the mobile phones have led to its use for exchange of text messages, images, videos and in recent times the ability to exchange the contents in real time.

Mobile devices can be categorised into basic phones, multimedia phones and smartphones, with smartphones being the latest (Chang, Chen and Zhou, 2009). The latest versions of smartphones are described as productivity enhancing, commerce enabling and have been positioned as a replacement for personal computers (Chang et al., 2009). Reports indicated that the sales of personal computers have been declining while the sales of smartphones especially that of its Tablet variant is on the increase (Gartner, 2013). This growth is driving the use of smartphones for *“electronic wallet application, electronic payment application, broadband Internet access, high computing and communication performance, and multimedia contents”* (Chang et al., 2009:740).

The level of adoption, penetration and possibilities of mobile technologies has made the mobile devices central in the lives of consumers. Marketing professionals have identified this as an opportunity to reach their target market (Persaud and Azhar, 2012; McDaniel et al., 2013). This has given birth to the mobile marketing concept described as the use of mobile devices and networks to communicate and engage target audience (Leppaniemi and Karjaluto, 2008). This is done through interactive media in the form of text, audio, images and video. The growth of social media, especially on mobile devices has opened whole new opportunities to use the platform to reach, understand and connect with customers (Persaud and Azhar, 2012). As a result, mobile marketing has become a very important part of the integrated marketing communication and marketing strategy within organisations (Leppaniemi and Karjaluto, 2008; Persaud and Azhar, 2012).

2.4.3 Connected customers

Beyond the buyer and seller communication that the Internet facilitates effectively, a new level of relationship amongst customers is developing on the Internet which is forcing organisations to reassess their customer experience and engagement strategies. In strategic industry analysis, many firms were glad to classify the bargaining power of the buyers as moderate to weak and would rather pursue opportunities with the weakest buyer's bargaining power (Hough et al., 2011). The customers bargaining power is considered weakest when they are unable to influence price, quality, customer experience and the like especially when the customers are dispersed and the voice of one or a few would make no difference. However, the ability of the Internet to socially connect the customers has negated this effect. It is now easier for people of same interest to connect, interact and even engage a brand via the Internet. IBM blogger, Luongo (2011) describes the movement as the connected customers.

Although the connected customer concept poses a threat to some firms, by forcing them to pay more attention to the increasingly demanding customer, organisations can look beyond this challenge to the new depth of opportunities that the customer communities offers (Berman and Kesterson-Townes, 2012). The most important of these opportunities is the wealth of information about the consumers that the firm can access that gives them the opportunity to know their target market better. Moreover, the connected customers provide opportunities to look at the behavioural pattern of their target market from the perspective of their digital lifestyle in studying their buying decision making process. Overall, firms should rather take advantage of their customer communities in the value creation process (Rowley, Kupitec-Teahan and Leeming, 2007) by connecting and engaging them in the marketing programmes of the company from end to end (Evans and McKee, 2010).

2.5 Social media

Social media bring together the tools and services that facilitate the social relationships, experience and discussions over the Internet (McDaniel et al., 2013). These tools include blogs, forums, communities and social network sites like

Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube, MySpace, Friendster that are changing the way people socialise, communicate and even make decisions. In the past decade, the social network websites have gained more prominence than others in terms of usage functionalities, influence and varieties.

Social Networks can be defined in terms of the functionalities that users have to create a profile, build a connection, share content with others of same interest and make their list of connection available thereby creating a viral link amongst a connection of people that the user knows, may know or are completely unknown (Boyd and Ellison, 2008). In accessing and trying to define social media, two key subjects are the creation and exchange of content, created by users which in most cases are in the form of discussions, reviews, comments, pictures and videos (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010).

The viral connection that exists in social networks especially with websites like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube creates a potential platform for people with the same interest to converge easily. From a social network developed for Harvard Students in 2004 (Belch and Belch, 2012), Facebook has grown to an unprecedented connection of one billion people as at October, 2012 (Shaughnessy, 2012). In its YouTube advert to celebrate its one billion people mark, Facebook compared its role in connecting people around the world to that of things that facilitate and help to bring people together like chairs, doorbells, bridges and airplanes that you may ignore but certainly need to get people together (YouTube, 2012). This positions the social network as today's "ordinary" tool for bringing people together and facilitating relationships.

2.5.1 Social media penetration

Social media presents vast opportunities as an effective communication and distribution channel, a tool to understand and influence the customer perception and behaviour and ability to bring people of the same interest together (Laroche, Habibi, Richard and Sankaranarayanan, 2012). It is therefore no longer a subject of discussion for organisations that want to have competitive advantage in the market place if they should use social media, but how and to what extent it should be used. Nicholls (2011) affirms that social media is definitely applicable in every sphere of

business from education, human resource management, health care, engineering, marketing, government and relative to this study, politics.

Beside the application and services available on the different social media sites, the rate of growth in usage and rate of penetration into geographies and demographics make this phenomenon indispensable especially in strategic communication. As at August 2012, Facebook reports that it has more than 1 billion people that visit the website at least once in a month representing about 14% penetration of the overall global population (Shaughnessy, 2012). It is noteworthy that more than half of the population of some countries like USA, United Kingdom, United Arab Emirates, Sweden, Denmark, Chile, Australia, Taiwan and Argentina have more than 50% of their population on Facebook with UAE topping at more than 68% penetration. From a continental perspective, North America has the highest penetration with 44% of its population on Facebook while Africa has the least penetration with only about 5% on Facebook (Socialbakers, 2013a). Lunden (2012) of TechCrunch.com reported that Twitter has surpassed the 500 million user mark as of July, 2012 and it is claimed that LinkedIn also has more than 200 million users. This makes Facebook the biggest social media channel by membership and usage.

This data correlates with the global Internet penetration data because only 15% of the African population had access to the Internet as at June, 2012 while 78% of the North American population already had access by the same time (Internetworldstats, 2012). However, this same survey a thought provoking trend. Between the year 2000 and 2012, Internet usage grew by 153% in North America, while the number of Internet users in Africa grew by more than 3000% with the same period. This demonstrates that Africa might be the new Internet and mobile technology frontier in terms of usage.

2.5.2 Social media content

All the attempts to define social media both from the academic and professional usage point of view emphasises the position of the content that is created and exchanged on the platforms. Whether it is a business to business, business to consumer or consumer to consumer relationship fostered on social media, there is a

flow of content, which in most cases is available to people far beyond the sender or intended receivers immediate sphere of contact. The impact of social media can therefore be traced to the exponential reach of the content created and exchanged on social media platform. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) amplify this fact by describing social media as far beyond the content and application on the platforms, but that the participation and collaborative efforts of the users are able to continuously be modified, improved and build up contents.

Content is in the form of simple text messages, blogs, web forum and communities, image and video sharing groups and the social network site, such as Facebook and Twitter that allows a combination of all or some of the contents types (Agichtein, Castillo, Donato, Gionis and Mishne, 2008). Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) further used the term user generated content (UGC) as a way of describing the way people use social media. The content on social media has now become a first point of reference in brand or product evaluation, irrespective of the investment on marketing communication by organisations (Agichtein et al., 2008; Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). It therefore suffices that organisations should engage their target market using social media to pass their message across effectively and to be able to measure the perception of the target market about their brand, product or services.

2.5.3 Social media engagement and crowdsourcing

If it is agreed that social media is growing to become this huge source of information that literature suggests and it is assumed that most people, especially consumers now turn to it as the first or important source of information about a brand, product or service, then it suffices that businesses have to pay serious attention to this source. Organisations seeking competitive advantage should recognise that the major source of information is no longer the organisation's website or the investment in the traditional integrated marketing communication strategies (Bradley, 2010). A conscious focus needs to be given to social media, to at the minimum listen and adapt to the information available about the brand, product or service. Bradley (2010) suggests that organisations should have strategies that go beyond listening to the information available about the organisation's brand or product in social media, but should engage customers using social media to take advantage of the opportunity that it presents.

When a business is considered, particularly from the marketing communication perspective, the structured effort of listening, paying attention and engaging the target market via social media may be termed as social media engagement. McDaniel et al. (2013) suggest that organisations put in place a structured listening system that collects information about what is being said about the brand, the industry, the competition and the competition. The authors emphasise that it is not enough to listen, but to take advantage of the power of social network to measure and monitor who is saying what. Sashi (2012) alludes that it is a mechanism to forge the traditional customer relationship effort though in a more intimate fashion.

However, social media practitioners describe engagement as communicating, connecting and relating with the target market in their world enough to get their attention (Falls, 2012). On a more specific note, Buckingham (2012), in an article on mashable.com, describes successful social media engagement as the effort of an organisation to listen to the target market and provide communication that focused on individuals rather than a mass market with a realistic message that the target market can relate to. Again, this emphasises the individualistic and personalised touch required in social media, suggesting a new digital word of mouth concept that takes advantage of technology to spread messages on a one on one basis.

2.5.4 Crowdsourcing

The potentially huge base of connected customers or target market using social media with interest in a particular product or industry provided an opportunity to gather a virtual crowd together to achieve a task. This new concept has been described as crowdsourcing. Howe (2006:4) introduced this new Internet enabled paradigm as “bringing people in from and involving them in broadly creative, collaborative process”. This can involve getting customers or potential customers involved in an organisation’s business activity (Garrigos-Simon, Alcami and Ribera, 2012) which could range from product development, marketing communication, marketing content creation and distribution to the production process. Taking advantage of social media, organisations can get a crowd involved in tasks that a number of employees or agency would have done for a fee and for a different types

of motivation that could range from recognition in the online community to a fraction of what an agency will charge (Howe, 2006; Garrigos-Simon et al., 2012).

2.6 Social media analytics

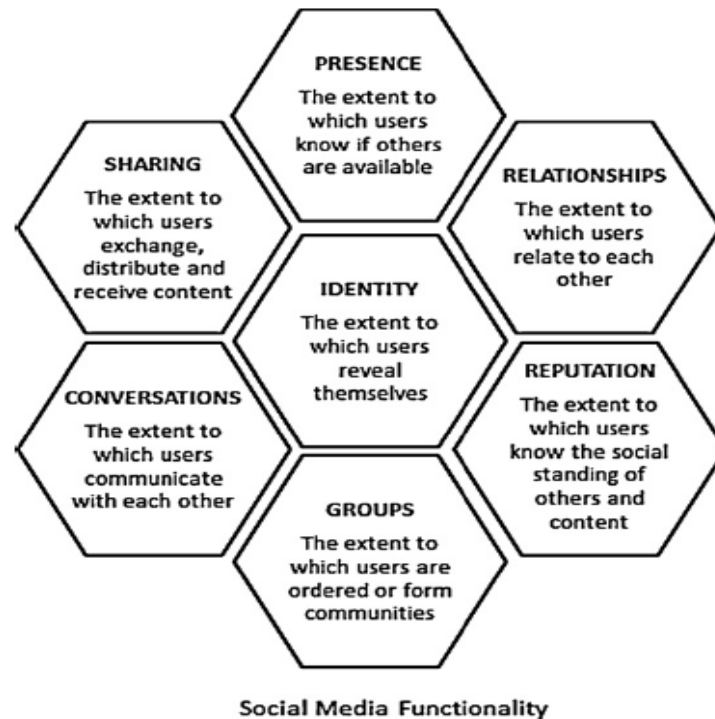
The web analytics have been described by the major practitioners in the field as understanding what needs to be measured, collecting the right data and analysing the data collected to understand the usage of web-based resources (Google, 2013). The tools of the different service provider create an opportunity to measure the success of online communication efforts or marketing campaigns using different websites or web based resources. The focus, type of data collected and available for decision making in web analytics is about who visited the website or resources and the interest of the visitor is measured by the page visited, the links clicked by the visitor or how long the visitor stayed on a page (Phippen, Sheppard and Furnell, 2004). It can be noted that web analytics focuses on the one way channel of communication, where the content is mainly from the seller and the target market is solely a consumer of content.

However, as established in the previous section of this study, the content in social media is both ways – the user generated content and the content generated by the seller in the process of engaging the target market. By its definition and the various functionalities provided by the several platforms, social media generates a wealth of behavioural, attitudinal, geo-location, demographic and relationships data (Sponder, 2012). This list is besides listening to what is being said about the industry, brand, product or service to generate relevant trends.

Sponder (2012) argues that despite the complexities, effective tracking and monitoring of social media could yield a measurable return on investment vis-à-vis the main objectives. The author describes the effective use of techniques and tools to collect, measure, analyse, integrate and make informed decision from the available vast sources as social media analytics. From a functionality perspective, the honeycomb framework developed by Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy and Silvestre (2011), shown below in Figure 2.3, could form the base for a structured approach to social media analytics. Not all of the identified functions are available on all of the social networks and Kietzmann et al. (2011) added that not all need to

present in a social media activity. However, where any of the functions are present, they can show the level of social activities that can form the basis of social media analytics.

Figure 2.3: Framework for social media analytics



Source: Kietzmann et al. (2011)

Each of the functionalities will provide a basis for social media analytics based on their implications as described below (Kietzmann et al., 2011):

- **Identity:** The amount of demographic and personal data that the customers share on social media could provide useful marketing insight. This can be used as a measurement of the quality of followership and level of commitment that an organisation has on a social network.
- **Conversation:** This is the extent to which followers or customers engage in discussions on a social network platform. Organisation can measure the amount of user generated content about their brand arising from conversations.

- **Sharing:** Sharing provides an insight into the level users exchange, distribute and are willing to receive contents. Insight into the source of contents that is being exchanged can also provide useful information.
- **Presence:** Owing to the increased level of connectivity of people that are always online, the virtual relationships that develop among people in a community can develop to levels where users watch who is available online at what time. This can provide insight on users that want to interact in real time and the level of intimacy that exist within the community.
- **Relationships:** The relationship that exist especially those that developed as a result of interactions in a community can provide insight about the level of social activities and cohesion with a group. Kietzmann et al. (2011) stress that increased inter-personal association and relationship would lead to more influencers within the community.
- **Reputation:** This is the extent to which users know of the social standing of others, communities, contents and brands. This is demonstrated by how many people approve and are willing to identify with an individual, community, content or brand. This can assume the form of mentions, likes, user ratings etc. Measuring the reputation of community members, content and brand can provide insight about strength of the community and passion of the members that could indicate brand equity.
- **Groups:** The extent to which the communities formed around a brand is structured and the amount of structured sub-groups that is created as an off-shot of the main community. Measuring this can provide insight into the group dynamics of the community.

The honeycomb framework provides a structure that organisations using social media for marketing communication can use in designing their engagement strategy. Each node on the honeycomb framework arguably represents a social media component that could be a source of vital information that could be collected, measured and analysed for decision making purposes.

2.6.1 Social media scorecard and return on investment

Organisations make use of scorecards to measure performance against objectives, the organisation's strategy and return on investment (Seal, Garrison and Noreen, 2012). Measuring overall performance especially with return on investment poses a challenge to managers because of the availability of multiple social media platforms, where just one channel is almost insufficient and several important items that could be measured. According to research by Stelzner (2012), how to measure the return on social media investment is the number one issue that bothers more than 40% of marketers using social media. A report by Thomases (2012) on Inc.com indicates organisations have to pay attention to measuring what is now known as sentiment analysis which has been described as gauging the target markets opinion about a brand or product on social media. This is evasive on its own not to mention how challenging it could be to measure the return on investment from such metrics.

Sponder (2012) explains that the use of scorecards in social media evaluation would help in the tracking and measuring the success of an organisation's campaign effort or investment on social media. The author emphasises a combination of database management, web analytics and statistical analysis as the right approach to measuring the return on investment from social media campaign. This will help in the collection, analysis and presentation of a scorecard that would give a picture of the returns on investment based on the objectives. Below is a suggested social media scorecard adapted from Schoenfeld (2012) and Sponder (2012). Schoenfeld (2012) suggests key metrics that could provide insight into the progress and ROI of a social media campaign. On the other hand, Sponder (2012) suggests that each of the metrics could be weighted based on firm's overall strategy and marketing programme.

Audience Metrics: Measurement of how many people have signified interest in a brand or joined the brand's community. It is the number of fans that like a page on Facebook and the number of followers on Twitter. The metrics include:

- **Perception metrics:** These include data gathered from listening to the perception of people across social media platforms.

- **Engagement Metrics:** This is a measurement of how the firm's effort is impacting the customer to customer interaction on different platforms.
- **Content Performance:** Monitoring contents to understand which content generates positive attention.
- **Exposure metrics:** The size of the local community and the potential target market.
- **Customer service metrics:** Measurement of the attention provided to customers via social media. This could range from response time to the amount of customer issues solved via the platforms.
- **Demographics:** The demographic characteristics of users provide information on what sort of message or engagement will aid success.

2.7 Social media: Theoretical background

The understanding of the link between social media and social networking site provides a valuable foundation to understand the theoretical background that supports the concepts. The review of literature suggests that social media can be described as the actual content that is being exchanged among individuals or groups (Mangold and Faulds, 2009; Burke, 2013), based on the consideration for the term "media". However, others look at the concept beyond the content as a strategy of communication or the way that information is shared with or among an audience (Stelzner, 2009; Hartshorn, 2010).

Either social media is considered as the content being exchanged or a way of transmitting information, the concept is enabled by the Internet and requires web-based platform or services (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). These platforms and services are identified as social networking sites (Boyd and Ellison, 2008; Mangold and Faulds, 2009). By definition, social networking sites provide platforms for individuals and groups to meet relate and exchange information in different ways depending on their functionality and design (Boyd and Ellison, 2008). This introduces the principle of social networks on which the concept of social media is based.

2.7.1 Social network theory

The social network theory identifies relationships on the basis of nodes and ties, where the nodes represent individual or groups in a relationship and the ties represent the nature of the relationship between the actors (Wade, 2011). The social network theory has been used to define the association, communication, the type and characteristics of the relationship that exist between individuals and groups (Williams and Durrance, 2008). The social network theory provides the basis for analysing the patterns, dynamics and influences that exist in relationships (Wade, 2011). This suggests that the possibilities and the opportunities of social media lie fundamentally in the relationships that is developed and how they are managed.

2.7.2 Social capital theory

Social networks that are well maintained have the potential to develop relationships where actors have a sense of trust and responsibilities toward one another or a common cause (Valenzuela, Park and Kee, 2009). The benefits and opportunities that emanate from social networks have formed the basis of the social capital theory. Lin (2001) defines social capital as the resources that are created as a result of social interactions. It is the value created for actors in a social network as a result of the relationship and association that exist between or among a network (Putman, 2004). Beyond the social capital that is created from normal interaction in social networks, Valenzuela et al. (2009) suggest that efforts can be made to make conscious investments in relationships to develop social capital. Moreover, the created social capital can be for the advantage of individuals in a network or it can be community oriented (Qureshi, 2011).

Lin (2001) highlights four elements that make amassed social capital to produce its embedded value:

- **Free flow of information:** Social relationships can enable the free flow of information about opportunities that is not easily accessible.
- **Influence:** The decision making process of an actor may be influenced because of a social ties or interactions that exist. Hence a social tie can sometime affect official decision making processes.

- **Social credentials:** Acknowledged social tie to an actor can be deemed as an approval, accreditation or certification of an individual by others.
- **Reinforcement:** Ties with an individual or a group can help an individual to build confidence that might be required in dealing with people or situations.

The social interactions and the social networks that are developed over the Internet have been linked to an increase in social capital (Valenzuela et al., 2009). The Internet enabled social networking sites have introduced a new paradigm into social networks by the functionalities that they offer to stay connected and be engaged in constant communication at a lowered cost (Ellison, Steinfield and Lampe, 2011). Furthermore, the use of social networking sites has been credited to helping in increasing the size of social networks rapidly compared to offline networks and being able to adequately maintain the network (Hofer and Aubert, 2013). Research by Ellison et al., (2011) established further that the type of communication and connection strategies employed can lead to even increased social capital.

Based on the social network and the social capital theories, it can be deduced that social media offer much more than an opportunity to find new friends, stay connected to old friends and maintain relationships. The theories suggest that social media can add value to individuals and organisations. Therefore, the use of social media as part of the integrated marketing communication or as part the overall marketing strategy can be founded on the ability to generate social capital. It therefore follows that more value can be obtained from the used social media in marketing by considering the social network and the social capital theories. Chapter 3 and the subsequent chapters of this study will explore how social media can be implemented for political campaigning for optimal social capital for the political organisations.

2.8 Summary

The application of marketing concepts is very important in creating sustainable competitive advantage that can help organisations and businesses to achieve their desired goals and stay ahead of their competitions. This involves the offering of products and services that aligns with the customers' needs. However, it is not

enough to have the right product or service, the customers need to perceived the organisation's product or service to be of value to them and they should also be will to patronise the organisation's brand. Marketing communications fills this position by employing different communication mix.

Traditional communication employs the use of television, radio, print media etc. However, the exponential growth of the Internet, mobile technologies and social media has proved not only to be useful in marketing, but also introduces a paradigm change in marketing communication. It introduces the user generated content that gives the consumer a say about the perception of other customers about a particular brand, this is now known as the "connected customers" concept.

The rapid diffusion and wide acceptance of the Internet, mobile technologies and social media show that these platforms have been very important part of the integrated marketing communication. The review of literature in this chapter shows that these platforms provide the opportunity present the value propositions of organisations to its target market. Organisations can also use these platforms to establish relationships between their business and their consumers and also create communities around their brand. These possibilities have a potential of generating brand equity. Chapter 3 will further investigate how they can be used in political marketing, specifically for political campaigning and engagement.

This Chapter addressed the research question RQ₁ - How the Internet, mobile technologies and social media impacts integrated marketing communication? The review of literature in Chapter 2 also addressed the RO₂ - To review literature on the role of communication in strategic marketing with a focus on the use of the Internet, mobile technologies and social media. Chapter 3 will review the literature on how the core concepts of marketing are used in the field of politics. Particularly, a review of the literature will be done on how social media can be used in political marketing and for political campaigning. A framework for implementing social media for political campaigning will be proposed based on the review of literature at the end of Chapter 3.

CHAPTER THREE

SOCIAL MEDIA AND POLITICAL MARKETING

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter examined the role of integrated marketing communication in the field of marketing with a specific focus on the Internet, mobile technologies and social media. In a study on Internet access and the key drivers in South Africa, Goldstuck (2012a) postulated that the degree of participation in the digital community could be linked to the length of time a person or group has been on the Internet. The research also showed that based on the number of years online, a user will follow a progression of initially having a desire to be connected and be concerned about the quality of Internet access. The next level of satisfaction after some time then becomes the ability to meet social needs like communication and networking through the Internet and finally self-actualisation like being able to generate content and shopping on the Internet.

In South Africa, as at December 2012, there were a total of 11.3 million forecasted Internet users out of which more than 35% have been online for five years or more (Goldstuck, 2012a). Out of this population, 5.53 million are on Facebook (Facebook, 2013b), indicating that 48% of the online community in South Africa might be active on social media. One could therefore argue that the usage of the Internet and social media as a marketing communication strategy would be important to any field with marketing interest.

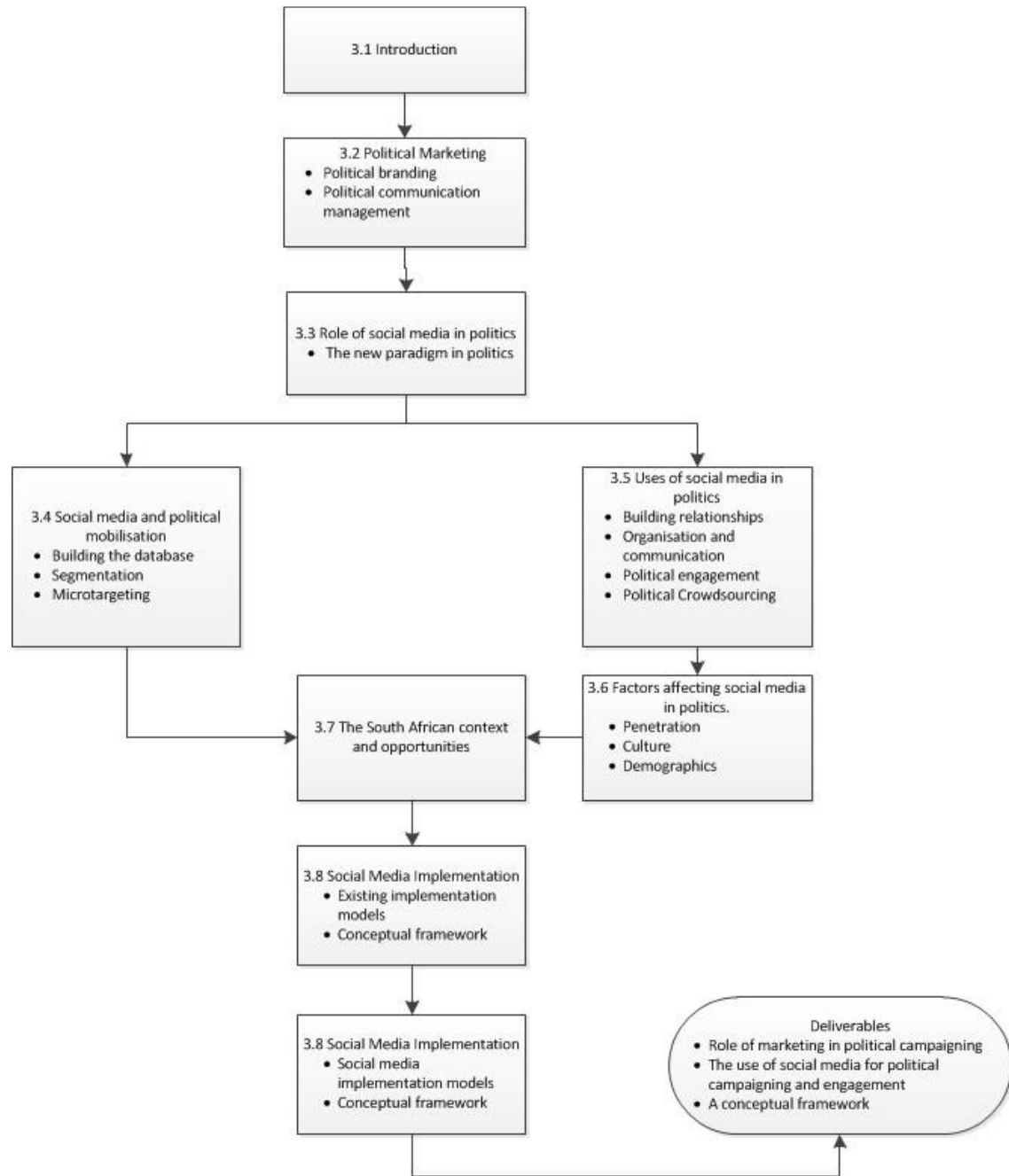
In the political sector, the concept of political marketing, branding and communication goes beyond winning an election in today's democracy and political processes. Moreover, strategic communication is considered as a key success factor in political campaigns and processes (Gurau and Ayadi, 2011). This chapter will address the research question RQ₂ - What is the role of strategic marketing in political campaigning and voters' engagement? RQ₃ - How can social media be used for political campaigning? It will also examine RQ₄ - How can a social media strategy framework be developed for a political campaigning? It will address the research objectives RO₂, RO₃ and RO₄. These include the review of literature on the strategic marketing, integrated marketing communication with a focus on the Internet, mobile

technologies, social media and the use of social media as an alternative and strategic communication tool for political engagement. Finally, a conceptual framework for the implementation of social media marketing strategies for political campaigning will be developed based on the literature review.

In order to achieve the aforementioned, this chapter will examine the concept of political marketing. Efforts will be made to review the branding and communication management in the field of politics (Section 3.2). Thereafter, Section 3.3 will explore the application of these concepts by looking at the role that social media plays in politics. Mobilisation of the electorate is an important task in politics. The role of social media in politics, the influence of social media in political mobilisation through the use of databases, segmentation and micro-targeting will be reviewed in Section 3.4. Also, to further understand the role of social media in politics, Section 3.5 will look at how social media is used for building relationships with the electorate, organisation and communication, political engagement and explore its use in the new concept of crowdsourcing.

To avoid the danger of a one-size fits all generalisations, it will be important to look at factors that could affect the use of social media in politics. Furthermore, it is important to look at the effect that the number of people using social media, cultural orientation and demographic distribution would have on its use in politics. This will be explored in Section 3.6 and Section 3.7 will place discussion in the chapter to the South African perspective before drawing a summary. Section 3.8 explained the implementation of social media for businesses and organisations. It also highlighted existing models for implementing social media and a framework for the implementation of social media for political campaigning is suggested at the end of the section. Figure 3.1 on the next page shows the structural flow of the study in this chapter.

Figure 3.1: Layout of Chapter 3



3.2 Political marketing

The focus of political marketing is to market values, ideologies and candidates of a political party in contrast to the conventional marketing of products and services in commercial organisations (Baines, 2012). Savigny (2003) however, argues that marketing managers in the commercial sector and political campaign strategists are faced with the same issues fundamentally. O'Shaughnessy, Baines, O'Cass and Ormrod (2012) allude that marketing in politics is the political offerings of the party, policies, leaders and issues that the electorate can relate to, based on the chosen strategic position of the party and what is perceived to be the orientation of the public and the electorate. Therefore, both schools of thought seem to converge about the fact that political marketing connects to the heart and minds of the electorate based on the description of marketing (Blythe, 2009).

The application of core marketing concepts is applicable in winning elections. It advances nation building, whereby the communication and relationship between the political parties and the other stakeholders allows for dialogue, feedback and participation in the political system (Lilleker, 2006). However, it is noteworthy, that political organisations around the world might be investing much more time, effort and money in marketing efforts during the election period than ever before. An indication of the magnitude of the spending on political marketing is evident in the 2012 presidential election of the USA. It has been reported that the total cost of this election could be as much as an unprecedented \$2.23 billion (Hickey, 2012) which is about the entire gross domestic product (GDP) of Lesotho.

The political terrain in most of the countries in the world is characterised by intense competition. In part, this can be attributed to the increasing demand from the public, the ease of access to information by the electorate, the evolving behaviour of the voters, the use of technology in politics and the methodical and scientific approaches by competing organisations (Thrassou, Vrontis and McDonald, 2009). Hence, these authors allude that the application of strategic marketing techniques in politics could offer competitive advantage and a structured framework for success in political campaigns and processes.

3.2.1 Political branding

One of the major concepts in the field of marketing that has been adopted and employed extensively in politics is branding (Marsh and Fawcett, 2011) with emphasis on the political party as a whole, the politicians and the government (Henneberg and O'Shaughnessy, 2007). From a broad marketing perspective, branding has been described as being a symbol, design, term, or slogan that an organisation uses to project a message with which the consumer can identify or distinguish the product or service (Dibb et al., 2012; McDaniel et al., 2013). The offering in the political sector is primarily packaged in the ideology, policies, values and the political candidates. Political branding can therefore be perceived not just as a label but the identity that a political party or campaign assumes (Marsh and Fawcett, 2011).

Therefore, it can be deduced that the public will associate with a party, candidate or government, based on its brand identity or because of the perceived benefit that the political brand can offer. From a political standpoint, the electorate will identify with political brands that they perceive can or would improve their lives, feel more connected, secure and offers them a future (Smith, 2012). The 2012 American presidential election was close. The nation was split into three – democrats, republican and undecided. But according to Smith (2012), the Havas media report about meaningful brands showed that more Americans favoured the Obama brand because more could relate with the Obama campaign's ideology in terms of their personal concerns, social, environmental and economic issues (Smith, 2012). This follows the argument by Marsh and Fawcett (2011) that systematic branding in politics can be used to sell the political agenda of a party or candidate to the electorate.

3.2.2 Political communication management

After the creation of a suitable identity that represents the ideology, campaign or candidate of a political party, based on strategic marketing concepts, an organisation needs to design a communication strategy that takes the message to the electorate and wins their vote. Gurau and Ayadi (2011) suggest that this flow of information from the political system through different channels to the electorate and the public can be described as political communication. Communication has been described as

a critical element that helps to establish interaction and develop relationships between the political system and the stakeholders (Gurau and Ayadi, 2011; Emmer, Wollin and Vowe, 2012).

The application of marketing communication concepts in politics has been criticised by some authors as anti-democracy (Savigny, 2003), because of the tendency of using skewed information that can influence the decision of the electorate. However, Emmer et al. (2012) suggest that the design of the right communication strategy would not only help a candidate or political party to win an election, but can also provide the platform for all the stakeholders to engage and participate in the political processes. It can be deduced that the former view represents the use of the conventional marketing communication mix in the form of advertising on television, the print media and public relations efforts. These channels undoubtedly offer one way communication where the voters only consume information. However, the latter suggests the use of bi-directional communication strategies where the electorate is not only engaged, but has unsuppressed voices.

Historically, the political communication landscape started to experience a paradigm shift at the turn of the century with the exponential growth of the Internet and communication technologies (Howard, 2006). Between 1999 and 2007, the use of websites and email to engage the electorate was prominent and some campaigns, especially in the USA, started to target different electorates with information that is relevant to them only. The remarkable development in the digital communication technology space from the middle of this same period to date has however opened new opportunities to the political system and the electorate alike. The possible level of participation by the electorate has changed from a consumer of information to active participants in the electoral processes. Above all, the relationship and level of intimacy between the political system and the electorate has developed more with the availability of digital communication technologies which can bridge the previous political divide.

Organisations in the Western World that recognised and took advantage of this fact like the Obama campaign have reaped substantial benefit from digital communication strategies. However, literature shows that digital communication

strategies and their ability to turn individual or communal ideologies into a well-structured movement are underestimated (Howard and Hussein, 2011). But digital communications were the bedrock of the Arab spring movement in North Africa and the Middle-East. Thus, the use of digital communication tools, especially social media in the political space has become indispensable. After the 2008 presidential election that took the use of the Internet to another level, President Obama of the USA was quoted saying that “the Internet served his campaign in unprecedented ways” (Balz and Johnson, 2009:1).

3.3 The role of social media in politics

People participate in politics because they believe that it will make their lives better and that it can affect their future (Baek, 2009). It therefore seems that there is an indirect psychological contract between the political systems and the electorate. To create and maintain this relationship, the politicians need to display their understanding of their political subjects by communicating ideologies that the electorate can believe in or get the electorate to believe in their ideologies. This process emphasises the importance of the marketing concepts, especially that of strategic communication in the field of politics. Vitak et al. (2010) posit that this psychological relationship between the political structures and the citizen is an important factor that determines the participation of the public in politics.

The rise and adoption of social media as a means of communication, developing and maintaining social relationship has ushered in a new paradigm and unending possibilities within the political system (Himmelboim, Lariscy, TinkHam and Sweetser, 2012). It appears that social media might gradually be changing the concept and the degree of political participation. Earlier research describes political participation as the efforts made by citizens to try and influence political processes (Himmelboim et al., 2012). It can be deduced from the descriptions that the participation of the electorate in the political processes could be from a much lower influence standpoint because their efforts are not organised and the politicians have a louder voice that project the image of their choice.

However, with the power of new digital technologies such as social media, there seems to be a new paradigm in political participation. Recent studies show that

through new media, bottom-up communication has found its way into political circles in many countries where electorates are more empowered to express and enforce their political views (Zuniga et al., 2010; Abdelhay, 2012; Howard and Parks, 2012). It has also been observed that social media can be used in the organisation for the efforts of the electorate to gain enough momentum that can affect the political system and structures. Moreover, it is interesting to note that even the minority and previously ostracised groups can now have a meaningful influence on politics (Howard and Parks, 2012). This can be seen in the increased participation of young adults in political processes. This is directly induced by their use of social media (Baumgartner and Morris, 2010).

The unprecedented wave of political change seen in the Arab nations, especially in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and some other has been accredited to social media (Howard et al., 2011; Abdelhay, 2012). The political structures in the region, underestimated the influence and effectiveness of social media as a platform for active political participation (Zuniga et al., 2010; Howard and Parks, 2012). As a result, the dictatorial rules in the region were replaced by democracy through the use of social media as a platform for political participation (Howard and Parks, 2012). This was achieved by the use of social media and networks like Facebook, Twitter and YouTube as a platform for internal education, political discussions, mobilisation and seeking the attention of the international communities to tell the true and undeniable stories (Howard and Hussain, 2011).

Movements powered by social media have toppled Governments and helped others to win elections, giving it a role in the new generation politics, which cannot be ignored. The unprecedented political change in several countries shows the ability of digital technologies to facilitate discussions and induce collective actions (Abdelhay, 2012). Other aspects of this new paradigm in politics is the direct link that exists between the discussion of politics and political participation (Zuniga et al., 2010) and the connection between technology diffusion, digital media and political change (Howard and Parks, 2012). The evidence of this is the involvement of a new generation of digitally connected people in political participation.

3.4 Social media and political mobilisation

Politicians have always been concerned about driving or preventing collective action of their electorate depending on which one favours their policies and ideologies. It has been noticed that there is a tendency of some voters not to show up on the actual Election Day (Dale and Strauss, 2009). This could imply that a close election can be lost on the grounds of low turn-out at the actual polls irrespective of popularity of the political party. Political parties as a result, employ the use of various communication media to drive the public or the electorate to participate in the collective action (Bennett, Breunig and Givens, 2008). Moreover, effective political mobilisation has been found to go beyond voting, but also, in inducing participation in the entire political process and structures. Hence, a system that meets the need of the electorate is encouraged (Coelho and Von Lieres, 2010).

Political mobilisation efforts with elements of some personal relationships between the political structure and the public have been found to be effective in creating the momentum required for collective action (Dale and Strauss, 2009:787). The authors posit that a “social connectedness” of some sort between the political party and the electorate that makes them feel welcomed at the polls or for a collective action will increase mobilisation. Previously, collective actions in the field of politics seem to be driven mainly by organised structures. Coelho and Von Lieres (2010) present evidence of three forms of mobilisation used in political mobilisation. These include:

- **Associational mobilisation:** This is the political mobilisation built on the relationship that intermediary organisations like NGOs have with the public to create collective actions;
- **Social movements:** This type of mobilisation for collective action is less structured but usually with an identity and a goal. It could be mistaken for a crowd action and have been known to exert productive pressure on political structure;
- **Citizen involvement:** This form of political mobilisation is achieved by getting ordinary people involved in institutionalised decision making. This is done by creating opportunities for the public to participate in actual political processes making them easily mobilised for collective action when the need arises.

The three forms of mobilisation described by Coelho and Von Lieres (2010) have some elements of relationships described as social connectedness by Dale and Strauss (2009). Research has found that digital communication media and technologies have the capability to foster this social relationship between the political structures and the public, thereby improving collective actions (Bennett, Breunig and Givens, 2008). According to these authors, not only is digital media cheaper – thereby extending reach per dollar spent, but it creates a sustained interpersonal network with the public beyond organised structures.

Political processes in recent years have all been characterised by the use of social media for political mobilisation. From the presidential elections in America, the Arab spring in North Africa, the Occupy world movement amongst others have seen the use of social network sites such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube extensively as a channel of communication because of their social and interconnectivity elements. A recent experiment conducted by Bond et al. (2012) in conjunction with Facebook proved that there is significant influence on voters turn out by online mobilisation done through Facebook during the 2010 US congressional election. The report of this experiment shows that messages displayed in the newsfeed of users influence their voting behaviours and displaying a list of friends that have voted was the reason others voted. The use of social media to create a “social contagion” (Bond et al., 2012:295) could therefore be the new face-to-face “social connectedness” (Dale and Strauss, 2009) that influences passive voters to participate in political processes because the behaviour of someone they know inspires them.

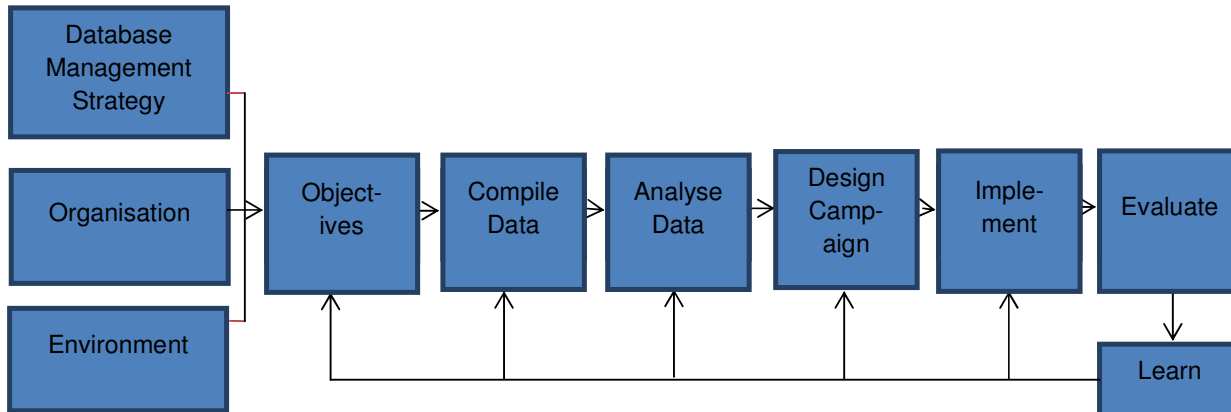
Social media offers psychological engagement, campaign recruitment and access to resources that influence political participation (Vitak et al., 2010); therefore, social media could be the new future of political mobilisation. According to the experiment by Bond et al. (2012), the use of social media, especially the likes of Facebook and Twitter have the power to create a ripple effect in reaching users, the users’ friend and friends of friends. With this interpersonal social network, messages not only spread faster, they penetrate deeper at cheaper cost. The social connection between recipients also creates a social influence that makes more people get involved in the political process or collective action as the case maybe.

The mobilisation of the social movement in the Middle East and North Africa was powered by Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. Howard and Parks (2012) described the Arab Spring as the “Facebook Revolution” because of the contagion effect that Facebook, Twitter and YouTube had on the movement as a communication platform and the means of driving the collective action in the region. In a more organised and strategic fashion, the Obama election campaign team also used social media to outperform its opponents (Kreiss, 2012a) in two successive elections. Several studies on the success of the Obama campaign points to the social connection between the campaign electorate that is powered by social media and database management that is carefully integrated with core marketing concepts (Harfoush, 2009; Gavet, 2012; Green, 2012; Kreiss, 2012a; Kreiss, 2012b; Scherer, 2012). These factors that stand out in the Obama campaign strategy fundamentally align with the political marketing concept discussed earlier, however with a different form with the use of social media.

3.4.1 Building a voters database

Data have become one of the most important assets of organisations. It is now known that the type, size and details of the data possessed by an organisation could lead to competitive advantage and subsequent control of a larger share of the market (O'Reilly, 2005). Therefore the development of a database of the current and potential customers is essential for effective marketing (Blattberg, Kim and Neslin, 2008), especially when the latest digital technologies are employed. The right information about the customers (current and potential), provides an opportunity to build a relationship that understands and delivers the right value to the customer. Blattberg et al. (2008) described a database marketing process that models the use of data and digital technologies for the purpose of marketing in any field as shown below in Figure 3.2

Figure 3.2: Database marketing process



Source: Blattberg, Kim and Neslin (2008)

Figure 3.2 shows a database marketing process that models the creation and usage of a customer database for marketing activities. It is essential that a strategy which aligns with the organisation's overall strategy is created for the database marketing exercise within the context of the prevailing environmental factors. The organisation would then set project objectives based on defined problems and then gather data from relevant sources based on the strategy and the objectives. Thereafter, models can be created to extract patterns from the data, based on which marketing campaigns can be designed and implemented. Feedback provided by implemented campaigns could then provide information that can be used to fine tune the process as required (Blattberg et al., 2008).

Research studies show that one of the advantages that social media provide is the silo of connected users' information (Bond et al., 2012; Kreiss, 2012b). In its raw format, the young Arab Spring activists of the Middle East and North Africa used this storage of information to create a collective action. However, politicians in several countries are now using social media in conjunction with other digital marketing tools and strategies for active political marketing (Jackson and Lilleker, 2009; Kreiss, 2012a).

It was noted that the building and use of a detailed voters' database was a major competitive advantage for the 2008 and the 2012 presidential bid of the Obama

campaign in the US elections (Green, 2012; Kreiss, 2012a). Social media served the Obama campaign team as a source of voter information (Kreiss, 2012b; Scherer, 2012) and execution of political marketing strategies. The Obama campaign maintains the most liked political page (over 35 million likes) on Facebook and a following of over 27 million on Twitter as the number one political figure and the 5th followed profile overall (Socialbakers, 2013b). President Obama has continued to use social media for political mobilisation beyond the elections by mobilising his followers for post-election collective actions (Facebook, 2013a).

3.4.2 Segmentation of social media database

The effective deployment of marketing concepts in the field of politics requires a good understanding of the voters and the political landscape within the jurisdiction of a political party or candidate (Osuagwu, 2008). In order to understand the voters, political parties have employed the use of market segmentation to understand the different categories of their target market (Isaacson, 2012). Effective segmentation in politics provides important information on issues, position and traits of the different groups that make up the potential voter population (Phillips, Reynolds and Reynolds, 2010). These authors suggest that this voters' intelligence should form the bedrock of political communication and message development for the different groups identified Isaacson (2012). The degree of homogeneity in the identified segments within the population will determine how successful they can be targeted with the right messages (Blattberg et al., 2008).

The social network sites are designed to be a repository of information about users. By the conceptual definitions and the description of the user activities on social media, the platforms provide a rich source of data (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010) about the users' personality and preferences that market models for decision making. Some political parties and office seekers have used the demographic, political affiliation, social network, interests and the behavioural data of users on social media to their advantages (Kreiss, 2012b). According to Phillips et al. (2010), the electorate can be segmented into groups based on attitudes, behaviour, demography, geography, expected benefits and their psychographic profile. However, Thackeray, Neiger, Hanson and McKenzie (2008) suggested that segmentation strategies should focus on the use of psychographic profiling that is

available with social media data. This could prove very useful in segmenting voters because of its ability to combine a number of the other factors which could provide information on why the other variables are important to the different segments (Phillips et al., 2010).

3.4.3 Micro-targeting

The essence of segmentation is to be able to make a strategic choice in deploying marketing resources for optimum returns. This process is described as targeting (Thackeray et al., 2008). With the availability of detailed data on social media and from other sources, Kreiss (2012b) noted that political parties are giving more attention to crafting their political communication based on high level profiling of the electorate. For instance, Facebook provides functionality to direct communication to an audience based on demography, geography, lifestyle, interest and interpersonal connection (Facebook, 2013b).

Targeting has been redefined in the field of politics by some political parties that use available data on voters' attitude, behaviour, lifestyle, etc. to predict the likely interest, attitude, expected behaviour and orientation. Gavett (2012) describes the process as micro-targeting. With traditional marketing, targeting is done based on segmentation. However micro-targeting employs mathematical and data mining techniques to uncover previously unknown patterns that could predict a new segment of interest with as much as 87% success rate (Murray and Scime, 2010). Although issues of privacy have been raised about the use of micro-targeting, Brennan (2012) of CNN describes the concept as helping the political parties to engage people on issues that concern them alone.

During the 2008 and the 2012 US presidential election, reports and studies describe the success of the Obama campaign as based on the use of micro-targeting with social media (Harfoush, 2009; Kreiss, 2012b). The campaign team was reported to have ensured that a profile of the candidate appear on every social network site through which specific messages were tailored and delivered to different communities including those regarded as minority groups (Harfoush, 2009). It was reported that the Obama campaign team gathered data through social media and other sources to model, predict and tailor communication specific to each group

(Gavett, 2012; Kreiss, 2012b; Scherer, 2012). Interestingly, social media played a strategic role in the gathering of information that was processed and was also used as a strategic channel of communication with the electorate. Communicating messages of personal interest on platforms where the electorate feel socially connected to the political candidate, friends and others of the same interest could therefore be one of the competitive advantages of the candidate.

3.5 Uses of social media in politics

The place and role of social media as a strategic marketing tool in politics is becoming increasingly important and inevitable. More specifically, it is becoming the tool of choice in political communication and has notably been used successfully to drive collective action in social movements with unprecedented goals. Howard et al. (2011) explained how the Arab spring made use of social media. Twitter was used for mobilisation, Facebook was used to create, maintain and nurture the network of people, while YouTube and other video oriented social network sites enabled the ordinary citizen journalism that broadcasted the stories beyond any form of borders (Howard and Hussain, 2011). Social media was used by the ordinary citizens during the Arab spring to engage the political structures; however, literature also shows that political structures that have engaged their citizens with social media follow the same pattern. Below is a list of how social media has been used in the political context.

- **Building relationships:** The traditionally non-social relationship between the political structures and their citizens have been noticed to have become less effective in political campaigns and driving collective actions (Dale and Strauss, 2009). It does appear that the characteristic top-down communication available through the use of mass media like television and print media does make the political parties seem far away to the citizen. However, the availability of digital technologies has not only helped in personalised communication, but it now fosters the development and sustaining of interpersonal relationships with and amongst the citizens (Bennett, Breunig and Givens, 2008). Social media allows for the building of such relationships and also provides the opportunity to leverage existing networks in establishing credible and trust based relationships (Harfoush, 2009). Hence increasing political participation and collective actions.

- **Campaign organisation and communication:** Perhaps the most important usage of social media found in literature and practise is the influence it can have in organising the actual campaign and its usage as the new age communication tool. The building of communities on social media has become a norm for almost all political organisation and figures. The communities in themselves are not able to deliver a competitive advantage and care must be taken that it does not become another channel for top–down communication. Rather, it is important that the goal of the use of social media be made clear as an online means to organise and drive offline action (Harfoush, 2009).

The Obama campaign's strategy was not to use social media for disseminating information. But the campaign team built a host of communities into a single virtual community where every member felt the sense of belonging to something special and was willing to participate in the entire process. The strategy of the Obama team was to use social media for "*the mobilisation of the Obama network of supporters, promoting active civic engagement, enabling peer-to-peer political campaigning, educating the public on issues and organisational strategies, enabling voters to make informed decisions, mobilising the ground game, Web-facilitated canvassing and phoning and raising money*" (Cogburn and Espinoza-Vasquez, 2011:203). Unlike some other candidates, the above finding revealed the use of social media for executing core political campaigns and not just a nice tool to have for meeting people.

- **Political engagement:** Political engagement refers to the level at which a person or constituency is mobilised and inspired to participate in political processes (Dahlgren, 2009). However, the author alludes that political participation is the physical actions that follow engagement. This suggests that political engagement is that state of interest where the citizens are willing to put in their efforts for collective action. Therefore, the level of social capital that a political party, structure or candidate possesses amongst the citizens will determine the level of political engagement, hence the level of political

participation and eventually the ability to drive collective action with and amongst the citizen.

Literature describes social capital as the link between or among people within organisations or institutions based on a shared identity or objective (Ellison, Steinfield and Lampe, 2007). It can therefore be argued that the amount of social capital possessed by a political structure, party or candidate among the citizens would determine its social connectedness among the citizens as described by Dale and Strauss (2009). However, Cogburn and Espinoza-Vasquez (2011) found that there is a direct link between the use of social media and social capital. More specifically, the Cogburn and Espinoza-Vasquez (2011) cite that the studies have shown that intense usage of Facebook can create and maintain a high level of social capital. This translates directly to political engagement, where people that would normally be indifferent to political processes can be inspired to get involved.

Moreover, the use of social media can help in dispelling the atmosphere of “us” and “them” between the politicians and the citizenry created by social or economic distance leading to expression of distrust. With the active and proper usage of social media, the political structures can close this gap and make their wards feel more connected to them (Harfoush, 2009).

- **Political crowdsourcing:** Crowdsourcing is the “talent-mining” act of completing tasks through community efforts in a public domain by asking for contribution from anyone via the Internet (Garrigos-Simon et al., 2012:1886). It allows for the participation and contribution of the public in solving problems or achieving a task that would have required the services of a few highly trained professionals or employees of an organisation only. Crowdsourcing allows people of different skills, talent and information to add value tasks and solving problems in the public by showcasing what they have to offer freely (Greengard, 2011) for different type of motivations (Garrigos-Simon et al., 2012). In recent times, political parties and candidates, especially those with high social capital, have taken advantage of this concept by getting many involved in collective actions. This could be in the form of knocking on doors,

motivating others, channel of communication, acting for or against negative publicity against their candidates.

The interpersonal network and the socially connected communities in the social network are playing a major role in enhancing crowdsourcing as a marketing concept in politics and general business environment. The Obama campaign was found to have a virtually connected network of five million volunteers that actively worked as part of the election campaign (Cogburn and Espinoza-Vasquez, 2011). From those that knocked on doors, blogged, posted a video to those working at the campaign headquarters, everyone felt connected, engaged and looked for opportunities to contribute because the campaign prioritised the use of social media internally for all the volunteers and externally to communicate and engage with the citizens (Harfoush, 2009).

3.6 Factors that affect the use of social media in politics

One of the most important findings in literature about the role of social media in politics is that it is an enhancing platform and cannot of itself guarantee success (Harfoush, 2009; Howard and Hussain, 2011). Social media can play a significant role as a communication tool in politics. But the application of the marketing concept of strategic fit and alignment could determine success or failure in the use of social media in politics or any business endeavour (Harfoush, 2009). Aligning the use of social media to the overall objective of the organisation and the prevailing environmental factors is therefore very important (Harfoush, 2009; Schaefer, 2013). The following are factors to watch in the use of social media in the field of politics:

- **Penetration of the Internet and social media:** The usage of social media is predicated on the accessibility of the Internet. Hence, the success of social media as a communication tool would depend on the penetration of Internet in the target population. Besides, studies have shown that the number of years of usage of the Internet also determines the type of activities they are engaged in on the Internet. Active users of social media have found to have been online for at least five years (Goldstuck, 2012a). Therefore, the continued decrease in the costs and increasing penetration of the Internet,

especially via the mobile telephone provides an opportunity for the use of social media in politics.

- **Cultural behaviour and orientation:** Studies have shown that there is a positive link between social media usage cultural orientation and behaviour of the citizen (Salem and Mourtada, 2012). The power of social media to influence cultural behaviour and orientation was amplified during the revolution in the Arab world. Its power as a communication tool has the power to influence opinion and view, therefore by extension values and cultural orientation. The result is an on-going cultural evolution in the region as a result of the Arab Spring (Salem and Mourtada, 2012). This fact is also evident is the management of minority groups with different orientation and beliefs by the Obama campaign team (Harfoush, 2009).
- **Demographics:** The social connectivity and interpersonal nature of social media makes it important to understand the target market, especially in political communication. The network in social media can be traced with demographic attributes. This correlates with the fact that issues face by people and motives for political participation can also be traced to demographic variables (Phillips et al., 2010). It therefore suffices that demographic factor like age, sex, geographic location, race etc. should be considered in the use of social media in political communication. For instance, the age group 19 – 24 have been thought to dominate social media, but recent studies have shown that the median age of users can be increasing. According to Goldstuck (2012b), the age group 60 and above is the fastest growing age group on Facebook in South Africa. This should inform the type of message and engagement strategy in political communication.

3.7 The South African context and opportunities

The number of active South African individual users and corporate organisations on different social media platforms show that it has come of age in South Africa. As at 2012, there were more than 8.6 million South Africans with access to the Internet. It is noteworthy that about 1.3 million of this population earn less than R5000 and 84% of them are less than 45 years old (Goldstuck, 2012a). This report on Internet

access in South Africa shows that the cost of the Internet has continued to decrease making the service accessible to users across different categories. The usage of the mobile phones and smartphones to access the Internet has been a major driver of the penetration of Internet in South Africa. According to Goldstuck (2012c), 7.9 million South African access Internet on mobile phones and 2.48 million access the Internet on mobile phones only as at the second quarter of 2012 (Goldstuck, 2012c).

There is 123% penetration of mobile phones in South Africa (Lyons, Valdés-Valdivieso and Penteriani, 2012). Accessing the Internet service via the mobile networks is improving and the cost of accessing the Internet via the mobile phone is decreasing. It can be argued that the use of social media will continue to grow in South Africa, presenting an opportunity for it to be used as a platform for marketing and communications. It is known that media usage in South Africa has crossed several barriers in the form of demographic and economic barriers. This is supported by reports which show a significant usage of social media even in the rural areas (Goldstuck, 2012b). However, in research conducted, 95% of the brands surveyed are using social media, but only 51% of them agreed that they are using Facebook effectively and only 33% of them are getting the best out of Twitter (Goldstuck, 2012b). This can be attributed to the slow adoption of social media by the executives of corporate organisations in South Africa because of the lack full understanding of the implementation model to adopt and the possible implications of a poor implementation (Chikandiwa et al., 2013).

In the South African political landscape, it appears that the citizen would be willing to engage the political structures actively to address the myriad of issues facing the nation. However, it can be argued that the political structures in South Africa are not harnessing the power of social media. It does appear that the political structure and figures in South Africa might be using social media as another means of one-way communication. While entertainers and celebrities appear to have the South African social media users engaged, with the profile of Nelson Mandela followed by that of Julius Malema rated in the top 20 Twitter profiles in South Africa. Although the @SAPresident profile of Mr Jacob Zuma has more than 205000 followers, it has only sent out 88 tweets since registration. Meanwhile, on Facebook the most liked political page is that of Barack Obama only followed by that of "Motlantle for

President” page that appear as the only local political page in the top 50 (Socialbakers, 2013a).

The South African population is increasingly dissatisfied with the performance of the politicians and government structures. This is demonstrated by the spate of the service delivery protests, the labour related protest and the general clamour for change (De Visser and Powell, 2012). Therefore, one could say that an opportunity exists in the South African political landscape for engaging the citizens in finding solutions to the many problems or educating the people on what the government is doing. However, a greater opportunity might exist for a transformational leadership or political party that can connect with the citizen and build trust among the citizens, a role that the use of social media as a communication platform could achieve based on literature review in this chapter.

3.8 Social media implementation: DA Eastern Cape

The literature review in the previous Sections of this chapter suggests that there is an opportunity to take advantage of social media for mobilisation and engagement within the South African political landscape. Moreover, an analysis of the current social media operations of the Democratic Alliance in the Eastern Cape revealed that the use of social media is unstructured. The social media desk is currently administered by an intern without access to the leadership of the organisation with the party structures. This would imply that the leadership involvement in social media activities is minimal or does not exist. A further discussion with the social media intern reveals that little is known about the existing members and there is generally no strategy or control of the information that goes on social media platforms from their desk.

It is important that organisations be structured and strategic in their approach to the use of social media (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). A wrong approach in the use of social media could produce a negative result either from a return on investment perspective or a negative impact on brand. A strategic approach in the implementation of social media as a platform of communication for organisations will not only inspire a positive result, but will determine if the impact and return on

investment can be measured adequately (Safko and Brake, 2009). One important strategic issue raised in the literature is that social media implementation strategy should align with the other marketing communication mix adopted by the organisation (Mangold and Faulds, 2009; Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010).

3.8.1 Social media implementation models

The crafting of strategy for the implementation of social media as a marketing communication tool within an organisation has been found to depend on what is considered as priority. This can be the target audience or the organisations strategic objectives (Chikandiwa et al., 2013). Social media practitioners have proposed the use of a number of models that can be used as foundation in developing an implementation plan and crafting social media strategy. Although not proven scientifically, the models identified include:

- **POST model:** The POST model suggests that the key elements in crafting social media strategy are People, Objectives, Strategy and Technology. According to Bernoff (2007) of Forrester Research that proposed the POST model, the first step in developing a social media strategy is to understand the target audience. The author proposed that this should be followed with a clear objective, then a strategy can be developed and a choice of technology can then be made based on the initial three elements.
- **ACCESS model:** The ACCESS model is based on the acronym – Audience, Concept, Competition, Execution, Social Media and Sales viability (Safko and Brake, 2009). Although this model is similar to the POST model, it looks at what the competition is doing to determine how the adopted concept will be executed. The model suggests that in implementing a social media strategy, it is very important to get to know the audience and that some level of research should be carried out to understand the distribution of the audience (Safko and Brake, 2009). In marketing terms, this can be called segmentation of the target audience.
- **OASIS model:** The OASIS model is similar to the other two models that have been mentioned earlier. The name is formed from the acronym of words that make up the model – Objectives, Audience, Strategy, Implementation and

Sustainment. One of the main differences of the OASIS model is that it prioritises the objectives of the organisation implementing social media above the audience compared to the other models (Mason, 2008). Other than this, it also stresses the fact that organisations need to learn and improve its strategy and plan depending on the outcome of implementation.

Each of the implementation models provides a list of important elements and variables that is very important in the implementation of social media marketing strategies for businesses and organisations. The elements highlighted in the models provide a basis for crafting a structured approach for the implementation of social media marketing strategies. Based on this study and the literature review in the previous sections, the next sections will propose a framework that can be used for the implementation of social media marketing strategies for political campaigning and engagement.

3.8.2 Conceptual framework

The literature review earlier in this chapter stressed that the electorate will identify with a political organisation or a politician if the value proposition from the organisation or politician is strong, clear enough and aligns with their need (Smith, 2012). The Democratic Alliance is positioned to deliver - the South African dream of one nation, with one future, living together under the constitution in peace, security and prosperity, with opportunity and recognition for all the rainbow people (DA Eastern Cape, 2011). As the official opposition party in South Africa, in the coming years, the DA arguably stands a chance to take advantage of the growing concern about the ruling party (Holmes, 2013) on national issues that forms the core of its vision.

Despite the fact that opportunities exist for the DA to increase its political capital in South Africa, its value proposition, branding and marketing strategies will determine its position in the coming years. The electorates that are unhappy with the ruling party will have the option to move to the DA, the other alternatives or even decide not to vote. Based on this fact and the literature that has been reviewed, this study will propose the implementation of social media marketing strategy that puts a strong emphasis on the ideology of the party but understands the electorate. In

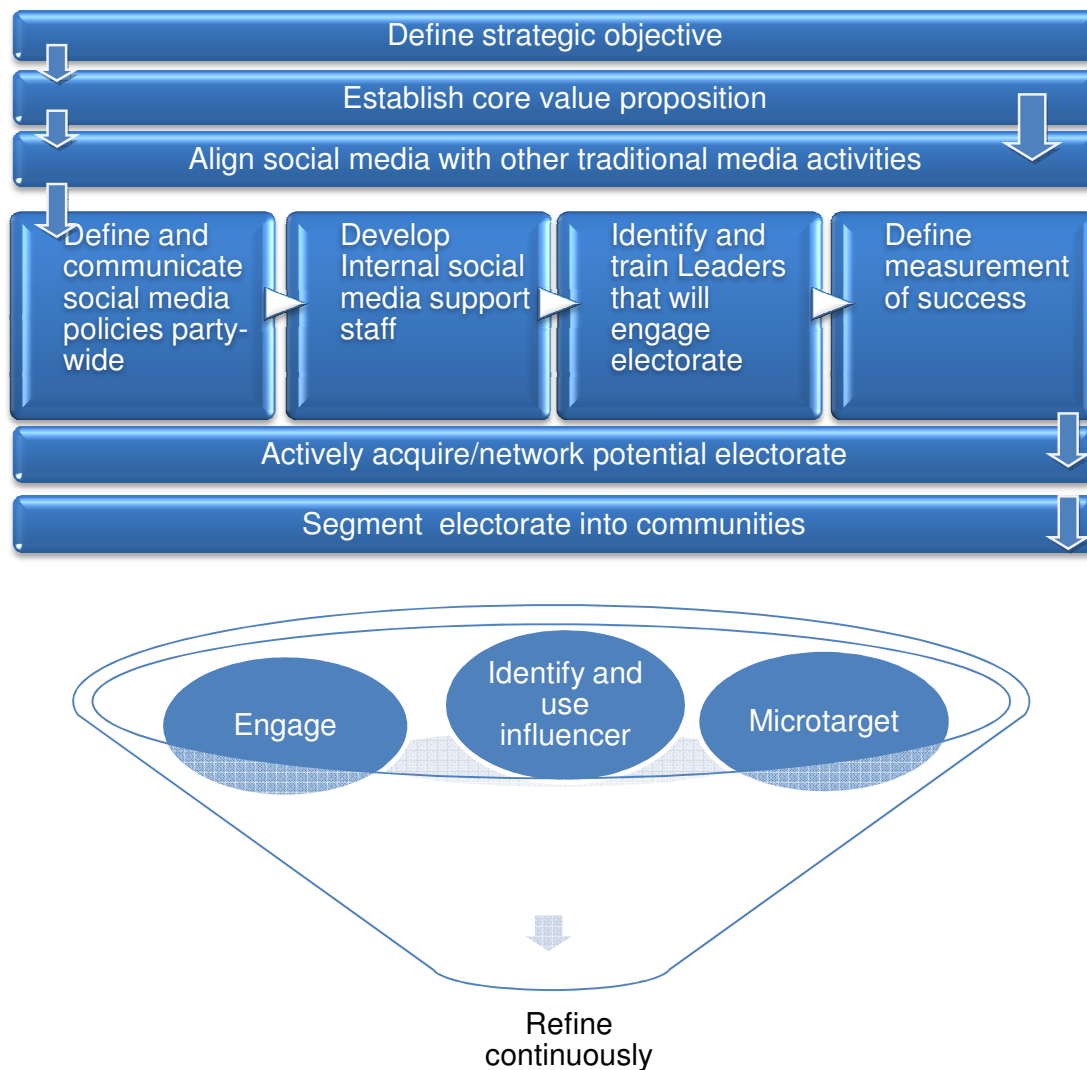
communicating with the electorate through social media, it is proposed that the implementation strategy identifies the different communities within its audience. This will enable it to pack the message/vision/ideology of the organisation according to the needs of each community.

Figure 3.3 shows a proposed conceptual framework for the implementation of social media marketing strategy for the Democratic Alliance in the Eastern Cape Province. This model is based on the OASIS model for the implementation of social media strategy (Mason, 2008) and social media strategy framework as suggested by Dawson (2009).

The conceptual framework in figure 3.3 assumes that the electorates are all familiar with the use of the Internet and many are already using the mobile platform. It puts a priority on the objective of the organisation. This should determine the value proposition and the involvement of the leadership of the organisation in the use of social media. Not only will this give the electorate the social connectedness that results in political capital as mention earlier in this chapter, it is expected to increase the level of political engagement and mobilisation.

Moreover, the framework proposes that the DA should actively implement strategies that will increase its followership on social media platforms. Thereafter, the organisation can target the electorate based on demographic data, socio-economic segmentation and their social network of choice. However, it is important that the organisation have a clearly defined policy on the use of social media, training the leaders and the employees adequately and have a measurement of success that aligns with the objectives.

Figure 3.3: Proposed conceptual framework for the implementation of social media



Source: Authors construction

Also, the framework incorporates the importance of listening and engaging. Social media is designed for two way communication. Listening, responding and engaging the user with actions like recognising and taking advantage of the influencers can increase the chances of success in implementing social media as marketing tool for politics (Dawson, 2009). Above all, listening and actively engaging the users will provide feedback that should help in shaping and evolving the organisations activities on social media (Safko and Brake, 2009).

3.9 Summary

This chapter reviewed the use of marketing concepts in the field of politics and discussed the use of branding and marketing communication in politics. This is based on the research objective RO₂ – to investigate and identify the role of marketing in political campaign and voters' engagement. The reviewed literature showed that the application of the core marketing concepts can provide political organisations and politicians the opportunity to understand, connect and effectively communicate with their target market. Furthermore, effective and strategic political marketing have the potential to offer competitive advantage to political organisations and politician. Part of this is the use of branding and communication in politics to sell the ideologies, values and policies of a political party or candidate to the citizen in order to win their vote or participation in the political process.

Chapter three also addressed the research objective RO₃ - to determine the uses of social media as an alternative marketing communication tool for political campaigning. It was discussed that social media presents an opportunity as a platform for political mobilisation. It was found that social media can provide a platform for political structures and campaigns to socially connect with the users, their friends and the friend of their friends creating an interpersonal network. It was discussed that this interpersonal relationship can induce political engagement which political structure or campaign can use to drive collective action. However, it was highlighted that although social media can be used to build and maintain communities and engage the citizens, the level and how the communities are engaged will determine political participation or collective action.

It was also discussed that social media can be used to build and connect with communities. Emphasis was laid on the use of social media as a basis for segmentation and micro-targeting the communities by communicating with them on their subject of interests and based on who they are. It was also discussed that the right of social media as a communication platform would result in community members getting involved as amplifiers of the message and directly influencing people in the sphere of contact both online and offline.

A conceptual framework on how social media can be implemented as a strategic marketing tool in politics was proposed at the end of the chapter three. This satisfies the research objective RO₄ - to develop a conceptual framework for the implementation of social media marketing strategies for political campaigning. The next chapter of this study will explain the research methodology that will be used to test the proposed framework for the use of social media for political campaigns.

CHAPTER FOUR

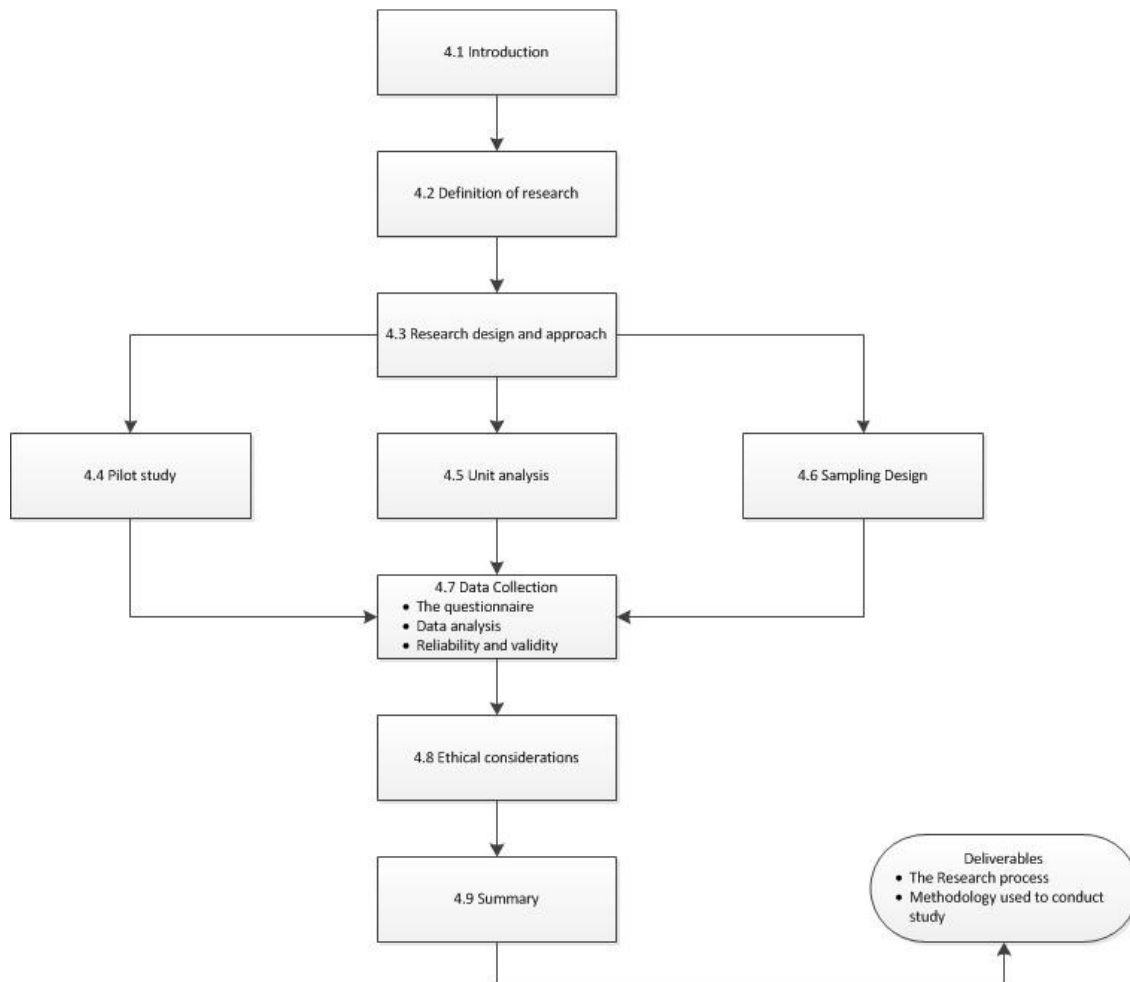
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

The review of literature in Chapters 2 and 3 suggests that the use of social media as a strategic marketing communication tool could provide a substantial advantage for politician and political parties. Chapter 2 articulates the role of the Internet, mobile technologies and social media in strategic marketing communication. It highlights the research objective RO₁ – to determine the role of communication in strategic marketing with a focus on the use of the Internet, mobile technologies and social media. Chapter 3 highlights the research objective RO₂ by investigating and identifying the role of marketing in political campaign and voters' engagement. Chapter 3 also deals with the research objective RO₃ by determining the uses of social media as an alternative marketing communication tool for political campaigning. A framework for the implementation of social media for political campaigning was proposed at the end of the chapter based on research objective RO₄ - to develop a conceptual framework for the implementation of social media marketing strategies for political campaigning.

This chapter will describe the research process and methodology that will be used to examine the findings in the literature review. It will achieve the research objective RO₅ - to explain the research methodology that will be used to carry out this study that can be used for future reproduction. It will describe the process that will be followed in this study to assess the use of social media in politics. This chapter will evaluate the framework that was proposed in Chapter 3. It will describe the research design which involves the planning of the research and the research approach that will determined the type of data that will be collected and used for this study. The later part of this chapter will describe how data will be collected and analysed in order to evaluate the proposed framework and make recommendations. Figure 4.1 provides the layout of the chapter.

Figure 4.1: Layout of Chapter 4



4.2 Definition of research

The dynamic nature of the world today offers unending opportunities to provide answers, solutions and new frontiers either to challenge the status quo or to introduce a new paradigm irrespective of the field of interest. The field of business is characterised by the quest for solutions to managerial or operational issues that require a constant need for decision making (Blumberg, Cooper and Schindler, 2008). This need for effective decision making, answers and solutions is what necessitates research in the different field of interests.

Social media have become a very important marketing tool as described in the previous chapter. However, business and organisational leaders are still sceptical or overly cautious about using it for business purposes. The slow pace of top

management acceptance of social media for business can be attributed to the lack of sound information and tools for decision making (Safko and Brake, 2009). Previous studies show that political organisations like the Obama campaign team for the presidential elections in the USA in 2008 and 2012 have used social media for political campaigning as part of their main strategies (Cogburn and Espinoza-Vasquez, 2011; Kreiss, 2012a). However, the rate of adoption and implementation of social media in business and organisations, including in the field of political marketing does not measure up to the opportunity it avails. This presents the opportunity and relevance for this study.

Research is defined as a systematic process of gathering, analysing facts and the interpretation of information thereof to be able to understand a concept, phenomenon, provide answer or offer solution in an area or interest (Leedy and Ormrod, 2010). The aim and objective of research can be summarised as any or a combination of the following (Collis and Hussey, 2009:3):

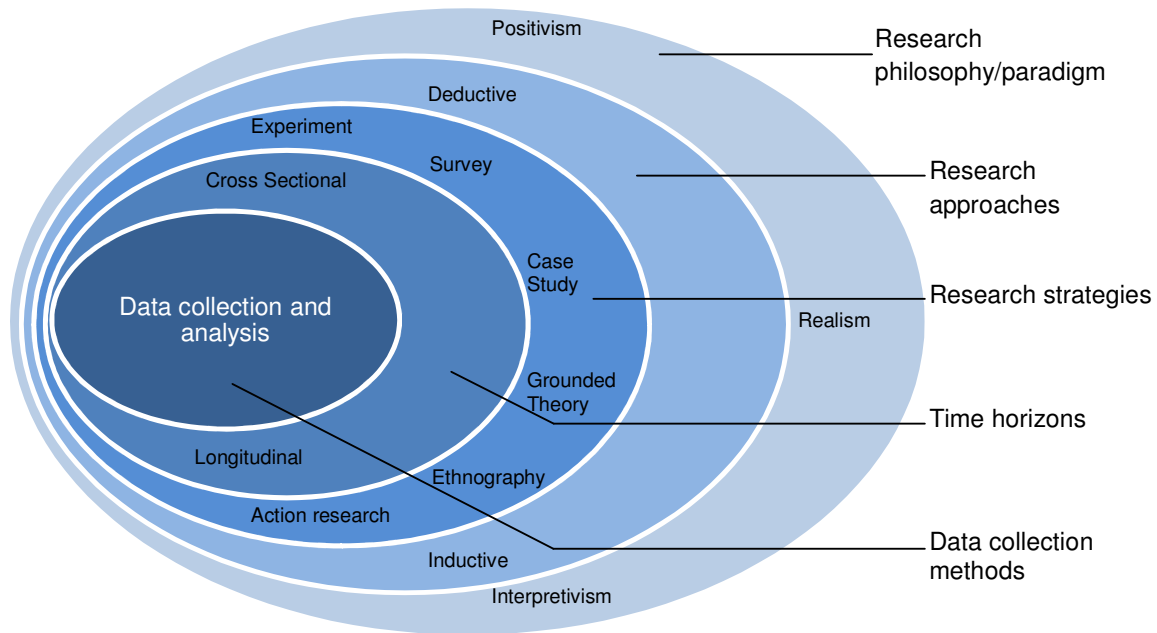
- The review and integration of existing knowledge;
- Investigation of existing problem;
- Provision of solutions to a problem;
- Exploration and analysis of general issues;
- Creation of new system or procedure;
- Explanation of new phenomenon; and
- Generation of new knowledge.

The research process allows for the creation of knowledge through methodical enquiries and investigation of research questions in the field of concern (Collis and Hussey, 2009). The process consists of sequential and interlinked phases with each depending and informing what happens in the other, though it is not required that one step be complete before going to the next (Blumberg, Cooper and Schindler, 2011).

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009) used the analogy of an onion to describe the methodical nature of the research process and how each element of the research

process interlinks as shown in Figure 4.2 below. The diagram shows the methodology that should be followed when conducting research in layers.

Figure 4.2: The research process 'onion'



Source: Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009)

At the core of the onion is how data are collected and analysed and the most outer layer is where the research philosophy is determined. Each layer of the onion represents a stage in the research process with each progressively influencing the next until the ultimate task of data collection and analysis (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). The following subsections describe the process and the adopted methodology for this study.

4.3 Research design

Research design is the planning of the tasks and procedures that will be undertaken during the research process to ensure the validity of the outcome of the research work (Collis and Hussey, 2009). It is the conceived plan of action and the structure of the investigation on how to find answers to the research questions (Blumberg et al.,

2011). In order to have a successful research undertaking, it is required to have a good understanding of the problem or issue of concern. Based on this understanding, the choice of an appropriate method and detailed plan of actions that fit the research problem/objective would then have to be made (Collis and Hussey, 2009; Leedy and Ormrod, 2010). Therefore, an appropriate research design will help in guiding and maintaining the right focus during the research (Collis and Hussey, 2009).

In creating a suitable research design, it is important to establish the research paradigm. The research paradigm is described as a set of fundamental assumptions or the philosophical framework that will guide how research is conducted (Collis and Hussey, 2009). Collis and Hussey (2009) emphasised that the research paradigm will guide the choice of research strategy and how data will be collected and analysed. The literature identifies two major research paradigms listed below (Collis and Hussey, 2009; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009):

- Positivism – the discovery and validation of theories based on empirical research through observation and experiments. Hence, it is associated with the use of quantitative methods.
- Interpretivism – a subjective research framework that is based on social reality that seeks to describe, translate and interpret with the purpose of understanding social phenomenon with a particular ambit. The qualitative research method is based on this research paradigm.

This study is based on the positivism philosophy that reality is independent of the researcher. As a result of this philosophy, it is expected that the research process of this study will produce quantitative data that will be used to test assumptions about the association among social media, political activities and other variables. Based on the positivism philosophy, this study will evaluate the proposed framework using an empirical study. The study will be carried out among a selected sample with the aim of generalising the findings about the proposed framework on the implementation of social media marketing strategies for political campaigning.

4.3.1 Research approach

The chosen research design and paradigm will determine the approach of the research. This can involve the use of variables as a measuring and investigation tool, the study of characteristics and qualities to examine a phenomenon (Leedy and Ormrod, 2010). The two research approaches can be differentiated by the type of information used for the study (Blumberg, Cooper and Schindler, 2008). The choice of the research approach can be either a quantitative or qualitative research, based on the subject of interest.

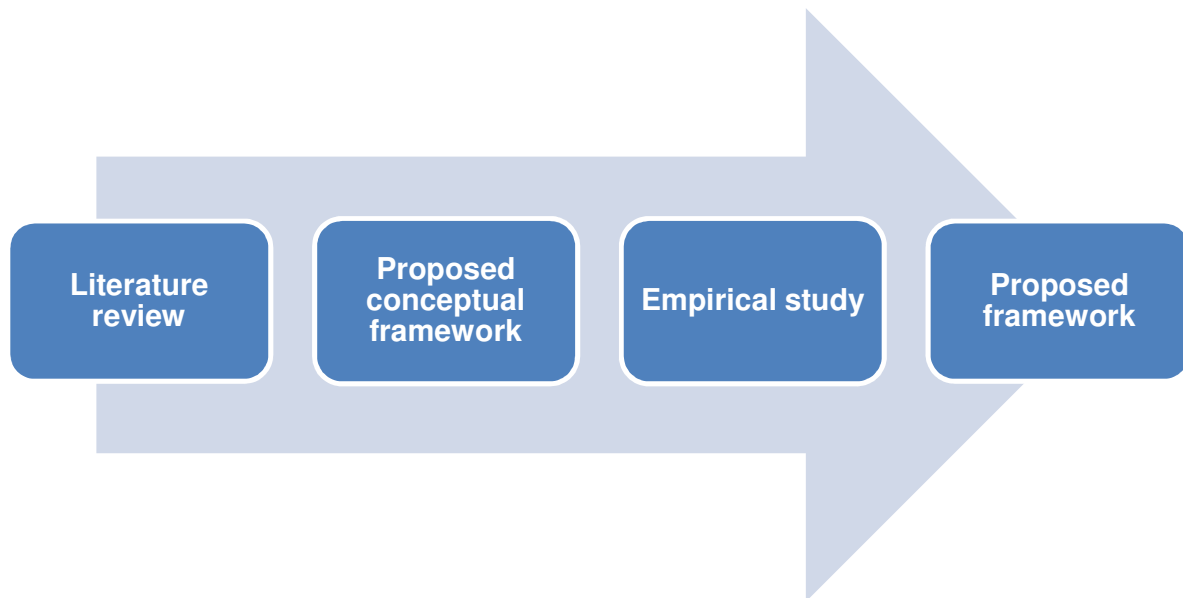
It is important that the adopted research approach be aligned with the expected quality of outcome (Blumberg, Cooper and Schindler, 2008) and the peculiarity of the research being carried out. However, the major difference in the two main approaches is the purpose of the study, the adopted process of the research, method of data collection and analysis phenomenon (Leedy and Ormrod, 2010). The quantitative study usually starts out with a theory or hypothesis that will be validated by collecting and analysing numerical data or statement of fact. On the other hand, qualitative research gathers, organises and interprets information in order to answer the research question thereby developing a theory or a hypothesis as the outcome of the study (Leedy and Ormrod, 2010).

The quantitative research can therefore be expected to follow a more structured research design and method of data collection and interpretation. While a qualitative research, might allow for procedural flexibilities and evolution of the research design during the study. Also, the quantitative research is objective and independent of the researcher's bias. However, the qualitative research is subjective and the opinion of the researcher might reflect in the process and conclusion of the study (Blumberg, et al., 2008; Collis and Hussey, 2009; Leedy and Ormrod, 2010).

This study will primarily make use of the quantitative approach for the most part of the study, but the qualitative approach will also be used. The qualitative study is adopted to do a gap analysis of the current usage of social media by the Democratic Alliance in the Eastern Cape. However, the primary focus of this study adopts the quantitative technique to carry out an empirical study among the members of the Democratic Alliance in the Eastern Cape that will be used to validate the

conceptualised framework that the party could adopt based on literature. The adopted approach is designed to focus on and answer the research questions. The approach of the study is described in Figure 4.3.

Figure 4.3: Adopted research approach



Source: Author's construction

- **Literature review:** A review of the literature was carried and presented in Chapters 2 and 3. Chapter 2 focused on the role that the Internet, mobile technologies and social media specifically play as communication tool in strategic marketing. Chapter 3 presented the review of literature on how social media can be used for political engagement and campaign. Case studies of how social media has played pivotal role in political events were also reviewed and the findings were presented in Chapter 3.
- **Proposed conceptual framework:** After a review of the literature in Chapter 2 and 3, a study of how the Democratic Alliance of the Eastern Cape is using social media and an analysis of the gaps therein, a conceptual framework will be proposed in Chapter 5. The proposed conceptual framework will take into account the main research questions, the objectives of the research and academic findings from the literature. The proposed conceptual framework will

also take into consideration the key success factors found in cases where social media have been effectively used for political purposes.

- **Empirical study:** The empirical study allows for the use of data collection or other mode of observation to gain insight and find answer to research questions. An empirical study was carried out among existing members of the Democratic Alliance of the Eastern Cape to find answers to the research questions and to validate the conceptual framework. A questionnaire (Appendix B) was designed and made available to the provincial official of the Democratic Alliance who administered the questionnaires directly among the members in the Eastern Cape.

Based on the literature review in Chapter 3, the questionnaire was designed to collect data relating to;

- The use of the Internet and mobile technologies;
- The general usage of social media and degree of interpersonal network available through the platforms;
- The current usage and willingness to use engage in political discussion on social media;
- The opinion of the membership about how the parties current usage of social media for political mobilisation and driving collective action; and
- Identification of segments among the membership based on demography and orientation for micro-targeting purposes.

4.4 Pilot study

A pilot study allows researchers to undergo a pre-testing of a proposed research process or a component of it. It provides a platform for feasibility testing of research elements and can uncover potential issues. The implementation of a pilot study ensures that the questionnaire used in the study is designed such that the respondent does not have a problem answering the questions (Saunders et al., 2009). The authors further suggested that implementing a pilot study can increase the validity and reliability of the data collected.

After designing the questionnaire for this study based on the literature review, it was presented to the statistician at NMMU to check the structure of the questions to establish content validity. This also assisted in pointing out potential issues of representativeness and suitability of some of the questions that was on the initial draft of the questionnaire. Thereafter, the amended questionnaire was presented to the leadership of the Democratic Alliance in the Eastern Cape for a second phase of piloting. In this case the aim was to ensure logistical feasibility, to test that the questionnaire covers all areas and is likely to provide answers for the research questions.

4.5 Unit of analysis

The unit of analysis describes the boundaries from which elements are selected for gathering information that will be used in a particular research (Blumberg, et al., 2011). It allows for a careful determination of the source, group or level at which the research will be carried out that will guarantee proper representation. A carefully selected unit of analysis should be able to provide answers to the research questions, should take into consideration the purpose of the research and how the outcome will be used (Blumberg et al., 2011).

The unit of analysis for this study was limited to the existing members of the Democratic Alliance in the Eastern Cape. This is because the research foci are the use of social media to engage the current members in the political processes of the party in the Eastern Cape and to engage other potential voters based on the perception of the existing members.

4.6 Sampling design

The total collection of items or elements which is being considered for research purposes is known as the population (Collis and Hussey, 2009; Blumberg et al., 2011). It is however not always practical to use the entire elements in a population because of the limitation of time, costs and other resources. A manageable subset of the population that provides an unbiased representation known as a sample can be used for research purposes (Collis and Hussey, 2009). A method of sampling that provides the best representation of the population is selected based on the unit of analysis. This can be either a probability or non-probability sampling method. While

the non-probability sampling method is generally subjective, the probability sampling methods provide a more precise estimation of the population parameters because it is based on a random selection and every item in the population has a chance of being selected (Blumberg et al., 2011).

This study will make use of a probability sampling technique known as the simple random sampling method. This method is employed when the items in the population are relatively homogeneous (Wagner, 2007). This implies that every item will stand an equal chance of been selected and expected to represent the other items. A survey was carried out among the members of the Democratic Alliance in the Eastern Cape Province. This survey is considered a simple random sampling because every member of the party will have an opportunity to participate in the survey.

However, in order to ensure that the number of responses received is representative, the decision of the acceptable sample size will be based on two main factors as suggested by Cochran (1977) and Bartlett, Kotrlik and Haggins (2001). These include the fact that majority of the data that were collected in the survey is categorical data and the acceptable margin of error for which a sample parameter is expected to be representative of the population parameter of the same nature (Bartlett, Kotrlik and Haggins, 2001). A population parameter is expected to fall within a range of values defined around a sample parameter with a specified level of confidence. This range is known as the confidence interval (Wagner, 2007). The alpha level is the probability that the resulting statistical inferences using the sample data will be the same with the inferences that would have resulted if the test is carried out with the entire population (Bartlett, Kotrlik and Haggins, 2001).

The questionnaire for this survey was randomly sent by the Democratic Alliance in the Eastern Cape to 400 of their members and a total of 92 responses were received. At 95% confidence interval and a 10% margin of error, using the formula by Cochran (1977), 88 responses is considered a representative sample. Although a lower percentage of the margin of error would have been preferred, 95% confidence interval and 10% margin of error would be adopted when making statistical inferences for this study.

4.7 Data collection methods

The majority of research work is based on the measurement of properties or characteristics of the objects that form the focus of the study for the purposes of making decisions or drawing knowledge (Blumberg et al., 2011). The nature of this research requires the measurement of behavioural patterns and opinions of people that fall within the unit of analysis of the study. The facts gathered and used as a basis for inferences are known as data (Collis and Hussey, 2009).

This can be in the form of observations and information gathered during an interview for a qualitative study or properties like age and preferred choice of airline in a quantitative study. According to Collis and Hussey (2009), a data point can be categorised into the following groups;

- **Continuous data:** These include data items that can assume any value within a range. This could be data such as age, height or an amount of money;
- **Categorical data:** Represent values that indicate distinction between groups or the selection among given options which are usually from a small list.

The method used in gathering data that will be used in the research is very important because it can determine the quality of the data and hence the integrity of the research output. Therefore, the unit of analysis, the type of data expected to gather and the desired outcome of the research all determined the approach adopted for data collection (Blumberg et al., 2011). The method of data collection is also determined by the research approach, whether it is a qualitative and quantitative study (Collis and Hussey, 2009; Blumberg et al., 2011).

The most common approach for collecting data in a qualitative study includes personal interviews, the use of diaries, focus groups and observations (Collis and Hussey, 2009). The interview method involves asking participants questions on a one-on-one basis to gather information on what they do, feel or think. The use of diaries for data collection involves keeping a sequential record of events, this could be in the form of what the participant do, feel of think over a period of time. The focus

groups involve collecting data about what a group of people feel about the subject matter, usually as a result of a discussion among the people. Finally, the use of observation as a data collection method is when the researcher collects information from the participants or samples by taking note of their activities in their natural setting of day-to-day lives. While these data collection methods are directly associated with qualitative studies, it is important to note that these methods can be applicable in quantitative studies as well (Collis and Hussey, 2009).

Besides the possibility of using some of the methods mentioned above, the data collection methods used in quantitative studies include the administration of questionnaires by post (Collis and Hussey, 2009). This involves sending a printed questionnaire to the respondents to complete and return back, this is however with a danger of very low response rate (Blumberg et al., 2011). The other means of administering the questionnaire involves calling the respondent up on telephone to answer questions while the data is captured on the questionnaire at the same time by the researcher.

Recently, with the growth in the use of the Internet and email facilities, questionnaires can also be hosted online and the respondents are invited to participate in the survey by sending them a link to the questionnaire via email. This data collection method can be particularly advantageous especially in the collating and analysis of the data because the data can be received in formats that are for analysis (Collis and Hussey, 2009). This study employs the use of a questionnaire designed to collect data from the members of the party and the interview method was also used to collect data from the staff of the organisation. The questionnaires were sent to the office of the Democratic Alliance in Port Elizabeth and administered by them among their membership.

4.7.1 The questionnaire

The questionnaire is used to gather data from respondents by presenting them with structured questions that measures what they think, know, do, feel or who they are (Collis and Hussey, 2009). It is important that the questions contained in the questionnaire are carefully constructed to ensure that the responses are reliable. A

well-structured questionnaire should have the following characteristics (Collis and Hussey, 2009; Blumberg et al., 2011):

- The questions should encourage participants to provide accurate responses;
- It should encourage participants to provide adequate information;
- Ask one question at a time;
- Each question should be short and simple;
- Avoid offensive and questions that will embarrass the respondents;
- Discourage participants from ignoring or refusing to answer any question;
- Encourage the participant to answer all the questions in the questionnaire;
- The questionnaire should be designed to communicate the importance of the survey and should show appreciation to respondents for participating, thereby leaving each respondent with a positive attitude.

There are a number of ways in which questions can be designed to obtain information and data from the participants. According to Collis and Hussey (2009), these can include open ended questions that allow the participants to provide responses in their own words. The other category is the closed or multiple choice questions to which predetermined answers are provided for each question from which the participant can select one or more relevant answers. Questions can also be framed in a ranking or rating scale format. In this case a question is asked in a way that expects the respondent to provide answers on a rating scale.

The questionnaire used to collect data for this study predominantly contains multiple choice and rating scale type questions. The rating scale type questions were designed according to the Likert scale which expresses the scale of the participants' attitude towards a statement by the assigned scores (Blumberg et al., 2011). The multiple choice questions can be divided into two categories, those with a 'Yes' or 'No' answers and those with question-specific multiple choices. A 5-point Likert scale was employed to measure the opinion of respondents about different statements. The Likert scale questions makes use of the 'Strongly Agree', 'Agree', 'Not Sure', 'Disagree' and 'Strongly Disagree' scale and the 'Never', 'Rarely', 'Occasionally', 'Frequently' and 'Always' scale. The 'Strongly Agree' indicates the highest degree of agreement and 'Strongly Disagree' indicates the exact opposite level of attitude

towards a particular statement in the questionnaire. The other scale used in the section C of the questionnaire was designed to measure how frequently the respondents make use of the Internet in different cases.

4.7.2 Data analysis

Data analysis involves the use of a methodical approach to describe the findings from data collected, extract reasoning, detect patterns and test the hypotheses/theories. Once again, the adopted approach for analysing the collected data is dependent on whether the study is qualitative or quantitative. The available methods can be categorised into description, association and elaboration (Dane, 2011). Description involves condensing and presenting the data in summarised formats for easy determination of frequencies, measurement of central tendencies and variability (Collis and Hussey, 2009).

The association category of data analysis is the methods used to detect relationships between and among variable while elaboration involves the explanation and interpretation of the relationships that exist among variables (Dane, 2011). From the analysis of data using the descriptive methods, there are assumptions or propositions of association between variables that arise. These propositions can then be constructed into hypothesis which can be tested for the association or possible influence among the variable (Collis and Hussey, 2009).

This study relies majorly on the use of statistical methods to analyse the data collected. Chapter 5 describes the analysis of the findings from the data in more detail. The findings were collected by using descriptive statistics and inferential statistical methods (association and elaboration). Descriptive statistical techniques will be used to summarise and display the quantitative data collected during the survey for proper interpretation. Inferential statistical techniques will be used to test hypotheses on the possibility of association between the level of political activities of the respondents on social media, gender and the population group that they belong as stated below:

H₀₁: There is no association between the respondents' level of political activities on social media and their gender;

H₀₂: There is association between the level of political activities of the respondents on social media and their population group.

The analysis of data for this study will use the data collected to test and validate the findings from the literature review conducted in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 in the context of this research. The result of the analysis will also be used to improve the conceptual framework where necessary.

4.7.3 Reliability and validity

In research that involves behavioural patterns, opinions and attitudes of the respondents about a concept, one would want to be sure that the questions asked or the selected variables sufficiently and accurately measure the underlying concept (Treiman, 2009). Moreover, it is important to ensure that the questions used as instruments for measurement in such studies are void of ambiguities (Collis and Hussey, 2009). These factors necessitate the test of validity and reliability of the responses that are received to questions asked in a survey especially where the rating or ranking scale responses are involved (Collis and Hussey, 2009; Treiman, 2009).

Validity represents the level to which a question, variable or data point accurately measures the underlying concept. It is the extent to which the measuring instrument measures what it is supposed to measure (Collis and Hussey, 2009; Treiman, 2009). This is particularly important because using the wrong measuring instrument or an instrument that does not effectively measure the underlying concept would effectively jeopardise the integrity of the research. Treiman (2009) suggests that validity can be tested by looking for the degree of relationship between the measuring instrument and other variables.

After the measuring instruments have been used to gather data, especially those that measures behavioural, attitudinal and opinion related data, it is important to ensure consistency (Treiman, 2009). This is achieved by the measurement of reliability of the resulting variables. Reliability indicates that the research will produce the same result if it is carried out more than once (Collis and Hussey, 2009). It also indicates that the finding about an underlying concept will remain the same if the same measurement is repeated over time (Treiman, 2009). The reliability of the

responses received to questions in a questionnaire can be assessed using the following methods:

- **Test re-test method:** this is achieved by asking the same question at different occasions and find the degree of correlation between the responses (Collis and Hussey, 2009);
- **Alternate-forms method:** this is done by presenting different versions of the same measurement to the participants of a survey. A correlation between the different version of the same measurement is then carried out to access the reliability of the measurement (Treiman, 2009);
- **Internal-consistency reliability:** This is the measurement of reliability that makes use of the statistical formula to measure the correlation between the items used for a study. One of such is known as the Cronbach alpha that measures the inter-correlation between the variables used in a study.

In order to ensure the reliability, this study makes use of Cronbach alpha as recommended by Nunnally (1978) as discussed in Chapter 5. As there is no technical way of determining the validity of the questions used as measurement in this study, the questions were framed based on the literature review in Chapters 2 and 3, Treiman (2009) suggested this as a way of ensuring validity.

4.8 Ethical considerations

It is not sufficient to make use of the right methodologies in research, the onus is on the researcher to also consider morality and what is appropriate. In the process of carrying out research, researchers are sometimes faced with issues on striking a balance between methodological theories and practicality (Blumberg et al., 2011). Therefore it is important that researchers make ethical considerations in executing their chosen research design and methodologies. While there is no definite rule that must be followed for ethical considerations in research, Blumberg et al. (2011) suggest that the researchers should simple consider morality, the right behaviour and carry out their work in a responsible manner.

One of the most important areas where the researchers are faced with ethical issues is in their relationship with participants from which data are gathered. Participants in

a research should be well informed about the purpose and benefits of the study and their right and protection must be guaranteed. They should be protected from any form of loss, harm, discomfort or embarrassment arising from the study (Blumberg et al., 2011), even when this can lead to a reduced response rate. Collis and Hussey (2009) suggest that to ensure an ethical behaviour with the participants of a study, the researcher should ensure the following:

- **Voluntary participation:** participation in the research is absolutely voluntary and no one should be coerced or left with no option than to participate in a study;
- **Anonymity and confidentiality:** It is important that the participant's right to privacy is not violated in any way. Besides the fact that this is ethical, it can increase the response rate (Collis and Hussey, 2009) and increase the validity of the study (Blumberg et al., 2011) because the respondents will be more comfortable to provide data freely.

This study has been carried out with consideration of ethical issues mentioned in the literature as described above. The officials of the Democratic Alliance in Port Elizabeth were duly informed about the purpose of the study. Also, participation in the survey was completely voluntary and no name or any form of identification was collected to ensure confidentiality as indicated on the cover letter attached to the questionnaire (Appendix A). Besides, the research has been carried out according to the ethical policy of NMMU research committee, the non-requirement of special ethical clearance is attached as Appendix C.

4.9 Summary

Chapter four reviewed theories of research design and methodology. It addressed the research objective RO₅ - to explain the research methodology that will be used to carry out this study that can be used for future reproduction. This study is based on positivism research paradigm; it aims to validate the element of the proposed conceptual framework that was discovered in the literature review. The adopted research approach is the use of literature review and case studies as research strategy to form the basis of a conceptual framework. An empirical study is later

carried out to evaluate the proposed framework before making final recommendations.

Primarily, this research will make use of quantitative techniques to explain social media behavioural orientation of the existing members of the Democratic Alliance in the Eastern Cape Province. It will also employ the use of qualitative methods to do a gap analysis by evaluating what the DA Eastern Cape is currently using in terms of social media. Thereafter, these findings will be used to make recommendations based on the literature review done in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3.

This chapter provides information on how this research study/process will be produced so that the aims and objectives of this study will be achieved, which is the research objective RO₅. Chapter 5 will be used to carry out the analysis and discussion of the data collected.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE RESEARCH RESULTS

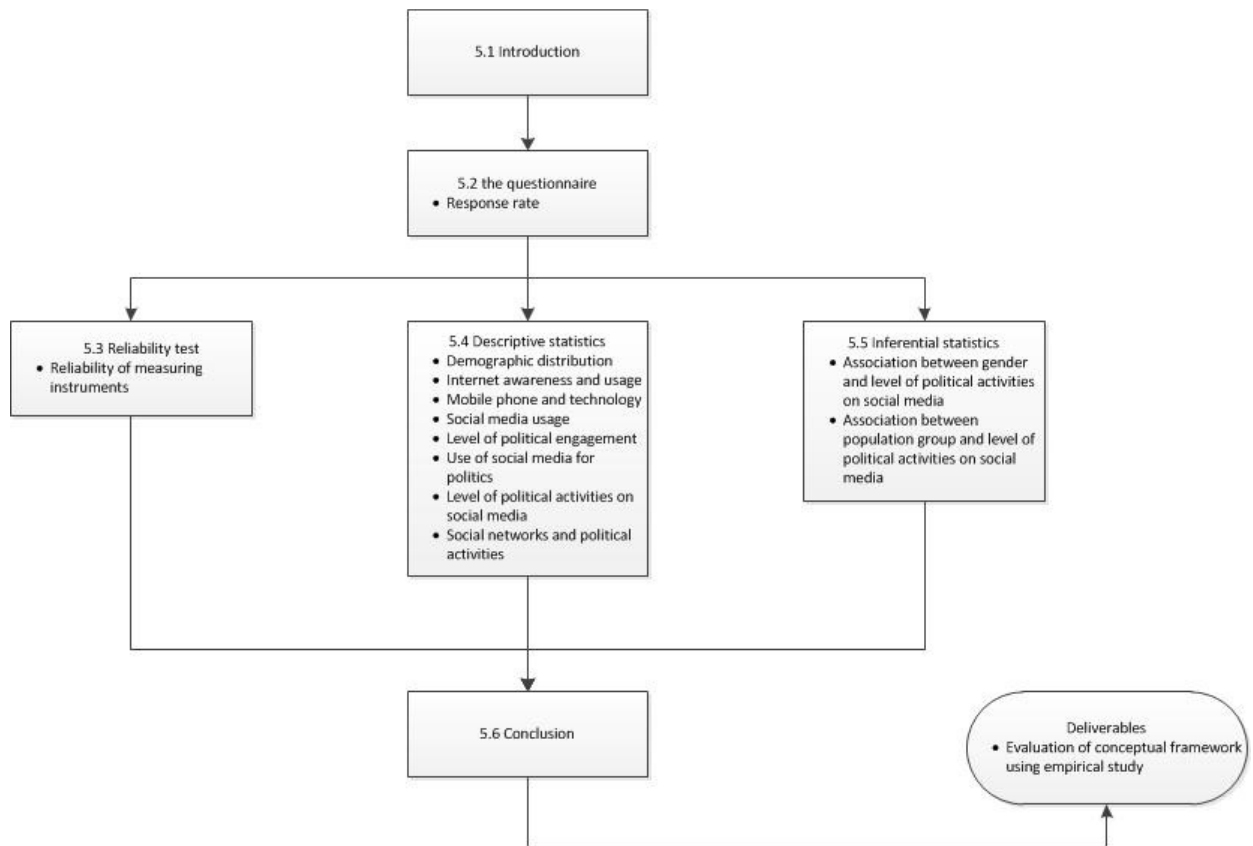
5.1 Introduction

The literature review in Chapters 2 and 3 described the important factors for the use of social media as a strategic marketing communication tool for political engagement. On the basis of the literature review, the later part of Chapter 3 presented a conceptual framework that the Democratic Alliance in the Eastern Cape could follow to take advantage of social media. In order to validate the conceptual framework, an empirical research was conducted by this study. Chapter 4 discussed the research design and methodology that was used to conduct this study.

This Chapter presents the results of the empirical study. It will describe the data collected, the response rate and the main research items on the questionnaire and their reliability. It will also present the descriptive and inferential statistical analysis of the data collected and the interpretation thereof. This chapter will also focus on the research question RQ₆ - how can a proposed social media strategy framework for political campaigning be evaluated? It will also address the research objective RO₆ – to conduct a survey that evaluates the proposed conceptual framework for the implementation of social media marketing strategies for political campaigning. Figure 5.1 shows how the chapter is structured in a flow diagram.

In order to achieve the objective and answer the research question above, this chapter will analyse the data collected, using descriptive and inferential statistical methods. It will also endeavour to present the analysis and interpretation in a format that is easily understood.

Figure 5.1: Layout of Chapter 5



5.2 The questionnaire

The questionnaire (Appendix B) used for this study was designed to collect data on the following:

- Demographics;
- Internet awareness and usage among the respondents;
- Mobile technology awareness and usage among the respondents;
- Social media in marketing;
- Level of political engagement;
- Perception on the use of social media for political activities; and
- Level of political activity on social media.

The demographic data were collected to understand the distribution and the representation of the respondents. Based on the literature review and the objectives on this study, the level of political activities of the respondents on social media is the

dependent variable and the other five measurements are the independent variables. Statistically, it is expected that the variation in the dependent variable can be explained using one or more independent variables. It is also expected that the influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable can be measured using statistical tools (Collis and Hussey, 2009).

5.2.1 Response rate

The questionnaires were administered by the provincial office of the Democratic Alliance in the Eastern Cape among its members. The response rate is a critical factor in determining if the conclusions from a survey are representative of the population. In order to ensure proper representation of the study, the survey targeted 400 members of the party. Although several factors like the length, the structural design of the questions and layout of the questionnaire were taken into consideration, only 92 responses were received after two months, signifying a 23% response rate.

This rate of response on its own could be interpreted as the level of political mobilisation with the party. Whether this is considered from a general perspective or the readiness for engagement on issues of social media, it remains a subject that should attract the attention of the party leadership.

5.3 Reliability tests

In order to ensure the integrity of the survey, the questions used to measure the dependent and the independent variables in this study were subjected to a reliability test. This is to ensure that responses received will remain the same if another survey is carried out at a different time (Collis and Hussey, 2009). The internal consistency method was adopted using the Cronbach alpha coefficient as a measurement of reliability of the measuring instruments used for each of the scales in the survey. Nunnally (1978) recommends that instruments used in basic research have reliability of about .70 or higher. As a result, this study ignored questions within each of the scales that reduce that Cronbach alpha coefficient for each scale. Table 5.1 below shows the final results of reliability tests for each of the scales after the desired coefficient has been achieved. Therefore, only the questions contained therein are considered for statistical measurement of each scale.

Table 5.1: Result of reliability test

Scale	Cronbach's Alpha	Measuring Instruments
Internet awareness and usage	0.700	How long ago did your start using the Internet?
		Where do you access the Internet mostly?
		How many hours do you spend on the Internet weekly?
		What do you use the Internet for regularly?
		The Internet is a better source of information than television?
Mobile phone and technology usage	0.880	Feature on your cell phone – Touch Screen
		Feature on your cell phone – Internet Access
		Feature on your cell phone - Camera
		Feature on your cell phone - GPS
		Feature on your cell phone - SMS
		Feature on your cell phone - MMS
		Feature on your cell phone – Conference Call
		Feature on your cell phone – Video Player
		Feature on your cell phone – Voice Recorder
		Feature on your cell phone – Voice Call
Level of political activity on social media	0.830	Have you ever posted a comment on social media that has something to do with politics?
		Are you a fan of any political candidate or group on any social media platform?
		Have you ever posted a Facebook status update that mentions politics?
		Have you ever liked a political comment on social media?
		Have you ever sent a tweet on Twitter that have something to do with politics?
		Have you ever watched a video on social media that has something to do with politics?
Social media in marketing	0.752	Have you ever posted a photo on social media that has something to do with politics?
		Social media provide useful information
		Social media brings your friends closer
Level of political engagement	0.841	The Internet is a better source of information than television?
		SA government should focus on creating more jobs
		SA government should focus on service delivery
		SA government should focus on eradicating corruption
		SA government should give more attention to dealing with crime
		SA government should focus on reducing inequality
Perception on the use of social media for political activities	0.868	Did you vote in the last election?
		Will you vote in the next election?
		The President should use social media for political communications
		SA politicians should use social media for political communications
		South Africans should increase the use of social media for political discussions
		Government should use social media to communicate with people
		Citizens should be able to provide comment /make request to the politician via social media
		You are comfortable for your friends to know your political orientation
		You will honour a political invitation sent via social media

5.4 Descriptive statistics

The descriptive statistical methods help in presenting data in a summarised format in that the underlying information contained in the data can be easily identified (Collis and Hussey, 2009). This is done by emphasising trends and presenting the data in pictorial format that shows relevant frequencies of occurrence in tabular form or with the use of charts. The following sub-sections present the descriptive statistics that are contained in the collected data about the demographic distribution of the respondent, the level of penetration of the Internet and mobile technology among the member of the DA in Eastern Cape, their social media usage – both at a general level and for political activities, their perception on whether social media should be used in politics and the degree of political mobilisation and engagement.

5.4.1 Demographic distribution of the respondents

The questionnaire collected data that gave indication about the biographical and the socio-economic status distribution of the respondents. Table 5.2 on the next page indicates the demographic distribution of the respondents.

Table 5.2 shows that only 31% (n=27) of the respondents are 30 years old and younger, while as much as 40% of the respondents are above the age of 40. Table 5.2 also shows that the male respondents were 59% (n=54) and the female respondents were 41% (n=38) and that the white population group could be more dominant with the party because 58% (n=53) of the total respondents belong to the white population. The possible demographic distribution of the party as shown in the results above is not in sync with the official demographic data of the Eastern Cape Province. This could mean that the level of penetration and political engagement is demographically skewed. According to the demographic data released by Statsa (2013a), people above the age of 40 years form only 24% of the South African population, but the data collected shows that 40% (n=45) of the party belong to this group. The same fact is reflected in the gender and population group distribution.

Table 5.2: Demographic data

Category	Variable	Distribution	% Response	n
Biographical data	Age	18 - 25	5%	5
		26 - 30	16%	15
		31 - 40	29%	27
		41 - 50	18%	16
		51 and above	32%	29
	Gender	Male	59%	54
		Female	41%	38
	Population Group	Black	27%	25
		Coloured	15%	14
		White	58%	53
Socio-economic data	Employment Category	Unemployed	6%	6
		Employed	61%	56
		Self-Employed	21%	19
		Pensioner	11%	10
		Others	1%	1
	Highest Education	Below Grade 12	3%	3
		Grade 12	11%	10
		Diploma	34%	31
		Undergraduate	23%	21
		Postgraduate	29%	27
	Type of residence	Owned	59%	54
		Rented	33%	30
		Others	8%	8

The second part of the data presented in Table 5.2 shows that more of the respondents belong to the affluent or at least mid-income earning South African citizens. While the official unemployment rate is 25.2% of the economically active South African population (Statsa, 2013b), which arguably would fit the age distribution range of this study, the data collected shows that only 6% (n=6) of the respondents are unemployed. However, 59% (n=54) of the respondent indicated that

they own the property where they reside. It is expected that they have a vested interest in what goes on around them and might be more active politically for this reason.

Therefore, one could suggest that there is an opportunity for the Democratic Alliance in the Eastern Cape to target more members in demographic groups where their representation might be skewed at the moment. However, the limitations of this study i.e. sample size need to be taken into consideration. These include the fact that the sample size of this study is not large enough and younger members/student arm of the Democratic Alliance in the Eastern Cape might not have participated actively in this study.

5.4.2 Internet awareness and usage

The respondents were asked about their level of Internet awareness, level of usage and what they do on the Internet. All of the respondents (100%) already have access to the Internet almost as expected based on the literature review. However the graphs below show that 94% (n=86) of the respondent have been using the Internet for more than 5 years with 77% (n=71) of the total respondent having more than 7 years of access to the Internet. Furthermore, 32% (n=29) of the respondent indicated that the spent at least 10 hours on the Internet weekly.

Figure 5.2: Years of access to the Internet

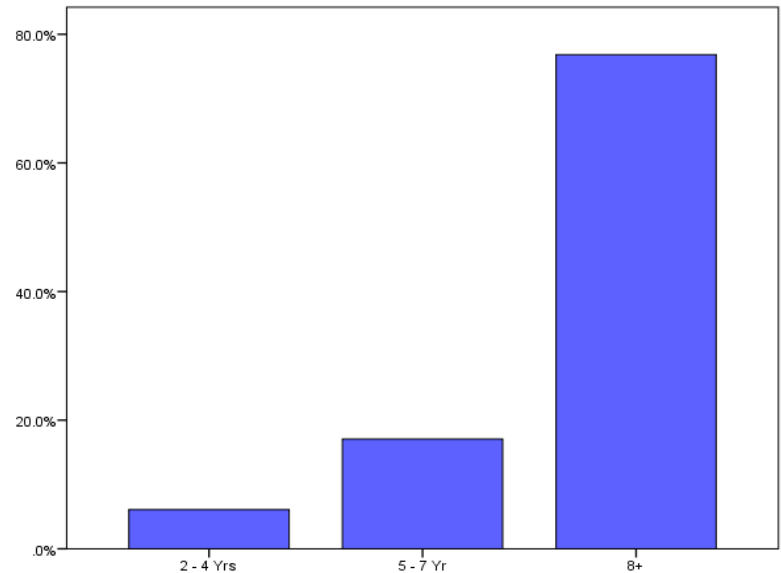
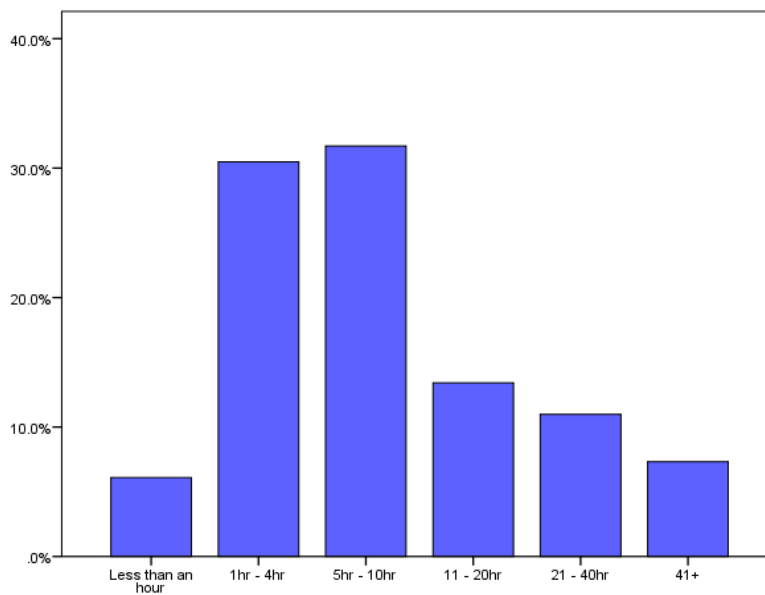


Figure 5.3: Number of hours spent on the Internet weekly



The data contained in Figures 5.2 and 5.3 show that the at least 30% of the respondents could be classified as active Internet users because of the amount of time they spend on the Internet and how long they have been using it (Goldstuck, 2012a). These people have an inclination to be contributors and not just consumers of information on the Internet. The level and type of activities that the respondents engage in support the fact that a good percentage of the respondents are active Internet users. Table 5.3 below describe how frequently the respondent use the Internet for tasks performed by active used and Table 5.4 show where the use the Internet more frequently.

Table 5.3: How the respondents use the Internet

	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Always
Online Shopping	43%	26%	20%	5%	7%
For work	13%	6%	17%	20%	44%
Getting Information	1%	3%	7%	31%	59%
Internet banking	11%	7%	12%	19%	51%
Entertainment	26%	24%	22%	12%	16%

Table 5.4: Where the respondents access the Internet

Where Internet is accessed	% of Respondent	No of Respondents
Home	65%	60
Work	60%	55
School	2%	2
Mobile Phone	35%	32
Tablet PC	15%	14

Table 5.3 shows that more than 30% of the respondents are comfortable using the Internet for online purchases, 64% of the respondent use it for work related tasks and 81% of the respondent are comfortable with Internet banking. Moreover, more than 60% of them access the Internet both at home and at work, while 50% (n=46) access the Internet using mobile devices. Finally, at least 80% (n=74) of the respondents also indicated that they the Internet is a better source of information than the television.

These figures indicate again that the existing members are active Internet user that can be engaged politically using the Internet and a good number of them can be mobilised to create content and reach others.

5.4.3 Mobile phone and technology

The participants of the survey were asked questions that measure their awareness and usage of the mobile technology. This is in line with the discoveries mentioned in the literature review that the mobile technology is a major driver of the Internet penetration and the growth in the amount of people using social media.

Figure 5.4 show that 37% (n=34) of respondents use a Blackberry phone that is known for its unique always-on Internet service. This is followed by the Nokia and the Samsung brand with 26% (n=24) and 29% (n=27) respectively. However, Table 5.5 provides more insight into the type of mobile phones used by the respondents. The data showed that 87% (n=80) of the respondents mobile phones have Internet access, 62% with touch screens, 72% (n=66) with GPS facilities and 92% (n=85) of the respondents phone have a camera.

Figure 5.4: Type of mobile phone used by the respondents

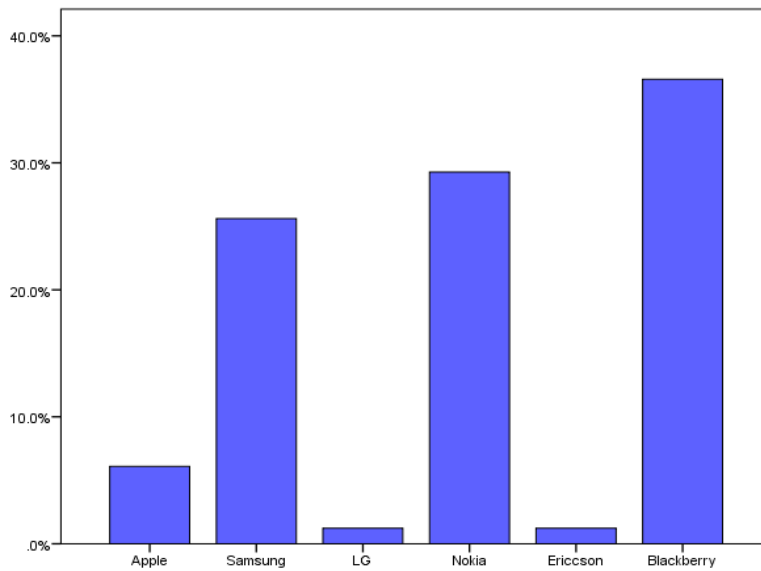


Table 5.5: Features available on respondent's cell phones

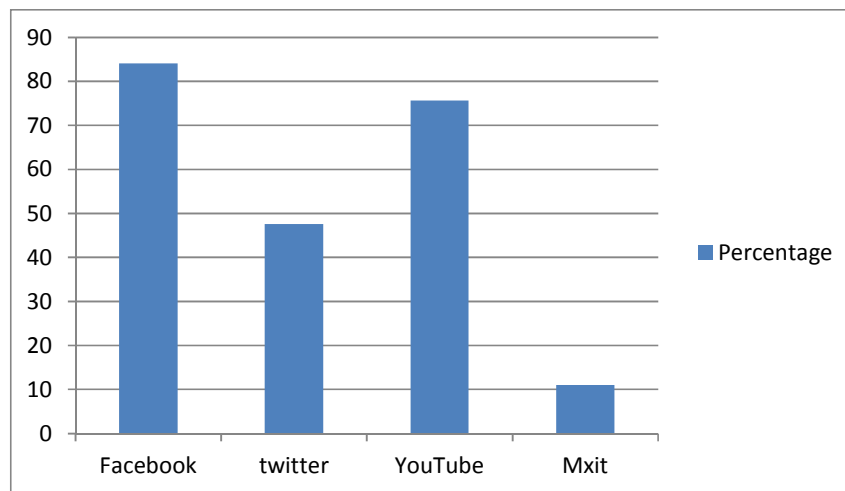
Features	% of Responses	No of Respondents
Touch Screen	62%	57
Camera	92%	85
GPS	72%	66
MMS	72%	66
Conference Call	47%	43
Video Player	74%	68
Voice Recorder	70%	64
Internet Access	87%	80

One could infer that majority of the respondents have Internet access on their mobile phones. It therefore means that they can be engaged via their mobile phones and they are likely to participate in discussion. The figures also show that majority of the respondent use the smartphones, these provides an opportunity for the DA to target and engage their members using technology platforms like the custom made mobile applications. Moreover, the availability of facilities like camera and video player could also indicate that they can consume and create video format contents. The harnessing of these feature can aid an effective two was communication between the political parties and the electorate.

5.4.4 Social media usage

The study of literature in Chapter 3 in respect of the use of social media in politics showed that Facebook, Twitter and the use of YouTube for distributing viewing and distributing video contents. The respondent were asked if they have accounts on Facebook, on Twitter, if they view videos on YouTube and on Mxit which is a social network created by a South African company.

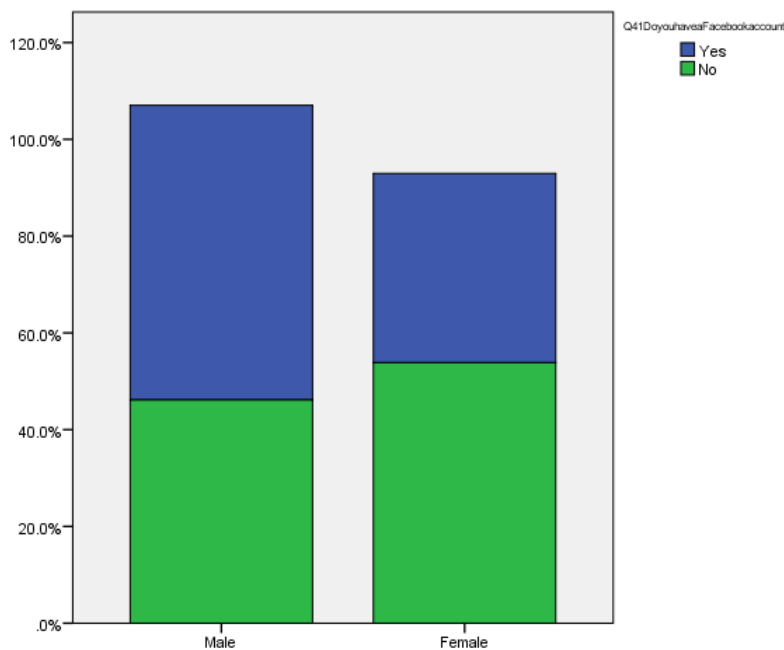
Figure 5.5: Percentage of respondent with account on different social networks



The graph in Figure 5.5 show that 84% (n=77) of respondents have a Facebook account, 48% (n=44) a Twitter account, 76% (n=70) watches video of YouTube and only 11% (n=10) is on Mxit. The latter is common among the younger people and none of the respondents over the age of 40 has an account on Mxit although this category forms 40% of the respondents.

Figure 5.6 shows that 60% (n=46) of those that have a Facebook account are male which follows the gender distribution of the entire respondents with 59% (n=54). This could imply that gender does not affect the ownership of social media.

Figure 5.6: Gender distribution of respondents that own a Facebook account

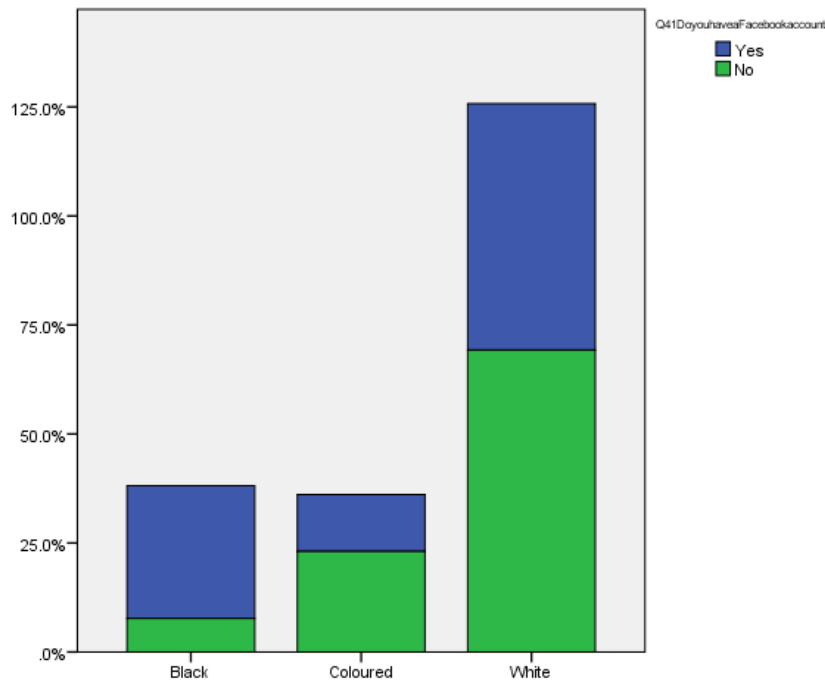


Also, the population group that the respondents belong to also seem not to affect whether they own a Facebook account or not. Figure 5.7 shows that 30% (n=23) of those that own a Facebook account belong to the Black population group, 13% (n=10) of them are Coloured and 57% (n=44) are Whites. These results align with the population group distribution of all the respondents as described in the Table 5.2. However, the result shows that if the respondents that belong to Black population group is considered alone, 95% (n=22) of this group own a Facebook account. If this is representative of the entire population, then Facebook could present a platform for the organisation to win more people in this population group.

The age distribution of the respondents that own a Facebook account did not appear to be significantly different from the age distribution of the respondents as well. The result shows that only 21% (n=16) of those that own a Facebook account are 30 years old or less while 44% (n=34) of them are older than 40 years old as shown in Figure 5.8. From a socio-economic status (Figure 5.9), it is noteworthy that although the pensioners form only 11% (n=10) of the total respondents, 11% (n =8) of those that indicate that they have a Facebook account are pensioners. Besides this, 66% (n=51) of them are employed against 61% (n=56) of the total respondents that are

employed and 17% (n=13) are self-employed compared to the overall 21% (n=19) that are self-employed.

Figure 5.7: Population group distribution of respondents that own a Facebook account



The above result shows that the ownership of a Facebook account and probably accounts in other networks is not dependent on factors such as age, gender, population group and even social economic factors. It can therefore be deduced that the popularity, desire to use or at least find out about the concept of social media cuts across different spectrum making it phenomenon that has come to stay. This makes it necessary for organisations such as those in politics to explore the possibility of making use of social media.

Figure 5.8: Age distribution of respondents with Facebook account

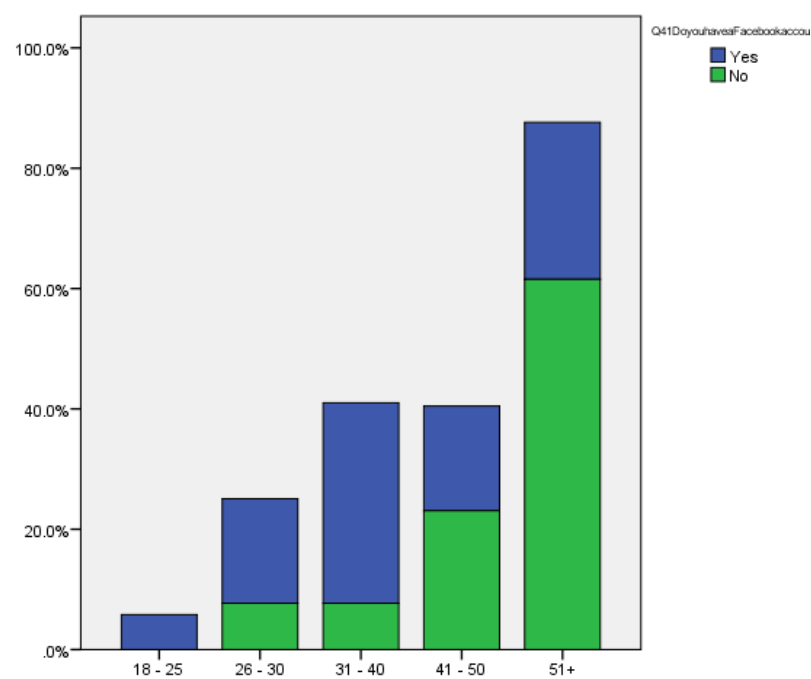
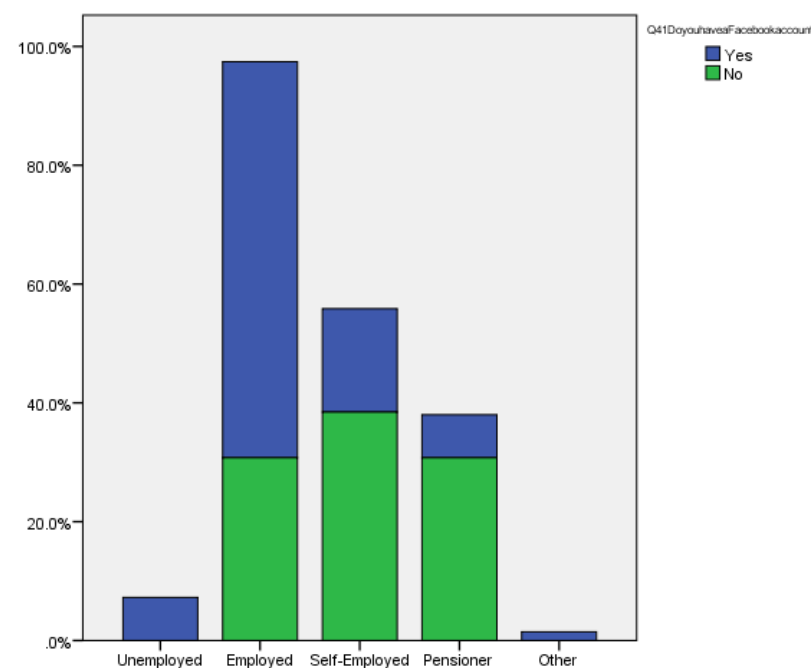


Figure 5.9: Employment distribution of respondents with Facebook account



The previous analysis on social media awareness has focused on account ownership only. However, the respondents were asked questions about the perceived value they get from social media. This was done by asking them questions about their perception of the usefulness of social media network for social

connectedness as described in the literature review and their perception about the ability of social media to provide useful information.

The result showed that 66% (n=61) of the respondents agree/strongly agree that social media provides them with useful information as shown in Table 5.6. Also, table 5.6 shows that 54% (n=50) of the respondents agree/strongly agree that social media have the ability to bring them closer to their friends. This result supports previous research cited in literature review section of this study that social media provides social connectedness and it is now seen as a source of useful information rather than a place to while away time (Mangold and Faulds, 2009). When this is added to the vote of confidence by the respondents on the fact that the Internet is a better source of information than the television, using social media as a strategic marketing tool could be seen as the right thing to do.

Table 5.6: Perception of respondent on the usefulness of social media

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Social media is a source of useful information	2%	9%	23%	45%	21%
Social media brings your friends closer	10%	13%	22%	30%	24%

The data presented in Table 5.6 show that more than 20% of the respondents chose to be neutral on both questions. While this category did not indicate that they agree with the two questions, they also chose not to disagree with the fact. This category could be people that believe in the potentialities of social media, but they have not been engaged adequately or targeted with the right information. Under the right circumstances and with the right content, this category of people can arguably be targeted as information consumers.

5.4.5 Level of political engagement

The results presented in this section indicate that the majority of the respondents are politically active. These results of the level of political engagement is as expected

because the questionnaire were distributed among the members of the party and probably it is the members that are very engaged that cared to participate in the survey. Table 5.7 shows that 96% (n=83) of the respondents agree/strongly agree that the government should focus on the major issue of job creation, service delivery, dealing with corruption, crime and inequalities that the country is faced with. Also, Table 5.8 shows 87% (n=80) of the respondent voted during the last election and 91% (n=84) of the respondent will vote in the next election.

Table 5:7: Respondents perception on the place of the Government in society

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
SA Government should focus on creating more jobs	2%	1%	1%	15%	81%
SA Government should focus on service delivery	3%	1%	0%	2%	94%
SA Government should focus on eradicating corruption	2%	0%	1%	5%	92%
SA Government should give more attention to dealing with crime	0%	0%	6%	5%	89%
SA Government should focus on reducing inequality	2%	3%	6%	22%	67%

Table 5:8: Respondents decision to participate in election

	Yes	No
Did you vote in the last election?	87%	13.%
Will you vote in the next election?	91%	9%

From a marketing perspective, the respondents of this study should only be targeted with the aim of making them influencers that will get the message of the party to those who are undecided or can be swayed to join the party.

5.4.6 Perception on the use of social media for political engagement

When asked about their perception on the use of social media for political engagement, a significant number of the respondents seem to agree/strongly agree that social media will be a useful tool for political mobilisation and engagement. More than 50% (n=46) of the respondents agree/strongly agree that the South African citizens and the politicians should use social media as a platform for discussion. While 71% (n=65) of the respondents agree/strongly agree that social media can be used as a platform for providing feedback to the politicians, 56% (n=52) of the respondents also agree/strongly agree that the Government should take advantage of social media platforms to communicate with the people that the lead.

Table 5.9: Perception of respondents on the use of social media for politics

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The President should use social media for political communications	8%	9%	37%	28%	18%
SA politicians should use social media for political communications	6%	5%	34%	34%	21%
South Africans should increase the use of social media for political discussions	6%	6%	34%	31%	23%
Government should use social media to communicate with people	6%	5%	33%	29%	27%
Citizens should be able to provide comment/request to the politicians via social media	5%	6%	18%	31%	40%
You are comfortable for your friends to know your political orientation on social media	7%	6%	13%	37%	37%
You will honour a political invitation sent via social media	7%	10%	33%	32%	18%

The data provides a good indication that the respondents are willing to engage the politician and be engaged by them using the opportunity presented by social media platform. Furthermore, 74% (n=68) of the respondents do not have a problem bringing their political orientation to social media platform and 50% (n=46) indicate that they will honour invitation sent via social media. This amplifies the opportunity to take advantage of the social connectedness on social media whereby where well-crafted marketing campaigns on social media can be designed so that people can influence the decision of their friends politically.

5.4.7 Level of political activities on social media

The respondents were asked questions to determine their level of political activities on social media. These questions were asked bearing in mind that the responses might be influenced by the other scales that has been mentioned earlier in this chapter. The overall result as displayed in Table 5.10 shows a low level of political activity by the respondents on social media. This is despite the results in the previous subsections of this chapter that shows that a good percentage of the respondents are active on social media and they are willing to engage and be engaged politically using social media.

Table 5.10 shows that only 29% (n=27) of the respondent has posted a political comment on Facebook at one point of the other, though 44% (n=40) of them have signified interest in a political comment on social media by clicking on the like button. This fact again underscores the fact that the respondents are interested but not completely engaged for them to be active politically on social media. Also, only 33% (n=30) of the respondents indicate that they are a fan of a political candidate or group on social media, only 11% (n=10) have participated in a political discussion on Twitter and only 20% (n=18) has posted a picture that has political orientation. But, 57% (n=52) has watched a politically oriented video on social media, perhaps because videos tend to go more viral on social media. The data above can be explained from the perspective of lack of political content, lack of mobilisation on the part of the political parties and politicians and a lack of visibility of political brands on social media for the electorate to relate with.

Table 5.10: Level of political activities of respondents on social media

	Percentage	No of respondents
Have you ever posted a comment on social media that has something to do with politics?	34%	31
Are you a fan of any political candidate or group on any social media platform?	33%	30
Have you ever posted a Facebook status update that mentions politics	29%	27
Have you ever liked a political comment on social media?	44%	40
Have you ever sent a tweet/rewet on Twitter anything that has something to do with politics?	11%	10
Have you ever watched a video on social media that has something to do with politics?	57%	52
Have you ever posted a photo on social media that has something to do with politics?	20%	18

5.4.8 Different social media networks and the level of political activities on social media

A further analysis was carried out on the level of political activities on social media to drill down and categorise the respondents into the different social networks. This is to discover the networks on which the respondents are more active politically and the owners of which social network are likely to be more active on social media politically.

Using a simple averaging method, an estimate of the percentage level of political activities of respondents on each of social media networks using the related activities of those with an account on each network as a measure was done. Tables 5.11, 5.12 and 5.13 showed the respondents seem to be more active politically on Facebook with average level of activities, followed by the use of YouTube in viewing political content with a 38% level of political activity average while political activities on Twitter came last with 37%. This is a very important variable to consider, seeing that

most of the politician and political figures that make use of social media in South Africa concentrate on the use of Twitter more than the use of other platform.

An example of this will be social media usage of Ms Lindiwe Mazibuko (Parliamentary leader of the Democratic Alliance) that has a following of over 78,000 followers that she engages regularly on Twitter (Twitter, 2013) but has a 10,700 following on Facebook (Facebook, 2013c). At the time of this study, the last activity on her Facebook page is 26 days old while her last activity on Twitter is one day old with almost a daily activity on Twitter during the last 26 days in review. This could imply that the politicians are ignoring the opportunities available of Facebook deliberately.

Table 5.11: Political activities of Facebook users on Social Networks

	Yes	No
Have you ever posted a Facebook status update that mentions politics?	33.3%	66.7%
Have you ever liked a political comment on social media?	49.3%	50.7%
Have you ever watched a video on social media that has something to do with politics?	60.9%	39.1%
Have you ever posted a photo on social media that has something to do with politics?	23.2%	76.8%
Have you ever posted a comment on social media that has something to do with politics?	40.6%	59.4%
Are you a fan of any political candidate or group on any social media platform?	39.1%	60.9%
Average level of respondents activity	41%	

Table 5.12: Political activities of Twitter users on social Networks

	Yes	No
Are you a fan of any political candidate or group on any social media platform?	46.2%	53.8%
Have you ever sent a tweet or retweet on Twitter that have something to do with politics?	23.1%	76.9%
Have you ever posted a photo on social media that has something to do with politics?	33.3%	66.7%
Have you ever posted a comment on social media that has something to do with politics?	46.2%	53.8%
Average level of respondents activity	37%	

Table 5.13: Political activities of YouTube users on Social Networks

	Yes	No
Are you a fan of any political candidate or group on any social media platform?	33.9%	66.1%
Have you ever watched a video on social media that has something to do with politics?	66.1%	33.9%
Have you ever posted a photo on social media that has something to do with politics?	16.1%	83.9%
Have you ever posted a comment on social media that has something to do with politics?	35.5%	64.5%
Average level of respondents activity	38%	

5.5 Inferential statistical analysis

Statistical inference provides that ability to make a more generalised induction about the population from which the sample statistics has been drawn (Wagner, 2007). This is done by using statistical techniques to estimate and hypothesise like characteristics, influences, relationships and associations in the data collected from the samples. The level of political activities of the respondents of this study on social media is considered the dependent variable. This section will use the chi-squared hypotheses technique to further test the association between the level of the respondents' political activity on social media and some demographic variables.

The choice of the chi squared hypotheses techniques is based on the fact the data collected is categorical in nature. This study will focus on inferential statistical test between the dependent variable and the demographic data only because of the limitation of chi-squared test that no category should have less than five responses for the results to be valid that was encountered. Even with the demographic data, the testing carried out proved invalid because it had a category with less than five responses; hence it was ignored for this research. The following tests were carried out at 0.05 level of significance.

5.5.1 Association between Gender and level of political activities on social media

H₀₁: There is no association between the respondents' level of political activities on social media and their gender.

Table 5.14: Chi square test of association between gender and level of political activity on social media

Questions	Chi Square	df	p. value	Decision	Association exist
Have you ever posted a comment on social media that has something to do with politics?	0.083	1	0.367	Accept Ho	No
Are you a fan of any political candidate or group on any social media platform?	0.325	1	0.285	Accept Ho	No
Have you ever posted a Facebook status update that mentions politics?	0.072	1	0.395	Accept Ho	No
Have you ever liked a political comment on social media?	0.01	1	0.487	Accept Ho	No
Have you ever sent a tweet retweet on Twitter hat have something to do with?	1.542	1	0.107	Accept Ho	No
Have you ever watched a video on social media that has	0.049	1	0.413	Accept Ho	No

something to do with politics?					
Have you ever posted a photo on social media that has something to do with politics?	0.129	1	0.360	Accept Ho	No

Table 5.14 above shows the tests between all the measuring instruments used for the level of political activity on social media scale. At the 5% level of significance, the level of political activities of the respondents is independent of their gender. Therefore, there is no association between the level of political activity on social media and the gender of the respondent. This will imply that the male and female level of political activity on social media is the same and in designing a strategy for political campaign, the DA does not need to focus on the gender of its target market.

5.5.2 Association between population group and level of political activities on social media

H₀₂: There is association between the level of political activities of the respondents on social media and their population group.

Table 5.15: Chi square test of association between population group and level of political activity on social media

	Chi Square	df	p. value	Decision	Significance difference exist
Have you ever posted a comment on social media that has something to do with politics?	8.716	2	0.006	Reject Ho	Yes
Are you a fan of any political candidate or group on any social media platform?	8.789	2	0.006	Reject Ho	Yes
Have you ever posted a Facebook status update that mentions politics?	12.958	2	0.001	Reject Ho	Yes
Have you ever liked a political	19.702	2	0.000	Reject	Yes

comment on social media?				Ho	
Have you ever watched a video on social media that has something to do with politics?	3.191	2	0.102	Accept Ho	No

The hypothesis H_{02} is focused on testing the association between the population group and the level of political activities of the respondents on social media. The different chi squared test between the population group of the respondents and the measuring instruments used to measure the level of political activity on social media provided results that substantiated the micro-targeting concept adopted by the OBAMA campaign team as described in the literature review. Apart from the use of social media to watch political video content on social media, the other instrument showed that at 5% level of significance, there is an association between the population group of the respondent and their political activity on social media.

This would imply that the activity a population group in terms of race might be different to those of other. It will therefore be necessary to target the different population groups differently when developing a political mobilisation or engagement strategy.

5.6 Summary

This chapter presented the data and analysed the data collected using quantitative analysis techniques. The initial section of the chapter was used to group the questions answered by the respondents into scales that align with the factors that has been discovered in the literature review chapters. Thereafter, the reliability test was carried out using the internal consistency method to determine the measuring instruments that will provide a reliable study for each of the scales.

Beside the demographic data that was collected, the independent variables identified and measured include the Internet awareness and usage of the respondents, the mobile technology usage among the respondent and the general social media awareness, penetration and usage among the respondents. The other independent variables were more politically related and include the level of political engagement of the respondents and their perception on the use of social media for political

activities. The identified dependent variable measured and analysed in this chapter is the level of the political activities of the respondents on social media.

Using descriptive statistical techniques, the data collected showed that not only does the data collected support the fact that a very high percentage of the respondent are Internet and mobile phone savvy. It also shows that some of them could be super users that could play a pivotal role in social media strategy of the political part and the literature review in Chapters 2 and 3 emphasised Internet and mobile phone penetration as the main drivers of social media. Moreover, the results also show that the party members are also interested in social media and that social media account ownership is independent of the demography of the respondent.

The findings of this chapter further show that there might be a mismatch between the perception of the people and the way the politicians and political parties in South Africa are using social media. This would imply that there are yet untapped opportunities for the use of social media for politics in SA. The result show that majority of the respondents belong to the white population. However, almost all the respondents that belong to the Black population group are active on social media. This could be an opportunity for the party to engage and penetrate this group via social media. The result shows that majority of the respondent have access to smartphones, this means that majority can be targeted on their mobile phones.

Inferential statistical analysis was also carried out to test if the population group that the respondent belong or their gender is associated with their level of political activities on social media. The result showed that gender is not associated with the political activities of the respondent. But, there is an association between the population group and the level of political activities of the respondents on social media. Overall, the results emphasised the need for proper segmentation of the target market and micro-targeting based on their population group and interest. This can be done by structuring the target market into communities of interest on the different social networks. This implies that the delivery of the organisations value proposition for the identified groups should be different and well planned.

The results in chapter five also show that majority of the respondents are active on the social networks politically and they are willing to be engaged politically using social media. The results show that majority of the respondents are politically active

and might be willing to participate in political processes if they are well engaged. This could be an opportunity for the political party to have access to their network of friends and follower on the social network. The results support the conceptual framework suggested in chapter three. However, the critical success factors and an improved framework that incorporate the gaps identified by the empirical study in this chapter will be suggested in Chapter 6.

Therefore, this chapter addressed the research objective RO₆ which is to conduct a survey that evaluates the proposed conceptual framework for the implementation of social media marketing strategies for political campaigning. The next chapter will summarise the findings from literature review and put the findings from the empirical study into perspective, draw conclusion and make recommendation for the implementation of social media in politics and future studies. It will also discuss the key success factors for using social media in politics based on findings from the study and the areas for future research.

CHAPTER SIX

FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUMMARY

6.1 Introduction

The review of literature in Chapters 2 and 3 revealed that the penetration of social media has grown significantly and its acceptance across different demographic, social and economic spectrum is on the increase (Goldstuck, 2012b). The literature review further showed that the use of social media as a marketing communication tools could be advantageous and politicians and political organisations can take advantage of social media for political mobilisation, engagement and campaigns. Based on the literature study, the later part of Chapter 3 presented a conceptual framework for the implementation of social media for political marketing. Thereafter, Chapter 4 described the research methodology adopted by this study and Chapter 5 presented and interpreted the results and finding from the empirical study that was conducted.

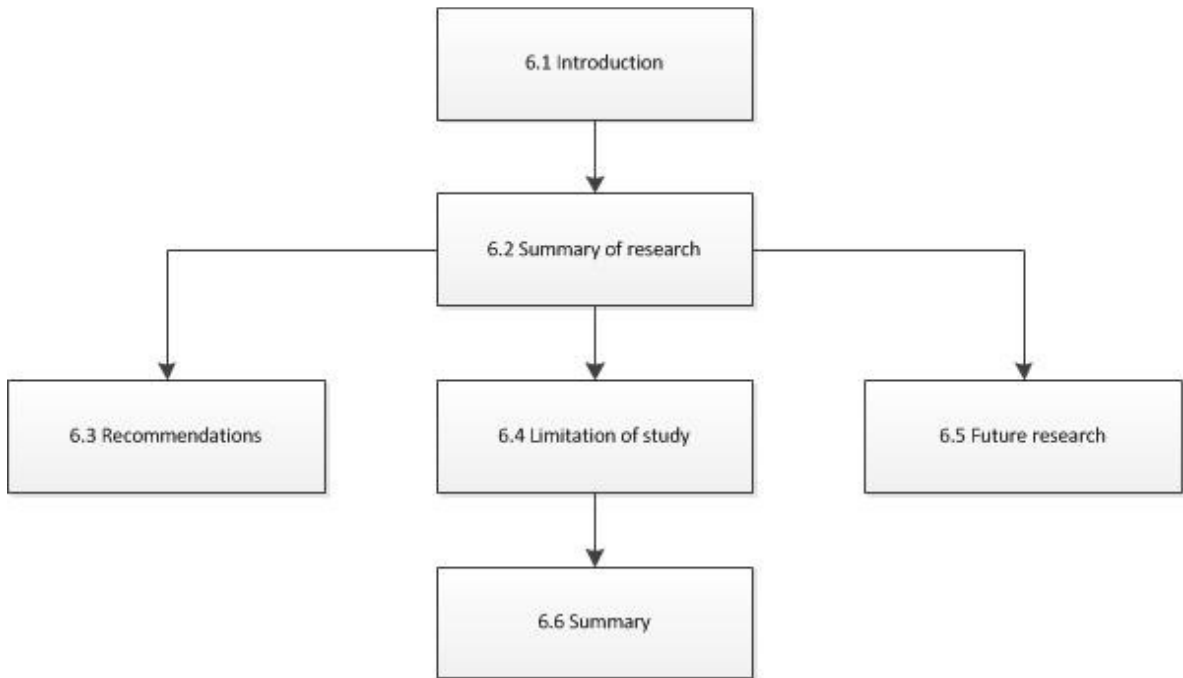
This chapter will summarise this study by discussing the research questions of the study and extract answers for each of the questions based on the findings of this study. Based on the findings of the empirical study in Chapter 5, the conceptual framework that was proposed in Chapter 3 will be evaluated in this Chapter. Thereafter, an improved conceptual framework for the implementation of social media marketing strategies for political campaigning and engagement will be present in this chapter.

Chapter 6 will also provide recommendations and highlight the key success factors that political organisations and politicians can follow in the implementation of social media for political campaigning. This will provide answer for the research question RQ₇ - what are the critical success factors for using social media in politics? It will also address the research objective RO₇ - to identify critical success factors for the implementation of social media marketing strategies for political campaign.

The evaluated conceptual framework will fulfil the main research objective RO_m - to develop a framework for the implementation of social media marketing strategies for

political campaigning and engagement. The critical success factors that will be extracted from the proposed framework will provide answer to the main research question RQ_m - how can a framework for the implementation of social media marketing strategies be developed for political campaigning and engagement? Finally, this chapter will discuss the limitations of this study and the opportunities for future research that has been identified in the course of this research. Figure 6.1 describes the layout of the chapter.

Figure 6.1: Layout of Chapter 6



6.2 Summary of research

The main research question (RQ_M) of this study is *“How can a framework for the implementation of social media marketing strategies be developed for political campaigning and engagement?”* In order to provide solution to the main research question, the main research objective RO_m – *“To develop a framework for the implementation of social media marketing strategies for political campaigning and engagement”* was set that was broken into secondary objectives. The following sub-sections describe the secondary questions that were investigated and the answers

identified. The sub-sections also describe the secondary objectives and how the objectives have been addressed by the study.

6.2.1 Research question RQ₁ and research objective RO₁

The first research question asked was, *“How do the Internet, mobile technologies and social media impact integrated marketing communication?”* The research objective RO₁ - *to determine the role of communication in strategic marketing with a focus on the use of the Internet, mobile technologies and social media*, provide answers to the research question RQ₁ and it was addressed by the literature review in Chapter 2. The review of literature revealed that the Internet and mobile technologies have experienced a phenomenal growth and evolved very rapidly over the last few years. This has introduced a paradigm change in how people communicate, making the Internet, mobile technologies and social media important tools to consider in strategic marketing. The result is that the inclusion of these tools in the integrated marketing communication has grown from being optional to a must in various industries and its relevance is increasing in many more.

The use of the Internet, mobile technologies and social media as a strategic marketing tool enables organisations to communicate with their target audience. However, the review of literature revealed that social media has also introduced the new dynamic of social connectedness (Dale and Strauss, 2009) into integrated marketing communication where the platforms facilitate the customer to customer interaction (Mangold and Faulds, 2009).

The other impact of these tools, now recognised as the new media, include the fact that consumers are now moving away from traditional media gradually and turning to the information available on social media during purchase decisions. With the continued adoption of social media in purchase decision and its influence on consumer behavioural patterns, organisations might have to update their communication strategies. The connected consumer concept requires organisation to recognise the influence the consumer can now exert in the branding and marketing process (Evans and Mckee, 2010). This gives rise to the need for organisations to change their marketing communication strategies from talking to

clients via traditional media into having dialogue with clients (Mangold and Faulds, 2009).

6.2.2 Research question RQ₂ and research objective RO₂

The second research question RQ₂ was – *“What is the role of strategic marketing in political campaigning and voters’ engagement?”*. In answering this question, the literature review in Chapter 3 identified that politician and political organisations adopt core marketing concepts to communicate their ideologies, values and candidate as value proposition to their electorates. This in turn translates to political capital in the form of mobilising the electorate to take action in their favour or the ability to engage the electorate for collective action in political processes.

Chapter 3 described the competition in the politics and suggested that the application of strategic marketing techniques is important to have a structured political campaign and to stand out among competition. This review of literature on the role of marketing in politics in Chapter 3 addressed the research objective RO₂ – *to investigate and identify the role of marketing in political campaign and voters’ engagement*.

6.2.3 Research question RQ₃ and research objective RO₃

The third research question RQ₃ was – *“How can social media be used for political campaigning?”*. To answer this question, the research objective RO₃ – *“to determine the uses of social media as an alternative marketing communication tool for political campaigning”* was also set at the beginning of this study. The literature review in Chapter 3 established a connection between the social connection and the multi-level interpersonal relationships that exist on social media platforms and the perceived psychological contract that exist between the political systems and the electorate (Himmelboim et al., 2012).

It was also discovered in Chapter 3 that the use of social media in political campaigning to become personal with the electorate creates a connection that makes the electorate feel closer to the candidate (Cogburn and Espinoza-Vasquez, 2011). This translates into opportunity for politician and political organisations to mobilise the electorate easily and in their favour during political campaign and

processes. The literature revealed that the use of social media in political communication is a catalyst for winning followers and building relationships (Cogburn and Espinoza-Vasquez, 2011).

Moreover, social media platforms provide the opportunity to understand the electorate by segmenting them to communities based on their interest. Thereafter, it provides an opportunity for direct interaction and feedback with the electorates. Above all, politician can target people with the right information. These identified uses of social media in politics address the research objective RO₃ and provides the answer to research objective RQ₃.

6.2.4 Research question RQ₄ and research objective RO₄

The fourth research question RQ₄ was – *“What are the components of a social media strategy framework for political campaigning and engagement?”*. The literature review affirmed the need for a structured approach in the implementation of social media for political campaigning and the possibility thereof. The later part of Chapter 3 described models for the implementation of social media and emphasised the target audience and the strategic objective as the key factors in implementing social media.

A framework for the implementation of social media for political campaigning was proposed based on the OASIS social media implementation model which priorities the objectives. The proposed framework consists of the identified components for a social media strategy framework for political campaigning and engagement. The development of the framework addressed the research objective RO₄ – *“to develop a conceptual framework for the implementation of social media marketing strategies for political campaigning”*.

The proposed framework in Figure 3.2 highlighted a step by step approach and the important factors that should be considered in implementing social media for political campaigning as discovered in Chapter 3. Some of the important points within the framework include a clear policy for governance, development of internal skills and training, buy-in and commitment of leadership and a clear measurement of success. The proposed framework suggested the knowledge and segmentation of the target

audience to communities for proper communication and the need to refine the implementation strategy continuously by learning from the system.

6.2.5 Research question RQ₅ and research objective RO₅

The fifth research question RQ₅ was – *“How can a detailed research methodology be provided in order to understand and reproduce this study in future?”*. In order to test the validity of the conceptualised framework for the implementation of social media as a marketing tool for political campaigning, an empirical study was conducted using the Democratic Alliance in the Eastern Cape and its members as sample. A questionnaire was designed and the provincial office of the Democratic Alliance administered among its members.

The questionnaire was designed with questions to measure the penetration of the Internet and mobile technologies among the respondents. The questionnaire also measured the level of social media platform usage and the willingness of the respondent to use social media platforms for political communication and engagement. In order to analyse the gaps and the opportunities for the use of social media in politics, the questionnaire also investigated the opinion of the respondents about how the politicians are using social media at the moment and what are their expectations. Finally, as discussed in the literature and emphasised in the conceptual framework, attempts were made to identify demographic, social or economic groupings that might exist and the possible variation in their usage or opinion regarding social media in political campaigning.

Chapter 4 describes the data collection process and how the collected data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistical method. It describes the underlying paradigm of this research and the approach followed. It is expected that this research can be reproduced by following the methodology of this research described in Chapter 4. This addresses the research objective RO₅ – *“to explain the research methodology that will be used to carry out this study that can be used for future reproduction”*.

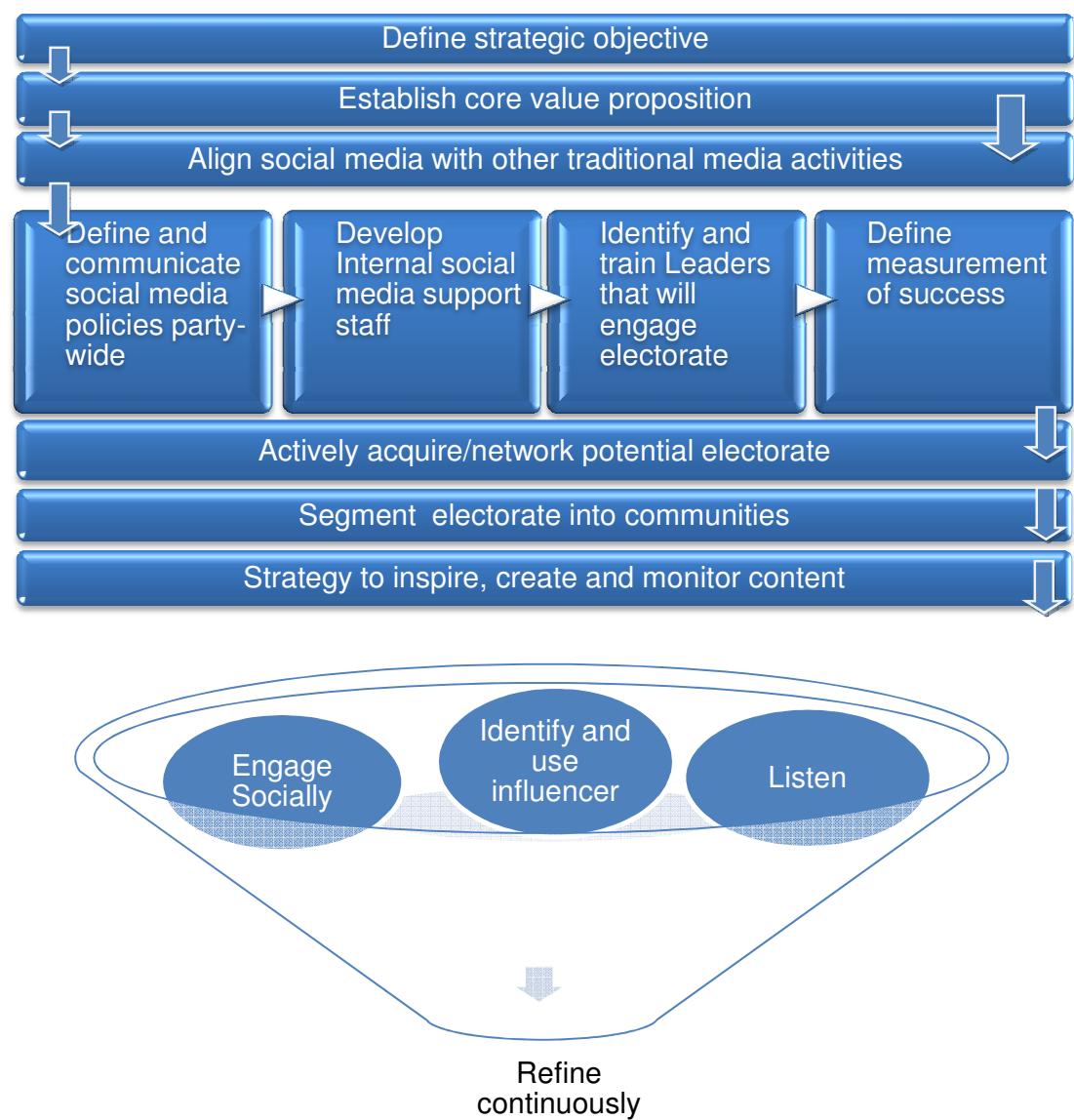
6.2.6 Research question RQ₆ and research objective RO₆

The sixth research question RQ₆ was – *“How can a proposed social media strategy framework for political campaigning be evaluated?”*. The empirical study in Chapter five addressed this question and the research objective RO₆ – *“to conduct a survey that evaluates the proposed conceptual framework for the implementation of social media marketing strategies for political campaigning”*. The empirical study was based on the adopted research design and methodology described in Chapter four. Data was collected and analysed using the descriptive and inferential statistical analysis techniques. The findings of the analysis showed that there is an opportunity for the use of social media for political campaigning among the sample and it also supported the important factors that were raised in the conceptual framework described in Chapter 3.

Based on the result of the data analysis, the framework proposed in Chapter 3 was re-evaluated and the following improvements were made to the conceptual framework as shown in Figure 6.2:

- **Strategy for content:** Beside the segmentation of the electorate into communities, it is suggested that there should be a strategic plan on how to develop content for each of the communities. Although the party might be communicating the same value proposition, it is very important that the content be aligned to the interests and the realities of each community.
- **Engage socially:** It is suggested that the engagement remains social to increase the level of access to social network of existing members and to inspire user generated content.
- **Listening:** It is important that listening be incorporated into the implementation of social media marketing strategy. This involved the monitoring and assessing what is being said about the organisation, its brand or the needs of the electorate. This will allow the organisation to continuously understand its target market and continuously refine its strategy for effectiveness of its social media strategy.

Figure 6.2: Improved framework for the implementation of social media for political campaigning



Source: Authors construction

6.2.7 Research question RQ₇ and research objective RO₇

The seventh research question RQ₇ was – “*What are the critical success factors for using social media in politics?*”. This is directly linked to the research objective RO₇– “*to identify critical success factors for the implementation of social media marketing strategies for political campaign*”. Section 6.3 of this chapter extracts the critical success factors that should be considered when implementing social media for political campaigning and the recommendations of this study. This is based on the

literature review, the proposed conceptual framework and the empirical study carried out in this study.

6.3 Recommendations

The literature review and the results of this study support the fact that the use of social media as marketing strategy in political campaigning provides a platform for engaging the electorate and reach potential followers. However, the need for careful planning and a strategic approach in the implementation of social media as a marketing strategy in a field like politics is very important. Moreover, in order to craft a winning strategy for the implementation of social media, previous studies suggested the use of a framework to guide the process and the eventual execution of the strategy (Chikandiwa et al., 2013). This is because of the nature and the primary functional design of the platforms that allows for user generated content on social media networks (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010).

Therefore, based on the findings of this study, the use of a structured approach for the implementation of social media in political campaign is pivotal for effectiveness and it is highly recommended. This is fundamental to answering the main research question RQ_m - *how can a framework for the implementation of social media marketing strategies be developed for political campaigning and engagement?* The conceptual framework in this study suggested an implementation approach and highlighted some success factors. Based on the findings of this study, the following are recommendations and the critical success factors on how to implement social media effectively for political campaigning based on the findings of this study:

- **Incorporate social media into overall marketing strategy:** It is recommended that politician or political parties that will be implementing social media should see it as part of its overall marketing strategy or a part of the overall integrated marketing communication. Although social media is a relatively new concept that introduces a paradigm change in marketing communication, its implementation should align with and complement the existing media activities (Safko and Brake, 2009). A conscious effort should be made to ensure that the approach of the traditional media does not

influence the implementation of social media strategy (Chikandiwa et al., 2013).

- **Identify and articulate objectives:** Although the organisations social media effort should align with the overall marketing strategy, it is recommended that the organisation have a specific social media strategy. This should define and clearly articulate the goal and objectives that the organisation seeks to achieve by using social media political campaigning (Bernoff, 2007; Mason, 2008).

The objective could also be sub-divided into short and long term objective that will describe what the organisation wants to achieve by using social media as a marketing strategy immediate and in the future. This could be using social media to win the support of a demographic group for an election as a short term goal or the use of social media for easy access and mobilisation of members of a political party. A clearly defined set of objectives will determine other factors in the implementation plan like the target audience, choice of platform and the measurement of success.

- **Segment target audience into communities:** It is recommended that the target audience be well defined, understood and segmented into communities based on interest, demographic and socio-economic communities. This will determine where to find the target audience of social media platforms available and how to keep the communication relevant to each of the communities. During this study, it was found that Twitter was the preferred platform of the few politicians that make use of social media in South Africa. However, the findings of this study show that there is a higher level of political activities on Facebook and more than 80% of the respondents sampled by this study are on Facebook. This is followed by 76% of the respondent that use YouTube for getting video content and then only 48% that use Twitter.

Moreover, the result of this study also indicates that there is an association between the activities of the respondent on social media and the population group that they belong. This further suggests that segmenting the target

audience based on their interest and community-focused communication is important for the effective implementation of social media for political campaigning. For effective results, each community should be implemented and managed to encourage user-generated content. This will allow the electorate to provide honest feedback that can provide political capital when handled with sincerity by the politicians (Heckadon, 2010). In the segmented communities, it is recommended that attention should also be given to identifying influencers in each community and working with them to effectively engage and mobilise their communities.

- **Acquire databases:** It is recommended that targeted efforts should be made to acquire and invite potential audience into each of the communities of interest created. This can be done by making use of the paid service on social media platforms. An example of this is the paid service on Facebook that can be used to grow networks based on interest or demography (Facebook, 2013b). Political organisations can also grow their networks/communities by purchasing databases from marketing agencies and inviting the audience to participate in their area of interests shown in the purchased database.
- **Leadership involvement:** It is recommended that the leadership of the political organisation be involved in the implementation of social media for political campaigning. The involvement and buy-in of the leadership should go beyond the approval of budgets for social media. But it is recommended that the leadership should acquire training where necessary and get directly involved in engaging the electorate on platforms.

By their definition and design, social media networks are not platforms for disseminating information but an opportunity to engage individuals and form communities of mutual interest (Heckadon, 2010). Therefore, the opportunity to interact with the politicians that will-be or have been voted into office is more likely to attract attention and provide a boost for the party's brand than the use of faceless and official social media accounts named after the party or a particular office. By doing this the organisation can create real stories and

engage in real discussions that will build the emotional bond that is beneficial to the organisations brand (Mangold and Faulds, 2009).

- **Measure success:** It is recommended that the measurement of success be clearly defined and linked to the objectives for the implementation of social media. The benefits of social media can be tangible or intangible. Social media platforms provide tangible measurements like the number of followers, number of people talking about a profile and how viral content went on the platform. It is recommended that these measurements be monitored and interpreted based on the objectives of the organisation.

For the purpose of political campaigning, it is recommended that the politicians and political organisations using social media should devise ways of measuring loyalty to the brand, level of engagement and mobilisation, reputation of party/candidate, brand awareness and political market influence. Gillin and Schwartzman (2011) recommended the use of surveys, community activities, volume and content of feedback, response rates, market share research as part of the instruments that can be used for these measurements. Measuring the success will not only provide an indication of the return on investments, it will also help the organisation to learn and improve.

- **Listen, engage and improve:** It is recommended that the mode of engagement should be primarily social. The use of social media for political communication, political participation and engagement can be categorised as business usage, but it is recommended that user generated content should be emphasised. The strategies and communication should allow for a sincere flow of information from the political organisation or candidate and from the followers on social media. The onus is on the social media structure that has been created to ensure that the process is well managed so that the benefits can be realised.

It is important to note that the implementation of social media for political campaigning should primarily be for building and maintaining relationships

(Dale and Strauss, 2009; Mangold and Faulds, 2009). Otherwise, the benefits might not be realised and the implementation could become counter-productive. It is therefore also recommended that listening to the communities become an important part of the implementation. This will not only provide useful information about the desires and opinions of the electorate that can be used to build political capital, it will also provide a basis on which each of the communities can be engaged. Moreover, it should help in the fine-tuning and form the basis of improving social media strategies from time to time.

6.4 Limitation of study

The following limitations were identified during this study:

- The size of the sample used is not representative because of the poor response rate. As a result, the sample size was not enough to perform detailed inferential statistical tests of associations;
- The samples were drawn from the provincial membership of a single political party;
- This research had to rely on some resources outside the academia because several aspects of social media concepts are still evolving or not enough academic research has been carried out in those areas; and
- Younger people/students were not directly targeted and they were not properly represented in the sample.

6.5 Future research

The use of social media as a marketing communication tool is evolving with enormous opportunity for more academic research. During this study, there are opportunities that were identified for the use of social media as a strategic marketing tool and specifically for the implementation of social media marketing strategies in political campaigning. These areas include:

- Future research can be carried out from the academia perspective to either develop or test the validity of the existing models for the implementation of social media as a strategic marketing tool;

- Further research can also be carried out to evaluate the framework proposed in this study across different political landscapes and parties. This can be done by using this framework for different political campaigns with varying objectives and the result can be measured;
- Also more research can be carried out to determine how to segment the target audience of a political campaign into communities so that they can be effectively micro-targeted using social media;
- A study may also be conducted to determine metrics for political capital and the return on investment obtained by the use of social media marketing strategies in political campaigning;
- This study may be repeated with a stratified sample based on demographics. This can involve a future research that actively involved the student arm of the Democratic Alliance or the youth league of the organisation; and
- Future research can also be carried out to include more people that belong to the Black and the Coloured population groups.

6.6 Summary

The main research objective of this research was to develop a framework for the implementation of social media marketing strategies for political campaigning. The studied literature suggested that the concept of social media can be linked to the social network theories and the benefits that accrue from social media to social capital theories. Therefore, the social network theories provided a basis for the study that was carried out on the concept and functionality of social media. While the social capital formed the basis for the studies carried out on how political organisations can take advantage of social media.

In order to achieve the objectives of this study, a literature study was carried out to ascertain the role of the Internet, mobile technology and social media on marketing communication generally. Literature and case studies were also studied on the use of social media for political engagement and campaigning. The findings of this study re-echoed the fact that the ties and flow of resources on social media provides a valuable platform for organisations to find, connect, interact and communicate with their target audience. It was also discovered that social media has become a very

important part of the integrated marketing communication strategies. However, there was evidence that the implementation of social media should follow a completely different strategy from the traditional media.

This study showed that politicians and political organisations can benefit from social media, by taking advantage of the ability to network with their members, the people in the network of their members and other potential members. Social media also provides the platform for the politicians and political organisations to social interact, build communities of interest around their brand and develop social ties online that can generate political social capital. This could provide increased brand equity, political engagement, participation and drive collective efforts in political processes.

Based on the finding from the literature review by this study, a framework was proposed and a quantitative study was carried out first to evaluate the opportunity that exist and the applicability of the proposed framework for the implementation of social media marketing strategies in political campaigning. This study concluded with a contribution of a framework for the implementation of social media marketing strategies for political campaigning and engagement. Recommendations were also made on some critical success factors for the implementation of social media marketing strategies for political campaigning and opportunities for further research on this subject were outlined.

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LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A: Cover letter

My name is Kayode Ayankoya; I am an MBA Degree student at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU). I am conducting research under the supervision of Professor André Calitz and Dr. Margaret Cullen. My topic is “**A framework for the implementation of social media marketing strategies in political campaigning**”. This research will provide politicians and political organisations with a structured approach, a guide on how to implement and critical success factors on how to use social media for political marketing.

You are part of our selected sample of respondents whose views we seek on the above-mentioned matter. We would therefore appreciate it if you could answer a few questions. It should not take more than fifteen minutes of your time and we want to thank you in advance for your co-operation.

The results of this research will be submitted to the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) in partial fulfilment of a Masters degree in Business Administration (MBA). The outcomes of this study will also be made available to the public by the university at a given time.

The survey is strictly confidential and the respondents will remain anonymous. Please answer all the questions in the questionnaire as accurately as possible by ticking the appropriate box. It will be appreciated if this questionnaire could be completed within 5 business days of receipt thereof. Should you require further information, please contact me at ayankayode@yahoo.com or 074 333 0643.

Thank you for your participation!

Kayode Ayankoya

Dr. Margaret Cullen

Researcher

Supervisor

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR KIND CO-OPERATION!

Appendix B: Questionnaire

Section A			
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	18 - 25	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	26 – 30	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	31 – 40	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	41 – 50	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	51 +	
Gender	<input type="checkbox"/>	Male	<input type="checkbox"/> Female
Marital status	<input type="checkbox"/>	Single	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Married	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Divorced	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Widowed	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Others (Please Specify: _____)	
Population group	<input type="checkbox"/>	Black	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Coloured	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Indian	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Asian	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	White	
City/Town	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Residential suburb/Township	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Postal code	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Employment category	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unemployed	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Employed	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Self-employed	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pensioner	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	(Please Specify: _____)	
Total Monthly Income category	<input type="checkbox"/>	R0 – R2499	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	R2500 – R4999	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	R5000 – R7499	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	R7500 – R9999	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	R10000 – R19999	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	R20000+	
Education level	<input type="checkbox"/>	Below Grade 12	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grade 12	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Diploma	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Degree	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Post-Graduate	
Number of dependants	<input type="checkbox"/>	None	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 – 2	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	3 – 5	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	6 – 8	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	9 +	
Type of residential property	<input type="checkbox"/>	Owned by you	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rented	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	(Please Specify: _____)	

Section B			
Do you have access to the Internet?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
How long ago did you start using the Internet:	<input type="checkbox"/>	0 - 1 year	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	2 – 4 years	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	5 – 7 years	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	7+ years	
Where do you access the Internet mostly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Home	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Work	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	School	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mobile phone	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tablet PC (Ipad, Samsung galaxy, etc)	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Internet Cafe	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Please Specify: _____)	
How many hours do you spend on the Internet weekly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	None	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Less than 1hr	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	1hr – 4hrs	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	5hrs – 10hrs	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	11hrs – 20hrs	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	21hrs – 40hrs	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	41+	
Do you read news online?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Do you have a TV?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Do you have Dstv?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Do you have a mobile phone?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, what type of cell phone do you have?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Apple	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Samsung	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	LG	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nokia	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sony-Ericson	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Motorola	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Phillips	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other. Please specify:	
What features do your cell phone have?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Touch screen	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Camera	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	GPS	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	SMS	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	MMS	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Conference call	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Video player	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Voice recorder	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Voice call	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Internet access	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	I don't know here?	

Please indicate on how frequently or rarely you use the Internet for each of the following on a scale of 1 to 5 where:					
1 – Never 2 – Rarely 3 – Occasionally 4 – Frequently 5 – Very Frequently (Please circle your option)	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Very Frequently
Work	1	2	3	4	5
Getting information	1	2	3	4	5
Internet banking	1	2	3	4	5
Online shopping	1	2	3	4	5
Entertainment (music, video, jokes etc)	1	2	3	4	5
Social networking (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube etc)	1	2	3	4	5

Section C			
Do you have a Facebook account?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Do you have a Twitter account?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Do you get video and information from YouTube	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Do you have a Mxit account	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Do you have a LinkedIn profile?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If you have a Facebook account, how many friends do you have on Facebook?	<input type="checkbox"/>	None	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 – 50	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	51 – 100	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	101 – 250	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	251 – 500	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	501+	
If you have a Facebook account, how often do you login to your account	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Daily	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weekly	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Monthly	

Section D					
Please indicate to the best of your knowledge how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements in the following sections on a scale of 1 to 5 where:					
1 – Strongly disagree 2 – Disagree 3 – Neutral 4 – Agree 5 – Strongly Agree (Please circle your option)	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
You are generally happy.	1	2	3	4	5
You are well satisfied about everything in life.	1	2	3	4	5
You are optimistic about the future.	1	2	3	4	5
The Internet is a better source of information than TV.	1	2	3	4	5
Social media provide useful information.	1	2	3	4	5
Social media brings your friends closer.	1	2	3	4	5
Social media shows what your friends are thinking.	1	2	3	4	5

The President should use social media for political communications	1	2	3	4	5
SA politicians should use social media for political communications	1	2	3	4	5
South Africans should increase the use of social media for political discussions.	1	2	3	4	5
Government should use social media to communicate with people.	1	2	3	4	5
Citizens should be able to provide comment/request to the politicians via social media.	1	2	3	4	5
SA government should focus on creating more jobs.	1	2	3	4	5
SA government should focus on service delivery.	1	2	3	4	5
SA government should focus on eradicating corruption.	1	2	3	4	5
SA government should give more attention to dealing with crime.	1	2	3	4	5
SA government should focus on reducing inequality.	1	2	3	4	5
You are comfortable for your friends to know your political orientation on social media	1	2	3	4	5
You will honour a political invitation sent via social media.	1	2	3	4	5
Did you vote in the last election?		Yes		No	
Will you vote in the next election?		Yes		No	
Have you ever posted a comment on social media that has something to do with politics?		Yes		No	
Are you a "fan" of any political candidate or group on any social media platform?		Yes		No	
Have you ever posted a Facebook status update that mentions politics?		Yes		No	
Have you ever liked a political comment on social media?		Yes		No	
Have you ever sent a tweet/retweet on Twitter that has something to do with politics?		Yes		No	
Have you ever watched a video on social media that has something to do with politics?		Yes		No	
Have you ever posted a photo on social media that has something to do with politics?		Yes		No	

Appendix C: Ethical clearance



FORM E

ETHICS CLEARANCE FOR TREATISES/DISSERTATIONS/THESES

Please type or complete in black ink

FACULTY: BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC SCIENCE.

SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT: BUSINESS. SCHOOL.

I, (surname and initials of supervisor) MARGARET CULLEN / ANDRE CAUTZ.

the supervisor for (surname and initials of candidate) Ayam Keyes K. A

(student number) 212 400096

a candidate for the degree of MBA.

with a treatise/dissertation/thesis entitled (full title of treatise/dissertation/thesis):

A FRAMEWORK FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING STRATEGIES IN POLITICAL CAMPAIGNING.

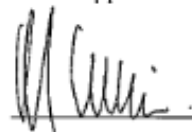
considered the following ethics criteria (please tick the appropriate block):

	YES	NO
1. Is there any risk of harm, embarrassment or offence, however slight or temporary, to the participant, third parties or to the communities at large?		X
2. Is the study based on a research population defined as 'vulnerable' in terms of age, physical characteristics and/or disease status?		X
2.1 Are subjects/participants/respondents of your study:		
(a) Children under the age of 18?		X
(b) NMMU staff?		X
(c) NMMU students?		X
(d) The elderly/persons over the age of 60?		X
(e) A sample from an institution (e.g. hospital/school)?		X
(f) Handicapped (e.g. mentally or physically)?		X
(g) Socially/economically disadvantaged?		X

3. Does the data that will be collected require consent of an institutional authority for this study? (An institutional authority refers to an organisation that is established by government to protect vulnerable people)		X
3.1 Are you intending to access participant data from an existing, stored repository (e.g. school, institutional or university records)?		X
4. Will the participant's privacy, anonymity and confidentiality be disclosed/revealed?		X
4.1 Are you administering a questionnaire/survey that:		
(a) Collects sensitive/identifiable data from participants?		X
(b) Does not guarantee the anonymity of the participant?		X
(c) Does not guarantee the confidentiality of the participant and the data?		X
(d) Will be distributed electronically (e.g. online via email/web link)?		X

Please note that if **ANY** of the questions above have been answered in the affirmative (YES) the student will need to complete the full ethics clearance form (REC-H application) and submit it with the relevant documentation to the Faculty Ethics Co-ordinator.

and hereby certify that the student has given his/her research ethical consideration and full ethics approval is not required.

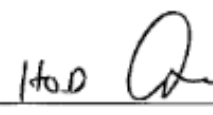


SUPERVISOR(S)

A. Catiz

6 Feb 2013.

DATE

pp HOD 

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

31/12/2012

DATE



STUDENT(S)

6 Feb 2013

DATE

Please ensure that the research methodology section from the proposal is attached to this form.